



Annual Report 2023

December 20, 2023

Office of Governor Glenn A. Youngkin

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

To: Glenn Youngkin, Governor
Honorable General Assembly Members

On behalf of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB), I'm pleased to present you with this year's report of our recommendations of issues impacting the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities so that your Administration can best serve these constituents. We represent one of the fastest growing demographics in the Commonwealth. As you may be aware, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are comprised of multi-layered and multi-faceted racial communities, representing complex identities marked by differences in socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, religions, languages, immigrant statuses, and perspectives.

The VAAB strongly supports this Administration's focus on equitable opportunities as it's the basis of all the work that this Board undertakes. We must, and will, continue to advocate for the AAPI communities, as well as to stand in solidarity with others to advance mutual understanding to ensure all communities have opportunities to reach their full potential.

I would like to thank your administration and staff for diligently working with us. Secretary of the Commonwealth, Kelly Gee, Harold Pyon, Michael Perez, Justin Bell, and Emma Jensen were instrumental in helping us continue our important work throughout the Commonwealth for our communities. Thanks to each of you for your leadership and support.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to each of the VAAB's current as well as previous board members who contributed not only their time, but also their expertise throughout the year. Board service is one of the most difficult volunteer roles of public service to fulfill. However, your high level of professionalism, ability to attend meetings, both virtual and in-person, and advocacy on behalf of the AAPI communities in the Commonwealth were incredibly notable. You have been judicious stewards of the VAAB and carefully deliberated on matters, while considering current and future impacts and outcomes. Despite the many personal, professional, and educational commitments, along with some serious adversities, your continued passion and commitment to serve and advocate for the AAPI communities of the Commonwealth, was not only inspirational, but embodied excellence. Thank you for all your hard work and for reflecting on what Japanese American social justice activist Yuri Kochiyama stated, "Life is not what you alone make it. Life is the input of everyone who touched your life and every experience that entered it. We are all part of one another." It has been an honor serving as your Chair, as well as getting to know you and all you do for the Commonwealth. I look forward to continuing to work with you all on future endeavors.

We look forward to working closely with you, your administration, and other advisory boards on common goals that support our mutually beneficial priorities. Thank you for the opportunity to continue our service to the Governor's Office, the Commonwealth, and the AAPI communities.



From: Nina Ha, Ph.D.
Chair, Virginia Asian
Advisory Board

2022-2023 VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Nina Ha, Ph.D., Chair, Christiansburg, APIDA + Center Director, Virginia Tech
- Quan Tiet Schneider, Vice Chair, Glen Allen, Senior Marketing Manager, Altria Group Distribution Company
- Salinna Lor, Secretary, Richmond, Communications Manager for the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association

CURRENT MEMBERS

- Harshad Barot, Virginia Beach, Owner, Galaxy Corporation
- Laura Beldin, Prince William, Senior Vice President and Private Client Advisor, Bank of America Private Bank
- Filipe “Pepe” Cabacoy, Norfolk, former Chairman and former Vice Chair- 3rd Congressional District, Filipino American Community Action Group; Director, The Coalition of Filipino American Voters of Norfolk
- Dr. Kamlesh Dave, Chester, President, Heart Care Associates, PC
- Thomas Fitzpatrick, Richmond, Executive Director for Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia
- Shakira Khan, Richmond, Manager Digital Communications, Dominion Energy
- Xiawei Lin, Virginia Beach, President, Lucky Orange Inc DBA Aqua S.
- Bao “Bobby” Ly, Springfield, President, Vietnamese American Community Association of MD, DC, and VA
- Tian Olson, McLean, Attorney, Director of Public Affairs for Chinese American Parents Association of Northern Virginia
- Srileka Palle, Fairfax, healthcare leader and NOVA Director, Rally Virginia
- Minesh Patel, Powhatan, President, Owner, and Founder, Ram’s of Virginia, Inc. and Shiv Traders, Inc.
- Marie A. Sankaran Raval, MD, Henrico, Pediatric Anesthesiologist and Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology, Department of Anesthesiology, VCU School of Medicine
- Ssunny Shah, Roanoke, Hotel Owner
- My Lan Tran, Glen Allen, Executive Director, Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Dokmai Webster, Falls Church, Founder and CEO, Pivotal Point, LLC
- Tony Yeh, Vienna, Real Estate Broker, United Realty, Inc.
- Henry Yuan, Fairfax Station, Venture Partner, VU Venture Partners

AAPI Outreach

Vacant

Governor’s Liaison

- Michael Perez , Deputy Chief of Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion

FORMER MEMBERS

- Melody Agbisit, PhD, Norfolk, Counselor, Educator and Social Entrepreneur
- Dr. Lisa Chen, Louisa, Louisa County Public Schools, Director of Middle School Education and Professional and Virtual Learning
- Y. Paul Chhabra, Norfolk, President, Rajput Group of Companies

- Rowena Finn, Virginia Beach, Artist, Art Instructor, Governor’s School for the Arts.
- Razi Hashmi, Fairfax, Foreign Policy Professional
- Justin Lo, Vice-Chair, Richmond, Senior Counsel, Virginia State Corporation Commission
- Suja S. Mathew, Henrico, Henrico, Policy Analyst, Association of American Physicians and Surgeons
- Praveendharan Meyyan, Arlington, Senior Economist
- Carla Okouchi, Fairfax, Music Educator and Choral Director
- Da Lin Sheth, Richmond, Assistant Professor of Law, University of Richmond School of Law
- Jewan “Jack” Tiwari, Prince William, President, Nepalese American Forum for Political Empowerment; Realtor; and Small Business Owner, Prime Estates, Inc.; and Arbina LLC
- Pient Y. Tran, Richmond, Vice President, Capital One

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

- John Littel, Secretary of Health and Human Resources
- Terrance C. “Terry” Cole, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland
- Aimee Rogstad Guidera, Secretary of Education
- Kelly Gee, Secretary of the Commonwealth
- Dr. Alexis Ablasca, MD, FAAP, FAPA, Chief Clinical Officer at Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

ADMINISTRATION

- Justin Bell, JD, Board Legal Counsel, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
- Emma Jensen, Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administration, Secretary of the Commonwealth

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Established by statute in 2001 as a governmental entity of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the purpose of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (“VAAB” or “Board”) shall be to advise the Governor on ways to improve economic and cultural links between the Commonwealth and Asian nations, with a focus on the areas of commerce and trade, art and education, and general government, and on issues affecting the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities in the Commonwealth.

According to the Code, the Virginia Asian Advisory Board has the power and duty to:

- Undertake studies and gather information and data in order to accomplish its purposes as set forth in § 2.2-2448.
- Apply for, accept and expend gifts, grants, or donations from public, quasi-public or private sources, including any matching funds as may be designated in the Appropriation Act, to enable it to better carry out its purposes.
- Report annually its findings and recommendations to the Governor. The board may make interim reports to the Governor, as it deems advisable.
- Account annually on its fiscal activities, including any matching funds received or expended by the Board.

The VAAB focuses its work on four key areas that are important to the API community. Board members serve on committees to help advance these areas.

COMMITTEES

BUSINESS & TRADE

Purpose: Examines the barriers to and opportunities for economic prosperity with respect to API owned or focused businesses in the Commonwealth. Additionally, we explore opportunities to enhance global trade with Asian and Pacific Islander partners and attract foreign investment in the Commonwealth.

Members: **Henry Yuan (Chair)**, Laura Beldin, Bobby Ly, Ssunny Shah, My Lan Tran, Xiawei Lin

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Purpose: Assesses the engagement of the API community within the Commonwealth in the areas of public services and programs, voter engagement, and civic participation. We explore the barriers to awareness and access, and work to improve communication between the Administration, service and program providers, and our disparate communities.

Members: **Thomas Fitzpatrick (Chair)**, Shakira Khan, Pepe Cabacoy, Dokmai Webster, Harshad Barot

EDUCATION

Purpose: Focuses on addressing the barriers to achieving a world-class education for APIs and all Virginians. The Asian and Pacific Islander community places high value on achieving through educational attainment across the educational spectrum; K-12, post-secondary (two and four-year), graduate and professional, as well as trade and adult studies.

Members: **Quan Schneider (Chair)**, Nina Ha, Tian Olson, Tony Yeh

HEALTH

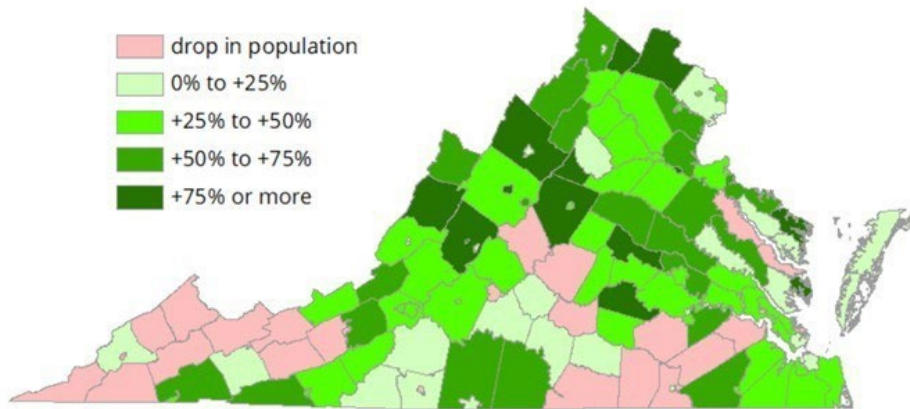
Purpose: Delves into the varying health disparities that exist between AAPI communities and other communities in the Commonwealth. Additionally, we examine how the varying social determinants of health affect the delivery and providers of health services to our communities.

As the racial and ethnic demographics of our Commonwealth continues to shift, there is greater need for pathways and workforce opportunity programming that encourages a more representative at all levels in the healthcare workforce.

Members: **Salinna Lor (Chair)**, Srilekha Palle, Marie Sankaran Raval, Kamlesh Dave, Minesh Patel

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian American Pacific Islander Population Change 2010 to 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

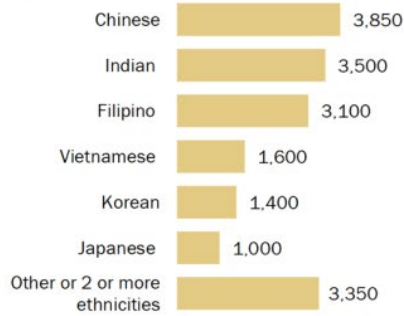
AAPIs are the fastest growing racial and ethnic population in the US. Virginia's API population similarly reflects this growth. Between 2010 and 2020, the API population in Virginia is estimated to have grown by 40%. Pew Research Center (2023) indicates "About 17.8 million Asian adults live in the United States, accounting for 7% of the total adult population, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of the 2021 American Community Survey. This population has roughly doubled since 2000, when 8.7 million Asian adults lived in the country.

Additionally, "Chinese adults are the largest Asian American ethnic origin group, accounting for 22% of the total Asian adult population. They are followed by Indian (20%) and Filipino (17%) adults, each making up roughly one-in-five Asian American adults. Vietnamese (9%), Korean (8%) and Japanese (6%) adults round up the top six largest Asian ethnic origin groups in the U.S. Together, these six groups make up 81% of all Asian American adults" (Pew Research Center, May 8, 2023).

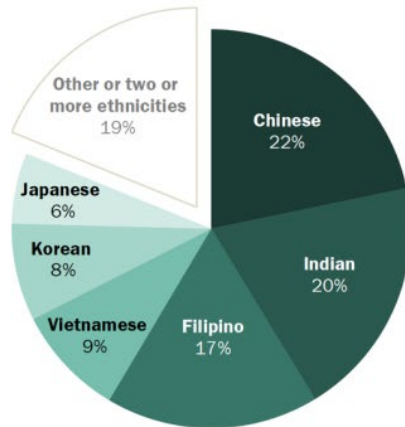
Six origin groups make up 81% of Asian American adults.

Six origin groups make up 81% of Asian American adults

Adult populations of Asian origin groups in the U.S., in thousands, 2021



% of Asian adults who are ___, 2021



Note: Asian adults include those who say their race is Asian alone and non-Hispanic, Asian and at least one other race and non-Hispanic, or Asian and Hispanic. The largest six ethnic groups include those who report being one Asian ethnicity only, alone or in combination with a non-Asian race or ethnicity. "Chinese" includes those identifying as Taiwanese. "Other or two or more ethnicities" includes those who identify with ethnic origin groups that are not one of the six largest Asian origin groups or who identify with two or more Asian ethnicities. Population estimates are rounded to the nearest 50,000. Percentages calculated from unrounded numbers. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2021 American Community Survey (IPUMS). "Diverse Cultures and Shared Experiences Shape Asian American Identities"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Foreign-born Virginians in 2021 reported their race as white (19.3 percent), Asian (36.8 percent), black (11.2 percent), or two or more other races (16.7 percent). Nearly 33 percent of the foreign born reported that they were Hispanic or Latino (VA State Information Data Profile, Migration Policy Institute, 2021.).

According to APIAVote (2022), the largest Asian American ethnic groups in Virginia include: Asian Indian (165,617), Filipino (112,885), Chinese, except Taiwanese (95,177), Korean (93,825), Vietnamese (71,379) and Pakistani (37,867). The largest NHPI ethnic groups in Virginia include: Native Hawaiian (5,619),

Guamanian or Chamorro (4,308) and Samoan (2,645). The top 5 Asian languages spoken in Virginia are Chinese (59,629), Korean (57,693), Vietnamese (48,883), Tagalog (46,627) and Urdu (35,717). Moreover, from 2010 to 2020, the number of eligible AAPI voters in Virginia grew by 62%.

IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS*

- 79% OF Asian American adults in Virginia speak a language other than English at home, and 31% are Limited English Proficient (speak English less than “very well”)
- In the 2022 Asian American Voter Survey, among Asian Americans that spoke a language other than English at home, 11% said that language has been a barrier in voting in previous elections and 42% said they would make use of voting assistance in their language (national-level data)

SOCIOECONOMIC CHALLENGES*

- 41,494 Asian Americans in Virginia (7%) lack health insurance
- 40,507 Asian Americans in Virginia (7%) live in poverty
- 11,568 Asian Americans in Virginia (2%) lack broadband access
- 448 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (NHPIs) in Virginia (8%) lack health insurance
- 556 NHPIs in Virginia (10%) live in poverty
- 335 NHPIs in Virginia (6%) lack broadband access

OUTREACH AND FACT-FINDING ACTIVITIES

On October 22, 2023, the VAAB, in collaboration with the APIDA + Center at Virginia Tech hosted a Town Hall/Listening Session to learn about the challenges and issues facing the APIDA communities, particularly at Virginia Tech.



Community Members’ Contributions:

Courtney Le, President of the Asian American Student Union at Virginia Tech:

- Articulated a need for an Asian American Studies curriculum.
- Articulated a need for more professionally trained Mental Health Providers, not only at Virginia Tech (of which there are currently now AAPI therapists at Virginia Tech’s Cook Counseling Center), but all over the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- Articulated that there is still Anti-Asian sentiments whereby students are treated with disrespect.

Temujin Chojilsuren, former President of the Korean American Student Association and former Vice President of the Political Science Club:

- Articulated a need to disaggregate AAPI demographics.
- Articulated a need to better support the Mongolian American community.

Michelle Ausman, Gia Ha, and Farooq Zahid, members of the Graduate Asian Pacific Islander Desi Association at Virginia Tech:

- Articulated a need to support graduate students who face many challenges such as food/rent/childcare insecurity.
- Articulated a need for graduate students making a living wage.

- Articulated a need to better support international graduate students who cannot always find campus jobs and make a living, particularly during the summer. Many international graduate students cannot work off campus.

Business & Trade Committee

Virginia went up to #2 in the “The Top States for Business” by CNBC in 2023, up from #3 in 2022¹. The rapidly evolving landscape surrounding the AAPI community in the Commonwealth further underscores the need to incorporate the AAPI business community and private sector recommendations into the policy making efforts. The insights gained from regional partners and the town hall meetings across the Commonwealth have allowed the Business and Trade Committee to refine and strengthen these recommendations, presenting a compelling case for its inclusion in further dialogue and policymaking consideration.

To ensure the AAPI business community would be able to stay abreast of the latest programs and resources that were made available to them, VAAB will take a phased approach to communicate and share relevant recommendations from this report through various channels, such as town hall meetings, listening sessions, and roundtables. This way, the key priorities could be effectively disseminated deeper into the AAPI business community leaders while continuously soliciting feedback to inform future policy discussion in the administration.

We would like to thank the following Virginia Tech students for their assistance, research, and drafting of this report: Faiyaz Azam, Dylan Todas, Ethan Zachery Bernabe, Sriya Botlaguduru, Phoebe Hayashi, Ahad Jan, and Khang Nguyen. Much of the information contained in the report came from a paper they drafted and presented to the VAAB townhall meeting in Blacksburg, Virginia on October 22, 2023.

Recommendation #1: VAAB recommends that more effort be put into collecting demographic data at the state level and better disaggregate data to better inform policy, particularly when the policy affects the AAPI community and enables the environment for AAPI businesses.

Demographic data can guide efficient resource allocation across the state or within specific communities. Analyzing demographic data enables government agencies to identify disparities across multiple dimensions including age, race, gender, income, and educational attainment. VAAB identifies several challenges that require attention, particularly in areas with the identification of highly concentrated industries of AAPI-owned businesses. One key issue is the lack of comprehensive support and access to essential resources like funding, grants, and business development programs. For example, while the Commonwealth maintains detailed data on prime contracts awarded through state procurement, there is a glaring gap in the collection of data concerning subcontracts. To address this, the VAAB strongly recommends that the Commonwealth begin to systematically collect and analyze data on all subcontracts, not just those from certified SWaM (Small, Women-owned, and Minority-owned) businesses. This approach would provide a fuller picture of business participation in state procurement and could help identify any disparities in access to opportunities for AAPI and other minority business communities. The administration shall develop a consolidated and comprehensive dashboard to disaggregate data and show the industry and business type breakdown by AAPI business owners and operators. These efforts can be accomplished by partnering with community organizations, such as the Asian Chamber of Commerce, Asian Business Owners Association, Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce, or others, to provide very small businesses with assistance in navigating available state requirements and resources.

¹ “Top States for Business,” CNBC, July 11, 2023 <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/07/11/north-carolina-is-top-state-for-business-led-by-workforce-economy.html>

VAAB continuously encourages the administration to continue to monitor, make regular updates to the Northern Virginia Regional Commission data dashboard, and intentionally share resources to ensure these regional commission data are accessible and understood by state agencies and the AAPI community. These include but are not limited to efforts such as the announcements about the availability of the data for public comments, convening of public meetings and town halls for the public to seek clarifications, and incorporate feedback. After policies are implemented, ongoing collection and analysis of demographic data—including educational attainment levels—are essential for evaluating the impact of these policies.

Recommendation #2: VAAB urges the administration to promote and encourage interagency collaboration to enhance procurement opportunities and remove hurdles faced by AAPI businesses to do business with the state.

VAAB sees the opportunity to get more AAPI businesses get registered as vendors on the purchasing system through the Virginia’s eProcurement Marketplace (eVA) and to get certified with the Small, Women-owned, and Minority-owned Business (SWaM) business certification program encourages minority and women-owned businesses to participate in state and local government funded projects. The Virginia Department of General Services (DGS), along with the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and higher education institutions (HEIs) have statutory authority for enforcing procurement policy for Commonwealth agencies. Currently, state procurement priorities and processes make it difficult for SWaM and AAPI-owned businesses. Subcontracts often represent accessible opportunities for small businesses, including minority- and woman-owned businesses, to become involved in contracting with the Commonwealth. However, subcontracting accounts for a relatively small percentage of the total contract and procurement that the Commonwealth awards.

To increase subcontract opportunities, the Commonwealth could consider implementing a program that requires prime contractors to subcontract a minimum amount of project work. The committee noticed that the prequalification process has been a barrier for many small AAPI businesses. Based on the Virginia Public Procurement Act, it prequalifies contractors and limits consideration of associated bids and proposals to only those contractors. The administration should consider ways to offset any burdensome aspects of prequalification to better encourage the participation of AAPI business owners.

Recommendation #3: Address language barriers and enhance workforce diversity by researching the demand for more Asian languages and consider offering these languages for certification and making business-related documents available in Asian languages.

AAPIs have the highest rates of self-employment, many of them owning a small business. One of the barriers for AAPIs can be language access. The committee recognizes that the administration is working on language access at various departments and agencies. Virginia’s API population is about 6.9%.² These five largest AAPI ethnic groups are Indian (23.85%), Filipino (14.98%), Korean (14.89%), Chinese (13.92%), and Vietnamese (12.15%). Indian and Filipino households speak English at higher rates, so language access is more of a concern for Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Khmer households.

² Quickfacts Virginia, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/VA>

In Virginia, many of the licensing exams are already offered in Korean and Vietnamese. Also, the Virginia court system offers translator certification in Arabic, Korean, Mandarin, Vietnamese.³ However, VAAB has identified areas of enhancement. For instance, two of the largest Asian groups in Virginia are Indian and Filipino, and they do not have their languages (mainly Tagalog and Urdu) offered by certified court interpreters or in business-related documents, which the VAAB believes is a gap that should be filled.

There are many benefits to ensuring that Asian language remain accessible to those for whom English may not be a first language:

1. Virginia retains skillful workers and disincentivizes them from moving to another state, such as Maryland, to take licensing courses or to work.
2. Expanding certified languages offered by the court would help the Foreign Language Services Division of the Virginia Courts in their mission in overcoming language limitations so as to ensure universal access to Virginia's Judicial System⁴.
3. Virginia ensures that its workforce in these professions is well trained and offers safe and dynamic services that can adequately serve the growing diverse AAPI community.

Recommendation #4: Enhance digital literacy programs for Asian small business owners.

Virginia is the home for major employers and Fortune, Forbes and Inc. ranking companies and they call the state home for their worldwide headquarters or major corporate sites. To build a nurturing environment to attract, retain, and serve dynamic talents and the AAPI community in the areas where these corporations are located, VAAB encourages the administration to continue to attract Asian descent and AAPI-owned businesses.

Internet access and digital literacy skills are crucial from accessing healthcare and job opportunities to building lifelong connections. AAPI small business owners are demanding greater access to more reliable and digital literacy training. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the businesses that performed and pivoted successfully were the ones that could shift their operations to the digital realm. But according to several community interviews and the research studies, the non-English small business owners that have relatively low literacy skills were not familiar with the adoption of digital tools. This shows a need for digital literacy training for AAPI small business owners who may still run their businesses but are unable to efficiently navigate government resources online and incorporate new technologies into their day-to-day operations.

Recommendation #5: Enhance assistance to the hospitality and tourism industry through fostering workforce development and increasing marketing funds to the Virginia Tourism Commission.

The tourism industry of Virginia in 2022 generated around \$30.3 billion in terms of visitor spending, representing a 20.3% increase from the year before. The Virginia tourism industry directly generated 210,721 jobs⁵. VAAB notes that the AAPI community has played a significant role in the tourism industry,

³ "Frequently Asked Questions about Certification." Virginia's Judicial System, Office of the Executive Secretary <https://www.courts.state.va.us/courtadmin/aoc/djs/programs/interpreters/faqaboutcertification.html>

⁴ "Frequently Asked Questions about Certification." Virginia's Judicial System, Office of the Executive Secretary <https://www.courts.state.va.us/courtadmin/aoc/djs/programs/interpreters/faqaboutcertification.html>

⁵ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2023/july/name-1010753-en.html#:~:text=The%20tourism%20industry%20in%20Virginia,from%20%2469%20million%20in%202021>

and the large number of hotels and restaurants are owned and operated in the Commonwealth of Virginia by members of the Asian American community.

Supporting the Virginia Tourism Commission (VTC) can create new opportunities for local businesses throughout the state, given the integral role that tourism plays in Virginia's economy. The committee is hopeful that the administration can work with associated agencies to help invest in workforce development and training programs for the jobs, especially adding targeted marketing funds to promote tourism through VTC. Also, facilitating public-private partnerships between the VTC and local AAPI businesses could partner together to extend the community reach and ensure that the unique needs and opportunities of the business community are considered in tourism strategies. More importantly, VAAB also recommends the administration and state agencies streamline permit processes for public spaces, underutilized venues, and underrepresented regions in the Commonwealth. This would make it easier for businesses to establish destinations and host unique programming that authentic to resonate with Virginia's branding and attract tourists.

Civic Engagement Committee

As we have reported in past Annual Reports, the Civic Engagement Committee continued to focus on three areas; AAPI engagement in the voting and elections, AAPI community engagement, and AAPI representation in state government.

Unfortunately, the challenges faced in each of these focus areas are evergreen, and the recommendations remain similar to previous reports. Specifically, the committee recommends:

- Appreciating the vast AAPI contributions to the Commonwealth,
- Expanding language access for AAPIs,
- Understanding the diversity of Virginia’s different AAPI communities,
- Allocating funding and resources for efforts to improve AAPI civic engagement, and
- Empowering AAPI leaders.

We would like to thank the following Virginia Tech students for their assistance, research, and drafting of this report: Brigitte Tran, Riley Johnson, Myla Gao, Kareena Mehta, Jake Clingerman, James Kim, Dawn Aerni, Mohammad Farooq Zahid, Shefali Verma. Much of the information contained in the report came from a paper they drafted and presented to the VAAB townhall meeting in Blacksburg, Virginia on October 22, 2023.

Focus Area #1: Voting and Elections

The Committee continues to remain concerned with underrepresentation of AAPIs and obstacles to voting access. Voting in Virginia, especially for AAPIs, has unique complications, including engagement, identification, language barriers, and socioeconomic challenges that need to be more formally addressed. While there are 383,842 eligible AAPI voters (including the multi-racial population), accounting for around 5.63% of the Virginia total population⁶, there are no published sources that record how many AAPIs vote in Virginia elections. In fact, in the final Virginia election survey conducted by Christopher Newport University, the only ethnicities listed were white, African American, Hispanic, or other⁷. This lack of data prevents analysis of voter data in the Asian population in Virginia. AAPIs often do not get the choice to put down their race, having to list “other.”

Another major obstacle that has been identified within the Virginia AAPI voter demographics is the language barrier and lack of language access. According to the 2022 AAPI voter demographics, 79% of AAPIs in Virginia speak a language other than English at home and 31% reported not being proficient in English. This information illustrates the barriers that may appear when Asian Americans go to cast their vote. The top five Asian languages spoken in Virginia are any Chinese dialect (Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.) (59,629), Korean (57,693), Vietnamese (48,883), Tagalog (46,627), and Urdu (35,717)⁸. The 2022 Asian American Voter Survey indicated that among Asian Americans who speak another language other than English at home, 11% said that language was a barrier in voting in previous elections. Fairfax County is the only jurisdiction in Virginia with additional language requirements mandated by the Voting Rights Act.⁷ In

⁶ 2022 AAPI VOTER DEMOGRAPHICS BY STATE,” accessed October 12, 2023, <https://apiavote.org/wp-content/uploads/Virginia.pdf>.

⁷ Final 2021 Virginia Election Survey,” Christopher Newport University, May 26, 2023, <https://cnu.edu/wasoncenter/surveys/archive/2021-10-27.html>

⁸ 2022 AAPI VOTER DEMOGRAPHICS BY STATE

Fairfax County, ballots and voter information are available in four languages: English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean. While the smaller percentage of AAPI voters in other localities does not trigger the Voting Rights Act requirement for, the lack of language access resources for the AAPI community is a barrier to AAPIs ability to exercise their right to vote.

Recommendations:

- Collect demographic data for all races including AAPIs.
- Add more translation options to increase AAPI voter turnout.
- Make a specific resource for Virginia AAPI community members to learn more about voting and increase voting participation for AAPIs.

Focus Area #2: Community Engagement

Engagement, Education, and Mindset

Students at the Harvard Graduate School of Education reported that while their K-16 curriculum incorporated Asian American history, the content only included brief comments about wars, threats, and immigration policy. Without accurate Asian American representation, the full context of a complex racialized nation is lost, rendering Asian Americans invisible and wedged between an uncomplicated Black-White binary that often dominates race conversations in the U.S.⁹ Without accurate representation, the AAPI population is vulnerable to stereotypes and discrimination. AAPIs consist of approximately 7% of Virginia’s population and are the fastest-growing population in the U.S. Thus, it is imperative that the educational curriculum is reflective of its population; Asian American History is American History.

Numerous studies have found that Ethnic Studies curricula have a positive impact on students, such as increased attendance, grades, graduation rates, academic engagement, and more.¹⁰ Contrasting this, social impediments to youth engagement include “lack of horizontal communication among youth and adult groups,” framing of youth as “a source of worry...not potential,” “partnerships with peers/adults, peers’ reluctance to exercise civic duty, social-emotional factors, and lack of resources.”¹¹ We recommend the inclusion of curricula that address this in both secondary and post-secondary education.

A significant contribution to the non-engagement mindset in the AAPI community is the idea that those in the AAPI community should “sit quietly.” This narrative has long been promoted in the media and often in the words of state government officials. AAPIs report feeling unseen and that they should not participate in civic engagement due to stereotypes of the AAPI community.¹² When AAPIs do participate

⁹ Kim, Josephine et al. “Countering a History of Invisibility, Erasure, and Exclusion through an Asian American Ethnic Studies Course.” *Asian American Policy Review*, Issue 33 (April, 2023). Harvard Kennedy School.

¹⁰ Sade Bonilla, Thomas S. Dee, and Emily K. Penner. “Ethnic Studies Increases Longer-Run Academic Engagement and Attainment,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 118, no. 37 (September 14, 2021): e2026386118, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2026386118>

¹¹ Michelle Bauml, Victoria Davis Smith & Brooke Blevins (2022) “Who Cares?”: Young Adolescents’ Perceived Barriers to Civic Action. *RMLE Online*, 45:3, 1-20, DOI: 10.1080/19404476.2022.2033069

¹² Moser, Laura. “Life in the Pressure Cooker.” *Slate* (June 09, 2016) <https://slate.com/human-interest/2016/06/immigration-jobs-and-schools-made-fairfax-virginia-a-hub-of-stem-focused-asian-students-what-about-kids-who-dont-fit-the-mold.html>

in voting, they have been known to be able to turn the tide significantly.¹³ When minority groups don't see themselves considered in policies or represented by government officials, they are discouraged from engaging. We recommend education that counteracts this mindset.

Recommendations:

- Civic education which focuses on contextualizing how civic life influences dispositions and actions, with an emphasis on civic responsibility and collective actions (especially during the development of moral ideas during secondary education).
- Civic education encourages ownership involving youth as authentic actors in civic projects, youth-adult partnerships, and facilitative policies and structures to sustain civic engagement. This will result in engagement in meaningful problem-solving, youth civic action, and collective, supportive activity.
- Virginia to study gaps in Asian American education to guide Virginia's education policy. Our overarching recommendations are to include comprehensive Asian American history as part of the public school curriculum (as Illinois requires) and to include an ethnic studies class as part of college graduate requirements (as California and Oregon require).¹⁴

Policing and Systematic Racism

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., the issue of hate crimes against AAPI members throughout the country and in Virginia has risen, with Attorney General Jason Miyares reporting nearly 3,800 hate crimes being reported since March 2020.¹⁵ This is only a fraction of the hate crimes that occurred during this period. Twenty percent of those who experienced a hate crime and did not report cited that they felt the police could not do anything or would not help. A common solution proposed is increased policing in AAPI-heavy communities. This aims to foster better relationships and familiarity between the police and these communities.¹⁶ However, this creates increased policing in areas that are already heavily policed, such as predominantly low-income Black and Brown communities.¹⁷ This perpetuates the idea that the government views the AAPI communities as model minorities and people in need of protection from other minority groups. In turn, weaponizing AAPI groups against other minorities creates an even harsher environment, potentially fueling more hate crimes and making AAPI's feel small, discouraging them from participating in community involvement as well as civic engagement. In 2020, 87% of all eligible police agencies did not report any of the hate crimes reported to them to the FBI.¹⁸

¹³ Nikore, Varun. "Asian voters could decide the Virginia governor's election. And many other races." Think NBC (November 02, 2021) <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/politics-policy/virginia-election-2021-asian-voters-impact-results-rcna4348>

¹⁴ Tran, David. "'We are invisible': Asian Americans seek to fill in gaps in Virginia's history curriculum." Richmond Times Dispatch. August 6, 2021.

¹⁵ Miyares, Jason S. "No Hate VA" Office of the Attorney General. <https://www.oag.state.va.us/programs-outreach/no-hate-va>

¹⁶ Virginia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. "Hate Crime Statistics and Incidence in Virginia." (November 2020) <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2020/2020-11-23-Hate-Crime-Statistics-and-Incidence-in-Virginia.pdf>

¹⁷ Furuya, A.T. "GLSEN Stories: Solidarity with the AAPI Community." <https://www.glsen.org/blog/glsen-stories-solidarity-AAPI-community>

¹⁸ Virginia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. "Hate Crime Statistics and Incidence in Virginia." (November 2020) <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2020/2020-11-23-Hate-Crime-Statistics-and-Incidence-in-Virginia.pdf>

Recommendations:

- Form community-based support groups that law enforcement can be involved in to help with reporting hate crimes but keep them from feeling like a threat to minorities in these communities.

Focus Area #3: State and Government Representation

In the past two Annual Reports, the VAAB has documented the several underrepresentation of AAPIs in state government. While the number of AAPI legislators has increased since those reports were published, AAPIs still account for about 1% of authorized judgeships in Virginia. One impediment to AAPI representation in government observed by the Virginia Tech students is how elected officials discuss Asian and Asian American issues in the media. Since the outbreak of the Coronavirus in 2020, roughly 32% of Asian adults have feared violent attacks due to their race.¹⁹ This perception of Asians and Asian Americans causing the pandemic during this time has also been fueled by many politicians through social media. According to the Pew Research Center, the number of posts in 2020 mentioning Asian Americans made by members of Congress online almost doubled from previous years. The majority of these posts made by Congress are regarding violence, racism, xenophobia, and discrimination. Many of these representatives do not make the distinction between Asians and Asian Americans, often lumping these issues to discuss both groups even though they may not be relevant to both parties simultaneously. Discussing global issues without separating AAPIs can discourage AAPIs from running for government positions and impact the perception of AAPI candidates that non-AAPIs have.

Recommendations:

- Appoint more AAPIs within the executive branch as agency heads, cabinet members, deputies, special assistants, college/university presidents, and other salaried, appointed positions.
- Produce accurate, nuanced information online to clear the perceptions that non-AAPIs have of Asian Americans.

Background on the Asian American Workforce²⁰

Asian Americans make up approximately 6.6% of the US workforce. Asian Americans make up a disproportionate share of high-paying occupations in computer science, math, engineering, health, and business. But they are also highly represented in lower-paying personal care and service work. For example, Asian Americans represent approximately 36.4% of the computer hardware engineers and 43.1% of medical scientists. At the same time, Asian Americans make up approximately 10.1% of employees in the personal care and services workers. They represent about 73.1% of manicurists and pedicurists specifically. The median weekly earnings for manicurists and pedicurists in 2022 was \$677 and it is 36% below the national average of \$1,059.

The demographic is least represented in the construction and extraction field, comprising 1.7% of the workforce. This is an underrepresentation of 4.9 percentage points. Asian Americans' diverse experiences

¹⁹ Sono Shah, "How U.S. Lawmakers Have Discussed Asian Americans on Social Media," Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project, May 13, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2021/05/13/how-u-s-lawmakers-have-discussed-asian-americans-on-social-media/>.

²⁰ USA Facts, Which jobs have the highest representation of Asian Americans? May 1, 2023

are reflected in their employment. Taiwanese and Indian Americans are particularly well-represented in management, business, science, and arts fields. Vietnamese and Thai Americans are highly represented in service occupations.

Education Committee

The Education Committee continues to focus on several core areas that are challenges for the AAPI community and the outreach to the broader Commonwealth of Virginia. These focus areas are:

1. Asian American Pacific Islander Curriculum in K-12
2. Asian American Pacific Islander Curriculum in Higher Education
3. Asian American Pacific Islander Teacher Recruitment, Retention and Leadership
4. Excellence in Education Through Promoting a Healthy Environment
5. Fine Arts Facility Space

The Education Committee wants to thank the following Virginia Tech students for their research and assistance in the drafting of this report: Gayatri Kamtala, Mekhi Lewis, Alexander Mai, Riley Phillips, Tara Tran, Matthew Qian, Aaron Ye, Joel Yi, Pamela Untalan. Some of the information contained in this report came from the paper they drafted and presented to the VAAB townhall meeting in Blacksburg, Virginia on October 22, 2023.

The Pew Research Center lists Asian Americans as the fastest-growing demographic in the United States, with a considerable increase of 81% from 2000 to 2019. Furthermore, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) were listed as a separate demographic, although they also had a significant increase in population, precisely 61%. According to NCES, currently 7.6% of Pre-K through 12th graders in public schools throughout America are Asian, while 11.6% are Pacific Islanders. Around 2.4 % of public school teachers and 2.5 % of private school teachers are Asian, and around 0.2 % of public school teachers are Pacific Islanders. In 2020, 1.3 million Asian students and 49 thousand Pacific Islanders were enrolled in colleges and universities.

Within the state of Virginia, the Asian American population grew 40% from 2010 to 2020, and AAPI now comprise 8% of the population according to the 2022 census. Within the state's three largest counties, Fairfax, Prince Williams, and Loudoun, however, APIDA students make up 19.8%, 9.7%, and 24.4% of their respective populations. In comparison, the three smallest counties, Highland, Norton, and Bath, APIDA students make up roughly 0%, 0.2%, and 0.8% of their respective populations.

Focus Area #1: Asian American Pacific Islander Curriculum in K-12 Education

Representation of all ethnic and cultural groups are important for student identity development.²¹ Illinois²², New Jersey²³, New York²⁴, and Connecticut²⁵ have all passed legislation to include AAPI Studies into their curriculum. Twenty states have mandated the teaching of AAPI history²⁶. Virginia has the opportunity to lead, encourage, and support this initiative to better educate its student population. We recommend that the Governor support efforts to include broader AAPI History and Social

²¹ <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/364955/pdf>

²² <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=110&GA=102&DocTypeId=HB&DocNum=0376&GAID=16&LegID=128327&SpecSess=&Session=>

²³ <https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562022/20220118c.shtml>

²⁴ <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/A7260>

²⁵ <https://www.cga.ct.gov/searchresults.asp?cx=005177121039084408563%3Ahs1zq3ague8&ie=UTF-8&cof=FORID%3A10&q=asian+american+pacific+islander+studies&submission=%EF%80%82>

²⁶ <https://www.taaf.org/ourwork/education#:~:text=Only%2020%20states%20have%20mandated,for%20these%20states%20remains%20inconsistent.&text=5%20additional%20states%20are%20in,history%20into%20K%2D12%20c lassrooms.>

Studies in the updated Standards of Learning (SOL). Although VA SB156²⁷ failed, we recommend and advocate that the Governor support this initiative in the future. As expressed in previous reports, we continue to encourage the facilitation of English language learning so that students can be better prepared to participate in civic education and engagement.

VA SB156: Requires state funding to be provided to support, in the 2022-2023 school year and thereafter, a new division wide ratio of English learner students in average daily membership to full-time equivalent teaching positions of 22 full-time equivalent instructional positions for each 1,000 students identified as having limited English proficiency.

In alignment with the Virginia Department of Education's Title III: Language Instruction for English Learners & Immigration students there exists programs that provide translation services to English second-language students as well as parents (Title III). The gap in services exists in understanding the needs of the AAPI Virginia community due to the aggregation of data. Funds are allocated without the knowledge of what AAPI needs for translation and cultural services due to the aggregation of data. As a result, school fund allocation is distributed without consideration for the languages required and programs required. Instead, as of the 2023-24 Title II allocation report, fund allocation is primarily based on the previous year's (2022) enrollment of English learners (Title III). Fund allocation differs on language and cultural needs as well as enrollment. Standards for translation services should include cultural knowledge and understanding as well as demographic information. Understanding these needs is not possible without the disaggregation of data.

Recommendations:

- Inclusion of Asian American and Pacific Islander studies in Public School K-12 and Higher Education curriculum.
- Provide financial resources to assist Asian American Pacific Islander English Language Learners and develop more robust language access.

Focus Area #2: Asian American Pacific Islander Curriculum in Higher Education

The lack of AAPI programs and classes at colleges and universities have been evident in the nation. An example of this can be seen in the report by students at the University of Virginia (UVA), titled "We Are Not Invisible." According to page 4, the AAPI curriculum should not have only one or two faculty members at the university level teaching the class at a public university that emphasizes diversity. What was also mentioned in the report, was that there is a lack of AAPI faculty in the university which further meant that the curriculum is not able to be fully supported by the school with great structure. Compared to other universities such as William & Mary, the University of Virginia lacks AAPI classes, majors, and minors. Despite having a greater student and faculty population, UVA lacks in curriculum compared to other colleges such as Brown, Harvard, and many more. In general, the AAPI curriculum is currently lacking throughout all levels of education.

Higher Education Offerings Examples:

William and Mary APIA (Asian/Pacific Islander American):

- Asian/Pacific Islander American APIA 222

²⁷ <https://www.billtrack50.com/billdetail/1415011>

- Acting Asian American APIA 315
- Asian Pacific American History APIA 320
- Islamophobia APIA 337
- Immigration, Assimilation, and Ethnicity APIA 350
- Topics in APIA Studies APIA 351
- Peoples and Cultures of Polynesia APIA 364
- Asian American Experience: Part 1, 1849-1965 APIA 365
- Asian American Experience: Part 2, 1965-present APIA 366
- Asian American Studies APIA 444
- Filipino American & Diaspora Studies APIA 445
- Korean American Diaspora Studies APIA 480
- Independent Study APIA 205
- Introduction to Asian & Pacific Islander American Studies APIA 332
- Sex & Race in Plays & Films: Dramatizing Diversity THEA 332

Yale AMST (American Studies):

- AMST 235 Language, Disability, Fiction
- AMST 272 Asian American History, 1800 to the Present
- AMST 719 Interrogating the Crisis of Islam
- AMST 840 Asian Inhumanities

Virginia Tech (Virginia Tech only offers the Asian American Experience Course as the only class directly tied to AAPI Studies. All the courses listed below are actually in Asian Studies with tenuous links to Asian American or AAPI Studies.):

- JPN 2744 - From Atom to Akira: Japanese Pop Culture (3 credits)
- CHN 2734 - Chinese Culture and Civilization
- CHN 3474 - Topics in Chinese Cinema
- CHN 3514 - Modern China through the Media, CHN 3604 - Chinese Language and Society, ARBC 2774 Arab Culture and Civilization
- ARBC 3274 - War and Arab Culture, ARBC 3644 - Religion in the Middle East
- ARBC 4334 - Research in Arab Culture

In comparison to other colleges, colleges in Virginia offer very little in terms of non-language-based APIDA courses. Not only is there very little, but only Chinese, Japanese, and Arabian cultures have been included, leaving out a multitude of other cultures and regions of APIDA.

Recommendations:

- Propose to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) that AAPI curriculum is necessary at the university level, not just in K-12 Education.

Focus Area #3: Asian American Pacific Islander Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Leadership

Although the number of Asian American Pacific Islander population continues to grow across the Commonwealth there is still little representation reflected in our educational workforce. In fact, the first ever Asian American Superintendent in the State of Virginia was elected in 2019-2020. For the academic

school year 2021-2022, there were zero (0) AAPI Superintendents. According to the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, the breakdown was 101 White superintendents, 33 African American superintendents, 1 Hispanic superintendent, and 0 Asian American superintendents. At the moment, there is no official tracking of this data. In fact, data provided from the Virginia Department of Education²⁸ is incomplete. Educators or employees in the Commonwealth are not required to provide race or ethnicity on any employment or personnel documents. Moreover, since outreach to elementary principal and secondary principal organizations is nonexistent, we recommend that moving forward official records of education administrators be gathered.

Bill VA HB979²⁹ was passed in April 2022 and it is important to follow up to ensure that Asian American Pacific Islander community members, students, and educators are aware of this provision to encourage more people to enter into the educational workforce. From our listening sessions, aspiring educators and Asian American Pacific Islander parents shared concerns on the lack of representation in our classrooms, curriculum, and administrators. We recommend partnering with the National Education Association³⁰, Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education³¹ leadership programs, professional development, mentorship and pathways into leadership. We recommend providing mentoring support to AAPI students, teachers, and administrators from across the state, using formal and informal approaches.

Recommendations:

- Develop a tracking and report mechanism to collect accurate data on Asian-American and Pacific Islander who are teachers, building-level administrators, central-office personnel, and superintendents.
- Virginia Institutions of higher education partner with the Virginia Department of Education to promote and attract aspiring Asian American Pacific Islander education majors.
- Professional Development opportunities for Asian American Pacific Islander educators and aspiring educators who seek mentorship and guidance for Leadership Roles in Administration.

Focus Area #4: Excellence in Education Through Promoting a Healthy Environment

Summary from 2021-2022 Report:

Asian American Pacific Islander communities are among the high risk groups³² most concerned with airborne viruses such as Covid, Monkeypox, Polio³³, and layered mitigation strategies for public health and safety. Improving Public School ventilation³⁴ and filtration³⁵ should be a top priority. School systems such as Abrome³⁶ were able to close out their third year without a single known case of COVID-19 entering their school facilities. They focused on

1. Not bringing COVID into their education community and

²⁸ https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/workforce_data/index.shtml

²⁹ <https://www.billtrack50.com/billdetail/1422399>

³⁰ <https://nea-apic.com/2020/08/31/aapi-mentorship-program/>

³¹ http://apahenational.org/?page_id=6

³² <https://aahiinfo.org/health-disparities/>

³³ https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0196655316305363?ref=cra_js_challenge&fr=RR-1

³⁴ <https://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/filtration-and-disinfection-faq>

³⁵ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/17/fact-sheet-biden-administration-launches-effort-to-improve-ventilation-and-reduce-the-spread-of-covid-19-in-buildings/>

³⁶ https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NS_KrkiSYHdW2xdEO7N13mZ0TqG-jqfDBUM3xnYliQA/edit

2. Not spreading COVID if it did enter their school community. They did so by offering remote learning during high COVID community spread. Daily COVID screening before entering the school site for in-person learning. KF94, KN95, N95 masks were mandated while indoors³⁷. Students and staff went outside to eat and were required to wear masks outdoors when in close proximity to one another. All rooms were equipped with HEPA air purifiers, Corsi-Rosenthal boxes³⁸, with CADR of at least 6 ACH per room and 8 ACH in all bathrooms. The use of CO₂³⁹ monitors⁴⁰ collected data to measure ventilation and vacating spaces when readings were above 800. Students were placed into small group cohorts with capacity limits for indoor learning spaces in an effort to limit exposure if someone inadvertently entered and infected a space. Educators and students were required to isolate themselves at home until it was safe for re-entry.

Focus Area #5: Fine Arts Facility Space

Summary from 2021-2022 Report:

Asian American Pacific Islander students, parents, and community members value the Fine and Performing Arts. They shared concerns about the lack of theater, dance, and appropriate facility space for current programs, especially at the Elementary School level. The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) believes “that all students PreK through 12, should have access to a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of instruction in music and the other arts, in school, taught by qualified teachers.”

OUTREACH AND FACT-FINDING ACTIVITIES

In collaboration with The Virginia Latino Advisory Board and the APIDA + Center (Formerly the Asian Cultural Engagement Center), the Virginia Asian Advisory Board held a Webinar/Listening Session around the topic of Violence In Schools on March 20th, 2023.

Summary of the event:

1. Need more mental health support and language access to better educate the student and parent Population.
2. Need more professional development support for educators so that they can be better intervene during instances of violence or intercede when microaggressions occur.

³⁷ <https://www.projectn95.org/>

³⁸ <https://cleanaircrew.org/box-fan-filters/>

³⁹ <https://schools.forhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/08/Harvard-Healthy-Buildings-program-How-to-assess-classroom-ventilation-08-28-2020.pdf>

⁴⁰ https://www.co2meter.com/products/aranet4-home-indoor-air-quality-monitor?utm_term=&utm_campaign=Dynamic+Search+Ads+Nov&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_acc=8520334188&hsa_cam=1628971135&hsa_grp=66078659950&hsa_ad=311734572939&hsa_src=g&hsa_tgt=dsa-414865952062&hsa_kw=&hsa_mt=&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gclid=CjwKCAjw0dKXBhBPEiwA2bmObaxWN-R03QD5NBrSQ577_zETc95uXQRUdGwtdRbYW8zxOKqBYo_58xoCkVcQAvD_BwE



Collaborators:

- Lyons Sanchezconcha, Chair, VLAB member
- Eduardo Zelaya, Secretary, VLAB member
- Yahusef Medina, VLAB member
- Quan Schneider, Education Committee, VAAB
- Nina Ha, Chair, VAAB
- Dr. Siming Xie, a former therapist at Cook Counseling at Virginia Tech, was asked to give a presentation around the topic of understanding and healing from racial trauma within the AAPI/APIDA communities.

Invited Speakers - In order of Appearance - 6:20 PM (3-5 minutes per speaker)

- Dr. Daphne Yao, parent of Blacksburg High School Student
- Radia Lu , student at Blacksburg High School
- Fadia Alhindi, parent of Blacksburg High School Student
- Asmaa Abu Samra, student at Blacksburg High School
- Dr. Kang Xia, parent of Blacksburg High School Student
- Jane Park, Virginia Tech Student
- Luke Stanley, Virginia Tech Student
- Zowee Aquino, Staff from Hamkae Center
- Ali Faruk, Families Forward
- In attendance were the following:
- Arianna S.
- Avril Montanti
- Carola Haas
- Edna Jasso
- Ha Tang

- Melody Agbisit
- Gloria Senecal
- Melissa Ripepi
- Henry Nguyen

Health Committee

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board's Health Committee was founded as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the years, the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIA) community has steadily increased its presence within the state of Virginia. As a result, pre-existing issues relating to health have become more vivid as the population has grown. Western society's practices of constant check-ups and secured insurance policies are foreign to APIA's members because of differences in socioeconomic status and traditional norms found in their native countries. An additional barrier is the complex healthcare system found in the U.S, which creates hesitancy among members to seek professional help.

Critical health issues such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS, smoking, tuberculosis, stroke, and liver disease are very common in the APIA community (Pfizer). APIAs are the fastest growing racial group in the US, yet 19.4% of APIA adults report about not having a consistent source of health care (Pfizer). This number is three times higher for the Cambodian and Vietnamese population due to the high cost of healthcare (Pfizer). Additionally, Vietnamese-American women are four times more likely to die from breast cancer (Pfizer). Furthermore, Asian Americans are at high risk for developing cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, hepatitis, tuberculosis, osteoporosis, and lupus (Lewis). The APIA community has also been recorded as having 40% more diagnoses for diabetes and 8 times more fatalities due to Hepatitis-B than non-hispanic whites (Reported Tuberculosis; Asian American Health). These statistics reveal a clear gap between the medical care that should be given and the medical care that is being received by the community.

The Health Committee wants to thank the following Virginia Tech students for their research and assistance in the drafting of this report: Helen Le, Patrick Vyn Badiang, Vincent Visarraga, Andrew Lin, Brian Dang, Fahrin Rahman, Peter Patroni, and Kush Jani.

Focus Area 1: Language Access

With the COVID-19 pandemic slowing down and Medicaid unwinding, it is more important than ever to ensure that Virginians have access to the proper information. Beginning in May of this year, Virginia started the process of redetermining all 2.2 million people that were on Medicaid. One of the biggest barriers to Medicaid redeterminations has been a lack of information or access to resources. When an individual signs up for Medicaid, they're supposed to say they need language services. However, the letter with all of that information is in English.

According to the Center of American Progress, AAPI experience the highest language barriers compared to other racial and ethnic groups with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and more than a third reside in linguistically isolated homes.

According to a study conducted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), financial, physical, communication, and cultural attitudes were four major barriers to accessing health care.

AAPIs are more likely to be uninsured than individuals that are white. The language ability necessary to arrange appointments, explain current symptoms, and understand diagnosis and treatment is an essential

skill for effective health care use. Many AAPIs lack these language skills which contributes to more barriers to health care access.

There is a lack of awareness towards critical illnesses among APIDA's members along with stigmatization regarding seeking professional health. However, stigmas are not the primary problem leading to the sheer scale of these issues in the community, but the lack of effort for advocacy towards repairing the stigma. A factor contributing to these statistics is the inability of the healthcare system to accommodate APIDA's needs. With 40% of the community not fluent in English and 6.6% of the community being uninsured, APIDA's members face various barriers to gain sufficient healthcare services to address their most prevalent concerns (Asian American Health). Coming from a collective society, APIDA's members are more likely to listen to members of their ethnic group regarding adopting foreign information like medical practices. The culture differences between the East and the West required health advocacy campaigns to enhance their diversity profile in order to get their messages across.

Recommendations:

- Invest in language access resources for state agencies
- Conduct survey in geographical regions to see what language access issues currently exist
- Establish funding for translation services for Virginia Department of Health information.
- Invest in interpretation services for physicians

Focus Area 2: Behavioral Health

AAPI mental health is currently in a state of crisis - an issue that was only exacerbated by the rise of anti-Asian sentiments during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are thankful for Governor Glenn Youngkin and his administration's dedication to mental health and substance use access and the Right Help Right Now Initiative.

There is a common misconception that AAPIs have a lower need for mental health care compared to other racial and ethnic groups, in part due to the "model minority" myth. But in 2020, suicide was the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, ages 10 to 19, and the second leading cause of death among those ages 20-34.

AAPIs face unique barriers to behavioral health care, including: language barriers, stigmatization and negative cultural conceptualizations of behavioral health within AAPI communities, a perceived lower need of mental health care among AAPIs compared to other racial and ethnic groups, a shortage of clinicians with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and a lack of culturally competent providers to meet cultural, social, and language-related needs.

There is a lack of AAPI representation on most levels and health and mental health professions are no different. A lack of representation results in pervasive barriers and blind spots along the economics pipeline and pathways. According to the Virginia Department of Health Professions, in 2022, AAPIs made up 4% of Virginia's licensed clinical psychologists, 2% of Virginia's licensed clinical social workers, and 2% of licensed professional counselors. There are not enough providers who understand cultural needs; administrators to implement AAPI cultural competence in policy and practice; and mentors or mentorship programs to build up AAPI representation. This lack of representation manifests in the health disparity gaps.

Recommendations:

- Invest in workforce pipeline to increase AAPI mental health professionals
- Expand access to mental health care by investing in language access services

Focus Area 3: Disaggregate Data

For the past two years, the VAAB Health Committee has suggested improving health equity by disaggregating data through data collection on race and ethnicity to yield accurate health outcome trends. The VAAB continues to recommend the disaggregation of data. This includes, AAPI in all health data collection, analysis, and reports by requiring health providers to update data collection points. For Virginia to be a leader in health equity and be able to make sound public health policy, we must insist on high quality, accessible, and reliable disaggregated data that reflects Virginia’s diverse and growing AAPI demographics. Understanding the AAPI healthcare needs and engendering trust is central to the strength of public health. Therefore, AAPI needs to be included in data collection, disaggregation, and analysis for all health policy outcomes and practice. Additionally, collecting more specific demographics (e.g. ethnicity, region, occupation) would focus on the needs of specific AAPI sub communities who may be underserved including the AAPI workforce. Other states have legislated such measures, however in order for Virginia to be a leader of data disaggregation best practices and standards, the Commonwealth should appropriate permanent funds towards data disaggregation. Without accurate data, we limit our effectiveness and ability to close the gaps in health disparities or address the needs of our community.

Data disaggregation helps provide relevant information of the inequalities that exist across all groups and income levels in order to identify the problems and address the structural barriers that certain AAPI subgroups face. The absence of racially and ethnically disaggregated data reflecting the health of AAPI persons and families underlies the struggles of the physician and healthcare community to fully attend to, and be attuned to, the unique needs of their AAPI patients. Given that federal designations and distinctions yield variances in terms of resource distribution (i.e., public health programs supports, public benefits, etc.), it is imperative, now more than ever, to hasten all efforts that disaggregate Asian American and Pacific Islander health outcomes and overall social needs. Without this data, clinical providers and researchers are at risk of misunderstanding the unique characteristics that impact AAPI health behaviors, beliefs, uses of medical/healthcare spaces, and the components that lead to their distinct health outcomes.

The lack of AAPI representation in Virginia uncovered discrepancies in the areas of data collection, policy, and practice. Furthermore, the research on AAPI health discrepancies and needs are sparse and many are outdated. Even though some improvements have been made in data collection, such as including AAPI in COVID-19 health data, there is still a high need to make AAPI data collection, analysis, and reporting a permanent practice in data disaggregation. Current efforts are not robust enough. Quantitative research will help researchers to visualize trends, but qualitative reports help add a density to the data that is currently missing. Because AAPI is a growing community in Virginia and plays a major role in providing and receiving healthcare services, it is important to take action at the needs of this community.

Recommendations:

- We recommend adopting evidence-based data standards for the inclusion of race and ethnicity information in electronic health records and standards for electronic data transmission that can reduce duplicative and redundant information.

Focus Area 4: Workforce

Hospitals and health systems struggled with burnout and staffing shortages long before the COVID-19 pandemic, but the past few years have only exacerbated the issue.

We know the workforce does not reflect our current population. According to Virginia Healthcare Workforce data, AAPIs represent 19% of physicians, 6% of nurses, 19% of pharmacists, 4% of licensed clinical psychologists, and 10% of physical therapists. As the racial and ethnic demographics of our Commonwealth continues to shift, there is greater need for pathways and workforce opportunity programming that encourages a more representative healthcare workforce.

When it comes to workplace violence, healthcare workers are disproportionately impacted. AAPI fatalities were three times higher than those of white healthcare workers. Filipino nurses account for about 31% of nurse fatalities even though they only represent 4% of total nurses in the U.S.

Recommendations:

- Invest in healthcare workforce
- Examples include assisting with student loan repayments, supporting legislation that addresses a cap on primary care reimbursement cuts, supporting legislation that significantly increases the residency slots of primary care medical specialties in the Commonwealth, assist with providing adequate childcare and eldercare, supporting programs that address mental and physical health, and collaborating with local colleges and universities to provide pathways to the workforce.

Comparison of Virginia Primary Care Workforce: Department of Health Professions

Physicians (2020): AAPI 19%

Race & Ethnicity					
Race/ Ethnicity	Virginia*	Physicians		Physicians Under 40	
	%	#	%	#	%
White	61%	14,577	65%	2,973	61%
Black	19%	1,664	7%	280	6%
Asian	7%	4,163	19%	1,111	23%
Other Race	0%	815	4%	171	4%
Two or more races	3%	419	2%	146	3%
Hispanic	10%	829	4%	199	4%
Total	100%	22,467	100%	4,879	100%

Registered Nurses AAPI (2021): 6%

Race & Ethnicity					
Race/ Ethnicity	Virginia*	RNs		RNs Under 40	
	%	#	%	#	%
White	61%	65,503	76%	24,687	73%
Black	19%	9,968	12%	3,582	11%
Hispanic	10%	2,858	3%	1,652	5%
Asian	7%	5,150	6%	2,377	7%
Two or More Races	3%	1,908	2%	1,026	3%
Other Race	0%	851	1%	322	1%
Total	100%	86,238	100%	33,646	100%

Nurse Practitioners (2021): AAPI 5%

Race & Ethnicity					
Race/ Ethnicity	Virginia*	NPs		NPs under 40	
	%	#	%	#	%
White	61%	7,326	78%	2,592	75%
Black	19%	1,121	12%	424	12%
Asian	7%	432	5%	183	5%
Other Race	0%	103	1%	32	1%
Two or more races	3%	167	2%	94	3%
Hispanic	10%	290	3%	140	4%
Total	100%	9,439	100%	3,465	100%

*Population data in this chart is from the U.S. Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States, States, and Counties: July 1, 2019.
Source: VA Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Dentistry (2021): AAPI 21%

Race & Ethnicity					
Race/ Ethnicity	Virginia*	Dentists		Dentists Under 40	
	%	#	%	#	%
White	61%	2,787	62%	726	55%
Black	19%	272	6%	66	5%
Asian	7%	971	21%	355	27%
Other Race	0%	169	4%	68	5%
Two or More Races	3%	84	2%	30	2%
Hispanic	10%	246	5%	74	6%
Total	100%	4,529	100%	1,319	100%

*Population data in this chart is from the U.S. Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States, States, and Counties: July 1, 2019.
Source: VA Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Outreach/Fact Finding

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board, in collaboration with the Philippine Nurses Association of Virginia, hosted an Asian Wellness Matters Community Health Fair on Sunday, June 4, 2023 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Old Dominion University Webb Center. The event was free and open to the public.

Programming included speakers Ben Equitan from Ramiscal Equitan Advisors, Dementia Friends, performances by Kuntaw Filipino Martial Arts, Fantastic Four - Bollywood Dance, ODU Dancers - Bollywood Dance, Ori O Keone T’ia Mai - Hula Dancing, Ornish Cooking, and topics on understanding Alzheimers and Dementia and Lupus.

The event featured Reiki Energy Healing by the Wellness Agency VA, Yoga & Sound Healing by Neleh Poltesky, Mind and Body Medication and Exercises by Shu Xiao & Falun Dafa Association Hampton Roads, Diabetes, Nutrition & Carb Counting, and Hearing Tests by the ODU School of Nursing, Face Painting & Henna Tattoos, and much more.

13 News Now covered the event. See the article here:

<https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/health/free-health-screenings-and-wellness-resources-offered-at-health-fair/291-4edae8f8-bfae-4bd2-9738-8533fe3e0614>

ABS CBN also covered the event. See the article here: [https://news.abs-](https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/07/20/23/health-fair-held-in-virginia-for-asian-americans)

[cbn.com/overseas/07/20/23/health-fair-held-in-virginia-for-asian-americans](https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/07/20/23/health-fair-held-in-virginia-for-asian-americans)

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board also collaborated on the event entitled, “Exploring Wellness Health Fair,” on October 15th, 2023 in observance of October being Filipino American History Month. This event was co-sponsored by the VAAB, the Philippine Nurses Association of Virginia’s Partners in Filipino and Asian American Health by AstraZeneca. Old Dominion University offered space at the Higher Education Center to host this event.

ASIAN WELLNESS MATTERS COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR
JUNE 4, 2023 10AM - 2PM
 WEBB STUDENT CENTER-OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

9:00 AM Asian Wellness Matters Community Health Fair Opens
10:15 AM Opening Remarks - Main Stage
 Ben Equistan - Ramiscal Equitan Advisors
10:30 AM Elements Friends (3 hour certified)
11:00AM Kuntao - Filipino Martial Arts
 Fantastic Four - Bollywood Dance
 ODU Dancers - Bollywood Dance
11:30 AM Oh! O Kaseba Tia Mai - Hula Dancing
 Orish Cooking
12:00 PM Petrus Mily - Asian American Alliance
 Kuffa Prizes
12:30 PM Understanding Alzheimer's & Dementia
1:00 PM Living with an autoimmune disease update

INTERACTIVE ROOMS & LIVE DEMONSTRATIONS
 Orish Cooking - Sharon Henry & Sentara
 Reiki Energy Healing - Wellness Agency VA
 Kaseba New with Ramiscal Equitan
 Yoga & Sound Healing - Nishu Dastidar
 Mind & body meditation & exercises - Shu Xue & Felan DuFa Association Hampton Roads
 Diabetes, Nutrition & carb counting & hearing tests - ODU School of Nursing
 Face Painting & Henna Tattoos

AT THE STAGE PERFORMANCES
 ODU Dance Troupe
 Fantastic Four - Bollywood
 ODU Dancers - Bollywood
 Kuntao - Filipino Martial Arts
 Oh! O Kaseba Tia Mai - Hula Dancing

MEDICAL SCREENINGS
 Blood Pressure
 Blood Sugar / A1C
 Hearing Tests
 and more

SPONSORS
 Ramiscal Equitan Advisors
 Ben Equistan, Managing Director
 Aquaphor Water Stone VS,
 Christopher Adams, Owner

EXHIBIT HALL
 Virginia Department of Health, Community Development Office - Virginia
 Alzheimer's Association of Southeastern Virginia
 EMVS Clinician Center
 National Counseling Group
 Mental Health Wellness Center-Children and Adolescents
 Lifeset Health
 Pharmacy Med Safety
 Sentara Stroke Program
 Sentara OBG Diabetes Program
 Medical Healthcare Solutions
 One Love Craft Designs LLC
 Project Nana - Women's Cancer
 Bright Smiles, Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry & Watson
 Lupus Awareness
 Family in Focus
 Youth Exam and Learn
 Ramiscal Equitan Advisors
 Aquaphor
 Asian American Alliance
 ODU Recreation Center
 ODU Nursing Program
 Men's Initiative
 American Diabetes Association
 Felan DuFa Association Hampton Roads
 Virginia Asian Advisory Board
 Philippine Nurses Association of Virginia
 ODU Health Foundation
 Kidney Smart Education
 HennaKart Center
 Eastern VA Chinese American Physicians Association
 EnDeaver, Human Trafficking
 Truist Health
 Petrus Mily

100 HAMPTON BLVD NORFOLK, VA 23509
 HOSTED BY VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD, PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA AND OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

ASIAN WELLNESS MATTERS COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

The VAAB, PNAVA, and ODU invites you to an interactive, informational event to share information about common health issues for Asian Americans - everyone is welcome!

SUNDAY JUNE 4 10 A.M. TO 2 P.M.
 ODU WEBB CENTER, NORTH MALL
 1301 W 49TH ST, NORFOLK, VA
 FREE PARKING AT 49TH ST. GARAGE

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE: HEALTH INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT INCLUDING DIABETES AND HEART DISEASE, CULTURAL DEMONSTRATIONS AND ACTIVITIES INCLUDING HENNA TATTOOS, FOLK DANCING, MARTIAL ARTS, GUEST SPEAKERS AND MUCH MORE!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
 MELODY.VAAB@GMAIL.COM OR
 CATPALERDS@GMAIL.COM

PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
SENTARA

OCTOBER is FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH 2023

EXPLORING WELLNESS HEALTH FAIR

Celebrating Philippine Culture Together in Health and Wellness

FREE and open to the Public
 Inaugural BAYANIHAN SPIRIT WALK in celebration of Filipino American History Month. The word "bayanihan" means the spirit of cooperation and unity, which embodies the important Filipino value of helping one's "bayan" or community.
BEGINS at 0900 outside FRONT ENTRANCE
 Book Signing & Meet/Greet 11:00-12:30
 Loida Lewis - Why Should Guys Have All the Fun?
 Located on 2nd Floor Nook

EDUCATION SESSIONS: 2nd Floor
 11:00 Alzheimer's / Dementia
 12:00 Minority Mental Health

Cultural Performances Coordinator: Tricia Orpilla
 Te Ori O Keone Ti'a Mal
 US NAVY Honor Guard Portsmouth Naval Corpsem
 Miss Teen Filfest
 Little Miss Polyfest
 Filipino Folk Dancing
 Tar Cui
 Armando the Extraordinary
 DJ Imperial Vocal
 Alvin Del Puerto
 Yoga Collective
 Isabel Williams Vocal
 Tai Chi King Tiger
 The Ketones

ROCK PAINTING
FLU VACCINES

HEALTH SCREENING
DOOR PRIZES

10AM-2PM Exhibitors
 ODU Health Promotion
 Project Nana
 Sentara Health Equity
 Enjewel
 Aquaholic
 Ramiscal Equitan Advisors
 SalaMaster
 Life Change Institute and Meridian
 American Heart Association
 Kultura Wellness and Consulting
 One Love Craft Designs
 Pinoy Street Team Gear
 Sentara Diabetes Educators
 Virginia Department of Public Health
 Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association at EMVS
 Filipino American Medicine Club at EMVS
 Shen Yun
 Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia
 LGBT Life Center
 Virginia Nurses Assoc of Hampton Roads
 Therafusion Massage, LLC
 StMichael and Company
 Serintea Healing
 American Diabetes Association
 Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

Philippine Nurses Association of Virginia's
 Partners in Filipino and Asian American Health sponsored by AstraZeneca
 @AstraZenecaUS's ACT on @HealthEquityCommunity Solutions Challenge