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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

March 12, 2014

Dear Community Members:

When I came into office in 2011, unemployment was rising fast, revenue was dropping, our reserve fund was halfway depleted, and Wall Street had put our credit rating on a negative outlook. Three years later, because of my administration's leadership, the District has been experiencing extraordinary success, and we've been able to make important investments in priorities such as affordable housing and education.

Shortly after I took office, the District's unemployment rate peaked above 11 percent. Late last month, the U.S. Department of Labor reported the District's latest unemployment rate at 7.6 percent – a three-and-a-half-point drop and the lowest unemployment rate we've seen in more than five years. Since 2011, nearly 34,000 private-sector jobs have been created in the District. Through the innovative, award-winning One City - One Hire program, we've connected more than 9,100 previously unemployed District residents with jobs at more than 1,100 partner employers.

After the previous administration spent half of our crucial reserve fund, or three-quarters of a billion dollars, my administration began structurally balancing the budget. As a result, we've posted three straight years of budget surpluses and have rebuilt the District's Fund Balance to the highest level in its history – \$1.75 billion. Wall Street has rewarded us with higher bond ratings, which allow us to borrow money at cheaper rates to modernize public facilities, and boost our reputation as a financially responsible jurisdiction.

Last year, I announced a historic and unprecedented investment of \$187 million in the District's supply of affordable housing, and I committed to preserving or building 10,000 affordable units by 2020. Under my administration, more than 5,000 affordable units have already been completed or are currently under construction, with thousands more in the pipeline. And as announced in my State of the District Address last night at Kelly Miller Middle School, I committed to another \$100 million investment in affordable housing, including for our senior residents.

Not only that, I also proposed an additional investment of \$116 million in public education to tackle the unacceptable achievement gaps between different racial and socio-economic groups, and between different parts of our city. The resource gap must be narrowed for students who have historically been under-funded, including middle and high school students, English-language learners, adult learners, and students in our alternative schools.

The state of the District is much stronger than it was just three short years ago when I took office, and perhaps the strongest it has ever been. I love the District of Columbia with all my heart, and will continue to work hard to make this city an even better place for everyone.

Sincerely,


Vincent C. Gray

OAPIA in the Community

OAPIA Conducts Voter Registration Drives



OAPIA Special Assistant Dory Peters registering individuals to vote and DC Health Link assists and brokers registering individuals for DC Health Link at Gibson Plaza Apartments on March 11, 2014.

On February 28, 2014 and on March 11, 2014, OAPIA visited Gibson Plaza Apartments in Mount Vernon Square to conduct voter registration, and registered individuals for DC Health Link. OAPIA also visited the Wah Luck House in Chinatown on March 10, 2014 to conduct voter registration for limited English proficient/non-English proficient AAPI residents. Lastly, OAPIA

visited Museum Square One Apartments in the Mount Vernon Square area on March 12, 2014 to register District residents to vote. Language interpretation was provided in Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese. OAPIA registered 44 District residents through these registration drives.

In addition to these efforts, OAPIA and the DC Board of Elections have been conducting voter registration activities throughout the year, and have been working to help ensure the AAPI community experience at the polls will include language support. If you are bilingual in an Asian language and would like to become a poll worker, please email oapia@dc.gov.

This year, the District of Columbia will hold a primary election on April 1, 2014, and general election on November 4, 2014.

For more information on [registering to vote, upcoming elections, general information about voting, or ways to volunteer](#), please visit [here](#).

OAPIA Attends the Guangdong Residents Association of Greater Washington, DC's Lunar New Year Banquet



The Guangdong Residents Association of Greater Washington, DC making a toast to welcome the Lunar New Year of the Horse.

Credit: Chinese in DC/Jianying Wang

OAPIA Director Soohyun "Julie" Koo delivered Lunar New Year greetings at the Guangdong Residents Association of Greater Washington, DC's annual Lunar New Year banquet on March 1, 2014 at China Garden Restaurant in Rosslyn, Virginia. The Guangdong Residents Association of Greater Washington, DC is an association of individuals and families with ancestral ties to Guangdong province in China.

OAPIA Promotes DC Health Link at the Chinese Community Church and to GABRIELA Washington, DC



OAPIA Community Outreach Assistant Yiyang Guo and a DC Health Link assister answering questions regarding DC Health Link at the Chinese Community Church.



OAPIA Outreach Coordinator Ngoc Trinh informing GABRIELA Washington, DC chapter members about DC Health Link.



A DC Health Link insurance broker answering questions concerning health insurance from GABRIELA Washington, DC chapter members.

On Sunday, March 2, 2014, OAPIA helped inform individuals about DC Health Link and helped conduct voter registration outreach at the Chinese Community Church in Chinatown. DC Health Link assisters and insurance brokers were onsite after the church service to answer questions and to help enroll members in affordable health plans through DC Health Link.

Additionally, OAPIA helped provide information about DC Health Link and other social services to members of GABRIELA Washington, DC at the Cleveland Park Public Library on Sunday. Representatives from the Department of Human Services and DC Health Link delivered presentations in regards to the different social services available to DC residents, and answered questions about the health and housing services available to members of GABRIELA Washington, DC. An insurance broker was onsite to help enroll members into affordable health plans through DC Health Link at the conclusion of the GABRIELA Washington DC chapter's meeting.

For more information on [DC Health Link](#), please visit [here](#). For more information on [GABRIELA Washington, DC](#) please visit [here](#).

AAPIC Community Lunch Break with OAPIA



OAPIA staff and interns enjoy lunch and conversation with community members.

On March 7, 2014, OAPIA hosted an AAPI Community Lunch Break at Asian Spice Restaurant in Chinatown. The purpose of the lunch was for OAPIA and DC government agencies to connect with fellow community members, and for community members to learn of volunteer opportunities in the District, and receive updates on upcoming OAPIA events and projects, within an informal lunch setting.

OAPIA News

OAPIA Welcomes New Community Outreach Specialist Chau Ngo

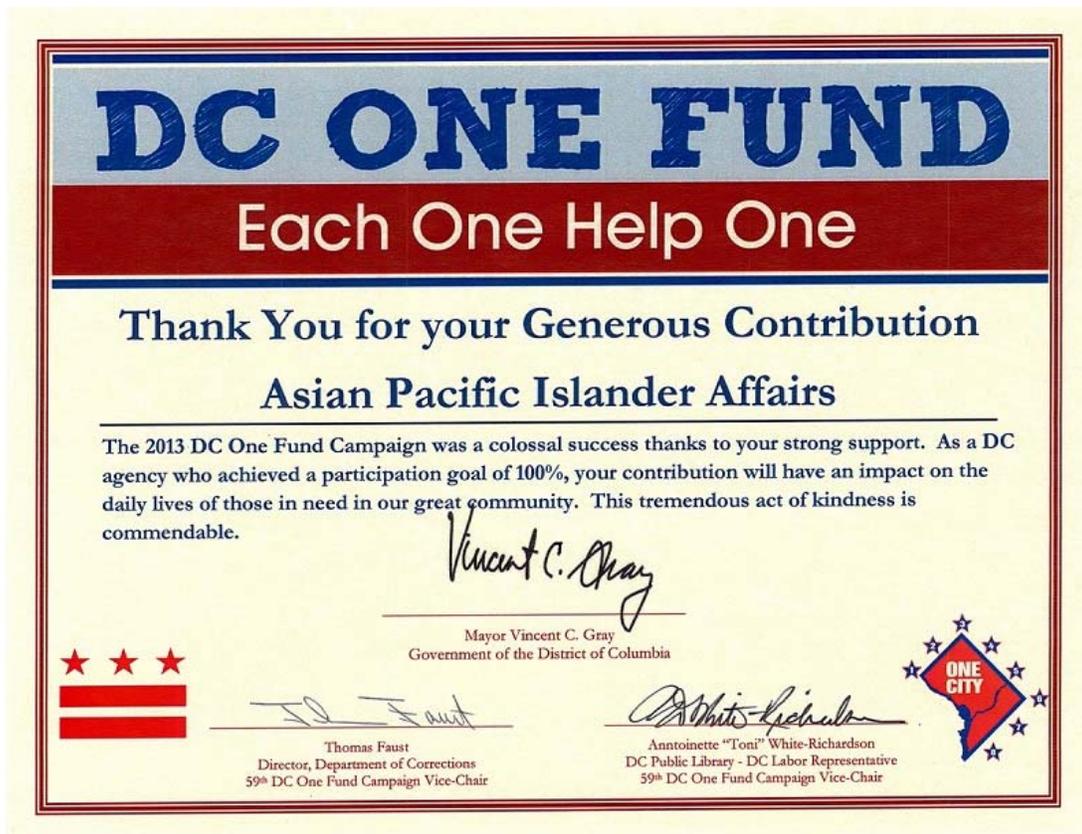


Chau Ngo

Chau Ngo recently joined OAPIA as a bilingual community outreach specialist, and is fluent in Vietnamese. She also provides translation and interpretation services for the Department of Special Services for Fairfax County Public Schools. Prior to joining OAPIA, Chau served as a human resource generalist and an independent consultant in the private sector.

Chau has experience interacting and working with groups of different ethnic backgrounds and communities. She began her first involvement with the local Vietnamese community in 1998, and continues to be involved. She is active in charity and fundraising events that promote awareness of the Vietnamese community, including the Vietnamese youth community. Chau is sensitive to the needs of individuals who are limited English proficient, and is committed to serving the local community so that it may grow and reach its highest potential.

OAPIA Receives DC One Fund Recognition



OAPIA was recognized for its contributions to the DC One Fund as an agency having a 100% participation rate of its employees on February 25, 2014. The DC One Fund is a charity fund supported by District of Columbia employees, and benefits local non-profit organizations.

Greetings from the Community Outreach Coordinator



Hello everyone, this is Ngoc Trinh, Community Outreach Coordinator for the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs.

How long have you been in DC?

I have been in the DC area for 14 years.

What brings you to DC and what do you enjoy most about DC?

I came to DC to study at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. After graduation, I was fortunate to find a job right here in DC, and then met my husband, and we have been raising our family here ever since. DC is ranked as the best city for family tourists, so we are lucky to be right here. There are so many free things to explore in DC, and the parks along the Potomac River are just gorgeous.

How do you stay engaged within the community?

As an outreach coordinator at OAPIA, I interact with AAPI community members on a daily basis through our office projects, community meetings, and by helping community members resolve their cases. It feels good to be able to contribute to making a difference in our community members' lives through my work at OAPIA.

Own Words

I have become a fan of soccer since my eight-year-old son started playing the sport and became the best scorer on his team. I am a real soccer mom now.

If you enjoyed reading this profile, please visit [I am AAPI in DC](#) to read additional community member profiles or to submit your own profile!

Spotlight: National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum - DC Chapter (NAPAWF-DC)

The National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) was founded in 1996 by 156 fierce Asian Pacific Islander (API) women gathering in Los Angeles, California. NAPAWF was formed to build the movement that advances social justice and human rights for API women and girls in the United States.

NAPAWF is currently involved in issues such as anti-human trafficking, reproductive justice, and immigrant rights. In addition, NAPAWF has worked to improve the health and safety of nail salon workers, as well as to ensure that the benefits of the Affordable Care Act reach API women and girls. Motivated by equality and justice, NAPAWF strives to "bridge the diversity of 40 plus language groups," and close the generational gaps that exist among women in the API community.

The NAPAWF-DC chapter strives to create a community of API women leaders working to educate and advocate for our social and economic justice, emphasizing a local angle on national issues.

For more information about [NAPAWF](#), please visit [here](#). For more information about the local [NAPAWF-DC](#) chapter, or ways to get involved, please visit [here](#).

March is Women's History Month

Women's History Month had origins as International Women's Day on March 8, 1911 in Europe. In many European nations, as well as in the United States, women's rights were a political, hot topic. Women's suffrage was a priority for many women's organizations.

Eventually, in 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8th as National Women's History Week. The U.S. Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration. Six years later, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March. Today, Women's History Month serves to celebrate women's contributions to culture, history, and society, while continuing to promote equality among the sexes.

For more information on Women's History Month or related resources in the District, please visit:

- [DC Office on Women's Policy and Initiatives](#)
- [DC Office on Women's Policy and Initiatives: Women's History Month Calendar of Events](#)
- [Women's History Month](#)

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