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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,

I am delighted to share with you some key indicators that show why the District of Columbia is viewed as a great place to live, work, play and do business. My administration has been implementing strategies and programs designed to build the District as a world class city, and we're achieving much success, according to a variety of outside sources.

We've recently received numerous accolades from those who track the status of cities and states, including: having the strongest economy in the United States, being chosen as the best city for recent college graduates, being named first for attracting and producing entrepreneurial founders of companies, second for real-estate investment, and being listed among the top cities for venture capital investment.

Moreover, my administration's focus on innovation has been showcased. For example, Forbes Magazine named us the nation's number one "tech hot spot," and Harvard University says my One City * One Hire jobs program is worthy of a "Bright Idea Award."

District agencies can take some of the credit for the District's top standing. For example, the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs has implemented Project BUILD (Business University Partnership to Innovate, Link, and Develop), an innovative partnership to help assist small businesses. Project BUILD is a pilot program designed to help improve existing small retail businesses in the District by connecting them with MBA students at Georgetown University. The students are offering services such as free in-language business consulting and tips on developing a personalized business plan.

By any of a number of measures, the District of Columbia is now one of the very best cities in America. And that is because we are aggressively implementing plans to continue to grow and diversify the District's economy, to make us the most livable and sustainable city in the nation, and to improve our public education system.

These honors are but a small sample of the many accomplishments that we have achieved with the help of key community partners, and with all of us working together as One City, we will continue to move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent C. Gray".
Vincent C. Gray

WHY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA IS THE PLACE TO BE

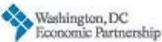
#1 Strongest Economy in the U.S. <i>POLICOM, 2013</i>	#1 in U.S. for LEED Certified Projects <i>U.S. Green Building Council, 2012</i>
#1 New Tech Hot Spot <i>Forbes, January 2013</i>	Top 10 U.S. Retail Investment Market <i>Marcus & Millichap, 2013</i>
#1 Best Cities for College Grads in U.S. <i>Careerbuilder.com, 2012</i>	#1 in U.S. for Attracting Entrepreneurial Founders of Companies <i>Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2012</i>
#1 Professional Development for Women <i>Measure of America, 2013</i>	Best-Educated City in America <i>UCLA Anderson Forecast, 2012</i>
Best U.S. Family Destination <i>ABC Travel Guides for Kids, 2013</i>	Top Departure City for International Travel <i>Cardhub.com, 2013</i>
Harvard University Bright Idea Award for One City - One Hire <i>Harvard University, 2012</i>	Top 5: Best U.S. City for a Vacation <i>U.S. News and World Report—travel.usnews.com</i>
Top 5: U.S. Cities for New Construction <i>Forbes, June 2013</i>	Top 10 in Venture Capital Investment <i>The Atlantic Cities, 2012</i>
Top 10: Most Walkable City in the U.S. <i>Walkscore.com, July 2013</i>	#2 Student Destination in the U.S. <i>Student & Youth Travel Association, 2013</i>
#2 Fittest City <i>American College of Sports Medicine, 2013</i>	#2 Hippest U.S. City <i>Forbes, August 2012</i>
Top 5: Global Cities for Real Estate Investment <i>AFIRE, 2013</i>	

Source: Spire/Infactor MSA rankings

Find out more about why the District of Columbia is a great place to live, work, play and do business at www.dc.gov.



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



OAPIA in the Community

OAPIA Project BUILD (Business University Partnership to Innovate, Link, and Develop) Updates



OAPIA meets with Dragon Express, a participant of Project BUILD, on July 25, 2013.

In June 2013, the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) partnered with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD), and Georgetown University to develop Project BUILD. Project BUILD (Business University Partnership to Innovate, Link, and Develop) is a pilot program designed to help improve existing small retail businesses in the District by connecting them with Georgetown University Master of Business Administration (MBA) students for free in-language business consulting services, including the development of a personalized business plan.

After OAPIA's interview process, nine MBA students were selected to assist six DC businesses registered for Project BUILD. The businesses include carry out stores, convenience stores, restaurants, and an auto repair training institute.

MBA students were separated into teams, with each team containing a unique set of language and technical assistance skills, to visit businesses and gather vital information for analysis. Once the necessary information was collected, MBA students were able to discuss and offer alternatives to the business owners to help them improve existing operations. In addition to developing a business plan for the small retail owners, the MBA students also helped the owners explore available grant funding opportunities as part of the next phase of Project BUILD.

For the next fiscal year, OAPIA, DHCD, DSLBD, and Georgetown University will offer the small retail businesses the opportunity to continue working with the MBA students in implementing some of the recommendations provided in the business plans as well as assistance in applying for any available grant opportunities.

OAPIA and the Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL) Present an AAPI and Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) Discussion with Gregory Cendana



Gregory Cendana (background) speaks to attendees about his identity.

On Thursday, July 25, 2013, the DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) and the Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL) presented a discussion on the intersections of AAPI and GLBT identity with Gregory Cendana, a member of Mayor Vincent C. Gray's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Advisory Committee, at the Human Rights Campaign. Gregory shared personal anecdotes of growing up AAPI and Queer, and highlighted the opportunities available for individuals interested in advocating for issues affecting the AAPI GLBT community in Washington, DC.

OAPIA Attends Youth Education Workshop on HIV Prevention



Youth answer questions at an HIV/AIDS education workshop.

On Monday, July 29, 2013, OAPIA staff attended a youth workshop on HIV prevention at Asian American LEAD. The workshop served to educate youth about HIV/AIDS by informing attendees how HIV/AIDS affects the human body, how HIV/AIDS is acquired, and the measures necessary to reduce the likelihood of contracting HIV/AIDS.

OAPIA Hosts 3rd Brown Bag Cultural Lunch Dialogue on the Vietnamese American Community



Attendees at the Vietnamese American brown bag cultural dialogue.

On July 30, 2013, the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) hosted the third of four Brown Bag Cultural Lunch Dialogues for District of Columbia government employees. The third session covered the Vietnamese American community, and was held at the Old Council Chambers in the Judiciary Square building. The purpose of these dialogues is to increase the awareness of District employees of various ethnic communities within the broader Asian American and Pacific Islander community. The speakers for the Vietnamese American dialogue were Hung Nguyen, past president of the National Congress of Vietnamese Americans and a candidate for the Virginia House of Delegates, and Linh Hoang, a former commissioner of the DC Mayor's Commission on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs.

OAPIA and AARP-DC Facilitate a Discussion as part of the Age Friendly City Initiative



OAPIA and AARP-DC facilitate a discussion on issues affecting seniors.

The DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, in cooperation with AARP-DC, facilitated the first of a two part discussion regarding the Asian American and Pacific Islander senior community's thoughts on improving the District of Columbia on July 30, 2013. As a part of the Age Friendly City Initiative, the discussion was held at the Family Matters Asian and Pacific Islander Senior Center with over 50 Asian and Pacific Islander senior citizens in attendance. The discussion session asked participants their thoughts concerning their livelihood in the District, focusing on issues such as housing, transportation, and safety, and how improvements can be made to better suit their needs. Mayor Vincent C. Gray is committed to making the District of Columbia an Age-Friendly City with an inclusive and accessible urban environment that encourages active and healthy living.

OAPIA Welcomes Additional Summer Intern

Chen Sheng is a rising senior at Georgetown University, majoring in international economics with a concentration in Asian studies. On campus, she is an active member of the Georgetown community, serving as co-president of the Chinese Student Alliance and as a student researcher for Georgetown University's Office of the Provost's International Initiatives. While she is fluent in the Shanghai dialect of Chinese, she hopes to improve her Mandarin Chinese language skills. She just recently returned from a year studying abroad in Taiwan, Shanghai, and Beijing, where she not only learned Mandarin Chinese, but also learned about the Chinese culture and lifestyle.



In her free time, Chen enjoys drawing, cooking, traveling to new places, spending time with her family, and taking care of Sushi, her pet fish. In the future, she hopes to continue her pursuit in the interests of US-China affairs while furthering her education in law school.

Chen Sheng

Spotlight: The Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center (APALRC)



The Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center (APALRC) initially begun as a collaborative effort by students from D.C. area law schools and attorneys associated with the Asian Pacific American Bar Association (APABA) and the South Asian Bar Association (SABA). Originally formed as an all-volunteer organization in response to the lack of linguistically and culturally appropriate legal services for the growing number of Asian Pacific Americans in the D.C. metropolitan region, APALRC has flourished to an organization with 15 board members, 10 full-time staff, 30 bilingual law student volunteers, and over 70 trained/qualified legal interpreters, who collectively speak more than 25 different Asian languages and dialects.

For more information about the APALRC, please visit [here](#).

July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month



In May 2008, the U.S. House of Representatives proclaimed July as National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Recognizing the paramount importance of improved access to mental health treatment and services and public awareness of mental illness, this resolution aims to enhance public awareness of mental illness and mental illness among minorities.

For more information or resources concerning mental health awareness, please visit:

- [DC Department of Mental Health](#)
- [National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

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