



CALIFORNIA COMMISSION
ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC
ISLANDER AMERICAN AFFAIRS

2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Strengthening and
Advocating for
Asian American
Native Hawai'ian/
Pacific Islander
Communities



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**GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER, MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE,
AND THE PEOPLE OF THE GREAT STATE OF CALIFORNIA:**



IT HAS BEEN A GREAT HONOR to serve as chair of the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs in 2010. This has been a year of extraordinary growth for the commission, both in depth and breadth. The commissioners addressed an array of important issues and moved forward in building our organizational capacity to keep pace with our growing presence.

The commission would not be in existence without former Assembly member George Nakano, who authored Assembly Bill 116, the legislation that created our commission in 2002. His foresight enabled API issues to be addressed on a statewide policy level today.

The commission is forever indebted to our outgoing commissioners, Norman Hui, Diane Ujiye, and Charlie Woo, whose visionary leadership and unwavering commitment provided a strong foundation for the commission's future work. It is because of the extraordinary dedication and leadership of these inaugural members that the commission has deepening roots from which we will continue to serve, assist, and advocate on behalf of California's Asian Pacific Islander communities.

For the upcoming year, we welcome new members Tami Bui, Jonathan Lupule, and Courtni Pugh.

The commission was proud to be a convening partner with the California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus for the 7th Annual California Asian Pacific Islander Policy Summit—AAPI 3.0: Preparing For a New Era of Leadership, Advocacy, and Organizing. Also for their partnership, we thank Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality, Asian American Education Institute, and Asian and Pacific Islanders California Action Network. Together, we created a platform for community members and organizations to meet and continue to develop an agenda that impacts the policies that impact California.

We thank the California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus members for their continuing support of the commission and for their partnership in co-convening the hearing on Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander communities. The participation of Assembly member Mike Eng, Assembly member Warren Furutani, and mayor Jim Dear and mayor pro tempore Elito Santarina of the city of Carson was vital in bringing NHPI issues to the forefront.

We are proud of our ongoing collaboration with the Asian Pacific Islander Problem Gambling Task Force and our involvement with the diverse Southeast Asian communities in the Central Valley—both of which the commission had called out as priority issues upon our establishment in 2004.

Finally and importantly, we thank Andrew Medina for his support throughout the year and Elaine Joe for her tremendous assistance in showcasing the commission's work in this annual report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nitasha Sawhney". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Nitasha Sawhney
Chair

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THE MISSION of the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs is to elevate the political, economic, and social issues of Asians and Pacific Islanders by contributing to and strengthening how state government addresses the needs, issues, and concerns of the diverse and complex Asian and Pacific Islander American communities.

CHARGE

The charge of the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs is to:

- ▣ Advise the Governor and Legislature on how to respond most effectively to views, needs, and concerns of the state's Asian and Pacific Islander American communities.
- ▣ Assist the state in being an effective liaison and conducting outreach with Asian and Pacific Islander American communities through information dissemination about Asian and Pacific Islander American communities concerning public and private programs beneficial to their interests.
- ▣ Examine issues of access and cultural language sensitivity by state agencies, departments, and commissions.
- ▣ Provide assistance to policymakers and state agencies in identifying Asian and Pacific Islander American communities' needs and issues and develop appropriate responses and programs.
- ▣ Educate the public about hate crimes against Asian and Pacific Islander American communities.

HISTORY

Former Assembly member George Nakano (Torrance) authored AB 116 in 2002 to establish the commission, with members of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus co-authoring the bill. The concept for the commission originated from strong community support and advocacy. The commission's creation is an historic recognition of the accomplishments and needs of California's growing Asian American-Native Hawai'ian/Pacific Islander (AA-NH/PI) populations.

The commission consists of 13 members appointed by the Governor and the Legislature. We are a citizens board comprised of leaders from different vocations, backgrounds, and regions of the state. Individually and collectively, the commissioners give an impartial assessment of AA-NH/PIs' needs. We seek to make California's government more responsive and efficient by helping state agencies, departments, and commissions improve service delivery to our communities. We also disseminate information on state programs and services that are important to AA-NH/PIs.

The commission has been operating since January 2004. Although established by statute, we do not receive any public money. Donations and private resources fully fund our operations.



NITASHA SAWHNEY, CHAIR

Ms. Sawhney is a partner in the East Bay office of GCR, LLP, where she specializes in education, labor, and employment law. Her community activism includes serving as legal advisor to the

Sikh Coalition and Policy Task Force of South Asian Americans Leading Together. She speaks frequently on issues regarding harassment and discrimination prevention, hate crimes, and bullying.



KIM-YEN HUYNH, VICE CHAIR

Ms. Huynh is a leader in Orange County's business community, promoting collaboration among ethnic businesses and working tirelessly on issues related to community improvement. She serves

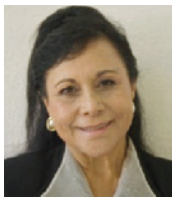
as chair of the Organizing Committee for the Asian American Business Women Leadership Conference and spearheaded 2010 U.S. Census efforts as chair of the Vietnamese Complete Count Committee.



DIANNE YAMASHIRO-OMI, SECRETARY

Ms. Yamashiro-Omi is program manager for Equity and Diversity for The California Endowment. She has long been dedicated to improving conditions for the

underserved and for API communities. Her career runs the breadth of staff, consultant, board member, advisor, and volunteer for numerous nonprofits and some of the largest philanthropies in the Bay Area.



CATHERINE 'OFA MANN, TREASURER

Founder and president of TOFA of Sacramento, Ms. 'Ofa Mann is the first Pacific Islander named to a California commission. Her leadership roles include APAPA,

Council of Asian Pacific Islanders Together for Advocacy and Leadership, and Sacramento City Unified School Council. She has been honored with numerous awards for her public service.



NORMAN H. HUI, D.D.S., ACTING COMMISSIONER

Dr. Hui is the founding chair of the commission. A strong proponent for community and civic involvement, he serves as treasurer of the Organization of

Chinese Americans and advisor to the Chinese American Political Association. He has been active for many years with the San Francisco Chinatown Lion's Club and Northeast Medical Services.



MIMI SONG

Ms. Song is CEO of Mimi Song Realty Group, a commercial real estate brokerage firm with offices in Southern California. For more than 20 years, she has been involved with a variety of

economic ventures, cultural organizations, philanthropic endeavors, and nonprofit groups, all devoted to bridging cultures and developing leadership in a global economy.



DIANE UJIYE, ACTING COMMISSIONER

Serving on the commission since its inception, Ms. Ujiye has spent 30 years addressing issues that affect API communities. Her voice and leadership have produced

innovative and significant advances throughout the state. She is director of Asian and Pacific Islanders California Action Network, which acts as a catalyst for public policies on issues related to API community development and services.



ALICE WONG

Ms. Wong was the first Asian American prosecutor assigned to the Homicide Unit of the Sacramento District Attorney's Office. She has dedicated much of her legal career to public service and

community advocacy. She is now in private practice with law partner Jerry Chong and also serves as president of CAPITAL Foundation, a nonprofit committed to API education and empowerment.



ANDREW WONG

Mr. Wong is a partner with Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP, focusing on commercial litigation and employment law. He is a governing board member

of the Pomona Unified School District and active with many community and civic organizations, including the Diamond Bar Community Foundation and Sports Educators of America.



BLONG XIONG

Mr. Xiong serves as a council member for the city of Fresno. He is an outspoken advocate on issues from education to civic participation and community economic development. He is the first Asian

American to hold a council position in Fresno and the first Hmong elected to a city council in the state of California. He also sits on the California Volunteers Commission, by appointment of the Governor.



(Photos, left to right) Chinese American Citizens Alliance supporting the U.S. Census in Oakland Chinatown; commissioners Norman Hui, Kim-Yen Huynh, Blong Xiong, Mimi Song, Nitasha Sawhney, Dianne Yamashiro-Omi, and Catherine 'Ofa Mann (not pictured: Diane Ujjiye, Alice Wong, Andrew Wong); presenters at the Joint Hearing on Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander Communities.

ORGANIZING API COMMUNITIES TO TAKE PART IN THE 2010 CENSUS

The energetic involvement of individual commissioners exemplified the importance of API inclusion in the 2010 U.S. Census. Commissioners spearheaded the effort in leadership positions on the Complete Count Committee, with Catherine 'Ofa Mann in Sacramento, Blong Xiong in Fresno, and Kim-Yen Huynh in Orange County. During the crucial spring and summer months, commissioners partnered with local groups to

Commissioner Kim-Yen Huynh (center) rallying neighbors in Orange County to complete the Census form.



be sure data were collected from as many API households as possible. Their work set the stage for CAPIAA's focus, with our statewide representation enabling us to cover all regions of California.

The breadth of activities included highly successful API media events in Fresno, Sacramento, San Diego, Southern California, and the Bay Area. We developed templates for talking points and press releases that were applicable throughout the state. In Fresno, community organizations and service

providers partnered with media outlets, with API leaders presenting in their home languages. Throughout the Central Valley, continuous messaging about the Census played on radio and television airways. For Orange County's Vietnamese population, the Rock to Count Concert and March to the Mailbox highlighted the importance of the Census. In Sacramento, APIs rallied their neighbors to fill out the forms. In the San Francisco Bay Area, commissioner Norman Hui, the East Bay Chapter of the Organization for Chinese



Commissioner 'Ofa Mann (back seat) leading the Census drive in the Sacramento region.

Americans, and Chinese American Political Association's Education Fund partnered once again with the U.S. Census. And commissioner Alice Wong assisted Senator Darrell Steinberg's office in developing the video "Census

Update From the Senate Majority Caucus," offering Web-based training to help state legislative offices learn about the Census and answer questions from constituents.

These combined activities laid the groundwork for when Census data are published and can be disaggregated. CAPIAA will lead the way in ensuring local emphasis of the data's analysis to be sure API communities are well represented.

JOINT HEARING WITH THE ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS ON NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS

Responding to the voices of Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) organizations and individuals at the API Summit, CAPIAA called a joint hearing with the API Legislative Caucus for the NHPI community to present their issues, concerns, and proposed solutions. A summary of the July 30 hearing in Carson is presented as a special report on page 13.



ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER PROBLEM GAMBLING TASK FORCE

Among the commission's first priorities in 2004 was convening the Asian Pacific Islander Problem Gambling Task Force (APIPGTF). Problem and pathological gambling is particularly rampant among API communities, contributing to domestic violence, substance abuse, alcoholism, and unemployment that can undermine families and communities.

Comprised of community leaders and CAPIAA commissioners, APIPGTF has remained steadfast since its establishment, advocating for essential resources that support culturally and linguistically competent prevention, intervention, and treatment services. The task force has been successful in its advocacy mission as well as in providing technical assistance to policy makers and public departments that address problem gambling in our communities.

Most recently, APIPGTF submitted recommendations to California's Office of Problem Gambling (OPG) on its current training and certification program as well as the pilot treatment program launched last year. The task force urged OPG to significantly strengthen its cultural and linguistic competence throughout all aspects of the training and pilot services program. An important element of this push is recommending that OPG not use the 2007 Prevalence Study as a basis for allocating resources for prevention and treatment programs in California. Nor should API data be cited during certification trainings because the methodology of the data collection failed to account for the prevalence of API problem gambling. Indeed, the 2007 Prevalence Study findings regarding API gambling are not consistent with what APIPGTF knows first-hand, empirically and with local data and anecdotes. For more information, please visit APIPGTF's Web site at www.apiproblemgambling.com.

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SECOND ANNUAL ASIAN AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Inspiring and empowering Asian American business women, the 2nd Annual Asian American Business Women Leadership Conference was held September 16 in Garden Grove. The theme, Global



Sylvia Gutierrez, with the U.S. Small Business Administration, inspiring at the conference.

Business Connections, tied together workshops that included an overview of the global business environment, discussion on the future of small businesses, and how to attract investors. With an international attendance, the 200 participants included a delegation from Cambodia headed by Her Excellency, Mrs. Mean Sam An, senator of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and more than 30 women business owners from Vietnam.

The Asian American Business Women Association presented the conference, which was cosponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration and supported by CAPIAA. Guy Fox, chair of the SCA Regional District Export, by appointment of U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke, offered a moving keynote speech during lunch. A fashion show featuring Vietnamese American designers added a sparkling highlight to the event.

The purpose of the conference was to connect women with a global vision for business development. The conference succeeded in raising awareness for creating a sustainable future and inspiring women to cultivate their leadership in the worldwide business community.

SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMMUNITY IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY

CAPIAA remains an advocate for the issues that are of concern for Southeast Asians striving to establish a foothold in California's Central Valley. At the March commission meeting in Fresno, community leaders spoke to the commissioners about the challenges they face, among them the language barriers encountered by local businesses in marketing their products, the need for micro loans, and the penalty imposed on family members for not paying workers comp when they make less than \$15,000 a year. Employment was identified as a pressing problem, exacerbated for a population that remains largely non-English speaking and lacking in work skills. The competition for jobs is compounded for APIs by limited access to employment services and vocational training.

Many groups within the larger Southeast Asian population—among them the Hmong—are in need of attention and resources. California demographics warrant a different lens, especially one that views the unique characteristics of specific APIs who have settled in the Central Valley. Advocacy must be ongoing in allocating resources that address their needs—from TANF and CalWORKS to CDBG. The commission is looking into bringing together key decision makers to educate the state-wide API community about this critical issue.

Since 2004 when CAPIAA identified the experience of the Central Valley's Southeast Asians as a priority, the commissioners have also noted the considerable progress made by API leaders for their constituents. APIs throughout the region are realizing successes—from the growing network of farmer's markets that increase the buying power of low income residents and subsidize healthy food purchases to the convening of roundtables throughout the state that address the health care, technical training, and education of the API workforce.

SUPPORTING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE LOS ANGELES PRESCHOOL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

CAPIAA passed a motion to endorse the principles of the Los Angeles Preschool Advocacy Initiative in a show of solidarity for increasing access to high quality preschool education in underserved communities. The initiative supports the important movement to address the childcare and development needs of children prior to their entry into elementary school, from birth to age five.

The priority principles include targeting children with the greatest need, promoting access and ensuring quality, supporting and growing the workforce while encouraging family engagement, ensuring successful school readiness, strengthening language development, and creating a comprehensive data base.

These principles will provide the underlying structure for building on the existing preschool, early care, and education system that serves Los Angeles' families.

2010 API POLICY SUMMIT AND GALA DINNER:

AAP I 3.0: PREPARING FOR A NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY, AND ORGANIZING



The California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus convened the 2010 California Asian Pacific Islander Policy Summit on May 3 and 4 in Sacramento. Presented in partnership with CAPIAA, Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality, Asian American Education Institute, and Asian and Pacific Islanders California Action Network, over 300 community leaders and activists from throughout California attended the annual event.

With CAPIAA chair Nitasha Sawhney serving as Day One's emcee, state lawmakers welcoming the attendees included Assembly members Warren Furutani, Van Tran, and Mary Hayashi and members of the California API Joint Legislative Caucus. Together, they set the goals and objectives for preparing



Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians at the summit with (center, left to right) Assembly member Warren Furutani, controller John Chiang, and Congress member Mike Honda. Commissioner Catherine 'Ofa Mann is seated 2nd from left.

Mark your calendar for the next California Asian Pacific Islander Policy Summit, May 2 & 3, 2011.

for a new era of leadership, advocacy, and organizing. The focus remained on bolstering APIs' political influence at the California State Capitol.

Following the four-track format begun at the 2009 summit, the first round of strategy and skills sessions concentrated on civil rights, education, health and human services, and housing and community development. In the second round of sessions, attendees participated in leadership and capacity building training on topics ranging from communication skills and public speaking to the global economy and environmental policy. Participants networked during the caucus meetings and attended Assembly budget hearings on two key safety-net programs: Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants and California Food Assistance Program.

The gala dinner followed a reception hosted by CAPIAA and the API Joint Legislative Caucus, kicking off May as Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Emcee Pamela Wu, director of marketing and public relations for the University of California Davis School of Law, welcomed Assembly member Van Tran, who gave the opening remarks. Assembly member Mary Hayashi introduced the Policy Impact honorees—California's Asian Pacific congressional members Judy Chu, Mike Honda, and Doris Matsui. Assembly member Warren Furutani presented the Community Impact award to the Grammy-nominated and Gold Record jazz fusion band Hiroshima. Board of Equalization chair Betty Yee introduced controller John Chiang who was recognized for his exceptional leadership and vision. Commissioner and APIs CAN director Diane Ujiiye closed the evening by acknowledging the many summit and gala sponsors. Participants remarked that this was one of the most uplifting and inspiring summit banquets they could remember.

Day Two began with key context and purpose remarks by Board of Equalization chair Betty Yee, senator Mark De Saulnier, and Assembly member Mary Hayashi. Highlighting the importance of health care, Megan Williams shared her poignant story as a mother whose daughter lost her life to a chronic disease. Day Two encapsulated the summit's fundamental purpose: to impact California public policy. Track teams visited more than 60 state officials advocating for bills and budget items that protect important quality of life provisions and move our communities to a higher level of engagement—with the Cal State Fullerton NAPAWF Boys singing a rap that fired up everyone to walk the halls of the State Capitol. The summit adjourned with a legislative team debriefing and closing remarks by Assembly member Ted Lieu.



At the summit (left to right): Peter Vang, Fresno County Dept. of Social Services; Congress member Mike Honda; commissioner Diane Ujiiye; and consultant Bill Wong.

Prior to the 2010 API Summit, each track committee planned and prepared to advance its respective legislative and budget agenda. There were three pre-summit conference calls and one webinar to brief as many summit participants as possible on the bills and budget items upon which each track had taken a position. The following are summaries of the legislative items within each track.

CIVIL RIGHTS

AB 1680 (Saldana–Hate Crimes Protection) Prohibits requiring a waiver of any of the legal rights under California hate crimes laws as a condition of entering into a contract. Any waiver of legal rights would have to be written and shown to be voluntarily and knowingly made and not be a result of coercion.

AB 1737 (Eng–Disaggregated API Data) Aligns critical state data so that they are broken out into the additional AA-NH/PI ethnic groups that have data reported in the U.S. Census, including Hmong, Tongan, Thai, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Malaysian, Indonesian, Taiwanese, and Fijian. The bill would apply to demographic data collected by specific state departments and boards.

AB 1775 (Furutani–Fred Korematsu Day) Designates April 19 of each year as Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution, reminding citizens of the significance of upholding the 5th and 14th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing a right to due process. Schools would be encouraged to observe the day to recognize the importance of preserving civil liberties.

AJR 15 (De Leon–Uniting American Families Act) Urges the U.S. Congress to pass and President Barack Obama to sign the Uniting American Families Act and support the removal of legal barriers to immigration by permanent same-sex partners. Current law does not allow gay and lesbian Americans and permanent residents to sponsor their foreign-born partners for legal residency.

AJR 37 (De Leon–Comprehensive Immigration Reform) Urges the U.S. Congress and President Barack Obama to take a comprehensive and workable approach to solving our nation’s broken immigration system by creating a path to citizenship for the millions of immigrants working and living in the U.S.

EDUCATION

AB 1737 (Eng–Disaggregated API Data) See description in Civil Rights.

AB 2095 (Brownley–English Learners and Students with Disabilities) Ensures that elements of the state’s standards, curriculum, assessment, and teacher training tools are strengthened to meet the needs of English learners and students with disabilities, striving to move beyond state and federal labels of failing to a role of support for closing the achievement gap.

SB 930 (Ducheny–Pupil Assessment) Establishes a fair, valid, reliable, and accurate accountability system for students who are English learners to provide accurate information regarding their academic performance. Schools and teachers instructing large numbers of English learners would not be unfairly penalized for the academic performance of their students due to the faulty assessment tool currently used.

SB 1116 (Huff–Heritage Schools) An urgency measure to establish “heritage schools” in statute as a category of schools that are not full-time day schools that offer education in a foreign language or on the culture and traditions of a country other than the U.S.



(Photo, left) NHPI health care advocates at the APIA Health Forum; (photo, right) San Francisco Chinatown, grappling with housing and development issues.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

AB 1737 (Eng–Disaggregated API Data) See description in Civil Rights.

SB 836 (Oropeza–Breast Cancer Screening) Restores the Every Woman Counts program which provides access to free breast cancer screening and diagnostic services to low income women.

SB 900 (Alquist–California Health Benefit Exchange) Establishes the California Health Insurance Exchange within the state Health and Human Services to make health coverage available and create the California Health Insurance Exchange Fund governed by a board appointed by the Legislature.

Budget Items

Prevent the elimination of critical assistance for immigrants: Oppose the Governor’s proposals to terminate life-saving programs for lawful immigrants, including the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP), and services provided to immigrants under the Medi-Cal and CalWORKs programs.

Preserve vital services for older adults: Reject proposals that threaten living assistance under SSI/SSP and CAPI and eliminate the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program.

Protect struggling families: Oppose the Governor’s plans to eliminate living assistance under CalWORKs, reduce Medi-Cal services while increasing out-of-pocket costs, and terminate the Healthy Families program.

Long-term solutions to help resolve California’s crisis: Support balanced approaches that reform our broken budget system and boost revenue to decrease the state’s rampant budget deficit and protect vulnerable Asians and Pacific Islanders from hunger and homelessness.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

AB 1405 (De Leon and Perez–California Global Warming Solutions Act) Establishes a Community Benefits Fund to be used solely in the most impacted and disadvantaged communities to accelerate greenhouse gas emission reduction or mitigate direct health impacts of climate change.

AB 337 (Ammiano–Socially Responsible Investment Act) Calls on CalPERS and CalSTRS to disclose and divest from any investments in companies engaged in predatory business practices that rely or result in the displacement of residents in affordable housing.

SB 454 (Lowenthal–Preservation of Existing Affordable Housing) Deletes the sunset date on three sections of law requiring affordable housing owners to provide notice to tenants and public entities before converting rentals to market-rate and to give limited priority to preservation purchasers.

TRACK CHAIRS AND COMMITTEES**CIVIL RIGHTS**

Santosh Seeram-Santana, *Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality*
 Tawal Panyacosit, *API Equality*
 Christopher Punongbayan, *Asian Law Caucus*
 Sara Sadhwani, *Asian Pacific American Legal Center*

EDUCATION

Jade Agua, *USC Asian Pacific American Student Services*
 Jane Kim, *San Francisco Board of Education*
 Jay Chen, *Hacienda La Puente Unified School District*
 Jess Kyo, *San Francisco Board of Education and Chinatown CDC*
 Hyunjoo Lee, *NAKASEC*
 Viva Mogi, *Chibi Chan Preschool*
 Nitasha Sawhney, *California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs*

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Wendy Ho, *Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum*
 Hala Masri, *Asian Pacific American Legal Center*
 Jonathan "Tana" Lepule, *Union of Pan Asian Communities*
 Dong Suh, *Asian Health Services*
 Jonathan Tran, *Southeast Asia Resource Action Center*
 Alisi Tulua-Tata, *Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Alliance*

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Omar Calimbas, *Asian Law Caucus*
 Christopher Punongbayan, *Asian Law Caucus*
 Gen Fujioka, *National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development*
 Malcolm Yeung, *Chinatown Community Development Center*

SUMMIT AND GALA BANQUET SPONSORS

Southern California Edison, *principal funder of the summit and gala*

Comcast
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 The California Endowment
 UC Multi-Campus Research Program
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 Asian Pacific American Public Affairs Association
 Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum
 Asian Pacific Islanders California Action Network (APIsCAN)
 Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus Institute
 Assembly member Mike Eng, 49th District
 Chinese American Citizens Alliance
 Union of Pan Asian Communities
 The W Group-Strategic Public Affairs LLC



(Photos, left to right) At the joint hearing, Assembly member Mike Eng, Assembly member Warren Furutani, and commissioner Diane Ujiiye; Pacific Islander Health Careers Pipeline students being recognized during the education presentation; presenters Vanessa Tui'one, Tongan Community Service Center, and Tana Lepule, Empowering Pacific Islander Communities.

Summary of California Native Hawai'ian Pacific Islander Issues and Recommendations from the Joint Hearing of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus and the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs

[Extracted for the CAPIAA annual report from the summary written by Richard Calvin Chang, Esq.]

In May 2010, Southern California Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) organizations and individuals attended the NHPI Caucus meeting held during the 2010 API Policy Summit. CAPIAA commissioner Catherine 'Ofa Mann chaired the NHPI Caucus meeting. In the weeks that followed, NHPI Caucus attendees were notified that CAPIAA and the California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus were

interested in addressing the lack of attention they had given to Pacific Islander issues. CAPIAA proposed using its quarterly meeting on July 30, 2010, as an opportunity to invite California Pacific Islander community based organizations to present their issues and propose solutions.

The following is a summary of the issues and recommendations presented at the joint hearing by NHPI members from the community, education field, and students, along with the organizations Empowering Pacific Islander Communities, Guam Communications Network, Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander Alliance, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, Pacific Islander Health Partnership, Samoan National Nurses Association, Tongan American Youth Foundation, and Tongan Community Service Center. Organizers of the Joint Hearing are extremely grateful to the Pacific Islander community members and organizations who brought their presence, knowledge, and stories to make this event a success.

PRESENTERS

Jonathan "Tana" Lepule, *Empowering Pacific Islander Communities*
 Ka'ala Pang, *Pacific Islander Health Partnership*
 Alisi Tulua, *Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance*
 Leah Leilani Beck, *Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance*
 Vanessa Tui'one, *Tongan Community Service Center*
 Natasha Saelua, *Empowering Pacific Islander Communities*
 Vaka Faletau, *Tongan American Youth Foundation*
 Caroline Sina Fifita, *Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance*
 Matthew Penesa, *Pacific Islander Education and Retention*
 Chris Maumalanga, *Tongan American Youth Foundation*
 Donny Fa'aliliu, *Tongan American Youth Foundation*
 Dorothy Vaivao, *Samoan National Nurses Association*
 Alek Sripipatana, *Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander Alliance and Community Research in Cancer and UCLA Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Equity, UCLA Division of Cancer Prevention & Control Research, School of Public Health and Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center*
 Peter Camacho, *Guam Communications Network, Asian and Pacific Islanders California Action Network*
 Shawn Sourgoose, *Guam Communications Network, Asian and Pacific Islanders California Action Network*



(Photo, left) Commissioners Kim-Yen Huynh, Nitasha Sawhney, and Dianne Yamashiro-Omi; (photo, right) commissioner Alice Wong and Jim Dear, mayor of Carson.

HEALTH

The few health related studies that have disaggregated Pacific Islander data revealed that Pacific Islanders suffer from disproportionately high rates of uninsurance and chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cancer, and heart disease. Recommendations from the joint hearing include the following:

Data disaggregation must be *mandated* and *enforced* at the state and federal levels for all medical institutions receiving state and federal funds. This issue must be pressed in spite of and because of California’s budget crisis since it would allow organizations to apply for and justify funding to benefit underrepresented populations that suffer the most during economic downturns.

Culturally and linguistically competent health care providers and patient navigators must be made available for NHPs, particularly for seniors, to help gain patients’ trust and thus lead to more accurate and earlier diagnoses of serious health conditions.

Senior health services require cultural and linguistic competency and should include programs that prevent isolation and provide transportation, medical supervision, and health education. Also needed are programs promoting early detection and prevention of cognitive changes and dementia through social activities and active engagement such as “hulacise,” ukelele classes, and traditional arts and crafts.

Funding for early cancer screening efforts such as the Every Woman Counts program remains essential given the disproportionately high cancer rates and uninsurance rates for NHPs.

Regularly maintain a statewide directory that identifies health clinics that can assist in health education programs. This would allow NHP community organizations to leverage their cultural expertise so that health clinics’ education programs can be adapted and, more importantly, utilized by NHPs.

Research led by the community and accountable to the community should be promoted, whether it is done in equal partnerships with academic institutions or with individual NHP researchers.

Increase awareness of NHPs with physical and mental disabilities for whom difficulties underscore all areas of life. Challenges are exacerbated for NHPs because the lack of cultural and linguistic competency in the health field can lead to misunderstandings, misdiagnoses, and discontinued treatment efforts.

YOUTH VIOLENCE

Many NHP youth come from low income families and are susceptible to gang violence through membership or simply living in areas vulnerable to gang activity. Youth violence incidents require community involvement in order to be resolved. Recommendations from the joint hearing include the following:

Promote high school level after-school programs supervised by NHPs to whom NHP youth can relate. Promotion is key because NHP community members may not be aware of currently available after-school and youth violence programs that leave youth fewer opportunities for gangs to influence their choices.

Involve faith based community leaders in gang interventions and after-school program planning. Many faith based NHP leaders are respected figures of authority with NHP families and youth yet are underutilized by law enforcement, social workers, and after-school program coordinators as a possible means of preventing and defusing volatile situations.



Presenters at the joint hearing (left to right): Alek Sripipatana, Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander Alliance; Dorothy Vaivao, Samoan National Nurses Association; Jane Ka'ala Pang, API Health Partnership; Tongan American Youth Foundation presenters Chris Maumalanga, Donny Fa'aliliu, and Vaka Faletau.

EDUCATION

NHPI youth share low high school graduation rates similar to those found in the Latino and East Asian American communities. Proportionally, even fewer NHPI attend four-year colleges and those who do have difficulty graduating due to a lack of support and preparation in high school. These barriers filter capable students from entering California's workforce and contribute to a severe lack of workforce diversity in professional careers. Educational barriers prevent the NHPI community from utilizing its potential to raise its economic status. Recommendations from the joint hearing include the following:

Promote, fund, and expand the Pacific Islander Health Careers Pipeline Project, the only program of its kind focused on NHPis in the U.S. It provides NHPI high school and college students the opportunity to work for skilled PhD researchers investigating NHPI health issues. The project should be expanded to pair NHPI students with professionals from other fields, such as engineering, business, and law.

Early childhood education programs must be developed to promote NHPI languages and cultures. Many ECE programs that do exist lack in quality, cost too much, or are too far removed from many NHPI communities. Improvement strategies include developing policies to recruit and retain NHPI ECE educators.

Develop collaborations between schools and community based organizations that have expertise in addressing cultural and social issues that affect academic performance.

Promote NHPI representation on governing educational bodies to enable the NHPI community to promote greater presence through ethnic studies courses.

Support a state resolution designating Pacific Islander Day to be used as a vehicle by schools to spread awareness and educate students about NHPI culture and communities.

Promote parental involvement programs to provide NHPI parents with the tools to help create an informed and supportive learning environment for their children and invest parents in decisions made at school board and PTA meetings. This may require assistance from NHPI organizations with expertise in addressing language and cultural barriers.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

NHPis must become more involved in the public policy decision making bodies that affect their lives. Recommendations from the joint hearing include the following:

Increase efforts to register NHPI voters and lower language barriers by creating NHPI language voter registration materials. California offers no voter registration information in NHPI languages, causing significant barriers, particularly for elders whose English language proficiency is limited.

Create a political action committee to help elect NHPis to local offices, school boards, and other governing bodies.

Promote civic engagement education workshops, including trainings in advocacy, making productive legislative visits, and community trips to Sacramento and local officials' offices.

**California Commission on Asian and
Pacific Islander American Affairs**

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