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OAPIA Bi-Weekly Newsletter

News Updates from the DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

A Message from the Mayor



VINCENT C. GRAY
MAYOR

Dear Community Members,

Last week the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, guests, and friends celebrated the Lunar New Year and welcomed the Year of the Snake in Chinatown with the annual parade and other festivities. Lunar New Year is just one of the many ways the District of Columbia celebrates the diversity of our communities and the progress the city is experiencing.

As I reflect back on the past year, I am reminded of the strategies and goals I laid out in my One City Action Plan, including growing and diversifying the economy, educating and preparing residents for the emerging new economy, and improving the quality of life for all of our residents.

I now look forward to accomplishing the goals I outlined in my State of the District Address on February 5 at the Sixth & I Historic Synagogue. In concert with my Five-Year Economic Development Strategy, my administration is striving to create 100,000 jobs and \$1 billion of new tax revenue for the District. The District is booming with new businesses, new development and newly revitalized neighborhoods and there are projects that are providing thousands of construction and permanent jobs, new housing that includes affordable units, and new neighborhood amenities. My administration has completed the construction of nearly 1,500 units of affordable housing and broken ground on an additional 1,700 units. Furthermore, I'm proposing a major affordable-housing initiative that will invest \$100 million in building and preserving 10,000 units of affordable housing.

I plan to establish the One City Fund, a \$15 million investment fund that will allow non-profits to compete openly and transparently for grants for projects that advance the key goals of: 1) growing and diversifying our economy; 2) educating or preparing our residents for the emerging new economy; 3) increasing sustainability; or 4) improving the quality of life for our residents. I believe non-profits, including community-based organizations that serve limited and non-English proficient Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, will welcome this initiative.

In addition, we have made great strides in improving public safety, as the number of homicides last year dropped below 100 to 88 homicides, the lowest number of murders our city has seen in 51 years. We are putting more police officers on the street, with a goal of

bringing the total force to 4,000, and working harder than ever to reduce smartphone thefts and fencing.

I am confident that these initiatives will have a positive effect on all residents of the District of Columbia, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, ward or neighborhood. I applaud the role OAPIA has played in ensuring that the Asian American and Pacific Islander community shares in the city's progress and look forward to working with the agency and the community to bring prosperity to all!

Sincerely,

Vincent C. Gray

District Headlines and Events

Mayor Gray's 2013 State of the District Address



Good evening, friends and colleagues, reverend Anthony, Rabbi Perlo, ladies and gentlemen.

And greetings to our outstanding Congresswoman, Eleanor Holmes Norton; Chairman Phil Mendelson and the other members of the Council of the District of Columbia; members of the District's judiciary; former mayor Anthony Williams, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners; and other leaders from across our great city. It's a great honor to have you here with us this evening.

And to the good people of the Sixth and I Historic Synagogue, thank you for providing us with this wonderful venue for the second year in a row. I absolutely love the symbolism of this site, because it is a place where the District's rich and diverse communities meet - regardless of age, ethnicity, faith, or political party - coming together to enrich the intellectual, spiritual, and cultural fabric of our increasingly vibrant city.

This historic building is also a symbol of how our city's rich past and promising future come together. And, indeed, our future is promising.

Speaking of symbols, our experience over the past football and baseball seasons symbolizes just how well things are going in the District of Columbia.

Over the past year, both our baseball and football teams had breakthrough seasons - and have become great examples of teams coming into their own. Both teams showed sustained excellence and brilliance that got them to postseason play - for the first time in franchise history for the Nationals, and for the first time in what seemed like an eternity for our football team.

And just as these great professional teams are getting things done and making us proud, so too is the District of Columbia making big things happen in the competition between great global cities.

As we gather here this evening, let's ponder just a few of the ways the District is proving we are a big-league city:

Our city is safer than it has been in decades, with murders at a 51-year low.

We are growing more quickly than we have in decades, with more than 30,000 new residents in the last two years - a growth rate of more than 1,100 net new residents per month. This gives the District the largest population we've had since the 1970s!

And that growth shows no sign of stopping. The District has just 11 percent of the region's population - but over the last two years, we've had 54 percent of the region's housing starts!

The District is booming with new businesses, new development and newly revitalized neighborhoods. All this economic activity has created 28,000 new private-sector jobs in the past two years.

We are also making major progress on my goal of becoming the greenest, healthiest, most livable city in the nation through my Sustainable DC initiative. And in just a few weeks, we will roll out our ambitious, forward-thinking plan to make the Sustainable DC vision a reality.

For the full remarks, please visit [here](#).

Gray Administration Year Two Report



When Mayor Vincent C. Gray took office in January of 2011, he promised to focus on creating jobs, reducing unemployment and growing the District's economy while educating and preparing residents for jobs in emerging industries and improving the quality of life for all our residents. Throughout his two years in office, using the [One City Action Plan](#) as a guide, Mayor Gray has continued aggressively to move DC forward, towards his vision of a more prosperous, equitable, safe, sustainable city for all.

View details of the Gray Administration Year Two Report [here](#).

OAPIA News

OAPIA Community Outreach at the Vietnamese American Community Service Center (VACSC)



OAPIA attended a workshop on January 29, 2013 at the Vietnamese American Community Service Center (VACSC) to promote the agency's "Mind Your Business" workshop and the Smart 911 program to 24 Vietnamese residents.

The "Mind Your Business" workshop was hosted by OAPIA in collaboration with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED), the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA), and the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) on January 30, 2013.

Smart 911 is a free service provided by the DC Office on Unified Communications (OUC). Using this service, individuals can create a profile for their household and each household member that includes vital personal and medical information they want 911 call takers and first responders to have in the event of an emergency. When individuals with profiles call 911, their profiles will be immediately available to call takers and first responders to provide quicker and more effective assistance. Individuals with limited English proficiency may also identify their preferred language for communication. OAPIA, in partnership with OUC, is currently promoting the Smart 911 program to the District of Columbia's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAP) community.

OAPIA Hosts "Mind Your Business" Workshop



(Washington, DC) - On January 30, 2013, the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) hosted the "Mind Your Business" workshop. Fifty merchants from the DC Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAP) community attended the workshop to learn about the "Great Streets Small Business Capital Improvement Grant" offered by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). Participants also received business licensing information from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) Director, Nicholas Majett, and updates on Sunday liquor sales from the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) Director, Fred Moosally.

Great Streets is a multi-year and multiple agency effort to transform under-invested corridors into thriving and inviting neighborhood centers using public actions and resources, as needed, to leverage private investment in retail, housing, offices and cultural facilities.

For the full press release, please visit [here](#).

OAPIA Receives Award from the Korean American Dry Cleaners Association of Greater Washington, DC



At the "Mind Your Business" Workshop held on January 30, 2013, OAPIA Director Soohyun "Julie" Koo and Special Assistant Dory Peters received a certificate of appreciation from the Korean American Dry Cleaners Association of Greater Washington, DC in recognition of their valuable service and contributions to the community. Last year, OAPIA facilitated partnerships with the Korean American Dry Cleaners Association of Greater Washington, DC and the DC Department of Environment to create an "assistance compliance" educational video to educate DC dry cleaners about dry cleaning regulations and standards compliance.



The film crew for the Korean dry cleaners compliance assistance video: Mary Lynn Wilhere, Manuel Oliva, Victoria North, Mrs. Yeon Chung, Christopher Brown, Babatunde Adebona, Sarah Yun, Jeff Ahn, and Joe Morcos. *September 26, 2012, Global Cleaners, Anacostia.*

Mayor Vincent C. Gray Swears in New Members of the DC Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs



(Washington, DC) - Mayor Vincent C. Gray administered the oath of office to nine newly-appointed community members and 10 government agency ex-officio members of the District's Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs during a ceremony at the John A. Wilson Building on February 8, 2013.

"The District of Columbia is proactive in engaging and meeting the needs of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, and working to ensure uniform and adequate language access," said Mayor Gray. "The commissioners and ex-officio members sworn in earlier today now join us in these efforts by working with District government agencies to ensure that the community can access services in a timely matter."

For the full press release, please visit [here](#).

OAPIA Welcomes Additional Spring Interns



Ju-Yeong Shin was born and raised in Seoul, South Korea. She majored in English and Chinese at Seoul Foreign Language High School and graduated summa cum laude. She is currently a junior at Seoul National University (SNU), majoring in social studies education. Her interests consist of human rights and public administration, as demonstrated by her previous internship at the Korea Human Rights Foundation. Ju-Yeong was the Student President in the Department of Social Studies Education and also worked as a SNU student ambassador. Through her previous work experience, she has considerable research skills and has made an extensive use of her language abilities.

Ju-Yeong hopes to improve her language skills and gain valuable work experience in the public administration sector at OAPIA. Her long-term aspiration is to become a lawyer or politician in the area of human rights.

Preet Mandavia was born and raised in Germantown, Maryland. He is currently a junior at the University of Maryland, College Park, pursuing a career in optometry, and majoring in mathematics, biology, and computer science. He has developed a passion for photography and graphic design, and has recently started his own company, with which he hopes to help the APIA community to the best of his abilities.

At OAPIA, Preet will be utilizing his graphic design skills to assist with promotional and outreach materials.



Minjun Chen was originally born in Chaozhou, China and later immigrated with her parents to Gaithersburg, MD. She is currently a fourth year student at American University with a self-created major in Korean language and area studies, a second major in economics, and a double minor in business administration and Chinese. On and off-campus, Minjun is very involved in promoting communication and understanding within and among the Asian and Asian American communities. Her academic interests consist of East Asian historical reconciliation, regional identity, and intercultural communications.

Minjun spent her entire third year abroad, studying in Beijing at Peking University, and in Seoul on the Boren Scholarship at Sungkyunkwan University and Sogang University respectively. She



was also a summer 2010 Princeton University Public Policy and International Affairs fellow. Minjun's hobbies include playing badminton, learning languages, and trying new ethnic foods.

At OAPIA, Minjun hopes to deepen her understanding of local APIA community issues, and how she can utilize her bicultural identity in acting as a bridge as it pertains to US-East Asian relations.

OAPIA Welcomes New Community Outreach Specialist Andrew Chang



Andrew Chang recently became the bilingual community outreach specialist and public information officer for OAPIA, after previously serving as the bilingual staff assistant. He will continue to serve as the liaison on employment related issues for the District of Columbia's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

Outside of OAPIA, Andrew is involved with the AAPI community through OCA and OCA-DC, and currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Conference on Asian and Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL).

Spotlight: 2013 Chinese Lunar New Year Parade



On February 10, 2013, Mayor Vincent C. Gray and Director Soohyun "Julie" Koo celebrated the beginning of Lunar Year 4711, the Year of the Snake, with an estimated 40,000 visitors and District residents at the annual Chinese New Year Parade. Community organizations, dragon dancers, lion dancers, and other performers marched in the parade in Chinatown. Remarks were made by the parade organizer, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA), the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, Mayor Gray, and other government officials. The event concluded with a rousing firecracker display.

The CCBA of Washington, DC was founded in the 1940s and formally registered in 1952. It is an umbrella organization that represents thirty Chinese and Chinese American organizations throughout the District.

February is Black History Month

Black History Month, also known as National African American History Month, is dedicated to celebrating and remembering the important achievements of African Americans in the U.S. and their central role in American history. This national celebration grew out of "Negro History Week" which was created by historian Carter G. Woodson and other distinguished African Americans. Since 1976, Black History Week expanded to Black History Month and is also honored in Canada and the United Kingdom as well.

OAPIA proudly supports Black History Month by continuing to foster stronger community ties between the Asian American and Pacific Islander and African American communities,

especially through its annual "Building One Neighborhood" community dialogue series. For more information about "Building One Neighborhood," please contact Dory Peters at dory.peters@dc.gov.

The DC area offers many free events celebrating Black History Month:

[African American Artists in the Collection](#)
Smithsonian American Art Museum/Renwick Gallery
February 13, 2013 - 12:30pm

[African American Men Sing Songs of Praise](#)
DC Black History Celebration Committee
February 17, 2013 - 3:00pm

[Beauty on the Ballot! The Politics of African-American Pageants and Beauty Culture During the Civil Rights Era](#)
U.S. Department of the Interior Museum
February 19, 2013 - 1:00pm - 1:45pm

[Celebrating Black History Month! James Baldwin A Soul on Fire Literary Salon](#)
Humanities Council of Washington, DC
February 28, 2013 - 6:30pm

For more events, check out Cultural Tourism DC's website [here](#).

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