



Photo courtesy of Vattana Peong

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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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.

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.



Photo courtesy of Tam Nguyen

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)
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
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 the 1980s.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.

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

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

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.

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

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

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.
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