

Celebrate AAPI Heritage Month with these 7 Boston-area spring events

By **Matt Juul** Boston Globe, Updated April 29, 2022, 4:02 p.m.



The 43rd Boston Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival returns to Cambridge this June with cultural activities, food, and the annual race on the Charles. MINGJIE SONG

In a city as vibrant and diverse as Boston, the local Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community has grown exponentially in recent years. According to [data from 1990 to 2019](#), the Asian American population in Greater Boston has grown by 207 percent, making it the fastest growing racial group in the area. While the AAPI community continues to face [discrimination and disparities](#), now is the time to show support and celebrate the wonderful cultures that make up the Asian diaspora. Here are a

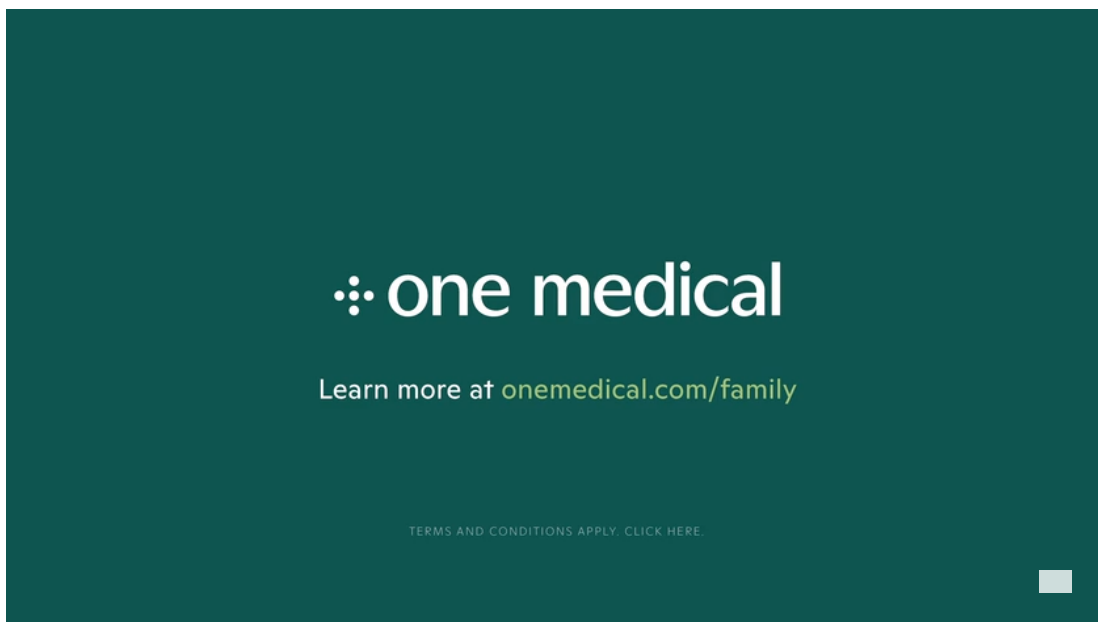
few events around Boston you can check out during AAPI Heritage Month this May and beyond.

[Boston Road Runners AAPI 5K](#)

In honor of AAPI Month, Boston Road Runners is hosting a fun run to support local AAPI nonprofits. The race is taking place at the historic Hatch Shell along the Charles River. The AAPI 5K will raise funds for the Asian American and Pacific Islander Commission, Asian American Women's Political Initiative, Asian Sisters Participating in Reaching Excellence, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Boston Little Saigon and Networking Organization for Vietnamese-Americans. Bibs for the race are sold out, but you can still attend or sign up as a volunteer. *May 1, 8 a.m. Carson Beach.*

bostonroadrunners.org/aapi-5k

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[AAPI Heritage Celebration at Fenway Park](#)

Before the Red Sox take on the Angels, head to Fenway Park early on May 3 for the team's annual AAPI Heritage Celebration. Prior to the game, attendees will see a number of special cultural performances, including dragon and lion dances as well as taiko drumming, which will take place on Jersey Street, plus Polynesian dance performances, which will be held on the Sam Deck. *May 3, 7:10 p.m., Fenway Park, 4 Jersey St., Boston. Tickets from \$17. mlb.com/redsox/tickets/promotions/themes/aapi-heritage*

Our Objects and Possibilities

In collaboration with Asian Musician Voices of America, the Pao Arts Center is hosting a special performance that weaves together works by AAPI composers and writers. This storytelling and musical experience features works such as Ken Ueno's "Atlas of Crossed Destinies," Jungyoon Wie's "Han," as well as the world premiere of Michael-Thomas Foumai's "Printing Kapa." *May 6, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Pao Arts Center, 99 Albany St., Boston. Free; \$13 suggested donation. paoartscenter.org*

AAPI Commission Unity Dinner

The Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission will hold its 14th annual Unity Dinner at the UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center in Lowell. The event celebrates the Bay State's diverse AAPI community, honoring their achievements and leaders who are making a difference. This year's ceremony will honor Dr. Carolyn Rubin with the Community Hero Award, the Yuri Kochiyama Cultural Center at UMass Amherst with the Leadership for Inclusion & Diversity Award, as well as Michael Liu with the Lifetime Achievement Award. *May 6, 6-9 p.m., 50 Warren St., Lowell. Tickets from \$100. aapicommission.org/unity-dinner-2022*



Attendees at Pao Arts Center's first art crawl in 2021, where the "New Narratives: Embodied Identities" exhibition was on display. COURTESY OF THE PAO ARTS CENTER

[Pao Arts Center 5th Anniversary Community Celebration](#)

To commemorate five years of Chinatown's first arts, cultural, and education center, the Pao Arts Center is holding a special celebration at Mary Soo Hoo Park on the Greenway in May. The event will feature the opening of the "Year of the Tiger" installation by Cheryl Wing-Zi Wong as well as performances by Wah Lum Academy, Jennifer Lin, and accompanying dancers, Bunker Hill Community College student and alumni musicians, and more. *May 14, 1-4 p.m., Mary Soo Hoo Park at the Greenway, Boston. Free.*

paoartscenter.org/events/2022/5thanniversary

Confronting Racial Injustices: Rising Asian American Voices

Join the Massachusetts Historical Society for a conversation on the history of violence Asian Americans have been forced to face over the years, as well as the rising voices who are combating the recent increase in hate directed toward the community. The online event will feature prerecorded remarks by Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and a panel discussion moderated by Massachusetts Superior Court Associate Justice Catherine H. Ham. *May 26, 6-7 p.m. Virtual. Free.* masshist.org/events/confronting-racial-injustice-rising-asian-american-voices

Boston Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival

An annual tradition since 1979, the nation's first dragon boat festival returns to the Charles River for its 43rd year in June. See dragon boat racing teams from across the country come together to compete, plus enjoy a weekend filled with cultural performances by local, national, and international AAPI groups, arts and crafts, and plenty of delicious food. *June 12, between JFK Street Bridge and Western Ave. Bridge, Cambridge. Free.* bostondragonboat.org

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