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**ASIAN AMERICAN
INSTITUTE**



MEMBER OF
ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER
FOR ADVANCING JUSTICE

Asian American Institute Newsletter

October 2010

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Dear Asian American Institute,

It's hard to believe that it's already the end of October!

We have been busy over the past 3 months with graduating the fourth class of Impact Fellows Program (IFP), hosting the Asian American Leadership Forum (AALF), and canvassing neighborhoods of Chicago so that members of the Asian American community are well informed to get out to vote on November 2. We would also like to thank all of you who supported us and attended our annual Fall Networking Reception last week.

AAI is still looking for volunteers to help with our GOTV (Get Out The Vote) efforts. Join us on Saturday, October 30 at the Devon Bank for the Asian Americans Vote Kickoff Event and on Election Day: Tuesday, November 2 to ensure that the Asian American community members make it out to vote to ensure our voices are heard.

Thank you,

Tuyet Le
Executive Director

AAI is Honored for its Work in the Asian American Community

LEAP Award



Tuyet Le attended Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP)'s Leadership Awards Dinner in Los Angeles on Thursday, July 22, 2010. She accepted the Community Award on behalf of the Asian American Institute.

IABA Award

Community Organizing News

Asian Americans Vote! Community Kickoff Event

Join AAI at our Asian Americans Vote Kickoff Event on Saturday, October 30, which will also feature food and games. The event will take place at Devon Bank at 6445 N. Western from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM.

The event will feature Raja Krishnamoorthi who will be speaking about the importance of Asian American participation in this election. Krishnamoorthi is a former candidate for Comptroller, and was one of the first Asian Americans to run for a state wide office in Illinois.

The event will be the kickoff for our Get Out The Vote weekend, where AAI will be working to turn out over 1500 Asian American voters in the 50th Ward.

Get out the Vote with AAI!

AAI is looking for volunteers on TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd to help us with our Get Out The Vote efforts. We'll be knocking on doors in the community and re-visiting those we have registered and spoken to already to make sure



Indian American Bar Association (IABA) hosted their annual awards banquet on Saturday, September 25, 2010 where AAI was awarded the Community Service Recognition Award.

KRCC Award



Korean American Resource and Culture Center (KRCC) hosted their annual Awards Dinner on Saturday, October 23, 2010 where AAI was awarded the Community Leadership Award.

Legal Advocacy News

AAI Publishes Reports on Language Access Barriers to Health Care

AAI recently conducted a study on language access barriers to health care faced by low-income Korean American and Lao American seniors in the Chicago metropolitan area. In collaboration with South Asian American Policy and Research Institute, Korean American Community Services, and Lao American Community Services, AAI conducted this study to contribute to the scant information available on local Asian American seniors with limited English proficiency. Federal law requires nearly all hospitals to provide interpreters to patients with limited English proficiency but, nevertheless, many Asian Americans continue to face language access barriers to health care.

According to the surveys collected by AAI, hospitals did not offer interpretation services in most cases, with approximately 90 percent of survey respondents relying on untrained interpreters (such as family members), a practice discouraged by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and other health care experts. Patients who have to resort to using family members as interpreters are put at a disadvantage when those family members do not have the skills, language, maturity, objectivity, or sensitivity that is needed for interpretation in medical situations.

The reports are available on our website:

[Korean Language Access Report](#)
[Lao Language Access Report](#)

For more information, please contact please contact Ami

they will be going out and voting. All canvassing is in the West Ridge/West Rogers Park area in the 50th Ward of Chicago (along Devon Ave).

We have shifts available all day, and if you volunteer for multiple shifts you'll be entered into a raffle to win a free round trip Southwest Airlines ticket, redeemable to anywhere Southwest flies. We have the following shifts available:

6 AM - 9 AM
 9 AM - 12 PM
 12 PM - 3 PM
 3 PM - 7 PM

For more information please contact Brandon Lee at Brandon@aaichicago.org or 773-271-0899 x200.

Statewide Candidates Answer Questions from Immigrant Community



On October 16th, the Asian American community joined other immigrant communities in a statewide candidates' forum where candidates for governor and senator in Illinois answered questions regarding immigrant communities. AAI's executive director, Tuyet Le, was a moderator for the Gubernatorial candidates segment. Pat Quinn was there in person to address all questions and Bill Brady's campaign had a representative who gave a statement on the candidate's behalf.

Sima Quraishi, executive director of Muslim Women's Resource Center, a close partner of AAI asked a question regarding fair representation of the Asian Americans to candidate Pat Quinn. While we did not get a direct answer to the question, the Asian American community's interests were visibly expressed.

This event, hosted by Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights was attended by close to 700 people.

Leadership News

Asian American Leadership Forum

On October 1st and 2nd of 2010, 150 individuals convened for the 6th annual Asian American Leadership Forum (AALF) for two days of individual learning and community building. Attendees from the private, public, nonprofit and academic sectors took part in workshops on a variety of topics addressing leadership and professional development skills. In addition, they also engaged in discussions focused on cross sector engagement to alleviate Asian American community issues. The Asian American Institute looks forward to continue the momentum we have started.

AALF would not have been possible with out the generous support of our following sponsors:

Gandhi, AAI's Legal Director (ami@aaichicago.org).

AAI Seeks Stories from Asian American Business Owners

As part of our affirmative action advocacy efforts, AAI has been collecting stories from Asian American business owners about discrimination that they have faced. Asian Americans continue to experience unfair treatment, and it is important to document these occurrences.

If you are interested in learning more about the project or if you have a story you would like to share about discrimination faced as a business owner, please contact Ami Gandhi, AAI's Legal Director (ami@aaichicago.org).

Farewell and Welcome to AAI Staff

AAI's Staff Continues to Grow

Farewell to Joanna Su as Program Director

AAI has been very fortunate to have had Joanna Su in the position of Program Director. As a highly respected leader in the Asian American community, her knowledge and wealth of community relationships has greatly enhanced and deepened all of our initiatives. With the addition of a new family member and personal priority changes as well as AAI's recent growth and policy strategy needs, Joanna has transitioned from a full-time staff member to a contractor/consultant for AAI. She currently works to support Human Resource and Development related activities. We are very grateful to Joanna for her dedicated commitment to AAI. In the many roles she has played over the years, as the president of AAI's Board of Directors, as a senior staff member and now as a consultant, Joanna has been and continues to be a valuable contributor to our organization. Thank you, Joanna!

Welcome to Samir Goswami

AAI is very pleased to welcome Samir Goswami as our Policy Director. He brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this newly created position to lead and manage our strategic policy development and advocacy. This includes developing issue briefs on key policy issues, and educating legislators and policy makers. He will work with staff members, affiliate organizations, and other collaborating organizations to formulate and implement strategies to further policy objectives. The Policy Director will act as a conduit to translate policy goals into action by connecting with advocacy groups, policymakers and their staff, and other stakeholders in the domestic policy community.

Samir spent the past fifteen years in Illinois working towards policy reforms on the issues of homelessness and affordable housing, workforce development, criminal justice reform, ending violence against women and on building a movement in Illinois to end sex-trafficking. His expertise lies in policy research and development, government relations and lobbying, communications and media advocacy and community based organizing. He has founded and led state and city-wide coalitions and campaigns, conducted numerous presentations and workshops and provided technical assistance to Cook County based law enforcement to create protocols to better combat sex trafficking. [View Samir's Full Bio.](#)



Thank you to all those who were a part of this year's forum and we look forward to see everyone there next year!

2010 Fall Reception

AAI's 2010 Fall Reception



AAI held its annual Fall Networking Reception on Thursday, October 21, 2010 at the historic Bridgeview Bank Building. We are so grateful once again for the Bridgeview Bank for allowing us use of the space for our event. It is a great opportunity which allows guests to attend AAI's reception in the area which we work. It was a great turnout with approximately 100 guests, many of which were new faces. Everyone enjoyed food and drinks, while connecting with old friends and new colleagues, as well as enjoying games that were informative of AAI and the Asian American community in Chicago.

We would like to thank everyone who was able to attend. We would also like to once again thank our sponsors for the event: Bridgeview Bank, the Nielsen Company, Southwest Airlines, and Active Copier. In addition, the Fall Reception was also used as a kickoff for the Annual Giving Campaign and announcement of the Challenge Grant, where an anonymous donor will match any new or increasing funds for the organization up to \$100,000. Board Member Anne Shaw presented Executive Director Tuyet Le with a big check of \$1500, which is just a start for the Annual Giving Campaign. [Donate Today!](#)

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Challenge Grant and Annual Giving Campaign

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DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT



**by making a donation today to the
Asian American Institute.**

**Your donation will go towards uniting the community
with a stronger voice. If we speak as one, we can have a
bigger impact on the issues that affect us all.**

**This year, a generous funder has offered us a
Challenge Grant. For any new money raised in
the next year, the donor will match your
contribution 1:1 up to \$100,000. Help us reach
our goal by making a donation today!**

**Please visit our website at www.aaichicago.org for more information and to
make a donation.**

The Asian American Institute is one of the leading pan-Asian nonprofit organizations in the Midwest, dedicated to empowering the Asian American community through advocacy, by utilizing research, education, and coalition-building. The Asian American Institute (www.aaichicago.org), Asian American Justice Center (www.advancingequality.org), Asian Law Caucus (www.asianlawcaucus.org), and Asian Pacific American Legal Center (www.apalc.org) are members of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice (www.advancingjustice.org), which is dedicated to defending and advancing the civil and human rights of Asian Americans both nationally and in local communities.

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