



# Status of Iowans of Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage (CAPI)

## FY 2008 NEWSLETTER

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### About CAPI

In the Spring of 2004, the Iowa legislature passed the bill to establish the **Commission** on the Status of Iowans of Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage (CAPI) within the Department of Human Rights. Nine (9) commissioners were appointed by the Governor in October. In August 2006, the first division administrator was appointed; thus the **Division** was established. The duties of the Commission, as established in Iowa Code Chapter 216A.152, define the work of the Division.

**Vision:** All Asian and Pacific Islander Iowans live up to their potential, regardless of ethnicity, station in life, and religion.

**Mission:** To ensure Iowa's Asians and Pacific Islanders have opportunities equal to other Iowans in education, employment, health care, housing, and safety and to publicize the accomplishments and contributions of the Asian and Pacific Islanders to the state.

### Who are Asians and Pacific Islanders?

The "**Asian**" is defined by the U. S. Census Bureau as "A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam."

The "**Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**" is defined as "A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands."

### API Iowans are a bimodal population, Census 2000 and 2006 American Community Survey Data

**Population:** Asians 51,992 and Pacific Islanders 1,400 (Iowa 2,926,324)

**Median income:** Asians \$50,610 and Pacific Islanders \$31,237 (Iowa \$44,491)

**Home ownership:** 57.2% (Iowa 73.3%)

**Poverty:** Asians 15.6% and Pacific Islanders 19.5% (Iowa 11.0%)

**Age 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education:** 50.0% (Iowa 24.0%)

**High school graduates:** 84.6% (Iowa 88.9%)

**Population growth:** 97,850 by year 2030 (projection by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.)

### Accomplishments

**Interpreter Bill signed by Governor on April 16, 2008:** Senate File 2129 – Adopt rules, with stakeholder input, pursuant to chapter 17A, to develop a mechanism to ensure the qualifications of interpreters for Asian and Pacific Islander persons and maintain and provide a list of those deemed qualified to Iowa courts, administrative agencies, social service agencies, and health agencies, as requested.

**As a Festival Friend of the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Asian Heritage Festival, May 17, 2008 at State Capitol East Campus:** surveys were collected from the API community members, sponsored a tent for TOGETHER youth group, partner with the American Red Cross Central Iowa Chapter to raise funds for victims of the earthquake in China and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar.

**API Showcase, March 13, 2008 at State Capitol rotunda:** 13 community-based organizations participated to feature their traditional dress, artifacts, cultural info, and more.

**Referred API Iowans to various state job openings and introduced [www.iowajobs.org](http://www.iowajobs.org) to API job seekers.**

## Capitol complex conference rooms named after the Sahai Family

Conference room 5, 6 and 7 on Level A of the Hoover State Office Building were named after the Sahai Family of Webster City to recognize their contributions to Iowa. The **Sahai Family** has contributed in excess of \$10 million to the following institutions in Iowa: Des Moines University, Iowa Public Television, Iowa State University, University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, Kendall Young Library, St. Thomas Aquinas School, Webster City Daycare, Webster City Community Schools, Iowa Methodist Medical Center, and Maharishi University of Management. The naming ceremony was held at the API Student Leadership Summit on May 2, 2008 at Grand View College.

## Youth Outreach

**TOGETHER** is a student run volunteer and civic engagement group, founded by high school students in August 2007, with the mission "To grow, learn and give TOGETHER." The group meets on a regular basis to volunteer, socialize, and learn about the community. To date, the group has put in over 150 volunteer hours and organized the first annual Support Local Talent event to highlight young talents in the metro area and raised fund for local non-profits. On July 1, 2008, the group was presented the Governor's Volunteer Award for their outstanding work in the community.

In March, 2008, CAPI launched a pilot **API E-mentoring program** in partnership with Des Moines Public Schools, The Principal Financial Group and the Iowa Mentoring Partnership. The program connects high school students with professionals through e-mail and visits to the worksites of mentors. During the 2-month pilot phase of the program, 8 mentors from Principal Financial Group were matched with 8 high school students from North and Lincoln High Schools. The second phase is set to begin in September of 2008 and run through April 2009.

The 2nd Annual **API Youth Leadership Summit** for central Iowa high school students took place at Grand View College on May 2, 2008. The event was a great success, hosting 93 students from 3 school districts and featured keynote speaker Ishle Yi Park – a singer, songwriter and poet from Queens, New York. Throughout the day, students also participated in a variety of workshops focusing on identity, culture and planning for life after high school.

## FY 2009 events in planning

**Town hall meetings:** across the State – one community at a time, one town/city at a time

**API Showcase Day:** March 19, 2009 at Capitol Rotunda

**API youth:** E-mentoring program, leadership program, cultural enrichment programs, TOGETHER, and Iowa Youth Congress

**New webpages:** WHO IS WHO and SHOWCASE API COMMUNITIES

**Smithsonian "Exit Saigon, Enter Little Saigon" traveling exhibit:** December 19, 2009 to February 28, 2010 at Iowa Historical Building

## Thank you and we look forward to having another productive year!

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of the volunteers, sponsors, community leaders, and supporters! Without you, we would not be here today! We are looking forward to working with you closely to have another productive year! THANK YOU!



### STATUS OF IOWANS OF ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE

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