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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

January 15, 2014

Dear Community Members:

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released new population estimates and I was delighted to hear that our population has reached 646,449 people, keeping the District of Columbia as one of the fastest-growing states in the country. This continued trend of rapid growth will move the District closer to the goal we set in my Sustainable DC vision to attract and retain 250,000 new and existing residents by 2032.

The District is drawing more than 1,000 new residents per month and this growth can be attributed to the progress we are making in several areas. For example, while other U.S. jurisdictions are emerging from the economic downturn and have begun adding jobs, there are greater opportunities for finding a job in the Washington region. From the height of the recession in 2009 to the present, the District's unemployment rate dropped from a high of 10.5 percent to 8.6 percent. Efforts implemented under my Five-Year Economic Development Strategy have already yielded 17,500 new jobs – jobs that attract individuals and families to live and work in the District.

The District's significant investments to improve public education and build high-quality school facilities are another factor attracting new residents and retaining families. The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) showed the greatest growth among all urban school districts in the nation on the 2013 Trial Urban District Assessment. The growth in DCPS students' 4th and 8th grade math and reading scores showed the highest scores ever seen on this test for DCPS. Furthermore, DCPS is increasingly diverse, as almost 18 percent of students are linguistically and culturally diverse, with four Asian and Pacific Islander languages among the top 10 languages, according to DCPS data for the 2012-2013 school year. This diversity is reflective of the many immigrants who choose to make the District of Columbia their home.

Another important factor making the District a safe and attractive place to live and work is the significant decline in homicides since 2011.

In general, the upward trend in the District's population is expected to continue as a result of our investments in public infrastructure, jobs, education, and safety, among other areas.

I set a goal for the District of Columbia to be healthiest, greenest, and most livable city in the country within 20 years. These results tell us that people across the nation and around the world already see us as well on our way.

Sincerely,

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

Vincent C. Gray

OAPIA News

OAPIA Celebrates the 10th Anniversary of the Language Access Act

OAPIA will be organizing a series of programs centered around the 10th year anniversary of the passage of the Language Access Act. OAPIA will explore the Language Access Act's effect on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in the District. The role OAPIA has played in

the implementation of the Language Access Act will also be highlighted.

Programs and activities to be held from January 2014 to September 2014:

- 10 for 10: 10 highlights of OAPIA's resources on language access in the District of Columbia.
- 2014: A Language Odyssey: Policy report and panel discussion on the effects of the Act on the District's AAPIs.
- I Got a Story to Tell: Stories about the District's AAPIs who are impacted by the Act.
- Language Arts: An AAPI artistic perspective on the Act.
- Groundbroken: A reception celebrating the AAPI pioneers of Language Access.

For more information on activities and announcements, please visit www.apia.dc.gov.

The Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA)
Celebrates
 The 10th Anniversary of the
Language Access Act



OAPIA will celebrate the passage of the Act and explore its effect on Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in the District. We will also highlight the role OAPIA has played in the implementation of the Act.

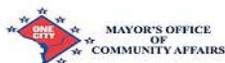


10 for 10
 10 highlights of OAPIA's resources on **language** access in the District of Columbia

2014: A Language Odyssey
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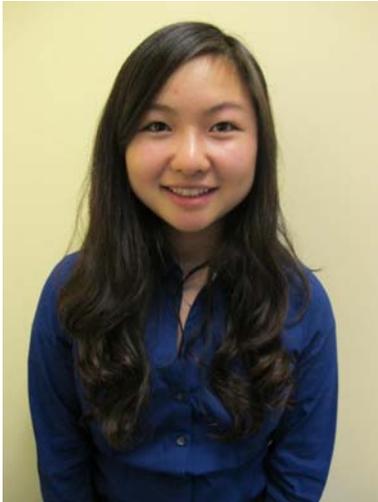
I got a story to tell
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 An **AAPI** artistic perspective on the Act
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For more information on these programs, please visit www.apia.dc.gov

OAPIA Welcomes Spring Interns



Belinda Lei

Belinda Lei was born and raised in the suburbs of Los Angeles in Walnut, California. She is currently a student at Georgetown University, class of 2017, pursuing a major in international politics with a certificate in Asian studies at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. As a second generation Chinese American, Belinda is dedicated to cultivating her Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) identity as well as giving back to the AAPI community. She has traveled to Asia multiple times since the age of seven and has been involved in a variety of Chinese cultural activities, including Chinese dance, playing the Chinese zither, and practicing bian lian, a Chinese Sichuan opera art form.

Growing up in a Mandarin speaking household, Belinda is fluent in English and Mandarin Chinese. She has experience working in a multilingual environment after interning at a law firm based in Tokyo, Japan. Her personal experience with Asian American issues as well as being an active board member of Georgetown's Asian American Student Association has fostered a deep passion towards improving the AAPI community. Eager and curious, Belinda is ready to learn from all of the opportunities and obstacles that DC presents.

Yiwen (Alexandra) Hu was born and raised in Shanghai, China. She is currently a freshman at Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. Although Yiwen has yet to decide upon a major, she has a deep interest in both business and politics. Yiwen is capable of communicating in English, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish. Yiwen is drawn to different cultures; however, given her upbringing, she is strongly attached to Chinese culture, including its art, literature, and tradition. She is strongly motivated to promote the Chinese culture she represents, incorporating and assimilating it into American society. Prior to her studies at Georgetown University, Yiwen was a journalism intern for the Oriental Morning Post in Shanghai, China.



Yiwen Hu

Greetings from the Staff Assistant



Hi everyone, I'm Christina Truong, Staff Assistant for the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs.

How long have you been in DC?

Switching coasts, I moved from Long Beach, CA to DC last January and have lived in the city for a little over a year now.

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

I originally came to DC through the University of California Washington Center (UCDC) program, first interning and then



turning into a full-time staff member at OAPIA. One of the things I enjoy most about DC is how close everything is in proximity to each other. Coming from California, where driving is a must, being

able to walk or metro to almost anywhere I want to go is great and having access to free museums has also been a big plus.

How do you stay engaged within the community?

My work as OAPIA's housing subject matter liaison has kept me engaged within the AAPI community. Through my cases, I've learned of various housing issues and concerns in the AAPI community and being able to resolve some of those issues has been quite fulfilling. As 2014 progresses, I also plan to be more active in the community by attending or volunteering at more events.

Own Words

I started weightlifting about six months ago and now I love it. It allows me to eat more cupcakes without feeling as guilty. =)

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!

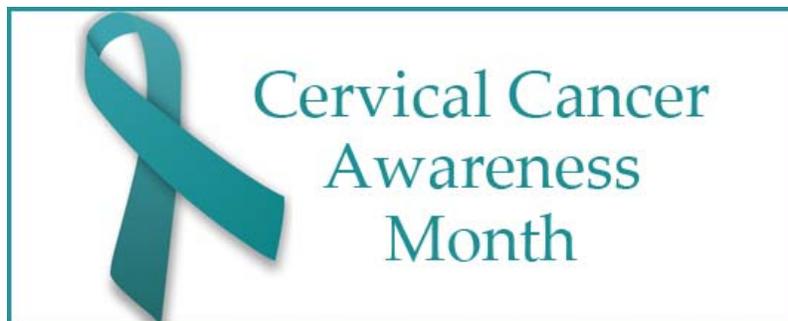
Spotlight: Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP)



The Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP) is a non-profit organization aimed at eliminating and uniting against domestic violence in the D.C. area. Through multilingual advocacy, legal representation, and economic assistance, DVRP's mission is to foster an environment in DC that will end sexual assault and domestic violence within the Asian/Pacific Islander communities while supporting healthier relationships. The project offers cultural and linguistic resources for abused API women as well as teen outreach and sexual minority services to promote independence and support. Additionally, the organization advocates for victims of domestic violence through fundraising and awareness events.

For more information about [DVRP](#) or ways to get involved, please visit [here](#).

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month



Cervical Health Awareness Month is an opportunity to raise awareness about how women can protect themselves from HPV (human papillomavirus) and cervical cancer. About 79 million Americans currently have HPV, the most common sexually transmitted disease. HPV is a major cause of cervical cancer; however, a Pap test can help detect abnormal (changed) cells early, before they turn into cancer. Most deaths from cervical cancer can be prevented if women get regular Pap tests and follow-up care.

Asian American and Pacific Islander women are much less likely to get routine Pap tests than women in other groups. This may be due, in part, to the widespread misconception that Asian American and Pacific Islander women are not at risk for cervical cancer, but this is not true. In fact, Laotian, Samoan, and Vietnamese women have the highest cervical cancer rates in the United States. Women who do not get regular Pap tests have higher rates of cervical cancer.

The District provides free breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic follow-up for eligible women through Project Women Into Staying Healthy (WISH). Project WISH also provides patient navigation, transportation assistance, and cancer education to all women enrolled in the project. District of Columbia women who are uninsured and underinsured and between the ages of 21 and 64 are eligible for Project WISH. Individuals may call (202) 442-5900 for more information.

For more information on Cervical Health Awareness Month or related resources, please visit:

- [HealthFinder.gov: Cervical Health Awareness Month](#)
- [DC Department of Health: Breast and Cervical Cancer Program - Project WISH](#)
- [Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)

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