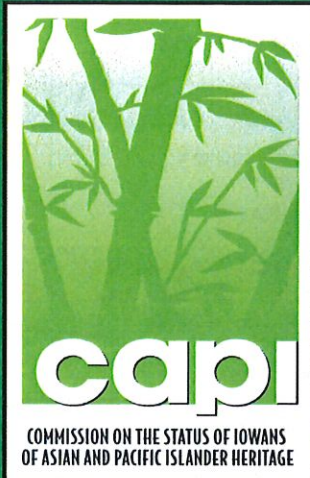


Commission on the Status of Iowans of Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage (CAPI)

Spring 2009 Newsletter

We are pleased to present the 2009 Spring Newsletter summarizing programs and achievements from this past year. Although many challenges lie ahead as this deepening financial crisis takes its toll, CAPI remains steadfast in its commitment to serve the needs of all Asian and Pacific Islanders of Iowa. Thank you for your continued support! We look forward to having another productive year!

Cyndi Chen, Administrator



Vision: For all Asian Pacific Islander Iowans to live up to their potential.

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 of Iowa?

API Iowans are a diverse population comprised of over 20 ethnicities.

- Population: Asians 51,992 and Pacific Islanders 1,400 (Iowa 2,926,324)
- Population increase: 21% or 9,141 from year 2000 to 2006
- Median income: Asians \$50,610 and Pacific Islanders \$31,237 (Iowa \$44,491)
- Home ownership: 57.2% (Iowa 73.3%)
- Unemployment: Asians 5.1% (Iowa 4.9%)
- 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%)

*2006 American Community Survey (ACS) Data

Major Accomplishments

- **Provided cultural sensitivity training** with other API leaders to more than 300 law enforcement officers in Des Moines and Polk County from January through March.
- **API Showcase, March 13, 2008 at the State Capitol:** 13 community-based organizations participated in a special forum to meet legislators and feature their culture and heritage.
- **Drafted and lobbied for the Interpreter Bill, which was signed into law by Governor Culver on April 16, 2008:** Adopt rules, with stakeholder input 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 and agencies, as requested.
- **Capitol conference rooms named after the Sahai Family of Webster City on May 2, 2008.** The Sahai Family contributed in excess of \$10 million to many esteemed institutions in Iowa, including Des Moines University, Iowa Public Television, Iowa State University, University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa and the Kendall Young Library.
- **Festival Friend of the 6th Annual Asian Heritage Festival, May 17, 2008 at the State Capitol:** Information tents were sponsored for CAPI and the *TOGETHER* youth group and surveys were collected from the API community members.
- **Raised funds for victims of the earthquake in China and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar** in partnership with the American Red Cross Central Iowa Chapter, community-based Asian organizations, and API youth.
- **Public Forum on Race and Ethnicity in Public Discourse, September 9, 2008 at Drake University:** The community forum featured a panel discussion and a question and comment session to address cultural sensitivity issues in reporting and the media.

Major Accomplishments Continued...

- **Sponsor of AdmirAsian Business Conference, October 24, 2008:** Sponsored 25 college students to attend a seminal conference for the advancement of Asian Americans in Iowa.
- **Promoted Targeted Small Business (TSB) certification and funding opportunities:** 26 Asian businesses were certified, 7 applied for TSB loans and 2 were funded \$50,000 each in 2008.

2008 Town Hall Meetings Held in the Des Moines Area

Community	Date	Top 3 Issues
Vietnamese	August 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to interpreters• Language barriers• Support for youth
Hmong	September 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education and ESL opportunities• Economic and agricultural opportunities• Housing and home repair
Burmese	November 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language barriers• Education – financial aid for non-residents and obtaining GEDs• Job/Occupation related issues

Youth Outreach

- **TOGETHER** was presented the **Governor's Volunteer Award for their outstanding work in the community on July 1, 2008.** 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 has put in hundreds of volunteer hours, fundraised for non-profits and organized the "Support Local Talent" event.
- **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 mentors' worksites. The year-long program, matching 22 high school students with 17 mentors started in the fall of 2008.
- **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 hosted more than 90 students from 3 school districts and featured keynote speaker Ishle Yi Park – a singer, songwriter and poet from Queens, New York. Students participated in a variety of workshops on identity, culture and planning for life after high school.

Upcoming 2009 Events

- **Town Hall Meetings:** All across Iowa, one community at a time, one town at a time.
- **Iowa Capitol API Showcase Day:** On March 19, 2009, "Meet & Greet" legislators and showcase API culture and heritage.
- **API Youth Outreach:** E-mentoring Program, Minority Youth Leadership Program, TOGETHER, and Iowa Youth Congress.
- **Smithsonian "Exit Saigon, Enter Little Saigon" Traveling Exhibit:** December 19, 2009 to February 28, 2010 at the Iowa Historical Building.

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