

The content in this preview is based on the last saved version of your email - any changes made to your email that have not been saved will not be shown in this preview.



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,

Next week marks the conclusion of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month.

AAPI Heritage Month is celebrated in May to commemorate the contributions of people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent in the United States. During the month, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders around the nation celebrate with community festivals, government-sponsored activities, and educational activities.



Mayor Gray and OAPIA will be hosting an [annual AAPI Heritage Month evening celebration](#) on May 30, 2014 at 7:00 pm at the historical Lincoln Theatre, 1215 U St NW. The celebration will feature live performances by local AAPI and international Asian artists, recognition of an AAPI pioneer of the Language Access Act whose efforts have impacted the District's AAPI community, and recognition of unsung heroes who have demonstrated extraordinary dedication in serving the District's limited English proficient and/or non-English proficient AAPI community through the presentation of the Mayor's Community Service Award.

Please join us as we celebrate and recognize the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders on [May 30th](#). We look forward to seeing you there!

Warm Wishes,

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

OAPIA in the Community

OAPIA Encourages Artistic Expressions within the AAPI Community
OAPIA Hosted a Panel Discussion on AAPI Fashion Design



A model displaying a dress from a panelist's design portfolio.



The panelists, fashion team, and the MC for the event pose with OAPIA staff.

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) - On Thursday, May 8, 2014, the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) hosted a panel discussion encouraging artistic expressions and contributions from the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Over 80 AAPI community members and District of Columbia government officials were in attendance to hear from local AAPI fashion designers about their cultural experiences as AAPI designers.

Soohyun "Julie" Koo, OAPIA Director offered welcoming remarks and greetings. The panelists shared their experiences in the local fashion industry, their struggles, and the role of their AAPI identity within their work, and also showcased their design portfolio to the audience.

"The panelists serve as examples in the AAPI community for individuals pursuing non-traditional careers," said Director Koo. "Their work and experiences can help to encourage and inspire young people to explore diverse career options."

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

OAPIA co-sponsors Forum on Mental Health and Substance Abuse/Addiction among AAPIs



OAPIA Community Outreach Specialist Andrew Chang making welcoming remarks.



Derek Iwamoto, PhD, of the University of Maryland, College Park presenting on substance abuse and addiction within the AAPI community.

On May 15, 2014, the American Psychological Association's Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) sponsored a community forum through its Ethnicity and Health in America Series (EHAS) to raise awareness about the physiological and psychological impact of substance abuse and addiction within the AAPI community. The forum was hosted in partnership with the Chicago Professional School of Psychology, the DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA), the National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse, and Derek Iwamoto, PhD from the University of Maryland, College Park.

OAPIA Attends Spring Forward Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration hosted by the Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP)



OAPIA Director Koo addressing the audience.

OAPIA Director Koo made remarks at DVRP's Spring Forward Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebration on Thursday, May 15, 2014.

OAPIA News

OAPIA Welcomes Summer Intern

Chergai Gao Rittenberg was born in Hangzhou, China, but at a young age moved to the United States. She has lived in various cities in Alaska before finally settling in Seattle,



Chergai Gao Rittenberg

Washington. During high school, Chergai had the opportunity to move to Beijing, China where she lived, traveled, and learned Mandarin Chinese for six years. She is currently pursuing a degree in public health at American University, while minoring in economics.

Chergai has a passion for learning and engaging with different cultures. She studied abroad in India and was culturally immersed by taking classes with local university students, observing and assessing local health conditions, and traveling throughout southern India. Since then, Chergai continues to learn Hindi and Punjabi. She also tutors Mandarin to students of all ages, and overall hopes to create a bridge with others through culture and language.

Spotlight: Counselors Helping (South) Asians/Indians (CHAI)



Counselors Helping (South) Asians/Indians (CHAI) is an organization located in the DC metropolitan area that takes a holistic approach to providing proactive, culturally competent information and referrals on mental health and wellness to the South Asian population. CHAI not only provides information to the community, but also addresses issues relating to language access and cultural barriers. CHAI also works collaboratively with communities and service organizations to end stigma and increase access to mental health services.

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

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month



The month of May is National Mental Health Awareness Month. During the month, individuals and organizations aim to raise public recognition about the importance of mental health to overall health and wellness, inform people of the ways that the mind and body interact with each other, and provide tips and tools for taking positive actions to protect mental health and promote whole health.

Research studies indicate that the Asian American and Pacific Islander community may experience mental health and wellness issues that stem from issues relating to immigration, cultural identity and norms, domestic violence, and gender roles.

For more information on Mental Health Month or related resources in the District, please visit:

- [DC Department of Behavioral Health](#)
- [OAPIA Mental Health Services](#)
- [Counselors Helping \(South\) Asians/Indians \(CHAI\)](#)
- [MentalHealth.gov](#)

oapia@dc.gov | www.apia.dc.gov | Phone: (202) 727-3120 | Fax: (202) 727-9655



[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to oapia@dc.gov by oapia@dc.gov | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

OAPIA | 441 4th St NW | Suite 721 North | Washington | DC | 20001