



California Commission on Asian & Pacific Islander American Affairs



FY 2022-2023

ANNUAL REPORT

PUBLISHED MAY 2024

Message from

COMMISSION CHAIR JASON PAGUIO



Dear Governor Newsom, Members of the Legislature, & the People of the Great State of California:

It is our pleasure to welcome you to our collaborative efforts as we continue to create positive change across California. Over the past year, our commitment to expanding access to higher education, fostering economic equity for small businesses within the Asian & Pacific Islander American (APIA) community, and promoting health equity has grown stronger than ever.

In 2023, we hosted several listening sessions that allowed us to engage deeply with community-based organizations. These sessions have been instrumental in broadening our impact and understanding the diverse needs of our communities. We have listened, learned, and acted on the valuable insights shared by our partners, ensuring that our policies and initiatives are community-driven.

We would also like to express our deepest gratitude to our previous commissioners, executive director, and staff. Their dedication, vision, and hard work have laid a strong foundation for our continued success and positively impacted countless lives across California. We thank them for their invaluable service and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

In 2023, I led the search for our new executive director with the former Chair and in December, we welcomed Khydeeja Alam on board. Our work continues to be guided by the voices of the diverse APIA communities we serve.

Looking ahead, we remain dedicated to our goals this year:

- **Expanding Access to Higher Education:** Create more opportunities for students from underrepresented APIA communities to access and pursue higher education.
- **Health Equity:** Advocate for and implement initiatives that address health disparities, ensuring all Californians have access to quality healthcare and wellness resources.
- **Economic Development & Workforce:** Drive economic growth and sustainability, ensuring small businesses thrive and contribute to the broader economy.

We will continue to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaboration to inform our advocacy efforts with the California State Legislature and the Administration. We thank you for your ongoing support and partnership and we look forward to another year of impactful work and shared success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Paguio". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Jason Paguio

Message from

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KHYDEEJA ALAM



Dear Governor Newsom, Senate President pro Tempore McGuire,
& Assembly Speaker Rivas:

As we reflect on the journey of the past year, I am pleased to present to you our Annual Report for 2023. It has been a year of transition and new beginnings for our organization, marked by significant milestones and promising prospects.

The year 2023 was indeed a year of transition, where we witnessed the emergence of new leadership and the continuation of our mission guided by the vision of our predecessors. We stand on the shoulders of giants, individuals whose unwavering commitment and forward-thinking vision have propelled us to where we stand today.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to the previous leadership and staff for their dedication and hard work. It is their efforts that have positioned the commission in its current place, laying a solid foundation upon which we can build and grow.

Looking ahead, we are committed to strengthening the visibility and infrastructure of the commission, ensuring that we have the necessary resources and support to effectively serve our community. Our focus will be on building a strong foundation and fostering community power, empowering individuals to become agents of change within their communities. In line with our mission, we remain steadfast in our commitment to address hate and discrimination in all its forms. We will work tirelessly to fill the gaps within the Asian & Pacific Islander American (APIA) community, bringing people together and amplifying their voices to create a more inclusive society.

Furthermore, we will concentrate our efforts on key issue areas such as economic equity, higher education, health equity, and advocating for policies and initiatives that uplift and empower our community. We must represent the diverse interests and concerns of our community, ensuring that they are heard and addressed at every level.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all our commissioners, supporters, and partners for their continued dedication and support. Together, we will continue to build upon the legacy of our past and create a brighter future for generations to come.

Sincerely,


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Khydeeja Alam". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Khydeeja Alam

**All references to APIA are inclusive of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities.*



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OUR MISSION

The **mission** of the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs (CAPIAA) 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 & Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities.

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 APIA communities,
- Assist the state in being an effective liaison and conducting outreach with APIA communities through information dissemination about APIA 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 APIA communities' needs and issues and develop appropriate responses and programs, and
- Educate the public about hate crimes against APIA communities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: LISTENING SESSIONS & COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

COMMUNITY VOICES

The Commission held eight listening sessions across the state in the following regions: Central Valley, San Francisco/East Bay, Santa Clara/San Jose, Sacramento Valley, Northern Counties (north of Sacramento), Inland Empire, Los Angeles/Orange County, and San Diego Area. These discussions addressed systemic barriers, including deeply rooted racism within healthcare, education, and economic and workforce institutions. The day-to-day challenges, exemplified by the five themes listed below, stem from this institutional racism. While community solutions were proposed to tackle specific issues faced by APIA communities, it is widely recognized that these daily challenges are symptoms of systemic and institutional racism.

ANTI-ASIAN HATE

PROBLEM

Common patterns include pervasive fear for safety, particularly among elders and women, verbal and physical harassment in public and workplaces, and a general fear of retaliation.

SOLUTION

Education and awareness emerge as key solutions, emphasizing the need for better understanding of what constitutes a hate incident and more outreach on available resources. Additional solutions stress culturally-competent services, mental health support, and non-carceral approaches.



ECONOMIC EQUITY

PROBLEMS

- **Housing:** There are severe housing instability and affordability issues in the APIA community. Language barriers exacerbate the lack of access to rent moratoriums and other housing protections, leading to higher eviction rates and homelessness. The rise in living costs and inflation are hurting working-class APIA families.
- **Workforce Development:** Economic recovery post-COVID-19 is uneven, with APIA communities, particularly those with limited English proficiency, relegated to low-paying, temporary jobs.
- **Small Business:** APIA-owned small businesses, especially in the cosmetology sector, are struggling due to high rents and the impacts of anti-Asian sentiment. Supportive measures such as grants for small businesses and policy interventions are necessary to sustain these businesses.

SOLUTIONS

- Address language barriers and increase affordable housing options through rent control, funding for community land trusts, and emergency housing assistance. Implement multilingual outreach to ensure accessibility of housing resources.
- Create targeted workforce development programs and job training opportunities for APIA communities, especially those with limited English proficiency. Invest in mentorship, internships, and permanent job opportunities to promote economic mobility.
- Support APIA-owned small businesses with financial assistance, safety programs, and policies to prevent discrimination. Enforce labor laws to protect workers from misclassification and underpayment.

EDUCATION

There were dozens of issues that came up in this area, however, we list the top three themes to address the foundational, immediate, and direct impact on the day-to-day educational experiences and safety of APIA students. Systemic changes such as increasing APIA representation on school boards are critical to ensuring staff have cultural humility and can provide culturally inclusive services to APIA students.

PROBLEMS

- **Lack of Implementation of Ethnic Studies:** Learning about the diverse APIA communities in the United States is crucial to fostering an inclusive school environment. Due to the lack of implementation of Ethnic Studies curriculums in the classrooms, it does not promote inclusivity and student engagement to foster discussions on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Lack of Cultural Humility & Culturally Responsive Mental Health Services:** Current interventions do not encompass culturally responsive services which negatively impacts APIA students' mental health and well-being.
- **Pervasiveness in Bullying and Hate Incidents in K-12 Schools:** This issue is reported across all regions which impact the safety, mental health, and learning environment for APIA students.

SOLUTIONS

- Ethnic studies curriculums are crucial for fostering a sense of identity and belonging among APIA students. Understanding their history and contributions can improve students' self-esteem and engagement, leading to better academic and social outcomes.
- There is an urgent call for cultural humility and linguistic competence to provide better mental health services for APIA students. Mental health is a key factor in students' overall well-being and academic success and breaking stigma is essential for supporting APIA students.
- Bullying comes in many forms and this is a critical area for intervention. While physical and verbal abuse are forms of commonly recognized forms of bullying in public schools, there is a need for more educational training on racial bullying. Incorporating Ethnic Studies curriculums in the classroom promote diversity and inclusion and foster safe spaces for students' learning environments.

HEALTH

Racial and class disparities are deeply entrenched in the U.S. healthcare system. Systemic racism affects resource distribution and care quality for marginalized communities, including APIA groups, who suffer from inadequate funding for language access and quality healthcare. The lack of disaggregated data also perpetuates these inequities, hindering efforts to address the specific needs of diverse APIA communities. Economic disparities worsen the situation, as underfunded community organizations and culturally specific health clinics struggle to meet growing demands. This inadequate funding highlights the intersection of race and class in health inequities, underscoring the need for comprehensive health justice and policy reform. Structural barriers must be dismantled and reimaged to achieve equity in healthcare.

PROBLEMS

- **Lack of Cultural Humility & Linguistic Competence:** Our current healthcare system is not fully equipped to meet the diverse needs of the APIA communities. This results in communities spending excessive time explaining cultural nuances, which detracts from the quality of care they receive. While some community-based organizations (CBOs) and culturally-specific health clinics assist with addressing some of these healthcare gaps, it is not enough nor is it sustainable.
- **Insufficient Mental Health Resources:** There are shortages of mental health providers and culturally competent services. APIA communities face intergenerational trauma from incarceration, deportation, and gender-based violence, which necessitates transformative and culturally sensitive mental health interventions.

SOLUTIONS

- There is a need for increased investment in services that have cultural humility and are linguistically competent. This includes the translation of health information, better bedside manners, elder care outreach, education, and general healthcare. In order to create more equitable healthcare systems, we need cultural competency to be built into our health systems and as well as investment in traditional wellness care.
- There is a growing demand to utilize traditional modalities such as healing practitioners and transformative healing practices that move away from policing. There is a need for more education, destigmatization, and a range of access to mental health care, especially for young people.

IMMIGRATION

The challenges faced by APIA communities in the immigration system are deeply intertwined with issues of race and class. Systemic racism and economic inequalities limit access to necessary resources and support, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage. By increasing funding for CBOs and expanding on current limitations of CBOs, advocating for policy reforms, and enhancing support for vulnerable populations, we can begin to address these systemic issues.

PROBLEMS

- **Lack of Access to Safety Net Programs and Public Assistance:** APIA immigrant and refugee communities often face significant barriers to accessing safety net programs and public assistance, primarily due to language difficulties and lack of resources.
- **Stopping Deportation and Providing Services for the Re-entry Population:** Many APIA immigrant communities continue to suffer from ICE raids, detentions, and exclusion from essential resources for formerly incarcerated individuals.
- **Support for Domestic Violence (DV) Survivors:** DV survivors particularly those in APIA immigrant and refugee communities often face additional barriers, such as language difficulties and lack of awareness about available resources.

SOLUTIONS

- Increased funding and expanding current funding limitations for CBOs are crucial to providing essential services, including pathways to citizenship and legal assistance. Ensuring cultural competence in public assistance programs is critical to effectively meeting the unique needs of various immigrant groups. By addressing these issues, we can help immigrants and refugees navigate public assistance systems more effectively, enhancing their overall well-being.
- Advocacy for gubernatorial pardons and the repeal of harsh immigration laws are crucial steps in protecting these communities. Providing comprehensive support for individuals re-entering society after incarceration is essential to ensure their successful reintegration into society. Addressing these issues will help protect immigrant communities from unjust deportations and support those who have been incarcerated.
- Targeted education and awareness campaigns are critical to helping DV survivors navigate California's victims' compensation program and other support services across the state. Funding for DV survivor-centered organizations is essential to address the financial hardships that show up in relationships with domestic violence. Ensuring language and cultural support for DV survivors will help them access the resources they need to escape abusive situations and safely rebuild their lives.

COMMITTEE WORK SUMMARY: ECONOMIC EQUITY

Minority-owned small businesses are a cornerstone of California's economy, comprising approximately 46% of all businesses in the state. Asian-owned businesses make up the second largest minority-owned small business in California and about 30% of all Asian-owned businesses in the United States are in California. It's important to note the impact of California's minority-owned small businesses which contribute more than \$192.8 billion in economic output and support 2.5 million jobs annually.

The Economic Equity Committee was established in 2023 to connect APIA business owners and entrepreneurs with state and federal resources and promote sustainable economic equity ensuring that APIA business owners can advance its financial security, strengthen its impact, and contribute robustly to the state economy. While many Asian-owned businesses have contributed much to the state's economy, such as ethnic enclaves or cultural hubs, they still face unique challenges including racial discrimination and barriers to accessing capital and resources. While some Asian communities have achieved considerable economic success, others particularly Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees experience higher poverty rates than other Asian communities.

Chair Jason Paguio and Commissioner Theodore Kim serve as Co-Chairs and have worked on the following in the Committee's first year:

- Focus on APIA-owned small businesses
- Build partnerships across California
- Establish studies to look at the APIA workforce through its partners such as AAPI Data and regional chambers

LOOKING AHEAD

The Committee will continue our community engagement, conduct a deep dive in various regions throughout the state to get a full scope of understanding in the unique issues and opportunities for Asian-owned small businesses, and provide culturally responsive policy recommendations to create a more inclusive and equitable economic landscape where all minority-owned small businesses can succeed and contribute to the prosperity of their communities and the broader economy.



COMMITTEE WORK SUMMARY: HEALTH ACCESS

Our Health Access Committee leadership members participated in planning meetings with APIA health advocates from across the state in support of building a three-year statewide research and policy agenda to advance APIA health equity.

On January 25, 2023, health equity leaders from across California gathered in Oakland to discuss community needs, priorities, and opportunities to advance health equity for Asian & Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities. Our California Commission on APIA Affairs co-sponsored this historic event. Key areas of focus were elevated organically: data disaggregation, language access and mental health. Subcommittees were formed to begin to outline specific recommendations in these areas.

On October 11, 2023, a second convening took place in Los Angeles, CA, which our California Commission on APIA Affairs also co-sponsored. At this second convening, work was accomplished to review and prioritize recommendations in each area of focus.

Commissioner Janani Ramachandran stepped down as Co-Chair of the Health Access Committee in the summer and Commissioner Taunu'u Ve'e was appointed to serve as Co-Chair, alongside Commissioner Lance Toma who had been serving as Committee Chair since the formation of this committee.

After reviewing the results of the Listening Sessions conducted in 2022, we prioritized convening special Listening Sessions for the Pacific Islander (PI) communities across California, with plans to organize several convenings in 2024 in Southern and Northern California.

CALIFORNIA AA&NHPI HEALTH EQUITY COALITION

Out of the Commission's work created the California AA&NHPI Health Equity Coalition comprising several leading community-based organizations to address health inequities across the state in the APIA communities.

Planning Coalition Members:

- *Lance Toma: San Francisco Community Health Center & California Commission on Asian & Pacific Islander American Affairs
- Taunu'u Ve'e: Regional Pacific Islander Taskforce & California Commission on Asian & Pacific Islander American Affairs
- *Julia Liou & *Thu Quach: Asian Health Services
- *Mary Anne Foo: Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance
- *Doreena Wong, Eddie Hu, Andrew Menor: Asian Resources, Inc.
- Priscilla Huang: Center for Asian Americans in Action
- Iyanrick John: ChangeLab Solutions
- Arnab Mukherjea: Cal State East Bay and Asian American Research Center on Health
- Alisi Tulu: Asian American Futures

**Indicates Coalition Co-Leads for Language Access and Data Disaggregation and Mental Health Committees*

COMMITTEE WORK SUMMARY: HIGHER EDUCATION

The Commission in conjunction with 80+ community partners spearheaded the passing of the California APIA Student Achievement Program (AANHPI SAP) which includes ongoing investment of \$16 million distributed between the California Community Colleges and California State Universities to provide culturally responsive services to enhance student educational experiences and promote higher education success for low-income, underserved, and first-generation APIA students and other underrepresented students.

In July 2021, CAPIAA received a one-time appropriation of \$1.5 million to enhance its operational capacity. This funding supports CAPIAA's mandate to improve access to higher education for APIA communities across California and to oversee the implementation of the AANHPI SAP.

The Commission provides regular consultation to the CSU Chancellor's Office and the Foundation for California Community Colleges, our role is critical in ensuring the effective implementation and administration of the AANHPI SAP across these educational institutions.

The Commission coordinated a successful discussion among the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the California State University Office of the Chancellor, the Foundation of the California Community Colleges, and all community partners in both the CCC and CSU systems at the APAHE 2023 Conference, in Oakland, California, to discuss the implementation of the AANHPI SAP (CA Ed Code 79510-79511 and 89297-89297.1).

The AANHPI SAP Central Office would be housed in the California Community College Foundation. Anthony Amboy was hired as the first inaugural director of the CCC AANHPI SAP.

43 colleges have received \$150,657 for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

To be eligible for the AANHPI Student Achievement Program, a college must:

- Be eligible for the Asian American and Native Pacific Islander-Serving Institution program authorized under the federal Higher Education Act
- Have experience providing student support services to AANHPI students and other underserved students
- Have program staff that will coordinate with campus faculty and staff to effectively deliver support services to AANHPI students

We would like to give a special thanks to Dr. Cirian Villavicencio who served previously as the higher education committee chair and commission chair for his work in leading the Committee's work alongside Vice Chair Kirin Macapugay. We are grateful for his dedication and commitment to uplifting our diverse APIA communities, especially in higher education.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES & ADVOCACY

[AB 943 \(Kalra\)](#) [Signed into law, Chapter 459]

[AB 1354 \(Fong & Ting\)](#) [Signed into law, Chapter 140]

[AB 506 \(M. Fong & Weber\)](#) [Held in Senate Appropriations Committee]

[AB1540 \(Fong\)](#) [Signed into law, Chapter 584]

[SB 245 \(Hurtado & Rubio\)](#) [Hearing canceled at the request of the Author]

[AB 311 \(Santiago\)](#) [Hearing canceled at the request of the Author]

[AB 884 \(Low & Cervantes\)](#) [Referred to Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee]

[AB 1084 \(Nguyen\)](#) [Died in Assembly Appropriations Committee]

[AB 1306 \(Carillo\)](#) [Vetoed]

[SB 227 \(Durazo\)](#) [Hearing canceled at the request of the Author]

[SB 434 \(Min\)](#) [Signed into law, Chapter 396]



FINANCIAL REPORT

CAPIAA's total budget for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 was \$2.97 million.

Below is the breakdown of our expenses:

Personnel: \$430,321

Operating Expenditures & Equipment: \$51,579

Grants & Subventions: \$1,000,000

Total Expenditures: \$1,481,900

LOOKING AHEAD

- ◆ Strategic Plan
- ◆ Stop the Hate (STH) & Ethnic Media Grants Implementation & Evaluation
In Partnership with California Department of Social Services & California
State Library
- ◆ AANHPI Higher Education Funding Implementation
- ◆ Statewide Policy Summits
- ◆ Data Equity, Language and Health Access
- ◆ Meet the Community Where They Are: Listening Sessions
- ◆ Community Outreach/Voter Education and Engagement



COMMISSIONERS



Jason Paguio
Chair



Kirin Macapugay, MSW
Vice Chair



Lance Toma
Secretary



Rajan Gill, MA
Commissioner



Tahra Goraya,
MC/MPA
Commissioner



Theodore Kim, JD
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Helen Lee,
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Commissioner



Simon Pang
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Darshana Patel, PhD
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Janani Ramachandran,
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Jason S. Tam
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Taunu'u Ve'e
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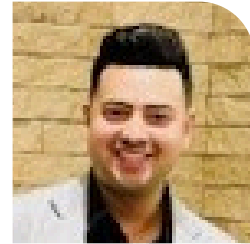
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