

**1917**

### **ASIAN AMERICANS IN WWI**

[All-Japanese Company D](#), 1st Hawaiian Regiment of Infantry, is formed in Hawai'i to [serve in World War I](#). There were also [Chinese Americans](#) who served in WWI. About 500 Chinese served as logistic support for General Pershing when he chased after Pancho Villa in Mexico in 1916. These Chinese returned to the USA with Pershing (because Pancho Villa put a price their heads for helping General Pershing). General Pershing attempted to give them USA citizenship as a reward, but Congress denied that. General Pershing was able to procure Permanent Resident status for these Chinese soldiers at a later date.

Prior to and during WWI, the US Navy allowed Filipino enlistees to serve under a range of military occupational ratings such as petty officer, band master, musician, coxswains' mate, seaman, machinist, fireman, water tender, commissary steward, officer's steward, and mess attendant.

[Testifying in Congress](#) on April 11, 1930, on a bill sponsored by Rep. Richard Welch (Calif.) that would exclude Filipinos from entering the U.S., Brig. General F. Lee J. Parker, chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, reminded the members of the House Committee on Immigration that more than 25,000 Filipinos had served in the U.S. armed forces in World War I, giving evidence of their wholehearted loyalty.

After WWI, the United States Navy issued new rulings restricting Filipinos, even those with college education, to the rating of officer stewards and mess attendant. These military occupational discrimination practices were stopped in the 1970's when there was a senatorial investigation of the use of stewards in the military due to pressure from the civil rights movement.

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### **ASIAN SERVICEMEN CAN BE NATURALIZED CITIZENS**

[Servicemen of Asian ancestry](#) who had [served in World War I](#) received the right of naturalization.