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 Subject: OAPIA Update - July 5, 2012
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OAPIA Update

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

Dear Community Members,

Each day, one in five children is the target of bullying in the United States. In an effort to protect the youths of the community and those who report incidents of bullying, Mayor Vincent C. Gray recently signed into law the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012, which uses a citywide approach to the prevention of bullying in the District of Columbia.



The Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) is in full support of the Mayor's larger goal to maintain a safe and diverse community. Youths are essential to the future development of our City, and OAPIA recognizes that in order to be a great City we must take measures to prevent long-term social and emotional problems that often result from bully incidents. We are very proud of Mayor Gray's commitment to our children.

As always, OAPIA is working hard to build on our legacy of advocacy and outreach.

Please continue to visit our website for frequent important updates, and join us in creating a better AAPI community within the District.

Warm Regards,

Soohyun "Julie" Koo
 Director, DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

OAPIA Welcomes Summer Youth Employment Program Interns



Nabani Ashraf

Nabani Ashraf is a rising junior at Bell Multicultural High School. She is from Bangladesh, and recently arrived in the United States three years ago. Nabani is currently in the National Honor Society. She finds math and science quite interesting, and plans to study in those subject areas in the future while aspiring to become a dentist or engineer.

This is Nabani's first summer in the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). She is grateful to become involved with initiatives that will benefit and connect the Asian American and Pacific Islander community at her placement at OAPIA.

Jennifer Li is a first generation Asian American; both of her parents were born and raised in Guangdong, China. She recently graduated from School Without Walls Senior High School, and plans on attending Kutztown University in Pennsylvania this fall, studying computer science/information technology, and hoping to assist people with computers issues in the future.

Her interests include origami, volunteering, and working with computers. In addition, Jennifer enjoys painting, creating motifs, and other forms of artwork. She hopes to put her passion into good use as an SYEP intern at OAPIA this summer.



Esther Davis is a rising senior at Washington United Christian Academy in Colmar Manor, Maryland. At a very young age she enjoyed math, english and science, and have excelled in those subjects throughout her previous high school years. Esther's love for english led to her involvement in the English Writing Competitions and Math Leagues at her high school. Esther plans to attend the University of Maryland, College Park and major in biology or chemistry.

Esther Davis

In her free time she enjoys reading, writing, and art. She is very excited to be working with



Jennifer Li

OAPIA this summer as an SYEP intern.



SYEP is a locally funded initiative sponsored by the Department of Employment Services (DOES) that provides District youth ages 14 to 21 with enriching and constructive summer work experiences through subsidized placements in the private and government sectors. The Career Exploration Fair is an opportunity for Host Employers to meet with prospective youth for summer placements. OAPIA is serving as a Host Employer and providing structured job opportunities for local youth during the summer.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.summerjobs.dc.gov>.

OAPIA Summer Interns Visit Local Community Organizations

By Hiji Nam, OAPIA Summer Intern

Last week, OAPIA interns stopped by the offices of MLOV (Many Languages, One Voice) and the Chinatown Service Center, both of which are community-based organizations (CBOs) that our office has worked closely with in the past.

Our first stop was MLOV, where we were warmly greeted by all the staff. Tereguebode Goungou, the Language Access Advocate, briefed us on the organization and their efforts to empower the local LEP (limited-English proficient) community. One of the most immediate recognitions we had was when Ms. Goungou brought out the language-access cards, which are also available in our office and allow LEP individuals to communicate that they cannot speak English and need (and are legally entitled to) an interpreter. We also learned about MLOV's administration of the DC Language Access Coalition, which brings together over 40 member organizations with the goal of providing legal, housing, health and education services to the LEP community. Another initiative of MLOV is the Nail Salon Project, which focuses on health justice and empowering LEP nail salon workers and owners.



MLOV has a diverse staff representing a wide range of cultures and languages, including Amharic, French, Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese, making them a useful gateway for the LEP community to service-providers. However, Ms. Goungou indicated that they are heavily reliant on volunteers due to the range of languages with which the organization interacts, especially during their community outreach visitations. Even with all the programs and services that MLOV offers, it is still a challenge for many in the community to open up and improve; MLOV is truly commendable and indispensable in regards to their hard work in serving our community.



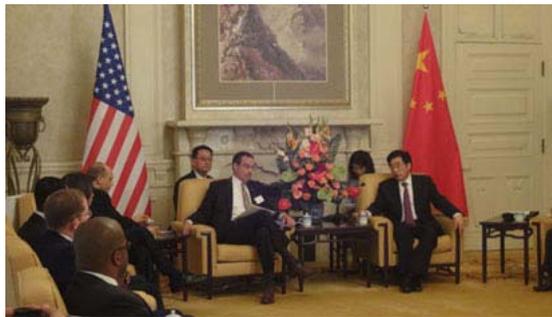
We next visited the Chinatown Service Center, located only a few blocks away from our office. There, Ms. Woo, a long-time volunteer, told us a bit about its history that dates back to 1977. Their services include translations, language classes, and preparation for the US citizenship exam, along with other counseling, education, and cultural programs primarily targeted towards new immigrants, children, and senior citizens.



They are sponsored by the Chinese Community Church, with which they share their building, though anyone who comes to them in need is welcomed, regardless of religious affiliation.

In summary, we learned a lot from our visits to our local CBO's. Connecting actual faces and individuals to the names of these organizations is important to our office, since it is these connections that eventually strengthen the whole community. OAPIA looks forward to the next opportunity to work in conjunction with these groups, and is grateful for their services.

Spotlight: The District's Sister City Relationship with Beijing, China



Mayor Vincent C. Gray and Beijing Mayor Guo Jinlong announced the reaffirmation of the Sister City Agreement between the two capital cities on Tuesday, June 26, 2012. DC's special relationship with Beijing spans 28 years, and the recent signing of the renewed agreement reflects a continued commitment to cooperative engagement while symbolizing the mayors' efforts to maintain and strengthen the partnership.

The U.S.-China Capital Friendship Council was established shortly after the first Sister City Agreement was signed in 1984 and was chaired by District architect Alfred H. Liu, with oversight from the Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia. In 1986, the District dedicated the Friendship Archway on H Street NW in Chinatown - a traditional Chinese gate designed by Liu. This archway was recently refurbished under the terms of the 2004 Sister City Agreement. While the Chinese gate was constructed to serve as a symbol of the established relationship between Beijing and the District, it also reinforces and emphasizes the historic Chinese character of the Chinatown neighborhood.

For more information, please visit [here](#).

DC Mayor's Commission on APIA Community Development

The DC Commission on APIA Community Development usually convenes monthly meetings to discuss current issues affecting the DC AAPI community.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 11, 2012 @ 6:30 pm at the OAPIA office located at 441 4th Street, NW, Suite 721N, Washington, DC 20001.

All commission meetings are open to the public. If you have any questions about the commission or its meetings, please contact oapia@dc.gov.

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