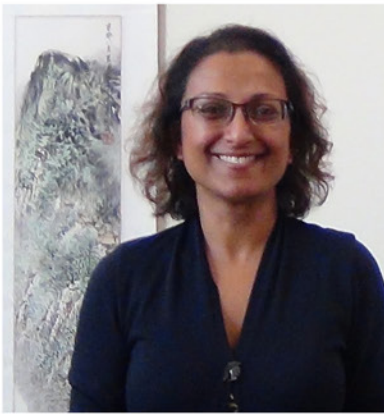
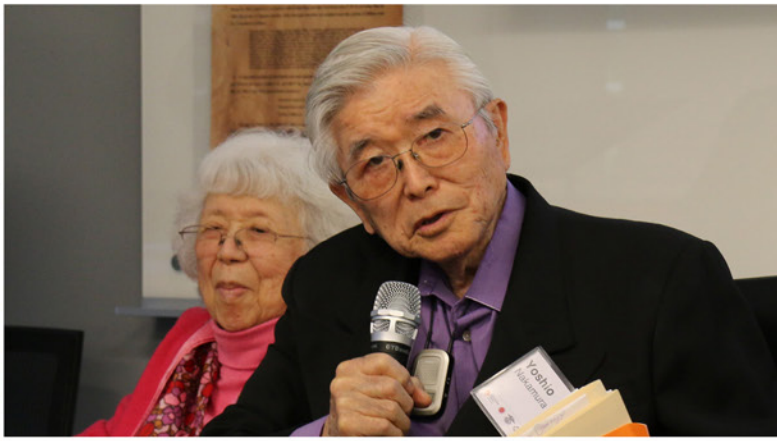
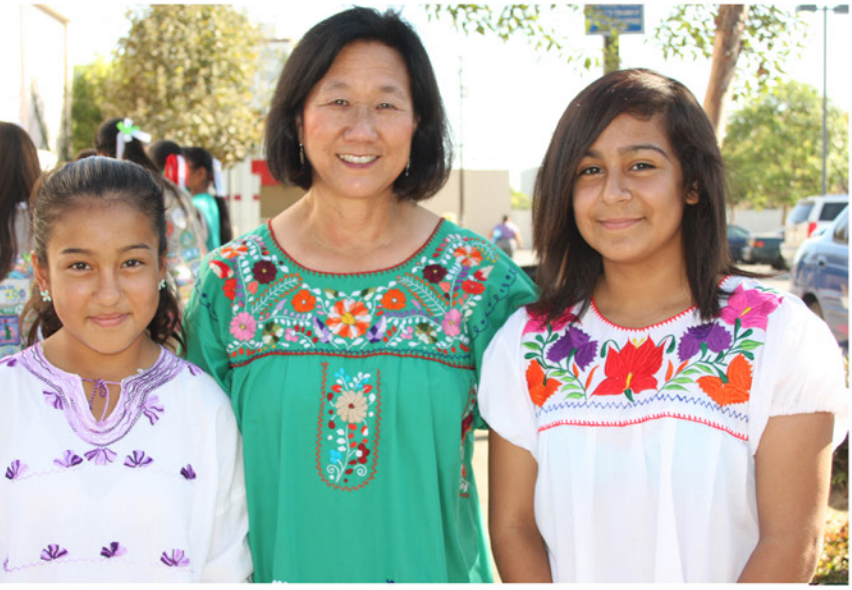
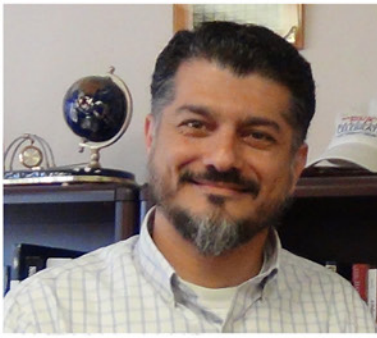
TRANSFORMING ORANGE COUNTY

ASSETS AND NEEDS OF ASIAN AMERICANS & NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS









ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE
ORANGE COUNTY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA IRVINE

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Ellen Ahn, executive director of Korean Community Services

Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Greater Los Angeles Area Chapter (CAIR-LA)

Shikha Bhatnagar, executive director of the South Asian Network

Mary Anne Foo, founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)

Jei Garlitos, principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District

Caroline Hahn, past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association

Naz Hamid, parent in Irvine; ran for the local school board

Ken Inouye, former chair of the Orange County Human Relations Commission; past president of the national Japanese American Citizens League

Charles Kim, cofounder and first executive director of the Korean American Coalition

Eduardo Lee, cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco

Michael Matsuda, superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District; founding member of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)

Tam Nguyen, former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce; owner of Advance Beauty College; former president of the California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Alumni Association

Tricia Nguyen, CEO of Southland Integrated Services, formerly known as the Vietnamese Community of Orange County (VNCOC)

Jonathan Paik, Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center

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Victor Pang, cofounder of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)

Vattana Peong, executive director of The Cambodian Family

Edwin Tiongson, project director of ELEVATE AAPI (Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) at Irvine Valley College

Audrey Yamagata-Noji, vice president of Student Services at Mount San Antonio College; served on the Santa Ana School Board for 25 years; volunteer with Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP)

Cyril Yu, former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association; senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office; ran for the Irvine School Board

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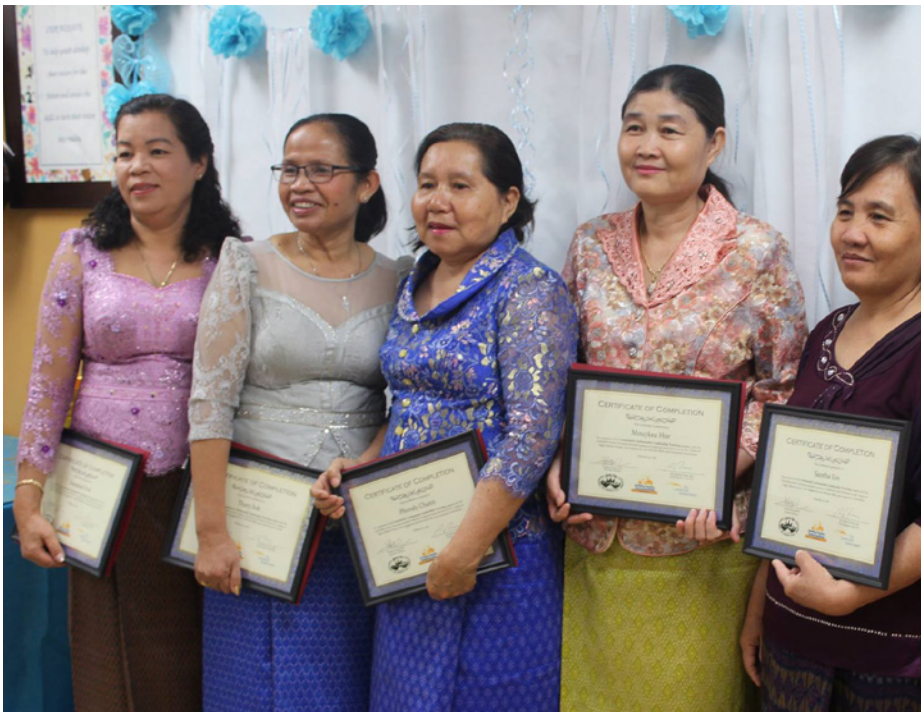

Photo courtesy of Vattana Peong

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Orange County—the third-most populous county in California and the sixth-most populous in the United States—exemplifies the major demographic shifts sweeping the nation. These shifts have transformed this predominantly homogenous, White, and suburban county into one that is highly diverse and urbanizing, where Asian Americans & Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AA&NHPI) now comprise 21% of the county's 3 million residents. With nearly 600,000 Asian Americans and over 19,000 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI), **Orange County is home to the nation's third-largest AA&NHPI population**.[1]

Although the county's fastest-growing population—from 2000 to 2010, the Asian American population jumped 41% in contrast to 6% growth for the county as a whole[2]—data and research on AA&NHPI in Orange County are surprisingly limited. Three years after the data-driven demographic report on the AA&NHPI of Orange County,[3] *Transforming Orange County* attempts to better understand the county's complex and diverse AA&NHPI community. Relying on rich narrative context and analysis from diverse community leaders (see table),[4] this report examines **six areas where AA&NHPI strengthen the county but also areas of concern that have been largely overlooked:** (1) building sustainable communities, (2) economic development and disparities, (3) K–12 and higher education, (4) health care services, (5) political participation and civic engagement, and (6) civil rights advocacy. In each of these chapters, we analyze the many contributions and resources that AA&NHPI bring to the county ("assets") as well as identify significant issues challenging AA&NHPI that must be addressed ("needs"), and conclude with key policy recommendations. With *Transforming Orange County,* we seek to increase knowledge, foster dialogue, and reevaluate policies about AA&NHPI communities in the county, and we hope this report sparks additional discussion, research, and action.

Interviewed Community Leaders

Ellen Ahn	Executive director of Korean Community Services
Hussam Ayloush	Executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Greater Los Angeles Area Chapter (CAIR-LA)
Shikha Bhatnagar	Executive director of the South Asian Network
Mary Anne Foo	Founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Jei Garlitos	Principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District
Caroline Hahn	Past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association
Naz Hamid	Parent in Irvine; ran for the local school board
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Cyril Yu	Former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association; senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office; ran for the Irvine School Board

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Chapter 2: Building Sustainable Communities

The rapidly changing demographics of the county and the subsequent residential shifts have resulted in an incredibly diverse and multicultural county. From 2000 to 2010, the Asian American population increased in every city in Orange County.[5] For decades, AA&NHPI have been drawn to Orange County, leading to increased AA&NHPI homeownership. AA&NHPI have also created ethnic enclaves and related cultural amenities, which continue to attract new residents to the county.

Unfortunately, Orange County experiences ongoing anti-Asian sentiment, discrimination, and segregation. The burdens of housing are also undeniable—all communities, including AA&NHPI, need more affordable housing and housing assistance programs. Homeownership among Asian Americans (58%) and NHPI (46%) is overall lower than non-Hispanic Whites (67%).[6] In such an expensive county as Orange County, this disparity in homeownership is masked by the focus on wealthier overseas Asian homebuyers.

Moreover, housing insecurities among AA&NHPI are often difficult to document and are rendered "invisible" by informal housing arrangements (e.g., extended family members sharing living quarters to mitigate expenses) and an undeniable stigma related to housing instability. Many AA&NHPI are reluctant to seek housing assistance due to concerns with family separation or immigration status. Housing insecurities are a particular concern for aging monolingual AA&NHPI, whose population is expected to grow 240% by 2060, comprising 33% of the total AA&NHPI population across the United States.[7]

To address these issues, it is critically important to collect and report disaggregated data on housing and sustainable community needs, and to ensure linguistically and culturally competent outreach, education, and assistance for AA&NHPI (e.g., financial education, tenant rights, affordable housing options, foreclosures)—both for tenants and homeowners, and particularly for seniors. Media and policy makers must help fight persistent anti-Asian sentiment and create a more welcoming county for all ethnic groups. Additionally, the county requires sustainable housing solutions, including the development and preservation of affordable housing stock.

Chapter 3: Economic Development and Disparities

As the county's fastest-growing population, the economic contributions of AA&NHPI are undeniable. In 2012, AA&NHPI businesses brought nearly $26 billion in revenue and over 100,000 jobs to the county.[8] AA&NHPI are integral to the county's workforce and are driving the growth of AA&NHPI business and commercial centers, emerging "next-generation" entrepreneurs and innovators, and transnational economic connections—including the increase in the number of businesses and developments established by overseas Asian entrepreneurs. Numerous major computer and technology companies, founded or run by Asians or Asian Americans, are headquartered in Orange County.

In contrast, AA&NHPI also face poverty, unemployment, and significant income disparities among ethnic groups. While 12% of Asian Americans in Orange County live in poverty (below general poverty rate of 13%), certain ethnic groups, including Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, and Cambodian, have higher-than-average poverty rates. Countywide, poverty rates for Thai Americans (20%), Vietnamese Americans (16%), and NHPI (15%) are particularly high.[9] There are also ongoing reports of workplace discrimination, worker exploitation, and resistance to Asian business owners. Small businesses, especially immigrant-owned businesses, still struggle with developing the legal, compliance, and accounting knowledge to thrive.

To bridge these disparities, it is critical to collect and report disaggregated data on poverty, unemployment, workforce challenges, and the needs of consumers and small businesses. Culturally and linguistically competent "know your rights and responsibilities" materials are recommended for both workers and business owners. Additionally, initiatives that protect low-wage workers and employees from discrimination and retaliation based on immigration status must be strengthened, and ultimately policy makers should create a comfortable business environment for diverse business owners, entrepreneurs, and workers.

Chapter 4: K–12 and Higher Education

Orange County is home to some of the nation's top-ranked K–12 public schools, attracting diverse AA&NHPI to the county. In the 2016–2017 school year, Asian Americans comprised 18% (88,279) of the students in the Orange County public school system, and NHPI comprised 0.4% (1,725) with concentrations in the Irvine (49%, 16,504), Westminster (39%, 3,367), Fountain Valley (37.5%, 2,394), and Garden Grove (35%, 15,638) school districts.[10]

AA&NHPI educators, administrators, and parents have made significant contributions in Orange County, including the development of language immersion programs, ethnic studies curricula in K–12 schools and local colleges, and the presence of many AA&NHPI in higher education. AA&NHPI have also developed important university-community partnerships.

Despite their many strengths, AA&NHPI still face educational needs such as an ongoing lack of resources for English language learners and immigrant families, including the growing challenges of undocumented students. Contrary to the "model minority myth" that Asian Americans are all inherently smart and college bound, Southeast Asians and NHPI do face significant and persistent educational disparities (e.g., 19% of NHPI have obtained a college degree or higher compared to 38% of the general population,[11] and NHPI high school graduation rates in Orange County are below average).[12]

Many children of immigrants or refugees face immense academic pressures, creating a significant need for culturally competent mental health services—particularly for transnational families. Increased school bullying and harassment of AA&NHPI students is also a growing concern in addition to the continuing lack of AA&NHPI representation among educators and school administrators.

To address these deficiencies, AA&NHPI require ethnic-specific data on educational challenges and attainment, greater access for English learners, more sustainable dual-language and bilingual programs, more culturally competent outreach and education for parents and families, and more culturally appropriate mental health programs. Anti-hate and anti-bullying policies must be strengthened and include supportive services for students, with specific support for undocumented students. Policy makers should also consider expanding ethnic studies curricula, building a pipeline to bring more underrepresented ethnic groups into roles as teachers and administrators, and advocating for policies that promote equal opportunity and diversity for all students in Orange County.

"It's such a vast diversity of Asian American groups—in terms of language and orientation and generation and educational needs and parental background and income levels—that it's just hard to lump everybody together, which just means that the work that you do has to be sensitive to all those different things."

Photo courtesy of Mary Anne Foo/ OCAPICA

Chapter 5: Health Care Services

AA&NHPI have historically been lumped together as a monolithic group, leading to misperceptions that AA&NHPI as a whole have better health outcomes than other racial groups, and in some cases, the general U.S. population. However, the lack of disaggregated AA&NHPI data often masks specific health issues, including significant differences between Asian American and NHPI populations.[13]

In Orange County, AA&NHPI have helped build a culturally and linguistically diverse health care workforce and lead culturally competent community-based organizations (CBOs), which provide a safety net for the underserved or those lacking health access. AA&NHPI also bring cross-cultural collaborations and a holistic and comprehensive approach to health.

In terms of needs, top issues include access to health insurance, limited capacity and funding for CBOs, and an underrepresentation of certain AA&NHPI groups as health care professionals. Insufficient culturally competent behavioral health services are a constant challenge. Acknowledging mental health challenges has significant stigma for most ethnic communities, and when AA&NHPI do seek help, it is difficult to find culturally and linguistically appropriate services. Disparities in behavioral health services are amplified for some populations such as Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian Americans who have experienced the trauma of civil war, displacement, postwar survival, and escape as refugees. Similar issues of stigma and the complex family dynamics of "saving face" magnify the need for more awareness and education programs related to domestic and family violence.

NHPI populations face particular health disparities that are often overlooked because of the lack of disaggregated NHPI data and their relatively smaller population. In 2012, the death rate for NHPI in Orange County was 864 per 100,000 people, which was the highest for all racial groups.[14] Improving health care services and programs for NHPI is critical.

Among the key responses needed are greater collection and reporting of disaggregated data on health disparities, conditions, and access, with a special focus on underserved populations such as NHPI. Linguistically and culturally competent outreach, education, and assistance for all aspects of health care service delivery are essential, as is more funding and support for culturally competent CBOs and more cultural competency training for health care professionals. Policy makers should

also focus on developing health career pipeline programs and community health worker (e.g., *promotores*) programs that target AA&NHPI.

Photo courtesy of Caroline Hahn

Chapter 6: Political Participation and Civic Engagement

Historically AA&NHPI in Orange County were discouraged and even prevented from political participation and civic engagement. While many barriers have been removed, AA&NHPI continue to face other challenges in exercising full civic participation, including intracommunity political divides that complicate voter outreach and mobilization efforts, and hamper the ability for AA&NHPI to unite and work together as a political force.

Community strengths include the growing visibility of AA&NHPI elected officials and the subsequent increase in political clout. AA&NHPI have also utilized legal efforts to ensure better political representation and have had success in mobilizing voters, especially limited English proficient ones. Federal and state laws protect the rights of limited English proficient voters. AA&NHPI-serving CBOs have also played a critical role in increasing civic engagement among community members through nonpartisan voter mobilization campaigns.

Community concerns include outreach challenges to first-generation voters and gaining a cohesive AA&NHPI political identity. AA&NHPI could potentially represent up to 20% of Orange County voters but only currently comprise 14% of voters.[15] There are persistent barriers for political candidates and a lack of both strategic representation and sustainable political leadership. There is also a growing need to foster the next generation of civic leaders and to channel more philanthropists in supporting civic engagement initiatives.

Policy recommendations include the collection and reporting of disaggregated data on voter registration, party affiliation, and voter turnout. More funding should be directed to linguistically and culturally competent assistance for voter registration, naturalization, and nonpartisan voter programs. Redistricting, districting, and existing legislation (i.e., Federal Voting Rights Act and the California Voting Rights Act) are important tools for ensuring better political representation. Policy makers and community leaders should also focus on building a pipeline of AA&NHPI running for office, including the appointment of board members and commissioners as stepping stones to elected office, and developing a sense of civic participation at earlier ages.

Chapter 7: Civil Rights Advocacy

Orange County has an unfortunate and long history of anti-Asian sentiment and Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA) has handled a number of hate crimes and discrimination cases arising within the county. Anti-immigrant rhetoric in 2016 and 2017 was a concern for many of the community leaders interviewed but also highlights the leadership of AA&NHPI in fighting for civil rights and improving race relations within Orange County. Other assets include AA&NHPI leadership in coalition-building across different ethnic groups and working closely with Orange County's growing Muslim community. With attacks on Muslims and immigrants increasingly intertwined, many AA&NHPI and Muslim groups and leaders are now working together to support each other, finding strength in numbers.

"So [we do] a lot of educating policy makers and funders all the time that 'We're really different now. You can't lump us all together. And it's even more different. There's even more of a divide now. . . . [We're] really different! We're on a spectrum!'"

The community requires culturally competent immigration and naturalization services and an escalating need for services for the undocumented Asian American and Pacific Islander population. An estimated 52,000 undocumented immigrants in Orange County identify as Asian.[16] However, these numbers are inexact since this part of the Asian American community is largely hidden out of fear or shame and is consequently lacking access to critical services and programs. Despite deep trust with these communities over the years, nonprofit organizations are seeing that the fear extends to people refusing to seek health and social services, even when critically needed.

Other challenges are intertwined with the rising number of hate attacks and the corresponding difficulty in tracking and responding to these incidents. As diverse as Orange County is, it still has pockets that are a magnet for hate group activities, and hateful sentiments have become more visible in the current political climate. The 2016 report by the Council on American-Islamic Relations found that Orange County had the highest number of anti-Muslim incidents, including hate crimes and other discrimination, in the state (363 out of 1,556 reports), an increase of 68% from the previous year.[17] In light of this escalation, coalitions beyond the AA&NHPI communities should be strengthened in order to achieve broader and deeper impact.

Again, disaggregated data would avoid masking ethnic-specific issues and ensure that culturally and linguistically competent legal information and services are provided to AA&NHPI. Policy makers should support comprehensive immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship for the undocumented and secures citizenship for eligible AA&NHPI. There should also be culturally competent outreach and education on the importance of reporting hate incidents and support for cross-ethnic racial coalitions and community-based programs that prevent and respond to hate violence.

CONCLUSION

The most consistent theme throughout *Transforming Orange County* is the importance of disaggregated data in order to understand the nuanced diversity of the AA&NHPI community. Aggregated data masks significant disparities affecting specific ethnic groups, especially Southeast Asians and NHPI.

Another recurring theme is the deficiency of linguistically and culturally competent outreach and education materials and services for every subject covered in this report. Due to the diversity and complexity of the AA&NHPI population, each ethnic group within the AA&NHPI umbrella has unique linguistic and cultural needs.

Finally, the report highlights the importance of continuing to strengthen AA&NHPI-serving community agencies; cross-ethnic coalitions; and organizations that amplify the assets, needs, and voice of AA&NHPI community members. The majority of AA&NHPI are immigrants or refugees, and many have experienced the hate and racism rooted in myths of the "perpetual foreigner" or misconceptions of being an economic threat. Unfortunately, with ongoing economic, diplomatic, and other tensions with China, Pakistan, North Korea, and other Asia Pacific nations, AA&NHPI are likely to continue to experience escalated hate fanned by global events and political rhetoric.

NOTES

1. Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. The report draws on data from both primary and secondary sources, and in particular highlights the voices and experiences of 20 community leaders who live and work in Orange County. Please refer to the table listing the interviewed community leaders. Many of those interviewed became involved in the AA&NHPI community from the 1990s onward, and their insights highlight the emerging influence of AA&NHPI in Orange County during this time. We made significant efforts to include a broad cross-section of both Asian American and NHPI leaders and communities. Unfortunately, given limitations of resources and time, this report is not meant to be exhaustive in terms of issues or AA&NHPI-specific ethnic groups covered.

5. U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census SF1, Table QT-P6; 2010 Census SF1, Table QT-P6. Information from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

6. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census SF2, Table HCT2. Information from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

7. National Asian Pacific Center on Aging. 2013. "Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States Aged 55 Years and Older: Population, Nativity, and Language." *NAPCA Data Brief* 1 (1).

8. U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Survey of Business Owners, Table SB1200CSA01. Note: Business owners who identify as more than one race may be double counted in these estimates.

9. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables, Table DP03.

10. California Department of Education, 2016–2017. "Students by Ethnic Designation Table." Accessed on September 6, 2017, http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/.

11. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey Data 5-Year Estimates, Table S1501.

12. California Department of Education. 2011–2012. California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System. "Cohort Outcome Summary Report by Race/Ethnicity." Information from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*, Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

13. California Department of Public Health Death Public Use Files 2005–2010. Information taken from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

14. California Department of Public Health Death Public Use Files 2005–2010. Information taken from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

15. Kandil, Caitlin Yoshiko. 2016. "Asian Americans' Numbers and Political Influence Are Growing." *Los Angeles Times*, September 22, 2016, http://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/entertainment/tn-wknd-et-0925-asian-american-voting-20160903-story.html; Wisckcol, Martin. 2017. "O.C. Offers Example of GOP Outreach." *OC Register*, January 23, 2017, http://www.ocregister.com/2017/01/23/oc-offers-gop-example-of-asian-outreach/.

16. Passel, Jeffrey S., and D'veraa Cohn. 2017. "20 Metro Areas Are Home to Six-in-Ten Unauthorized Immigrants in U.S." Pew Research Factank News in the Numbers, February 9, 2017, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/02/09/us-metro-areas-unauthorized-immigrants/.

17. Council on American-Islamic Relations. 2016. *Civil Rights Report 2016*. Sacramento: Council on American-Islamic Relations.

Photo courtesy of Vattana Peong

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE ORANGE COUNTY

The diversity of Orange County, California, has made it a major destination that attracts new residents and tourists alike. It is now home to the third-largest Asian American & Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA&NHPI) population in the nation, which has changed the county's cultural, economic, religious, political, and social landscape. Of the almost 3.1 million people living in Orange County, over 600,000 individuals identify as Asian American and over 19,000 individuals identify as Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander. The county has also become increasingly diverse: 44% White, 34% Latino, 20% Asian American, 2% Black or African American, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.[1] From 2000 to 2010, Asian Americans grew by 41% and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders grew by 17%, higher than the total population growth of 6% in Orange County.

Within the AA&NHPI community, there are distinct cultures and histories, along with variations across ethnicities, occupations, incomes, generations, citizenship, immigration status, religious beliefs, political ideologies, and linguistic abilities. This diversity adds to the various assets that AA&NHPI bring to the region and impacts how to define and address the needs of AA&NHPI. The AA&NHPI community faces common issues and struggles across different ethnic groups; however, treatment as a monolithic racial group masks the unique needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable AA&NHPI.

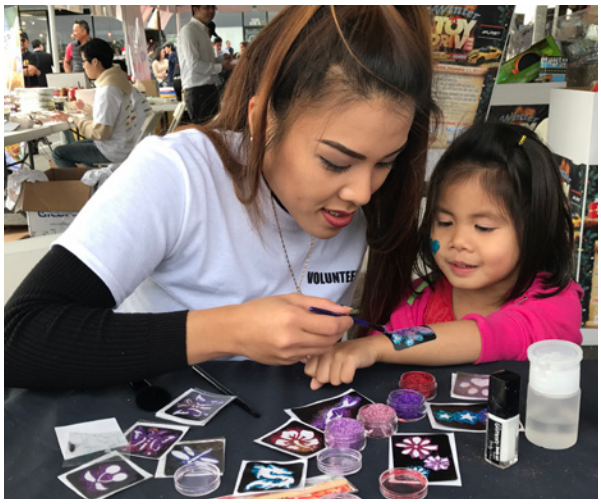

Photo courtesy of Tam Nguyen

To better understand the impact of these demographic changes on Orange County, this report highlights major assets and needs of the AA&NHPI communities in six key areas: building sustainable communities, economic development and disparities, K–12 and higher education, health care services, political participation and civic engagement, and civil rights advocacy. The issues raised in these topic areas are driven by the narratives of AA&NHPI community leaders who shared personal histories and provided insights about working with AA&NHPI communities across Orange County. The interviews, conducted in the spring of 2017 following the 2016 presidential election, reflect the tremendous political uncertainty for the future of AA&NHPI not just in the county but across the United States.

This report is intended to provide important opportunities to increase knowledge, foster dialogue, and reevaluate policies. Given the limitations of resources and time, this report is not meant to be comprehensive or exhaustive in terms of covering all the conditions facing or issues affecting the various ethnic groups. The main objective is to address the core issues about the assets and needs of these communities while being attentive to their long history in the county and the contemporary predicaments they face. We hope this will improve our understanding of the specific experiences of AA&NHPI communities and race relations more broadly in Orange County. This report provides key policy recommendations to further strengthen these assets and better address these needs to promote equity and improve the quality of life for all in the county.

METHODOLOGY

The data gathered for this report include primary and secondary sources. In contrast to past reports on AA&NHPI in Orange County, the research draws on interviews with 20 community leaders representing different ethnic groups and interests, including housing, business, education, health care, civic engagement, electoral politics, and political advocacy (see table).[2] Their years of experience working with diverse communities as well as residing in Orange County helped to shape this report. A majority of the interviewees were transplants to Orange County, arriving as the children of immigrant families or as adults who came to attend school or work, which reflects the demographic growth and transformation of the region.

Interviewed Community Leaders

Ellen Ahn	Executive director of Korean Community Services
Hussam Ayloush	Executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Greater Los Angeles Area Chapter (CAIR-LA)
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Mary Anne Foo	Founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Jei Garlitos	Principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District
Caroline Hahn	Past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association
Naz Hamid	Parent in Irvine; ran for the local school board
Ken Inouye	Former chair of the Orange County Human Relations Commission; past president of the national Japanese American Citizens League
Charles Kim	Cofounder and first executive director of the Korean American Coalition
Eduardo Lee	Cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco
Michael Matsuda	Superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District; founding member of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Tam Nguyen	Former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce; owner of Advance Beauty College; former president of the California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Alumni Association
Tricia Nguyen	CEO of Southland Integrated Services, formerly known as the Vietnamese Community of Orange County (VNCOC)
Jonathan Paik	Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center
Jane Pang	Cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Victor Pang	Cofounder of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Vattana Peong	Executive director of The Cambodian Family
Edwin Tiongson	Project director of ELEVATE AAPI (Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) at Irvine Valley College
Audrey Yamagata-Noji	Vice president of Student Services at Mount San Antonio College; served on the Santa Ana School Board for 25 years; volunteer with Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP)
Cyril Yu	Former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association; senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office; ran for the Irvine School Board

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

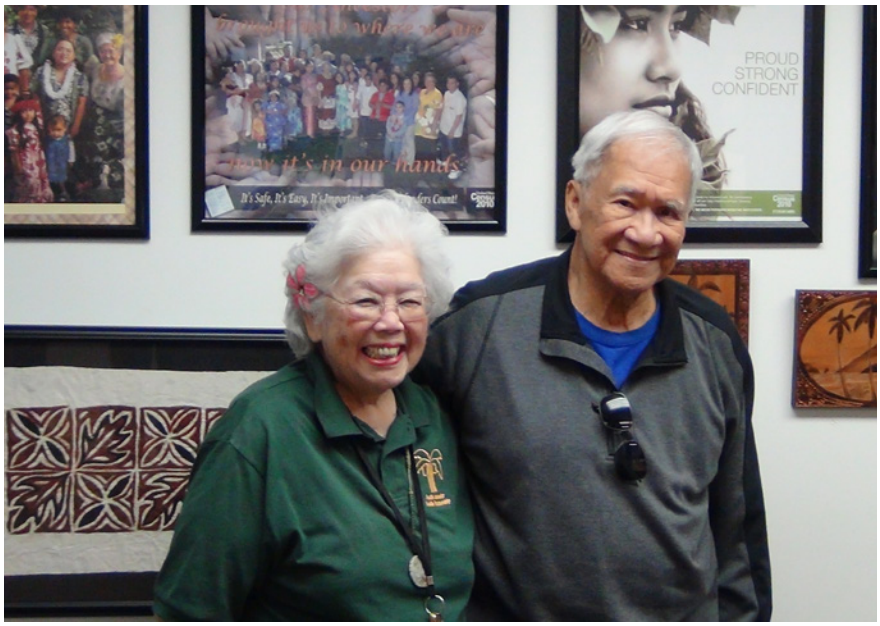

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

Most leaders became involved in the AA&NHPI community from the 1990s onward, highlighting the emergence of AA&NHPI as a growing influence in the county. These one- to two-hour interviews captured their life stories as well as their leadership work and observations of the community. Individuals were selected based on multiple recommendations and were able to provide an abundance of information about assets and needs, making this report unique in providing in-depth information and personal narratives about these key topics. Given the restriction of resources, we acknowledge that there are numerous leaders who have made a significant impact on the county that we could not interview, in addition to limitations in the ethnic representation of the interviewees. We hope that future studies can capture even more of the diversity of the population.[3] To supplement the interviews, this report also draws from a range of documents and publications available from governmental, academic, organizational, and media sources, providing additional information on the key areas that the community leaders identified during their interviews.

A LONG HISTORY IN ORANGE COUNTY: IMMIGRANTS, MIGRANTS, AND REFUGEES

Given the diversity of the population in Orange County, capturing the histories and contemporary experiences of all the different AA&NHPI ethnic groups is challenging. Ken Inouye, a third-generation Japanese American who grew up in Los Angeles and is a former chair of the Orange County Human Relations Commission and past president of the national Japanese American Citizens League, remarks that it is difficult to generalize about the history since "there are different generations and different periods of time that all the different Asian communities are here—we're not homogeneous." Mary Anne Foo, who is of Chinese and Japanese descent and is the founding executive director of the county's largest pan-Asian organization, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, speaks about this diversity:

> People have these stereotypes: 'Well, I see Asians driving nice cars. They're all wealthy.' I'm like, 'That's not true!' Or [people say,] 'I see these poor refugees who just can't get out of poverty and live on welfare, live on the taxpayer dime.' And I go, 'That's not true either.' So [we do]

> a lot of educating policymakers and funders all the time that, 'We're really different now. You can't lump us all together. And it's even more different. There's even more of a divide now. You have new immigrants, but you have these young families who have all moved here for education. . . . [We're] really different! We're on a spectrum!'

AA&NHPI are not a new group to the county and have a long history in the region. In the mid-1800s, Chinese immigrant laborers were recruited to construct the railroad and work in agriculture in California, and a number were lured to Orange County as well. On the West Coast and especially in California, anti-Chinese and anti-immigrant fears arose over the influx of Asian immigrants who were predominantly male and being paid lower wages. In fact, Asian immigrants were barred from becoming U.S. citizens, which perpetuated the stereotype of them as unassimilable. Common laborers were not allowed to bring their wives or children to ensure they would not settle permanently in the United States. Agriculturalists and industrialists purposely paid Asian workers lower wages in order to suppress wages for all workers. On the West Coast, where most Chinese laborers resided, anti-Chinese riots broke out, which led to mob violence. Chinese were beaten, some were murdered, and their homes were looted and destroyed. In 1906, city officials used an unsubstantiated rumor of a case of leprosy to justify burning down the Chinese area of Santa Ana, the largest in the county at the time. This pattern of agitation led the U.S. Congress to pass the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which is the only immigration legislation that targeted an ethnic group and barred further immigration of Chinese laborers. Subsequently, Japanese immigrant workers were recruited to replace the Chinese and worked to expand the railroad system, establish farms, and set up small businesses, which were dispersed throughout the county.

Similar to the anti-Chinese attitudes and policies, anti-Japanese sentiments eventually led to the restriction of further immigration from Japan in the early 1900s. However, with the backing of the more powerful Japanese government, male immigrant laborers from Japan were permitted to bring wives, resulting in the creation of families and a second generation. Many had converted to Christianity and created religious sites but also maintained their cultural practices by setting up Japanese language schools. Like other Asian immigrants, the Japanese were classified as "aliens ineligible for citizenship," and the 1913 Alien Land Act in California barred them from purchasing land or property, therefore causing them to rely on short-term leases. During World War II, Japanese Americans were incarcerated in detention camps, which devastated the community. Some returned to Orange County to reestablish their homes, businesses, and organizations in the postwar years.[4] Despite these anti-Japanese sentiments and policies, the Japanese were the largest Asian group in Orange County from 1910 through the1980s.[5] Laborers were also recruited from India, Korea, and the Philippines to California to build the infrastructure and work in agriculture. Some passed through the county

and faced a similar anti-Asian reception as the Chinese and Japanese had, although there is limited archival material on their experiences.

In the decades following the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, the Asian American population of Orange County began to substantially increase and diversify. This legislation eliminated the quota system based on national origin that unfairly disadvantaged Asian immigrants and instituted policies that gave preference for family reunification and skilled professionals. Starting in World War II, Asian immigrants were allowed to become U.S. citizens, and as a result of the 1965 Act, many could sponsor their family members as immigrants. As individuals sponsored their wives or husbands, brothers and sisters, and mothers and fathers to join them, who in turn sponsored more relatives, the community began to expand. Others were able to immigrate because they had professional skills such as nursing or medicine as well as computer or technology skills, which were desired by the United States. The War Brides Act also granted special permission to members of the U.S. Armed Forces to sponsor their Asian wives to immigrate to the United States. These military brides, who had met their husbands while the men served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, further increased the population with the birth of multiethnic and multiracial children.

While there is an early history of restrictive policies toward Asian immigration, since the 1800s, the U.S. government has encouraged students from Asia to study in American universities. Some of these students have found employment and have become permanent residents in the United States. More recently, Asian immigrants have also used special programs such as the EB-5 program created in 1990, which grants green cards if there is a capital investment of at least $1 million in a commercial enterprise and the creation of at least 10 jobs. Some highly skilled Asian workers, especially in the high-tech industries, are also arriving in the county as temporary workers on special H-1B visas, with some managing to find permanent employment and residency. This growth reflects Asian Americans who are migrants from other counties or states and are attracted to the county because of the availability of economic and educational opportunities.

Currently over one-third of the population in Orange County is foreign-born. Combined, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Latino communities make up more than 50% of this population. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are also primarily immigrant communities as 65% of Asian Americans and 21% of Pacific Islanders living in Orange County were born outside of the United States.[6] The foreign-born population is a mix of both old and new immigrants, with close to a quarter being recent immigrants. Additionally, 23% of Asian immigrants and 26% of Pacific Islander immigrants entered the country in 2000 or later.[7] Nearly 1,700 Asian refugees arrived between 2002 and 2012; almost all were from Southeast Asian countries. Nearly 1,400 were from Vietnam, and almost 200 were from Burma/Myanmar, with the Burmese/Myanmar American population count at 855

in 2010.[8] Moreover, there is an estimate of 52,000 undocumented Asian Americans living in Orange County.[9] There are also smaller numbers of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean immigrants arriving from South America, where their families had originally immigrated, which adds to the complexity of the Asian American demographics within the county. Thus, immigration and migration is not just part of the history of AA&NHPI but continues to shape AA&NHPI communities in the county today.

Within the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities, there is variation in how the population is classified, which reflects the history of U.S. colonization and militarization in the Pacific. Some Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander groups are citizens by birth, while others are naturalized citizens, and some are permanent residents or green card holders and U.S. nationals. For example, Native Hawaiians are U.S. citizens by birth, and Chamorros from Guam, a U.S. territory, are also classified as U.S. citizens. The Marshall Islands were originally a U.S. territory following World War II and gained independence in 1986. They have been a part of the Compact of Free Association (COFA) with the United States since 1983, which was revised in 2004. Under this agreement Marshallese are labeled as "non-immigrants" and are not considered legal citizens but can live and work in the United States legally without applying for a visa. Tongans and Samoans must apply for legal permanent resident status to legally live and work in the United States. Those born in American Samoa, which has been a U.S. territory since 1900, are classified as U.S. nationals and do not have birthright citizenship but can apply for citizenship and have the right to reside in other parts of the United States. Different Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities have settled in Orange County for occupational and educational opportunities or to rejoin family members, with some migrating from surrounding counties, and others finding their way to the region because of their higher-than-average numbers of enlistees in the U.S. military.

"Because there are different generations and different periods of time that all the different Asian communities are here, we're not homogeneous."

DIVERSITY OF CONTEMPORARY COMMUNITIES

Today Orange County is home to many different AA&NHPI ethnic groups. A number of community leaders who grew up in Orange County in the 1960s through the 1980s, when the county was predominantly White and before the influx of immigrants and refugees, recall being one of the only Asian Americans in their respective neighborhoods. It was not so long ago that Asians from Orange County drove to Los Angeles County to eat in ethnic restaurants or shop for ethnic groceries as well as to attend ethnic cultural and religious events. Eduardo Lee, who is of Chinese descent and cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco, grew up in Newport Beach and was one of two Asian families in his neighborhood in the 1970s. He recalls how his father, a restaurant owner and chef, would often visit Los Angeles Chinatown for socializing and supplies for his restaurant: "The only Chinese community was still in downtown LA. There was no other community. There was

no Garden Grove. There was not a Monterey Park. But as we got older and older, that influx of [Asians came, so] Garden Grove became sort of [a hub], Westminster became a hub."

Similarly, Caroline Hahn, a second-generation Korean American who is past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association, was one of a handful of Asian Americans in her elementary school in Huntington Beach. She remembers how, as the child of immigrants from South Korea, she noticed differences among the Asian immigrant families and those who had been in the United States for multiple generations: "There was a boy [at my school] who was Japanese American. . . . [I remember] thinking, 'Oh he's Asian as well.' But he was, I believe, fifth-generation Japanese American, so his parents spoke English very well, and I understood that's different from my parents." Thus, the ethnic diversity in Orange County also reflects differences between U.S.-born ethnic groups and new immigrants.

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

While the Chinese, Japanese, and to a lesser extent Filipino American, communities were the most prominent Asian communities in the county for many decades, Orange County is unique because it is home to the largest concentration of Vietnamese Americans in the United States, with a population of almost 200,000. Vietnamese Americans are also the largest Asian ethnic group in the county, making up approximately one-third of the Asian American population.[10] Michael Matsuda, a third-generation Japanese American who grew up in Garden Grove in the 1960s and is superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District, observes that "it's almost night and day from when I was a child until now. The Asian Pacific [Islander] population has exploded, mainly through the Vietnamese population." Given U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, those who were allied with the United States sought refuge in America when the war ended in 1975, with later waves arriving as "boat people" refugees and immigrants through the 2000s. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, Vietnamese refugees were temporarily settled at the Camp Pendleton Marine base nearby in San Diego County, and a number were sponsored by individuals and religious or charitable organizations for permanent settlement in Orange County. Given their limited resources, many Vietnamese gravitated to Westminster, Garden Grove, and Santa Ana where the rental prices for residential and commercial properties were more affordable.

Korean Americans make up the second-largest Asian ethnic group in Orange County and in 2010 numbered over 94,000. Ellen Ahn, a 1.5-generation Korean

American who grew up in Los Angeles Koreatown and is the executive director of Korean Community Services, explains that in the 1980s and 1990s the Korean secondary migration pattern was that "you settle in [Los Angeles] Koreatown, and then when you kind of 'make it,' you come to Orange County. . . . A lot of Koreans come to Orange County for the better school districts—it's the burbs. So a lot of Koreans settled in this north part of the county in the '80s and '90s." Charles Kim, who cofounded and was the first executive director of the Korean American Coalition in Los Angeles in 1983, also describes the differences between the Los Angeles and Orange County Korean American communities: "More successful people are here in Orange County, especially Irvine. Even though it's kind of far, but they have their business in LA, but they live in Irvine. . . . There are more successful and settled people here than [those in] Koreatown in LA. So Koreatown here is kind of a little bit different." In addition, the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest, which was a racial and economic conflict in which many Korean businesses were destroyed, spurred migration out of Los Angeles and into the central and northern areas of Orange County, including Garden Grove, Fullerton, and Buena Park. The Korean American population in Orange County represents a mix of foreign-born (73%), many who arrived through the Immigration Act of 1965, and U.S.-born individuals (27%).[11] Over 60% of Korean Americans reported in 2005 that they had lived in the United States for longer than 15 years.[12]

The Filipino American community is the third-largest Asian American ethnic group in Orange County with over 89,000 in 2010 but does not have large ethnic concentrations. U.S. colonization of the Philippines historically impacts current migration patterns and the characteristics of the population. Earlier immigrants came as laborers, but since World War II, others came to the United States through their careers in the U.S. military. Given their English language skills and Western-based educational training in their homeland, Filipino immigrants have also been recruited to work in the medical fields, especially as nurses. Others have immigrated through the family reunification program. While the Filipino American community does not have ethnic concentrations like the Vietnamese and Korean American communities, there are Filipino businesses scattered around the county. Most notable is the Seafood City Supermarket, which is a large Filipino chain market that recently opened in Irvine and serves the growing Filipino American population.

Edwin Tiongson, project director of ELEVATE AAPI (Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) at Irvine Valley College, notes that since Filipinos are dispersed throughout Orange County, it makes it harder for them to build cohesion: "Where we live, our Filipino groups are a little fragmented, not as visible, maybe not as mobilized." Jei Garlitos, principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District, elaborates on the generational gaps and how they contributed to some of those difficulties but that they also allow for the possibility of bridging between cultures:

> I think the biggest thing, at least in the Filipino American community, that I appreciate is trying to bridge the gap between those two generations. I think in the past I recall where there was a bit of a disconnect between the Filipino American kid that grew up or was born and raised here, didn't have that connection, or was not as well versed within their particular culture, the Filipino culture. And then you had these parents who were upset at that because they forgot this culture. And I think there's this in-between generation, whether it's myself that was not born here but kind of grew up here, and now those second-generation Filipinos, as we come to our 20s and 30s and 40s, I feel like our community, our purpose, has been to marry the two, to marry this Filipino culture with this American [culture].

The Chinese American population is similarly geographically dispersed and the fourth-largest Asian ethnic group in Orange County. While the Chinese, along with the Japanese, have been in Orange County for over a century, the Chinese American community has become more internally complex, ranging from those whose ancestors arrived five generations ago to recent immigrants. During periods of economic and political turmoil in mainland China and Taiwan during the Cold War era, select students and professionals were allowed to permanently settle in the United States, with some making Orange County their home. After the passing of the 1965 Immigration Act, Chinese immigrated from various countries through programs for family reunification and skilled workers. In 2010, over 84,000 individuals in Orange County said they identified as Chinese and almost 14,000 as Taiwanese. In addition to China and Taiwan, recent Chinese immigrants have arrived from Hong Kong and Southeast Asian countries including Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Demographic statistics tend to mask these national origin distinctions; many ethnically identify as Chinese, but they have distinct migration patterns as well as different linguistic and cultural practices.

Cyril Yu, senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office and former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association, describes how the internal diversity that is reflective of the different immigration waves has led to differences in how community leaders are defining the Chinese American community identity in Orange County:

> You're also seeing the Taiwanese community evolving to figure out how the mainland Chinese community fits into this puzzle. Because for 40 years or for 30 years they really didn't have this conundrum to deal with. And now they're dealing with individuals who want to kind of set up their own institutions, who have their own ways of teaching Chinese that's different than the Taiwanese, who politically see the world very differently. And so you don't have natural coalitions because we're all Chinese. In fact, you have the opposite. . . . It's an evolution

> that's happening that we're still not sure where it's going to go. But we know just from sheer numbers that there's more mainland Chinese that's going to come over that will numerically overwhelm the existing Taiwanese community, which already overwhelmed the existing Hong Kong Cantonese community. So their leadership really does kind of evolve based on who the dominant group is, and we haven't seen that dynamic play out entirely. And so it's something that's a big question mark moving forward.

In 2010, the Japanese American population in Orange County was 48,225, making it the fifth-largest Asian American population. Fewer immigrants have been arriving from Japan in more recent decades. However, the population is expanding primarily from the growing U.S.-born population; the community now has multiple generations, including a growing fourth and an emerging fifth generation. Among those immigrating from Japan, there are international students and Japanese corporations with employees, and some temporary workers, that have also contributed to the population growth. Although residentially dispersed across the county, Japanese markets as well as active ethnic organizations and events in different parts of the county continue to attract community members to the region.

"It's almost night and day from when I was a child until now. The Asian Pacific [Islander] population has exploded."

The South Asian American community is unique within the Asian American community because it represents multiple ethnic groups from different countries. South Asians are also residentially dispersed throughout the county and although there are some businesses scattered locally, areas just outside of the county—such as Artesia in Los Angeles County—offer a flourishing South Asian commercial district and attract South Asians to the county. While Asian Indians make up the largest ethnic group with a population of over 45,000, the rest of the ethnic groups collectively are one of the fastest-growing Asian American communities in Orange County, with Pakistanis at 6,000, Sri Lankans at 1,500, Bangladeshi at 945, and Nepalese at 300. From 2000 to 2010, the Bangladeshi American community grew by over 118%, along with significant growth in the Sri Lankan (81%) and Pakistani American (69%) communities as well.[13] Shikha Bhatnagar, who immigrated from India as a child and is the executive director of the South Asian Network, explains that the diversity is not just based on national origin but religion:

> So the South Asian community basically represents all major faiths. . . . It's because South Asia is a product of many millennia of conquerors and people coming through, and so we do have significant portions, of course, of Hindus, Muslims. You also have Buddhists, a lot of Christians in our community, a lot of Jains. And also I should mention even though they're not really present in our community, but in India, [they] specifically had a thriving Jewish population.

The South Asian American grouping thus encompasses an extremely diverse population; South Asians include those who have been here for generations as well

as newcomers who are practitioners of different faiths, speak various languages, originate from different regions, and have different class backgrounds.

Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Greater Los Angeles Area Chapter (CAIR-LA), is of Syrian ancestry and immigrated from Lebanon to Texas in 1989 to pursue his college education. He moved to Orange County in 1993, along with his wife who is Muslim of Mexican descent, and became active in the Muslim American community, which included working with other Muslims to establish a mosque in Anaheim. Ayloush recognizes how the Muslim community in Orange County is unique compared with the rest of the United States and reflective of the county's Asian American diversity and growth:

> In Orange County [in contrast to other areas in the United States], we have much less African American Muslims, much less African Americans in general. So probably the number in Orange County would be my guess is probably closer to 40% Asian American–South Asian . . . . So South Asian 40 to 45% and that's Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi for the most part, some Burmese, and another 35% Arab. . . . The South Asian community, . . . in addition to the Malaysian Muslims and Chinese Muslims, . . . a large, huge Cham community in Orange County [who are] Vietnamese and Cambodian [Muslim], . . . Orange County is actually home to a lot larger than usual Cham community.

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

Other Southeast Asian Americans also reside in Orange County; in 2010 there were 7,072 Cambodian, 5,288 Thai, 4,356 Indonesian, 3,053 Laotian, and 456 Malaysian Americans. While a smaller population compared with the Vietnamese, Cambodian refugees also began to settle in Santa Ana in the 1980s. They were displaced by the Vietnam War, which spread into their country, and are survivors of violence and trauma in the aftermath of the Cambodian genocide in which one quarter of the population was massacred. Vattana Peong, who immigrated from Cambodia and is the executive director of The Cambodian Family, describes the current diversity and geographic dispersal of this community:

> Santa Ana has the highest number of Cambodians, about 3,000. But in Orange County we have close to 10,000, and they're all scattered around, so it's hard for us when we do outreach and education activity. So those have to be tailored to them as well, and that is a challenge. . . . It has been important to build trust and relationships to work with the ethnic minorities within the Cambodian community. . . . In our Cambodian community in Santa Ana, we have Muslim Cambodians and we have Chinese Cambodian. We have Cambodian Cambodian. But we have been able to work with everybody. . . . We have a policy of being inclusive regardless of your religious belief or cultural belief.

As a result of displacement caused by the Vietnam War, refugees from Laos, including Hmong groups, many of whom suffered wartime trauma, also arrived as refugees to the county. In 2010, they numbered 1,200 and are residentially dispersed in the county.

While Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) make up a small percentage of the total county population (less than 1%), Southern California is home to the largest NHPI concentration outside of Hawai`i and the Pacific Islands. Orange County is home to the fifth-largest NHPI population in California.[14] In 2010 in Orange County, Native Hawaiians numbered 6,256, Samoans 5,205, Guamanians/Chamorros 2,610, Tongans 883, Marshallese 495, and Fijians 296. Jane Pang, cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership, notes the different NHPI communities in the county as well as smaller communities that have settled in Orange County have not always been recognized in demographic statistics because of their small size and the general lack of data disaggregation:

> We're probably the most rapidly growing community. And the Samoans have quadrupled, I think, throughout the West Coast. . . . Hawai`i who has the largest population. [There is also] the Compact of Free Association [countries], so they're—the Marshallese, Chuukese, Federal State of Micronesia, Palau. And these are all the Micronesian communities. . . . The other group would be the Tongans, who are probably the next-largest group in the area. The Melanesians are here, probably families are too, they . . . aren't that large. Papua New Guinean. Fijian is a fairly nice [size] group, and I think they just got disaggregated, added to the disaggregation list. So Fijians here in California now have been looked at [as a distinct community].

While there is currently a small Marshallese community in the county, it is important to note that at one point the community was larger. Costa Mesa used to be a major hub for the Marshallese community across Southern California, whose members would attend the local churches in this area.[15]

The historical and contemporary overview of the AA&NHPI population is further discussed throughout each of the chapters in this report. Each chapter highlights the major assets of AA&NHPI communities, followed by the unmet needs of the communities. The report thus emphasizes the many contributions and resources that AA&NHPI bring to the county, which are often overlooked, while also identifying the significant issues that are concurrently impacting these communities. Each chapter concludes with policy recommendations, which we expect will be expanded and refined further through discussions and dialogue that can, we hope, lead to more concrete solutions.

The complexities of the AA&NHPI population clearly justify the collection of more disaggregated data and community narratives that can raise awareness about

the diverse experiences of AA&NHPI communities. We hope that this report provides information that can be useful to community members, community leaders, policy makers, researchers, educators, the media, and other key stakeholders, and that it will facilitate more awareness about the changing landscape of Orange County and be a source for positive transformations. Ultimately we encourage more conversations with AA&NHPI about how we can collectively create a more vibrant and equitable community.

NOTES

1. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census SF1, Tables P5 and P6. Percentages for each racial group include both single race and multiracial people, except for Whites, which is single race, non-Latino or Hispanic.

2. Most work in Orange County; however, they may work for an organization that serves the greater Southern California region such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-LA), which covers the greater Los Angeles area and is headquartered in Anaheim in Orange County, or may be based outside Orange County such as the South Asian Network, which is located in Artesia in Los Angeles County but serves Orange County as well. All are AANHPI except for Hussam Ayloush, executive director of CAIR-LA, who is Syrian raised in Lebanon, whose organization also serves AA&NHPI Muslims.

3. We recognize "Asian Americans" and "Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders" are two distinct categories, each having been socially and politically constructed, and whose meaning has shifted over time and in different contexts. Scholars, organizations, institutions, and community members have vastly differing views on this grouping. Attuned to these perspectives and to the parameters of Orange County, we tried to make this an inclusive study that found commonalities but also to parse out some major differences within and between these groups.

4. For more info, see Arthur A. Hansen's collections of Japanese American oral histories in Orange County available through The Lawrence de Graaf Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. http://coph.fullerton.edu/collections/JAcollections.php.

5. UC Irvine Libraries. 2009. "Demographics." *Immigrant Lives in the OC & Beyond*. UCI Libraries. https://www.lib.uci.edu/sites/all/exhibits/immigrant/index.php?page=section_2.

6. This statement refers to the impacted population as Asian American and Pacific Islander instead of AA&NHPI because Hawai'i statehood classifies Native Hawaiians as U.S. citizens and not immigrants. AAPI Data. n.d. "Nativity by County," accessed September 6, 2017, http://aapidata.com/stats/county-data/nativity-county-aa/.

7. Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census STF1, Table SE:T15. Information from Social Explorer Census 1990 tables, accessed November 15, 2017, https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/C1990/R11522541]; AAPI Data. n.d. "Detailed Origin for Asians by County (Asian Am)," accessed September 6, 2017, http://aapidata.com/stats/county-data/detailed-origin-for-asians-by-county/.

11. California State University, Fullerton; Children and Families Commission of Orange County; and Korean Community Services. 2008. *Profiles of the Korean American Community in Orange County* (December). Orange County, CA: CSUF, Children and Families Commission of Orange County, Korean Community Services.

12. Ibid.

13. U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census SF1, Tables P8, PCT7, and PCT10; 2010 Census SF1, Tables P5, PCT7, and PCT10; 2010 Census SF2, Table PCT1. Information from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

14. Empowering Pacific Islander Communities, and Asian Americans Advancing Justice. 2014. *Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders: A Community of Contrasts in California*, Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

15. WINCART. n.d. *The Collaborative, Past Present Future,* Fullerton, CA: California State University, Fullerton.

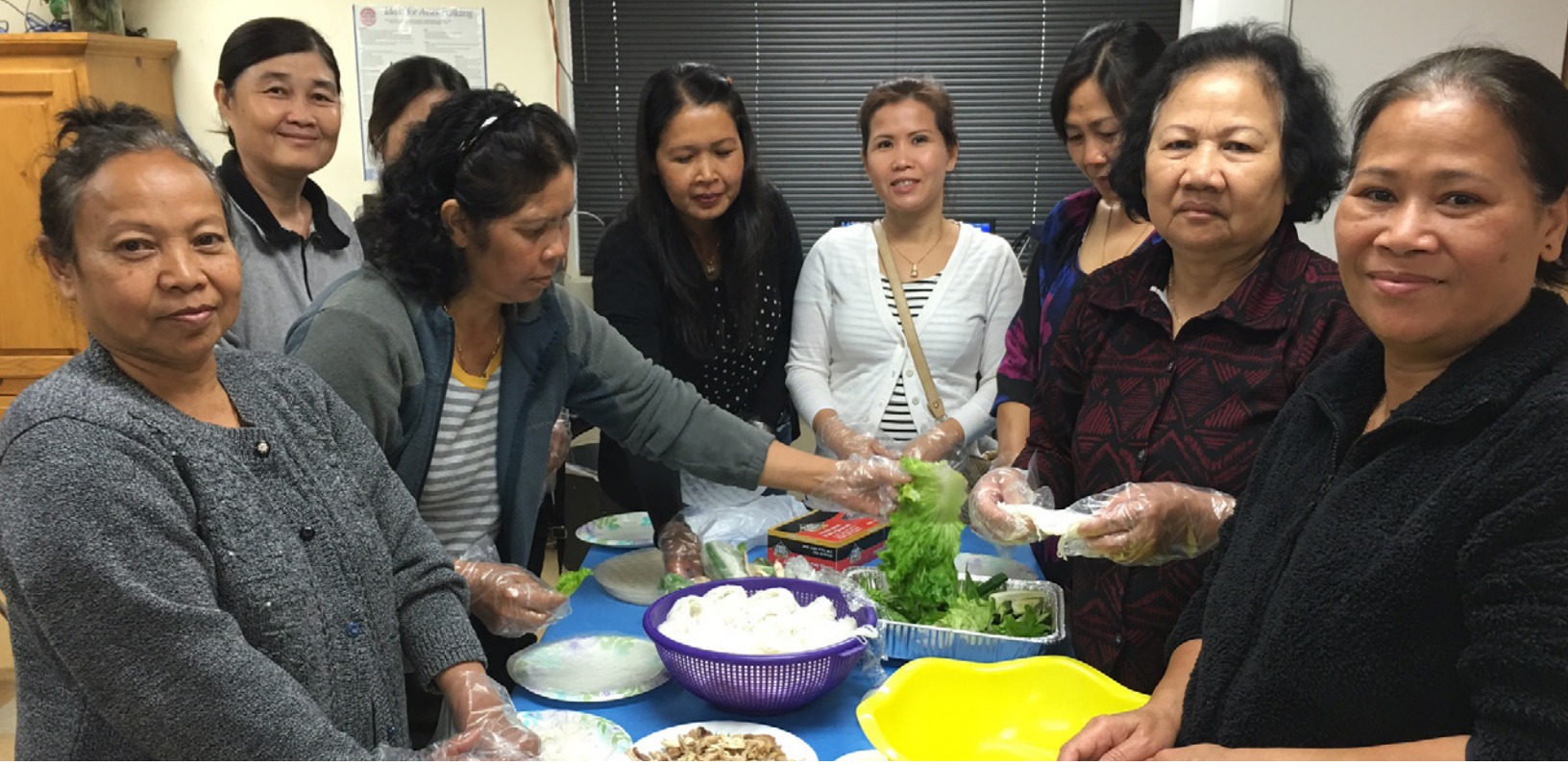

Photo courtesy of Vattana Peong

CHAPTER 2

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE ORANGE COUNTY

Orange County continues to be a place that attracts Asian Americans & Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AA&NHPI) because of its Pacific Rim location, temperate climate, quality of public education, employment opportunities, and well-established ethnic communities. As they settled in different cities in Orange County, AA&NHPI also established businesses and institutions that not only serve ethnic community members but also bring new residents to these areas. These amenities continue to attract AA&NHPI, including an increasing number of Asians from other countries, to Orange County. Despite these residential shifts that suggest the county is becoming a more multicultural and diverse area, AA&NHPI still face persistent discrimination and segregation. In addition, the county is now one of the most expensive places to live in the United States. The increasing housing prices may jeopardize the residential stability and security of many middle- and low-income AA&NHPI homeowners and renters, which include families and elderly immigrants.

ASSETS

Residential Growth

Orange County attracts AA&NHPI residents who want to live in areas with diverse neighbors, businesses, and community institutions as well as good public schools. As Mary Anne Foo, who is of Chinese and Japanese descent and the founding executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, explains, "People are moving to Orange County because of the lifestyle, because of the schools, because of the family focus. And so a lot of people, immigrants were coming here because of Little Saigon, because of Koreatown, because of the Chinese area in Irvine. And so they still come for that, but they also come for the lifestyle and the family, so we saw a lot of people moving in." While many AA&NHPI residents are from other locations, including those who attended local colleges and opted to stay in the county, a good number were raised here and want to be near their families. They see Orange County as a place that not only provides employment and educational opportunities but also has attractive mainstream and Asian American institutions and businesses.

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

The Vietnamese and Korean communities in Orange County are the largest and most visible communities with large concentrations in multiple cities, while other AA&NHPI ethnic groups in Orange County are generally more geographically dispersed.[1] From 2000 to 2010, the Asian American population increased in every city in Orange County. Among cities with at least 10,000 Asian Americans, Irvine (99%), Yorba Linda (56%), Cypress (54%), Tustin (53%), and Fullerton (52%) had the highest percentage of Asian American population growth. Among cities with

at least 400 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, Irvine (66%), Cypress (46%), Huntington Beach (44%), Tustin (40%), and Lake Forest (38%) experienced the highest percentage of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population growth.[2] Some with more expendable incomes, including single, young professionals, are also taking advantage of newly constructed rental units in the county, which may lead to the continued growth and dispersal of AA&NHPI throughout Orange County. Whether as renters or homeowners, AA&NHPI infuse dollars into the local neighborhoods and economy by purchasing goods and services while also helping to create community institutions and spaces that serve the growing population.

The reputation of good school districts and low crime rates, especially in other suburban areas such as Buena Park and Fullerton, continues to be a major attraction for Asian Americans, both new immigrants and U.S.-born generations. Many Korean Americans moved to Orange County after migrating from the Los Angeles area in search of educational opportunities. Charles Kim, cofounder and first executive director of the Korean American Coalition, explains that specific areas in North Orange County that are accessible to major freeways were also more desirable than cities in South Orange County because of its proximity to Los Angeles Koreatown:

> Cerritos [on the border of Orange County but in Los Angeles County] became a very popular area with a heavy Korean population. And then now actually this area, Buena Park–Fullerton area, became the hub of Orange County's Koreatown. That used to be like the Irvine area. We have two Korean Americans [mayors who have] served the city of Irvine, but Irvine is kind of too far down [south]. And now everybody thinks that this, Fullerton area is a good school district, easy access to LA, . . . and also to the [Los Angeles International] airport area, so this is a very popular area. There are many people actually coming, even though they work in Koreatown [in Los Angeles], they live here.

The multiethnic services available in Orange County's major cities have become an asset that attracts more residents to the county. The city of Irvine is expected to become the largest city in the continental United States with a predominantly Asian population.[3] Incorporated in 1971, the city has established a master-planned community that was predominantly White, but by 1980, AA&NHPI made up 8% of the population; by 1990 it rose to 18%, and by 2000 it climbed to 30%. With a total population of 238,474, Irvine is 40% Asian (96,341) and is also distinct as it is not dominated by one Asian ethnic group.[4] The Asian population is 33% Chinese (31,728), 19% Korean (18,744), 15% Asian Indian (14,476), 10% Vietnamese (9,280), 8% Filipino (7,822), and 6% Japanese (6,213).[5] Naz Hamid, an Irvine parent of Indian and Afghani heritage who moved to the city in 2003 and who came to California initially as an international student from Pakistan, shares her observations: "I've seen a huge shift—a really big shift. When we moved here, it

was very difficult to find an Asian restaurant. It was very difficult to find a dentist or a doctor who was Asian. But I think now it is easier to locate one, whether you're looking for a Pakistani doctor or a Chinese doctor. It's much easier to find someone you feel you can identify with."

Emergence of Ethnic Neighborhoods and Cultural Amenities

The growing AA&NHPI residential population has helped to establish ethnic centers throughout Orange County with community-serving businesses and institutions. Eduardo Lee, who is of Chinese descent and cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco, grew up in South Orange County at a time when there were few Asians in the area. He comments on the growth of the Asian markets throughout Orange County:

> There were no Asian markets growing up. Now you got one in almost every-other mile kind of a thing. It's becoming like totally normal. The bottom of the hill [in Irvine] is a Korean market now. It used to be Ralph's. Then it became something else, [a] Persian [market]. Now it's Zion [Market, a Korean grocery store]. . . . The first Asian market that opened used to be packed. It was 99 [Ranch Market] and I think . . . [in] Garden Grove. . . . We used to drive out there!

Today there are large Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, and Vietnamese markets and business chains dispersed across the county. In addition to ethnic markets, ethnic religious institutions—such as Christian churches, Buddhist temples, Muslim mosques, Hindu temples, and Sikh gurdwaras—and organizations, from cultural organizations to ethnic-based chambers of commerce, have been established throughout Orange County. These businesses and institutions signify the concentration of ethnic residents in these places and are assets attracting additional residents to these areas.

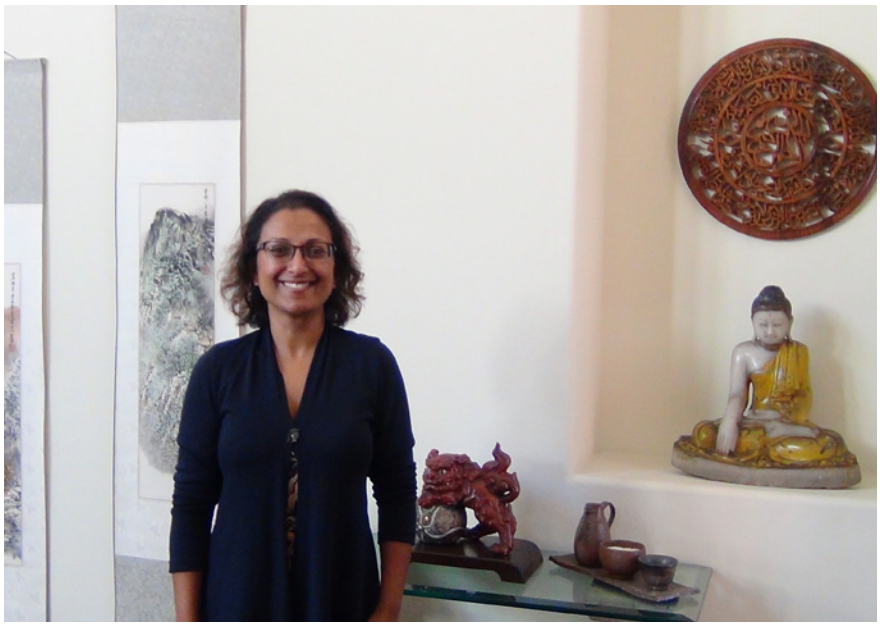

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

Starting in the late 1970s and 1980s, Little Saigon emerged as a new ethnic enclave in central Orange County. Tam Nguyen, former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce and the second-generation owner of the family business, Advance Beauty College, recalls visiting Little Saigon as a child and realizing the importance of personal and cultural connections for newcomers that contributed to the community's expansion:

> We would come down to Little Saigon . . . what I guess [were] the beginnings of Little Saigon back then, so that we could go to the service areas where we could send things back to their families, whether it's money or things or items, necessity items. Obviously, the ability to buy groceries that were important to our culture, that my mom and dad were familiar with, [and] to also meet with their friends. . . . They were always keen on was learning the language and culture for [my sister] and I. . . . Mom and Dad wanted to expose us to as many Vietnamese friends and family as possible on weekends, knowing that we didn't have that during the weekdays. So those were kind of motivators for my parents to really reconnect.

Nguyen points out how Little Saigon was an important social and cultural center for the community, especially for Vietnamese refugees who had suddenly been uprooted and could now connect with co-ethnics who shared similar experiences of having to build a new life in another country. Parents who wanted their children to retain the language and culture were attracted to living near the Vietnamese language classes that were held in the Little Saigon vicinity on weekends.

This scenario was similar for other immigrant groups as well. Cyril Yu, senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office and former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association, describes how the largest Chinese school in Southern California was started in Irvine in 1976:

> It started off like many of the cultural language schools, the heritage language schools, in California, and even the ones I was used to growing up in Northern California and Southern California. You had families that got together that basically built their own school. They would rent facilities from the local school district, and they would hold weekend classes. . . . They evolved from a small school and eventually rented out University High School . . . [in Irvine because they] needed more space as it grew . . . [and] the school board raised the rent.

The Chinese American community thought the rent increase was unfair and galvanized to create its own multifunctional 44,000-square-foot community space. Yu further elaborates:

> As a [Chinese] community, they were mad. . . . It was at that time that the community leaders said, 'Can we raise money to build our own school?' And there was this huge funding drive that was put together. . . . This was in the 2000s. That generation that had started this Chinese school 40 years ago, they were established in their careers. They were now making very good money, and they knew how to raise money in this system. They understood from working with different

> community groups how to talk to the Irvine Company to get them the land [in Irvine] that they ended up buying for the school, and how to fund-raise for this project and get it through the city. . . . You had people that were . . . lawyers and accountants and business people. . . . You had a community that was able to pull together to do this, and they built what eventually became the South Coast Chinese Cultural Center. . . . You had this building of the center that last year celebrated its ten-year anniversary as kind of a legacy project of a community that had been here for 40 years.

Not only did the Chinese American community learn how to work together and mobilize its resources and networks, it also established an important community center that makes the county more welcoming to Chinese American residents and is also available for use by the broader community.

Homeownership and Asian Overseas Investments

Orange County has received attention for attracting overseas investors from Asia who are capitalizing on the housing market. Even during the recent economic recession or downturn, areas in Orange County with high percentages of Asian Americans maintained their real estate values, and many homebuyers continue to be overseas Asians or Asian Americans. More upscale developments with new luxury homes are attracting a more affluent population. For example, approximately 75% of the buyers of the Five Point Communities' Pavilion Park project at the Orange County Great Park in Irvine are recent Asian immigrants or overseas Asian investors.[6] Real estate developers are now marketing to Asian buyers with advertisements featuring photos of Asian families and designing homes with feng shui concepts, wok or spice kitchens with enclosed kitchen areas for cooking pungent foods, and in-law suites to accommodate multigenerational families.

Irvine is one of the top-three cities for residential investment by mainland Chinese along with San Francisco and Los Angeles.[7] Homebuyers from China, Hong Kong, India, Taiwan, and other Asian countries pay cash for their homes with quick escrows. They are thus being sought after as buyers by real estate agents who sell homes in Anaheim Hills, Buena Park, La Palma, Newport Coast, Tustin, and Yorba Linda. Some purchase homes as a safe haven for their money or as a place where their children can attend school. Real estate companies advertise and set up satellite offices in Asian countries; Asians are thus familiar with the housing market and amenities in the county even before they arrive as immigrants. Charles Kim of the Korean American Coalition explains how Koreans became attracted to Orange County through publicity in South Korea: "Those who send their kids here [think], 'Yeah Orange County is really good. There's a lot of good schools, easy to find a place to live, and at the same time, a good shopping area.' So it's kind of there are the personal contacts here—they tell them in Korea—so they come here."

The overseas investment has also increased property values. This trend has benefits for current property owners and the county, which will have more public funds through property taxes. However, the housing market has also raised concerns about future housing affordability and availability in Orange County.[8]

NEEDS

Persistent Anti-Asian Sentiment

The history and persistence of AA&NHPI discrimination highlights how AA&NHPI may still be treated as if they do not belong in Orange County, despite their contributions. In the early 20th century, Asians were discouraged from settling in Orange County because of fears that they posed an economic threat. In 1906, the modest Chinatown in Santa Ana was burned to the ground, justified by city officials based on an unsubstantiated rumor of a case of leprosy. During the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, unfounded suspicions that they were potential enemies caused many Japanese Americans to lose their homes, businesses, and farms, which were dispersed throughout the county.

Michael Matsuda, a Japanese American who was born in Orange County and grew up in Garden Grove in the 1960s, is superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District. He shares his parents' story of how they returned to Orange County following World War II but had difficulty finding housing until they met a family who did not hold discriminatory views of Japanese Americans:

> My mom and my dad recall trying to rent an apartment and as soon as she [my mom] showed up, they would basically slam the door on her face [saying] 'No Japs' [a racially derogatory term for Japanese or Japanese Americans]. So she got so frustrated on the phone she would just say, 'I'm Japanese,' and [she received] a lot of hang-ups. But there was one family who said, 'Well, come on. We'd like to meet you.' So my mom and my dad met this very kind *hakujin* family, the White family, in Garden Grove. Their names were Michael and Bertha Andres. And of course my name is Michael Bert, so I'm named after them. They were the one family who said it didn't bother them to rent to Japanese Americans. And in fact, Mr. Andres cosigned the loan for my dad to get furniture. So my mom always, during when I grew up in Garden Grove, I had to deal with a lot of prejudice, she would always remind me that there are these White people who helped us.

Race relations have improved, but anti-Asian resentment persisted as Asian Americans established a presence in Orange County. When Southeast Asian refugees began arriving in the mid-1970s, there were fears that they would pose a financial burden on local communities. When they began establishing a commercial and residential presence, they were accused of taking over those areas in the county.

"Affordable housing is very limited for the population, especially we have seen a lot of clients [who] have to share an apartment with multiple tenants."

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

In the 1990s when the Korean business districts became more prevalent using signage in Korean, they faced hostilities by those who started an English-only campaign.

Caroline Hahn, a second-generation Korean American who is past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association, grew up in Huntington Beach and moved back in 2006 with her family to work as a criminal justice lawyer. Soon after moving back, she was harassed on the street, reminding her of the discrimination she had faced growing up in this area of Orange County:

> I was pushing the stroller with my child in it, and we were walking to the park. And this truck drives by and [the driver] says, 'Hey you chink!' This was 2006 and I thought, 'They can't be talking about me, right?' And so I look around, but no one else is there. So I realized, 'Oh my gosh, they're talking about me!' And that actually really unnerved me. . . . I think I'm more sensitive to that whole thing because I grew up in Huntington Beach. Because I felt so different, and I felt like people didn't have a problem making it known that I was different. . . . What I experienced—that is not right, like that's racism!

After this incident, Hahn decided to move to Tustin, where she felt the area was more diverse and friendlier to non-White ethnic groups. The persistence of hate crimes and discrimination in the 1990s and 2000s, along with the current resurgence, indicate that addressing discrimination against AA&NHPI continues to be a major need.

Racial and Residential Segregation

Although Orange County is becoming more diverse, residential segregation and preferences based on racial stereotypes continue. A 2016 scholarly study of the persistence of residential segregation in Orange County indicated that White interviewees preferred to live in racially homogeneous neighborhoods and expressed negative or stereotypical perceptions of Latinos and, in some cases, Asians.[9] The study also indicated that White residents assumed that Asians could easily integrate into their communities based on assumptions and stereotypes of Asians as successful model minorities, overlooking their socioeconomic heterogeneity. Despite the multiethnic character of Irvine, some Asian residents still feel like "outsiders" because of their lack of English language fluency and lingering resentment from long-term residents who are resistant to the demographic changes.[10]

Jonathan Paik, Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center, has witnessed the growth of AA&NHPI in Orange County since his family moved to Fullerton in the late 1980s. This growth became more noticeable as he became engaged in political organizing:

> For me the transformation has been stark. . . . For me, the things that I learned recently, I think in the last 2½ years, was like how starkly segregated our communities were while creating that block. Like the block of Asian Americans was being created while there was a block of Latino communities that were being created. And if you were going to go across the county, I mean you look at cities like Anaheim, Garden Grove, Westminster, and Santa Ana, like all those cities have changed dramatically. Garden Grove, which used to have a big Korean hub has like a Korean exodus now. They're moving to Irvine. They're moving up here to Buena Park, North Anaheim. . . . Given that Westminster, growing up, had always been considered, and still today is considered, Little Saigon, but now like . . . Little Saigon has really become larger. It's really expanded across like four different cities.

Yet Paik notes that residential segregation and a lack of interaction among racial groups continues to create separations and sometimes conflict between groups:

> It's really cool that our county has become so multiethnic—but how much interaction is actually happening between these different communities? And I would say that level of interaction has been very small, like very, very small. . . . I think it has stirred up a ton of conflict actually in Central Orange County, but that can be resolved. And I actually believe that young folks, and especially young folks from each of our communities, are actually the future for that—a future for being able to build bridges.

Burdens of Housing Costs

Orange County has also become an increasingly expensive place to live and ranks fourth out of the largest 100 metropolitan areas for fastest-growing income gap between the rich and the poor between 1990 and 2012.[11] In 2014, Orange County was the second-most expensive metro area in which to purchase a home in the nation, just behind the San Francisco metro area and ahead of the Los Angeles metro area.[12] In 2016, the median home sale price for a single-family home in Orange County was $704,950; the minimum household income needed to purchase a home was $86,870.[13] The median gross rent in Orange County is now $1,548 a month.[14] An annual household income of $52,960 is needed to rent a one-bedroom apartment.[15]

The majority of AA&NHPI reside in cities, and an estimated half of poor AA&NHPI live in the 20 most expensive real estate markets nationwide.[16]

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

Approximately 42% of Asian Americans and 54% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) are renters, while 58% of Asian Americans and 46% of NHPI are homeowners.[17] While many homebuyers in Orange County are of Asian origin, this masks persistent disparities many AA&NHPI residents face as homeowners and renters in Orange County's extremely expensive housing market. Homeownership among Asian Americans (58%) and NHPI (46%) is still overall lower than non-Hispanic Whites (67%).[18] The percentages also vary when broken down by different ethnic groups and, in particular, Samoan Americans have the lowest rate of homeownership in the county. Only 31% of Samoan Americans are homeowners, which is lower than Blacks or African Americans and Latinos.[19]

However, statistics on household income can be deceptive. Among AA&NHPI communities, there may be more wage earners who contribute to household income. AA&NHPI residents are predominantly in family households, with 80% of Asian Americans and 78% of NHPI in family households.[20] Approximately 15% of Asian American and 20% of NHPI families countywide have three or more workers contributing to the household income. Nearly a quarter of Cambodian American families have three or more workers contributing to the household income, a rate similar to that of Latinos (24%).[21] Per capita, Asian Americans in Orange County earn $33,703 and Pacific Islanders earn $30,630, which is substantially less than non-Hispanic Whites ($49,817).[22] Thus, AA&NHPI face income disparities, and the financial burdens of housing may be even greater when considering per capita income disparities.

Many segments of the AA&NHPI community still face financial burdens in housing in Orange County. Ideally, 30% or less of the household income should be dedicated toward housing costs. Among those with mortgages, 53% of Asian Americans spend 30% or more of their income on housing.[23] Approximately 61% of Korean, 57% of Vietnamese, 56% of Cambodian, 54% of Filipino, and 53% of Indonesian American households with mortgages spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs.[24] Asian American renters also face housing cost burdens, with over 50% of Asian Americans and 38% of NHPI spending more than 30% of their household income toward housing costs.[25] Among Asian American renters,

Thai (62%), Vietnamese (60%), and Korean Americans (57%) are the most burdened, spending 30% or more of their income on housing.[26] Approximately 38% of Vietnamese and 30% of Thai American renters are severely housing-cost burdened and spend 50% or more of their income on housing, rates higher than all racial groups.[27]

The need for more affordable housing and housing assistance programs will continue to grow, especially as Orange County becomes a more expensive place to live. As of 2016, there were 26,643 subsidized housing units in Orange County, and they were 93% occupied.[28] Currently the county's housing authorities have provided rental assistance to over 22,000 households, but an estimated 77,000 households are still on a waiting list for rental assistance, indicating that the overall demand is still high in Orange County.[29] Currently AA&NHPI comprise 43% of subsidized housing residents in the county, the highest of any racial group.[30] This number has grown since 2008, when AA&NHPI made up 38% of subsidized housing residents.[31] In addition, Orange County has no rent-control law, so property owners are legally allowed to increase rent as long as they provide proper notice. Given the high demand of housing, property owners may be inclined to continue raising rents.

As the cost of purchasing a home and renting has risen substantially in Orange County, new immigrants and refugees who work in the county are moving to other counties like Riverside or San Bernardino where housing expenses are lower, and commuting to work, which presents other burdens such as added transportation costs. In other cases, they are leaving the state to seek a lower cost of living. Mary Anne Foo of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance notes that, "We also see a lot of transition moving out because no one can afford it here. So the 2020 Census will be very interesting 'cause a lot of people have moved to the Inland Empire to be able to get a house, to be able to afford housing because it's just so expensive here."

"People are moving to Orange County because of the lifestyle, because of the schools, because of the family focus."

Invisibility of Housing Insecurities

Housing instability, overcrowding, and informal housing are also important issues affecting AA&NHPI communities that housing statistics do not capture. Jonathan Paik of the Korean Resource Center explains some of the housing conditions facing Korean American clients:

> The folks we interact with every day through naturalization or through deferred action and through health care access, most folks that you were to find here are not folks that you're finding that are like incredibly wealthy. In fact, they're folks who are new immigrants who are moving here that are, even if they're living in cities like Fullerton or Irvine, that have a higher income per capita. Often they're making that work by being able to live in larger collective housing than what is traditionally known in the American nuclear family.

Extended family members may share living quarters to cover expenses; however, renting to strangers is also being practiced to cover housing expenses. In congested pockets in Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and Westminster, overcrowding occurs in rentals and homes, where garages, porches, and rooms are sublet or rented out to strangers, which can lead to unhygienic conditions and dangerous situations for children.[32] Vietnamese American homeowners, who are not always part of the wealthier segment of the community and are struggling to pay their mortgages, rent out shared rooms to two or three individuals or families in Little Saigon.[33]

Vattana Peong, executive director of The Cambodian Family, relates how many are forced to share housing because affordable housing is in such demand, and his organization serves as a safe, community space for youth who are experiencing overcrowding at home:

> Affordable housing is very limited for the population, especially we have seen a lot of clients [who] have to share an apartment with multiple tenants. . . . Some of the clients live in a garage with their kids. . . . They told us that . . . "We are grateful that we just walk from the neighborhood and come here to do our homework and hang out and join this after-school program." . . . So a lot of our Latino clients live in a garage, and a lot of Cambodian clients have to share housing with their friends and family. And a lot of family members have been unable to be accepted into affordable housing. . . . At least two or three clients are coming to our door a month asking for [the] affordable housing list. . . . We have a list so we were able to refer them to, but most of the time they have to be on the waiting for five to six years.

These housing insecurities may be especially difficult to document because AA&NHPI are often concerned about family separation or worried about their immigration status. Mary Anne Foo notes why AA&NHPI are reluctant to ask for housing assistance: "There's so many at-risk for homelessness or homeless Asians that it's just hidden because the Asian community doesn't want to talk about it. Because they're afraid that their children will be taken away. Because they might be accused of child neglect." Children who live in overcrowded conditions due to economic hardship also tend to be those who report experiencing homelessness and unstable living conditions.[34]

Emerging Need for Senior Housing

Affordable senior housing that targets AA&NHPI communities is an expanding need, given that they are one of the fastest-growing senior populations in the United States. They are expected to grow 240% by 2060 and make up 33% of the total AA&NHPI population across the country.[35] Over 87% of AA&NHPI seniors in the United States are also foreign-born, indicating that the AA&NHPI senior needs are interrelated with their experiences as immigrants.[36] While AA&NHPI senior citizens often live in multigenerational households, this is not always viable,

and many are beginning to live on their own. An estimated 36% of AA&NHPI seniors across the United States are low-income and living alone.[37] As Ellen Ahn, a 1.5-generation Korean American who grew up in Los Angeles Koreatown and is the executive director of Korean Community Services, remarks about the emerging needs in the Korean community in Orange County, "We have also seen a greater senior need and as the early immigrant population, the 1970s and 1980s population, as they've aged, their needs have grown a lot more." Low-income immigrant seniors or those on a fixed income who are monolingual are in need of affordable housing options that provide health assistance and allow them to age in place as well. Subsidized housing for seniors can have long waiting lists and application processes that can be complicated to complete. In 2014, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County and the Public Law Center successfully stopped major rent increases for 200 elderly Asian immigrant seniors living in a low-income apartment complex in Anaheim, preventing possible displacement and homelessness.[38]

Ethnic enclaves that provide linguistically and culturally appropriate services will become even more important for aging monolingual AA&NHPI seniors.[39] Community organizations are beginning to fill this gap by providing services for low-income seniors, especially those who live independently. Tricia Nguyen, CEO of Southland Integrated Services (formerly Vietnamese Community of Orange County), describes the range of its services that specifically focus on seniors:

> We also do [have a] seniors' isolated program called Early Intervention for Older Adults. We also help with telephone assistance, translation, billing issues, utilities issues. . . . And then [at] our headquarters, we do food commodities on a monthly basis to give to 400 low-income families. We provide a senior center where seniors can come in to play cards, do activities. We provide them hot meals, nutritious meal from Senior Serve. . . . A lot of them might not have meals [otherwise] because they don't have family members. And we do transportation programs, we have senior nonemergency transportation and we have [a] senior mobility program where we transport to and from the senior center.

Additionally, Jane Pang, cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership, notes how Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander seniors are in need of resources, especially those that address mental health. She explains how the Aloha Seniors Program connects seniors who are residentially separated, so they can build a support network:

> A lot of elders I know, for a fact, are depressed, go through depression. And not having the resources to help them, I see that because I work with the older population. . . . Many of the husbands of the spouses passed, but the Aloha Seniors have been so remarkable. I sit back and

"It's really cool that our county has become so multiethnic—but how much interaction is actually happening between these different communities?"

> see that with each case there is at least three or four of the seniors will band together, . . . make sure that individual is brought to our activities, offer transportation, give them support, take them out to lunch or breakfast. And those interactions are undirected by us. . . . Aloha Seniors—that social network is so strong.

Having senior citizen facilities and assisted care centrally located for this segment of the community is a concern for all AA&NHPI communities. Sufficient funding to expand housing options and provide services will become even more critical as the senior citizen population increases.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collect and report disaggregated data for AA&NHPI on housing conditions and sustainable community needs (e.g., informal housing arrangements, homelessness).
- Provide culturally and linguistically accessible education, outreach, counseling, and legal assistance for AA&NHPI on housing and sustainable community issues such as financial education, tenant rights (e.g., eviction, fair housing), affordable housing options (e.g., Section 8 requirements, transitional housing), and foreclosures. This should include translated materials and contracts, interpreters, and bilingual advocates.
- Provide culturally and linguistically accessible housing and related services to AA&NHPI seniors (e.g., transportation, meals) and plan for future housing options, particularly low-income senior housing, for the growing AA&NHPI senior population.
- Fund community organizations that provide AA&NHPI-specific housing and related services (e.g., after-school programs) that address overcrowding and other community sustainability issues.
- Educate media and policymakers that AA&NHPI experience racial hostility and segregation in their neighborhoods, and support policies that create a welcoming county for all ethnic groups.
- Enforce anti-discrimination laws in housing, including new state laws barring the use of immigration status to threaten or intimidate tenants.
- Advocate for local and state policies that support the development and preservation of affordable housing stock in Orange County such as inclusionary housing requirements.

INTERVIEWED COMMUNITY LEADERS

Ellen Ahn	Executive director of Korean Community Services
Mary Anne Foo	Founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Caroline Hahn	Past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association
Naz Hamid	Parent in Irvine; ran for the local school board
Charles Kim	Cofounder and first executive director of the Korean American Coalition
Eduardo Lee	Cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco
Michael Matsuda	Superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District; founding member of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Tam Nguyen	Former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce; owner of Advance Beauty College; former president of the California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Alumni Association
Tricia Nguyen	CEO of Southland Integrated Services, formerly known as the Vietnamese Community of Orange County (VNCOC)
Jonathan Paik	Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center
Jane Pang	Cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Vattana Peong	Executive director of The Cambodian Family
Cyril Yu	Former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association; senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office; ran for the Irvine School Board

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

NOTES

1. Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

2. U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census SF1, Table QT-P6; 2010 Census SF1, Table QT-P6. Information from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County.* Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

3. Wheeler, Ian. 2016. "Why Asians Have Become the Dominant Group in Irvine—and What That Means for the City." *Orange County Register*, September 21, 2016, http://www.ocregister.com/2016/09/21/why-asians-have-become-the-dominant-group-in-irvine-and-what-that-means-for-the-city/;.

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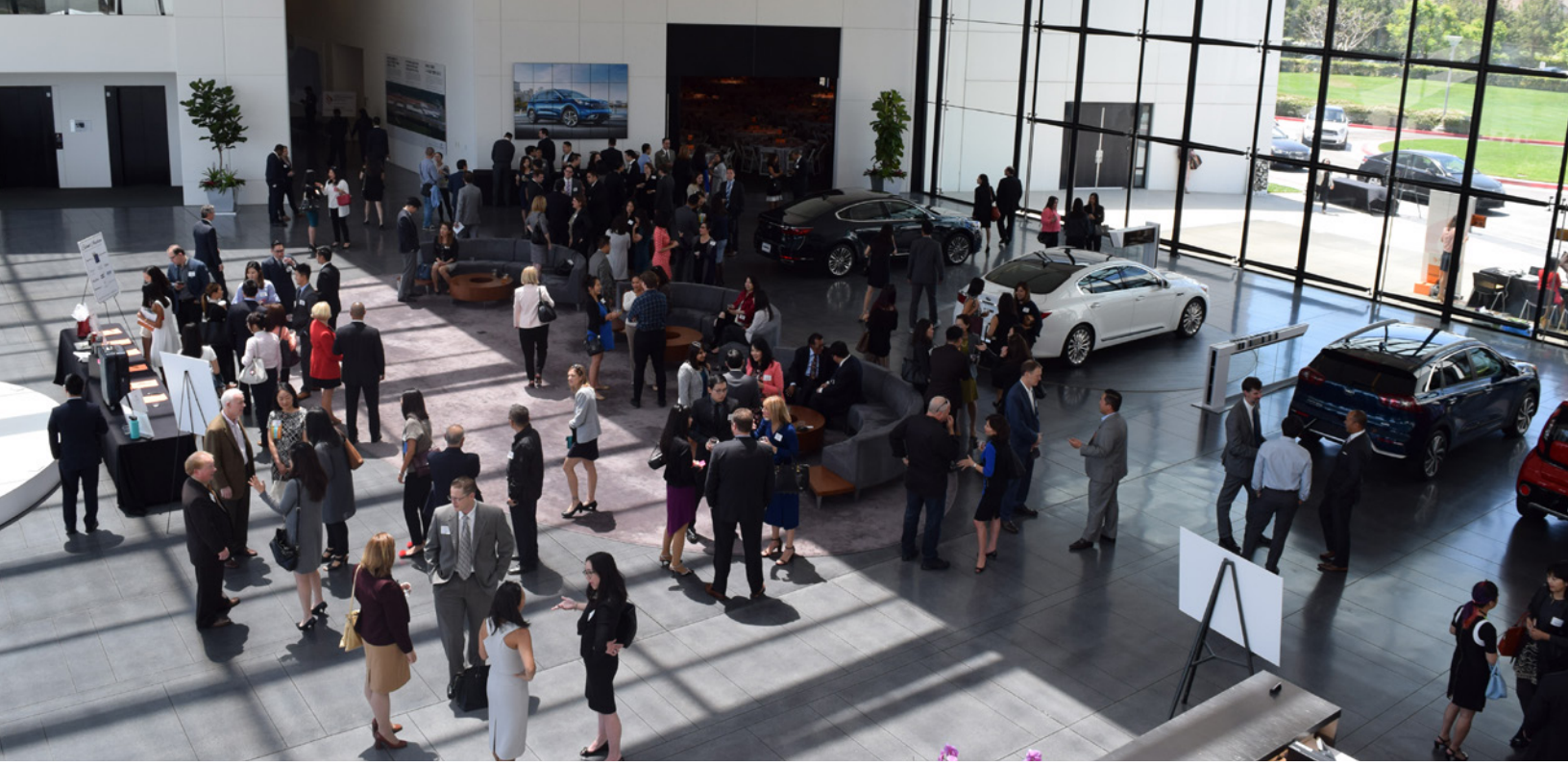

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

CHAPTER 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DISPARITIES

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE ORANGE COUNTY

The growing Asian American & Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA&NHPI) population has been important to the economic growth of Orange County. In addition to bringing a diverse workforce of high- and low-skilled workers, the number of both large and small Asian-owned businesses has increased dramatically, especially with the creation of ethnic commercial centers. While some of these businesses cater to ethnic clients and customers, many have grown to serve the broader Orange County community. The increase in the number of businesses and developments established by overseas Asian entrepreneurs is also noticeable. These businesses bring new jobs, increase tax revenue, and attract new investments into the area, and they have helped to stimulate the local economy during economic downturns or recessions. However, there are still issues of poverty and unemployment among different AA&NHPI groups. Broader economic trends have impacted the livelihood of immigrant small business owners. Additionally, AA&NHPI workers face discrimination and challenges in the workplace, and overseas Asian investors face local resistance to their developments. AA&NHPI small business owners and workers face gaps in political representation to address these ongoing issues.

ASSETS

Contributions to the Workforce

AA&NHPI have made important contributions to the county's workforce. After World War II, Orange County became an area primarily for the manufacturing industries; however, beginning in the 1990s, the county's economic base shifted away from manufacturing to the service, information, and tourism industries. The AA&NHPI presence in the local economy also increased during this period, with many workers, including low-wage earners, arriving to work in these developing industries. The boom in AA&NHPI population growth has paralleled the more recent shift toward higher-skilled industries and jobs based in Orange County, with many U.S.-born and foreign-born skilled professionals in technology, finance, and legal fields contributing their talents to the local economy. Currently 63% of adult Asian Americans and 67% of adult Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are in the labor force, close to the county's overall rate of 66%.[1] No longer confined to racially segregated jobs, college-educated Asian Americans are now in a range of professional occupations that require skilled workers. In Orange County, over 50% of Asians work in management, business, science, and arts occupations.[2] Approximately 37% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders work in service occupations and 29% in management, business, science, and arts.[3]

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

Growth of Businesses and Commercial Centers

The growth of the AA&NHPI communities has not only brought contributions to the local workforce but has also reshaped the local economy. California has the largest AA&NHPI consumer base in the United States.[4] The local economies have shifted to reflect their growing purchasing power, which can be seen in the growth of AA&NHPI-owned businesses that cater to the different communities. Orange County, in particular, has seen a steady growth. In 2012, there were 78,701 Asian American–owned businesses and 1,225 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander–owned businesses, a growth from 2007 of 24% and 37%, respectively. Combined they continue to be the second-largest group of small business owners in the county. In 2012, these businesses brought in nearly $26 billion in revenue and provided approximately 105,000 jobs to the county.[5]

These businesses do not just cater to AA&NHPI interests. This entrepreneurship has created more jobs and increased the tax revenue that can be used to improve the county's infrastructure and provide better public services. Furthermore, many of these businesses are helping to revitalize depressed neighborhoods, with the renovation of dilapidated mini-malls or the development of new commercial spaces. Mary Anne Foo, who is of Chinese and Japanese descent and the founding executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, summarizes the economic transformations and how they contribute to changing attitudes:

> It's just been amazing! So for Asian Americans, what was known in the '90s and 2000 was Little Saigon, Koreatown—this amazing business center [and] the number of incredible first-generation immigrant-owned businesses. . . . They just transformed cities and you saw communities coming in, so a lot of investments into Orange County. From there, now you see all these companies and restaurants and businesses and corporations coming from Asia to invest in Orange County, really wanting to be here, and then families wanting to stay.
>
> When we were first doing advocacy [with the county] and talking to policy makers, they would be like, 'Oh, you know, you guys are a drain on us! You know, all these refugees drain all these taxpayer dollars.' And I'm like, 'No. They actually are bringing in all this economic development, all this money into the business community. You're getting all the city taxes because of these businesses.' And now we can say, 'Hey we're bringing in billions—more than 20 billion in revenue into your cities, so you now can't question us.'

The emergence of distinct ethnic neighborhoods shows the economic contributions of Asian Americans. These areas have become major commercial centers, some surrounded by ethnic residential hubs. These one-stop areas cater to the ethnic

population, flourishing with stores that sell clothes, furniture, cars, and jewelry as well as services such as real estate, banking, insurance, medical, and auto repair. Most visible are concentrations such as the Little Saigon area, which is officially marked with welcome signs in Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and Westminster, and the Korean business districts in Garden Grove and Buena Park.

Orange County's Little Saigon, the largest Vietnamese American concentration in the country, started with a few Vietnamese businesses in Santa Ana and Westminster, which then spread to Garden Grove and Fountain Valley. Tam Nguyen, former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce and the second-generation owner of Advance Beauty College, explains that his father established the family business in Little Saigon because the community could draw from resources through ethnic networks centralized in that area: "He could see Little Saigon being the epicenter pretty early on in the organization or with leaders who had the resources and the vision for something larger."

Like other refugees who were forced to switch careers, Nguyen's father, who was formerly in the South Vietnamese military, followed his wife into the nail and beauty industry, first as a worker and then as a business owner, to support the family. Due to the discrimination they faced and their lack of English language skills, many refugees, even those without entrepreneurial experience, opened businesses that catered to co-ethnics in Little Saigon. What started out as a handful of small Vietnamese enterprises has blossomed into thousands of businesses, both chain stores and mom-and-pop shops. Frank Jao, who opened the landmark Asian Garden Mall and owns many of the mini-malls and other developments, is credited with Little Saigon's expansion. With all the entertainment centers and other amenities that Little Saigon offers, it has become a major tourist destination.

Photo courtesy of Linda Trinh Vo

Korean business hubs have also emerged. The concentration of Korean-owned businesses in Garden Grove developed in the period after the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest, when Koreans were seeking safer sites to open their businesses. Most recently, in North Orange County, Buena Park has received attention as an emerging Korean American center. Distinct from the older Korean American business district in Garden Grove, it tends to attract younger generations as well as non-Koreans. Major Korean restaurants and retail have emerged around Beach Boulevard, a main thoroughfare, including H-Mart, the popular Korean supermarket chain. A new retail complex, The Source, houses restaurants, an entertainment area, and CGV Cinema, which is owned by a major South Korean conglomerate and specializes in showing Korean movies and providing a 4DX interactive experience.[6] Cities like

Buena Park have emerged as a new hub for international investment, helping to revitalize formerly economically depressed areas in Orange County.

Cities like Irvine and Fullerton also have pockets of Asian businesses, but it has become commonplace to see Asian-owned businesses in the ubiquitous mini-malls that dot the Orange County landscape. In contrast to the evolution of ethnic enclaves such as Little Saigon and Koreatown in Garden Grove with a concentration of many ethnic small businesses, the current trend shows a deliberate development of Asian-oriented commercial spaces. For example, the Diamond Jamboree Shopping Center in Irvine is one of the city's most bustling commercial centers and is occupied by a mixture of Asian and Asian American chains and local brands that attract both Asians and non-Asians alike.

Next-Generation Entrepreneurs and Innovators

Orange County is on the cutting edge of businesses serving and rooted in Asian American communities. In addition to the ethnic businesses and commercial hubs described earlier, Asians and Asian Americans are launching innovative and entrepreneurial businesses or expanding Asian global businesses via Orange County. First-generation Vietnamese small businesses have grown into major Orange County businesses, and a number are now managed by the younger generation. While pursuing an MBA at California State University, Fullerton, Tam Nguyen, owner of Advance Beauty College, which trains nail and beauty salon workers, used his family business as a setting to apply his classroom projects: "My fellow classmates loved it because we got a chance to access a business that was very willing and open to change from every aspect, from management to marketing to accounting. So all the major aspects of a business or operations, was like we had a real-life case study and example. I think those are the years where our business changed the most."

Through his education and professional training, Nguyen and his sister have added more structure to the business and expanded it from a small family business to a multisite business that hires nonfamily employees and serves a diverse student population. He and other second-generation Vietnamese American business owners build off their parents' generation by incorporating the knowledge and skills they gained through their education into the family businesses: "The second generation was college educated. They still had the parents' work ethic. They were able to blend that nicely together to really scale up and be successful. I think the dream is to not only be successful in Little Saigon, which our parents were, but to be able to scale up and be broader, serve other communities besides just your own ethnic enclave."

Many of these Vietnamese American–owned businesses, both first and second generation, now extend beyond the vicinity of Little Saigon. Nguyen describes this development:

> Since I've gone to college, you got the Lee Sandwiches, you got the great restaurants, you got the 7 Leaves [Café]. You got iconic brands coming out of Little Saigon that are going mainstream, that are being supported by Americans. Boiling Crab [restaurant] is another one. I mean, I can keep naming them. But there's a lot of great brands that my non-Vietnamese friends, my neighbors, would [say], 'Wow! . . . We went and had a great experience.' And to know that comes from a Vietnamese family that started in Little Saigon, there's a lot of pride to that that's hard to describe.

Asian American–owned businesses are being incubated and established in areas outside of ethnic enclaves and expanding even further throughout the county and country. Wahoo's Fish Taco, a casual restaurant chain with its first location in Costa Mesa, has expanded to other states and internationally to Japan. In 1988 Chinese-Brazilian American brothers Eduardo Lee, Mingo Lee, and Wing Lam, who were raised in Newport Beach, founded this popular chain. Their food is a blend of Asian, Brazilian, and Mexican influences, combining their childhood experiences working at their parents' Chinese restaurant, Shanghai Pine Gardens on Balboa Island, and their surfing treks to Mexico. Eduardo Lee, who mentors emerging entrepreneurs, comments on how Asian markets and foods have become popular: "The Asian influence . . . it's almost everywhere. When they talk 'fusion,' they're always talking [about] Asian food. They're not talking [about] anything else pretty much. So anything that says 'fusion' it's usually Asian and Mexican, or Asian and Caucasian, or Asian and something. It's something Asian based."

Orange County is home to many Asian chains, both local and overseas. Korean immigrant Philip Chang founded the popular chain Yogurtland, opening his first location in Fullerton. Korean American Jay Yim established his first Creamistry ice cream shop in Irvine and has expanded across the United States and to other countries. Vietnamese American entrepreneurs also started 7 Leaves Café and Afters Ice Cream, which have locations across the county and are expanding to other areas. In addition, restaurants and bakeries from Asia have opened locations in Orange County. Most notably, Taiwanese bakery 85°C Bakery Cafe opened its first U.S. location in the Diamond Jamboree complex in Irvine, and its popularity led to the opening of other locations nationally.

This emerging restaurant and food scene highlights the contributions of Asian innovators in Orange County. Lee points out:

> If you look at all the top restaurants, they're all [owned by] younger Asian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Koreans. . . . These are second-generation restauranteurs. Most of them are probably born here, kind of thing, were raised here for a super long time. So we understand the business culture a little bit differently than if you just came off the boat today. . . . I mean we're becoming really—not that we weren't acknowledged as

> businesspeople—but we've become solid, legitimate businesses, a force to contend with.

The media and foodie fans are giving accolades to many of the major chefs in Orange County, including young Asian Americans. Leonard Chan, a Chinese American from Irvine who founded The Alchemists restaurant consulting group, was recognized as one of Orange County's most influential people in 2014 for developing a range of popular restaurants and food halls across Orange County, including McFadden Public Market in Santa Ana. Ryan Garlitos, a Filipino American chef who operates Irenia Restaurant in Santa Ana, which serves modern Filipino cuisine, was named 2016 Best New Chef by the *Orange County Register*. Carlito Jocson, a Filipino American raised in Orange County, is the executive chef and original co-owner of Yard House chain restaurant and has also been praised for his culinary success.

"We've become solid, legitimate businesses, a force to contend with."

Transnational Companies and Economic Connections

Asian Americans as well as Asian nationals have founded major computer and technology companies, some of them multinational, with headquarters in Orange County. Taiwanese immigrants cofounded VIZIO and Kingston Technologies, Inc.; online sources estimate VIZIO's revenue to be $3.1 billion and Kingston Technologies, Inc.'s revenue to be $6.5 billion. In addition, Orange County is also attracting overseas investment from Asian corporations such as carmakers Kia, Hyundai, and Mazda, which have opened U.S. corporate headquarters in the county. Some Asian businesses have opened corporate offices in the region because they perceive it to be a welcoming climate to Asians and the large Asian American population, who could be potential employees or customers.

Asian Americans have cultural and linguistic skills as well as connections that can attract these international or multinational businesses to the region and expand local businesses internationally. Tam Nguyen believes the ties that immigrants and refugees have to Asia will increase transnational investments that can assist in the continued growth of Orange County:

> We're also going to see global business. . . . There are natural, not only just family, but business ties from here to each homeland, whether it's the Korean community [or] the Vietnamese community. And these are significant communities in Orange County. You're going to continue to see . . . international projects develop that way. . . . It doesn't come from the enterprises or the corporations; it comes from the ethnic communities. These are organic relationships that are family and friends from the community. . . . As I view Orange County moving forward, I view it as a very global port that has a very nice Asian flavor. But it's not just Asian American—it's Asian with a tie back to Asia, and for me that's pretty exciting.

Contributions of Economic Organizations

Asian American employees and entrepreneurs have formed a multitude of organizations that are intended to help them advance economically and contribute to the local economy. Although some business owners join mainstream chamber of commerce organizations, a number of ethnic business organizations and chambers have a mission that is specific to assisting co-ethnics in learning about business regulations and opportunities, building networks, and expanding their businesses. In some cases, members can assist each other when contending with racial discrimination in the workplace as well as finding co-ethnic mentors, which can be helpful to new immigrants. For the children of immigrants and refugees, they are often the first ones in their families to attend college in the United States and are the first ones in their families to enter professional fields in the private or public sectors. There are profession-specific organizations that focus on lawyers or health care practitioners as well as formal AA&NHPI networking groups that exist within public or private companies, which were created to develop a supportive network to share resources and knowledge to advance in their field. Over the years, the number of Asian American or ethnic-specific—such as Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Taiwanese, and Vietnamese—organizations and groups have hosted seminars, workshops, and social gatherings.

Photo courtesy of Tam Nguyen

NEEDS

Poverty and Unemployment

Despite the strong AA&NHPI presence in the Orange County workforce and the contributions that AA&NHPI entrepreneurs have made in the county, there are significant poverty, unemployment, and income disparities, especially among specific AA&NHPI ethnic communities. The model minority myth often feeds into the stereotype that all Asian Americans are well educated and wealthy, without recognizing the tremendous socioeconomic diversity of the AA&NHPI population. Ellen Ahn, executive director of Korean Community Services, explains how ethnic groups, especially those perceived as more successful, often hide these issues: "There are some Koreans that are very well-off. But if you tease out the numbers, our poverty rates are there, especially among our single mothers, our seniors. There are certain pockets of our population that are very poor, and so that's a huge misperception." Approximately 12% of Asian Americans in Orange County are living in poverty, lower than the general population of 13%.[7] However, Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, and Cambodian ethnic groups all have higher poverty rates

than the total population.[8] Thai Americans, Vietnamese Americans, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have particularly high poverty rates countywide, with approximately 20% of Thai Americans, 16% of Vietnamese Americans, and 15% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders living below the poverty line.[9]

The unemployment rate for Orange County is 7.6% and has been slowly decreasing since 2013.[10] While Asian Americans have the lowest unemployment rate at 6.7%, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have the highest unemployment rate of all racial and ethnic groups at 12.8%. Vast differences also exist across ethnic groups. For example, Pakistani (10.4%), Indonesian (9.1%), and Vietnamese Americans (8.0%) have unemployment rates that exceed the county average.[11] In addition, state-level indicators show that while Asian Americans have a higher average salary of $62,979 compared with Whites at $56,730, when further disaggregated, Asian Americans make less than their White counterparts in occupations such as schoolteachers and retail salespeople.[12] Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders also tend to make less than their White and Asian American counterparts, with the exception of sales workers and truck drivers.[13] In addition, data on per capita income rather than household income show that Asian Americans in Orange County actually earn $33,703 and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders earn $30,630, which is substantially less than non-Hispanic Whites ($49,817).[14] Cambodian Americans earn only $19,274, which is less than all racial groups except Latinos ($17,028).[15]

> "If you tease out the numbers, our poverty rates are there, especially among our single mothers, our seniors. There are certain pockets of our population that are very poor, and so that's a huge misperception."

Workplace Discrimination and Exploitation

Historically, the county has not always welcomed Asian laborers or businesses. While racial attitudes have improved, anti-immigrant and anti-Asian rhetoric, which can create a negative and unwelcoming business environment for AA&NHPI, is still present. Early in the development of the Vietnamese and Korean districts, some had their businesses vandalized, and Anglo residents complained about the number of ethnic businesses "taking over" their town, business signs in Asian languages, and business owners not speaking English. Current political rhetoric complaining about immigrants taking away jobs from Americans or framing China as the "economic enemy" can also lead to misplaced violence or discrimination against Asians.

AA&NHPI continue to face workplace discrimination, which may vary among different ethnic groups and across occupations. In a landmark case in 2003, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA) filed a class action lawsuit with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) Legal Defense and Educational Fund against the clothing retailer Abercrombie & Fitch over racially discriminatory employment practices.[16] An Asian American plaintiff from a Costa Mesa store witnessed corporate representatives telling management to hire staff that looked like their advertisements, which were

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

primarily White models. The lawsuit resulted in a $40 million nationwide class settlement, and the company agreeing to changing its hiring and employment policies as well as the company's operations and marketing practices.

AA&NHPI may also face discrimination based on gender and racial stereotypes that create barriers and prevent them from advancing into leadership positions. Immigrants encounter additional obstacles based on their limited English language skills or a lack of recognition of their college degrees and work experience from their homeland. Even among AA&NHPI professionals, extra effort is required to prove themselves in the workplace. Caroline Hahn, past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association, shares her experience as one of the few Korean American female lawyers in Orange County and balancing the gender and racial stereotypes others may have of her: "In the end, I have to be extra smart, extra better, extra on time, extra polite. There has to be nothing that the judge can say I've done wrong in order to prove myself, in order to make sure that my package is not affected, that my work speaks for itself. And so in a sense it motivates me to be an extra better attorney. . . . But it just shocks me! It's 2017 now, but it's [discrimination is] still there. And I very much try to fight against it."

Moreover, immigrant workers are often more vulnerable to exploitation due to their lack of English proficiency or lack of legal status.[17] In 2016, Advancing Justice-LA filed a case on behalf of Vietnamese American nail salon workers challenging exploitative industry-wide labor practices such as long hours without required breaks, minimum wage and overtime violations, and unlawful deductions for using equipment and supplies. Many low-wage workers are also undocumented, with a higher likelihood of turning to the underground economy or being paid "under the table." These workers may not be paid the minimum wage and have a harder time protecting their legal rights. Some low-wage workers are also victims of human trafficking, laboring under terrible work conditions for little-to-no pay, and are among the hardest workers to reach and legally represent.

The Competitive Market for Businesses Owners

While there are successful Asian American–owned small businesses that have grown and established a mainstream presence, many small businesses are still struggling. Tam Nguyen observes how competition can be fierce in ethnic communities where there are similar businesses and owners have to give substantial discounts in order to stay competitive:

> There's a small number of individuals that succeeded, and they get highlighted, and so we become this 'model minority' and . . . [people think] all businesses are succeeding like that, which isn't the case. I mean we get to highlight some certain exceptions to the rule. Businesses are struggling. Business is hard. From 2008 to 2012 . . . that was a major recession that demoralized a lot of businesses. A lot of businesses went out of business. . . . There's certainly, with every sector that you talk about, there's certainly the one or two great success stories, but overall I think there's still a lot of assistance and there's a lot of attention that's needed to be placed on Vietnamese and Asian businesses in order [for them] to thrive.

Immigrant-owned, small businesses still struggle with developing the legal, compliance, and accounting knowledge to sustain a business. Language barriers can make it even more difficult to follow federal and local rules and regulations.

The growth of online shopping hurts local brick-and-mortar businesses of every scale. While this affects all businesses, it can have more substantial consequences for Asian Americans. According to Eduardo Lee of Wahoo's Fish Taco, the high number of small business owners and already-slim profit margins make them vulnerable to economic downturns:

> Retail is dying because of the internet. So no one's shopping at malls anymore, and it's bad for the community. So I'm out there advocating, 'Spend your dollars here in Orange County. Keep your tax dollar base here. If you're buying online, the tax dollars are not staying in Orange County, so schools suffer.' First of all, the landlord suffers because the malls are all having problems. These big boxes are hard to replace. When you get a Nordstrom that leaves, that's 50,000 square feet of empty space. You can't replace it. . . . So the thing that happens with that is you also probably laid off maybe 3,000 employees. Your local base is disappearing, so you got to shop locally.

Even though smaller ethnic businesses are a destination stop and provide specialty items that are unavailable online, they are still vulnerable to economic downturns, and trends can have ripple effects in ethnic communities. For example, the nail salon industry is a major industry for Vietnamese Americans. Not only are workers and owners dispersed throughout the county, but the beauty schools that train workers and the beauty supply stores are concentrated in Little Saigon, so many are dependent on this industry.

Resistance to Business Owners and Lack of Representation

The economic investment from overseas corporations has also led to concerns about how they transform the identity of a community, with some Korean entrepreneurs

facing resistance from mainstream political leaders to develop in Buena Park. Charles Kim, a longtime community activist who cofounded the Korean American Coalition in Los Angeles in 1983, explains:

> We have our hurdles too because local, traditional Americans, they're not happy. . . . [They said] 'We don't want this to be Koreatown. Period.' So that's the fight we need to fight here. [We asked] 'Then who's going to come here to develop?' Because it used to be really run-down and nobody wanted to come. . . . This area [was known for] prostitution and beggars and just nothing here. But Village Circle [shopping center opened], then the Korean building started . . . popping up and booming. So Buena Park is seeing the changes on Beach Boulevard, but some of the leaders are not happy 'cause it's not initiated by their own, [it's] built by what they call 'foreigners' from Korea. So we're actually converting this area whether you like it or not.

Political representation is lacking for many immigrant small business owners and workers. Within AA&NHPI communities, there is still a culture of not wanting to bring attention to their problems and to solve issues on their own. Nguyen explains, "But unfortunately going back to not having a voice at the table or key decision makers who are in strong funding positions . . . even today we're still like, 'Just leave me alone, I got my blinders on. I'm just going to work hard and just get out of this rut on my own.' Not so much 'I'm looking for assistance and help' kind of mentality, and that could hurt." For first-generation immigrants and refugees who are from countries of political conflict, speaking out politically is perceived to be dangerous. They may be unwilling to speak up even when their rights as business owners are being violated.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collect and report disaggregated data for AA&NHPI on economic assets and needs (e.g., income, poverty, employment, workforce barriers, consumer spending, small or ethnic businesses).
- Provide culturally and linguistically accessible education, outreach, and assistance for AA&NHPI for safety net programs (e.g., CalWORKs, Medi-Cal), workforce development programs (e.g., English language classes, job training, job placement services), and worker protection laws.
- Preserve and strengthen safety net programs for the most vulnerable, including cash assistance (CalWORKs, Cash Assistance Program of Immigrants), food assistance (CalFRESH), social services (In-Home Supportive Services), and health care (Medi-Cal).
- Protect AA&NHPI, immigrant, and low-wage workers by enforcing antidiscrimination laws, enforcing laws that prohibit intimidation of or

retaliation against employees based on immigration status, enforcing federal and state labor laws (e.g., wages and hours, health and safety), and passing local ordinances against wage theft.

- Include AA&NHPI in equal opportunity programs (e.g., minority public contracting programs) and advocate for equitable hiring and promotion policies for all employees.
- Hire a workforce that reflects the diverse AA&NHPI clients or customers.
- Provide culturally and linguistically accessible education, outreach, and assistance for AA&NHPI small businesses on their rights and obligations as employers.
- Support the development of AA&NHPI small businesses and specialized chambers but also include AA&NHPI small businesses in mainstream chambers and business associations.
- Educate local governments and chambers about demographic changes in the county and support policies that create a welcoming county for all ethnic groups.

INTERVIEWED COMMUNITY LEADERS

Ellen Ahn	Executive director of Korean Community Services
Mary Anne Foo	Founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Caroline Hahn	Past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association
Charles Kim	Cofounder and first executive director of the Korean American Coalition
Eduardo Lee	Cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco
Tam Nguyen	Former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce; owner of Advance Beauty College; former president of the California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Alumni Association

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

NOTES

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4. Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, and Asian American Federation. 2014. *Making America Work: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the Workforce and Business*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, and Asian American Federation.
5. U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Survey of Business Owners, Table SB1200CSA01. Note: Business owners who identify as more than one race may be double counted in these estimates.
6. Chan, Alex, and Bryce Alderton. 2017. "O.C.'s Koreatown: Buena Park Draws Residents and Businesses from L.A." *Los Angeles Times,* March 24, 2017, http://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/entertainment/tn-wknd-et-0326-korean-businesses-20170325-story.html.
7. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables, Table DP03.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S2301.
11. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables, Table DP03. Note: Data include Asian alone and in combination.
12. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples 5-Year Estimates, accessed on September 6 2017, https://datausa.io/profile/geo/orange-county-ca/.
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15. U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B19301. Information taken from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.
16. Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles. n.d. "From Our Litigation Archives: APALC Sues Abercrombie & Fitch." Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, accessed October 16, 2017, https://www.advancingjustice-la.org/blog/our-litigation-archives-apalc-sues-abercrombie-fitch#.WeUkUWhSw2x.
17. APALA and UCLA Labor Center. 2009. *Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence: Report from the First National Asian Pacific American Workers' Rights Hearing*. Los Angeles: APALA; UCI Community & Labor Project and UCLA Labor Center. 2014. *Orange County on the Cusp of Change*. Los Angeles: UCLA Labor Center.

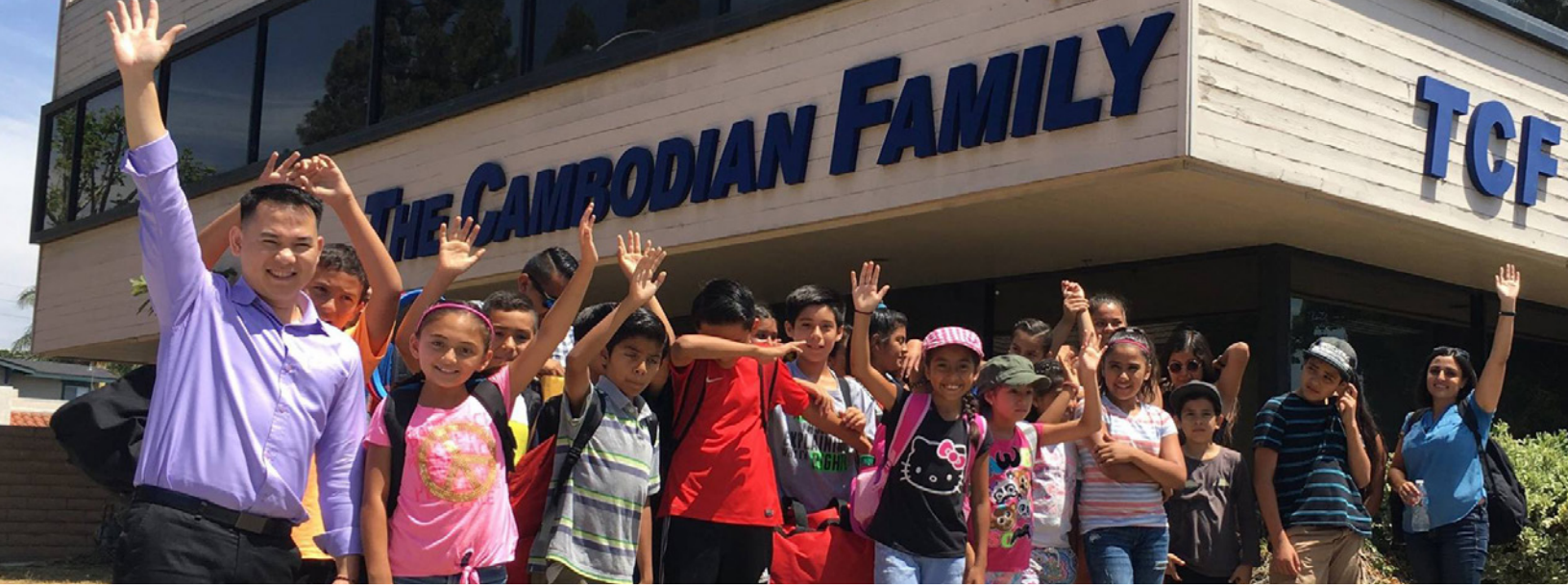

Photo courtesy of Vattana Peong

CHAPTER 4

K-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE ORANGE COUNTY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA IRVINE

Asian American & Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA&NHPI) students, parents, and educators have contributed to improving the Orange County public education system and increasing opportunities for immigrant and refugee families. Over 94% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders and 90% of Asian Americans are enrolled in K–12 public schools;[1] thus, addressing AA&NHPI educational needs should focus on these institutions. While much attention has been given to the high academic achievement of many Asian Americans and the framing of them as "model minorities" who are inherently smart, hardworking, and college bound, this misrepresents the diversity of educational experiences of the group. Like other students, AA&NHPI educational attainment depends on their parents' level of education, socioeconomic background, and type of school they attend; however, being immigrants, being English language learners, or facing racial discrimination or bullying adds another layer of obstacles. Additionally, it is critical that AA&NHPI mental health services are expanded to better serve students and their families. The K–12 public education system as well as institutions of higher education have been instrumental in contributing to the advancement of AA&NHPI families in Orange County, but educational leadership, policies, curricula, and practices require continuous modifications as the demographics change to ensure the inclusion of different AA&NHPI communities.

ASSETS

Contributions of Educators and Administrators

Asian American educators have played critical roles in advocating for immigrant and refugee student populations. These leaders are attentive to the cultural and linguistic needs that emerged with the changing population. Prior to becoming superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District, Michael Matsuda, a Japanese American who grew up in Garden Grove in the 1960s, taught English as a second language (ESL) to Vietnamese high school students who had just arrived as refugees in Orange County. As a teacher in Garden Grove, he recalls, "They were shocked to see an Asian face. They had never seen an Asian teacher [at the school]. And I was shocked to see all these Vietnamese because I really knew nothing about the whole [refugee] experience." Matsuda drew from his own experience of being racialized and encountering discrimination as a Japanese American, which allowed him to build closer relationships with Vietnamese American students. He recalls one student opening up to him about the racism he and other Vietnamese American youth were experiencing:

> He said, 'You know, the principal . . . he's a racist. He doesn't like Vietnamese.' I said, 'What are you talking about?' And he goes, 'You watch. When there's a fight between a Vietnamese and a White kid, you watch who gets suspended longer.' And I said, 'I don't believe that.' . . . On the chalkboard, we had a code on suspension [to track]

> who got the heavier suspension, if it was equal, or who got the heavier one, and over time, he was right. The Vietnamese kids got the [heavier suspension]. Those were the early days of [the] school-to-prison pipeline. I didn't know it then, but that was going on. So the kids knew what was happening, and they were teaching me.

Audrey Yamagata-Noji, vice president of Student Services at Mount San Antonio College, served on the Santa Ana School Board for 25 years and experienced the board's shift from being predominantly White to becoming more multiethnic. She explains that working with such a diverse student population made her work both challenging and exciting:

> What's always challenging about Asian Americans and Pacific [Islander] Americans in general is it's such a vast diversity of Asian American groups—in terms of language and orientation and generation and educational needs and parental background and income levels—that it's just hard to lump everybody together, which just means that the work that you do has to be sensitive to all those different things. You can have a sixth-generation Chinese American and an Indian American who just arrived but speaks English to a Tongan who just came from Tonga, and the level of education is much lower . . . and is really struggling. So you got a whole wide cross section. And I think that will always be the challenge as well as excitement to working with our particular students—the great diversity.

As part of the board, she pushed for policies that addressed the needs of low-income immigrants as the county was experiencing an influx of both Latino and Vietnamese immigrants:

> Spanish was not spoken in the district at the time, so [Spanish-speaking] parents weren't included or invited. So we changed a lot of things. We didn't apply for Title VII bilingual funds [previously], so we applied for that. We didn't have the free breakfast program, so we went after that. So there were a lot of things that the conservative board majority up until that time didn't believe we needed.

Parent Contributions and Engagement

Education is a high-priority issue for many AA&NHPI, and Orange County's top-ranked K–12 public schools attract both foreign- and American-born AA&NHPI families to the county. In the 2016–2017 school year, Asian Americans made up 18% (88,279) of the students in the Orange County public school system, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders made up 0.4% (1,725).[2] Asian American students are particularly concentrated in Irvine (49%, 16,504), Westminster (39%, 3,367), Fountain Valley (37.5%, 2,394), and Garden Grove (35%, 15,638) school districts.[3]

Cities such as Irvine have become known for their stellar public schools and high levels of parent engagement. Naz Hamid, an Irvine parent who ran for the local school board, was attracted to Irvine because of the top-quality education:

> Everybody would talk about the fact that we were moving behind the 'Orange Curtain.' 'What a horrible thing. Why would you leave LA with its diversity and move behind the Orange Curtain?' But that actually didn't matter to us because we knew that we would find like-minded individuals who cared about their children's education and that we would find an identity common with them, that it would be okay. And that's exactly what happened. We moved to Irvine, and all the parents care about their kid's education.

Living in Irvine, she notices that "the parents stayed very, very engaged, whether it's with the PTA [parent-teacher association], whether it's with in-classroom help, whether it's with running extracurricular activities. Parents in Irvine in particular are really, really engaged." While some Asian immigrants have joined the regular PTA, others have formed ethnic-specific groups such as the Korean or Chinese American parent groups, which allow them to converse in their ethnic language, share information, and encourage parent engagement. Their active participation as volunteering in classrooms, organizing school events, and being involved in fundraising projects benefits all students and contributes to school districts.

In some less-affluent areas such as Santa Ana and parts of Anaheim, Asian American administrators have tried to encourage parent engagement despite language and socioeconomic barriers. Audrey Yamagata-Noji recalls while serving on the Santa Ana School Board how the board tailored the parent conferences around each ethnic group's needs:

> We looked at what was appealing to the parents. So for the Vietnamese they said, 'Well, talk about financial aid and scholarships and college, and they'll come,' so that was their topic. And the Koreans said, 'You know, talk about achievement stress.' And the Cambodians wanted to know more about gangs and drugs. They were on Minnie Street. They needed to understand all of those kinds of things. The Samoans, the same things, about gangs and some of the social issues that were going on in their community. So we allowed the communities to organize their own sessions and have their own separate speakers but come together to be part of the whole.

Michael Matsuda, now superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District, believes that policies such as the Local Control and Accountability Plan, which requires school districts to work with the community to establish plans and distribute funds, has helped the Anaheim Union High School District. He explains how this input from immigrant parents was instrumental in redirecting resources to

help their children while encouraging immigrant parents to actively engage in their children's education:

> If you're an immigrant parent, all of a sudden you have a voice in terms of how money is spent. So we've seen money shifted from just traditional salaries, benefits, the traditional things, to ensuring that we have community liaisons at every site, . . . people that have a background in ethnic studies. They understand the community—translators, social workers. We didn't have any social workers before. Now we have social workers, people that can connect the wraparound services to meet the gaps between delivery systems.

The district also used the funding to create programs that gave immigrant parents tools to support learning at home:

> We have a parent leadership academy, so part of the money goes into training parents by parents. These are parent led. We have parents coming into the classroom through parent learning walks. And we're doing them in-language now, Spanish, Korean, and now in Vietnamese. . . . That is very empowering because they're parents with their eyes and ears seeing classroom instruction.

> There are two things, two takeaways for parents: What can you do to help this [learning] at home? Like when you talk to your kid, what do you guys talk about, and how do you get them to talk about things? That's the same challenge the teacher has, so can you help support critical thinking at home? We're getting parents as allies to push the teachers in a positive way.

Matsuda draws from his experiences working as a founding member of the nonprofit organization Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA). He notes that AA&NHPI parents can be effective participants in decision-making if they have opportunities for input and know that their perspectives will be seriously incorporated into policy changes:

> Democracy is about having a voice. And that's what we're trying to do, to model democratic practices and empower, all the stuff that I've learned through OCAPICA. . . . In the Asian Pacific community you have [people], especially in the Vietnamese community, who've never experienced what a democracy is or a functional democracy. They need to be affirmed that they do have a voice and it's a valid, it's an authentic, it's a real voice that we want at the table.

K–12 Dual-Language Immersion Programs

The Orange County K–12 public school system has started providing curricula that reflect the changing demographics of their students. There are a number of school districts in Orange County that offer dual-immersion Spanish-English programs, with other public schools and some charter schools offering dual-immersion programs in Korean, Mandarin, and Vietnamese. In addition, the Garden Grove and Westminster School Districts offer a Vietnamese immersion program.[4]

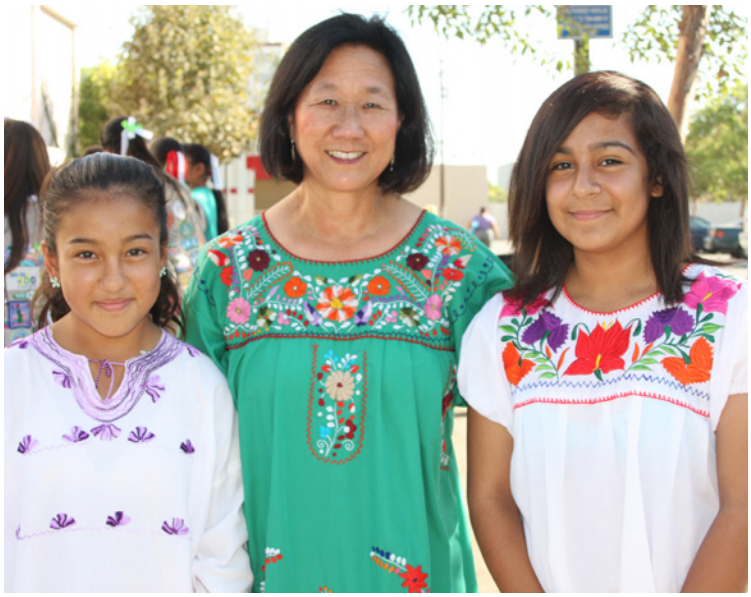

Photo courtesy of Audrey Yamagata-Noji

There are also Chinese immersion programs in the Capistrano and Orange School Districts.[5] While the expense may be higher, many consider this an important service for immigrant and refugee children that helps with their adjustment, and some affluent districts have offset these costs with grants or contributions from parents.[6] As a Santa Ana School Board member, Audrey Yamagata-Noji sees the value of dual immersion or bilingual programs since they help non–English speaking children transition into English, noting that knowing more than one language actually helps children learn. In other cases, parents whose children speak English want their children to be fully fluent in other languages and enroll their children in these dual-language immersion programs to better prepare their children for the global economy.

Ethnic Studies in K–12 and Higher Education

The public education curriculum is also changing to include AA&NHPI experiences in teaching. OCAPICA developed a K–12 curriculum about the Vietnamese American experience that is offered in some school districts. These programs and courses reflect the multicultural identity of Orange County but also provide a space for Asian American youth to learn and appreciate their culture. Michael Matsuda explains how critical these courses are for youth development: "Kids, regardless of their ethnicity and gender, they hunger for that. That's why I think ethnic studies courses are so important to bring into high school or even earlier because everybody wants to know 'Who am I?', 'How do I fit in?', 'How do I become comfortable with myself?' So I think that's really important."

Local colleges provide ethnic studies courses, which offer accurate and inclusive histories that include AA&NHPI experiences. University of California, Irvine (UCI) and California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) have established Departments of Asian American Studies, while some community colleges offer courses. For some community leaders, taking ethnic studies courses was instrumental in their career trajectory. Ellen Ahn, the executive director of Korean

Community Services attributes learning about the Asian American studies movement in college to having politicized her, giving her a deeper understanding of how her work with Korean Americans fits into the larger narrative about Asian Americans:

> If it were not for that, Asian American activists throughout—I would even say, from the 19th century throughout but particularly post-1960s—people like me would not have benefited. . . . They paved the way for a lot of things that we just take for granted now. And so, the Asian American studies movement is a part of the greater Asian American rights movement. But I am very appreciative of that and all of those moments. . . . So that was very formative studying that, understanding that, understanding that there's a greater diaspora that we all function in has really helped me place my work where it belongs in that greater story, that greater narrative of where Korean Americans are.

"The [AA&NHPI communities] need to be affirmed that they do have a voice and it's a valid, it's an authentic, it's a real voice that we want at the table."

Recruitment and Retention in Higher Education

Orange County is home to major four-year colleges and community colleges that serve many AA&NHPI: 38.7% of UCI students are "Asian/Pacific Islander" and 16.2% are international students, many who are from Asia, and 21% of CSUF undergraduate students identify as "Asian/PI."[7] CSUF has the highest enrollment of Vietnamese American students out of all the CSU campuses.[8] Close to 30% of students at Irvine Valley College, the community college in Irvine, identify as Asian American.

The college environment is a space that brings the different AA&NHPI groups together where they can potentially learn about one another and build solidarity. Cyril Yu, senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office and board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association, describes how he developed a broader racial consciousness with other Asian Americans through his college experience:

> By the time I got to college, it became less about the cultural identity component than about common ideas about what the community should be. So certainly embracing that idea of being Asian American as opposed to Chinese American—that really came to fruition when I was in college. A lot of the things that I did were with Chinese Americans, Vietnamese Americans; [I] had a lot of Filipino friends, Korean friends, just everybody in all of those communities. It wasn't about their community; it was about creating ties among all of the communities. They were more interested in having an Asian American group than about a Chinese American or Filipino American group. Those groups had their own strengths. . . . At least among my groups of friends, we tended not to divide ourselves in that way. It was more about finding common things that we needed to work on.

With the significant number and presence of AA&NHPI in higher education in Orange County, programs have developed to meet the specific needs of these students and also often benefit the surrounding community. Notably, UCI and Irvine Valley College are both Asian American and Native American and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI), a designation from the U.S. Department of Education and the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. This designation provides financial resources to institutions of higher education to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to improve recruitment and retention of the different AA&NHPI ethnic groups, especially underrepresented ones.

Edwin Tiongson is project director for the AANAPISI project at Irvine Valley College, which is called ELEVATE AAPI (Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders). The program provides a safe space for AA&NHPI students to study and build community with other students, staff, and faculty. It also supports the broader community by offering ESL classes as a part of its programming. Tiongson explains the benefits of the ESL program and the diversity of the school:

> We get the students who just immigrated here to the grandparents that really can't understand their grandchild and the parent who can't navigate their child through school. And it's beautiful because we see Asian Pacific Islanders in there, I think it's like two-thirds. . . . You see a bunch of folks that also are Spanish speaking, Farsi speaking, those populations that are there. And we were able to support them with getting their center up and running and able to contribute to the institution to provide and meet that need of learning the language.

Audrey Yamagata-Noji echoes Tiongsan's sentiments regarding the intergenerational benefits of ESL programs provided by the local community colleges: "Colleges like Santa Ana [College], they have a huge adult education noncredit program for ESL, so the parents can go and actually learn the English language, which is going to help them in their jobs and help them with their children and their grandchildren in understanding and communicating."

The AANAPISI grant also helps to connect the university to local community organizations, further strengthening the network among AA&NHPI service providers. Tiongson says these collaborative efforts help to provide opportunities and inform students about how they can give back and improve their communities:

> By connecting with community-based organizations and hearing their stories, it's . . . finding opportunities for our students to connect with them so they can gain skills, . . . so they can make that choice to either be a part of the narrative [of change] and part of the engagement, or take it for what it's worth, [learning] life skills that will help them also

in the long run. Maybe they'll come back to other types of work that are similar down the line, but at least giving them that opportunity.

Upon graduation, students who benefit from this program can use their talents to find employment that improves the county's economic vibrancy and contribute to their communities. However, the future of the AANAPISI program is uncertain given educational policy changes at the federal level.

Development of University-Community Partnerships

Local university-community partnerships have also been critical in acquiring funding and sharing resources to address community needs. These partnerships have the potential to build the capacity of community organizations, which often lack sufficient infrastructure or funding to conduct research or implement programs. Pacific Island Health Partnership (PIHP) has formed two partnerships with colleges to help acquire funding in order to create culturally and linguistically appropriate community educational programs. It partners with CSUF on the Weaving an Islander Network for Cancer Awareness, Research, and Training (WINCART) program, and more recently, with the University of California, Riverside, for the Navigating Healthy Hearts cardiovascular disease program.[9] Jane Pang, cofounder of PIHP, describes how they were able to raise awareness about colorectal cancer through WINCART: "Our people aren't informed. We need to get that out, so we worked . . . three full years to get a whole video, handout, flip charts, and get the education out in language as well to the community." They build on these educational collaborations to create new partnerships and have partnered with St. Joseph's Hospital to connect with Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community members to encourage colonoscopies.

NEEDS

Resources for English Language Learners

Language continues to be an important issue for students who are from immigrant families. Over 24% of the students in Orange County school districts are English language learners.[10] While English language learners in Orange County are predominantly Latino (79%), the next-highest groups are students who speak Vietnamese (8%) followed by Korean (2.5%) and Mandarin Chinese (2%).[11] More funding and resources have been allocated to charter schools, which are able to provide language immersion programs. However, there are concerns about whether they will serve the specialized needs of low-income, immigrant children.

Michael Matsuda explains that charter schools are not obligated through locally elected school boards to address community needs, which can include needs specific to English language learners:

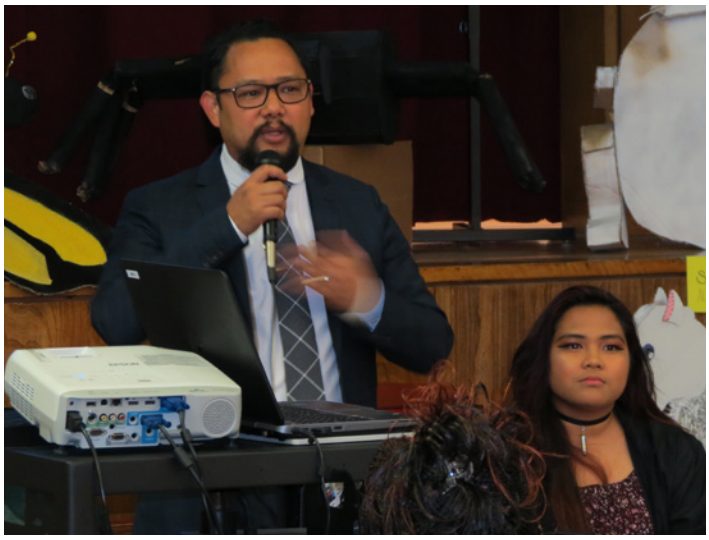

Photo courtesy of Jei Garlitos

> The issues of English language acquisition, that's a big thing and challenging. . . . Some of [the charter schools and voucher programs] are pretty good. The vast majority, I would say 90% plus, are in there to make money. And the most expensive kids are English learners—the ones that need more support—English learners and students with special needs and have a history of disenrollment. It'd be one thing if their demographics looked like ours in terms of ability, but they don't. There have been ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] studies that have shown they're resegregating America. That's a very dangerous trend for a democracy.

Audrey Yamagata-Noji, who advocated for bilingual education as a Santa Ana School Board member, cautions that if bilingual education is disproportionately offered in charter schools, it may hurt low-income immigrants who still primarily attend traditional public schools:

> So it became valuable for middle-class parents to have their kids learn a foreign language through a bilingual program. So it's not okay to use bilingual education for poor Latino and Vietnamese students to learn their language and English and content area. But it's acceptable for a predominantly, English-speaking middle-class families, be they Latino or Anglo to be in a bilingual program. That blows my mind.

Resources for Immigrant Students and Families

Immigrant students and their parents still face challenges navigating the intricacies of the U.S. educational system. This barrier can occur even among those who are well educated in their homeland. Naz Hamid, a parent in Irvine, who came to California initially as an international college student, describes the barriers immigrant families face trying to pursue educational opportunities for their children:

> We don't have anybody who holds our hand as much and guides us about how to navigate the system, whether it's high school and what courses you should be taking, when you should be taking them so you can get into a good college, and what is it you're supposed to be studying, what kinds of tests you should be taking. . . . Because your kids are coming up through the school system, it's sort of assumed that you know. But we don't know. I don't know. I have a college degree. I'm a working professional. I still don't know. So kids need a lot of hand holding because that institutional knowledge is not there.

This preparation can involve selecting the right major, attending job fairs, getting internships, finding mentors, and building networks; yet, even when students are proactive, they lack the personal connections that make a difference in securing a job upon graduation. Hamid believes this can impact immigrants:

> With an immigrant family who doesn't have those kinds of connections, our needs become very, very different. It sort of almost feels like we need folks who have been established to sort of give us that sort of a leg up and say 'Okay, you know what? Let me hold your hand. Let me guide you. Let me see what I can do to help you and level that playing field.' So a lot of that stuff is missing. Economically you may be pretty well off, but that network just isn't there.

Thus, despite their socioeconomic status, immigrants still face social and cultural challenges to advancing their children's education.

Serving Undocumented Students

Community leaders have expressed specific concerns about undocumented students being denied educational opportunities. The 2012 Obama-era policy, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), permitted undocumented immigrants who entered the country as minors to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation to attend school and work; however, the Trump administration rescinded this program in September 2017. California has close to 223,000 "DACA-mented" individuals, the highest number of the 800,000 DACA beneficiaries across the United States.[12] The top 15 countries of origin for DACA recipients include South Korea, Philippines, and India.[13] An estimated 45% of undocumented students within the University of California system identify as Asian American.[14] However, undocumented immigrants remain largely "hidden" in Asian American and Pacific Islander communities,[15] with many eligible undocumented Asian American and Pacific Islander youth not seeking DACA over the past five years; those that did come forward find that few resources targeted Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.[16] Audrey Yamagata-Noji explains that even under DACA, there are very few resources targeting Asian American and Pacific Islander undocumented students:

> They have almost no services available to them. The Mexican consulate is actually getting really involved in working with Mexican citizens and their rights. And there are a lot more immigrant rights activists and attorneys who speak Spanish, who understand that side. There are fewer that understand the Asian dilemma. So you have Korean, Filipino, some Chinese who fall under that. I had a Pacific Islander DACA student, and he was accepted to transfer to a college in Utah, but they wouldn't accept DACA. They wouldn't accept his DACA

"But I think for the Asian Pacific Americans who are DACAs, they just don't know where to go. They absolutely don't understand what's happening, and the resources aren't clearly available."

> status. They didn't understand it, but New Mexico did. So states don't understand it. There's so much misunderstanding about that and families are concerned. Some college students are wanting to give up. There's a lot of fear. But I think for the Asian Pacific Americans who are DACAs, they just don't know where to go. They absolutely don't understand what's happening, and the resources aren't clearly available.

In California, the state has taken many steps to protect the rights and futures of undocumented students, including providing in-state tuition and financial assistance as well as passing a new "school sanctuary" law in 2017 (AB 699) aimed at protecting undocumented students in public schools. However, great uncertainty about federal laws and policies, including the ability to obtain work authorization, will likely push any "DACA-mented" immigrants and other undocumented back underground, living in constant fear of deportation. It will be up to the state, counties, cities, and school districts to escalate efforts to support undocumented students in the coming months and years.

Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Educational Disparities

Of critical importance are the persistent educational disparities facing Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities. Only 19% of NHPI have obtained a college degree or higher compared with 38% of the general population.[17] NHPI high school graduation rates in Orange County are below average (83% versus the county average of 86%), while NHPI dropout rates countywide are identical to those of Blacks or African Americans (13%).[18] Despite high levels of enrollment of Asian Americans into higher education, NHPI make up less than 1% of the student population across California public institutions.[19] The barriers that NHPI face in education include major gaps in the education system that provide financial and social assistance to NHPI college students to pursue their education.[20] Rather than focusing on admissions policies, retention is a major issue that institutions of higher education need to monitor and critically evaluate to ensure that their programs, staff, and services assist NHPI students consistently all the way to graduation. These continuing disparities support the need to disaggregate data for NHPI and understand the educational barriers they face in order to effectively tailor programs to their needs.

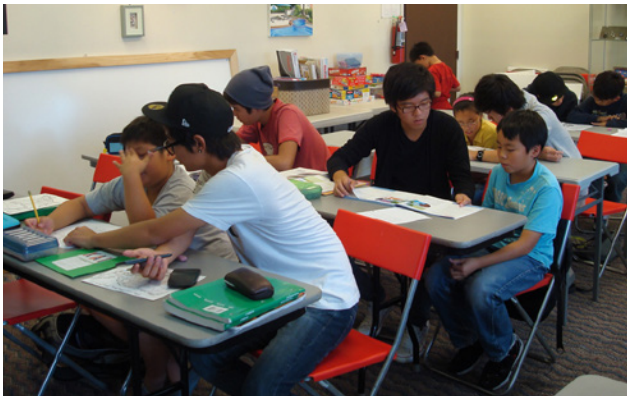

Photo courtesy of Ellen Ahn

Academic Pressures and Mental Health Services

Mental health issues are also impacting AA&NHPI students; however, it may be difficult for them to accept professional assistance (see chapter 5, "Health Care Services"). Jei Garlitos, principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District, has seen mental health issues impact both low- and high-income families as well as low- and high-achieving students, but they all tend to reject mental health services:

> I would see students who saw their anxieties rise as the pressures would build up. A lot of those families, we would offer, 'Hey, maybe your student needs someone to speak to, to kind of relieve [the pressure].' [The parents say,] 'Nope. No thank you.' And I think that's the biggest challenge we have. . . . They don't want anyone else as part of this intervention. The parents say, 'We will take care of it. There's an issue with my kid, just tell me what it is. We'll be able to go home and go take care of it.' Regardless, if it was the more affluent kids or high-achieving kids or the ones who are at-risk.

An emerging mental health issue relates specifically to transnational families in Orange County who are often referred to as "geese families" or "parachute kids." Within these families, parents are often separated from their children. Sometimes both parents remain in Asia, shuttling to the United States periodically. In other cases, the mother stays in the U.S. while the father continues to work in Asia or a guardian supervises the child. The parents agree to this arrangement in hopes that if their children are socialized into the U.S. educational system early on, it will assist them in gaining admission into top U.S. colleges and provide them with more opportunities than in their homeland, where there are fewer universities and competition is fierce for limited slots. However, as they are often unsupervised and left alone in the United States, parachute kids may face adjustment issues and social alienation, which can lead to mental health issues of depression, suicide, and aggression.[21]

In many cases, immigrant and refugee parents have made incredible sacrifices in order for their children to have better educational opportunities. In some cases, this creates immense pressure on their children to do well in school. Michael Matsuda relates the unforeseen problems facing a number of immigrant and refugee families in the Anaheim Union High School District:

> Right now, you have a lot of these stereotypes in the Asian communities—the tiger moms, the tiger dads—that we're all focused on going to the top colleges and all that. And there is a sense of truth to that, but I think it's also when you go deeper, I've had parents who are struggling with this issue of mental health and depression and isolation. And realizing that they're trying to do what's best, thinking I want my kid to get a high SAT score or whatever, but beginning to realize that that's leading to a sense of emptiness for the child. And I think that's another big challenge for our community. You know we've been successful with this model [of] push, push, push through education, but now there's a backlash. There's sort of an undercurrent of 'Oh wait a second, maybe we're pushing too hard. And maybe we're pushing on the wrong things.' And I'm hearing that increasingly from our Asian American parents.

Photo courtesy of Mary Anne Foo/ OCAPICA

Naz Hamid, whose children attend high-performing Irvine schools, agrees that this pressure has negative effects on children of immigrant families: "That pressure sometimes has some very unintended consequences that parents are not really looking for. Kids struggle with depression. They attempt suicide. Some of them end up dropping out of high school entirely. Some of them turn to drugs. And it's really sad because that's not what any parent wants for their child."

Intense parent engagement and unrealistic expectations of their children's academic success can also have negative consequences. Matsuda sees these different mental health issues becoming so prevalent in K–12 education that they need to be closely evaluated: "It's an increasingly complex world, and it's increasingly stressful. We know that depression, teenage depression, is on the rise. And we can no longer be education that looks at traditional metrics of test scores and SAT scores and say that we're doing a good job. We have got to reflect on what is the purpose of public education in a democracy."

The pressure also extends to college students. Audrey Yamagata-Noji works with Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP), a Los Angeles nonprofit organization that also provides leadership training for the educational, political, and corporate sectors in Orange County. She tries to guide Asian American college students to pursue their personal interests and balance them with their parents' expectations:

> It's critically important for parents to understand college majors and the American mindset, that the student has the right to decide their own major, which is not something always embraced by families. They want to weigh in, and there is an expectation that you go to a professional school. So going to college, you're going to be a doctor or an attorney or a computer scientist or some kind of a scientist, so you have STEM [science, technology, engineering, and math] and the professional schools covered. That's to make your parents the proudest of what you're going to do.
>
> Many, many students want to study psychology. I've often wondered why. Is it because of their own questioning about their development and some of the issues that they go through? . . . We do this training with LEAP. . . . 'When your major is not *your* major.' 'When getting straight A's isn't good enough because you should've had A+s.' And so our 'joke' with LEAP is, you get around the parent pressure by having the double major—one for your parents, one for yourself.

> We also noticed the fallout for a lot of students at the university level: the high competition and the pressure to succeed, students committing suicide, students pressuring not just to get in but to graduate in shorter amounts of time, [and] the competition amongst Asian students with each other. And so there's a psychological fallout that's happening with all of the pressures for achievement.

There are very narrow and traditional understandings about "academic success" beyond grades and majors that can create undue pressure on AA&NHPI students. Overall there are still expectations to go to a four-year university, especially a top-ranked school, immediately after high school. Immigrant and refugee parents, especially those who did not attend college or even those educated in another country, are not always familiar with the educational options and choices available in the United States such as transferring from community colleges. In fact, 47% of Asian American and 55% of NHPI freshmen start college in the California community college system.[22] Yamagata-Noji elaborates:

> Over time the community colleges have become more of a viable alternative to recent immigrants and to other families for lots of reasons, some economical. . . . If you can't get to your destination right out of high school, community colleges have done a good job now with transfer, and you actually can get to your top college by going through a community college now. So I think we're starting to change some of that. But there still is a big stigma. Even in the UC system, UC Merced is not UCLA, and community college is still not Cal Poly Pomona, . . . and that [information] I get from talking to college students themselves.

Edwin Tiongson, who oversees the ELEVATE AAPI program at Irvine Valley College, asserts that community colleges can be an important space for young people to "discover themselves" before finding their academic and career interests, which can help with students' emotional well-being: "Not everybody has their set path in mind, and I want to say it's totally okay. Community colleges are here to be, and I'm taking my students' words, it's a 'pit stop,' a testing ground to find out what works and what doesn't. When you're a . . . small fish in a big pond, it's daunting."

School Bullying and Harassment

School bullying and harassment against AA&NHPI students based on stereotypes of their ethnic identity as well as gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, or religion are also major concerns at both the K–12 and college levels.[23] A national report indicates that while Asian Americans have the lowest rate of bullying among those who are bullied, Asian Americans are most likely to be harassed because of their race.[24] Since the 2016 election, administrators across the United States have noted increases in anti-Muslim bullying, which is consistent with an overall rise in

anti-Muslim harassment.[25] Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles has received reports of school bullying in recent years, including in Orange County.

Asian American educators in the county such as Michael Matsuda are concerned about the current anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim climate impacting public education and persistent educational inequities:

> Public educators are kind of like the medical profession where we don't discriminate who comes through the doors. Everybody gets served. We do not ask whether you're documented or undocumented, and that's supported by the Supreme Court decision[s]. The purpose of public schools is to educate everybody, but as we know that's kind of under siege by the federal government. They're questioning that. They only want education for certain people, not the undocumented, not certain religions like Muslim. We know that's all going to be challenged constitutionally.

Students are also directly responding to harassment. Matsuda shares how his students responded to recent bullying:

> At one of our high schools we had incidents where kids were putting pepperoni pizzas in Muslim students' lockers, and then kids harassed some girls with their hijab. So the students were so upset they decided to do a wear-hijab day, and they got the Christian club and the other clubs to come together during lunch. And they were doing infomercials at the announcements about why Muslim girls wear hijabs. So there's for every knucklehead thing that's racial or whatever, there's all these kids coming together and they do the right thing.

In another example, Edwin Tiongson describes how two Muslim students on the speech and debate team he advises presented a skit to dispel myths about their community: "They found a poem, 'This Is Not Our Islam,' . . . a beautiful spoken-word poem. . . . It was through these types of performances that they were able to advocate. . . . It was about sharing the message, 'This is not our Islam—don't put us into this category. Don't overgeneralize the acts of a few to the religion of the many.'

Addressing bullying requires the creation of inclusive environments both in K–12 and higher education by students. Educators and administrators as well as elected officials and community leaders should promote and enforce inclusive policies and appropriate actions that protect those who are targets of bullying and harassment. Some of the solutions to these problems can include ethnic studies courses, diverse teachers and administrators, complaint procedures and mediation programs, and regular training of staff.

Lack of Institutionalized Ethnic Studies Curricula

Given the presence and contributions of AA&NHPI in Orange County, educators have noted that this history has yet to be consistently institutionalized as required curricula across the Orange County school districts. Audrey Yamagata-Noji notes that "we've missed the boat on educating children about their own histories and their own language." California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law AB-2016 ordering the creation of a model ethnic studies curriculum for high schools with standards that any state school could implement. The bill's sponsor, Assemblymember Luis A. Alejo (D-Salinas) remarks, "The development of a comprehensive ethnic studies curriculum acknowledges the diversity of California, which has the most ethnically diverse public school student body in the nation. . . . Ethnic studies are not just for students of color. We should give all students the opportunity to prepare for a diverse global economy, diverse university campuses and diverse workplaces."[26] School districts in Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco have already adopted these policies. Orange County school districts have yet to adopt similar policies, but efforts should be made to train teachers and build an inclusive curriculum that includes local AA&NHPI histories.

Increasing the Number of Educators, Administrators, and Elected Officials

As the AA&NHPI student population has increased, more AA&NHPI have been hired as educators and administrators. However, given the growing number of AA&NHPI students in K–12 schools and institutions of higher learning, a concerted effort to hire and appoint more diverse role models in front of the classroom and in positions of power within the Orange County educational system is needed. In particular, there are few Asian Americans in leadership positions steering education policies at either the K–12 or higher education levels. Michael Matsuda identifies this as a major workforce gap: "We're good at entry level, but we don't rise up. They're very few [AA&NHPI] superintendents, very few principals. And I think that is a challenge. How do we learn to advocate for ourselves and support each other?"

Tam Nguyen, who served as president of the CSUF Alumni Association, also sees this gap within higher education institutions:

> Even the places where you think would be the most inclusive and diverse such as the universities. I mean I can't help but to think of my two institutions, UC Irvine and Cal State Fullerton, which are near and dear to my heart 'cause I attended them as a student. And the student bodies are very diverse, but I also look at administration, I look at leadership positions and when I talk about that, I look at VPs and deans. We still lack a large number of role models. So the lack of role models in high-profile positions is still evident.

"A lot of those families, we would offer, 'Hey, maybe your student needs someone to speak to, to kind of relieve [the pressure].' [The parents say,] 'Nope. No thank you.' And I think that's the biggest challenge we have."

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

While Asian Americans may value education and respect teachers, the field itself is not seen as a desired profession for the community. Jei Garlitos of the Anaheim Union High School District explains this disconnect: "Within the Asian American community, it's [education is] still not one of the big professions to look at and say, 'I want to be a leader in that profession.' I still think Asian American families and communities still value, although they value education pretty highly, they still will look at doctors, engineers, lawyers, those types of professions prior to say counselor or assistant principal first. . . . I hope that that's changing within the next couple of generations as we educate more and more."

Given the significant number of AA&NHPI students in Orange County schools, AA&NHPI leadership in schools and school districts should address issues that disproportionately impact AA&NHPI. Although the California state average for minority students is 76%, many schools in Orange County exceed this percentage with schools that are majority Latino and AA&NHPI.[27] For example, the Garden Grove Unified School District serves over 44,000 students, and over 90% are minority, mainly Hispanic/Latino, and AA&NHPI.[28] AA&NHPI enrollment is also increasing in other school districts in more affluent areas of the county. The Irvine Unified School District has over 33,381 students enrolled, with 16,579 AA&NHPI students.[29] While Asian Americans, primarily Vietnamese Americans, have served on the school boards in Garden Grove and Westminster, Irvine and other cities with increasing AA&NHPI student demographics need more diverse representation. AA&NHPI voices are not just needed in educational instruction and administration but are also needed in major political leadership roles, including appointed superintendents and elected school board members.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collect and report disaggregated data for AA&NHPI on educational needs and attainment.
- Expand access to English learner, bilingual instruction, and dual-immersion programs in languages commonly spoken by AA&NHPI students. This should include increasing recruitment, retention, and support of teachers and teacher's aides bilingual in AA&NHPI languages.
- Support opportunities for limited English proficient parents to meaningfully engage in their children's education, including the translation of school documents into AA&NHPI languages, AA&NHPI language interpretation at school meetings and events, and parent groups targeting immigrant parents unfamiliar with the U.S. educational system.
- Ensure that undocumented students have access to education and related services, and implement state laws that serve and protect undocumented

students (e.g., AB 699). In particular, target outreach to and support of Asian American and Pacific Islander undocumented students and their families, in recognition that undocumented Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face cultural barriers to disclosing their undocumented status.

- Target outreach to and support of underrepresented AA&NHPI ethnic groups, particularly Southeast Asian and NHPI students who may lack sufficient support and resources to succeed in school.
- Increase mental health education, outreach, and services for AA&NHPI students in both the K–12 and higher education levels. In the K–12 setting, these efforts should also include parents and family members and address cultural barriers (e.g., acknowledging mental health needs).
- For both K–12 and higher education levels, adopt and enforce anti-hate and anti-bullying policies at school and school district levels (e.g., AB 2845), provide counseling and other supportive services to students, develop clear reporting requirements, and provide training to teachers and school administrators on implementing these policies.
- Provide AA&NHPI ethnic studies programming, including supporting and incorporating ethnic studies curriculum at high schools as required by state law as well as in other public school grades and in private schools. Include lessons on issues like the "model minority myth" and the significant diversity (socioeconomic, culture, language, religion) across AA&NHPI ethnic groups.
- Recruit, hire, and promote K–12 and higher education teachers and administrators who can work with diverse student populations, including more AA&NHPI. Also build a pipeline that encourages more AA&NHPI to become teachers and administrators, including mentorship programs to help elevate more AA&NHPI to higher-level positions.
- Support policies that promote equal opportunity and diversity in public education, ensuring students from diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds have equal access to a quality education.
- Increase funding for K–12 and higher education, including the community college, California State University, and University of California systems, to ensure public education is accessible and affordable to all AA&NHPI. Strong financial aid programs, targeted outreach, and in-language resources for parents are critical.
- Increase awareness and understanding among AA&NHPI communities of the role of community colleges in providing a more affordable path to higher education.

INTERVIEWED COMMUNITY LEADERS

Ellen Ahn	Executive director of Korean Community Services
Jei Garlitos	Principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District
Naz Hamid	Parent in Irvine; ran for the local school board
Michael Matsuda	Superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District; founding member of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Tam Nguyen	Former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce; owner of Advance Beauty College; former president of the California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Alumni Association
Jane Pang	Cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Edwin Tiongson	Project director of ELEVATE AAPI (Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) at Irvine Valley College
Audrey Yamagata-Noji	Vice president of Student Services at Mount San Antonio College; served on the Santa Ana School Board for 25 years; volunteer with Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP)
Cyril Yu	Former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association; senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office; ran for the Irvine School Board

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

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Photo courtesy of Ellen Ahn

CHAPTER 5

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE ORANGE COUNTY

Culturally appropriate and linguistically competent education and services are of critical importance in addressing Asian American & Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA&NHPI) health disparities in each community. In Orange County, there are a number of AA&NHPI organizations and health care professionals that deliver linguistically and culturally competent services and education to AA&NHPI communities, particularly to low-income immigrants and refugees who are monolingual and limited English proficient, and even to non-AA&NHPI. While AA&NHPI contribute significantly to the county's health care services system, there are also continuing health service delivery needs as well as access to medical coverage that impact AA&NHPI. Providing timely and appropriate physical, behavioral, and mental health services to AA&NHPI ethnic groups is especially difficult as there are barriers both within the community and in the system. Ethnic organizations provide much-needed services that are not provided by most mainstream providers, but this fragile safety net for vulnerable AA&NHPI faces funding, capacity, and other challenges that threaten its ability to sustain quality care for the vastly diverse AA&NHPI community in the county.

ASSETS

Culturally and Linguistically Competent Workforce

AA&NHPI have been critical in contributing to both the mainstream health care system in Orange County and the development of culturally and linguistically competent services in the community. Linguistic competence is the ability to speak a client's preferred language, and cultural competency is understanding the cultural practices and behaviors, and even historical background, of the clients. Asian Americans make up 38% of the health care practitioners and technicians in the county, and over 36% of Filipino Americans work in health care and social assistance professions.[1] The top industries in which Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County are employed are also health care and social assistance.[2] AA&NHPI work in a wide range of health care jobs that treat or provide services to patients and clients in hospitals, health care centers, and homes. However, given the increasing number of AA&NHPI populations, there is still a shortage of culturally and linguistically competent health care service providers (see Needs section).

Photo courtesy of Vattana Peong

The personal and family experiences of several community leaders motivated their health and social service work with AA&NHPI communities. Mary Anne Foo, who is of Chinese and Japanese ancestry and the founding executive director of the

Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, says that growing up in Marysville, California, she faced anti-Asian racism that led her to depression and drug and alcohol abuse as a teenager "because I just wanted to fit in and I wanted to be White." Her post-college community work with the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health in the San Francisco Bay Area helped empower her to be proud of being Asian American and to work on Asian American issues: "That journey from self-hatred to kind of exploring and seeing, oh, the community is really diverse and interesting, to self-acceptance and self-love, was through that period."

Michael Matsuda, a third-generation Japanese American and superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District, relates how he saw intergenerational trauma among his family and other Japanese Americans who experienced mass incarceration during World War II, an experience that had deep emotional impact on the community but is often not talked about within families: "It did take its toll when you think about the emotional trauma passed on generationally because we as adults now can look at the relationship between my mom and my dad, within the family, and how that trauma—even though you're trying to bear with it and have the guts to go through it—I think it did take an emotional toll on families generationally." As a leader of a large school district, Matsuda found his family's own experience with intergenerational trauma helpful in understanding the experiences and mental health needs of many of his students who are from refugee families.

Shikha Bhatnagar, who immigrated from India as a child and is the executive director of the South Asian Network, also talks about growing up and observing family trauma and domestic violence in the South Asian community and noticing the community's lack of response to such issues. This motivated her to work on gender justice issues in the community: "That also really sort of fueled my anger about the way that our community responds to domestic violence." The personal insights and commitments of these community leaders motivate them to address health care and its related issues from a culturally nuanced perspective.

Leadership of Culturally and Linguistically Competent Community Organizations

In addition to the contributions of AA&NHPI health care professionals and workers, AA&NHPI community-based service agencies and clinics have also played an important role since the 1990s in addressing health and social service needs of new immigrants and refugees in Orange County. They provide direct and indirect linguistically and culturally competent care to diverse AA&NHPI ethnic groups and address needs that may be overlooked by mainstream hospitals and health care providers. Ellen Ahn, executive director of Korean Community Services, remarks that even if mainstream organizations have staff with relevant language

skills, they "just don't have the reach that a community organization has. And that reach involves relationships, history, trust, reputation—all of those things that a couple of staff or a department just cannot do—and so we fill that gap."

Jane Pang, cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP), explains how her organization has played an important role in translating materials for the Pacific Islander communities, which are often overlooked because of their relatively smaller population:

> Every time we have a new program coming out I'm asking, 'Can we get it done in Samoan and Tongan?'—at least two of my five languages. And they would get the Vietnamese, they would get the Korean, they would get all the other ethnicities. And I said, 'Could we just get one in Samoan, translate in Samoan?' The state could never get that [and would say] 'There wasn't enough resources.' So this is what part of the basic mission for PIHP is. . . . Let's find resources so then we can then take the information and do our own translation. And that way we can then help the small organizations who we network with some extra resources.

Shikha Bhatnagar of the South Asian Network echoes the same sentiment in serving the South Asian population—that the familiarity of the South Asian Network with the culture of the community allows it to be more effective in delivering services:

> Understanding how the experiences of a Bangladeshi American and their culture as a Bangladeshi Muslim . . . it's very specific. . . . We have this group of Punjabi aunties come in the other day, you know the way that you speak with them, . . . sometimes you have to be firm in a way that maybe a non–South Asian would be uncomfortable doing. But the person who's from that culture understands that the only way this person is actually going to make it to this appointment is if you're a little firm with them. . . . There's not only language, but it's the cultural nuances as well when we deliver these services.

Having cultural understanding is especially critical for many refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos who may not only be monolingual or limited English proficient but also traumatized by war and displacement. Tricia Nguyen, the CEO of Southland Integrated Services, formerly the Vietnamese Community of Orange County (VNCOC), describes how the organization was created in 1979 in response to Vietnamese refugees settling in the county:

> It started out because of the influx of Vietnamese [who] immigrated here when we lost our country. So a group of volunteers got together and [said], 'We need to have a nonprofit to help the community.' So we started out as [providing services for] immigration, citizenship, offering

> job skills in our classes. And then about 10, 12 years after that, they say, 'We need a clinic.' So that's how they started the Asian Health Center [which was part of VNCOC].

Southland Integrated Services now has over 60 staff and continues to expand to address the evolving health needs of the Vietnamese American community, including dental and mental health services.

Vattana Peong, executive director of The Cambodian Family, which was founded in 1982 by Cambodian refugees to help other newly arrived Cambodians in Santa Ana, explains how the community has difficulty talking about its past history and how its staff spends time to build trust with each client who is dealing with "all those kind of stories of war, of genocide. So the clients are most likely not [going] to disclose that information or tell that client information to providers who [do] not really understand what [is] happening—the root cause behind immigration and refugee experiences."

Before these community-based organizations and clinics that developed in recent decades, many AA&NHPI in Orange County had to rely on organizations in Los Angeles County for assistance. Mainstream organizations in Orange County were not providing linguistically and culturally competent health care services, resulting in high levels of disparities when it came to health care access. In response to this, community-based organizations saw the dire need and began delivering services to the underserved, becoming a critical safety net. Remarking on the impressive growth of Korean Community Services, which now has 80 staff and has expanded its social services to include a medical clinic, Ellen Ahn of Korean Community Services says that "We used to, 10 years ago, literally advise our clients to move to LA because the services are better there, and we no longer have to do that." These ethnic community organizations have been critical in developing a health care and social service infrastructure that addresses the health care needs of Orange County's AA&NHPI populations.

Collaborations to Deliver Effective and Impactful Services

Responding to Orange County's demographic growth, organizations such as the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) formed and emphasized collaboration across ethnic groups to more effectively deliver services. Drawing upon her previous experience working with pan-Asian coalitions in Los Angeles and San Francisco, founder and executive director Mary Anne Foo of OCAPICA brought together other emerging AA&NHPI community leaders in 1997 to work on health care issues. The vision of a multiethnic collaboration was an important aspect that second-generation AA&NHPI community leaders brought to the table:

> It was young, new leaders who built a good reputation that could help us build trust. Because there was so much fighting in Orange County among first generation and between the different Asian American and Pacific Islander ethnic groups that I really thought about this. It has to be 1.5 or second generation who sees the whole Asian American and Pacific Islander [community], who aren't saying 'I'm Vietnamese, I'm fighting for Vietnamese' or 'I'm fighting for Koreans' or 'I'm fighting for Chinese,' . . . but that the board would see themselves as '[I'm] Asian American' or 'I'm Pacific Islander' or 'I'm API' [Asian Pacific Islander] . . . because we need to fight for everybody.

Michael Matsuda, a U.S.-born Japanese American who supported Foo to form OCAPICA, adds, "You put the sticks together and you're a lot stronger. And that's where I think Mary Anne Foo, her vision of creating this cross–Asian Pacific organization that would be much stronger together rather than isolated and being pitted against each other [was effective]." Today, OCAPICA has approximately 100 staff who speak 24 languages and provide programs in addition to health, including employment, education, and civic engagement.

Holistic and Inclusive Approaches to Health Care Services

Leaders of AA&NHPI organizations also expressed a broad vision of their role in the Orange County community. Their holistic view of health includes comprehensive services that address the different aspects of health while also creating healthy communities that address language barriers to education, workforce development, and political engagement. Michael Matsuda speaks about OCAPICA's vision as "grounded in social justice and a deeper understanding of not just sort of giving services but also empowering with education and empowering with a voice, so we can empower more of our community to come forward and articulate that in a way that is going to impact the larger system." OCAPICA, Korean Community Services, and Southland Integrated Services serve senior citizens, families, and youth, and all three organizations provide mental health services, while the latter two also provide medical services. These organizations also provide wraparound services for families to deliver mental health services for the children as well as for their parents and to improve relationships within the family. The California passage of Proposition 63 in 2004 was critical in allocating funding for many ethnic communities to provide these mental health services. To meet growing client populations, some groups have multiple sites and conduct off-site outreach and education at schools, businesses, and faith institutions, to ensure that AA&NHPI communities are being served where they live, work, and pray.

Although many of these organizations may have started with a focus on AA&NHPI, many now serve other communities in Orange County facing similar issues. Since these organizations work with low-income clients, many who

are immigrants or refugees, they have been able to apply their knowledge and experiences to serve other underserved populations. After they received their first funding in 1983, The Cambodian Family employed a diverse staff that served not only Cambodian Americans but also Latinos and Eastern European and African refugees who, like them, had escaped war and famine. With budget cuts, they were forced to downsize; however, executive director Vattana Peong describes how the organization serves both Cambodian Americans and Latinos, and emphasizes how they are able to serve both communities because they have shared experiences:

> That has always been a question asked to our agency: How can you work with Latino populations or other populations? . . . So that is the key thing. So when we have, for example, health education together, we try to be inclusive, so we have a translator for them. . . . We have ethnic food for them as well to make sure that we are diverse. And for our after-school program, it's very important because our after-school program is a mixture of Latino and Cambodian youth in the same room. How are they going to be working together? So we have a very skilled staff member who is able to work with them by having them share their experiences because . . . 95% of our clients are immigrants or refugees, so they were able to share their experiences, their experiences of resiliency, their experiences of struggle with their parents. So they were able to listen to each other.

"There's not only language, but it's the cultural nuances as well when we deliver these services."

Southland Integrated Services CEO Tricia Nguyen says that the organization changed its name from the Vietnamese Community of Orange County to better reflect its clientele and to be more inclusive of those who need the services provided by the center, regardless of their ethnic background:

> So I changed [the health clinic that had been called] Asian Health Center to Southland Health Center, and it was received very well from the non-Vietnamese population because we serve everybody. And they say, 'Oh my god, we're so glad you changed your name because we feel like when we see Asian Health Center, we feel like we don't belong there or you don't want to focus on us.' And then after that, about a year, a year ago, I said, 'You know what? Let's just be brave and let's just close our eyes and change [the organization's] name.'

These community organizations and clinics have grown and built trust beyond their own ethnic communities. They are addressing gaps in service delivery that mainstream institutions fail to address, not just for their own ethnic groups, but for other underserved populations as well.

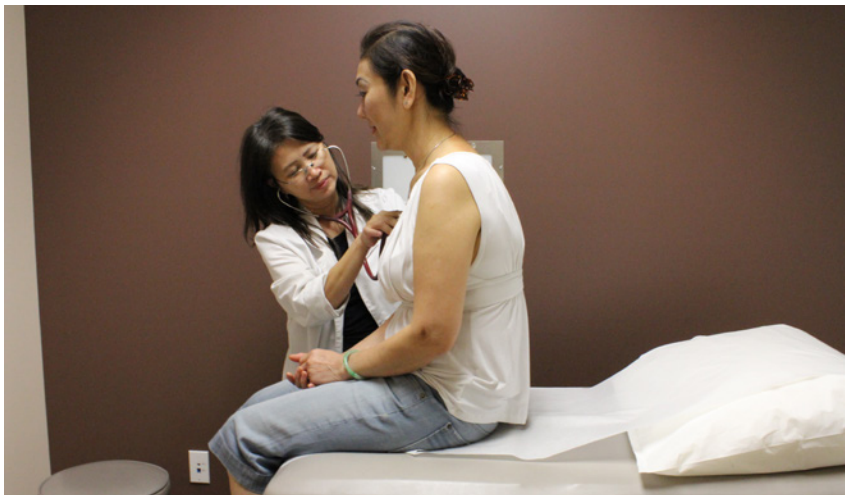

Photo courtesy of Tricia Nguyen

NEEDS

Improve Access to Health Insurance

Health insurance continues to be an important health access issue for AA&NHPI. Enacted in 2010, the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) significantly increased health insurance options for many Californians through the creation of the Covered California marketplace and the expansion of Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California). This expanded coverage to over 4.7 million Californians by 2016, including many lower-income families and individuals. Nationally, Asian Americans were among the greatest beneficiaries of the ACA, purchasing health insurance coverage at higher rates than other groups.[3] In California, 21% of enrollees were Asian Americans, well above the Asian American population statewide (15%).[4] In Orange County, the uninsured rate decreased from 17% to 12% from 2013 to 2014, and the uninsured rate for Asian Americans in the county dropped from 15% to 8% during this time.[5]

Since the November 2016 presidential election, the ACA and other federal health care programs have been under repeated attack in Congress and by the current administration. If the ACA is repealed, many AA&NHPI are at risk of once again becoming uninsured or spending more money on health coverage. Community leaders working in social services shared that their clients have expressed fear about how federal policy changes will impact their access to health care. Korean Americans may be particularly affected by changes to the ACA. With a high concentration of small business owners, Korean Americans have had especially high rates of uninsurance and often have to purchase health insurance independently. In 2008, prior to the ACA, Korean Community Services estimated that one-third of Korean Americans in Orange County were uninsured.[6] Ellen Ahn explains:

> There are going to be some huge changes to Medicaid and Covered California. . . . That's what's been promised by the new administration. And it's particularly jarring for Korean Americans. . . . But I've seen some Covered California numbers, and Asian Americans enrolled in much higher rates in Covered California than other ethnic communities, and Korean Americans in particular. Which means if there are changes to Covered California, that means we're going back to what we were before the Affordable Care Act, which is the high number of uninsured. Our Medicaid enrollments have been very, very, very high. So our Medicaid expansion population, if that goes away, that will leave many, many, many uninsured.

Health insurance has made access to both physical and behavioral health services a reality. Without it, access will be financially prohibitive for many AA&NHPI. Ahn notes how the ACA helped to expand coverage to address a wide range of health issues:

> And Medicaid expansion and Covered California not just meant more insured, it also meant more benefits. . . . So it opened up new mental health care benefits, psychiatric benefits. It's much more complex than just 'insured' per se. And so what that meant for the immigrant who either bought their insurance through their exchange or who received Medicaid through the expansion, what that meant is the ability to access some very basic preventive services or addressing mental health medication, it meant not going to the emergency room for basic needs. And if this goes away, that's a huge blow to the safety net [for the] population.

Limited Capacity and Funding for Community Organizations

Community organizations and health clinics have provided an important service for AA&NHPI communities, especially first-generation immigrants. Some of these centers, such as Southland Integrated Services and Korean Community Services, provide preventive health services to many low-income communities that are supported through federal funding. If there are any cuts to Medicaid or community health center funding, or if further attempts to repeal and replace the ACA succeed, it will mean less funding to these centers and a shift away from key services like preventive care, mental health care, and women's health services. Such changes would remove a safety net for many of these communities, which depend on these community centers for basic services. Tricia Nguyen relates how this impacts the stability of her organization:

> In terms of the clinic, as a leader, I worry about the funding. We don't know if the federal funding . . . if it's going to get cut. How is that going to play out? What are the regulations and inconsistency? Like one day it's like, 'Oh we're doing this!' And the next day, 'Oh we're doing that.' Because that's our struggle with the county level as it is before. It's like they're changing on us, you know, on a weekly basis. And so that's our concern. It's a lot of uncertainty. It creates a lot of stress.

As these organizations continue to fill these needs, they all face similar funding and political uncertainty that may jeopardize their capacity to provide quality care to these communities.

In addition to questions about funding stability, nonprofit leaders raised concerns about the excessive compliance and reporting requirement for the foundation

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

and government grants that support their organizations. Although accountability and transparency are necessary, community agencies have limited administrative capacity and need a more streamlined and simplified grant-reporting process that is less cumbersome and time-consuming. Many of them rely on multiple national and regional grants that require inordinate amounts of time to complete the paperwork for both small and large grants. Shikha Bhatnagar notes that nonprofits "spend really ridiculous amounts of time reporting on money, which hinders our ability to serve our populations. And frankly, the funds that we're getting are really just Band-Aid solutions to much deeper issues." Simplifying these tasks would give the organizations more capacity to provide much-needed services to the AA&NHPI community.

Providing culturally and linguistically competent services is an additional burden on the limited capacity of community organizations. Although community organizations have played a critical role in filling that gap, there are still major challenges. Vattana Peong asserts that this becomes a major gap in the continuum of care for many Cambodian Americans in Orange County: "About 80% of the time a lot of clients that we refer out got referred back to us because they [the mainstream organizations] didn't have the capacity, especially on language and cultural understanding . . . so that puts challenges back on our back." Many community leaders view language assistance as more than the mechanics of interpretation and translation and involves a deeper cultural understanding that comes from being a part of the community. Ellen Ahn explains:

> Cultural competency is much more than language. Cultural competency involves a cultural inclusion, which means you need to really bring in folks who are a part of the community into the process, the service provision process. And we fill that need. But it also means understanding the culture well, and you can't do that with one staff. If you hire a Korean, that doesn't [necessarily] happen. You really need to be embedded in the community, understand the community, the nuances of the community. You can't teach that in a training. I'm not belittling training. Training is important. Cultural competency training is critical and it helps to a certain degree, but it's best served by folks who are embedded in the community.

According to cofounder Victor Pang, Pacific Islander Health Partnership uses an intergenerational approach to translate materials in the Pacific Islander communities so that it is culturally appropriate: "We use a two-step process. First everyone

translates it literally. But then we give it to an elder, and the elder translates . . . to their thinking of what the message should be."

The need to ensure culturally and linguistically competent care makes AA&NHPI cases more complex and time-consuming, and the additional work required is often uncompensated or undercompensated. Tricia Nguyen's team expends extra effort to ensure terms are properly translated:

> There's always a lot of terminologies that we don't have on the medical side, like for example, *nurse practitioner*, *occupational therapist*. We don't have those terminology [in Vietnamese]. So a lot of time it's really a struggle for us. . . . There could be 10 people translating one thing totally different. So that's the hard part, is being culturally competent. But it's very hard to do translation. I feel like they're so limited . . . folks that are really, really good at translating English to Vietnamese and vice versa. 'Cause a lot of them [organizations], they do Google translate. . . . The brochures we came across and we're like, 'What is this? It is just not good.' So we end up doing a lot of the translation for a lot of the folks locally if they need help.

AA&NHPI community organizations have played a crucial role in the collection of disaggregated health data and can do more with additional funding and resources. AA&NHPI have historically been lumped together as a monolithic group, leading to misperceptions that AA&NHPI as a whole have better health outcomes than other racial groups, and in some cases, the general U.S. population. However, the use of AA&NHPI aggregated data often masks specific health issues that AA&NHPI experience, including significant differences between Asian American populations and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations. Cancer is the leading cause of death for Asian Americans, while heart disease is for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.[7] AA&NHPI comprise over half the deaths associated with chronic hepatitis B infection and are 8 to 13 times more likely to develop liver cancer compared with other groups.[8] Southeast Asian women also face high rates of breast cancer and low rates of breast cancer screening.[9] While medical conditions are not addressed directly in this report, further research is needed about the prevalence of these health disparities, which include the collection and analysis of disaggregated data to understand specific causes, patterns, and treatments.

"95% of our clients are immigrants or refugees, so they were able to share their experiences, their experiences of resiliency, their experiences of struggle."

Underrepresentation of Health Care Professionals

While Asian Americans make up over one-third of the health professionals in Orange County, and many Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders work in health care jobs, there is still an underrepresentation of specific ethnic groups in health occupations. Communities that have the most need for bicultural and bilingual services are also the ones with the highest poverty levels and lowest educational

attainment rates. There are thus fewer individuals in the pipeline to become health professionals (see chapter 3, "Economic Development and Disparities," and chapter 4, "K–12 and Higher Education"). Some community leaders also expressed that the comparatively lower salary in nonprofit occupations may discourage individuals from working at community organizations.

Within the Cambodian American community, only 4% have a graduate school education and, of those, very few return to work in community organizations. According to Vattana Peong, "We don't have enough [of a] culturally, linguistically [capable] workforce to provide services to our population. And we're still going to go back to square one. We never will get out of this cycle unless we address that high school–college career pipeline in terms of the allied health, like public health professional, therapist, or things like that, or other medical fields." Currently in Orange County there is only one Khmer-speaking medical provider and physician assistant and no Khmer-speaking mental health providers for a population of 7,471 Cambodian Americans.[10]

Gender is also a factor in providing culturally and linguistically competent services. Trained female professionals are essential in contexts such as assisting a female victim of domestic violence and sexual abuse. Having someone whom a victim can ethnically or racially relate to—and of the same gender—is particularly critical for these types of services because of the high levels of stigma experienced by community members and the corresponding reluctance of community members to identify themselves as someone in need of mental health services and/or a victim of domestic violence.

Photo courtesy of Ellen Ahn

Several community leaders also mentioned the need for more AA&NHPI males in the behavioral and mental health care professions. Recalling his experience attending Chapman University to receive a degree in counseling, Jei Garlitos, a Filipino American principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District, notes the lack of AA&NHPI males: "I was one. There were two female Asian Americans. One was Japanese American and the other one was Chinese American. And then, I believe, one of them is still in the profession. The other is no longer. And I'm no longer, at least not, in counseling. . . . That was the one thing that I saw was still a need in that area for us, is the need for mental health services and counselors, I think, that our population can relate to."

In Garlitos's experience working in education, "there's not enough Asian Americans, not enough Asian American males in the [counseling] profession I think to be able to address some of those students." Jane and Victor Pang, cofounders of Pacific Islander Health Partnership, assert that in order to respect Pacific Islander cultural norms, there is a need to have both male and female health advocates. Victor

Pang's leadership has helped to further health education among males in the Pacific Islander communities, including issues that are not easily recognized such as male breast cancer, which he personally battled.

Behavioral Health Services and Addressing Stigma

One of the major AA&NHPI health care needs identified by community leaders was the need for more culturally competent behavioral health services, which include mental health and substance abuse. There is still a major stigma within most ethnic communities to acknowledge mental health problems, and when AA&NHPI do seek help, culturally and linguistically appropriate services are limited. Many AA&NHPI cultures emphasize the concept of "saving face," meaning not bringing shame on one's family, and seeking mental health counseling or accepting professional assistance to resolve family problems is often viewed as shameful. One report found that 34% of Korean Americans over the age of 60 were diagnosed with probable depression and an additional 8.5% reported suicidal ideation; however, only 6.5% had contacted professionals.[11] Approximately 71% of them considered depression as a sign of personal weakness, and 14% stated mental illness would bring shame to the family. Compared with the state average of 5%, elderly Vietnamese Americans reported suffering from mental disability or symptoms associated with mental illness at 7%, and more Vietnamese American participants reported a higher frequency of mental distress than other AA&NHPI groups. Immigrants and refugees, even those who have been in the United States for a long time, may not know U.S. laws or the U.S health care system, including where to get health coverage and services, what mental health services are available to them and their families, or how to find information in their native language.

According to Suzie Xuyen-Dong Matsuda, a clinical social worker who is the Pacific Asian Unit service chief at the Orange County Health Care Agency, when culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health services are made available, members of the community use them. However, mainstream institutions often do not have the resources or staffing, or they neglect to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to these populations.[12] As a result, nonprofit ethnic organizations have filled the gap in providing these services, even though the lack of capacity and onerous administrative requirements often limit their ability to meet the need for such services. These organizations receive federal, state, or county grants, or funding through foundations; however, during the economic recession or shifts in the political climate, their funding has been cut. Often underfunded, they have had to lay off valued staff and curtail their services, knowing that the needs of the community will be unmet.

Disparities in behavioral health services are amplified for populations such as Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian Americans who have experienced the trauma of civil war, displacement, postwar survival, and escape as refugees. Vattana Peong explains how he and his staff at The Cambodian Family must make extra effort to identify possible mental health issues and advocate for the community:

> When I go out and advocate for our population, we usually talk about the unique needs of the population we serve. I always talk about the experiences that they went through, not just a war, a civil war, but a genocide. It's about a population that witnessed a lot of killing, a lot of torture, a lot of starvation, a lot of family separations. So a story of immigration experiences and a story of resiliency—that's usually what I tell other people about our population. But talking about mental health, that has already been a challenge for our community because there are very, very limited resources for the Cambodian community, especially those who are still suffering from PTSD [posttraumatic stress disorder] and depression.

Impacted Cambodian Americans find it difficult to share their history, so they often internalize their problems, and behavioral and mental health conditions often manifest themselves in physical health symptoms:

> And there was so many things I was not able to find out what happened. For example, they come to complain that 'I have a lot of headaches,' 'I have a stomach ache.' And I thought that [it was] a physical complaint, but actually sometimes [it's] emotional and mental health things. But they didn't want to talk about that. So I had to work with my staff who are the case managers to really identify [the real problem]. So that was a challenge for me to really put extra time to really work on one client with different staff members.

Furthermore, language barriers make Cambodian Americans reluctant to seek help from government programs, and they may be less likely to apply for Medi-Cal, which covers both physical and mental health. Additionally, they may lack knowledge of how the health care system functions and need help to navigate its complexities.

Tricia Nguyen says that some immigrants and refugees may not necessarily have diagnosable conditions, but the adjustment of learning a new language and culture on top of everyday stresses can accumulate and contribute to emotional strain. She points out how "saving face" and stigma with mental health illness make it difficult for them to ask or receive help: "And I don't think nobody really knows, like the recognizing of the stress [of] . . . marriage, having kids, acculturation, not having the financial day-to-day, not having a roof over [your head], . . . food, . . . transportation, childcare. So there's so much that our community struggled [with], but because they're saving face, they don't want to come forward to get our help."

Stigma continues to be a major challenge to accessing mental health for youth and family counseling services. Jei Garlitos of Anaheim Union High School District describes his experiences working as a Filipino American school counselor reaching

out to Asian Americans as well as Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders and their reluctance in seeking services:

> As a counselor, the biggest thing that I saw was the reluctance to receive help. . . . Families just didn't go seek counseling. It was this big taboo for them. And so the minute I would go 'I'm a counselor. I'm a counselor here to help your child,' the family says, 'No, no thank you. We'll take care of it ourselves.' You got a lot of that from [the] Pacific Islander community. . . . As soon as I realized that, I tried to approach it more as 'I'm a fellow Pacific Islander trying to reach out to help.' They were a lot more open to it. But the minute the word *counseling* or *counselor* or *intervention* was brought up, they didn't want any of that. What I learned from those particular families was they liked to keep it within their family, . . . whether it was discipline . . . they would handle it internally. And then working with Asian Americans outside of the PI [Pacific Islanders], so, you know, Korean Americans, Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, similarly, they did not want help.

The stigma and inability to access mental health services can lead to violence toward themselves or others. Michael Matsuda relates that this can lead to intergenerational trauma within families, which he has seen in both the Japanese and Vietnamese American communities:

> Especially in the Vietnamese, where you have a large refugee population, there's a lot of issues that are transferred generationally. There's a lot of issues of self-hate or shame that are deep, that can manifest itself, and family dynamics and other relationships that can be very harmful. So the issue now with mental health is so important to address in the schools, with all kids, but especially those who have these roots that have a lot of trauma generationally.

Caroline Hahn, a criminal defense attorney and past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association, shares that in her experiences working criminal cases with Korean American clients, many are associated with unaddressed mental health issues: "People don't want to talk about it. They want to brush it under the rug. And then if it's not treated, what ends up happening is it gets to a point where you could've treated it at this level, but it gets to a point, if they're not on medication or something happens, and they commit a really big crime. So many of my current Korean clients, the reason why they're in criminal court is because there's a mental illness that was either undiagnosed or untreated."

"Medicaid expansion and Covered California not just meant more insured, it also meant more benefits. . . . And if this goes away, that's a huge blow to the safety net [for the] population."

Raising Awareness about Domestic and Family Violence

Dealing with domestic violence cases is a concern for many AA&NHPI communities. Like mental health, the issue of domestic violence is a taboo subject for AA&NHPI communities as it involves both personal and family dynamics that many feel should not be publicly aired in order to "save face" or avoid bringing shame on their family. The sensitivity of this topic further highlights the importance of having community organizations and bilingually and biculturally trained AA&NHPI professionals who understand how to educate the community about available counseling or legal services and to assist those affected.

Shikha Bhatnagar explains that the South Asian Network operates an anti–domestic violence program, and that publicizing domestic violence is a problem among South Asians since it presents a negative view of their community. Some feel that because they are a racialized minority or predominantly an immigrant community, highlighting these problems can lead to negative repercussions. Community education on this issue needs to be handled with care and cultural sensitivity, so it does not alienate community members nor create racial stereotypes: "A lot of the work that we need to do as an organization is internally. . . . The challenges of being so diverse internally is that we all come from different experiences and we may not mean to say things in certain ways, but we might accidentally do it in a way that offends or makes somebody feel isolated, and we have to be very careful about that."

Caroline Hahn further describes how her identity as a Korean American and being raised in an immigrant family helps her to better understand domestic violence court cases with Korean American clients, which she notices have been increasing in Orange County:

> In the Korean community, there's a lot of DUIs [driving-under-the-influence violations]. There's a lot of alcohol-related cases. . . . Say you're dealing with someone who is middle-aged or older than middle age, say 50s or 60s, [a] Korean man drinks alcohol, goes home, gets into [a] fight with his wife, ends up hitting her, pushing her, shoving her, whatever. [The] police get called out. [The] man's arrested. . . . A protective order is issued. [The] man can't go back to his wife, his own home, because he can't be near his wife.
>
> There's so much cultural implications that go along with that. For instance, drinking is really big in the Korean community, with Korean men. Domestic violence is big. Sometimes you'll have both of them come in at the same time, maybe the alleged victim and the defendant. And I mean in a sense, sometimes, I counsel both of them. . . . [I have an] understanding as to how their relationship works. . . . I understand because I grew up in a [Korean] household. . . . I understand the dynamics. . . . There's just a sense of familiarity and understanding that

> they don't have to express with me and so it makes me understand my clients a lot better, deeper, and I can speak Korean, which helps.

Speaking about child abuse cases, Hahn's experience shows that immigrants who were raised in their homeland where physical punishment is more acceptable can find themselves suddenly facing criminal child abuse charges without clearly understanding why:

> Say there's a case where dad gets frustrated with child, and he spanks the child or whatever. [The] child calls the police. And now the client, the dad, is facing criminal charges for child abuse. But not only that, he's facing maybe termination of his parental rights because Social Services has now gotten involved and removed the child from the home.
>
> And you're talking about someone, if he has been in the United States for a very long time, even if he's a citizen, this is the first time this has ever happened to him. He doesn't understand the American legal process. So I know where he's coming from because if he says, 'I was so frustrated because he wasn't listening," . . . I understand that coming from a Korean family with a Korean perspective. I get it.

These examples do not present a cultural justification for criminal or negligent behavior; rather, they highlight how cultural competency can place the crisis in context and aid in intervention. While tension between parents and children during the teenage years is commonplace, this is compounded for immigrant families that are raising children in a very different environment than the ones in which they grew up in addition to language and cultural barriers between generations. Furthermore, these concerns may be specific to behavioral health issues, but they ultimately speak to the social and institutional barriers AA&NHPI communities generally face in accessing social services to address different health needs.

"In terms of the clinic, as a leader, I worry about the funding. We don't know if the federal funding . . . if it's going to get cut. … It's a lot of uncertainty. It creates a lot of stress."

Improving Health Care Services and Programs for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders

Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) populations face particular health disparities that are often overlooked because of the lack of disaggregated data and their relatively smaller population. In 2012, the death rate for NHPI in Orange County was 864 per 100,000 people, which was the highest for all racial groups. Health education and access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services remain a huge barrier for a number of NHPI communities. An understanding of the culture and history of the different NHPI groups is especially critical in the delivery of services to the different communities.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for NHPI, and the proportion of NHPI deaths attributable to diabetes is also highest among all racial groups.[13] Pacific Islander Health Partnership, in collaboration with Pacific Islander community

groups and University of California, Riverside, created the Navigating Pacific Hearts program to help educate the different ethnic groups about heart disease through culturally relevant interventions. Cofounder Jane Pang relates their efforts to improve dietary habits:

> Our Tongans at last year's Heart Health event took their most popular dish, which is taro leaf with corn beef, and they used coconut or mayonnaise and tried to make it healthier. So it's trying to challenge the community to think about how you can do the same dish but make it a little healthier, less high in calories and less high in cholesterol. And that's the reward we are able to appreciate because the volunteers that we work with are willing to take the extra step, after learning what their options are, to really be creative . . . and help build their community.

Eating greens and salads is not necessarily part of the culture of Pacific Islander groups due to environmental concerns tied to a history of American military presence in their homeland: "Think about it. After you nuke the Marshall Islands, where can they plant salad or anything from their island? We wonder about what the fish they're eating, consuming, because that pollution and that nuclear waste is still there within the area."

Cancer is the fastest-growing cause of death for NHPI.[14] According to Pang, stigma toward the disease can make it difficult to treat and can impact the mental health of many NHPI:

> [The] Chamorro community won't even talk about cancer. We used to say "the big C." They won't even say that and won't share. . . . Last year when we did our heart health, one of our leaders, she just turned 40, said from the period of time from when her grandmother died, had a massive attack at age 40, she always kept it in the back of her mind and in her heart, 'Will I ever get to 40?' And carrying that burden, and not even sharing it with her aunts or the other family members, by not talking about it or sharing that. . . . She made it to 40 and she celebrated. . . . We need to share.
>
> Some of the community feels by sharing that, if you're young, it affects your eligibility for partnership and future marriage and your future life. And that in some circles is a great burden and double the burden. Number one, the lack of information. Number two, the fact that they can't share it. And so much of it, if we understand there are things we could do to help prevent heart disease and all the other chronic diseases, but to carry that burden without sharing, to me I thought that . . . had great impact.

Similar to Asian ethnic groups, they also face language barriers as many Pacific Islander ethnic groups have their own native language, but linguistically and

culturally competent materials can be even more scarce given their smaller populations. Pang notes that having these materials available would help NHPI combat high rates of cancer and obesity: "These are basic things, basic 101, that Hispanics have, that African Americans have, all the other ethnic groups, and our Pacific Islanders are basically struggling." Pacific Islander Health Partnership has had to correct translated health materials from mainstream institutions:

> Susan G. Komen gave us these steps for self–breast exam. And so I don't know who did it, but nationally it came down in Marshallese, so I gave it to the minister's wife to look at it. She said, 'Oh that's very interesting. The word they use for *step 1*, *step 2*, *step 3*, was the "step" they used for marching and was not [referring to] the first thing you do, the second thing you do.' So the literal translation was done, but no one did the cultural context and so that was missing. And so she laughed and couldn't understand why. And it was really terrible because it came from national, Komen national. And so again they gave it to someone who was well educated and knew the language but didn't have the cultural context.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collect and report disaggregated data for AA&NHPI to identify disparities in health coverage, conditions, and access, with a special focus on underserved populations such as NHPI ethnic groups.
- Research issues impacting health access and health care service delivery to AA&NHPI communities (e.g., impact on client operations of significant administrative responsibilities, use of interpreter and other ancillary services).
- Provide culturally and linguistically accessible education, outreach, and assistance for AA&NHPI on health and health care services, e.g., health care rights; eligibility for Covered California, Medi-Cal, or other health coverage; other types of health care such as dental care, mental health services, substance abuse treatments.
- Fund community-based programs that provide culturally and linguistically competent interpreters and translators who are also knowledgeable about health and health care.
- Fund existing health programs and services provided by AA&NHPI-serving agencies, including preventive and specialty care, behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse), oral health, and other essential health care benefits. Recognize that AA&NHPI clients may require more resources to receive equitable services due to cultural and linguistic barriers (e.g., need for longer visits, use of interpreters).

- Provide AA&NHPI cultural competency training for all health care students and professionals to ensure culturally appropriate health care delivery to community members, especially by mainstream institutions (e.g., migration histories and experiences, cultural stigmas in seeking services, proper use of trained health care interpreters and translated materials).
- Create or expand health career pipeline programs and expand outreach and recruitment for positions in the health care field in order to increase the number of health care professionals from underserved AA&NHPI communities (especially from Southeast Asian and NHPI ethnic groups).
- Create or support community health worker programs that can provide AA&NHPI communities with basic health education and assist with accessing and navigating the health care system (e.g., *promotores* training programs in the Latino community).
- Work with NHPI community organizations to address NHPI disparities in health services.
- Expand culturally and linguistically accessible behavioral health services for AA&NHPI, from the first point of contact and throughout the entire pathway of care.
- Counter the low number of AA&NHPI seeking mental health or family violence interventions by educating AA&NHPI communities on the need for and value of mental health services and services for survivors of domestic or other family violence.
- Maintain and expand local, publicly funded safety net programs and providers (e.g., community clinics, hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers).
- Improve overall access to health care by supporting efforts to move toward a single-payer and/or universal health care system for all Californians.

INTERVIEWED COMMUNITY LEADERS

Ellen Ahn	Executive director of Korean Community Services
Shikha Bhatnagar	Executive director of the South Asian Network
Mary Anne Foo	Founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Jei Garlitos	Principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District
Caroline Hahn	Past president of the Orange County Korean American Bar Association
Michael Matsuda	Superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District; founding member of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Tricia Nguyen	CEO of Southland Integrated Services, formerly known as the Vietnamese Community of Orange County (VNCOC)
Jane Pang	Cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Victor Pang	Cofounder of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Vattana Peong	Executive director of The Cambodian Family

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

NOTES

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4. Ramakrishnan, Karthick, and Farah Z. Ahmad. 2014. *State of Asian American and Pacific Islanders: A Multifaceted Portrait of a Growing Population*, Washington, DC: Center for American Progress (September).

5. Children & Families Commission of Orange County. 2016. *OC Community Indicators 2016.* Santa Ana, CA: Orange County Community Indicators Project.

6. California State University, Fullerton; Children and Families Commission of Orange County; and Korean Community Services Inc. 2008. *Profiles of the Korean American Community in Orange County* (December).

7. California Department of Public Health Death Public Use Files 2005–2010. Information taken from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

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10. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B02015.

11. California Reducing Disparities Project Asian Pacific Islander Strategic Planning Workgroup. 2013. *The CRDP API Population Report: In Our Own Words.* Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health (March).

12. Vo, Linda Trinh. 2003. "Managing Survival: Economic Realities for Vietnamese American Women." In *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology*, edited by Shirley Hune and Gail Nomura, 237–252. New York: New York University Press.

13. California Department of Public Health Death Public Use Files 2005–2010. Information taken from Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

14. Ibid.

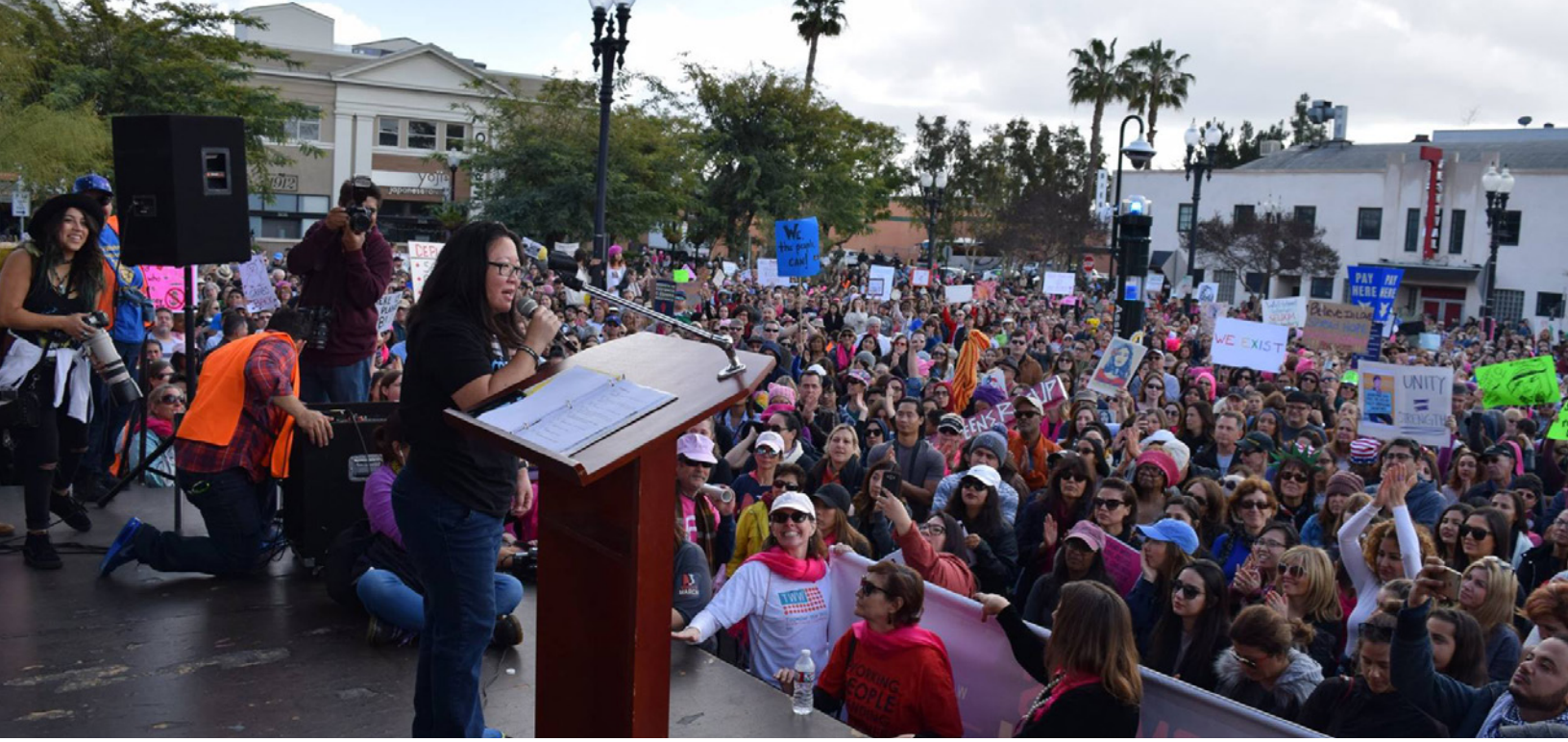

Photo courtesy of Mary Anne Foo/OCAPICA

CHAPTER 6

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE ORANGE COUNTY

Historically, Asian Americans & Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AA&NHPI) have faced many barriers that have discouraged, and even prevented, them from political participation and civic engagement. Asian immigrants were barred from citizenship for many decades until World War II and afterwards, so they could not vote or run for office. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders faced a history of colonialism that denied them the right to democratic participation. This historical legacy shapes AA&NHPI political participation; however, in the past few decades, given their population growth and increasing resources, AA&NHPI are emerging as an influential force in the civic and political life of the county. Despite being a predominantly immigrant population, first-generation Asian Americans along with their children are making significant political gains by voting and contributing to campaigns. Many AA&NHPI are also running for office and winning elections. They are breaking barriers by being the first in their family or from their ethnic group to participate in local civic and political institutions as volunteers, appointees, and politicians. These efforts to gain a political voice and engage in the democratic process defy the model minority myth that mistakenly presents them as passive or apathetic to political activities.

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

While major barriers have been removed, AA&NHPI continue to face challenges in reaching their full potential with political participation and civic engagement. The internal diversity within the AA&NHPI populations can make it difficult for them to engage in the process as well as work together as a political force. External obstacles also persist, including racial exclusion, access to funds, and political networks. While community organizations have provided resources for voter outreach and political education programs, there is a need for outreach and programs that foster future leaders who can shape their communities by serving on influential civic engagement boards and running for public office.

ASSETS

Visibility of Elected Officials and Increasing Political Clout

Michael Matsuda, a third-generation Japanese American who grew up in Garden Grove in the 1960s and the superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District, remarks, "Asian Americans in California are a force to be reckoned with politically and electorally." For example, in the 2012 elections, over 29 Asian Americans ran for political office in Orange County and 10 were Vietnamese Americans.[1] In 2017, three of the five Orange County supervisors are Asian American, and they are from diverse ethnicities: Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Other candidates and elected officials represent the major Asian American groups

such as Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, South Asian, and Taiwanese. Charles Kim, a longtime community activist who cofounded and was the first executive director of the Korean American Coalition, describes how Asian Americans in Orange County are using their political resources and clout to support elected officials who represent their interests:

> One by one we've been helping, and then we've been successful in getting them elected. . . . If we don't have votes, we'll raise money and help them campaign. If we have votes, we'll make sure they come out and vote. . . . We're here as Americans. We want to be a part of it. We want to work together. If you don't want us to be a part of it, then hey, we'll find someone who can work with us. . . . That's the political decision-making [process]. We want someone that can represent us.

Although the Vietnamese American community was established a little over 40 years ago, it has gained significant political clout at local and state levels, with representatives serving on the California senate or assembly and county board of supervisors, mayoral, city council, or school board positions. Some elections have led to Vietnamese Americans being the majority of candidates and the predominant members elected to the school board or city council. Tam Nguyen, a former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce and former president of the Alumni Association at California State University, Fullerton, notes the political strength of the Vietnamese American community:

> You have so much representation from the city level to the county level to the state level and now congressional level with Stephanie Murphy [from Florida] and Joseph Cao [from Louisiana]. But the Vietnamese Americans have been a very important community for the mainstream. And every time the election season comes out, I get so many non-Vietnamese friends who I serve on these boards with that always ask like, 'Wow, the Vietnamese go out to vote! They're so strong politically.'

This election of these officials has encouraged more Vietnamese Americans to run for office since they now have role models.

These successes have created political momentum at both the regional and national level, and the community recognizes that their votes count. Furthermore, given their residential and commercial concentration, they have been able to shape local elections and have shown their ability to "get out the vote" for co-ethnic politicians, especially in tight races with low voter turnout. Regardless of the ethnicity of the candidate in cities like Fountain Valley, Garden Grove, and Westminster, candidates have to reach out to the Vietnamese American community if they want to win an election.

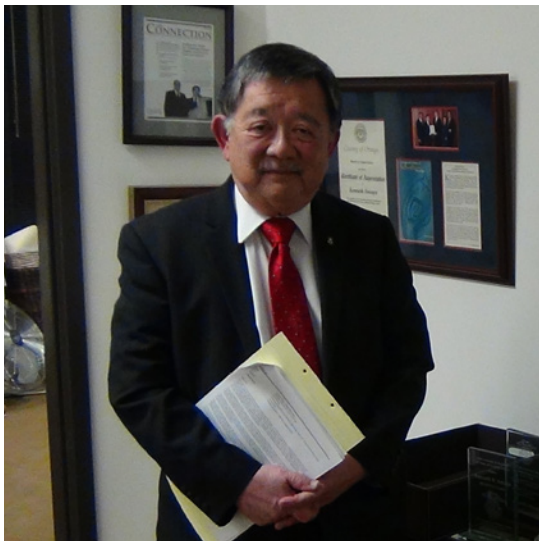

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

Legal Efforts to Ensure Better Political Representation

AA&NHPI have also engaged in legal efforts to ensure better political representation of Asian Americans in Orange County and to provide opportunities for Asian American communities to have important political dialogues. In partnership with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA) sued the city of Fullerton in 2015 for having an at-large election system. The lawsuit argued that at-large elections violated the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 by diluting the voting power of Asian Americans, who comprised nearly 25% of the city and were yet precluded from getting elected to office.[2] Jonathan Paik, Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center, was a plaintiff in the lawsuit and recalls his experience mobilizing the Korean American community, many of whom were engaging in the political process for the first time, and educating the community about political representation:

> Being able to see Korean American residents who are like my grandfather's age and folks get excited when they hear about, 'What does it mean about Korean American representation? What are our values as a community?' Those are the things about district elections that no one ever talks about. But for me, it opened up a conversation that I always had a deep fear and apprehension and assumptions about my Korean American community because of the way my family grew up. . . . [Discussions about how to map] districts really unpacked a lot of those values, conversations, for me in a way that I think is really necessary.

Paik observed how Korean Americans of different generations, immigration statuses, and backgrounds were encouraged to have conversations about their political values and learning how to speak with a collective voice. District elections will go into effect in 2018 in Fullerton, and there are efforts to bring district elections to other Orange County cities such as the city of Santa Ana. In one of the newly created Fullerton districts, eligible Asian American voters make up nearly a majority of the district, and if they vote as a bloc, they may influence the outcome of the election.

Mobilization of Voters, Including Limited English Proficient Voters

Since 2006, Asian Americans Advancing Justice has been effectively conducting voter engagement efforts in Orange County, working closely with community partners, to target AA&NHPI voters in their primary language. These collaborative nonpartisan voter mobilization campaigns involve 10 to 20 community groups

and hundreds of volunteers each election cycle, and in the past decade have made hundreds of thousands of calls, in up to 14 AA&NHPI languages in one election cycle. Through collaborative outreach and mobilization projects with thousands of AA&NHPI voters Advancing Justice-LA and the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance found that nonpartisan targeting of limited English proficient (LEP) voters, especially Vietnamese Americans, was particularly impactful because they tend to be low-propensity voters that respond well to targeted, in-language outreach.[3] Furthermore, a higher percentage of Asian Americans cast their votes by absentee ballots. The 2006 General Election survey indicated that over half of Orange County voters cast their vote by mail, compared with 61% of Asian American and 72% of Vietnamese American voters.[4] Having in-language ballots has been helpful to new LEP voters as well as educating them about the process of casting their votes by absentee ballots, which gives them time to go over the complex voting materials at their convenience.

Federal and state laws provide strong requirements to protect the rights of LEP voters, even covering languages beyond the largest groups, which allows immigrants to participate in the political process. AA&NHPI overall have higher-than-average levels of limited English proficiency, and some ethnic communities have particularly high LEP rates. Not surprisingly, many Asian voters rely heavily on language assistance in order to vote. The federal Voting Rights Act requires translated ballots for larger language groups in a particular jurisdiction (10,000 voters or 5% in a county) and the ability to bring interpreters into the voting booth. California-specific laws add further requirements on counties to assist smaller language groups. Both the state of California and Orange County have taken proactive steps to ensure that LEP voters are able to register to vote and to understand and cast their ballot. Orange County's registrar of voters has worked closely with Advancing Justice-LA and the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance to provide translated ballots and bilingual poll workers. Orange County is covered federally for Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and is covered by the state for Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, and Tagalog, but this can change depending on the political climate. These laws and policies have helped to ensure that AA&NHPI voters are able to make their vote count.

The Critical Role of Community Organizations and Civic Engagement Programs

Many of the organizations profiled in this report, including The Cambodian Family, Korean Community Services, Korean Resource Center, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, and South Asian Network, have expanded their services to provide civic engagement and political education programs so that community members can acquire the knowledge and skills to engage in the political process. Some immigrants and refugees come from countries in which holding a public office or voting is seen as extremely dangerous; it is thus critical to

teach immigrants and refugees about U.S. civic engagement and political processes. Vattana Peong describes how The Cambodian Family started a civic engagement program because it wanted to promote an understanding of democracy to the community:

> [Cambodians] think the city council, the local government, the county government, the state, the federal, they don't want to speak against that because they said, 'You know I don't want to have any problem with the government.' . . . Because of that, what happened to them 30 or 40 years ago, which taught them not to talk against the government, has carried over here, so they remain silent. So The Cambodian Family wants to break that silence, . . . make sure that they come out and be civically engaged.

These organizations have been proactive in increasing the political visibility of their communities, going beyond traditional social service provider roles to becoming advocates and a needed voice for a broader range of issues. In 2003, after the success of community organizing among Native Hawaiians in Los Angeles, Jane and Victor Pang felt that Pacific Islander communities in Orange County that were "disadvantaged" and "invisible" needed something similar, so they cofounded the Pacific Islander Health Partnership. Jane Pang explains:

> [We thought] that maybe it's time to really organize something we wanted to do for Orange County, and that started Pacific Islander Health Partnership. [We] called a few of our friends who were living in Orange County and said let's meet and let's talk about maybe helping the communities. And so from the experience of the Hawaiian Civic Club movement, we now have a group of folks who are really engaged with their community in trying to make a difference socially and becoming civically engaged.

While the organization's mission is to collaboratively address the health needs of the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities in Orange County, the organization has developed its health education services as cultural events that bring together the different NHPI communities. The Pangs and other NHPI community leaders have also been advocates for the Orange County NHPI community at a national level through the Hawaiian Civic Club's annual lobby day in Washington, DC. Jane Pang relates that the lobby day has a cultural ceremony followed by visits with representatives in which "the ask has always been in terms of the cancer funding, continuing education—we have Native Hawaiian Health Act coming up, the Education Act. And so those are specific things [for which] we are able to ask for support." They also hope to bring more NHPI representatives, especially Samoan and Tongan leaders, to future lobby days.

There are still too few AA&NHPI represented in mainstream social, cultural, and economic boards and committees in the county; however, many are quite civically engaged within the ethnic community organizations and more leaders could be encouraged to transfer these skill sets to mainstream civic and political engagements. Most of these ethnic groups have a multitude of active cultural, educational, economic, religious, social, political, and professional organizations that involve dynamic individuals with a variety of resources. Through these volunteer opportunities and invaluable organizational experiences, individuals can learn the requisite leadership skills and gain the confidence and connections needed to pursue political appointments or elected positions in the mainstream. Moreover, some leaders continue to be engaged in homeland politics and can use these skills to navigate politics in the U.S. context. With support, there is incredible potential with the growing AA&NHPI communities and existing community organizations to organize, mobilize, and direct existing resources, which will enable AA&NHPI to develop a stronger political voice, become more civically engaged, and invest in future electoral processes.

> "If we don't have votes, we'll raise money and help them campaign. If we have votes, we'll make sure they come out and vote."

NEEDS

Outreach Challenges of First-Generation Voters

Given the tremendous size and growth of AA&NHPI in Orange County and the shifting political identity of the county, AA&NHPI are poised to play a significant impact in the county with the right resources and attention. AA&NHPI could potentially represent up to 20% of Orange County voters, but they currently comprise only 14% of voters in Orange County.[5] At least 5% of AA&NHPI who are eligible are not voting. Voter outreach efforts targeting Asian Americans are limited, and to the extent it is done, the focus is on the larger ethnic groups, including Vietnamese, Korean, and Chinese. Very little voter education or mobilization, whether by political parties or nonpartisan community groups, targets smaller AA&NHPI communities. As the AA&NHPI electorate grows, nonprofit social service and grassroots advocacy groups are bridging some of the political education and mobilization gap of AA&NHPI voters and will need the resources to more deeply engage potential voters with relevant programs, including more local candidate forums.

As mentioned earlier, language is a major hurdle for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AA&PI) voter engagement given high levels of limited English proficiency in many AA&PI ethnic groups and the complexity of U.S. elections, particularly California's elections, which often include complicated ballot measures. Not surprisingly, many Asian voters rely heavily on language assistance in order to vote, and targeted, in-language outreach campaigns have proven to be effective in encouraging AA&PI voters who are LEP to vote. More multilingual voter outreach, education, and mobilization resources are needed. The lack of ethnic- and language-

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

specific voter outreach and education affects AA&PI voters across the nation, but places such as Orange County, where there is a large immigrant AA&PI population, are particularly impacted when translated voter materials or bilingual poll workers are unavailable.[6]

In addition to language, AA&NHPI voters tend not to strongly identify with either major political party, which has led to low outreach strategies toward these communities. The latest numbers for the county indicate that 35% of Asian Americans are registered as Republican, 27% Democrat, and 34% Independent.[7] However, the younger generation of AA&NHPI tend to vote Democratic, so there are partisan splits between generations.[8] Given that voter outreach and mobilization is heavily funded by political parties and partisan candidates, AA&NHPI voters are often overlooked by major campaigns. In Orange County, which has a long history as a Republican stronghold, the Republican Party has made more headway in AA&NHPI outreach. Not surprisingly, there have been more Republican Asian American elected officials in Orange County than Democratic. However, in the 2016 general election, Orange County began to turn "blue," or lean Democratic, based on voter registration and votes cast for the presidential election.[9] This shift raises the stakes in future elections for both major parties in how they outreach to increase the turnout of AA&NHPI voters, including the large number that do not identify with either party.

Since many immigrants or their children are first-generation voters, their partisan allegiances are not as strong, especially in local races, which are seemingly nonpartisan. Mary Anne Foo, founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, provides insight into why Asian Americans may not neatly fit into political affiliations and are often seen as crucial "swing voters" because they vote based on issues and values rather than party lines:

> Asians here are socially progressive, fiscally conservative. And the reason why it's fiscally conservative is because there's a lot of small business owners and they worry about their taxes and they worry about surviving. . . . They say, 'I work really hard. I pay taxes. . . . I'm aligned more around business practices.' But on social stuff—LGBTQ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning] issues, women's rights—they're really progressive! . . . The Asian community is going to be [voting] based on the values of keeping families together, immigration support for keeping families together, . . . not targeting of immigrants. They're going to vote for business practices and business

> support. And they're going to be socially progressive on their values around education for everyone, public school education for everybody, access to higher education, and support for families.

Lack of Cohesive AA&NHPI Political Identity

Community leaders note that political divides within and among AA&NHPI ethnic communities have made it difficult to build political power, coalitions, and a cohesive political identity. In some cases, Asian Americans cross ethnic lines to support an Asian American of any ethnicity in office; however, this sense of ethnic or racial solidarity cannot be assumed. Cyril Yu, senior deputy district attorney and board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association, observes that in cities like Irvine, which has a substantial Asian American population, there are large subgroups of Asian ethnicities, but they do not always vote for one another:

> It becomes a little more complicated when you [are] talking about communities because even though I see the communities as being Asian American, they don't necessarily see themselves as being Asian American. They see themselves as being Korean American or Vietnamese American or Chinese American. So there isn't that connection between Chinese voting for Vietnamese and Vietnamese voting for Korean and Korean voting for Chinese. . . . They may view you as 'Okay, you're Asian American, you're close enough. I'll vote for you.' But there isn't that necessarily, 'I'm going to automatically vote for you' in the way that with the Chinese community voting for a Chinese person is going to have that connection.

There are also political divides within each ethnic group, and this internal complexity impacts strategies for outreach and voter mobilization efforts. For example, while outsiders often lump all ethnic Chinese together, there are internal distinctions based on their country of origin, generation, and socioeconomic background. As Yu, explains, these differences create both opportunities and challenges in building political power:

> The Chinese community that's come over now, that's come over from mainland China, . . . we have seen this change, and it's been a little bit gradual, but in recent years it's really accelerated. This is very different. This is not the Taiwanese community that came over for education and eventually got jobs. . . . This is the group of individuals in terms of the wealth component of it that have established businesses in China that are moving their wealth offshore to protect their wealth—whether it's buying real estate or making sure their kids have an education—because they don't know what's going to happen in China. We've seen all these things, rapid acceleration over the past 20 years of economic growth.

For some communities like the Chinese American population, which tends to be residentially dispersed with commercial spaces that are not as concentrated geographically, there is difficulty in organizing and collaborating as a political force.

Yu further comments about the political divides among Chinese Americans that reflect the different personal histories within the community:

> There has been a very clean divide within, certainly among the Chinese community, but a lot of the more established Asian American communities, that they're split politically between the Republican side and the Democratic side. And so it's not that easy to say that we're all on the same page as the community because politically we're not. There are people who see the world very differently than the other side. They may be the same ethnicity, but they argue very passionately for the Republican position or for the Democratic position. And a lot of it is based on the experiences they had, the communities they've grown up in, and what's happening within their own community. And it's not necessarily based on living in Irvine either. You do have this split between Democrats and Republicans even among middle-class Chinese and so [there are splits] intergenerationally as well.

Charles Kim of the Korean American Coalition has noted similar divides within the Korean American community as it continues to grow and gain a political presence. He explains how the early formation of the Korean American Coalition as a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group required that they be mindful of partisan divides as they worked on domestic advocacy issues:

> As we became bigger and more powerful, then we divided [into] the more progressive, more conservative, more Democratic, more Republican. So you have a clash of differences and cultures and political ideologies. So we didn't get involved in Korean politics at all, period. But we wanted to get involved, so KAC because it is a nonprofit, we stayed neutral. So we cannot do any political activities, so we cannot help the Korean American Republican Association and also the Korean American Democratic Committee to form. . . . It's not easy as an advocacy organization because you have to take action because of the nature of our work. But two-thirds of our work we work pretty much closely with more progressive organizations, civil rights organizations.

Barriers Confronting Political Candidates

As AA&NHPI comprise the fastest-growing population in the county, AA&NHPI representation in elected offices is critical to ensure the community helps shape the future of the county. However, while there are currently some high-profile Asian Americans in local, county, and state offices, overall AA&NHPI are

underrepresented in key political leadership roles. While there are more Asian Americans running for political office, creating a pipeline to develop, support, and mentor AA&NHPI candidates is still needed. Cyril Yu, who ran for the Irvine School Board, recalls how Chinese Americans encouraged him to pursue politics but hesitated to encourage their own children to pursue this career path because it is not seen as a traditional profession:

> You would get a lot of encouragement from parents or from adults. They wouldn't necessarily say I want my kid to go into politics, but they say, 'Hey, you should really go into politics. You should really do this!' And I'm like, 'Okay, cool!' But you would not see them, you know, pushing their kids to do the same thing. So it was an interesting contrast between them recognizing that we want Asian American and Chinese American leaders, but they were very reluctant that that should be the career choice of their own son or daughter.

AA&NHPI candidates may not receive community encouragement and access to opportunities to help build a political career. Audrey Yamagata-Noji, the first Asian American woman to serve on the Santa Ana School Board, describes how running for a political position was difficult for her and went against cultural expectations:

> Going into politics actually goes against everything with how I was raised. Number one, you don't brag about yourself. Number two, you don't get involved with things because you're not supposed to rock the boat. Keep everything calm and zen and balanced. You don't ask people for money. You got to fundraise. You don't put signs up with your name or flyers with your picture on it. You don't walk into people's personal space, their houses, knock on their door, and ask them to vote for you and they don't even know you. So this was extremely disruptive to me personally to have to do all of that.

"Asian Americans in California are a force to be reckoned with politically and electorally."

Obstacles still persist for Asian Americans to run and hold elected positions such as campaign fundraising and having networks in the mainstream community to gain crucial endorsements. Eduardo Lee, cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco, has made concerted efforts to fundraise and engage politicians so that they are aware of issues impacting small businesses and the restaurant industry. He notes that this is uncommon for many older Asian Americans, even business owners: "We don't [traditionally] donate money politically. That's where your big problem is, we don't want to get involved politically. . . . [The older] generation, we're not really that involved in the community nor are we involved politically. Under the radar is what we're like kind of a thing. We've always been quiet."

For emerging leaders who are the first generation in their family to become politically involved, having limited political connections poses challenges to campaigning. Cyril Yu explains that "with Asian Americans, unless you're active in

Photo courtesy of Cyril Yu

the community, unless you're active doing things, you don't necessarily have the profile to have the name recognition that gets you to the point where you can run." Furthermore, viable candidates willing to run often need to find and educate potential financial supporters who can support their candidacy: "On the money side, it really kind of depends. Somebody like me that works for the government, I don't have a lot of money. I'm not a successful businessperson, but you have successful businesspeople who say, 'No, I would never touch politics in a million years, but I would happily fund candidates or get behind them to do those types of things.' So you need to have the ability to tap on both of those things."

First-generation immigrants who have limited knowledge of the U.S. political system may have an especially difficult time running for office even if they have interest and support. Naz Hamid, an immigrant parent from Pakistan who is of Indian and Afghani heritage, ran for the Irvine Unified School District board in 2016. She shares her experience trying to run for elected office as a political newcomer and receiving initial support because she represented an important demographic in Irvine, the Asian immigrant parent:

> I was actually approached by the teacher's association. I had tried to become a little bit more politically engaged. I had attended a couple of state conventions as an observer, and I knew a lot about how much we were getting for education and how much we were not getting. And they felt that as an immigrant, people would be able to identify with me and vote for me. And they know I'm smart, that I can do this job, so they approached me and asked me if I was interested in running.

However, Hamid also learned that despite her other qualifications, she lacked the experience or training to run a competitive campaign:

> I had absolutely no political training when I decided to run for office, and that was a huge disadvantage. I wish I had made the decision a lot earlier because I would have learned so much through a training program. . . . I didn't even know what GOTV [get out the vote] stood for. But all of the sudden all these people around me were going, 'What's your GOTV initiative looking like?' I'm like, 'I have no idea. What is that? What do you mean? What is GOTV? . . . But how do I get out the vote?' I had no clue!
>
> Postelection I took some training and understood what all this meant, but during the election, [I had] no clue. I did nothing to get out the vote. I did absolutely nothing to raise more funds beyond [family]. . . . I didn't do any kind of neighborhood meeting to say 'I'm running.'

> Nothing like that happened. And I realized after the election how complex it is. It's almost like running a business when you start running an election. So I feel a lot more prepared now than I was back then.

Creating Strategic Representation and Sustainable Political Leadership

As the AA&NHPI electorate matures, voters are also asking harder questions about what it means to exert political power at the polls and to vote for AA&NHPI candidates. Several community leaders said that although there are high-profile Asian American elected officials in Orange County, not all prioritize Asian American community needs. Audrey Yamagata-Noji, who served on the Santa Ana School Board, notes that in general AA&NHPI are perceived as representing their ethnic base; however, this is not always the case:

> What's fascinating to me now is the number of Asian Americans that are elected in Orange County. . . . Just look at the board of supervisors for the County of Orange. That's amazing to me [that three of five are Asian American]. That's absolutely amazing. I know that there are just a lot more that have run for office. I think it's a lot more representative. Whether your goal and purpose was to represent your community or not, whether you identify with your community or not, you're seen as being Asian American. . . . So there's a sense of representation and inclusiveness. Whether it's actually true or not, I think depends on the community.

In some instances, AA&NHPI candidates use their ethnicity, such as their immigrant or refugee background to garner co-ethnic votes, but once elected they do not advocate for the best interest of the AA&NHPI communities. In other cases, Asian American politicians have to distance themselves from their ethnic group to convince other racial constituents that they will advocate for the whole population, not just their own ethnic group. Jonathan Paik, Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center, remarks on how the community is starting to closely evaluate co-ethnic candidates:

> There is an ethnic identity and pride that people want to be able to see in their elected leadership. And most folks won't actually ask the questions around values of leadership, which is why our work on district elections is so important, because it teaches that. But for a lot of folks, they say, 'A Korean American is running. It's like, at the end of the day, we know that we're not going to agree with everything, but it's important for us to support our own community.' And so folks will vote that way. . . . But I think the challenge has often been that folks are voting based on an opportunity to support their community, when in reality I think the question remains, 'Is that leader supporting the community?'

As more Asian American politicians vie for the same position, the community has begun to scrutinize their record and become more sophisticated in making their votes count rather than simply voting or fundraising for a candidate because they are a co-ethnic. Some AA&NHPI have also voted and held fundraisers for a non–co-ethnic or non–Asian American candidate over a co-ethnic who they believe has a proven track record or will better address the needs of the community. The community recognizes that as important as it is to have politicians that reflect the racial diversity of their city, having politicians, regardless of ethnicity, who are responsive to the needs of the AA&NHPI constituents and who advocate on their behalf is just as—if not more—vital.

Additionally, winning one election or electing one AA&NHPI candidate is often insufficient for building broader political power as a community. For example, Irvine receives extensive publicity about being a multicultural city and elected two Korean immigrant mayors; however, in the 2016 election, the multiethnic city council transitioned to an all-White council for the first time in 12 years.[10] This outcome has led to questions as to why a majority Asian American city with an Asian American population that continues to increase and has financial resources would lose mainstream political representation. There are a variety of reasons for this, but multiple Asian American and Middle Eastern American candidates ran in the recent election and, in some cases, this can divide the ethnic votes, making it difficult for many first-time candidates without name recognition to garner enough votes. Additionally, the larger population counts due to an increase in newcomers does not automatically translate into more ethnic politicians winning elections as many new immigrants may be unfamiliar with the political process.

Fostering the Next Generation of Civic Leaders

Community leaders stress that youth leadership development and civic engagement are important to fill the political leadership gaps in the county. Since many are the children of immigrants or refugees, they are not necessarily raised in families that have a tradition of civic participation. Jei Garlitos, principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union School District, explains that providing opportunities to foster civic learning and leadership training needs to begin early and can occur within the educational system:

> This access to more civic engagement for our students is a big piece because . . . they don't get educated in civic engagement within their own families. But also I think within the Asian American community, . . . we don't have enough politicians or we don't have enough of those Asian Americans in that regard.
>
> Looking at it on a bigger scale, if we are really, are to truly affect some of these policies and our program changes or community changes, I think we need some of our Asian American students to start getting

> involved with leadership roles. And not just within their own particular profession of how they can be successful. . . . What can we give them so that they can start looking at how to make others successful around them within our own communities? So I think we're starting to see that within our school district at the very least, but I don't know, within the rest of Orange County, if that's something other Asian American students have access to.

One of the main issues many AA&NHPI community organizations face is a lack of individuals willing to volunteer on their boards and committees, even in a community with a relatively large, diverse, and talented AA&NHPI population. Consequently, there is a need to cultivate a young cadre of willing and capable leaders.

Channeling Philanthropy toward Civic Engagement

In terms of supporting AA&NHPI civic engagement, there is a continuing need to build philanthropy or a culture of giving among the first generation as well as the emergent second generation who have accumulated wealth and influence. A small segment of Asian Americans has started making large donations to educational institutions, for example, the University of California, Irvine, School of Medicine, and mainstream cultural institutions such as the symphony or museums, but much more work is needed to nurture a culture of philanthropy within the AA&NHPI community that supports worthy charitable causes encouraging civic engagement. Asian Americans with substantial wealth are an untapped resource that can support programs to improve the quality of life for AA&NHPI in the county.

While some AA&NHPI philanthropists have established family foundations that are responsible for overseeing the investment and directing how the funds will be spent, few target civic engagement projects. Tam Nguyen, former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce, notes that there are some wealthy individuals that direct their funds toward charitable causes; yet, being public with their charitable giving can be a barrier for many who do not want to bring attention to themselves: "Many businesses don't want to be on the radar. To being very deliberate about saying I gave over a $1 million . . . to various organizations, that takes a certain way of thinking and a certain boldness." However, being public with their substantial donations can encourage other AA&NHPI to also give to charitable causes, especially to ethnic projects, and become civically engaged. Furthermore, this charitable largesse works toward ensuring that these influential social, cultural, and political mainstream institutions are more inclusive of AA&NHPI issues in the future.

Charles Kim asserts that overseas companies with headquarters in Orange County are just starting to contribute to the local ethnic community. More can be done to

educate them on the benefits of being more charitable to the local community and to encourage civic engagement where their employees, clients, and customers work and live:

> Korean corporations like Hyundai or Samsung or Kia, they make money here. The money goes back to Korea. . . . They're willing to spend money here, [but] just token support. But pretty much the operations of the Korean American community here [are] pretty much self-generated. It's not supported by Koreans, not supported by Korean money. But Korean American businesses support Korean American activities. But it's good to see Hyundai doing well, Kia doing well, but we want them to do more in this community, . . . but they're not listening yet. As much as we pressure the leaders, the civic leaders, we like to pressure the Korean corporations to do more for the Korean American community because . . . [they] make money from this country. [They can] do more.

In addition to ethnic companies and donors, mainstream foundations, institutions, and donors should also target more of their employee efforts and funding to encourage civic involvement and contributions to ethnic communities.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collect and report disaggregated data for AA&NHPI on political participation (e.g., voter registration, party affiliation, turnout, voter opinion polling, candidates, elected officials).
- Provide culturally and linguistically accessible education, outreach, and assistance for AA&NHPI seeking to become U.S. citizens and voters, including naturalization applications, voter registration, voter education, get-out-the-vote efforts, and assistance at the polls. This applies to political parties and candidates but also to ballot measure (issue) campaigns and nonpartisan voter programs.
- Increase funding and other support for nonpartisan voter programs since a significant number of AA&NHPI voters are not party affiliated.
- Increase AA&NHPI voter participation by working with local election officials to secure resources and ensure compliance with state and federal laws requiring oral language assistance and translated election materials (Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act; Sections 12303 and 14201 of the California Elections Code).
- Promote the California Secretary of State's online voter registration website, available in eight Asian languages (registertovote.ca.gov).
- Build the political maturity of the AA&NHPI electorate by educating

AA&NHPI voters on the importance and value of cross-ethnic and cross-racial coalition building for greater political power.

- Utilize redistricting and district elections as tools for better political representation by assessing and evaluating how political districts can be drawn to allow for the elections of individuals who represent diverse constituents in the districts, outreaching to and engaging AA&NHPI communities in the redistricting process, and educating local policy makers about the benefits of district elections.
- Deepen and broaden the pipeline of diverse AA&NHPI running for political office, including the recruitment and training of more AA&NHPI potential candidates; encouraging AA&NHPI to run for more offices at all levels; appointing more AA&NHPI to boards and commissions as a stepping stone to elected office.
- Strengthen a sense of civic participation in AA&NHPI communities, including targeting K–12 students to participate civically (e.g., volunteer as poll workers) and encouraging overseas Asian companies and local philanthropists to make charitable and political donations locally.

INTERVIEWED COMMUNITY LEADERS

Mary Anne Foo	Founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Jei Garlitos	Principal and coordinator of Alternative Education with the Anaheim Union High School District
Naz Hamid	Parent in Irvine; ran for the local school board
Charles Kim	Cofounder and first executive director of the Korean American Coalition
Eduardo Lee	Cofounder of Wahoo's Fish Taco
Michael Matsuda	Superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District; founding member of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Tam Nguyen	Former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce; owner of Advance Beauty College; former president of the California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Alumni Association
Jonathan Paik	Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center
Jane Pang	Cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Victor Pang	Cofounder of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Vattana Peong	Executive director of The Cambodian Family
Audrey Yamagata-Noji	Vice president of Student Services at Mount San Antonio College; served on the Santa Ana School Board for 25 years; volunteer with Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP)
Cyril Yu	Former president and current board member of the South Coast Chinese Cultural Association; senior deputy district attorney at the Orange County District Attorney's office; ran for the Irvine School Board

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

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6. Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, "Asian American Voters Backed Clinton over Trump by Wide Margins and across Ethnic Groups," press release, November 10, 2016, https://advancingjustice-la.org/media-and-publications/press-releases/asian-american-voters-backed-clinton-over-trump-wide-margins#.WeVX6WhSw2x; Shimura, Tomoya. 2016. "Political Candidates Appeal to Irvine's Growing Chinese Population." *Orange County Register*, October 20, 2016, http://www.ocregister.com/2016/10/20/political-candidates-appeal-to-irvines-growing-chinese-population/.

7. Wisckcol, Martin. 2017. "O.C. Offers Example of GOP Outreach." *Orange County Register*, January 23, 2017, http://www.ocregister.com/2017/01/23/oc-offers-gop-example-of-asian-outreach/.

8. Ibid.

9. Smoller, Fred. 2016. "Orange County is turning blue: Decades of support for anti-Latino policies have handed the GOP stronghold to Democrats." *Los Angeles Times*, August 29, 2016, http://beta.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-smoller-orange-county-goes-democrat-20160824-snap-story.html. Note: The 2016 election outcome at the county level, however, may not reflect a permanent trend as some registered Republicans may have been voting against the Republican candidate given the political climate of the presidential election, and they may vote Republican in future general elections.

10. Shimura, Tomoya. 2016. "Growth of Asian Population in Irvine Not Reflected in City Council Election Results." *Orange County Register*, December 26, 2016, http://www.ocregister.com/2016/12/26/growth-of-asian-population-in-irvine-not-reflected-in-city-council-election-results/.

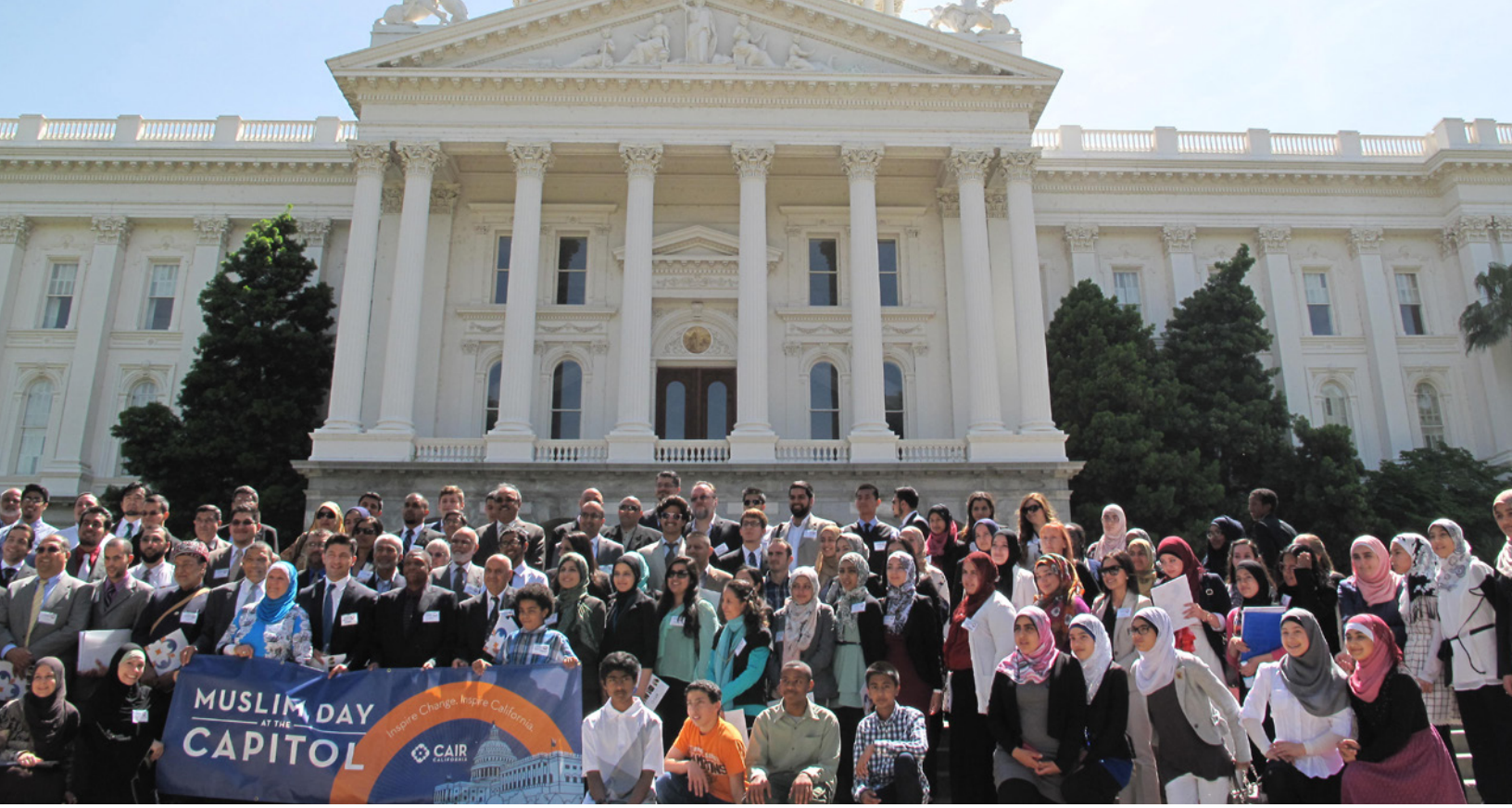

Photo courtesy of Hussam Ayloush

CHAPTER 7

CIVIL RIGHTS ADVOCACY

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE ORANGE COUNTY

Asian Americans & Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AA&NHPI) have enhanced the diversity of Orange County and helped to make it a culturally vibrant hub. In addition to their cultural and economic contributions, AA&NHPI in the county have also made visible issues of civil rights, racism, and other social inequities. As the county's fastest-growing population, AA&NHPI voices on these issues are especially critical in a place like Orange County, which has a history of politics that has been hostile toward immigrants. The recent anti-immigrant rhetoric that was at the forefront of the 2016 presidential election indicates this issue will continue to be a major challenge for AA&NHPI communities. Many community leaders expressed a mixture of concern and hope on how they and the communities they serve are attempting to navigate the current political terrain to secure and protect the rights of AA&NHPI and other vulnerable communities during these uncertain times. This concern was expressed across different areas, from health care to employment to education.

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

ASSETS

Leadership in Fighting Racism and Hate

Asian American civil rights organizations, including Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, formerly Asian Pacific American Legal Center (Advancing Justice-LA) and the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), have worked with mainstream institutions and local communities to bring attention to incidents of racial profiling and racial violence and raise awareness about other racial discrimination targeting AA&NHPI. In January 2017, Asian Americans Advancing Justice launched an online hate tracker focused on anti-AA&NHPI hate incidents (standagainsthatred.org) to help document and highlight AA&NHPI cases nationally; a number of cases have been documented in Orange County since the fall of 2016.[1]

Over the years, Advancing Justice-LA and other groups have also worked on a number of hate crime cases in the county. In 1996, 24-year-old Vietnamese American Thien Minh Ly was brutally murdered near his Tustin home by two white supremacists who called him a "Jap," a derogatory term for Japanese and Japanese Americans. Advancing Justice-LA and the JACL were able to help prosecute it as a hate crime. That same year, Advancing Justice-LA also worked on an advocacy campaign to ensure that the U.S. attorney general would use hate crime charges in an incident at University of California, Irvine, where 60 Asian Americans received hate email about killing Asians on campus that was signed "Asian-hater." This led to the first U.S. government prosecution and conviction of a federal hate crime in cyberspace.

In 2001, after Taiwanese American teenager Kenny Chiu was murdered by his white supremacist neighbor in Laguna Hills, his family worked with Advancing Justice-LA and U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu to pass "Kenny's law," which increased protections for hate crime victims and their families. In addition, other cases of racial discrimination have arisen in Orange County, including a high-profile class-action case in 2003 against retailer Abercrombie & Fitch for racially discriminatory employment practices targeting Asian American, Latino, and Black or African American applicants and employees. Along with other civil rights groups, Advancing Justice-LA successfully represented Asian American employees from a store in Costa Mesa who were among the first to question the retailer's employment practices.[2]

AA&NHPI are active leaders in fighting for civil rights and improving the racial climate of Orange County. A number of community leaders recall personal instances of racial discrimination that shaped their advocacy work. Ken Inouye, former chair of the Orange County Human Relations Commission and past president of the national Japanese American Citizens League, the oldest Asian American civil rights organization in the country, has been working to ensure more protection for vulnerable communities. He witnessed how the Japanese American community was unfairly racially profiled and incarcerated during World War II, which has influenced his longtime advocacy work to raise awareness about injustices.

Similarly, Mary Anne Foo, who is of Chinese and Japanese descent and grew up in Marysville, California, recalls how growing up in the 1980s she was harassed because of anti-Asian sentiment: "In high school when I would walk home from school, there would be people trying to—members of the Ku Klux Klan—had tried to run me over. I remember them burning a cross on my front yard, throwing beer bottles at me." Foo's parents taught her about civil rights issues such as racial segregation and cross-racial coalition building, lessons she carried with her into adulthood and her career. Now, as the founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, her personal experiences motivate her ongoing advocacy work.

In the mid-1990s, Edwin Tiongson, a San Diego State University undergraduate student, along with his fraternity brothers were wrongfully arrested at an Irvine apartment complex when they were visiting University of California, Irvine, as a part of the college fraternity mixers. During this period, young Asian males were racially profiled by the police in Orange County in their effort to curb gang activities.[3] Although auto theft charges were later dropped, that was a transformative experience: "There was someone that was an eyewitness that said four people of Latin descent were attempting to steal a golf cart. And I'm Filipino. I was with two other Filipinos and a Japanese guy. Lo and behold, [we] end up

getting arrested, went to Irvine city jail. . . . It was my first . . . exposure to being profiled." This experience motivated him to dedicate his career to assisting and advocating for youth. Tiongson is currently working as the project director of project ELEVATE AAPI (Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) at Irvine Valley College, where he mentors AA&NHPI community college students.

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

AA&NHPI Coalition Building

A growing strength of Orange County's AA&NHPI community is the level of collaboration and support across ethnic, racial, and other lines. For example, Jane and Victor Pang share that through Pacific Islander Health Partnership's work with other organizations, Asian American community leaders are also becoming advocates in reminding mainstream institutions to include the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities. Jane Pang appreciates how her relationship with Vattana Peong, an immigrant from Cambodia and executive director of The Cambodian Family, has developed over the years, where he now brings up Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander issues: "We just got invited to [the] Orange County Mental Health Multicultural Task Force. There's Asians there, but Vattana said, 'There's no Pacific Islander!' I said, 'See!' And Vattana, who's Cambodian, is saying, 'Where are the Pacific Islanders?' So we got him as an advocate! And that's what it's all about—building that partnership and collaboration." Thus, AA&NHPI coalitions have been beneficial in helping the different ethnic groups learn about each other and become allies to help increase political visibility.

According to Michael Matsuda, superintendent of Anaheim Union High School District, coalition building among different ethnic groups is critical because it provides a stronger voice to policy makers:

> There's a lot of commonality among the API [Asian and Pacific Islander] groups, and the existing groups were more focused on their own specific communities. And I understand, you are kind of in a survival mode, and you need resources for Cambodians. You need resources for Vietnamese. But what was happening is those resources were being put in these [separate] buckets. . . . But when you have [coalitions], you can create synergies because there are common issues across communities. . . . You put the sticks together and you're a lot stronger.

Standing in Solidarity with the Muslim Community

Orange County has a growing Muslim community, with estimates of 25,000 to 120,000 in 2010, and with other estimates of 121,000 to 500,000 in Southern California. Indeed, Orange County is home to the second-largest Muslim American population in the country.[4]

Muslims are often perceived to be only from the Middle East; however, there are extensive Muslim communities around the world, and some have come here as immigrants or refugees. In Orange County, many Muslims are of South Asian ancestry, with one study in Southern California estimating that the ethnic group with the highest regular mosque participation is South Asian at 41%, with a small number of Southeast Asian descent.[5] A particularly strong voice for the diverse Southern California Muslim American community is the Greater Los Angeles chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR-LA). Formed in 1997 in Anaheim and led by executive director Hussam Ayloush, who is Syrian American and was born in Lebanon, CAIR-LA has become a strong partner to AA&NHPI and other immigrant communities in Orange County. As an international student at The University of Texas at Austin, Ayloush was active in campus Muslim organizations, which gave him an appreciation for the ethnic diversity of the Muslim community in the United States. After being employed as an aerospace engineer, he decided he could have more meaningful impact working as an advocate.

Since September 11, 2001, the demands on Muslim American organizations like CAIR-LA have multiplied. And since 2015, the anti-Muslim sentiment has grown significantly, driven by global events, domestic policies, and political rhetoric. Last year, CAIR-LA provided services to 500 people through its civic engagement and immigrant rights programs, and educated the general public about Muslims and Islam, correcting misperceptions about their community and faith. With attacks on Muslim Americans and immigrants increasingly intertwined, many AA&NHPI and Muslim American groups and leaders are now working together to support each other, finding strength in numbers. Mary Anne Foo explains:

> There were a lot of hate crimes after 9/11, and if we didn't have the buy-in and the relationships with all these other organizations, having just us stand up there [individually] wouldn't have done anything. But when we get 24 different groups to say 'We're standing together against hate crimes,' 'We're standing together for voting,' 'We're standing together for the rights of everybody, for immigrant rights,' was much more powerful. And I think when we had early success and different types of successes, [this] was key to getting everybody involved.

Foo's sentiments about growing partnerships are echoed by Ayloush:

> Once we shifted away from some of the smaller circles of ethnic politics into a little bit more growing the coalition into the API aspect of things, again great things have happened. Politically we built Muslims. It brought [together] communities that [had] never worked with each other, Chinese and Japanese, . . . Koreans and Chinese, Koreans and Japanese. And then suddenly bringing Indians and Pakistanis, who would've put Indian [and Pakistanis], two nemeses, together? But now they come together and work together because they understand that all of us—our one being, our future, our safety—depends on each other's strength, support, and well-being.

NEEDS

Citizenship, Immigration Status, and Barriers to Accessing Services

Citizenship and immigration have become important issues of advocacy as the current political climate has become increasingly anti-immigrant. U.S. citizenship in particular provides a number of important rights and benefits such as voting rights and health and social benefits. In today's political climate, citizenship status is even more critical as government services for noncitizens, even if they are legal immigrants, are under threat. In addition, immigrants are worried about deportation, and depending on their status, anxious about being able to reenter the country. Currently, 19% of Asian Americans and 12% of Pacific Islanders living in Orange County are not citizens. They make up 25% of the total population in Orange County that are not citizens.[6] There are many barriers to obtaining citizenship such as lacking sufficient fluency in English, being unable to take or pass the citizenship exam, or being unable to afford citizenship application fees.

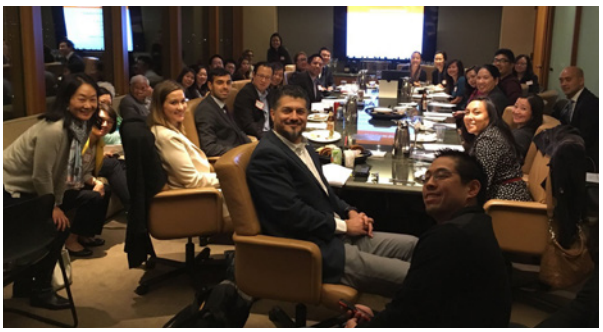

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

Even Asian American and Pacific Islander immigrants who are legal residents and have green card status can still be vulnerable for deportation, which is having a devastating impact on families in Orange County.[7] Due to poverty and unstable housing conditions, some Southeast Asian refugees engaged in criminal or gang activities that put them at-risk for both incarceration and deportation.[8] Since 1998, over 16,000 Southeast Asian refugees across the United States have received final orders of deportation, 12,000 of which are based on past criminal acts, the highest number of any immigrant group.[9] As of November 2017, the U.S. government is pressing both Cambodia and Vietnam to repatriate more Cambodian and Vietnamese Americans. Even if they committed the offense in their youth, have already served their prison time and are rehabilitated, are gainfully employed, and are married to U.S. citizens and have children, they can still be detained indefinitely

or forcibly deported. In many of these cases, these individuals were born in refugee camps as their families were escaping political persecution in Vietnam or the genocide in Cambodia; if deported, they are being sent to a country where they have never been, where they may have no relatives, and where they may not even speak the language. Advocates, including Advancing Justice-LA, believe these detentions and deportations are unconstitutional and unjust, and have sued to stop them.[10]

Jane Pang, cofounder of Pacific Islander Health Partnership, points out the unique citizenship issues among the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities since some are citizens by birth, others are U.S. nationals, some are naturalized citizens, and others are immigrants. The lack of U.S. citizenship is often intertwined with issues of poverty:

> [Some Pacific Islanders] can work here without a green card, but if we want them to become citizens and eventually end up voting, we do voter registration. We realized they need a green card to become citizens. And it costs what, 1,600 dollars, some exorbitant amount, to get the green card. But they have to wait [five] years before they get to apply for citizenship. So we're at a catch-22 as we try to advocate for citizenship. They're caught, and many of them can't even afford the initial cost of the green card. So they're barely making it, and economically they're probably the most challenged. And because . . . [their community is] so small, there's really no hard data on where they are socioeconomically because they're so invisible.

Without citizenship status, they are ineligible for many public benefits, which can further exacerbate their socioeconomic conditions. National estimates show that of the 12 million undocumented immigrants nationally, over 1 million are Asian American.[11] The Los Angeles and Orange County area is home to 1 million undocumented immigrants, the second-largest metropolitan area behind New York City.[12] An estimated 52,000 undocumented immigrants in Orange County identify as Asian American.[13] However, these numbers are inexact since this part of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community is largely hidden, out of fear or shame, and lacking access to critical services and programs. Ellen Ahn, executive director of Korean Community Services, observes:

> We have seen the undocumented go even more underground. . . . You have a sizable population of permanent residents, green card holders, and we have seen a rush towards citizenship. There's a lot of fear in the community. There's been talk about cutting benefits for the newly immigrated or going after folks who have [Medicaid benefits]. So there is this hesitancy or fear to reach out to some very-much-needed benefits, and no one knows how far it's going to go. And so there's just a general anxiety with the new presidential administration that we've never seen before around immigration.

"You can create synergies because there are common issues across communities. . . . You put the sticks together and you're a lot stronger."

Jonathan Paik, Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center, notes that the model minority myth and belief in the American dream can make it difficult to address these issues within the community:

> Most folks don't know that one in seven Korean Americans in the United States are undocumented. These are statistics that no one ever talks about 'cause our culture plays to that. Our county right now, and our community, really plays, at least from my personal experience and observation, plays to the idea that folks are trying to reach to the top . . . this like American dream narrative that people are trying to achieve.

Edwin Tiongson of Irvine Valley College also points out that there are undocumented individuals in the Filipino American community who worry about deportation: "I think about my fellow Filipinos—they're TNTs. I don't know if you've heard that [Filipino] term before. It's like *tago ng tago* ['undocumented immigrant in hiding']. And they wander from spot to spot . . . because of fear of being deported." Thus, the reluctance to bring attention to themselves and fear of repercussions from authority figures makes it difficult to track undocumented Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and furthers their invisibility in any conversation about immigration. In addition, unlike Latinos, who are associated with crossing the borders through Mexico, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders usually become undocumented through different means. Many enter the United States legally through work or student visas but have overstayed their visas. This segment of the community does not enter the United States as undocumented immigrants, and this can lead to additional challenges with reaching, educating, and protecting a population that may not identify as "undocumented."

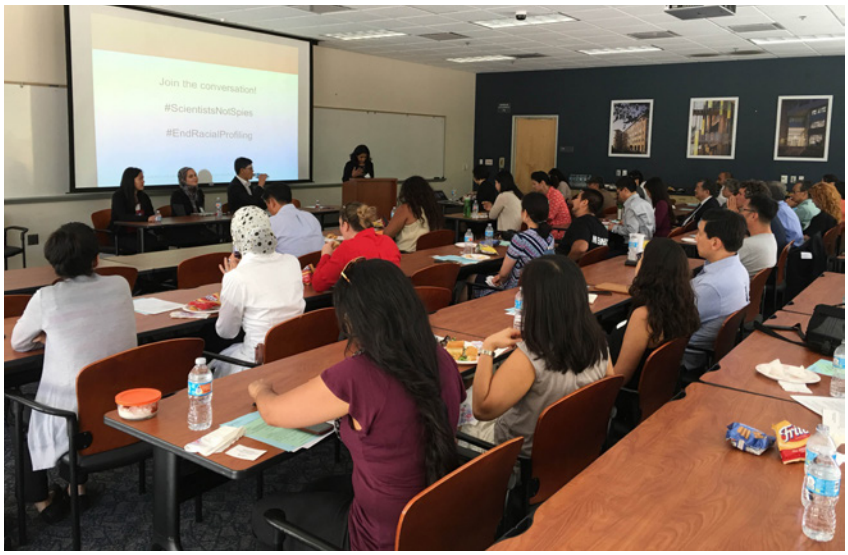

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

It is especially important for undocumented individuals to be informed of immigration and enforcement policies, which can change quickly depending on the political climate. Under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, which was approved in 2012, over 800,000 undocumented individuals who came to the United States as minors were granted a renewable deferred action from deportation for two years and received a work permit. Other laws, such as AB 60 allowed undocumented people to obtain a driver's license. Mary Anne Foo explains how community organizations have had to be especially aware of the political shifts to help clients who may not always understand the changes and their impact:

> It's that fear and the misinformation or the information that changes on a daily basis. So two weeks ago we're saying, 'Do not travel. Do not leave the country. Do not renew your DACA.' This week is, 'Okay, renew your DACA as soon as possible because it's going to take them another 6 months to decide what to do. Get it renewed now.' Things are changing constantly and people are afraid. . . . What do we tell our folks now? We just told them this; now we're telling them this.

Since these interviews with community leaders, DACA was repealed (in September 2017), which has placed added pressure on local Asian American and Pacific Islander community leaders to provide additional services as well as focusing advocacy efforts for DACA recipients whose future is uncertain. Currently, there is more institutional support for DACA students, with universities helping to serve and advocate for their students. However, for "DACA-mented" immigrants who are no longer in school, the ending of DACA may push many further underground.

Community groups face increasing difficulty in trying to reach impacted populations in order to assist them. Local community organizations have partnered with Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County and other legal aid services to provide more immigrant and citizenship workshops to try to help community members navigate current political policies. These free services include connecting people to mental health or law enforcement resources and assessing their legal options based on their circumstances. However, Michael Matsuda, superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District, describes how fear in the community is overriding these community efforts:

> It is already having an effect because we've had five forums with our parents. In partnership with OCAPICA [Orange County and Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance], with ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union], [and] Anaheim Police Department, [we were] trying to get information out. Even though they're well attended, 200 people or so, and a fair amount of Asians that have come to those things, but there's a sense of fear. Because you see the ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] raids and all of that out there, so now they're afraid. And so they're saying 'We don't want to come to those things.' So now we're having smaller ones at the sites where they feel safe, using our community liaisons. And the police are there to assure them, 'Hey we're not ICE.' They're trying to differentiate themselves in a good way.

The Orange County Sheriff's Department has several detention contracts with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement to incarcerate undocumented immigrants, which has created additional feelings of distrust among immigrants toward law enforcement entities.[14]

Despite gaining trust with these communities over the years, nonprofit organizational leaders are seeing how this fear contributes to people refusing to seek out health and social services, even on critical issues. Shikha Bhatnagar, executive director of the South Asian Network, observes that the organization's clients may no longer seek help for critical services such as domestic violence, an issue already seen as difficult to address in the community:

> People aren't applying for public benefits . . . because maybe they're a relative of an undocumented person and they don't want that person to be exposed. And one of the things that we've been told is that . . . your health records are protected, but DHS [Department of Homeland Security] records are a free-for-all. They don't have the same protections, privacy rules, and they can access your records. And so it makes it very difficult for us because people do need services, but we fully understand their concerns in applying for these benefits, and so it's definitely coming into play with our work.

Michael Matsuda also notes that this same fear is impacting low-income K–12 students who face housing instability. Although there are resources available for youth, parents may not want to disclose their undocumented status:

> Here's where it's affecting [children] right now, is free and reduced lunch. I mentioned we have 4,100 homeless. A fair amount are undocumented. They're so afraid; they don't want to sign up for free and reduced lunch, which is going to exacerbate the food deprivation problem. And then you have an issue with FAFSA [Free Application for Federal Student Aid]. If you want to apply for financial aid, parents now are afraid that that's it's going to the federal [government]. They might trust us, but they don't trust the federal government. And so you think about that, with the DREAMers [DACA recipients] and all of that, not getting [financial aid]. And that depresses the kid because mom is afraid too. [She will say,] 'We don't want to give our information.' So we're heading into some very murky waters—all the more reason why we need to reach out to our community, take their hand, and [tell them], 'We're in this together.' We've got to do that.

Rising Number of Hate Crimes and Incidents

While currently recognized as a diverse area that welcomes newcomers, Orange County also has a history of anti-Asian and anti-immigrant sentiment, including a number of hate crimes and racial discrimination cases (see chapter 1, Introduction). One of two cofounders of the Minuteman Project, an anti-immigrant group, was from Orange County and gained national notoriety in the mid-2000s for setting up civilian patrols along the U.S.-Mexico border. Currently, there are still pockets in

Orange County that are reportedly a magnet for skinhead, white supremacy, or hate group activities.

These sentiments have become more visible in the current political climate. Hussam Ayloush of the Council on American-Islamic Relations has observed that the political rhetoric promoting racism and targeting undocumented immigrants and Muslims has become acceptable in public settings. He cautions against normalizing and ignoring racist rhetoric as it ultimately leads to physical violence against those who are being verbally attacked:

> The presidential campaigning time has unleashed racism and hatred in America that I have never witnessed in my life. Never. It's almost like it allowed people to come out of the closet with their racism basically, . . . what they kept inside, because it was becoming unpopular, abnormal, unacceptable socially to be so racist. What Trump did, especially Trump, he normalized racism. He made it acceptable again to take the racist talk outside of the dinner table with your kids and family. People used to sit in the living room and maybe make comments about all . . . these Chinese, these Arabs, these Muslims. Suddenly, now it's like, 'Oh, we can go out and make these racist comments or views, express them publicly.' And that is a problem because once you normalize bigotry and racism, . . . it's a slippery slope. It's not just something that just remains stable. It's a negative dynamic thing, meaning it starts with rhetoric, then it becomes action, then it becomes violence.

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Ken Inouye, former chair of the Orange County Human Relations Commission and past president of the national Japanese American Citizens League, also notices that there is a lack of civility that is leading to a rise in hate crime and discriminatory incidents: "In Orange County, the hate crimes are six times as high as they were from the election until now because people are throwing aside their niceties and really saying things they might not have said otherwise." Since the 2016 elections, hate crimes in Orange County have increased with physical assaults, vandalism of structures, and displays of hate symbols that have targeted Asian Americans as well as other diverse communities.[15] Between November 2016 and February 2017, the Orange County Human Relations Commission reported 14 hate crimes, which is higher than the previous year during this period.[16] The total number of hate incidents reported to the Commission in 2016 was 73, which is almost double the 43 incidents reported the previous year.[17] The 2016 CAIR report found that Orange County had the highest number of anti-Muslim incidents, including hate crimes and other anti-Muslim discrimination, in the state (363 out of 1,556 reports), an increase of 68% from the previous year.[18]

Many of these hate incidents or crimes may be based on mistaken identity or stereotypes. In particular, many South Asians have been the victims of anti-Muslim

attacks. For example, South Asian American practitioners of the Sikh faith who wear beards and a head wrap similar to a turban, or their religious sites, called gurdwaras, are misidentified as Muslim and are the targets of hate crimes and incidents.[19]

Moreover, many Asian Americans of various ethnic backgrounds have reported being the subject of anti-Asian and anti-foreigner incidents. Asian Americans Advancing Justice has tracked more than 300 anti-Asian incidents from late 2016 to fall 2017. Hate crimes can be directed at individuals for their ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religion, or some other characteristic. For example, AA&NHPI who are LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning) may identify and be targeted for different aspects of their identity. According to the Orange County Human Relations Commission, recent motivations for hate crimes are highest for the target's race, then religion, followed by LGBTQ status,[20] and like other statistics, only use one factor in identifying hate incidents or crimes.

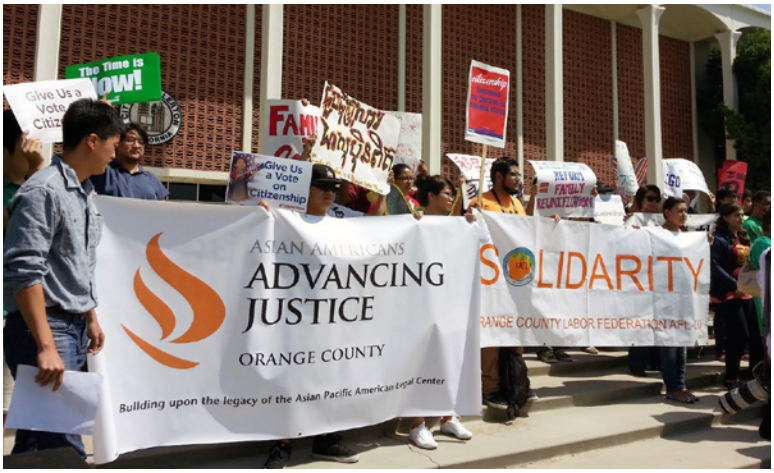

Photo courtesy of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County

A recent hate incident involved Gloria Lee, a Korean American partner at a prominent law firm and founding cochair of the Executive Advisory Council for Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County. While she was crossing the street in Costa Mesa, Lee was yelled at by a driver to "go back to [expletive] China!", who then narrowly missed hitting her.[21] Born in Chicago and an alum of Stanford University and University of California, Berkeley, she says, "I was shocked. . . . I realized that despite [my] accomplishments or contributions to the community, some people still just see me as a foreigner who doesn't belong."[22] Jonathan Paik of the Korean Resource Center also notes that this is impacting the Korean American community: "In Orange County specifically we've seen an elevation of hate crimes happening, even in the Korean American community. The swastikas being drawn, graffitied over in churches in Buena Park. You're seeing this level of boldness amongst hateful community members against communities like ours." Thus, regardless of how many generations of AA&NHPI have been here, the image of AA&NHPI as "forever foreigners" or "racialized other" who do not belong in America persists and is exacerbated in the current political climate.

These prejudicial attitudes and actions stem from misunderstandings and misguided fears regarding the changing demographics and how it will impact residents in the county, as Hussam Ayloush explains:

> It is a result of a large segment of white Christian America not digesting the rapidly changing demographics of America. It's creating a shock. And all of us, including those who are part of that demographic

> change, have a responsibility to transition people mentally, culturally into it, into the changing America. Again, I'm not saying the onus is on us and racist people are off the hook, but I'm saying many people are not racist. Many people are being manipulated by the racist people. They're creating fear in them of the 'other.' And we all can play a role—the victims, the victimized, the victimizers—in a way where we can kind of open their mind, open their eyes to the changing demographics: what it means, how beautiful it is, how beneficial it is to them, to their future, [and] to the future of their children. You and me are not a threat to their children. You and me are actually . . . going to make things, create more opportunities for their children and our children together . . . and that is the message we can tell people.

Tracking and Responding to Hate Crimes and Incidents

While the Orange County Human Relations Commission reports an overall increase in hate incidents, the actual number is most likely higher as hate incidents are not always reported. However, in order to effectively track or follow up on hate incidents, Ken Inouye remarks that it is necessary for law enforcement and policy makers to classify acts of racial violence as hate crimes, even if it may be a difficult process:

> Once you . . . [name] something as a hate crime, then you've got to prove that in addition to other things to get a conviction. So a lot of times law enforcement doesn't want to go for that 'cause it's higher fruit, [a] higher standard. But from the victim's standpoint, it's kind of a way of saying, 'Okay, let's acknowledge the fact that this was just a senseless act of hate.' . . . It's not necessarily that you want revenge.

There are also various reasons why AA&NHPI underreport hate incidents, which can include the stigma of being known as a victim of discrimination, fear of further violence directed at them, or anxiety regarding the government scrutinizing their immigration status. Hussam Ayloush observes that many may not want to acknowledge hate crimes and discrimination as a systemic problem that can affect them personally: "Most people don't think of themselves as a possible or potential victims of discrimination or hate. . . . When they hear about it, they think it's the 'other,' it's somebody who lacks the intelligence or lacks the connection or maybe they brought it onto themselves. . . . People don't ever think they will ever be victims of [hate]." In some cases, individuals may purposely try to hide their religious affiliation such as wearing a turban or hijab as a way to prevent hate incidents. However, this ultimately infringes on their religious rights even if it may seem like a choice, and it does not resolve the proliferation of these acts.

AA&NHPI community leaders and organizations are actively trying to respond to these issues but face barriers in serving the community due to limited resources.

As mentioned earlier, in 2017, Asian Americans Advancing Justice established the hate-incident-reporting website standagainsthatred.org to help document and track hate incidents nationally. However, organizations have limited resources to increase their capacity for assisting individuals who believe they have been the target of a hate attack. Ayloush describes how CAIR has to prioritize its work given its limited capacity as a community organization:

> We barely scratch the surface of the need in the community. . . . With my staff, I say, 'Cut the fat, like do the essentials. We're not going to be able to help every person who calls our office. . . . We will have to refer others to other places. We will have to empower people to do things, and we might have to say no to certain things. . . . We have to do what is more urgent and what creates more impact.' That's how it is because of the limited resources.

Jonathan Paik of the Korean Resource Center expresses a similar sentiment about the limited resources addressing hate incidents but particularly strategies that are preventive rather than reactionary. This can be a major challenge requiring a community effort to make connections among local-, state-, and federal-level advocacy:

> We can help you with responding, but that's about as much as we can do. What are the systemic changes we're making right now in light of a federal administration that's not willing to pass the most progressive policies right now? What is our role in being able to not only defend but also be on the offensive? What is our role of our everyday community members like teachers and professors and students and home-care workers and like all these employees who are working every day? And what is their role and being able to not only defend but to fight? And to fight and to be able to increase the level of justice in a time when there's little justice to be seen?

The majority of Asian Americans are immigrants or refugees. Therefore, the current anti-immigration and anti-refugee rhetoric and policies create an unwelcoming political climate for them. The types of hate and racism usually directed at Asian Americans are related to myths about the "perpetual foreigner," misperceptions of being an economic threat, or stereotypes about "terrorists." Unfortunately, with ongoing economic, diplomatic, and other tensions with China, Pakistan, North Korea, and other Asia Pacific nations, Asian Americans are likely to continue to experience escalated hate fanned by global events and political rhetoric.

Need for Further Research and Data Disaggregation

Supporting and expanding ongoing data disaggregation efforts is critical in order to provide a complete and nuanced understanding of the diversity of AA&NHPI. As mentioned in other chapters, aggregated data frequently mask significant

disparities affecting specific ethnic groups. For example, in education (see chapter 4, "K–12 and Higher Education"), some Asian ethnic groups perform above average on education indicators, which can hide the challenges faced by other Asian and many Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander groups. Given the growing diversity of the AA&NHPI population, gathering accurate data for each ethnic group is challenging. The U.S. Census now captures some of the most detailed ethnic-specific data available. The first U.S. Census was conducted in 1790, with a Chinese category being added in 1870; Japanese in 1890; Filipino, Korean, and "Hindu" or Asian Indian in 1920; Hawaiian in 1960; and Vietnamese, Samoan, and Guamanian or Chamorro in 1980.[23] In 2000, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders were divided into separate racial groupings, and for the first time, multiracial individuals could select more than one racial category.

State and local data collection is unfortunately not as detailed. For many years, California law required some state agencies to collect disaggregated data for Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Laotian, Cambodian, Hawaiian, Guamanian or Chamorro, and Samoan ethnic groups. Recent state law changes, including California Senate Bill AB 1726 passed in 2016, applied the data requirements to specific agencies: Department of Fair Employment and Housing, Department of Industrial Relations, and Department of Public Health. It also expanded to include new ethnic or national origin groups such as Bangladeshi, Hmong, Indonesian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, Thai, Fijian, and Tongan. Through this law, disaggregated health information for AA&NHPI, including rates of major diseases (such as hepatitis B, cancer, and cardiovascular disease), health risks of each group, leading causes of death, and pregnancy rates, may become available in the near future. However, it will only be implemented successfully if sufficient funds are available on a consistent basis both statewide and at the local county level. Currently, the law does not apply to all state agencies, and the application of this law varies depending on funding and resources, so data may be inconsistently collected and reported.

Advocacy for data disaggregation is an ongoing fight and will become more important in the next few years. Most AA&NHPI community leaders and groups, particularly those working on health and education issues, fight ardently for ethnic-specific disaggregation in order to shed light on and address disparities across AA&NHPI ethnic communities. However, there are segments of the AA&NHPI community, particularly in the Chinese immigrant community, that oppose data disaggregation in the educational context, which is connected to their opposition to affirmative action admissions policies, and this minority voice is present in Orange County.[24] Given both federal leadership and funding challenges in implementing the upcoming Census 2020, it will be important to monitor and address this internal community division as well as to strengthen support for AA&NHPI data disaggregation.

"You have to disaggregate data, and you have to look at the different needs by region and by where folks are living, so we have to dispel a lot of myths."

Locally, while there are general statistics about Asian Americans in Orange County, there are only limited data that further break down the information into specific AA&NHPI ethnic groups. Mary Anne Foo explains: "People either see them [AA&NHPI] as doing super well, which many are, or super poor, which many are, or all going to college. So we have to spend the time saying, 'No, no, no. We're so diverse!' You have to disaggregate data, and you have to look at the different needs by region and by where folks are living, so we have to dispel a lot of myths."

The homogenization of Asian Americans into one racial category, which in some cases includes Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI), masks many of the nuanced needs and characteristics of the distinctive ethnic groups. Vattana Peong of The Cambodian Family states that for the Cambodian American community, having ethnic-specific data is critical to understanding health issues across generations:

> The advocacy and the increasing of data is important work for our Cambodian Family right now because a lot of our needs has been lumped together with the Asian category. And we know that different Asian ethnic groups have different needs. However, for Cambodians, we have particular needs. We have unique needs. Because first, we are the survivors of genocide. We have suffered a lot of posttraumatic stress disorder and depression. And also we have a community that has 40 years of experience in the U.S., but their health are not really getting better. And now there might be a kind of intergenerational trauma being passed onto the second generation, and that is the work that we want to focus on as well. . . . Having good data will help us build our advocacy effort to advocate for more resources. . . . There have been misperceptions about us, 'That your population is small, there's probably not much need, only close to 10,000 in Orange County.' . . . But we want to change that perception. We have a small population, but our needs are so dire.

He adds that having consistently collected mental health data over time will help community leaders track trends and provide better services: "We have always been using old statistics. For example, . . . 62% of our clients have PTSD [posttraumatic stress disorder], and over 50% have depression. And that data was conducted in 2005 by the RAND Corporation. And now it's 12 years later. We want to know where those numbers are at right now."

NHPI community leaders in Orange County have been critical advocates for data disaggregation, particularly in separating Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders from Asian Americans, and making additional distinctions within the NHPI grouping. Victor Pang recalls how one of the first advocacy efforts for the Pacific Islander Health Partnership was to ensure that Pacific Islander groups were appropriately categorized and counted in the U.S. Census: "They wanted

to disaggregate from the Asians and they [the U.S. Census] called them 'Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders.'" Jane Pang, who cofounded the organization with him, elaborates on the controversy of lumping together those originally from Guam, Tonga, Samoa, the Marshall Islands, Tahiti, Palau, Fiji, etc. into the "Other" category:

> When we talk about advocacy, the first big movement was to get recognized as 'Pacific Islanders.' . . . Victor Pang was on the U.S. Census [Bureau National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations] for about 11 years . . . and tried to fight for fully disaggregated [data], realizing the [federal] Office of Management made a decision. . . . And within our community, all the communities, Pacific Islanders said, 'We don't want to be the *Other*!' . . . We didn't want them to be [the] 'Other' either! So we automatically dropped [the] *O* in *NHOPI* and just started using *NHPI*, and eventually that now has become the trend, and everybody says 'NHPI' and dropped the 'Other.' . . . So now we have 'Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.'

Although the 2010 U.S. Census still used the category Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders, individuals themselves use their preferred categorizations. This highlights how ethnic groups continue to change and evolve and the importance of input from community members regarding the accuracy of categories and designations. Community leaders still identify data disaggregation of NHPI as an ongoing need with significant ramifications for health policies and services at the local and state levels.

Strengthening Coalition Building

Coalition building has been critical in increasing the AA&NHPI political voice on many issues, from hate crimes to data disaggregation. While there have been successes in coalition building in Orange County, community leaders express hope in further building and maintaining these relationships to make sure that all the ethnic groups are at the table. However, it can still be difficult for these diverse groups to work together given the unique histories and needs of each community. Tricia Nguyen, CEO of Southland Integrated Services (formerly the Vietnamese Community of Orange County), explains that pan-ethnic coalitions are only possible when there are unifying issues across the groups, which encourages them to mobilize collectively: "We're so diverse. [For example,] for Asian Americans, this topic is dear to us, but it's not for Koreans. So we [have to] find a common goal, common agenda, that we all can go towards. That, I find, is more efficient because we all care for similar, you know, similar topics." Thus, some issues that are important for specific ethnic groups may not be as important for others, making it difficult to build effective partnerships.

The Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) was one of the first pan-ethnic coalitions to form and be funded in Orange County. Mary Anne Foo, the founding executive director, relates that there are still challenges given the limited resources generally available to AA&NHPI organizations: "The challenge is it's not that people didn't get along. They actually did. And that people said, 'Hey yeah we got to work together. We're stronger together.' But it was the lack of resources that made it hard." In these coalitions, the types of community organizations vary, with varying degrees of staffing and operational capacity, making the distribution of resources difficult across groups as well as the ability of some organizations to fully participate or take on a leadership role. Vattana Peong says "if you ask us [The Cambodian Family], like a small nonprofit like us, to lead the effort, that would be almost impossible for us to do that. So it has to be building the capacity of each nonprofits, Asian nonprofit, to be able to work on that field."

Foo acknowledges the challenges in coalition building and the need to balance resources, which have to be further divided and distributed among the varying groups when coalitions receive funding. This is an ongoing process as funding sources, demographics, and needs change. She explains how OCAPICA had to change its organizational model to ensure that the work of partner organizations, who may represent smaller ethnic groups, was not lost within a broader coalition:

> I started to see that people kept recognizing OCAPICA, and we were getting a lot of money. And I was concerned because the individual organizations were losing their identity in a way because we would get credit, and I never wanted that to happen. I wanted us to work together, but I didn't want all the credit to go to OCAPICA because we were just a convener, a facilitator. And if we were getting money for the Cambodian community, but [The] Cambodian Family doesn't, that's not fair. So, at the time we thought, 'We're really strong as a coalition. We got to stick together.' But at the same time, we got to fight for people to understand just funding us doesn't mean you've funded the Asian community. You got to fund everybody. . . . And we got to spread it around. But everyone's got to get recognized. We can't do this alone.

NHPI communities also face challenges working in coalitions. They have historically been overlooked when lumped with Asian Americans, and there is also significant diversity within the NHPI grouping. Since their populations are smaller, they have often selectively formed coalitions with Asian Americans, which enlarges their numbers, for example, when applying for federal grants. However, their specific needs and voices can get lost in these coalitions, and the inclusion of the NHPI communities may be in name only. Jane Pang, who is ethnically Chinese but grew up in Hawai`i makes a concerted effort to hold these collaborators accountable to Pacific Islanders:

> I take it as an opportunity to share with the Asian Americans. And I've always spoken very loudly. And as I said my first task was to find out how many of the API [Asian and Pacific Islander] organizations in Los Angeles were really taking care of Pacific Islanders. So I've always had that real strong advocacy undertone. And that's why we're always together in that I'm the Asian American. [Victor Pang is] the Pacific Islander. And so they need to be reminded constantly that I'm here. Though I'm Asian American, I speak a very loud Pacific Islander voice. People who know me, or [who] I've worked on committees with know that because sometimes it lies on deaf ears, so I have to hold my community accountable—that if you're going to be Asian Pacific Islander, then please include the Pacific Islanders.

Coalition building beyond the AA&NHPI communities is also critical. In Orange County, Latinos and Asians are the fastest-growing groups and as immigrants often live in close proximity to each other. They sometimes face similar concerns, but linguistic barriers make it challenging for them to communicate with one another. The city of Fullerton is an example of how cross-racial collaboration can have an impact. Along with Vivian Jaramillo, who represented the Latino community, Jonathan Paik successfully sued the city to replace at-large elections with district elections, a city which is 35% Latino and 23% Asian American but has had predominantly White elected leadership. He explains how coalition building with Latinos was critical to the success of the case, but that it also took time to build that trust and develop a shared sense of community:

> Even though our demographic accounts show that we're the majority now, like folks of color are certainly the majority of Orange County. What I learned though is that it's a false statistic to be able to aggregate everyone together and assume that the values are the same, and that folks are in the same place in terms of what kind of change they want to see. It's a good pitch, but at the same time, there's a lot of work to be done to be able to build coalitions not only amongst our staff, which was happening two years ago, but with our base. So it took a year and a half, 18 months, to be able to have Korean monolingual speakers and Latino monolingual speakers to come together in a city council meeting and to be able to say that . . . [elections are] unfair for our representation and to be able to talk about talking points and share stories about what it meant to be able to live in this part of the neighborhood.

Many refugees and immigrants are encountering new ethnic or racial groups for the first time, and these community or organizational leaders have just begun to learn how to work together. Currently, these relationships may be based more on personal relationships and on an ad-hoc basis. Tam Nguyen, former president of

the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce, stresses that these coalitions ultimately need to be institutionalized:

> The challenge is we have over 30 Asian subgroups, and we build relationships within our own Asian subgroups. We also have to in parallel build relationships with our brothers and sisters from the Hispanic/Latino community, our brothers and sisters in the African American community, and more broadly with the community that's been here the longest, the Caucasian community, to really make it work and to have these collaborations. Those dynamics are very personal right now. It happens in a very individualized basis. It's very personal, but it needs to happen at the more collaborative, more organizational, level in order for things to continue to get to a point where we need to see that impact.

Hussam Ayloush believes that formal coalition building that expands beyond AA&NHPI ethnic groups will become more common with future leadership who have more opportunities for exposure to different groups in schools, neighborhoods, workplaces, and religious sites:

> It's way more accepted and embraced by the younger generation, the young professionals, 40 and under. The older [generation is] . . . still swallowing and digesting it. . . . They're not opposed to it, but I know when I sit with some older Chinese American activists or older Pakistani activists or Arab American activists, for them it's like, 'What's common between me and the others?' They don't see it yet fully. But it's what we've seen so far and it continues. It is a growing scale, meaning we're only going to see a better future. . . . If we're happy with what we've seen so far, wait another 10 years and I think the future holds even way more success, more unity, more positive impact. . . . Because at the end of the day, we're improving the quality of life basically, the quality of life for everyone. It's like the tide, when the tide goes up, all the ships, all the boats go up. And the API [Asian and Pacific Islander] community, the Muslim community, the Jewish community—when we're focusing on making sure everybody's respected, it doesn't just become [that way] for us. When you make sure there's no school bullying, we're protecting everybody.

AA&NHPI need to continue to build cross-racial, cross-ethnic coalitions to achieve broader and deeper impact, which will help to ensure that all communities are being protected and being treated equitably.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Advocate for disaggregated data for AA&NHPI for local and state programs to identify disparities on key social indicators (e.g., housing, economic development, poverty, education, health and health care, voting) and to better understand the different assets and needs within each ethnic community.
- Ensure language-accessible legal information and services for AA&NHPI communities so that they can enforce their rights (e.g., enact municipal language access ordinances so that local governments serve all residents equally).
- Help eligible AA&NHPI secure immigration benefits or U.S. citizenship by providing culturally and linguistically accessible outreach, education, and services in immigration and citizenship. In particular, fund organizations that provide free and low-cost legal assistance to AA&NHPI immigrants and related services such as civics and English-language classes.
- Protect undocumented Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders through culturally and linguistically accessible legal services (including deportation defense) and "Know Your Rights" education on immigration enforcement issues.
- Support federal immigration reform that expands opportunities for both high- and less-skilled workers, reunites families, and provides a pathway to citizenship for the undocumented.
- Ensure local implementation of state laws and adopt local ordinances that prohibit discrimination against immigrants in employment, housing, education, and public services, particularly the use of retaliation against undocumented immigrants for asserting their rights. Ensure local implementation of SB 54, which limits state and local police in enforcing federal immigration laws.
- Educate AA&NHPI communities on hate attacks and the importance of reporting hate incidents, including providing culturally and linguistically accessible information.
- Better track and respond to hate attacks against AA&NHPI communities, including ensuring that hate attacks are properly identified and investigated as such and providing disaggregated data on hate incidents.
- Strengthen successful models of intergroup relations programs for youth and adults, including in-school programs and curricula that promote diversity and embrace differences, and community-based programs that prevent hate violence and respond to hate crimes and incidents.

- Support and encourage cross-ethnic and cross-racial coalitions involving diverse AA&NHPI communities, particularly around shared histories and common policy concerns such as education, health care, and immigration.
- Provide more funding and support for AA&NHPI groups who serve and have the trust of AA&NHPI community members, particularly those who protect targeted groups such as Muslim Americans and undocumented immigrants.

INTERVIEWED COMMUNITY LEADERS

Ellen Ahn	Executive director of Korean Community Services
Hussam Ayloush	Executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Greater Los Angeles Area Chapter (CAIR-LA)
Shikha Bhatnagar	Executive director of the South Asian Network
Mary Anne Foo	Founder and executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Ken Inouye	Former chair of the Orange County Human Relations Commission; past president of the national Japanese American Citizens League
Michael Matsuda	Superintendent of the Anaheim Union High School District; founding member of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
Tam Nguyen	Former president of the Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce; owner of Advance Beauty College; former president of the California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Alumni Association
Tricia Nguyen	CEO of Southland Integrated Services, formerly known as the Vietnamese Community of Orange County (VNCOC)
Jonathan Paik	Orange County director of the Korean Resource Center
Jane Pang	Cofounder and board member of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Victor Pang	Cofounder of Pacific Islander Health Partnership (PIHP)
Vattana Peong	Executive director of The Cambodian Family
Edwin Tiongson	Project director of ELEVATE AAPI (Equitable Learning Experience Valuing Achievement, Transfer and Empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) at Irvine Valley College

The quotes from these interviews are represented verbatim in this report, with some shortened for space considerations, shown by an ellipsis. The only other modifications are to help provide context, shown in brackets.

NOTES

1. Bharath, Deepa. 2017. "Rise in Crimes Targeting Asian Americans Leads to New Anti-Hate Website." *Orange County Register*, January 23, 2017, http://www.ocregister.com/2017/01/23/rise-in-crimes-targeting-asian-americans-leads-to-new-anti-hate-website/.

2. Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles. n.d. "From Our Litigation Archives: APALC Sues Abercrombie & Fitch." Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, accessed October 16, 2017, https://www.advancingjustice-la.org/blog/our-litigation-archives-apalc-sues-abercrombie-fitch#.WeUkUWhSw2x.

3. According to the ACLU, "The Garden Grove (CA) Police Department settled a 'gang' database racial profiling lawsuit by a group of young Asian Americans who said their civil rights were violated when officers photographed them as suspected gang members based merely on their ethnicity and clothing." https://www.aclu.org/other/racial-profiling-definition (accessed October 14, 2017).

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7. This statement refers to the impacted population as Asian American and Pacific Islander instead of AA&NHPI, because Hawai'i statehood classifies Native Hawaiians as U.S. citizens and not immigrants.

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11. Passel, Jeffrey S., and D'veraa Cohn. 2016. "Overall Number of U.S. Unauthorized Immigrants Holds Steady since 2009." Pew Research Center Hispanic Trends, September 20, 2016, http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/09/20/1-birth-regions-and-nations/.

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13. Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance. 2014. *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in Orange County*. Los Angeles: Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

14. Graham, Jordan. 2017. "ICE Can Jail Up to 120 More Undocumented Immigrants as Orange County Sheriff Contract Expands by $5 Million." *Orange County Register*, May 17, 2017, http://www.ocregister.com/2017/05/09/orange-county-supervisors-expand-federal-immigration-jail-contract-despite-pleas-from-advocates. The Orange County Sheriff's Department is the only local law enforcement agency in the state that permits sheriff's deputies to act as ICE agents. However, the California Legislature recently passed SB 54, which outlaws certain agreements and will limit the ways that the Orange County Sheriff can cooperate with ICE.

15. The Orange County Human Relations Commission separates hate crimes from hate incidents, behavior motivated by bias but not rising to the level of a crime. In California, the law describes hate crimes as those motivated by bias, hatred, or prejudice based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disability, and gender or sexual orientation. It can be harder to prosecute since it is often difficult to prove the specific bias that led to the crime.

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