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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,

My administration has made significant progress in implementing my Sustainable DC Plan, which seeks to make the District of Columbia the healthiest, greenest, and the most livable city in the nation over the next 20 years. I recently discussed a few innovative new projects that will help us achieve the goals of the plan. For example, the District Department of Public Works recently opened its first composting transfer station at its Benning Road waste facility. New battery and anti-idling technology is being utilized in Metropolitan Police Department vehicles in an effort to reduce air pollution, and save fuel and taxpayer dollars. New community gardens are being planted by the Department of Parks and Recreation in each ward to increase access to fresh, healthy foods across the District. The Department of General Services has begun an aggressive "Game Change" initiative to reduce energy consumption in District facilities by 20 percent in 20 months and save the District more than \$10 million dollars annually.

OAPIA and the District Department of the Environment are working together to educate the Asian American and Pacific Islander community about the importance of protecting our environment and conserving the precious air, water and other resources to ensure a good quality of life for the next generation. In addition, OAPIA will be hosting a health fair on May 18<sup>th</sup> to provide health education and screenings, and raise awareness about the importance of preventive care in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community and among other D.C. residents.

I am committing the full resources of the District government to ensuring that we achieve the ambitious goals of the Sustainable DC Plan. The initiative will make the District of Columbia a model for innovative policies and practices that improve quality of life and economic opportunity for all. I encourage everyone to learn more about the Sustainable DC Plan at [www.sustainable.dc.gov](http://www.sustainable.dc.gov) and get involved in our sustainability efforts at home and in your community.

Sincerely,  
  
Vincent C. Gray

OAPIA is Celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

OAPIA will be hosting the following events in celebration of [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#) in May.

MAYOR'S OFFICE ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AFFAIRS

# SAVE THE DATES

## STORIES ACROSS THE DINING TABLE

Tuesday | May 7, 2013 | 6:00 pm  
 Goethe-Institut – 812 7th St NW, Washington, DC 20001  
 RSVPs required. Join OAPIA and prominent local DC chefs in a panel discussion on how Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) identity is expressed through food. Light food and refreshments will be served.  
 RSVP Link: <http://oapiafoodpanel.eventbrite.com>



## HEALTHY DC FAIR

Saturday | May 18, 2013 | 10:00 am  
 Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library  
 901 G St NW, Washington, DC 20001  
 Come get all your health questions answered and receive vital information on health related issues, application assistance for low income insurance, and free screenings for diabetes, blood pressure, vision, dental, HIV, Hepatitis B & C.

## MAYOR GRAY'S ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

Thursday | May 30, 2013 | 7:00pm  
 DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCAH), Kollaboration DC  
 Lincoln Theatre – 1215 U St NW, Washington, DC 20009  
 RSVPs encouraged. Join Mayor Gray for an evening of DC's best performances presented by Kollaboration DC, the Mayor's Community Service Awards, networking opportunities, and more!  
 RSVP Link: <http://2013aapihm.eventbrite.com>



Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities are provided upon request. Please provide 7 days advance notice by calling (202) 727-3120.



Government of the District of Columbia  
 Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



Mayor's Office on Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs  
 Soohyun "Julie" Kim, Director

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<http://www.apia.dc.gov>

OAPIA Events



**Mayor  
Vincent**

### **C. Gray and OAPIA Recognize Food as an Expression of AAPI Identity**

(Washington, DC) - On Tuesday, May 7, 2013, the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) hosted a panel discussion on how food can be used as a means of cultural expression at the Goethe-Institut in celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month. Over 100 AAPI community members and District of Columbia government officials were in attendance to hear from District of Columbia and Maryland AAPI chefs about their experiences as it pertains to food and AAPI culture. The chefs also spoke of their immigration experiences and how they have used food as a way to convey their AAPI identity.

Mayor Vincent C. Gray; Soohyun "Julie" Koo, OAPIA Director; and Wilfried Eckstein, the Director of the Goethe-Institut, all offered welcoming remarks and greetings.

"The sheer number of varied ethnic restaurants in the District of Columbia is a testament to our city's appreciation for diversity," said Mayor Gray. "Food is just one form of expression for communities, including the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, to share their identity and culture with others."

The panelists shared personal anecdotes, noting that their love for food inspired them to be where they are today. Food was described as a medium to draw individuals of all backgrounds together, despite any language barriers.

"The food I prepare for guests is expressive of my dedication and my passion for cooking. My techniques and dishes have been influenced by my childhood in the Philippines when my mother would cook for me out of love," said the White House Executive Chef Cristeta Comerford, one of the featured panelists.

In addition to Chef Comerford, Daikaya partner and Executive Chef Katsuya Fukushima, KAZ Sushi Bistro owner and Chef Kaz Okochi, and Indique Heights co-owner and Chef K.N.

Vinod served on the esteemed panel. Konrad Ng, the Director of the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, served as the moderator. OAPIA will be hosting additional events throughout the month of May in celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Please visit [www.apia.dc.gov](http://www.apia.dc.gov) for information on all the events happening in May.



## Spotlight: Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS)

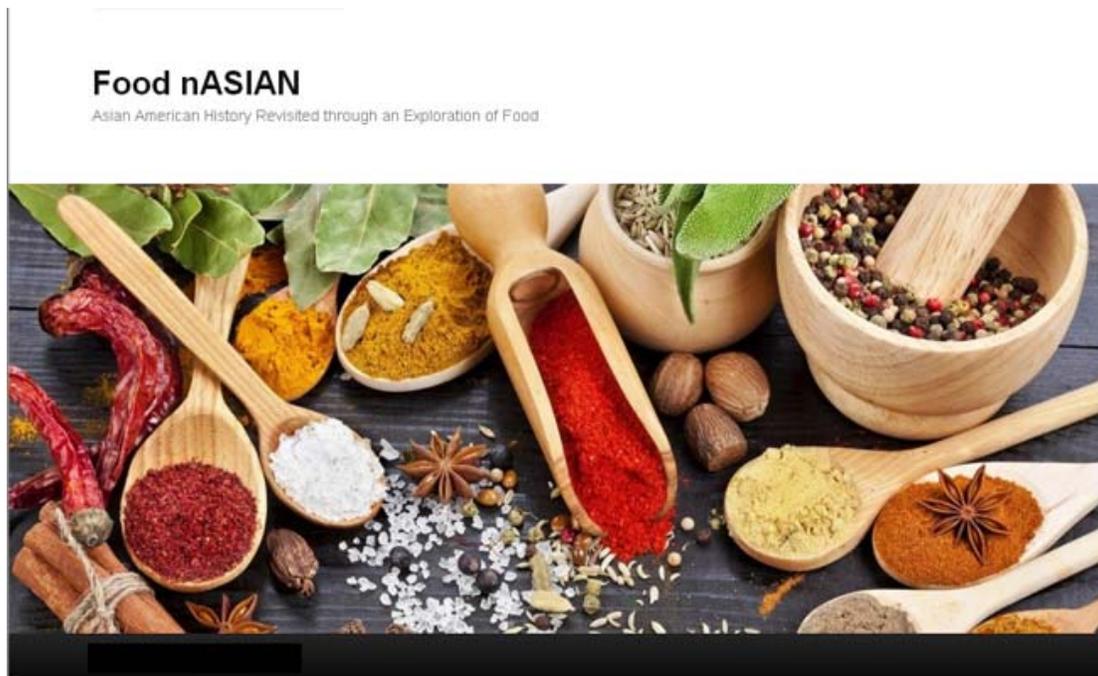


The Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) is a national non-partisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting Asian Pacific American participation and representation at all levels of the political process, from community service to elected office. APAICS programs focus on developing leadership, building public policy knowledge, and filling the political pipeline for Asian Pacific Americans to pursue public office at the local, state, and federal levels.

APAICS was founded alongside the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) in 1994 by former Secretary Norman Y. Mineta. Originally founded as the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus Institute (CAPACI), APAICS continues to support CAPAC by serving as a resource to Congress and promoting a politically active and civically engaged Asian Pacific American community.

For more information about APAICS, please visit [www.apaics.org](http://www.apaics.org).

## May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month



Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is celebrated in May to commemorate the contributions of people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent in the United States. During the month, Asian Americans around the nation celebrate with community festivals, government-sponsored activities, and educational activities.

Congress passed a joint Congressional Resolution in 1978 to commemorate Asian American Heritage Week during the first week of May. This date was chosen because two important anniversaries occurred during this time: the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in America on May 7, 1843 and the completion of the transcontinental railroad (by many Chinese laborers) on May 10, 1869.

Congress later voted to expand it from a week long to a month long celebration. According to the 2000 Census Bureau, the Asian-American community is the fastest growing group in the DC Metro Area. Over the last decade, the number of Asians who have relocated to the DC area has increased by approximately 30 percent.

Every May the DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. This year's theme is Asian American History Revisited through an Exploration of Food. As part of the theme, OAPIA will post [food profiles and youth recipes](#) every week on its [blog](#) to showcase the diversity of Asian culture and cuisine.

During this month, OAPIA will host one of its largest events, the annual [Mayor's Asian American and Pacific Islander \(AAPI\) Heritage Month Celebration](#) which attracts people across DC and greater DC area. The event is a celebration of the AAPI community and incorporates cultural entertainment, the Mayor's Community Service Award ceremony, and ethnic food tasting. Join Mayor Gray for an [evening of performances](#), the [Mayor's Community Service Awards](#), networking opportunities, and more!

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