



Tuyet Le
Executive Director

Tuyet Le is the Executive Director of the Asian American Institute (AAI), the Midwestern region's premiere pan-Asian organization committed to empowering Asian Americans through advocacy by utilizing research, education and coalition-building. AAI is affiliated with the Asian American Justice Center in Washington, D.C., the Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles, and the Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco.

As AAI's leader, Ms. Le has focused on improving cooperation among diverse Asian American communities, raising their visibility and highlighting their concerns to policy makers and the public at large. Under her stewardship, AAI released *Understanding Asian Americans in Metropolitan Chicago*, a report offering a description of the Chicago region's Asian American population. Other AAI publications include a comprehensive directory of Asian American organizations in the Chicago area, and a report describing and evaluating the work of Illinois elected representatives concerning the needs of the Asian American community. Under Ms. Le's leadership, AAI programs have also included advocating for affirmative action, voting rights, Redistricting Education Project, the APA Political Empowerment Initiative, APA Education Resource Guide, Housing Research and advocacy against hate crimes.

In addition, Ms. Le is involved in national Asian American organizations, serving as the Midwest representative to the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans. Ms. Le's leadership has been recognized by numerous officials and organizations, having served on the Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Asian Affairs, and the State Comptroller's Asian American Advisory Council. She currently serves as vice president on the board of directors of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and serves on the editorial board of *The Chicago Reporter*.

Ms. Le, who came to the United States as a refugee from Vietnam, previously worked at the Vietnamese Association of Illinois, and last served as its acting executive director. In 2001, she served as the festival planning committee chair for the inaugural Women Warrior Festival of the Center for Asian Arts and Media at Columbia College. Ms. Le has been awarded the State Treasurer's Community Leader Award, listed in *Today's Chicago Woman* "100 Women Making a Difference Poll," and featured on News 2 Chicago as a "Hometown Hero."

In 2002, PoliticalCircus named her as one of the 30 most influential Asian Pacific Americans under age 30. She was also a member of the 2004 Leadership Greater Chicago Fellows Class. She recently received awards from Cook County and the Organization of Chinese Americans for her work on including Asian Americans in Chicago's public contracting affirmative action program.