



Activism, Solidarity, and Social Movements in AANHPI Communities

Competency

Educators apply Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) civic histories—including youth activism, labor organizing, immigrants' rights, and cross-racial coalition building—to design learning experiences that develop students' knowledge of civic participation, collective action, and historical change.

Key Method

The educator builds understanding of AANHPI civic histories, activism, social movements, and solidarity to design learning experiences that helps learners examine civic participation, collective action, and historical change.

Method Components

Throughout U.S. history, young people have played a significant role in movements for social change. AANHPI youth and communities have been part of that history—organizing for civil rights, workers' rights, educational equity, and recognition of their histories and contributions.

Social movements aren't single events. They develop over time through sustained organizing, coalition-building, and strategic action, involving people across different roles working toward shared goals. A campaign is one of the primary tools through which that organizing takes shape: a coordinated effort with a defined

goal, a strategy, and a base of support. Understanding how campaigns work—and analyzing who holds power, who is harmed, who benefits, and how AANHPI communities have used them—is central to this microcredential.

Who is AANHPI?

AANHPI is a broad term that includes many ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and national communities. While the term is often used collectively, it represents a wide range of experiences, histories, and perspectives.

Understanding this diversity is important when studying civic history and social movements. Different AANHPI communities have experienced migration, labor organizing, discrimination, community building, political participation, and advocacy in different ways. Recognizing these differences helps educators move beyond a single narrative and better understand the many contributions AANHPI communities have made to civic life in the United States.

The AANHPI umbrella includes:

East Asian: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, Taiwanese, Tibetan

Southeast Asian: Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian (Khmer), Thai, Laotian, Burmese (Myanmar), Indonesian, Malaysian, Singaporean, Hmong, Mien/Iu Mien

South Asian: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Nepali, Bhutanese, Maldivian, Afghan

Central Asian: Kazakh, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen

Native Hawaiians: the Indigenous Polynesian people of the Hawaiian Islands (also called Kanaka Maoli)

Polynesian: Samoan, Tongan, Tahitian, Māori (New Zealand origin), Tokelauan, Niuean, Cook Islander

Micronesian: Chamorro (Guam/CNMI), Marshallese, Palauan, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Kosraean, I-Kiribati

Melanesian: Fijian, Papua New Guinean, Solomon Islander, Ni-Vanuatu

Social Movements and Civic Participation

Social movements are organized efforts to create, influence, or resist social, political, economic, or environmental change. Civic participation can take many forms, including voting, attending public meetings, advocating for community concerns, participating in campaigns, organizing events, engaging in public dialogue, or supporting community initiatives.

Examining social movements helps students understand how individuals and communities work together to address issues and influence change.

Understanding how social movements develop provides a foundation for analyzing historical events and contemporary civic issues, and helps students see how people organize together to challenge unfair conditions and build a more just future.

AANHPI Contributions to American Civic Life

AANHPI communities have a long and significant history of civic engagement and social movement participation in the United States.

Yuri Kochiyama was a Japanese American activist who, after her family's incarceration during World War II, became a prominent advocate for civil rights, political prisoners, and reparations for Japanese Americans. Her work is a powerful example of how personal experience with injustice can lead to lifelong civic commitment and cross-racial solidarity.

Philip Vera Cruz was a Filipino American labor organizer and co-founder of the United Farm Workers who dedicated decades of his life to improving conditions for agricultural workers. His story connects AANHPI labor history to the broader American labor movement and illustrates what sustained, organized civic action can accomplish over time.

Pacific Islander communities have organized around issues of climate justice, land rights, and cultural preservation. Their advocacy offers examples of civic engagement that connect local community needs to broader national and global conversations.

Coalition Building

Social change rarely occurs through the efforts of one individual or community. Solidarity involves people and communities working together toward shared goals while recognizing and respecting different experiences and perspectives.

Throughout history, AANHPI communities have participated in coalition-building efforts connected to labor rights, civil rights, educational equity, immigrant rights, and environmental advocacy. These partnerships demonstrate how individuals and communities can work together across differences to address shared concerns and advocate for change.

Studying solidarity helps students understand how collaboration and collective action can strengthen movements and contribute to lasting change. Exploring examples encourages learners to examine how communities can work together to address challenges and build more inclusive and equitable societies.

Campaigns as a Framework for Civic Learning

A campaign is a coordinated effort to achieve a specific goal through organized action. Campaigns have been central to many of the most significant moments in American civic history—from labor rights to civil rights to environmental advocacy. Understanding how campaigns work helps students move from awareness to action, and from individual concern to collective strategy.

A basic campaign framework includes: identifying an issue or goal, understanding who has the power to address it, building a base of support, developing a strategy, and taking action. These components appear across campaigns of very different scales—from a school-level initiative to a national movement.

Rather than treating civic engagement as abstract, it grounds the learning in strategy and practice.

AANHPI Youth Activism and Social Movements

Young people have played important roles in many social movements throughout history. AANHPI youth have organized around issues such as educational access, representation, immigrant rights, discrimination, and environmental concerns. Historical examples such as the Third World Liberation Front strikes demonstrate how young people have advocated for change and influenced educational institutions, while contemporary youth continue to engage in issues affecting their communities and society.

Examining youth activism helps students recognize that civic participation is not limited by age. Historical and contemporary examples demonstrate how young people have contributed to meaningful change within their schools, communities, and the broader world.

These examples also provide opportunities to analyze how social movements develop, how campaigns build support, and how collective action can influence historical change.

The Educator's Role

Civic learning is most effective when it's grounded in accurate historical knowledge, connected to students' lives, and supported through meaningful inquiry. Learning about AANHPI civic histories helps address gaps in the traditional curriculum while providing students with examples of leadership, activism, collective action, and social change.

Educators play an important role in helping students analyze historical events, evaluate civic strategies, examine multiple perspectives, and connect historical examples to contemporary issues. They can also help students identify how race, class, and policy shape who has voice, who has access, and who is left out of decision-making. Through thoughtful instruction, educators can help learners develop a deeper understanding of civic participation and the ways individuals and communities contribute to historical change.

Supporting Rationale and Research

Hester, Johanna, et al. "Asian American Workers and Unions: Current and Future Opportunities for Organizing Asian American and Pacific Islander Workers." *AAP/ Nexus: Policy, Practice and Community*, vol. 14, no. 1, Jan. 2016, pp. 78-96.
<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/984981w2>

Journell, Wayne, et al. "Teaching Civics: An Overview of Instructional Strategies Using Primary Sources, Role-Play and Simulations, and Academic Service Learning for Teaching Civic Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions." *The Social Studies*, 2024.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00377996.2024.2379908>

Rodríguez, Noreen Naseem, and Sohyun An. "Perspectives on Practice: Celebrating AAPI Heritage Month Is Not Enough: A Guide to Centering Asian American Histories and Narratives." *Language Arts*, vol. 101, no. 5, 1 May 2024, pp. 350-357.
<https://publicationsncte.org/content/journals/10.58680/la20241015350>

Resources

AANHPI

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Revised on July 22, 2026

Youth-Led Campaigns, Foundations, and Futures Textbook

[Youth Organizing: Building Multiracial Solidarities](#)

[Youth-Led Campaigns](#)

AANHPI Contributions to American Civic Life

[Yuri Kochiyama - Densho Encyclopedia](#)

[Yuri Kochiyama - U.S. National Park Service](#)

[Philip Vera Cruz - Foundations and Futures](#)

[Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander \(AANHPI\) Labor Leaders - NEA](#)

AANHPI Youth Activism and Social Movements

[Ethnic Studies: Born in the Bay Area from History's Biggest Student Strike - KQED](#)

[Asian American and Pacific Islander Workers' Organizing - Foundations and Futures](#)

Campaigns as a Framework for Civic Learning

[Labor Organizing: The New York Taxi Workers Alliance - Foundations and Futures](#)

[Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change](#)

[Pacific Climate Warriors Speak at Climate Strike - Zinn Education Project](#)

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn this micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and be proficient in all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

300-500 words

Please don't include any information that could identify you to reviewers.

Please answer all of the following questions:

1. What grade level and content area do you teach or support?
2. Briefly describe your school or workplace setting—urban, suburban, or rural—and any context you feel is important for reviewers to understand about the community you serve.
3. Before working on this microcredential, what did you know about AANHPI civic history and social movements, and why did you choose this microcredential?

Passing:

- The educator clearly identifies their grade level and content area.
- The educator provides a brief, clear description of their setting.
- The educator reflects honestly on their prior knowledge and states a clear reason for choosing this microcredential.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this microcredential, please submit the following three artifacts as evidence of your learning. See the rubric for the passing requirements.

Please don't include any information that could identify you or your students to reviewers.

Artifact 1: Curated Resource Collection for Teaching AANHPI Civic History

Using the template [Curated Resource Collection](#), create a collection of instructional resources to teach AANHPI civic history, activism, solidarity, and social movements at your grade level and within your content area.

Your collection must include:

- At least eight instructional resources (primary sources, articles, videos, multimedia resources, lesson materials, or other instructional tools)
- Resources representing at least three different topic areas addressed in this microcredential (e.g., civic participation, youth activism, labor organizing, solidarity and coalition building, climate justice, or social movements)
- A two to three sentence annotation for each resource that:
 - summarizes the resource, and

- explains how it could be used in instruction at your grade level or content area
- A one-paragraph rationale explaining how the collection as a whole supports student learning about AANHPI civic history and civic participation

Artifact 2: AANHPI Civic History Template

Create a student-facing template that will guide exploration of AANHPI contributions to American civic life. This template is designed to be reusable—candidates and their students can apply it to a variety of individuals, campaigns, and movements, including those covered in this microcredential. Use two to three of the resources from Artifact 1 to inform your design.

Your completed worksheet must include questions across four categories:

- **Key Concepts:** Questions that ask students to identify and explain foundational ideas—what a social movement is, how a campaign works, and what distinguishes civic engagement from other forms of participation.
- **Evidence-Based Questions:** Questions that ask students to locate and cite specific evidence from the readings to support a claim or explain an event.
- **Critical Analysis:** Questions that ask students to analyze the strategies used in a specific AANHPI historical campaign—what the goal was, who was involved, what approach was taken, and the outcome.
- **Application:** Questions that ask students to connect what they've learned to contemporary civic life or their own community experience.

After creating the template, create an exemplar for yourself so that you're clear on what proficient student work would contain. Include the exemplar in your submission. The preferred format is a PDF. If you choose to submit a link to an online document, please ensure that sharing settings allow anyone with the link to view.

Artifact 3: Participant Samples – AANHPI Civic History Template

Following your classroom implementation of the Civic History Template (Artifact 2), select three samples of your students' completed worksheets that represent a range of student understanding—one that demonstrates a strong grasp of the material, one that demonstrates developing understanding, and one that demonstrates emerging understanding.

For each sample, write a brief explanation that addresses:

- Why did you select this sample to represent this level of understanding?
- What do the student's responses reveal about their engagement with AANHPI civic history?

- What instructional next steps would you take to support or extend learning based on what you observe in this work?

Submit your three selected student samples and your written explanation in a single submission. The preferred format for submission is a PDF. If you choose to submit a link to an online document, please ensure that the sharing settings allow anyone with the link to view.

Please ensure that no student names or identifying information are visible in your submission.

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Curated Resource Collection for Teaching AANHPI Civic History	Collection includes at least eight resources covering at least three different topic areas. Each entry includes a linked resource, the resource type identified (e.g., article, video, primary source, podcast), a topic area, and a two to three sentence annotation describing the resource and its instructional value. The closing rationale clearly explains how the collection as a whole supports civic learning about AANHPI communities at the educator's grade level and content area.	Collection includes at least eight resources but covers fewer than three topic areas, or some entries are missing required elements. The closing rationale is present but vague or doesn't clearly connect to the educator's grade level and content area.	Fewer than eight resources are included, and/or multiple entries are missing required elements. The closing rationale is either absent or fails to address how the collection supports civic learning about AANHPI communities.
Artifact 2: AANHPI Civic History Template	Template includes questions across all four categories: Key Concepts, Evidence-Based, Critical Analysis, and Application. Questions are clearly written and	Template includes questions across most categories, but one is missing or underdeveloped. Questions are mostly grade-appropriate. The Application section is present	Template is missing multiple categories, or questions are grade-inappropriate. Questions primarily ask for recall or restatement. The Application section is absent or doesn't

AANHPI

	grade-appropriate. The Application section connects historical AANHPI civic contributions to contemporary civic life or the candidate's own community context. An exemplar is included that demonstrates what proficient student work would contain.	but the connection to contemporary civic life or community context is vague or incomplete. An exemplar is included but may not fully illustrate proficient student work.	connect to contemporary civic life or community context. An exemplar is absent or doesn't reflect the template's intent.
Artifact 3: Student Samples - AANHPI Civic History Template	Three student samples are submitted, representing strong, developing, and emerging understanding. A written explanation for each sample addresses all three elements: why the sample was selected, what the student's responses reveal about their engagement with AANHPI civic history, and what instructional next steps the educator would take.	Three student samples are submitted. Written explanations are present, but address only one or two of the three required elements for some or all samples.	Fewer than three student samples are submitted. Written explanations are absent or don't address the required elements.

Part 3 Reflection

(400-500 words)

For tips on writing a strong reflection, review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Please don't include any information that could identify you to reviewers.

Answer all of the following questions:

1. What did completing this microcredential reveal about gaps in how AANHPI civic history is represented in your curriculum or instructional materials?
2. What did your students' responses to the Civic History Template reveal about their prior knowledge of AANHPI contributions to American civic life, and what would you do differently in your instruction as a result?
3. What did you discover through building the curated resource collection that you didn't know before?
4. How has this microcredential changed how you approach teaching civic participation, especially the role of systems, power, and solidarity in historical change?

Passing:

- The educator identifies at least one specific gap in how AANHPI civic history is represented in their curriculum and connects it to what they learned through this microcredential.
- The educator describes what student responses to the Civic History Template revealed and identifies a concrete instructional adjustment they would make.
- The educator reflects honestly on what the resource-collection process revealed about their prior knowledge of AANHPI civic history.
- The educator explains a specific change in how they think about or plan to teach civic participation and historical change.