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# OAPIA Update

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



VINCENT C. GRAY  
MAYOR

July 18, 2012

Dear Community Members,

As many experienced, a violent storm recently struck the metropolitan Washington area, sending hundreds of thousands into darkness. While the devastating storm left many residences and businesses without power, District government agencies were quick to respond and provide emergency services. For example, we opened designated cooling centers for those who experienced power outages and for people who just wanted to beat the record-breaking heat. In addition, city crews worked around the clock to clear the streets of fallen trees and debris.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank our employees from multiple D.C. government agencies for their hard work, as well as community members for their cooperation, collaboration and patience during a challenging period.

Public safety is one of my top four priorities along with education, job creation and economic development, and fiscal stability. I appreciate the work carried out by the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) during the storm, and every day, as we work collectively to achieve our goals,

With OAPIA, my administration is working hard to ensure the public safety of our residents and that all of our residents have access to quality services, especially during times of crises.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent C. Gray".  
Vincent C. Gray  
Mayor, District of Columbia

OAPIA Interns Visit Domestic Violence Resource Project

By Hiji Nam, OAPIA Summer Intern



**OAPIA Interns Meet With DVRP Staff**

Last week, OAPIA interns and OAPIA Outreach Specialist, Dian Herrman, visited the [Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project \(DVRP\)](#), a nonprofit organization serving victims of domestic violence within the AAPI population. The group began in 1995 by Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women who were concerned by the lack of domestic violence awareness and resources available for survivors. Now, DVRP provides services and education for domestic violence issues. Their work is divided into two main programs; the first being the Advocates Program, which provides one-on-one therapy, services, and resource provision to women who have faced or are currently facing an abusive relationship. This includes interpretation in over twenty languages, peer support, referrals to outside service providers, and court accompaniments. The Community Outreach Program is devoted to increasing awareness about the dynamics and impact of domestic violence in the DC AAPI community. Connecting with community leaders, organizing workshops, and targeting their outreach to specific audiences, such as through ethnic media (newspapers, television channels, magazines, etc.), are some of the strategies DVRP utilizes for its outreach program.

It is important to understand the basics: What is domestic violence? The answer is surprisingly more complex than expected, as it encompasses not only physical abuse but also mental, economical, and verbal abuse that occurs in a consistent pattern of behavior within an intimate relationship. In fact, the abuser does not necessarily have to be a romantic partner but can be an in-law, parent, or even a child. In the AAPI community specifically, domestic violence is a taboo subject, thereby only exacerbating the issue. Domestic violence affects a shockingly large number of people—one in three women has experienced physical or sexual abuse by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their life. Even more astonishing is the fact that the AAPI community has a very high rate of domestic violence, much greater than many other ethnicities, with 41% of AAPI women being likely to be abused. With the statistical evidence as high as it is,

it is concerning that the AAPI community is so reluctant to address this issue, making the services of DVRP even more invaluable and admirable. Our visit made a lasting impression on each of us, and we extend our thanks to DVRP for hosting our visit.

We encourage you to visit [DVRP](#) to learn more on how to volunteer.

## OAPIAs 7th Annual Sidewalk Chalk Contest

*By Jennifer Li, 2012 Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) Intern*



On July 12, OAPIA hosted its 7th Annual Sidewalk Chalk Contest in front of the Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial Library. At the library, over a 100 student participants, all ranging from grades 1-8, were in attendance. All participants had about 40 minutes to draw their favorite Asian food, such as noodles, chicken, rice, or beef. Many kids decided to draw their favorite desert which was ice cream. After drawing for 40 minutes the participants were greeted by Ronald McDonald, who performed for them while the judges made their final selection. Next, all the participants stood by their art anxiously for the announcement of the winners from each group. The winners not only received prizes, but so did all participants for participating.



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

Spotlight: Cherry Blossom Giving Circle



The Cherry Blossom Giving Circle is a volunteer collective of individuals committed to creating positive social change in the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities of the Washington Metropolitan Area. Representing diverse cultures, professional backgrounds, perspectives, and interests, individuals join to pool resources and leverage them to give back to API-serving nonprofits in the area - ultimately leading to positive change in the area's underserved API communities.

The mission of the Cherry Blossom Giving Circle is to raise funds and awareness that will advance the work of Washington Metropolitan Area nonprofits working to uplift the lives of underserved segments of the region's Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

For more information, email [dcgivingcircle@gmail.com](mailto:dcgivingcircle@gmail.com) or 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 in TBD 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](mailto:oapia@dc.gov).

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