



## White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Two-Year Anniversary MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

On October 14, 2009, President Barack Obama signed Executive Order 13515 reestablishing the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (Initiative) and the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (Commission) to address issues concerning the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. This historic executive order carved out a key avenue of access to the federal government for AAPI communities and affirmed President Obama's commitment to AAPI communities.

Together, the Initiative and Commission have been engaging diverse AAPIs across the country on critical issues facing the community. Over the last two years, the Initiative and Commission have hosted over **200 events** including national summits, roundtables, open dialogue sessions, and workshops in **23 states**, the District of Columbia and Pacific Islands, and in **50 cities**, reaching more than **22,000 people**.

Additionally, as part of the Administration's commitment to improving the quality of lives for AAPIs, the Initiative has been working with more than 23 federal agencies and executive offices to create and implement plans to increase the AAPI community's access to federal programs and services. The following highlights the accomplishments of the Initiative, Commission, and agencies, made possible through the work of community partners in the past two years:

- **Advised federal agencies on disaster response efforts after the Gulf Coast Oil Spill.** Immediately after the BP Oil Spill, the Initiative deployed staff to Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama to convene town hall and roundtable meetings with federal officials and over 300 Southeast Asian American community members to discuss issues of concern regarding the federal government's disaster response efforts. The Initiative advised the interagency team coordinating federal relief efforts on how to best serve these communities and convened a Gulf Coast Philanthropic Briefing in Washington, DC, to draw attention to the lack of community infrastructure to support the Southeast Asian community during disasters and to spotlight community-led economic development projects in the Gulf Coast.
- **Created a comprehensive *Guide to Federal Agency Resources for AAPI communities*.** In order to connect communities with federal funding, programs, and resources, the Initiative created an easy-to-use navigational tool meant to provide a brief snapshot of federal resources available to assist organizations and individuals seeking to improve the quality of life of AAPIs. Within this guide, individuals and organizations can find information about grant opportunities, loan programs to help start businesses, federal resources for food and housing for low-income individuals, health-care programs for veterans and their families, and other such resources.
- **Promoted and increased support for the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) program.** In FY 2011, the number of self-certified institutions rose 126% and the number of funded AANAPISIs rose 87%. The number of AANAPISIs in Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Territories also increased – self-certified institutions rose 150% and funded institutions 33%. Since 2010, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) has awarded more than \$7.5 million to AANAPISIs. Additionally, the Initiative worked with ED to include AANAPISI as an official post-secondary institution that enrolls populations with significant percentages of minority students. This inclusion helped facilitate more partnerships with federal agencies leading to internships, fellowships, scholarships, and other development opportunities for low-income students and faculty as well as grants and contracts for their institutions. In June 2010, the Initiative also helped support the launch of a national organization called the Asian Pacific Islander American Association of Colleges and Universities (APIACU), which will help member colleges and universities improve capacity to address the needs of the nearly 1.2 million underserved AAPI students across the nation.
- **Released action plans to reduce health disparities.** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released an *Action Plan to Reduce Health Disparities* and a *National Stakeholder Strategy for Achieving Health Equity* that

outlines goals and actions to reduce health disparities among racial and ethnic minorities. In May 2011, HHS also released *Combating the Silent Epidemic of Viral Hepatitis*, an action plan for the prevention, care, and treatment of viral hepatitis (HBV) that calls for providers to better recognize the diversity of patients at risk for HBV and strengthens the capacity of state and local health departments to collect a core set of HBV surveillance data. On July 28, 2011, President Obama declared the first World Hepatitis Day, and a meeting that included a HHS panel was hosted at the White House.

- **Increased access to linguistically accessible resources.** The U.S. Department of Justice has reinvigorated its implementation of rules and regulations regarding language access by convening an Interagency Working Group on Limited English Proficiency, encouraging federal agencies to review internal language access policies, and providing information, tools, and technical assistance regarding limited English proficiency and language services for federal agencies, recipients of federal funds, users of federal programs and federally assisted programs, and other stakeholders.
- **Increased awareness of federal resources pertaining to bullying and harassment.** ED's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) issued a "Dear Colleague" letter to clarify when student-on-student harassment may violate federal education anti-discrimination laws. In partnership with OCR, the Initiative ensured that this information reached AAPI and Muslim communities, which are uniquely impacted by bullying and harassment in schools. In addition, the Initiative hosted a joint webinar and stakeholders' meeting with DOJ and ED that discussed jurisdiction of claims within the federal government, how agencies process harassment claims, and what information is needed to file a claim.
- **Convened AAPI communities to discuss strategies on improving immigrant integration.** In partnership with the White House Domestic Policy Council, the Initiative has held a series of roundtable discussions with immigrant advocates, foundations, educational institutions, state and local officials, leaders from faith communities, business leaders, law enforcement, and others. The Initiative kicked off the Integration Initiative's inaugural discussion in Minneapolis and subsequently held roundtables in Seattle, Los Angeles, and Hawaii.
- **Collected employment data on AAPIs.** For the first time, the U.S. Department of Labor produced estimates for seven specific groups of Asian Americans from the Current Population Survey, including Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, Vietnamese and Other Asians. The data covered labor force participation, employment and unemployment for each of these groups from 2003 through 2010.
- **Created the first interagency working group to address nail salon worker health and safety.** A myriad of health and safety issues affect AAPI salon workers, forty percent of whom make up the national nail salon workforce. The Initiative, with the leadership of Mathy Stanislaus of the Environmental Protection Agency, along with the Food and Drug Administration, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, the Small Business Administration, and national and community groups has developed a plan to assess and improve their regulations, programs, and outreach strategies to ensure nail salon worker health and safety.
- **Proposed new standards for collecting and reporting data on race, ethnicity, sex, primary language and disability status.** In June 2011, HHS drafted new rules promoting disaggregation of data based on standards currently used by the Census Bureau for the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Decennial Census. The new standards add seven Asian subgroups and four Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander subgroups, and once finalized will help target more research and tailor interventions for underserved and minority communities.
- **Helped launch a new Senior Executive Service (SES) Development Program.** While the numbers of Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islander federal government employees closely reflect the total population of AAPIs in the country, Asian American and NHOPI representation at SES, mid- and senior-level management remains low. In response, the Asian American Government Executives Network, with participation from the Initiative, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission launched a program to identify and aid applicants in preparation for the SES selection process through intensive training, education, and mentoring.

*For a full list of our accomplishments, please visit [www.whitehouse.gov/aapi](http://www.whitehouse.gov/aapi)*