

**Office on Asian and Pacific Islander
Affairs (OAPIA)**

Community Grant Report

I. Introduction

There are over 17,000 Asian and Pacific Islander (API) residents living in the District and about a fifth of them are living below the federal poverty line.¹ About 30% of the API residents have limited English proficiency (LEP)², and thus have been linguistically and culturally hampered from getting access to District services and programs. As a result, the LEP population has sought the assistance from API-led community-based organizations (CBOs) to address many of their needs.

Frequently, the CBOs are asked to provide social services in addition or unrelated to the services rendered under the current funded programs. Feeling unable to turn away clients with additional needs, CBOs render these social services on a pro bono basis, which puts further strain on the CBOs' already overstretched resources. In turn, the strain on the CBOs' resources invariably affects their ability to effectively secure grants to sustain, enhance, or create additional programs to meet their client's needs.

Through the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA), a number of API-led CBOs and the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (the Commission) requested that the Mayor support earmarking funds as part of the Mayor's proposed FY07 Budget to underfund CBOs who provide vital services to the District's API residents. As a result, the Mayor and the Council approved the allocation of \$250,000 for community grants targeting vital social services to the District's API residents. OAPIA was given the responsibility of administering and managing these community grants. The funds were intended to enhance existing and startup programs focused on improving Asian and Pacific Islanders' need in health, education, legal services and employment. This report provides an overview of OAPIA's grant process, grantee profile, and oversight process.

II. Grant Process

A. Independent Consultant

OAPIA conducted its grant process through an independent consultant chosen by the Office of Contracts and Procurement from a slate of bids received. OAPIA met with the consultant and provided a brief overview of OAPIA and the purpose of the grant. The consultant used the District's current grant guidelines from the Department of Health and Office of Contracts and Procurement, as well as, Federal guidelines as a basis for the review process and developing the Request for Proposal.

B. Informing the Public of Funding Availability

OAPIA notified the public of its community grant through OAPIA's website, emails to community-based organizations, and the Office of Partnerships and Grants Development's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). Notification targeted CBOs providing services to

¹ U.S. Bureau of Census 2000.

² *Ibid.*

underserved API residents, particularly linguistically isolated, in four areas of need: health, education, employment, and legal services.

OAPIA held a Pre-Application Conference on August 10, 2006 at 441 4th Street NW, 11th Floor Conference Room. Sixteen people, representing 10 CBOs, attended the conference. The consultant guided participants through the grant application and the review process. A questions and answers (Q&A) session followed the presentation. OAPIA posted the Q&A session on its website and informed the CBOs. In addition, OAPIA provided CBOs with individual meetings with the consultant if they had additional questions.

C. Application Review Process

OAPIA and the consultant recruited six grant reviewers using different resources (e.g., Office of Grants and Partnership's newsletter, emails to the community leaders). The review panel was composed of "neutral, qualified individuals selected for their experiences in job training, education, training health care, social services, human services, and the fields of evaluation planning and implementation" as stated in the RFA. Reviewers were chosen because of their experience/knowledge in different areas that included, but were not limited to education, public health, nonprofits, and DC government. Three weeks prior to the grant review meetings, reviewers were mailed a slate of applications to review, score, and comment. Each application received at least two independent reviews.

The consultant facilitated a grant reviewer meeting where each application's score were discussed. Final scores for each application were developed based on the average of all the reviewers' scores. (Some OAPIA staff also reviewed all applications to provide context, but their assessment was not including in the reviewers' scores.) The review panel submitted the recommendation for funding to OAPIA. After reviewing the recommendations and any other information considered relevant, OAPIA allocated appropriate funding amount and notified successful applicants.

III. Grant Awardees

Seven out of the ten community-based organizations received community grants through OAPIA grant process. Each grantee provides a vital service to the API community. Below are profiles of the seven CBOs that received grants from OAPIA:

- **Asian American Leadership Empowerment and Development (AALEAD)**
Funding Priority Area: Youth Services (\$35,000)

Asian American LEAD's overarching goal is to increase the opportunities and ability of low-income Asian American children to move out of poverty and become successful, self-sufficient adults. It firmly believes that education is the key to meeting this goal. seeks to promote the well-being of Asian American youth and families through education, leadership development, and community-building. AALEAD focuses on the Vietnamese, Amerasian, and Chinese immigrant and refugee communities in the Mt. Pleasant, Columbia Heights, and Shaw neighborhoods of Washington, DC.

- **Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center (APALRC)**
Funding Priority Area: Legal Services (\$45,000)

The Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center (APALRC) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the legal and civil rights of Asian Americans in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan community through direct services, education, and advocacy. Through its innovative programs and strategic partnerships, the APALRC's main goals are two-fold: (1) to address the individual legal needs of low-income and limited-English proficient Asian Americans, particularly in the areas of workers' rights, domestic violence, and immigration, and (2) to advocate for broad-based systemic change on civil rights issues impacting Asian Americans.

- **Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP)**
Funding Priority Area: Health Services (\$20,000)

Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP) is a local non-profit organization in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that is committed to ending domestic violence in the Asian/Pacific Islander communities.

Through direct assistance, community engagement and training of service providers, DVRP strives to address and prevent domestic violence in a manner that supports survivors of domestic violence and promotes cultural competency to meet the diverse needs of our communities.

- **Chinatown Service Center (CSC)**
Funding Priority Area: Social Services (\$33,000)

The Chinatown Service Center (CSC) is a non-profit, community-based organization providing social services to low-income and underserved members of the Asian American community in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. Located in the heart of D.C.'s Chinatown, the Center was founded in 1977 by the Chinese Community Church. CSC serves as a hub for the needs of low-income Asian American individuals, families, seniors and youth, many of whom have limited English language skills.

- **Greater Washington Urban League/Asian Senior Center (GWUL/ASC)**
Funding Priority Area: Health Services (\$20,000)

The Asian and Pacific Islander Senior Center is GWUL's focal point for service delivery for the city's Asian and Pacific Islander aged population. Services include congregate meal services, distribution of commodity supplemental foods, home delivered meals for those who are unable to attend center services. Other services include counseling, case management, translation and interpretation, transportation to sites and activities, English tutoring, recreation and socialization. The Center works with public and private sector agencies in a variety of ways to provide services and activities for the Asian elderly, and to insure that this population has access to all services provided for its citizens.

- **Newcomers Community Service Center (NCSC)**
Funding Priority Area: Employment Services (\$40,000)

A non-profit, community-based organization, NCSC helps refugees and immigrants from all countries achieve self-sufficiency and participate in their new society by:

- Helping refugees and immigrants obtain financial stability through employment.
- Helping newcomers maintain or adjust their legal immigration status.
- Communicating newcomers' needs for education, health, employment and other services to public and private agencies.
- Promoting respect and support for cultural preservation.

- **Vietnamese American Community Service Center (VACSC)**
Funding Priority Area: Youth and Parental Services (\$35,000)

VACSC was created to assist the Vietnamese-Americans in the District of Columbia in assimilating and in integrating into the American Society without sacrificing their cultural heritage and identity, and to promote friendship and understanding between the Vietnamese and the American communities at large. Its mission is:

- To provide cultural, educational, recreational, and other programs to promote the cultural heritage and enhance the quality of life of Vietnamese-Americans in the District of Columbia.
- To promote intercultural exchange between the Vietnamese and the American community at large.
- To advocate for equal treatment and opportunities for all District immigrants and refugees.
- To collaborate and work with organizations with similar purposes

IV. Oversight and Technical Assistance

To ensure that services are reaching our API residents through the funded programs, OAPIA has implemented an oversight process that includes written documentations (e.g., financial and program reports) and on-site consultations (e.g., site visits and meetings). Grantees must send OAPIA written documentations on a quarterly basis; whereas, on-site consultations are done at the beginning of the grant year and on a need basis. OAPIA has also delegated \$20,000 from the grant funding to provide technical assistance to grantees. The oversight process and technical assistance funding will help to ensure that the District's funding is used appropriately; funded services are being delivered; and grantees have not just financial but technical assistance in providing those services.