

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

## 2007 NEWSLETTER



### 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 Iowans live up to their potential, regardless of ethnicity, station in life, and religion.

**Mission:** To empower Asians and Pacific Islanders, improve their well-being, and celebrate a diverse Iowa.

### 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 were a bimodal population, Census 2000 data

**Population:** Asians 43,119 and Pacific Islanders 2,196 (Iowa 2,926,324)

**Median income:** \$40,348 (Iowa \$39,469)

**Home ownership:** 45.8% (Iowa 72.9%)

**Poverty:** Asians 14.2% and Pacific Islanders 19.5% (Iowa 9.1%)

**Age 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education:** 42.9% (Iowa 21.2%)

**High school graduates:** 74.3% (Iowa 86.1%)

**The fastest growing racial group:** 125,360 by year 2030 (projection by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.)

### Accomplishments

Collaborated with the Iowa Secretary of State's office to develop "**exercise your vote**" poster and campaign on getting the API Iowans to vote, Fall of 2006, [www.iowavotes.us](http://www.iowavotes.us).

Facilitated presentations to the API community: "**Asian and Pacific Islander Iowans health disparities**" presented by Dr. Michele Yehieli, Associate Professor and Executive Director of Project EXPORT Center of Excellence on Health Disparities and Dr. Mark Grey, Associate Director of Center for Social and Behavioral Research, Professor of Sociology, Anthropology, Criminology, and Director of Iowa Center for Immigrant Leadership and Integration; "**Civil Rights**" presented by Ralph Rosenberg, Executive Director of Iowa Civil Rights Commission; and "**Iowa Boards and Commissions**" presented by Miriam Tyson, Senior Advisor to the Governor-Elect Transition Committee.

Hosted an **open house** event at the Iowa Capitol Rotunda, Des Moines, November 29, 2006.

Held the **Asian and Pacific Islander American Education Conference** - Moving to the Next Level of Education, Callanan Middle School of Des Moines, April 21, 2007; co-sponsored by the Asian Advisory Committee of the Des Moines Public Schools.

Invited a New York City **artist Nian Shi** travel to Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Newton, and Des Moines schools to demonstrate the **Chinese grass weaving** technique, May 1-12, 2007; sponsored by Arthur Neis, Iowa Sister States, and World of Difference.

Co-hosted the **Hung Sheng Lion Dance Theater of Taiwan** with Iowa Sister States, Hoyt Sherman Place of Des Moines, May 10, 2007.

Collaborated with Latino Affairs and Status of African Americans to launch the **Iowa Youth Congress** – a minority youth civil engagement program, <http://www.ycpp.net>.

## Accomplishments (continuing)

Partnered with IPTV to distribute DVDs of "**A Promise Called Iowa**" - a documentary film made by IPTV on how Iowa became a place of refuge and freedom for many Southeast Asians - to all public libraries, schools, and AEAs, [www.iptv.org/promise/](http://www.iptv.org/promise/).

Supported Dub Vang to organize the First Annual **Iowa Asian and Pacific American Student Leadership Summit**, Grand View College, Des Moines, May 11, 2007. The Summit featured Tou Ger Xiong as a keynote speaker and held breakout sessions in diversity, political activism, and community involvement. Ninety-five (95) students from 8 high schools in 4 districts in Central Iowa attended. This event was sponsored by Bankers Trust, Employee and Family Resources (EFR), Iowa Asian Alliance, Grand View College, JEL – Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control of Iowa Department of Public Health, Center for American Intercultural Studies of Iowa State University, Des Moines First Assembly, Fugee Design, Des Moines First Assembly of God, Snyder & Associates, Don Khongmaly Insurance Agency, Mercy Medical Center, National Guard, and College Planning Center.

Hosted a VIP brunch event at the Fifth Annual Asian Heritage Festival – **CelebrAsian**, Blank Park Zoo of Des Moines, May 12, 2007, [www.celebrasian.org](http://www.celebrasian.org).

**Recruited API Iowans to serve on boards and commissions.**

## Capitol complex conference rooms named after the Sahai Family

Three conference rooms in the Hoover State Office Building will be named after the Sahai Family of Webster City to recognize their contributions to Iowa. The naming ceremony will be held in Spring 2008.

## Youth outreach

**Mollie Ibbotson**, AmeriCorps\*VISTA member, was hired in October as the Youth Outreach Coordinator to lead the API youth outreach efforts, 515-281-6254, [mollie.ibbotson@iowa.gov](mailto:mollie.ibbotson@iowa.gov).

**TOGETHER** is a student run volunteer and civic engagement group, founded by Phouthasack Keopraseuth and Thanh Nguyen in August 2007, with the mission "To grow, learn and give TOGETHER." The group meets on a weekly basis to volunteer, socialize, and learn about the community. To date, the group has helped with a supply drive for the Burmese community, the AdmirAsian Awards, and events at DMACC and the Robert D. Ray Asian Gardens. The co-presidents are Phouthasack Keopraseuth and Sacha Chandavong.

CAPI will launch a pilot **E-mentoring program** with Des Moines Public Schools in spring of 2008. This program will connect high school students with professionals through e-mail. Weekly communications will give students an insider's perspective of the work world, such as: dressing for success, time management, workplace culture, and more.

The 2nd Annual **API Youth Leadership Summit** for high school and college students is under planning. The event will be held at Grandview College, Des Moines in May 2008 and will include a keynote speaker and workshops.

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

Thanks 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!



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## STATUS OF IOWANS OF ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE

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