



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

May 20, 2020

U.S. District Court Celebrates Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

The court celebrates Asian Pacific American Heritage and recognizes the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to the law and legal profession.

In celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage month, U.S. District Judge Edmond E. Chang offers a [fourteen-minute video presentation](#) highlighting the role of William Marutani, in the 1967 landmark Supreme Court case, Loving v. Virginia. Marutani, a Japanese-American civil rights attorney, represented the Japanese American Citizens League, which filed an amicus curiae brief in the Loving case.

[Judge Chang's remarks](#) depict Mr. Marutani's background, including his confinement at the Tule Lake Incarceration, one of several sites where Japanese-Americans were incarcerated during World War II. Using audio excerpts from oral arguments made before the Supreme Court, Judge Chang presents Marutani's novel argument, which challenged the concept of race as a factor in government policy. The Court's ruling in the Loving case struck down laws banning interracial marriage as violations of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

William Marutani earned his law degree from the University of Chicago in 1953 and volunteered in the South as a civil rights lawyer throughout the 1960s. In 1975, Marutani was appointed to the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, becoming the first Asian-American judge in Pennsylvania.

In 1990, Congress passed Public Law 101-283, which expanded Asian Pacific American Heritage Week to a month. Judge Chang is the first Asian Pacific American to be nominated to sit as an Article III judge within the 7th Circuit.