



OREGON COMMISSION ON ASIAN AFFAIRS

2009-2011 REPORT & 2011 – 2013 STRATEGIC PLAN

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

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LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION

Dear Office of the Governor and Supporters of the Commission:

On behalf of the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs, I am excited to submit this Report which serves as both a summary of the Commission's work in the previous biennium as well as a snapshot of the Commission's goals going forward into the 2011-2013 biennium.

This past biennium was a time of struggle and renewal for the Commission. Despite having to rebuild after being defunded, the Commission was able to conduct a variety of programs that bridged the gap between our communities and the government, helped our communities engage in the civic process and held a successful fundraiser. We are very proud of our accomplishments these past few years and are looking forward to even more success in the next biennium. We are especially grateful for the direction and organization provided by our Administrator Lucy Baker and the administrative support provided by Joy Howard. Having full-time dedicated staff is essential to the work of the advocacy commissions.

We recognize that the upcoming legislative session will be full of difficult choices in trying times. It is important to note that the Commission represents many communities that are most severely impacted by the economic downturn and at the same time are the least heard. We hope to serve as a resource to the Governor, the Legislature and state agencies as they move forward and make difficult decisions which will greatly impact the residents of our State and help provide a voice and perspective of the Asian Pacific American community of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Liani Jean Heh Reeves
Chair, Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs

THE OREGON COMMISSION ON ASIAN AFFAIRS

HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION

The Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs (OCAA) 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 lobby 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 2001, all four advocacy commissions were defunded and their staff were let go. The OCAA continued to survive under the leadership of its then chair Ms. Carol Suzuki, who helped sustain the Commission literally from her home. In 2006, the Legislature created the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office and brought the four advocacy commissions under one office with shared staff.

THE PRESENT

Today, the overall mission of the OCAA is to work for enhanced access to economic, social, legal and political 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 decision 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, 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.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS

WHO ARE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS

One of the challenges facing the Oregon Commission on Asian 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 Affairs advocates on behalf of this diverse Asian Pacific American community.

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.



OREGON COMMISSION ON ASIAN AFFAIRS (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): CAROL SUZUKI, KHALID WAHAB, PATRICK SIENG, CHAIR LIANI JEAN HEH REEVES, VICE CHAIR DAVID KONG, ROVEEDA AHMED, SIMEON MAMARIL.

COMMISSIONERS

The OCAA 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, Korean, Cambodian, Laos, Thai, 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.

COMMISSION CHAIR

Liani Jean Heh Reeves, Portland (11/1/2005-10/31/2008; 11/1/2008-10/31/2011)

Chair Reeves has served on the Commission since 2005. She was born in Seoul, Korea, and adopted to the United States. She was raised on the Southern Oregon Coast (North Bend) and re-located to Salem for college and law school at Willamette University. She brings a background in law and community advocacy. In her professional capacity, she serves as the Deputy Chief Trial Counsel for the Oregon Department of Justice Trial Division. She previously served as a Staff Attorney with the National Crime Victim Law Institute and a Clinical Instructor of the Lewis & Clark Law School Crime Victim Clinic. She volunteers her time to the Commission as Chair, as well the Oregon State Bar Affirmative Action Program. She was the key note speaker at the 2010 Asian American Youth Leadership Conference. She is active as a mentor to APA law students and new attorneys, and was awarded the Mentor of the Year Award from Willamette College of Law in 2003 and from Lewis & Clark Law School in 2007 and was honored as one of Portland Business Journal's 40 Under 40.

COMMISSION VICE-CHAIR

David Kong, Portland (4/10/2006-4/9/2009; 4/10/2009-4/9/2012)

Vice Chair Kong was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. He was born to refugees from Cambodia and Laos. He currently works full-time as a grade school counselor while he finishes his Masters in School Counseling degree at Lewis & Clark College. Previously, Vice Chair Kong served as the Asian/Pacific Islander American Coordinator at MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility where he organized and facilitated an APA support group, provided support to minority youth through one-on-one mentoring and counseling and planned culturally specific events for incarcerated youth. He has served on the Governor's Summit on Disproportionate Minority Contact in the Juvenile Justice System Youth Awards Subcommittee. Vice Chair Kong has also served on the Board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and was a Promise Intern for the Urban League of Portland.

COMMISSIONERS

Teresa Ferrer, Portland (10/1/2008-4/9/2009; 4/10/2009-4/9/2012)

Commissioner Ferrer was born in Newark, New Jersey and raised all over the country while her father, Enrique Bollozo Ferrer Jr., served in the United States Air Force. Of Filipino descent, she is a graduate of the University of Oregon with a Masters Degree in Education. She has been an educator in Oregon since 1979 and is currently working as an education consultant for the Center for Teaching and Learning with the Oregon Education Association. She has served as a commissioner for the Oregon Teachers Standards and Practices Commission where the majority of her service was in the role of chair of the Program Approval Committee which oversaw the transformation of all the approved education programs from a credit based system to a competency based system. In her last year as a K-12 educator she served as a full time release mentor for bilingual teachers in the Salem Keizer School District and previously taught for 16 years in Florence, Oregon as a Talented and Gifted Program Coordinator and remedial education teacher. She also served on the governing board of the Peace Harbor Hospital in Florence. In her current position with OEA, she coordinates a variety of statewide social justice training programs as well as two of the organization's most successful statewide conferences. She is a statewide trainer of mentor teachers, beginning educators and all categories of educators in professional practice as well as in state and federal licensure issues.

Simeon Mamaril, Portland (10/1/2008-4/9/2009; 4/10/2009-4/9/2012)

Commissioner Mamaril was born in Aringay, La Union, Philippines. He retired as a bank manager from Philippine National Bank and immigrated to the United States in 1984. He holds a Bachelors of Science in Business Administration from Far Eastern University in Manila, Philippines, and completed the MBA program at the University of Oregon. Commissioner Mamaril serves as the Chairman of the Board of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon and SW Washington and has participated in trade missions to the Philippines. He also serves on numerous boards that advocate for the social, political and civil rights of the community, including Asian Family Center, Asian Pacific American Seniors Coalition, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) and APANO-PAC. Commissioner Mamaril has contributed to the *Asian Reporter* and *Philippine News*. He has received numerous awards and recognitions for his service including the Most Honored Elder Award from the *Asian Reporter* in 2002.

Patrick Sieng, Salem (2/18/2008-2/17/2011)

Commissioner Sieng was appointed to the Commission in February 2008. He serves as Chief of Staff to State Rep. Jean Cowan (D-Newport) and operates an independent website design business – PK Strategies. Commissioner Sieng also serves as Vice-Chair of the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency and as a member of the Salem Area Mass Transit District Budget Committee. He attended Willamette University as a Multicultural Achievement Scholar and is a business administration major at Portland State University.

Carol Suzuki, Salem (5/1/2001-4/15/2003; 4/16/2003-4/15/2006; 4/16/2006-4/15/2009; 4/16/2009-4/15/2012)

Commissioner Suzuki serves as the Operations Director for the Senate Majority Office and has worked for the Oregon Legislature for over 14 years. She also served as Chair of the OCAA for four terms (2002-2006). Active in her local community, Commissioner Suzuki is a member of the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters and Salem City Club. In addition, she serves on the Chemeketa Community College President's Community Leader's Group and as a member of the Salem One Community Initiative which strives to build a more inclusive community through dialogue and education. Commissioner Suzuki is Japanese-American and grew up in the Hood River Valley where her family continues to grow cherries, pears and apples on their family farm.

Khalid Wahab, Portland (2/15/2008-2/14/2011)

Commissioner Wahab works as a primary care director at Kaiser Permanente. He received his undergraduate degree from Lewis and Clark College majoring in biochemistry. Subsequently, he received his Masters in Public Health from Portland State University. While working in the healthcare field, he also attended the evening law program at Lewis and Clark and completed that in 2008. Commissioner Wahab was born in Afghanistan and a few years after the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, his family migrated to Pakistan, where he lived for about 8 years before permanently relocating to Portland in 1991. He speaks Pashto, Urdu, Hindi and some Farsi. Living in the Portland Metro area, Commissioner Wahab has been able to cultivate ties to the Afghani, Pakistani and Indian communities who call Oregon their home. Commissioner Wahab was appointed to the Commission in early 2008.

LEGISLATIVE APPOINTEES

Senator Jackie Dingfelder- D - Portland, District 23

Jackie Dingfelder serves as the State Senator from District 23 in Northeast and Southeast Portland. When she is not in Salem, she works as a Senior Environmental Planner for a private consulting firm. Senator Dingfelder is a strong champion of protecting Oregon's environment and has extensive experience on water resources management, energy, and conservation issues.

OCAA MISSION & DUTIES

MISSION

The Legislative Assembly declares that the Oregon Commission on Asian 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.

DUTIES

- 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.

GOAL ONE –BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT

Strategies

- To educate government agencies on issues impacting the APA community.
- To foster communication and collaboration between the APA community and State elected officials and agencies.
- To empower APAs to participate in the civic process.

Last Biennium Activities

Public Focus Meetings. Beginning in 2008, the Commission began conducting a series of public focus meetings to assess state agencies operating for the benefit of Oregonians to see whether and how they incorporate and support the specific needs of the APA community. The Commission has invited various state agencies to present to the Commission and community about whether their respective state programs adequately meet the needs of APAs. Each agency was asked to present on issues such as:

- The number of APAs served and in what capacity (i.e., as clients, public, etc.);
- Any perceptions about the needs of the APA population and whether each agency is able to meet them;
- Whether each agency has specific programs designed to meet the needs of the APA population (or any minority-specific programs);
- Any successes the agency has had with serving the APA community; and
- Ways in which the Commission can better support each agency in serving the APA community.

During the 2007-2009 biennium, the Commission met with the following agencies: Oregon Department of Corrections; Oregon Youth Authority; Oregon Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision; Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles; and the Oregon Department of Human Services. Materials related to these public hearings were attached to the 2007-2009 Strategic Plan. To obtain copies of these materials, please contact the Commission Chair Liani Reeves at liani.coaa@gmail.com.

During the 2009-2011 biennium, the Commission held an in depth meeting with the Oregon Department of Education (June 7, 2010). In preparation for the meeting, we asked Superintendent of Education Susan Castillo to report on the following issues:

- Enrollment demographics of APA students in K-12 schools;
- APA language immersion programs;
- Graduation rates of APA students;

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- ODE staff demographics;
 - Diversity and equity trainings offered by ODE;
 - Any perceptions about the needs of the APA population and whether she believes ODE is able to meet them; and
 - Ways in which the Commission can better support the agency in serving the APA community.

The meeting with Superintendent was the most well attended out of the Commission's public meetings and attracted a variety of community members including teachers, public administrators, community advocates and parents and students of Oregon's public schools.

ODE presented statistics which, on their face, seemed to report positive results for the APA community. According to ODE, APAs were the highest ranking group in math, they ranked equally with white students in reading measures and APAs had the highest graduation rates out of all student groups. However, it was discovered that the ODE does not break down the APA statistics by ethnicity. Other national groups track student performance by ethnicity. For example, a recent report published by the National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research and Education that found that a majority of the members of the Laotian, Cambodian, and Hmong communities – age 25 and older – only have a high school degree or less. That also applies to Pacific Islander communities. Unemployment rates among Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander communities are three to five times higher than East or South Asians. Therefore, looking at the statistics on our communities kept by the ODE, it's easy to conclude that Asians are the "model minority" but that approach leaves a significant segment of the population falling through the cracks. This is a critical problem that must be acknowledged and addressed. Materials from the most recent meeting with the Oregon Department of Education are attached to this report.

A crucial problem in government's understanding of the APA community... The notion that "Asians" is a sufficient label to track data and provide services is a mis-notion that the Commission encountered with each of the public agencies invited to present. State agencies operate under a misunderstanding of the Asian Pacific American community and approach the communities with a "one size fits all" solution. Our consistent message back to all the agencies has been the importance of breaking down performance results by ethnicity and to look at other factors that come into play within our communities (socio-economic, immigrant versus refugee status, etc.). The agency meetings have been a good starting point for the State to have better understanding of the unique aspects and challenges of the APA communities.

Asian Pacific American Voter Education Project (APAVE). Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) are one of the fastest growing populations in the nation yet among the least civically engaged. Voting is a vital step towards getting the voices and issues of APAs heard in government, but less than half of the eligible APA voters cast their votes in the 2004 General Election. To address this deficit, the Commission partnered with community organizations the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) and the Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association (OAPABA) to encourage civic participation through voter education. This initiative included three different components: Voter Education Summits, an APA Voters' Guide and "get out the vote" work.

The Voter Education Summits were held in four locations (Eugene, Salem, Beaverton and Portland) and targeted community organizations, student groups, the business community and faith-based organizations. They were designed to discuss the value and legal context around voting and what role different entities and individuals can play in increasing civic engagement among APA voters.

APAVE created a nonpartisan APA Voting Guide by asking all candidates for selected races to submit statements in response to the following questions: 1. *What experiences have you had with Oregon's APA communities that allow you to represent their interests?* and 2. *With whom, and how, do you plan to address the interest of Oregon's APA communities?* The guide also included several pro/con statements on measures that were of interest to the APA community. The APA Voting Guide was published in the October 4, 2010 edition of the *Asian Reporter* and then was translated into Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Korean and Samoan and posted on the APAVE website.

The project also engaged in more traditional "get out the vote" work including working with the Bus Project's "Trick or Vote" canvas and phone banking to APA community members to remind them to vote.

The APAVE project provided a great partnership between the Commission and community organizations while helping to address a critical issue facing our communities. Materials from the APAVE project including voter education materials and the APA Voting Guide are included as Attachments to this Report.

APA Legislative Day. On May 8, 2009, the Commission partnered with the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon to host the first APA Legislative Day. Approximately 100 APAs were transported to the State Capitol—many of whom had never set foot there before. The Commission helped APANO organize face-to-face meetings with legislators and had the opening convocation in the Senate conducted by APA religious leaders. Prior to the Legislative Day, APANO and the Commission trained Legislative Captains to act as leaders for groups of APAs meeting with elected officials. There was also broad education on the legislative process, "how a bill becomes a law," and on different issues important to the APA communities. The participants went to the Capitol with talking points on the 2009 state budget cut impacts on APAs; health equity and reform; and immigration and civil rights. APANO has been a crucial community partner for the Commission and an organizing force in the APA community. Materials from the 2009 APA legislative Day are included as Attachments to this Report.

2009 Asian Pacific American Legislative Day



The Legislative day began with a blessing by monks from Thailand. Pictured above the Venerable Phra Arjan Subin of Wat Baddha Oregon in Turner, Oregon.



Senator Margaret Carter giving words of inspiration to the group. Other guest speakers included Representatives Brian Clem and Nick Kahl, Affirmative Action Director Peggy Ross and community leader Sho Dozono.



Preparing to meet with legislators.

Upcoming Activities

Continued Work with Oregon Department of Education. The issue of public education is one of critical importance to our communities as was demonstrated by the widespread turnout for our ODE public meeting. The Commission felt that the dialogue that was started with Superintendent Castillo during the public focus meeting was positive and productive; but it was only the beginning of what could be a long term strategic plan to improve understanding and services to the APA community. Rather than continuing to invite additional agencies to present the Commission, the Commission decided to prioritize additional follow up meetings with the Oregon Department of Education throughout the next year. We look forward to working with Superintendent Castillo and her staff, the Legislature and the Governor on improving access and accountability of public education in Oregon.

APA Legislative Day 2011. The Commission has begun the planning process with APANO to plan a 2011 Legislative Day (set for March 1, 2011). The format will be similar in nature and will include education on the legislative process, issues that impact our communities and will culminate in a trip to the State Capitol to meet with state legislators.

GOAL TWO – ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION ON ISSUES IMPACTING APAs

Strategies

- To advocate on APA issues both within the APA community and to allied communities.
- To become a resource on APA issues.

Last Biennium Activities

Advocacy and Education. The Commission undertook a number of advocacy projects on issues of importance to the APA community. For example, during the last biennium the Commission:

- Provided legislative support and testimony on anti-bullying legislation (House Bill 2599).
- Provided input on priorities to the Oregon Department of Human Services Office of Multicultural Health during its strategic planning process.
- Provided input on a Health Care Data Collection project designed to collect and produce more accurate and useful data on health disparities.
- Co-sponsored and participated in a historical reenactment of the *Trial of Minoru Yasui*, an American born Japanese American citizen who was arrested for violating the curfew laws imposed against all citizens and non-citizens of Japanese descent during World War II.
- Participated in the Asian American Journalists Association Panel on Asian Americans in Government.
- Provided the key note speech at the Filipino American Association of Portland and Vicinity Inc. 50 Year Golden Anniversary Banquet. The speech focused on a reflection of APA legal and social history.
- Presented at the Oregon Commission for Women's GAPS conference, *Working together to bridge gender gaps in education, health care, employment, and leadership*. The presentation focused on female students of color in education: overcoming stereotypes, cultural misunderstanding and other barriers. The presentation materials are included as an Attachment to this Report.
- Presented at the National Association for Asian and Pacific American Education Conference, *API in a Changing Nation: Showcasing Asian Pacific Leadership and Communities in the Northwest*. The presentation focused on the pervasiveness of accent discrimination against students of color by other students and teachers from grade school through college and offered solutions for remedying accent discrimination in education. The presentation materials are included as an Attachment to this Report.
- Participated on panels about interracial adoptions within Chinese and Korean communities and on Asian American adoptee identity issues.

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- Provided key note speech at several Street Law Luncheons to discuss experiences as students of color and ways in which a law degree can empower individuals and community.
 - Facilitated discussion as guest lecturer in Professional Responsibility/Ethics class on the role of race and gender in the legal system.
 - Provided key note speech at 2010 Asian American Youth Leadership Conference. The speech focused on the importance of building networks to create positive change.

Upcoming Activities

Continued Advocacy and Education. The Commission will continue to look for opportunities to advocate and educate the APA communities and allied communities on issues impacting APAs in Oregon.

Commission Name Change. To better describe the diversity of the community and to be more inclusive, the Commission is submitting a bill to change the name of the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs to the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs.

GOAL THREE – BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Strategies

- To look for opportunities to partner with other community organizations or individuals to educate and share ideas on community empowerment.
- To develop OCAA outreach materials to educate about the Commission and about issues important to the APA community.

Last Biennium Activities

International Visitor Leadership Program. In October 2010, the Commission hosted a group of South Korean women through the International Visitor Leadership Program, a U.S. Department of State sponsored professional development program. The participants visited several U.S. cities to explore different aspects of women's empowerment. In Oregon, the group wanted to explore the topics of:

1. The opportunities, challenges, and constraints related to the role of women politically, economically, and socially;
2. Grassroots, non-profit, and civil society efforts to advocate and provide services for women's issues; and
3. Educational strategies and training programs designed to empower women.

The Commission was asked to put together a meeting with other community leaders that would focus on strategies for and challenges to the legal protection for women. The host group included leaders to address various aspects of women's empowerment and legal rights:

- Ms. Liani Reeves, Chair of the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs with background in women's crime victim rights as former Staff Attorney for the National Crime Victim Law Institute
- Mr. Simon Whang, Assistant Attorney General for the Oregon Department of Justice and former prosecutor of domestic and sexual violence crimes
- Ms. Liz Rogers, community advocate for immigrant women who are victims of domestic violence
- Ms. Michelle Ing, law firm partner and co-founder of the Miss Asian Oregon Pageant
- Ms. MeeSeon Kwon, PSU student, member of APANO and staffer for David Wu
- Ms. Soohyun Park, recent law graduate and first generation Korean immigrant

The guests from South Korea included women who had excelled in leadership in their home country:

- Ms. Soon Ae CHOI, Deputy Director, Office of the Supreme Council, Grand National Party (GNP)
- Dr. Sung Hi JEOUNG, President, Gyeongnam Women's Re-Employment Support Headquarters
- Ms. Hee Kyung JUN, Policy Director, Citizens United for Better Society (CUBS)
- Ms. Na Youn KIM, Manager, The Women's Human Rights Commission of Korea

This event was a great opportunity to collaborate on an international scale and share ideas about legal and social strategies to empower underserved communities.



INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Each year, 5,000 foreign visitors, identified by United States Embassies as the future leaders in their countries, participate in U.S. Department of State-sponsored study tours to the United States. The visitors, representing over 100 countries and a wide range of professional interests, meet Americans of different ages and backgrounds, and learn about the traditions and ideas which characterize the United States and make it unique. These visitors then take the lessons and ideas they learned here back to their home country and work to apply them to their communities.

Each visitor spends approximately 22 days in the country and visits 4-5 different states. Nearly five

OCAA Marketing. The Commission has developed a brochure and updated its website to market the Commission and its activities. The Commission has also created a display and has taken advantage of community events in order to distribute materials and promote the Commission's services.

Colors of Influence. The Commission Chair recently did an interview with *Colors of Influence*, an online magazine that shares success stories and highlights the contributions of people of color in business and civic life. The focus of the article was to inform others about the Commission and its programs and to discuss some of the issues facing the APA community. A copy of the article in its entirety is included as an Attachment to this report. Excerpts from the article include:

- "The right to vote was something that people have fought hard for. Some people have the notion that their vote doesn't count –which isn't true. Especially in Oregon which is a relatively small community, there are many elections that are won or lost by a handful of votes."
- "With all large entities, there is a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to how they conduct business or deliver services. But sometimes that just doesn't fit with our cultures."
- "We try to work with government agencies to make sure they're addressing those types of issues [i.e. government distrust], so the community feels or understands that they can access government in a way that's not threatening."

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 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

Youth Conferences. The Commission has offered financial support and partnership with organizations focused on APA youth including co-sponsorship of the 2009 and 2010 Asian American Youth Leadership Conference (AAYLC), an annual youth leadership conference for APA youth in the Portland area. In 2010, over five hundred students attended conference, where they met other APA youth and community leaders, broadened and deepened their understanding of APA culture and contributions to Oregon and developed and polished leadership skills. Commission Chair Liani Jean Heh Reeves was the key note speaker of the 2010 AAYLC Conference and spoke about the history of the APA community, today's growing power of the community and the importance of building networks. Materials from the 2010 AAYLC are attached to this Report.

Law Student Support. Having culturally competent legal representation within the community is crucial to having adequate access to justice. Therefore, commissioners have been active in supporting APA law students, including participation at the Oregon State Bar Affirmative Action Program *Opportunities for Law in Oregon*, a minority retention program held annually for incoming law students. Commissioners have also participated in events sponsored by the Lewis & Clark Law School and Willamette College of Law Asian Pacific American Law Students Association and served as mentors to APA law students.

Community Events. The Commission on Asian 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. OCAA 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
- 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 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
- 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.

Upcoming Activities

Continued and Expanded Community Partnerships. The Commission will continue to work with existing community partners such as the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon as well as seek to build new partnerships with community organizations working for the APA communities.

Community Organization Resource List. The Commission hopes to partner with APANO to compile and publish a resource book of organizations in Oregon working with the various APA communities.

Strategies

- To collaborate with the Commissions on Black, Hispanic and Women's Affairs on issues of common interest.

Last Biennium Activities

Equity & Accountability Primary Candidate Forums. During the 2010 Primary Election, the four advocacy commissions partnered with a coalition of over 20 community organizations representing people of color, immigrants and refugees, and hosted two unique bipartisan candidate forums for Oregon's Primary Election. On April 28, 2010, candidates for Governor and Metro President were invited; and on April 29, 2010, candidates for Multnomah County Commission and City of Portland were invited to present. The candidates were asked to respond to questions from communities of color to engage in a dialogue on issues of racial equity and social concern. Each candidate was asked to provide a written response to the following question: "What experience and accountability prepares you to represent the interests of Oregon's communities of color, immigrants, refugees and women?" The responses were compiled in a printed brochure that was distributed at the forums and available on the internet. A copy of the written materials from the Equity & Accountability Primary Candidate Forums is attached to this report.

17th Annual DHS Statewide Diversity Conference. The commissions jointly presented at the Statewide Diversity Conference, *Making Diversity Your Business*, in Salem, Oregon, September 21-22, 2010. The purpose of the workshop was to educate state agency representatives about the commissions' work and how they are addressing race and social justice. Each commission presented on its history, mission and priorities and major issues and outcomes related to race and justice. The presentation also generated audience participation and dialogue about important race and social justice issues related to child welfare.

Oregon League of Minority Voters Civil Rights Luncheon. The advocacy commissions appeared jointly at the Oregon League of Minority Voters Civil Rights Luncheon to discuss the efforts of the commissions and upcoming priorities.

Upcoming Activities

Collaborative support on legislation and legislative decisions. The advocacy commissions will be jointly supporting legislation that impacts all of their constituent communities such as reform to the driver's license requirements and budget decisions relating to state services.

Strategies

- **To increase the financial viability of the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs.**

Last Biennium Activities

2010 Fundraiser. On August 29, 2010, the Commission held a fundraiser titled *Celebrating the Journey: Journeys of the Asian Pacific Islander Community in Oregon and Fifteen Years with the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs*. 2010 marked the fifteen year anniversary of the Commission's creation. The fundraiser program included reflections from former state Senator John Lim, who was instrumental in creating the Commission, a statement from former Governor John Kitzhaber who was the Governor who signed the Commission into law, Peggy Ross from Governor Theodore Kulongoski's office and two key note speakers: Mr. Kilung Ung and Ms. Dmae Roberts. Mr. Ung and Ms. Roberts were selected because of their extraordinary journeys as APAs in the State and because they are using their stories and the stories of others to educate and inspire.

Dmae Roberts is a two time Peabody award winning radio artist and writer whose work often airs on NPR. Her work is often biographical and cross cultural and is informed by her biracial identity. Her Peabody award winning documentary *Mei Mei, A Daughter's Song*, is a harrowing account of her mother's childhood in Taiwan during WWI. She recently won a second Peabody award for her documentary *Crossing East*, the first Asian American history series on public radio. She is currently working on her own memoir, *Lady Buddha and the Temple of Ma*. She has won numerous awards for her art and her advocacy. She spoke about the importance of telling personal stories and keeping Asian American history alive.

Kilong Ung's journey began in Cambodia where he nearly starved to death during the Khmer Rouge genocide. He came to the United States in 1979 as a refugee. He graduated from Reed College and later when on to get a masters' degree. He documented his journey and times of hardship and triumph in *Golden Leaf*, the term he coined to describe the extraordinary journey of a Khmer Rouge genocide survivor. He is raising money through the Golden Leaf Education Foundation to build schools in Cambodia. He is active in the Cambodian American community and speaks often to help inspire others to celebrate life. He spoke about this journey as a Golden Leaf, made possible by American prosperity and optimism.

The fundraiser raised approximately \$3000 in funds for the Commission programs. Materials from the fundraiser are attached to this Report.

Upcoming Activities

2011 Fundraiser. The Commission will be planning another fundraiser in the Fall of 2011.

ATTACHMENTS

- *Interests of the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) American Community in the Oregon Department of Education*, June 7, 2010, Franklin High School, Portland, Oregon
- *Engage! Asian Pacific American Voter Education Project*, Voter Education Summit, September 21, 2010, First Congregational Church, Salem, Oregon
- “The Right to Vote”
- *The Asian Pacific American Voter Guide* – English Version
- *The Asian Pacific American Voter Guide* – Samoan Version
- *The Asian Pacific American Voter Guide* – Chinese Version
- *The Asian Pacific American Voter Guide* – Korean Version
- *The Asian Pacific American Voter Guide* – Vietnamese Version
- *The Asian Pacific American Voter Guide* – Cambodian Version
- Asian Pacific Legislative Day Program, May 8, 2009, Oregon State Capitol, Salem, Oregon
- *Female Students of Color in Education: Overcoming Stereotypes, Cultural Misunderstandings, and Other Barriers*, by Bill Y. Chin, 1st Annual GAPA Conference, March 7, 2009, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon
- *Accent Bias Against Students of Color*, William Y. Chin, 2009 NAAPAE Annual Conference, Tacoma, Washington
- *Colors of Influence*, Q&A: Liani Jean Heh Reeves, Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs, January 9, 2011
- *Connecting Tomorrow’s Leaders*, Asian American Youth Leadership Conference, April 30, 2010, Portland Community College, Portland, Oregon
- *Equity & Accountability Oregon Primary Candidate Forum*, April 29 and May 4, 2010, Portland, Oregon
- *Celebrating the Journey: Journey of the Asian Pacific Islander Community in Oregon and Fifteen Years with the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs*, August 19, 2010, University of Oregon White Stag Building, Portland, Oregon