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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 Director

**Dear Community Members,**

The month of February has been a particularly noteworthy month for us, as we helped to celebrate the Lunar New Year with Mayor Vincent C. Gray, and as we had our agency performance oversight hearing.

It was my pleasure to meet several of you at the Mayor's Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs swearing-in ceremony and Lunar New Year reception on February 8, 2013. Mayor Vincent C. Gray was in attendance to appoint nine new community members and ten government agency ex-officio members to the commission. The commission works with the Mayor and DC government agencies to address the concerns of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, and to ensure government services can be accessed in a timely manner. These new commissioners will help to bring diverse and unique perspectives when addressing community issues, allowing OAPIA to better assist the community, despite language and cultural barriers that might exist. In addition, Mayor Gray and I were attendance at the local Chinatown Lunar New Year parade on February 10, 2013 to help ring in the Lunar New Year. I would like to wish everyone a prosperous and joyous Lunar New Year!



On February 14, 2013, we had our Public Performance Oversight Hearing and I am thankful for all the support we received through testimony. We always encourage civic participation, and highly suggest that you become more involved with your local community. At OAPIA, we are always appreciative of the assistance from volunteers who have made our past events, such as our annual holiday toy drive celebration, a huge success. We welcome returning and new volunteers for our upcoming Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebration in May; please stay tuned as we announce further details!

Another great opportunity to become more engaged is by attending our next bi-monthly community meeting in March, which will allow community-based organizations, District government agencies, and the general public to interact and discuss issues affecting the local AAPI community; we will be announcing the date of the meeting soon. Furthermore, the

Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs meetings holds monthly meetings that are open to the public; the next public meeting will be held tonight on February 27, 2013. For more information about upcoming OAPIA activities and the commission, please visit [www.apia.dc.gov](http://www.apia.dc.gov).

Warm Regards,



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

## OAPIA News

### **OAPIA Performance Oversight Hearing & Budget Hearing**

OAPIA had its performance oversight hearing on February 14, 2012 in front of Councilmember Barry. Asian American LEAD, the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center, and the Chinatown Service Center testified as public witnesses and provided input regarding OAPIA's performance. OAPIA has a budget hearing scheduled for April 19, 2013.

The recording of the performance oversight hearing can be viewed [here](#).

### **OAPIA Participates in Lunar New Year Festivities**



OAPIA celebrates the Lunar New Year with seniors from the Asian Senior Center in Chinatown.



OAPIA celebrates the Lunar New Year, known as Tet in Vietnamese culture, with the Vietnamese American Community Service Center.

## District News and Announcements

### **DC Housing Authority (DCHA) Suspending New Applications to Waiting List**

The DC Housing Authority (DCHA) has used its waiting list for many years to record applications for its housing assistance programs. People are housed from the waiting list based on the date and time they apply and their selected preferences. As of January 2013, there are almost 70,000 families and individuals on the list requesting housing.

Effective April 12, 2013, DCHA is suspending new enrollment to the waiting list in order to:

- Update the waiting list to make sure people already on the list still want and need housing;
- Give people on the public housing waiting list a chance to list which properties they want to live in;
- Make the waiting list process easier to understand and manage.

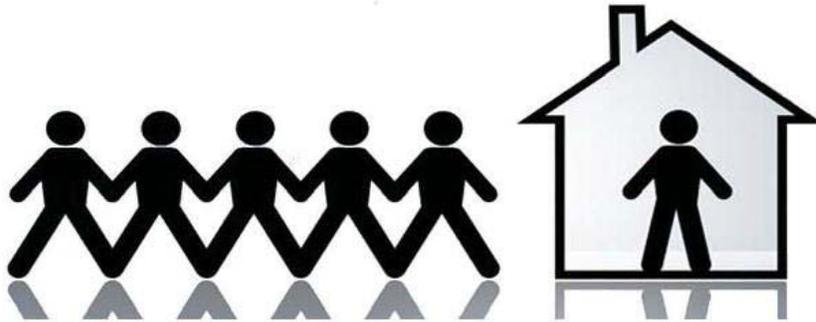
For more information about the suspensions of new applications in English, please visit [here](#). For more information in Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese, please see the flyers below, or email [oapia@dc.gov](mailto:oapia@dc.gov). For general information about DCHA, please visit [www.dchousing.org](http://www.dchousing.org).



# 重要通知

哥伦比亚区房屋管理局现在接受加入  
“享受住房补贴等候列表”的新申请

截止 **至2013年4月12日 (星期五)**



申请网址是 [www.dchousing.org](http://www.dchousing.org)。

您可以申请公共住房，住房选择券计划和房屋适当修复计划。

如需了解更多信息，请访问[www.dchousing.org](http://www.dchousing.org)，或致电 (202) 535-1000

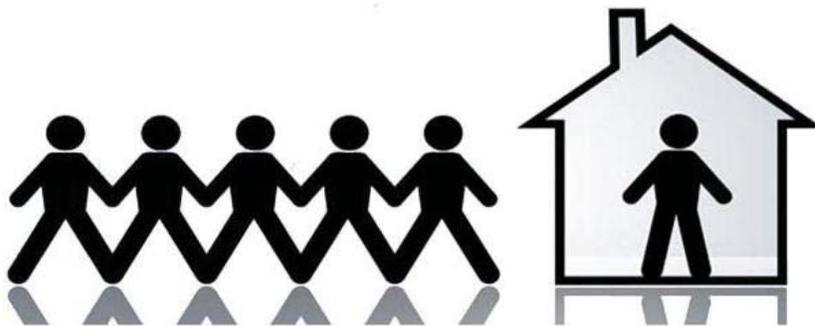
**Chinese Flyer**



# THÔNG BÁO QUAN TRỌNG

Ủy Ban Gia Cư Quận Columbia  
đang nhận đơn mới cho  
Danh Sách Chờ để được hỗ trợ gia cư

cho đến **THỨ SÁU, NGÀY 12 THÁNG TƯ, 2013**



Đơn xin có thể lấy tại [www.dchousing.org](http://www.dchousing.org).

Quý vị có thể nộp đơn xin Gia Cư Công Cộng (Public Housing), Chương Trình Phiếu Chọn Gia Cư (Housing Choice Voucher Program) và Chương Trình Phục Hồi cho Gia Đình có Lợi Tức Thấp (Moderate Rehab Program).

**Để Biết Thêm Thông Tin, Xin Viếng [www.dchousing.org](http://www.dchousing.org) hoặc Gọi (202) 535-1000**

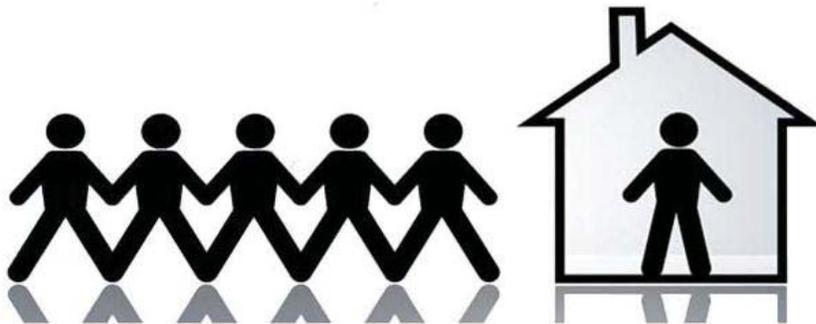
**Vietnamese Flyer**



# 주요 공지

컬럼비아 특별구 주택청에서 주택  
보조금 대기자 신청을 받고 있습니다

신청 마감일 **2013년 4월 12일 금요일**



신청서 다운로드: [www.dchousing.org](http://www.dchousing.org).

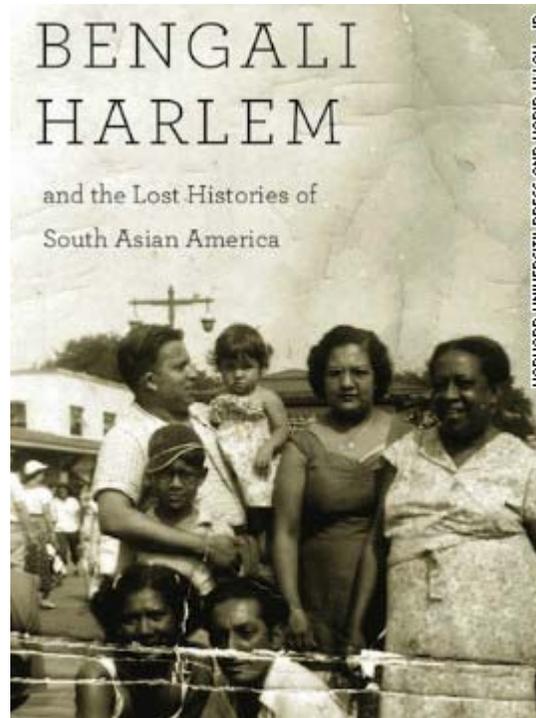
공영주택(Public Housing), 주택 선택 바우처 프로그램(Housing Choice Voucher Program),

적정 재건 프로그램(Moderate Rehab Program) 신청 가능

자세한 정보는 [www.dchousing.org](http://www.dchousing.org)를 참조하거나 (202) 535-1000으로 전화하시기 바랍니다.

**Korean Flyer**

Asian Americans in the News



In *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America* by author Vivek Bald, published in January 2013, a history that was largely forgotten is finally revealed. It is the story of Bengali people who came to America seeking a better life, but could not help but hide themselves in relative anonymity. Bald searched for as much information as possible pertaining to Bengali individuals and their experiences in America, and detailed their lives and tracked down their descendants. It took him nine years to meticulously investigate through marriage and death records, court resources, and newspapers.

His findings indicate that from the 1890s to 1940s, many Bengali individuals who came to America were illiterate, which conflicts with the modern day stereotype of highly educated South Asians. At that time, immigration was illegal and racism was widespread over the country, thus many Bengalis were embraced by African American and Puerto Rican communities and intermarried within those communities. These Bengali men wanted their kids to grow up as an American, and to ensure that their own immigrant history and experience should not be forgotten. Many descendants of these Bengali immigrants were unaware of their familial history, until Vivek Bald help to document a lost history of immigration of America, of the South Asian American experience.

Source: [CNN](#).

Spotlight: Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - DC Chapter (APALA-DC)



The Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance DC Chapter (APALA-DC) serves as a bridge

connecting Asian Pacific Americans with the broader labor movement. [APALA](#) is the first and only national organization of Asian Pacific American union members to advance worker, immigrant and civil rights.

Since its founding in 1992, APALA has played a unique role in addressing the workplace issues of the 660,000 APA union members and as the bridge between the broader labor movement and the APA community. Backed with strong support of the AFL-CIO, APALA has 13 chapters and pre-chapters and a national office in Washington, D.C.

For more information about APALA-DC, please visit [here](#).

## February is Heart Disease Awareness Month



According to a 2010 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), heart disease is the most leading cause of death in the United States. The month of February is dedicated to raising awareness about heart disease and increasing knowledge about prevention. Educate yourself on the dangers of heart disease and get on track to better heart health.

Heart disease is a broad term for describing a variety of diseases related to the heart. The various diseases that fall under the category of heart disease include diseases of your blood vessels, such as coronary artery disease; heart rhythm problems (arrhythmias); heart infections; and heart defects you're born with (congenital heart defects). The term "heart disease" is often used interchangeably with "cardiovascular disease." Cardiovascular disease generally refers to conditions that involve narrowed or blocked blood vessels that can lead to a heart attack, chest pain (angina) or stroke. Other heart conditions, such as infections and conditions that affect your heart's muscle, valves or beating rhythm, also are considered forms of heart disease.

From the [National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health](#), Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) have low levels of awareness and control concerning high blood pressure. There is very little awareness among Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese immigrants, and significantly higher levels of blood pressure among Filipino Americans, and significantly lower blood pressure screening rates among AAPIs.

To protect yourself from heart disease, please follow these measures as recommended by the CDC:

- Eat a healthy diet. Choosing a healthful meal and snack options can help you avoid heart disease and its complications. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for heart disease. To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate a number called the [body mass index](#) (BMI). Doctors sometimes also use

- waist and hip measurements to measure a person's excess body fat.
- Exercise regularly. Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.
  - Don't smoke. Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. So, if you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quitting will lower your risk for heart disease. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit.
  - Limit alcohol use. Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which causes high blood pressure. For more information, visit the [CDC's Alcohol and Public Health Web site](#).

The DC Department of Health also offers information and programs such as the Cardiovascular Health Program to help maintain a healthy heart. To learn more, please click [here](#).

## DC Mayor's Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

The DC Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs usually convenes monthly meetings to discuss current issues affecting the DC AAPI community.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 27, 2013 @ 6:30 pm at the DC Department of Human Resources (DCHR) Customer Service Center Conference Room on the first floor lobby, south side, of the One Judiciary Square building located at 441 4th Street, NW, 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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