



**OREGON COMMISSION ON  
ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AFFAIRS**

**2011-2013 REPORT &  
2013 - 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN**



**SERVING THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN  
OREGON SINCE 1995**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>Letter from the Commission</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Asian American &amp; Pacific Islanders</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Commissioners</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Mission &amp; Duties</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Past Achievements</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Current Projects</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Future Plans</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Future Goal One – Education on Issues Impacting API’s</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Future Goal Two: Civic Engagement – Creating a Pipeline of Civic Leaders from the Asian Community</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Community Events</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Community Connections</b>	<b>21</b>

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## LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

### Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

"Advocating Equality and Diversity"

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#### Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

##### Chair:

Stephen Ying

##### Vice Chair:

Mari Watanabe

##### Commissioners:

Jennifer Kleskie

Ping Khaw-

Sutherland

Mahendra Shah

Joseph Santos-

Lyons

Michelle Vlach-Ing

##### Legislative Liaison:

Rep. Gene

Whisnant

Sen. Jackie

Dingfelder

##### Staff:

Lucy Baker,

Administrator

Nancy Kramer,

Executive Asst.

Dear Governor Kitzhaber, Legislators, and friends of OCAPIA,

The Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA) is pleased to share their summary report for the 2011-2013 biennium as well as its strategic goals for the 2013-2015 biennium. The Commission changed its name in early 2011 from the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs (OCAAA) to the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA). It reflects the importance of Pacific Islanders in the broader Asian community and highlights their representation by the Commission.

This biennium, growing community partnerships were the foundation of OACPIA's work. We strengthened our long standing partnership with the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) around civic engagement and advocacy during the 2011-13 biennium with 2 successful Legislative Days, joint celebration of Asian Heritage Month in the Capitol, voter registration efforts, and issue forums. And we added a new strategic partner in the Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce (APACC) with 2 successful events: training in contracting and a networking event for diversity contracting which engaged 100+ API businesses and procurement staff. We will continue to serve as a resource to the Governor, state agencies and organizations to provide insight and perspective from the Asian and Pacific Islander community of Oregon.

OCAPIA said farewell to past Commission Chairs Carol Suzuki, who served the Commission for 10 years, Liani Reeves, and Simeon Mamaril. Their leadership established the Commission as a viable bridge between Oregon's Asian communities and state and local government. They laid the groundwork for our new, dedicated Commission leaders, Commissioners and Legislators to build upon.

Throughout this report, we highlight the Commission's work that impacted our community this past biennium, and included two of its strategic goals that we will focus on in this biennium. With the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) population growing at the fastest rate in the US and second highest in Oregon, OCAPIA's strategic goals are education and civic engagement of the API community. Our work in education corresponds with the Governor's education goals for all Oregonians, for all students to graduate from high school by 2025. In civic engagement, we are focusing on all levels of civic opportunities for APIs, from serving on boards and commissions, to running for office, and voting.

The Commission is looking forward to continuing its contributions to our great state in 2013-2015.

Sincerely,

Stephen Ying  
Chair

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## THE OREGON COMMISSION ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AFFAIRS

### Highlights of the 2011-13 Biennium

- Partnering with APANO and other community organizations on legislative outreach efforts including annual Asian Pacific American Legislative Day at the Capitol;
- Working on non-partisan voter education initiatives regarding health, education, and civic engagement;
- Hosting essential dialogue with state leadership in education on challenges to Asian Pacific Islander communities and ways in which we can better meet the needs of all of Oregon's communities;
- Partnering with the Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce (APACC) and the Governor's Office to provide a training for 40 small business owners in the API community on increasing contracting and business;
- Co-Sponsoring with APACC a networking event for 80 businesses and partners interested in diversity contracts;
- Jointly convening with the Advocacy Commissions a policy and legislative meeting for State Agency leaders and OAC Legislators to discuss legislation of interest to communities of color and women in the 2013 legislature;
- Pursuing a Tax credit for the Advocacy Commissions.

### HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION

The Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA) grew out of the vision Mr. Charles Shi, retired teacher from Portland Public Schools, and Mr. Paul K. Duong, then Refugee and Immigrant Coordinator for the City of Portland. They took their idea to Senator John Lim who drafted the bill for the establishment of the Commission. Many representatives from the diverse APA communities of Oregon traveled to Salem to encourage the Legislature and the Governor to create a commission to advocate for the APA community. In 1995, Senate Bill 342 was passed by the Legislature and signed by then Governor Kitzhaber, creating the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs.

The Commission initially had an economic development focus, but was later amended to bring it in line with the other state advocacy commissions (Commissions on Black Affairs, Hispanic Affairs and Women). In 2003, all four advocacy commissions were defunded and their offices closed. The OCAA Commissioners continued to serve under the leadership of its then Chair Ms. Carol Suzuki, who continued to convene the Commission and lead its work from her home office. In 2006, the Legislature created the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office and brought the four advocacy commissions under one office with 2 shared staff. The Commission changed its name in early 2011 from the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs (OCAA) to the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA) to better reflect the important contribution of Pacific Islanders in the broader community.

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## THE PRESENT



Today, the overall mission of the OCAPIA is to work for enhanced access to economic, social, legal and civic opportunities for APAs within Oregon. The Commission also helps facilitate communication between state agencies and Oregon’s APA communities by providing a direct link to government. This function not only benefits APA communities, but it also provides the State with valuable information on how best to provide services to all its diverse residents. The Commission’s placement within government with direct access to and accountability with policy makers is what makes the Commission distinct from community nonprofit organizations and exactly the reason why the community advocated for the creation of such an entity.

## THE OREGON ADVOCACY COMMISSIONS OFFICE

The Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office (OACO) was created in 2006 to support the work of the Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic and Women's Affairs which serve as the liaisons between the minority communities and government. The OACO is responsible for administrative support to the Commissions as they strive for implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal and political equality for minorities in Oregon. The OACO works with the Commissions to continually assess the issues and needs confronting minorities across Oregon and to identify programs, projects and activities which the OACO will undertake regarding those issues.

### Lucy Baker | Administrator



Lucy Baker joined the OACO as its Administrator in 2010. She has served as the Executive Director of the Oregon Business Leadership Network, a Portland based non-profit and named partner in the Oregon Business Plan in 2007 focused on growing cultures of inclusion within business. Lucy also has served as the Interim Director of the Planning and Special Projects Unit and Sr. Policy Analyst for Multnomah County Aging and Disability Services. Her career and passion has focused on building networks and partnerships that grow equity for underrepresented populations.

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**Nancy Kramer | Executive Assistant**



Nancy Kramer, Executive Assistant, has a history of working in nonprofits, in Portland and also in her hometown of New York City. She loves supporting all four Oregon Advocacy Commissions in the important work they do for their communities. In May 2012 Nancy coordinated the first Asian Pacific American Heritage Month proclamation signing hosted by the Governor’s Office and OCAPIA, along with their community partner APANO. The event included dance performances and poetry and is one of the high points of her time with the Commissions to date.

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**ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS**

**WHO ARE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS**

One of the challenges facing the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs is the great diversity of the APA community.

"Asian Pacific American" is a general term for a person of Asian ancestry who is born in or immigrated to the United States. While many people traditionally think of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) as those with origins from Far East Asia (Japan, China and Korea) or Southeast Asia (including Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam), APAs actually comprise a population with origins over a much larger geographic territory. And in fact, those of Asian origin comprise the largest population group on the face of the earth.

In addition to those coming from the Far East and Southeast Asia, APAs also include those who originate from South Asia (the Indian subcontinent), Central Asia (including the former Soviet Union), the Middle East and the Pacific Islands.

Because APAs have vast geographic origins, the key sociodemographic feature of the APA community is its great diversity. It is estimated that the entire APA population comprises over thirty-two different ethnic groups and speaks almost five hundred distinct languages and dialects.

The APA community also involves numerous stages of immigration and emigration, ranging from some communities with many generations of American born citizens to other communities of recent immigrants or refugees. This results in large disparities between APA populations in terms of social, economic and educational achievement. The Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs advocates on behalf of this diverse Asian Pacific American community.



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## THE FASTEST GROWING POPULATION

### THE FUTURE

The 2000 census showed Asian Pacific Americans to be the fastest-growing racial group in the United States, increasing from 3.8 million in 1980 to 6.9 million in 1990 to 10.2 million in 2000. While APAs comprise 4.2 percent of the population nationwide and 3.9 percent of the population in Oregon, they are projected to reach 11 percent (51.6 million) by 2070. This population growth exceeds any other race group in the United States.

According to Census 2010, Oregon's Asian population spiked in the past 10 years, growing by 44,000. Much of that population is concentrated in Washington County, particularly in Beaverton. Oregon's green economy and technologies such as solar power are drawing Chinese and Korean immigrants. Oregon's high-tech industry has brought Indian immigrants, and the many Vietnamese who settled here attracted others.

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## COMMISSIONERS



Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (from left to right): Vice Chair Mari Watanabe, Mahendra Shah, Ping Khaw-Sutherland, Joseph Santos-Lyons, Jennifer Kleskie (not pictured: Chair Stephen Ying, Commissioner Michelle Vlach-Ing, Senator Jackie Dingfelder, Representative Gene Whisnant)



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The OCAPIA is comprised of eleven members. Nine are appointed by the Governor, one by the Senate President and one by the Speaker of the House.

The Commission strives to recruit commissioners that represent diverse ethnic, geographic and professional backgrounds. The Commission currently has representatives from the Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Malaysian, Cambodian, Filipino and Afghani communities. Commissioners bring different immigrant and refugee backgrounds as well as represent professional backgrounds, from both public and private sectors, and from the legal, medical, educational, business and government fields. Individual commissioners also have ties to a variety of community-based organizations.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Stephen Ying - Portland (Commission Chair)**



Stephen Ying is a reputable activist. His dedication and involvement with the community has brought forth positive results for the Portland community. Stephen stands for change and progress. He invests and provides his time freely for the betterment of the community.

The service that Stephen has been involved in crosses many platforms that include being on several Boards of Directors, Associations, and Committees including:

- Co-Chair Oregon Civil Right Council
- VP of Oregon Fujian Sister State
- New Portlander Council of City of Portland
- Board of Directors of Portland Kaohsiung Sister City
- Board of Directors of Portland Shuzhou Sister City
- Board of Directors of the Portland Chinese Lan Su Gardens
- Old Town China Town Neighborhood Association
- Old Town China Town Business Association
- Old Town China Town Vision Committee
- Advisory Service Coordination with the Central Portland Police precinct
- Advisory Committee for the Urban Renewal River District of PDC
- Advisor of Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce

In addition to these boards and committees, Stephen served as the President/ Vice President of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association from 2004 to present. Furthermore, he has also served as the President of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance and the Bing Kong Association.

The core of Stephen’s service and activism focuses on promoting and preserving Chinese heritage, sponsoring youth service and scholarships, engaging in charitable activities, advocating for small

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businesses, providing social service for the community, and most importantly, acting as a liaison for the Chinese community.

Recognized and entrusted by many community organizations as well as civic and governmental agencies, Stephen brings open communication, responsiveness and participation throughout our community for a better and more enjoyable Portland.

Honorable awards and recognitions:

- Flying Horse award, 2009, Northwest China Council
- Spirit of Portland award, 2008, Mayor of Portland
- Sir Knight, 2006, 2012 Royal Rosarian

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**Mari Watanabe - Portland (Commission Vice-Chair)**



Mari Watanabe has held two half-time employment positions since April 2012. She the Program Director of Leadership Portland with the Portland Business Alliance where she oversees all aspects of the 10 month leadership program designed to develop civic leaders. Her other position is as the Executive Director of Partners in Diversity, a non-profit whose mission is to help organizations recruit, support, and retain professionals of color in Oregon and SW Washington.

Prior to her positions with the Portland Business Alliance and with Partners in Diversity, Mari served as executive director for the Oregon Nikkei Endowment, a Japanese American history and culture non-profit organization

since 2008.

Mari worked in apparel manufacturing with garment companies such as Union Bay Sportswear, Nordstrom, and Nike before leaving to pursue work in the non-profit arena.

Current and past board/community service includes U.S.-Japan Council Membership Committee, National Veterans Network Committee, Business for Arts and Culture Diversity Advisory Committee, Portland Taiko Board, Executive Development Institute (EDI) Board, Friends of Minidoka Board, Japanese Ancestral Society Board, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon Advisory Board, and the Old Town Chinatown Business Association Board.

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**Ping Khaw-Sutherland - Portland**



Ping Khaw-Sutherland has been active in AAPI communities in Oregon as a leader, a participant and advocate—and often as a professional artist. For over ten years, she was involved with award winning radio projects as a marketing director. She also had the privilege to work closely with local community serving the Asian, Hispanic and European populations while providing grants development, budgeting, fiscal oversight and management to ensure funding continues for various community projects.

In 2010, her position as the U.S. Census 2010 Oregon Partnership team lead, Media Specialist and cross-cultural trainer carried an emphasis on community outreach, planning, organizing and directing media activities and developing partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, community and faith based organizations and other grassroots entities. Currently, she is the president for the Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon and SW Washington.

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**Jennifer Kleskie - Portland**



Filipina-American, Jennifer Kleskie has spent much time deepening her understanding of people and ways to address the complex social and emotional conflicts that exist on the planet. These musings began before the age of 5 years old, as she questioned the whereabouts of her biological parents, struggled to integrate her mixed-race identity into a broader understanding of “racial” diversity and perplexed over finding an appropriate response to “What are you?”

These questions led her to train in Process Work, a depth-oriented practice of listening to both the linear and the non-linear, the dreams and passions of a group or organization, individual or family, as strongly as the everyday viewpoints formed by living in a socially dissected world. Jennifer maintains a private practice in Portland, Oregon, where she consults and counsels, relating diversity awareness to abuses of power, working with experiences of poverty and marginalization, and in dealing with interpersonal and trans-generational conflicts. As a certified Process Worker and conflict facilitator she brings a larger awareness to the dynamics that co-create conflict and adversary.

Jennifer holds a Masters in Conflict Facilitation and Organizational Change, a Diploma in Process Work and is a member of the International Association of Process-Oriented Psychology. She works and trained in international facilitation teams and is proud to serve as a commissioner for OCAPIA.

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**Michelle Vlach-Ing - Salem**



Michelle Vlach-Ing is an attorney in private practice in Salem, Oregon. She obtained her bachelor degree at the University of Hawaii in 1998 and her Juris Doctorate from Willamette University College of Law in 2001.

Michelle’s practice consists of acquisitions of trademark and copyright registrations and litigation in the state and federal courts, as well as international arbitration. She has tried and/or managed cases involving contract disputes, patent infringement litigation, trademark and trade dress infringements, copyright infringement, cybersquatting, antitrust, business, employment law and child custody.

Her interests include cooking, hiking, camping, traveling and she enjoys these activities with her family.

Michelle served on several state and local bar committees. She is a member of SEDCOR (Strategic Economic Development Corporation) and the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce. She is serving the last year of her second term as an Elected Delegate to the Oregon State Bar House of Delegates. She recently accepted a position on the Board of Directors for the Salem Multicultural Institute and is on the Advisory Board for the Lawyers Campaign for Equal Justice.

She is admitted to practice before:

- The State of Oregon
- The United States District Court of Oregon
- The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals
- The Thirteenth Circuit Court of Appeals (Federal Circuit)
- The United State Supreme Court
- The United States Court of International Trade

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**Joseph Santos-Lyons - Portland**



Joseph Santos-Lyons is a Chinese-American adoptee, musician, minister and cultural organizer. Born in Portland and raised in Clackamas County, Joseph has worked for democracy, human rights and systemic change that address the root causes of inequities for 25 years in Oregon, Colorado, Massachusetts and the Philippines. Currently he serves as an Executive Director for the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, a community organization with over

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2,000 constituents that works to advance racial equity in public policy. He is also affiliate community minister with the First Unitarian Church of Portland. Previously he has served the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Unitarian Universalist Association and Coalition for a Livable Future.

He is passionate about his family and neighborhood, spending time outdoors with his partner and three school age children, and tending to a prolific plum tree. Joseph has been a performer in Portland Taiko, a multicultural trainer, and is particularly interested in the rising community of color electorate.

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**Mahendra Shah, CFA - Portland**



Mahendra is Director of Treasury at PacifiCorp, a multi-state electric utility based in Portland. Mahendra has been a resident of Oregon since 1980 and serves on the Board of non-profit entities:

1. Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon providing micro-small business advisory services.
2. Kalakendra Limited: producing Indian classical, traditional and folk art performances in the Portland area by artists from Indian subcontinent for over 25 years.
3. Adventist Health Foundation bringing high quality comprehensive health care, and
4. Treasurer: India Cultural Association of Portland.

Mahendra supports programs that (a) help self-motivated small business entrepreneurs and (b) improve cross-cultural understanding among people in Oregon communities.

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**LEGISLATIVE APPOINTEES**

**Senator Jackie Dingfelder- D - Portland, District 23**

Jackie Dingfelder serves as the State Senator from District 23, representing portions of Northeast and Southeast Portland and Maywood Park. When she is not in Salem, she works as the Executive Director for a non-profit organization, River Restoration Northwest.



Sen. Dingfelder is serving her twelfth year in the Oregon Legislature and chairs the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee. She is also a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Natural Resources Subcommittee of the Joint Ways and Means Committee.

Sen. Dingfelder has been a vocal advocate for stable school funding, affordable health care, and consumer protection. In addition to her legislative experience, Sen. Dingfelder has a long record of community involvement. Volunteering with such groups as the Hollywood Senior Center, SMART (Start Making A Reader Today), the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force, Planned Parenthood, and the Oregon League of Conservation Voters has allowed her to learn about the issues that are important to her community. The Senator has also attended the American Leadership Forum and is able to bring the knowledge she gained there to her legislative office.

Sen. Dingfelder is a PhD candidate at Portland State University, Hatfield School of Government. She also has a Master's Degree in Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and a Bachelor's Degree in Geography-Ecosystems Management from the University of California, Los Angeles. She lives in Northeast Portland with her husband Tom and enjoys hiking, bicycling, kayaking, gardening, and reading.

### **Gene Whisnant - R - Sunriver, District 53**



Gene Whisnant is serving his fifth term as State Representative for rural Deschutes County, House District 53. He was appointed first on September 5, 2003. For the 76th Legislative Session Gene will serve as a Co-Chair of the House General Government and Consumer Protection Committee. He will also serve on the House Judiciary Committee and the Joint Ways and Means Committee. Gene is a retired US Air Force Colonel. After completing a 27 year military career, he moved to Deschutes County and immediately became involved in the Deschutes County Republican Party. He was elected as the party Treasurer in 1997. In 2000 and 2002 he served as Chairman of the Deschutes County Party. Interested in his community's well being, Gene serves on the Deschutes County Commission on Children & Families since 1999. He presided as vice chair and chairman of the 15 member volunteer Board and currently participates as an ex-officio member.



**MISSION**

The Legislative Assembly declares that the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs shall work for the implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal and political equality for Asian Pacific Americans in this state and to maintain a continuing assessment of the issues and needs confronting Asian Pacific Americans.

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**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- I. Work for the enhancement of economic, social, legal and political opportunities for APAs within Oregon.
- II. Identify and examine the needs of APA residents.
- III. Assess all programs of state agencies operating for the benefit of APA residents and make recommendations to the appropriate agencies for the improvement of those programs.
- IV. Compile information relating to services available to APA residents, including but not limited to: education and training programs, work programs, dispute resolution programs, trade opportunities, housing programs, health programs, mental health programs including alcohol and drug services and welfare programs from local, state and federal sources and through private agencies.
- V. Develop and sponsor programs in cooperation with APA groups and organizations to inform APA residents of services available to them.
- VI. Submit to the Governor at the beginning of each biennium a report that describes the needs of APAs and that specifies the programs, projects and activities that the Commission will undertake regarding those needs.
- VII. Establish an Asian Affairs Network to facilitate the work of the Commission.

**CIVIL RIGHTS**

OCAPIA Commissioners met with leaders in the Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Cambodian, Filipino, Burmese, and Micronesian communities to raise awareness of the Commission as an advocate and resource. The Commission intervened in specific civil rights issues such as a Vietnamese family in Grants Pass that was dealing with hate crimes against their family to a Chinese woman who unjustly lost her home in Multnomah County.

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

During the last biennium, OCAPIA participated in Secretary of State Kate Brown’s new voter initiative. Working with the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), OCAPIA engaged in increasing voter registration within our Asian community. The creation of voters’ pamphlets in multiple Asian languages and phone banking to register new voters were highly successful activities.

**LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY**

To better describe the diversity of the community and to be more inclusive, the Commission submitted a bill to change the name of the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs to the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs in 2011. The Commission partnered with APANO to sponsor 2 legislative days at the Capitol during the 2011 and 2012 sessions. During those sessions, the Commissioners testified on key legislation on Cultural Competency in Health Care, Pay disparities, and other key areas that are part of the strategic priorities of the joint Advocacy Commissions. In preparation for legislative days, OCAPIA also partnered with APANO to provide community members with training and resources on the legislative process.

**OCAPIA Legislative Advocacy Priorities 2011 and 2012:**

**Health Equity:**

Disparities in access to effective health care is a strategic priority for the joint Advocacy Commissions. This includes the overrepresentation of communities of color in health issues including diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure, and the underrepresentation of these communities in health screening.

We let legislators know that requiring education in providing culturally competent care for physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals is essential in assuring that health care is delivered

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in effective and engaging ways for members of communities of color across Oregon. Requiring training on delivery of culturally competent care for the providers is a key strategy in supporting professional excellence while improving outcomes for these communities.

### **Jobs and Pay Disparities**

Addressing disparities in pay for equal work is a shared priority of the four Oregon Advocacy Commissions and is an underlying issue of much of our advocacy and policy work. While slow progress is being made, this issue continues to challenge women and people of color in the Oregon workplace regardless of education, experience or performance. Extending specific protections in the equal pay law to assure that wage discrimination is unlawful for all protected classes including race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, disability and age is imperative.

### **Intern Protections in the Workplace**

Providing the protections that we all expect in the workplace to the hard working interns serving in so many offices statewide is important. During internships students are exposed to every working environment and situation which can include predatory, discriminatory environments. We need to assure that they have rights and protections.

### **EDUCATION:**

To prepare for the work of the OCAPIA in 2011-13 in the area of education gaps, the Commission hosted a community meeting with the Oregon Department of Education on the achievement of Asian and Pacific Islander students in Oregon. See the Powerpoint presentation by ODE and the OCAPIA overview of discussion points here: [http://www.oregon.gov/OCAPIA/Pages/resources\\_information.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/OCAPIA/Pages/resources_information.aspx)

The OCAPIA has followed the disparity studies completed in Multnomah County for various ethnic and racial groups including the API community. While Asians are often called the “Model Minority” for their accomplishments in school, this does not take into account the struggles of the community in particular aspects of education. Overall, in the Asian and Pacific Islander community 20.5% have not completed high school compared to only 6.3% of the white community in Multnomah County in 2009 (American Community Survey.) Of the 50+ Asian groups attending school, a number of them are struggling with the lowest graduation rates in Oregon, which is hidden within the overall API graduation rate. The OCAPIA supports developing granular data that reveals disparity in education among API’s and then engaging the communities to help craft solutions to these issues. The Governor’s reform efforts with OEIB coupled with community engagement are supported and followed by the Commissions. Closing gaps are the subject of upcoming 2013 session testimony by the Commission in support of addressing access to English Language Learner programs in schools and other efforts addressing education disparities.

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**JOBS AND THE ECONOMY:**

**AAPI Small Business Conference “Increase Revenues for Your Business”**

In May, 2012, the APACC (Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce) and Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA) partnered for the highly successful **AAPI Small Business Conference “Increase Revenues for Your Business”** in Portland on May 17<sup>th</sup>. The Governor’s Director of Business Equity, Cheryl Myers, along with partners in the API community trained 40+ API business owners on ways to grow their success by contracting with government entities and larger corporations.

**Small business to business networking at Pittock Mansion**

In September, 2012, APACC and OCAPIA partnered again to host an evening of networking at the Pittock Mansion called “Meet Minority Chambers of Commerce and Commissions” 150+ individuals representing leaders in procurement and diversity for private business, and City, County and State departments and small business owners exchanged business information and connections at the event.

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**CURRENT PROJECTS**

**TAX CREDIT**

OCAPIA intends to approach the legislature to create an Oregon Tax credit for funds of up to \$50 annually per individual or \$100 annually per couple to the Advocacy Commissions. Although it is OCAPIA that is heading up this request, the funds gathered are intended to be used among all Advocacy Commissions to assist with funding the activities of each commission. Donations will go to assist all Oregon Advocacy Commissions unless the donor specifies the donation is intended for OCFW, OCAPIA, OCBA or OCHA.

The OACO was formed in 2005 to support the Commissions on Asian Affairs, Hispanic Affairs, & Black Affairs and the Commission for Women. Funding for the OACO and the individual commissions funds Commissioner travel reimbursement and stipends, along with 2 staff positions who support over 70 Commission-related meetings and events each biennium. In difficult economic times, the Commissions have reduced the OACO budget with each Oregon budget adjustment, finding creative ways to support its statutory mission. But with a number of downward adjustments in 2 years, the staff and Commissioners spend time needed for Commission support reviewing what can be cut from its budget. Unlike other Oregon Boards and Commissions, the Advocacy Commissions have no licensing fees or other fee assessments and must fundraise directly for their Other Funds. The Advocacy Commissions need meaningful funding and attention of the Commissioners needs to be dedicated toward accomplishing tasks and goals in the Strategic Plan. In the interest of supporting the Commissioners in using their

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volunteer time serving on the Commissions to address issues of employment, poverty, stable families, education, access to adequate health care, safety, meaningful community involvement and civic engagement, OCAPIA is proposing a tax credit for the Advocacy Commissions.

The communities we serve should be able to direct funding to the Advocacy Commissions and a tax credit is a meaningful way in which the community can have a say in how their tax dollars should be spent.

**OREGON AAPI CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND DIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP**

A two day workshop in June 2013 will provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of the AAPI population in Oregon and will include a brief historical relevancy, the role of ethnicity, geographical re-settlement, recent migration, cultural development and labor force that impact the social and economic formation in Portland and tri county areas.

These workshops will utilize current Census data with the goal of raising awareness about the different regions and ethnicities in existing local community organizations in Oregon. The purpose of these workshops are to foster a better understanding of the history and struggle of immigrants in the work place, and to help outsiders that have business interactions with particular immigrants or refugee groups to better understand the cultural, the economical impact and the influence of local AAPI community to the area developments.

Hopefully, the knowledge gained will help spark cross cultural communication and improve the workplace environment.

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**FUTURE PLANS**

**2013-2015 OCAPIA STRATEGIC PLAN**

In November of 2012, the OCAPIA met to lay out its strategic goals for the next biennium. The two priority areas the Commission will focus on will be education issues affecting Asian and Pacific Islanders and civic engagement, creating a pipeline of community leaders. The next two pages highlight goals for each of these areas. Although the commission will focus on these two goals, commissioners will continue to engage in other advocacy and community partnerships throughout the coming two years as opportunities arise.

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## **GOAL ONE – EDUCATION ON ISSUES IMPACTING APIs**

During the discussion it was revealed that although API students do well in school overall, there are groups within the API community, including Bhutanese and Cambodian students, with very high dropout rates and low achievement in math and reading. The ODE requested the OCAPIA's assistance in the following areas, which the Commission is pursuing as appropriate as the Oregon redesign of education moves forward.

- Commission representation on ODE State Advisory Special Ed Council, and Pre-school State Interagency Coordinating Council.
- API representation on ODE Standard Item Bias Review Group (reviews content for presence of characteristics that could result in differential performance of students).
- Participate in state's assessment system by applying to serve on the Assessment Sensitivity Panel which reviews items to ensure they are free of bias and stereotyping.

### **COMMUNITY FORUM:**

In spring, 2013 the Commission will also host further discussions with community leaders within API community groups struggling with school achievement and ODE/OEIB to consider barriers, issues and ways to improve.

## **GOAL TWO – CIVIC ENGAGEMENT – CREATING A PIPELINE OF CIVIC LEADERS FROM THE ASIAN COMMUNITY**

Civic engagement of Oregon's Asian and Pacific Islander population is an important part of its participation in shaping government policy and in assuring the sustainability of our communities. OCAPIA's second goal for the 2013-15 biennium is to create a pipeline of knowledgeable candidates who are willing to serve as elected officials and appointed officials in state and local governments and also on boards for non-profits, corporate businesses and foundations.

Objectives:

1. Create education program on civic engagement – how government works:
  - Speaker Panel Forums
  - Field trips to attend government meetings, legislative days and other public forums
  - Mentoring Program with elected officials
  - Partnership with APANO on civic engagement programs



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2. Create partnerships with other civic engagement training programs

- Partner with training organization such as New Leadership Oregon, Business for Culture and Arts (BCA), and other civic leadership training programs with similar goals.

3. Create a pipeline of prepared candidates so when various civic opportunities arise, OCAPIA and its partners have candidates prepared to fulfill these seats.

- OCAPIA will work with community leaders and community organizations to help identify individuals who are ready to fill vacant seats and who are emerging leaders that we can mentor.

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## **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

The Commission has been represented at a wide range of APA community events including:

- Asian American Journalists Association
- Asia Fest
- The *Asian Reporter* Fundraiser and Awards Banquet
- Asian Health and Service Center Banquet
- Asian Family Center Dinner
- Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce
- Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon Statewide Conventions
- Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association Chinese New Year Celebration
- Filipino American Association of Portland and Vicinity, Inc.
- Miss Asian Oregon Pageant 2009
- Oregon Korean Foundation Banquet and Fundraiser
- Oregon Korean American Day Celebration
- Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association Events
- Oriented.com APA Networking Events
- Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon Events

The Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs has also been represented at community events outside the APA community. For example, Commissioners have participated in the following types of community events:

- Say Hey! Quarterly Networking Events
- NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner
- Oregon Commission for Women, Women of Achievement Brunch
- Oregon Women Lawyers Betty Roberts/Mercedes Deiz Awards Dinner
- Oregon Minority Lawyers Association Annual Fundraiser and Quarterly Luncheons
- Oregon League of Minority Voters Events

## **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATION**

OCAPIA Commissioners are also represented on a number of other government task forces and commissions including representation on:

- Oregon Judicial Department Access to Justice Committee
- Teachers Standards and Practices Commission
- Oregon Korean American Day Commission
- Environmental Justice Taskforce
- Asian Law Enforcement Council, Portland Police Bureau

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- Governor’s Summit on Eliminating Disproportionate Minority Contact in the Juvenile Justice System Youth Awards Subcommittee
  - Oregon State Bar Affirmative Action Committee
  - Portland Public Schools Committee on Redesign
  - Oregon Department of Human Services Office of Multicultural Health Community Advisory Council

## **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

Commissioners have ties to a diverse range of community, civic and social organizations. A select few include:

- Korean American Citizens League
- Chinese American Citizens Alliance
- Organization of Chinese Americans
- Japanese American Citizens League
- Matsu Kai Japanese Women’s Group
- Thymos
- Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon and SW Washington
- National Federation of Filipino American Associations
- Council of Filipino American Associations of Oregon and SW Washington
- Filipino American Historical Society, Inc.
- Filipino American Association of Portland and Vicinity, Inc.
- Aguman Capampangan NW USA, Inc.
- Greater Salem Filipino American Association
- Asian Family Center, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
- Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon and SW Washington
- Asian Pacific American Seniors Coalition
- Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
- Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon PAC
- Asian American Youth Leadership Conference Executive Committee
- Oregon Minority Lawyers Association
- Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association
- National Pacific American Bar Association
- National Association of Muslim Lawyers
- Friends of Kam Wah Chung & Co. Museum
- Minority Groups Section of the Association of American Law Schools
- American Association of University Women
- Friends of Asian Studies, Portland State University
- Oregon State Board of Visitors of Minority Affairs
- President’s Community Leaders Group of Chemeketa Community College
- Oregon Education Association Minority Affairs Committee

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- Siuslaw Area Women’s Shelter
  - Portland City Club
  - Salem City Club
  - Oregon State Poetry Association
  - Center for Social Sustainability
  - Young Women Social Entrepreneurs
  - Young Environmental Professionals of Color

Commissioners apprise the Commission of their respective community ties and news, events or other issues relevant to the APA community as a whole.

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The Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs 2011-2013 Report & Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs 2013 – 2015 Strategic Plan  
is also available in its totality online at:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/OCAPIA/annualreport.shtml>

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