
You Can Make a Difference!

The strength of the Asian American Institute relies on the combined talents and commitment of the various ethnic communities dedicated to uniting Asian Americans and voicing common issues and concerns.

With your active support and involvement, the Asian American Institute can further strengthen its capacity to build community coalitions and establish a powerful voice for Asian Americans.

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**ASIAN AMERICAN
INSTITUTE**



MEMBER OF
ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER
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Educate Advocate Empower

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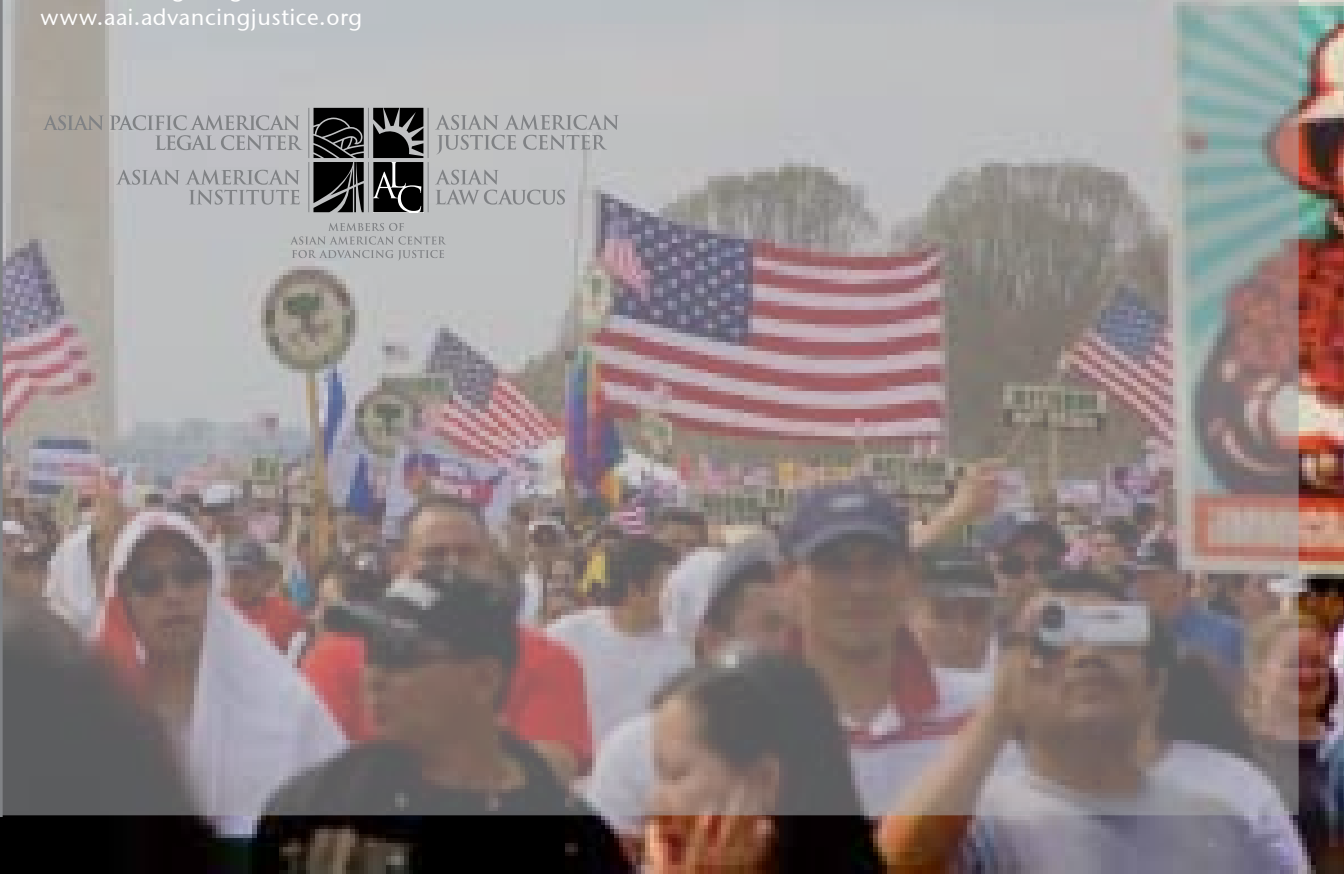
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Our Mission

The Asian American Institute was established in 1992 as a pan-Asian not-for-profit 501 (c)3 organization. Its mission is to empower the Asian American community in the Chicago area through advocacy, research, education, and coalition-building.

Specifically, AAI works to:

- Improve cooperation and mutual understanding by bringing together Asian American communities of various ethnic, linguistic, and social backgrounds.
- Raise the visibility of the Asian American community and effectively convey the community's concerns to elected officials, policy makers, and the general public.
- Gather and disseminate data about Asian American communities.



About the Asian American Institute

Asian Americans are one of the fastest-growing populations in the United States. While they are often seen as a homogenous group, in actuality, Asian Americans are an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse community. According to 2008 Census estimates, they number over 617,000, representing 5% of the state's population, an increase of 30% since 2000. In Illinois, this diverse and often-overlooked community includes Americans of Bangladeshi, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Nepali, Pakistani, Thai, Tibetan, and Vietnamese descent. The community constantly faces the stereotypes of being the "perpetual foreigner" and "model minority," both causing them to be excluded from full participation in American society.

In response to the needs of the fast-growing population, a group of Asian American community activists, academic professionals, and business leaders established the Asian American Institute in 1992. The Asian American Institute was the first organization to address the concerns of Chicago's diverse Asian American communities.

Community Organizing and Civic Engagement

The Asian American Institute strongly believes in community organizing as a core strategy for Asian American empowerment. AAI's work is informed by our community members. Through community organizing, AAI builds and strengthens relationships with leaders of Asian American service organizations and institutions so that we can better understand community concerns and engage with the community to take action.

We work in partnership with other Asian American organizations and institutions to promote participation in the democratic process. We work with community leaders to bring together people of all Asian American backgrounds to create change.

AAI also works in partnership with non-Asian American organizations, such as Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), to fight collectively for a better future for all immigrants in Illinois.



Legal and Policy Advocacy Program

The Asian American Institute's Legal and Policy Advocacy Program advocates for laws and policies that promote social, economic, and political equity for the Asian American community as a whole. Through this program, AAI advocates for government officials and other decision-makers to enact and implement policies that protect the civil rights of Asian Americans.

The program includes initiatives in the areas of:

- affirmative action and equal opportunity
- voting rights
- redistricting
- hate crimes
- discrimination
- language access to health care



Leadership Development Programs

The Asian American Institute's leadership programs aim to create a pipeline of informed, aware, and strategic leaders who are passionate about both leadership and Asian American issues. AAI will empower these leaders to be the catalysts for positive change in the Asian American community.

AAI aims to cultivate emerging leaders and strengthen existing leaders to create a network of change; we strive to build a collective force of strong Asian American leaders to be effective agents of change in the corporate, government, nonprofit, and academic sectors. AAI charges these leaders to take action and achieve results for the Asian American community. AAI's leadership programs accomplish this by providing unique opportunities for leaders to build individual capacity through training, workshops, and experiential learning framed in an Asian American context. AAI provides general training in leadership development paired with specialized training on Asian American focused arenas such as identity, community, issues, and advocacy.



Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Since 2005, AAI has been affiliated with the Asian American Justice Center (AAJC, based in Washington, DC), Asian Law Caucus (San Francisco), and Asian Pacific American Legal Center (Los Angeles), providing a Midwest perspective in shaping the national Asian American public policy agenda.

In June 2010, we formalized our affiliation with these outstanding organizations around shared vision and values and a national issues platform. As members of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, we work together to promote a fair and equitable society for all, by working for civil and human rights and empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other underserved communities.

In formalizing these long-time relationships, we are expanding our networks, resources, and impact, and speaking with one unified and powerful voice.

Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) – Washington, DC. AAJC is a national organization dedicated to advancing the civil and human rights of Asian Americans and building a fair and equitable society for all through public education, public policy, community organizing and litigation.

Asian Law Caucus (ALC) – San Francisco, CA. ALC is the nation's oldest legal organization defending the civil rights of Asians and Pacific Islanders, particularly low-income, immigrant and underserved communities.

Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) – Los Angeles & Orange County, CA. APALC is the nation's largest legal organization serving Asians and Pacific Islanders, through direct legal services, impact litigation, policy advocacy and leadership development.