



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam



2019 Annual Report

December 2019

Report prepared by members of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Governor Ralph Northam,

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 and Pacific Islander (API) community so that your Administration can best serve these constituents.

The VAAB had a busy year. Not only did we hold six board meetings, we submitted two reports of recommendations (2017 – 2018 and 2019); planned and held three town halls across the Commonwealth; participated in or conducted several key board activities; and engaged in many outreach and fact-finding activities. We continued our efforts behind three focus areas, Business & Trade, Civic Engagement, and Education; and identified two emerging issues - anti-Asian sentiment and health disparities.

Your Administration has also been very busy. We're pleased to see our Director of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Outreach, Saman Aghaebrahim, play an engaging role and partnership with the VAAB and that a special assistant, Danielle Campbell, was appointed to provide us and the other advisory boards with much needed support, consistency, and synergy. Additionally, the establishment of a Virginia African American Advisory Board and a Chief Diversity Officer were long overdue. I appreciated the opportunity to engage with both and look forward to working together to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion for all Virginians.

While there's been progress, more can be done. Dr. Janice Underwood was appointed in early September, after a 5-month long search, as the Commonwealth's first-ever director of diversity, equity and inclusion and chief diversity officer. Unfortunately, her office is still not fully staffed. We fully support Dr. Underwood's priorities and want to see her be able to make significant progress in the remainder of your term. We urge you to fill the remaining positions quickly so that Dr. Underwood may fulfill her purpose. Furthermore, to ensure sustainable infrastructure and policies that will promote a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable Virginia for all beyond your term in office, we urge you to leverage the new makeup of the General Assembly to codify this office.

The VAAB continues to strongly support your focus on racial equity as it's the basis of all the work that this Board undertakes and the issues that are brought to this Board from our community. So many of our community's values and needs intersect with those of other underrepresented groups. We look forward to working closely with Dr. Underwood and other advisory boards on common goals that support your priorities.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue our service to the Governor's Office, the Commonwealth, and the API community.

Sincerely,

May Nivar, Chair

VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Established by statute in 2001 as a governmental entity of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (“VAAB” or “Board”) serves as a formal liaison between the Administration and the diverse and rapidly growing API communities in the Commonwealth.

Pursuant to Section 2.2-2450 of the Code of Virginia, the VAAB is pleased to submit to the Honorable Ralph S. Northam this updated annual report as a summary of its activities, findings, and recommendations from January through November 2019.

The current board comprises leaders in the API community across Virginia. The members are respected in their relative fields of expertise and commitment to their community.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

May Nivar, Chair

VACANT, Vice Chair

Komal Mohindra, Secretary

J.R. Smith, Treasurer

CURRENT MEMBERS

1. **Hassan M. Ahmad**, Sterling, Immigration Attorney and Founder, The HMA Law Firm
2. **Julia K. Chun**, Fairfax, Chief, Staff, Office of Senator Barbara A. Favola
3. **Atiqua Hashem**, Glen Allen, General Counsel, ChildFund International USA
4. **Razi Hashmi**, Fairfax, U.S. Department of State
5. **Eric Lin**, Chesterfield, Principal at the VIE Group
6. **Komal Mohindra**, Falls Church, Sr. Private Sector Development Specialist, World Bank Group
7. **Rumy J. Mohta**, Midlothian, CEO, Atlas Branding & Communications
8. **Patrick A. Mulloy**, Alexandria, Washington-based Trade Counsel and Consultant
9. **May Nivar**, Midlothian, Sr. Manager, Regulatory Affairs, Altria Client Services
10. **Sunny Shah**, Roanoke, Hotel Owner
11. **Mona H. Siddiqui**, Midlothian, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
12. **J.R. Smith**, Glen Allen, Partner at Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP
13. **Leonard C. Tengco**, Vienna, Litigation Attorney, Pesner Kawamoto, PLC
14. **Hyun Lee**, Centreville, Vice President, Korean American Society of VA
15. **Bao “Bobby” Ly**, Fairfax, President, Vietnamese American Community Assoc. of MD, DC, and VA
16. VACANT
17. VACANT
18. VACANT

FORMER MEMBERS

- **Vicki Mirandah**, Henrico, Chief of Staff, Corporate Audit Services, Capital One
- **Osman Parvaiz** (Vice Chair), Glen Allen, Vice President, Capital One
- **Karla J. Soloria**, Norfolk, Assistant City Attorney, City of Norfolk

ADMINISTRATION

- **EX OFFICIO MEMBERS**

- **Brian Ball**, Secretary of Commerce and Trade
- **Atif Qarni**, Secretary of Education
- **Daniel Carey, M.D.**, Secretary of Health and Human Resources

- **GOVERNOR'S OFFICE STAFF**

- **Saman Aghaebrahim**, Special Assistant for Community Engagement and Director of Asian American and Pacific Islander Outreach
- **Danielle Campbell**, Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administration, Secretary of the Commonwealth (As of October 2019)
- **Meryem Karad**, Special Assistant for Policy and Communications to the Secretary of Natural Resources (through October 2019)

- **LEGAL COUNSEL**

- **Justin Bell, J.D.**, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of VA

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:** **Rumy Mohta (Chair)**, Hassan M. Ahmad, Bao “Bobby” Ly, Komal Mohindra, Patrick A. Mulloy, Ssunny Shah, Karla Soloria

- **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:** **Razi Hashmi (Chair)**, Hyun Lee, Eric Lin, J.R. Smith

- **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:** **Mona H. Siddiqui (Chair)**, Atiqua Hashem, Vicki Mirandah, Leonard C. Tengco

DEMOGRAPHICS

API Population Growth in Virginia 2005-2017

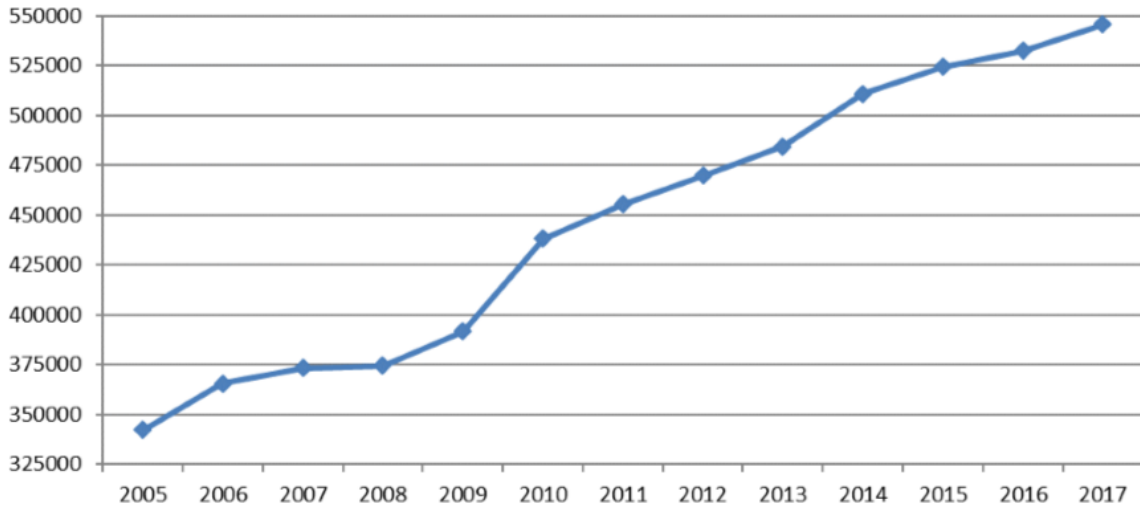


Figure 1. API population has grown by over 200,000 from 2005 to 2017. This is a growth rate of approximately 60% during this period which places the API community among the fastest growing racial communities in the Commonwealth.¹

Virginia API Demographics by Gender in 2017

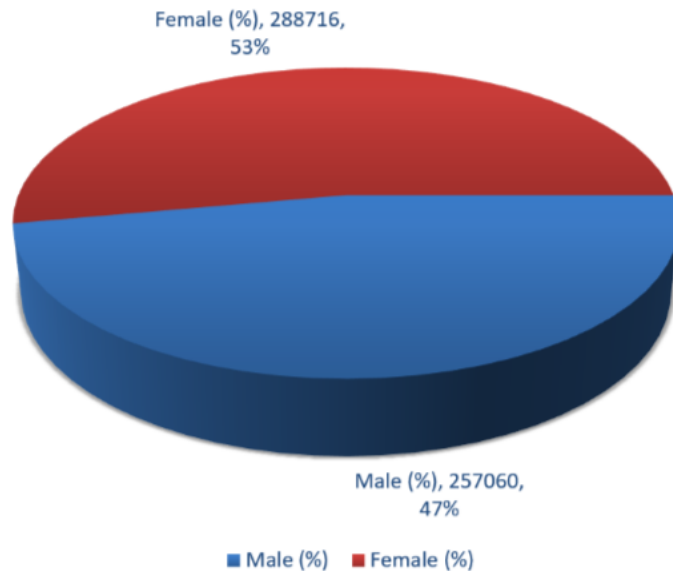


Figure 2. The gender ratio in the API population remains consistent throughout the last decade with the female and male populations at 53% and 47% respectively.²

Virginia API Demographics by Age 2017 (%)

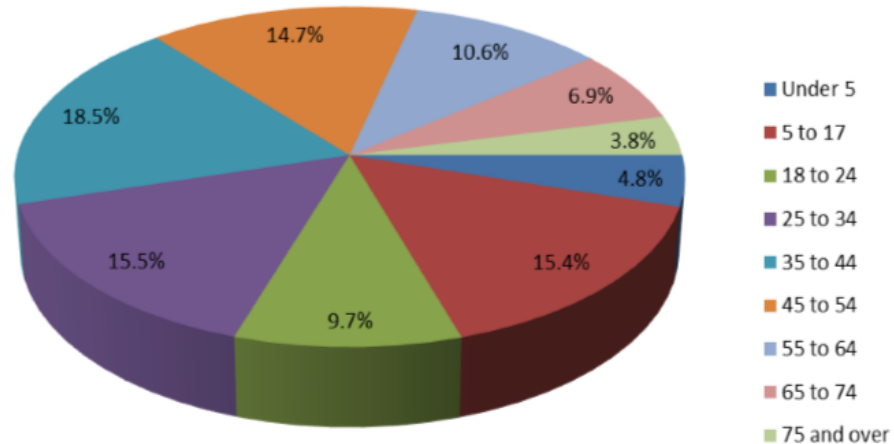


Figure 3. Based on the API Population Age Demographic Breakdown in the year 2017, almost 49% of API population within the Commonwealth is between the ages of 25-54 years old.³

Virginia API Population Median Age

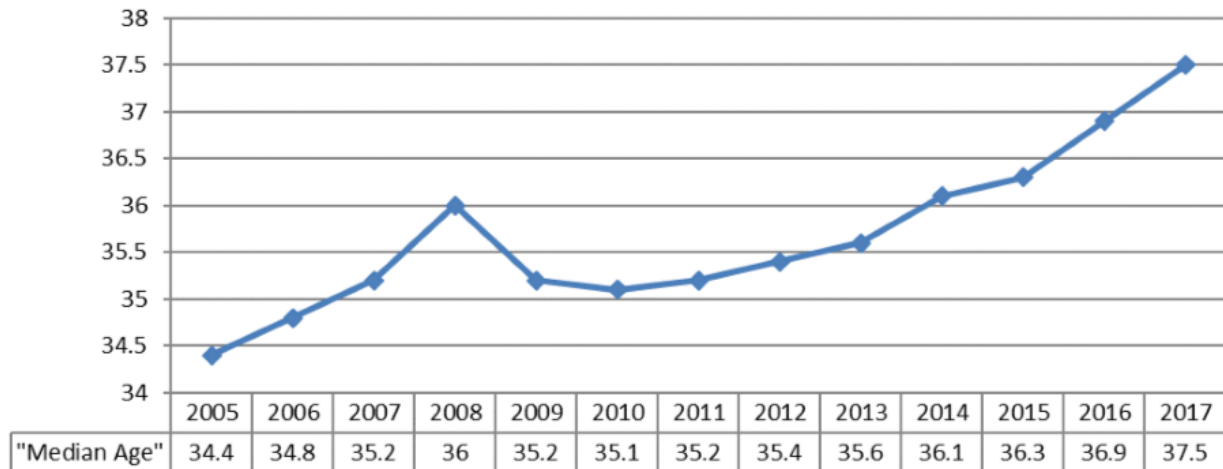


Figure 4. The median age of API population within the Commonwealth has increased from 34.4 in 2005 to 37.5 in 2017.⁴

Virginia API Educational Attainment 2017

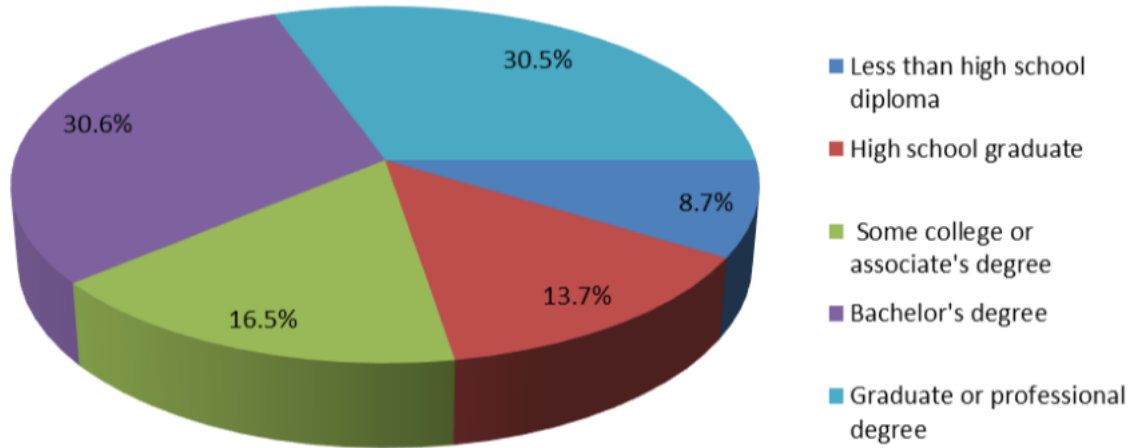


Figure 5. Based on the API Educational Attainment data in the year 2017, over 91% of the API population within the Commonwealth has graduated from high school, and 61% of the population has a Bachelor's degree or higher.⁵

API Language Spoken at Home 2017 (%)

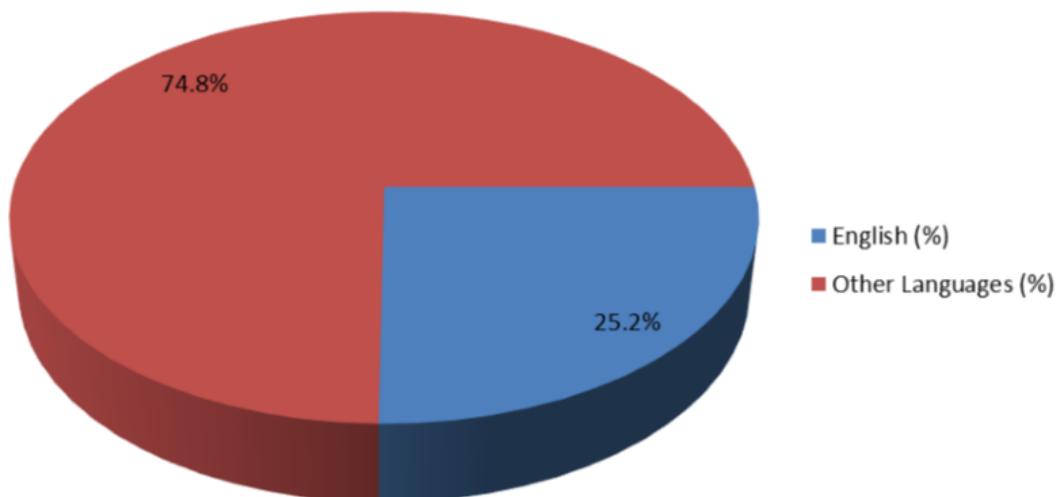


Figure 6. Almost 75% of API population within the Commonwealth of Virginia over the age of 5 speaks a language other than English at home.⁶

Percent English Spoken Less than Very Well 2017

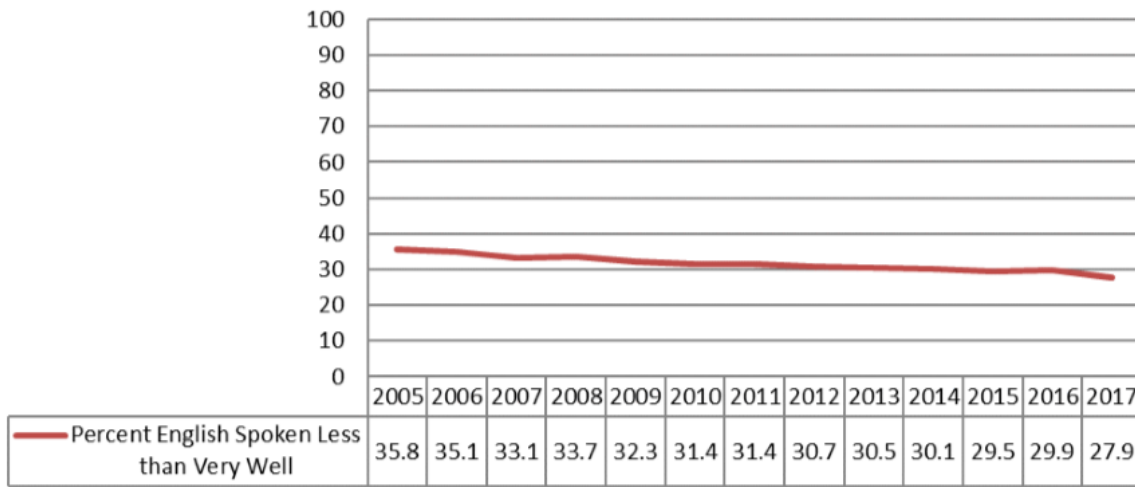


Figure 7. The language proficiency of the API population within the Commonwealth has improved from 2005 to 2017. The percentage of API population speaking English less than very well has gone down from 35.8% in 2005 to 27.9% in 2017.⁷

API Regional Population Distribution in Virginia 2015

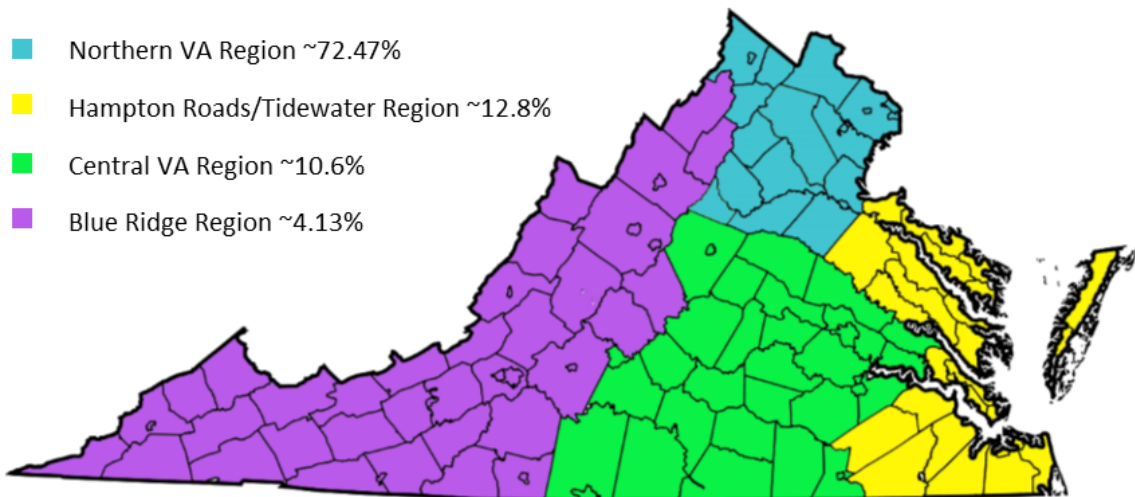


Figure 8. The Northern Virginia Region has the largest concentration of API's (~72%), followed by the Hampton Roads/Tidewater Region (~14%), Central Virginia Region (~11%) and the Blue Ridge Region (~4%).⁸

¹ US Census Bureau- American Fact Finder- S0201 Selected Population Profile in the United States ACS 1-Year Estimates 2005-2017

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ US Census Bureau- American Fact Finder- B01001 Sex by Age Universe: Total Population ACS Selected Population 2006-2010 and 2011-2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board (“VAAB”) submits an executive summary of its annual report from January through December 2019 to the Honorable Ralph S. Northam for review and action.

The VAAB continues to identify and research opportunities and critical needs of the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities. To carry out its mission, the VAAB engaged in numerous fact-finding and community events, including planning and executing town halls in Tidewater, Southwest Virginia, and Northern Virginia.

In preparation for this report, we continued to focus on three key areas - business and trade, civic engagement, and education - and have updated recommendations for each. We are also considering a deeper dive into the health disparities within our community and more importantly, we raise an important emerging issue to your attention - anti-Asian sentiment.

BUSINESS AND TRADE

The VAAB congratulates the Governor on the progress that has been made since Amazon announced plans a year ago to establish its second headquarters in Northern Virginia; one that will bring economic opportunities for all Virginians, including the API community.

The VAAB is focused on understanding key business and trade issues of importance to Virginia’s API community and recommending steps to enhance opportunities for Virginia small business owners, particularly those in the API community, and increase the benefits to Virginia from enhanced trade with Asian countries. There is an alignment between issues of importance to the API business community and issues that are explicit priorities for the Commonwealth, such as support developing a skilled workforce and enhancing trade opportunities.

The VAAB recommends the following, which all fall under the purview of the Secretary of Commerce and Trade:

- **Continue to Connect with the API Small Business Community**
- **Improve and Prepare a Skilled Workforce**
- **Leverage Immigration**
- **Virginia as a Tourism Destination for Asia’s Growing Tourist Class**
- **Use Hampton Roads’ Deep-water Port to Enhance Trade with Asia**
- **Navigate Virginia’s Economic Ties with Asia Amidst Continuing US-China Trade Issues**
- **Be Aware of Other Potential Business and Trade Matters**

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The VAAB believes that empowering the API community empowers all Virginians. As a state with a history of racial inequality, there is a greater onus on advisory boards, such as the VAAB, to promote diversity and inclusion and policies that positively impact all Virginians. Currently, the most critical task is the constitutionally-mandated census taking place April 1, 2020.

As required by the U.S. Constitution, the U.S. Census has been conducted every 10 years since 1790, and participation in the U.S. Census is required by law under Title 13 of the United States Code. The decennial census, and the data collected therein, is the basis for per capita federal funding, representational apportionment, and private sector business spending. As such, it is critical that everyone is counted, only once, and in the right place.

The VAAB utilizes U.S. Census Bureau Data in a variety of ways to address the issues, needs, and opportunities within the Commonwealth. Three members of the VAAB - Eric Lin, Razi Hashmi, and Hyun Lee - serve on the Virginia Complete Count Commission to further ensure the interests of the API community are considered.

The VAAB notes that only 55% of the API population intends to respond to the Census, which is 12% lower than the other respondents surveyed in the Census Barriers, Attitudes and Motivators Study¹ and would translate into an undercount of approximately 254,250 people or \$5.09 billion in federal funds over a 10-year period. Forty-one percent of API have serious reservations about the confidentiality of Census data, which was used for the internment of 150,000 Japanese Americans during WWII. Similarly, recent immigrant API groups, such as Indians, Pakistanis, and Bengalis are also concerned that government could use census data to identify undocumented immigrants. The API community is diverse, and has specific needs; however, data disaggregation is not available. A lack of data aggregation prevents policy makers to address specific concerns of individual API communities. In addition, a general lack of trust in government institutions also leads to suppressed voting numbers at 49% compared to White (65%), Black (59%), and Latino American (48%).

Based on such trends, the VAAB recommends the following, which all fall under the purview of the Secretary of the Commonwealth:

- **Continue Support for the Virginia Complete Count Commission and Earmark More Resources Toward Outreach to the API Populations**
- **Mandate the Collection and Disaggregation of API Subgroup-specific Data**
- **Enhance API Policy Advocacy & Voter Engagement**

¹ https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/research-testing/communications-research/2020_cbams.html

EDUCATION

In our last annual report, the VAAB recommended education policies in the areas of cultural competence, bullying prevention, and mental health, English language proficiency, and support for diverse career, leadership, and educational opportunities for APIs. As a follow-up, the VAAB proposes specific state government initiatives that may form the basis of legislative, Cabinet, and state agency action.

The following recommendations all fall under the purview of the Secretary of Education:

- **Require cultural competence training for all Virginians seeking initial teaching licensure through the Virginia Department of Education**
- **Incentivize local school divisions to conduct independent equity assessments that gauge student experiences of bullying and harassment in the school setting.** The assessment will serve as a foundation to develop district wide systematic initiatives to better serve the mental health needs of underserved populations, including API students, who have experienced mental health effects of discrimination in the school setting
- **Pilot a volunteer English Language Learners (ELL) curriculum for newcomer immigrant parents and students with a focus on language and cultural competence**
- **Direct the newly appointed Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to develop an initiative focused on active recruitment of teachers and school administrators from diverse backgrounds**

FUTURE FOCUS

The following topic falls under the purview of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources:

Our September town hall in Roanoke commenced exploratory work into the health disparities of the API communities, which we are considering adding as a key focus area for 2020 and including recommendations in next year's report. Cultural misunderstandings or communication problems between people seeking treatment and service providers may prevent cultural minorities from using services and receiving appropriate care.² This issue evolved during the November town hall in Northern Virginia when community members raised issues around the stigma of mental health in the API community. We explored this issue further during our December board meeting with a panel discussion on mental health, suicide prevention and adverse childhood trauma.

² <https://namivirginia.org/mental-health-resources/minority-mental-health-matters/>

It is our intention to establish a Health Committee whose purpose would be to delve into the varying health disparities that exist between API communities and other communities in the Commonwealth. Additionally, we would examine how the varying social determinants of health effect the delivery of health services to our communities.

EMERGING ISSUE: Anti-Asian Sentiment

The following emerging issue falls under the purview of the Secretaries of Commerce and Trade, Education, Health and Human Resources, and Public Safety and Homeland Security; the Chief Workforce Development Advisor, and the Chief Diversity Officer:

In the last several decades, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has shifted its national and global aspirations to that of a more dominant geopolitical force. We have seen tighter internal controls and a national imperative to lead and influence. This adoption of a more aggressive stance has prompted several visible and alarming initiatives. One such initiative is the PRC’s intention to be the technological leader in a multitude of advanced technologies and scientific pursuits. The technology push has engendered an innovation and scientific advancement race with Western counterparts, including the United States. This has resulted in several documented cases of intellectual property theft through human and digital means. This coupled with the PRC’s intent to influence and control the global diaspora has created a notably tenser and more competitive geopolitical climate.

These unfortunate tensions between the U.S. and the PRC have intersected with the development of international academic collaboration and research. Since the latter half of 2018, a significant number of Asian researchers, specifically Chinese, have been labeled as national security risks and even PRC agents. On the surface, these incidents involving a handful of academics and researchers seem isolated and solely in the realm of academia. However, the larger concern is that these incidents collectively have potentially damaging effects on some Asian Virginians regarding their careers, businesses, and everyday life. As we have seen in the past, our communities are not easily distinguishable and are easily profiled and demonized.

The VAAB, as it did with the concerns about anti-Muslim sentiment in previous reports, now raises a warning flag on the increasing anti-Chinese, and by extension anti-Asian, sentiment. The political and growing public narrative positioning Chinese as the new “Red Scare” is of great concern and will color the perceptions of Asians in general. The concerns do not just fall in academia, but in business, employment, K-12 education, and everyday life as well.

As this is an unfolding and evolving concern, the VAAB is delving deeper into the issue to develop a better situational analysis of the impact on the Commonwealth. We will:

- Continue to monitor and analyze reports and findings from federal agencies, congressional committees, and news sources involving intellectual property, technology theft, and influence-peddling.
- Engage with Federal and State agencies, legislative committees, and other authorities.
- Engage the Department of Education, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, individual research institutions, and higher education centers to ascertain their current policies and due processes.
- Interview Asian, specifically Chinese, scholars, researchers, and students.
- Engage and interview Asian business leaders, employees and community leaders.
- Gauge the Commonwealth's ability to address these concerns and crises if they do occur.

GENERAL BOARD MEETINGS

The VAAB held six board meetings this year:

1. February 12, 2019 (Richmond, VA)
2. May 2, 2019 (Richmond, VA)
3. July 18, 2019 (Virginia Beach, VA)
4. September 20, 2019 (Blacksburg, VA)
5. November 7, 2019 (Annandale, VA)
6. December 5, 2019 (Richmond, VA)

The VAAB failed to achieve quorum during its September 20, 2019 meeting in Blacksburg. The attendance log for Board members is attached as Exhibit A hereto.

As previously noted in previously submitted reports, the Commonwealth's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) rules exacerbate the challenge of consistently achieving quorum because such rules require in-person meetings and generally prohibit Board member meeting participation through 21st century technology.

The VAAB has sought guidance from the Office of the Attorney General and understand that the balance between transparency in our Government and efficiency is often difficult to maintain. As the VAAB serves in an advisory capacity, it continues to be our hope that advisory boards be allowed to operate with working papers and committees that fall outside of FOIA regulations.

The following guest speakers shared expertise or experiences that support our purpose and focus areas. Such engagement provides additional information to inform our annual report.

- Sanket Acharya, Vice President, Eastern VA Franchise Owners Association
- Charlotte Baker, DrPH, MPH, CPH, Assistant Professor, Epidemiology, Department of Population Health Sciences, Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine
- Justin Bell, J.D., Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of VA
- Charles J. Bodnar, Department of Public Works, City of VA Beach
- Steve M. Baffuto, Special Agent in Charge, VA ABC Bureau of Law Enforcement
- Zac Canody, P.E., Director, Engineering, VA Port Authority
- Deborah Carlier, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Engagement, School of Engineering, Virginia Tech (VT)

- James Cheng, Board Member of the Center for Innovative and Technology and Former Secretary of Commerce and Trade
- Elaine Consolacion, Vice President, Asian American Student Union, VT
- Delegate Kelly Convirs-Fowler, VA House of Delegates (21st District)
- Van Crowder PhD, Executive Director, Center for Int'l Research, Education, and Development, VT
- Ben DeGuzman, Executive Director, Washington D.C. Mayor's Office on API Affairs
- Traci DeShazor, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth
- Kathryn Dolan, Director, Business Development and Outreach Services, VA Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity
- Senator John Edwards, VA State Senate (21st District)
- Karen Eley Sanders, MS, EdD, Chief Diversity Officer, VT Carilion School of Medicine
- Evan Feinman, Chief Broadband Advisor, Office of the Governor
- Christopher Flynn, PhD, Executive Director, Mental Health Initiatives for VT and Licensed Clinical Psychologist, VT Cook Counseling Center
- Guru Ghosh PhD, Vice President, Outreach and International Affairs, VT
- Rebekah Gunn, Assistant Director of Government Relations Blacksburg, VT
- Nina Ha PhD, Director, Asian Cultural Engagement Center, VT
- Don Hempson PhD, Associate Vice President for International Affairs, VT
- Philip Hernandez de Wright, Assistant Dean of Students, VT
- Delegate Mark Keam, VA House of Delegate (35th District)
- Lee A. Learman PhD, Dean, VT Carilion School of Medicine
- Ian Leuschner, Esq., Director of International Support Services, VT
- Chris Ley, Business Services Manager, Northern Virginia, VA Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity
- Jaclyn "Jackie" Marmol, Fellow and Past President, Asian American Student Union, VT
- Andria P. McClellan, Norfolk City Council, Chair, Hampton Roads Coastal Resiliency Subcommittee
- Alvenia McQueen, Partnership Specialist, DC & VA, U.S. Census Bureau
- Clark Mercer, Chief of Staff to Governor Northam, Commonwealth of VA
- Trang Montgomery, Program Director, Virginia Career Works, Northern Virginia Region
- Craig Moore, Assistant Salem Location & Design Engineer, VA Department of Transportation
- Genie Nguyen, Commissioner, VA Complete Count Commission
- Ayham Nouisser, President, Muslim Student Union, VT
- Minesh Patel, Chairman, VA Asian Store Owners Association
- Vinay Patel, Treasurer, Asian American Hotel Owners Association
- Atif Qarni, Secretary of Education, Commonwealth of VA
- Bethany Rallis PhD, Clinical Psychologist, Cook Counseling Center, VT

- Delegate Sam Rasoul, VA House of Delegates (11th District)
- Kylie Stamm, Assistant Director, Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Multicultural Education, George Mason University
- Justine Suegay, President, Asian Pacific American Coalition, George Mason University
- Shannon Taylor, Henrico Commonwealth Attorney
- Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth of VA
- My Lan Tran, Executive Director, VA Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Takumi Sato PhD, At-large Member, Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity, VT
- Chris Tsui, Owner, EAT Restaurant Partners
- Daryn Warner, Partnership Specialist, Roanoke, U.S. Census Bureau
- Tracey Wiley, Director, VA Department of Small Business Supplier Diversity
- Dan Wolf, Chief Administrative Officer, VA Information Technologies Agency
- Lily Xie, President, Asian American Student Union, VT
- Jonathan Zur, President & CEO, VA Center for Inclusive Communities

TOWN HALLS

VAAB members planned and moderated several town halls across Virginia to engage with the community and generate awareness of the VAAB's purpose.

July 18, 2019, Philippine Community Center, Tidewater

Lead: Karla Soloria, VAAB Member

The town hall agenda focused on the 2020 Census, Medicaid Expansion, veteran's services, and the Port of Virginia. We welcomed Delegate Kelly Fowler and approximately 50 community leaders and members. We continue to learn that earned state resources are not being fully utilized by some of our community's most vulnerable, such as aging Virginians and API Veterans who need government services the most. Language limitations and technology barriers made finding, understanding, and using state resources a seemingly daunting task.

September 20, 2019, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, Roanoke

Lead: Sunny Shah, VAAB Member

Business Panel Moderator: Atiqua Hashem, VAAB Member

The town hall agenda focused on the 2020 Census, Small Business Opportunities and Support, and I-81 Expansion business opportunities. We continue to highlight the importance of the 2020 census through town halls and education materials. In addition, the VAAB continues to identify commerce expansion opportunities such as a proposal to further develop I-81. The VAAB welcomed Senator John Edwards, Delegate Sam Rasoul, and approximately 40 local community leaders and members.

November 7, 2019, Mason District Governmental Center, Northern Virginia

Lead: Bao "Bobby" Ly, VAAB Member

Business Panel Moderator: Komal Mohindra, VAAB Member

The town hall agenda focused primarily on technology advancements and workforce development opportunities. Additionally, as another opportunity to highlight the importance of the 2020 census, we had a panel discussion with the area's partnership specialist from the U.S. Census Bureau and several API commissioners of the VA Complete Count Commission, including two who serve on the VAAB, Hyun Lee and Eric Lin. The VAAB welcomed Delegate Mark Keam and approximately 60 local community leaders and members.

SPECIAL BOARD ACTIVITIES

Service on the Virginia Complete Count Commission

As the upcoming 2020 Census is of critical importance to the API community and the Commonwealth, the VAAB is fortunate to have three members appointed in December 2018 to serve on the Virginia Complete Count Commission. Razi Hashmi, Hyun Lee and Eric Lin, along with three other API community leaders, are working to raise more awareness about the importance of the decennial census and build in-community support for conducting the survey. This API subcommittee has created four regional workgroups to work within our communities to achieve as complete a count as possible.

Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month Proclamation

On May 1, 2019, Governor Ralph S. Northam issued a proclamation recognizing May 2019 as *Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month* in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It commemorates the essential contributions, sacrifices, and accomplishments that APIs have made to Virginia. To celebrate, over a hundred guests attended a special reception at the Executive Mansion on May 2, 2019.

2019 VAAB Community Leader of the Year Award

The VAAB Community Leader of the Year Award honors and celebrates an individual who has exhibited exemplary service or leadership and has had an exceptional impact on the API community in Virginia. On September 13, 2019, the Honorable Ralph S. Northam and VAAB Chair May Nivar presented the award to Mr. Ting-Yi Oei, who was nominated by Ted Gong, executive director of the 1882 Foundation. Mr. Oei's passion and contributions to ensure our Asian history is preserved and celebrated are inspiring. Most notably, Mr. Oei drafted and promoted the successful passage of a Virginia General Assembly resolution to designate May 10, 2019 as the 150th Anniversary of the Completion of the First Transcontinental Railroad. It honored railroad workers, 80% of whom were Chinese immigrants; and encouraged schools and leaders throughout Virginia to celebrate this national achievement.

Engagement with Other Advisory Boards

The chairwomen of the VAAB, May Nivar; Virginia Latino Advisory Board, Cecilia Barbosa; and Council on Women, Carol Rick Gibbons, were invited for a lunchtime panel discussion at the Virginia African American Advisory Board's inaugural board meeting in Richmond, VA on September 19, 2019. Purpose was to share the purpose of each board and its focus areas and experiences and perspectives representing the community on their respective advisory boards. Subsequently, on December 2, 2019, Secretary of the Commonwealth Kelly Thomasson and Deputy Secretary Traci DeShazor held a meeting with the chairs of all four boards and their respective outreach directors to discuss ways to leverage protocols and collaborate on common ideas and solutions. We also discussed 2020 being the half-way mark of the Administration and an opportunity to advance key initiatives. The VAAB looks forward to future meetings to collaborate with the Administration and the other advisory boards.

Meeting with Dr. Janice Underwood

On October 17, 2019, VAAB Chair May Nivar, and Board Member Eric Lin met with Dr. Janice Underwood, the Commonwealth of Virginia's first-ever Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion to discuss opportunities to work together to advance racial equity and promote inclusion, including the idea of an intercultural summit amongst the various advisory boards and their respective communities. We also discussed the challenges facing the API community and the potential barriers that need to be removed to ensure success and equitable presentation.

OUTREACH AND FACT-FINDING ACTIVITIES

VAAB members also attended or engaged with the following organizations and their representatives to generate awareness of the VAAB's purpose or advance the VAAB and creation of this report.

- Nony Abrejano, Commissioner, VA Complete Count Commission
- Suja Amir, Commissioner, VA Complete Count Commission
- Brad Baldia, Commissioner, PA Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American (APA) Affairs
- Alexandria Bratton, Census Table, Virginia Civic Engagement Table
- Ron Brown, VA Partnership Specialist, Philadelphia Region, U.S. Census Bureau
- Rob Buscher, Commissioner, PA Governor's Advisory Commission on APA Affairs
- Racquel Cepeda, VA Partnership Specialist, Philadelphia Region, U.S. Census Bureau
- Cheryl V. Chambers, Manager National Partnerships Program, U.S. Census Bureau
- Julie Emery, Executive Director, Virginia Civic Engagement Table
- Jennifer J. Kim, Assistant Division Chief, Decennial Census Mgt. Division, U.S. Census Bureau
- Kendall Kosai, Deputy Director, OCA Asian Pacific American Advocates
- Philip M. Lutz, Deputy Regional Director, U.S. Census Bureau
- Keely Monroe, Democracy Program Manager, Funders Committee for Civic Participation
- Sreedhar Nagireddi, Commissioner, VA Complete Count Commission
- Tram Nguyen, Executive Director and Co-Founder, New Virginia Majority
- Christina Poy, Administrative Director, MD Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs and Commission on South Asian American Affairs
- Paul Reyes, Assistant Regional Manager, U.S. Census Bureau
- Dustin Rinehart, Director State and Local Government Affairs, Port of Virginia
- Claire Ross, National Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau
- Monica Sarmiento, Executive Director, Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights
- Stephanie Wong, Membership & Chapter Development Manager, OCA Asian Pacific American Advocates
- John C. Yang, President and Executive Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice
- Corrine Yu, Managing Policy Director, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
- Tiffany Chang Lawson, Executive Director, PA Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
- Altria's Asian Employee Resource Group, EAST
- Asian American Society of Central Virginia
- Capital One's Asian Employee Resource Group
- Cultural Center of India

- Dominion Energy's Asian and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group
- Embassy of India
- Filipino American Association of Central VA
- India Association of VA
- India Heritage Society Roanoke
- Ik Onkaar
- Organization of Chinese Americans, Central VA
- Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues
- World Bank - IMF Indian Staff Association

BUSINESS AND TRADE COMMITTEE REPORT

The VAAB is focused on understanding key business and trade issues of importance to Virginia's API community and recommending steps to enhance opportunities for Virginia small business owners, particularly those in the API community, and increase the benefits to Virginia from enhanced trade with Asian countries. There is an alignment between issues of importance to the API business community and issues that are explicit priorities for the Commonwealth, such as support developing a skilled workforce and enhancing trade opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to Connect with the API Small Business Community

This year, the VAAB focused more of its engagement and outreach with the API small business community; an area of importance to Governor Northam and Secretary Ball's stated agenda. Through our outreach, we heard from several small business and association leaders about their concerns on the rising crime rate and public safety. Specifically, the VAAB learned that some API business owners have experienced gun violence, vandalism, burglaries, and other crimes. In the same forum, the Commonwealth Attorney for Henrico County had the opportunity to hear these experiences and share what efforts were underway in Henrico to strengthen community engagement and develop more culturally sensitive law enforcement and public safety management. The VAAB remains committed to help generate awareness of our community's public safety challenges and bridge them to potential solutions.

While there are several support programs and opportunities available for businesses operating in the Commonwealth, there is often a gap in the flow of information between the API community and program providers. There is an opportunity for two-way dialogue - use community organizations as conduits for disseminating information about state programs and for hearing feedback from the API business community. This feedback can also be critical to the success of Asian trade missions from the Commonwealth.

The VAAB recommends the following, which all fall under the purview of the Secretary of Commerce and Trade:

- Strategically build or deepen partnerships with a range of API business associations
- Empower and support the efforts of the Director of AAPI Outreach for relevant outreach activities and events
- Continue to support the VAAB's board meeting and town hall efforts by encouraging and availing key subject matter experts to members of the API community

- Increase API small business participation in trade missions, perhaps through a scale up of the funds already available under the federally supported State Trade and Export Promotion Program (STEP). STEP is a pilot initiative to help small businesses increase exports. The program makes matching awards to states to assist small businesses enter and succeed in the international marketplace. STEP support is provided to eligible small business concerns (“STEP Clients”) located in states, territories, and the District of Columbia. For this fiscal year, the U.S. Small Business Administration only awarded \$266,667³ to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership for this purpose.

Improve and Prepare a Skilled Workforce

Because of Virginia’s low unemployment rate, there is a shortage of a skilled workforce in the labor market, constraining new business attraction to the Commonwealth.

- Major employers in Virginia, such as Lockheed Martin, Rolls Royce, and others, have made good faith efforts to support and advance workforce training either through manufacturing apprenticeships or academic grants.
- The VAAB recommends that the Commonwealth coordinate with small to medium tech businesses that also require skilled workforce, many of which are API-owned businesses.
- We learned at a recent board meeting that Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) has an apprenticeship program. We recommend the Commonwealth continue to support VITA and fund this program.
- Partner with technology and manufacturing firms to provide certification courses
- Tap into the multiple military bases in the Commonwealth for skilled labor. Department of Veterans Services can help potential retirees convert their MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) into skills that translate to civilian resumes and match with potential employers. For example, veterans with requisite medic field experience could be facilitated to convert this into EMS (Emergency Medical Services) and other medical certifications, veterans with logistic field experience could be facilitated to receive civilian CDLs (Commercial Driver’s License) relevant to employment in Virginia’s shipping and logistics companies.

Leverage Federal Immigration Laws

Immigration is often thought of as the sole province of the Federal government. However, states can leverage federal immigration laws to help build a Commonwealth that welcomes and works for everyone.

³ <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/grants/state-trade-expansion-program-step/directory-step-awardees>

- Continue to urge the General Assembly to issue driver's licenses to all residents, regardless of immigration status.
- Encourage affiliations between nonprofit entities and institutions of higher education. Such nonprofit entities can be in economically underserved areas of the Commonwealth to aid job creation, such as entrepreneurship, microbusinesses, or vocational trades. Such nonprofits are then able to seek foreign talent on H-1B visas *without* regard to the annual H-1B cap and the "lottery" system that plagues the current setup. The main beneficiaries of such cap-exempt H-1B's are Chinese and Indian applicants, who suffer from extended backlogs that frustrate their ability to remain in the United States.
- For immigrants who have truly distinguished themselves in the service of the Commonwealth, (e.g., serving in an underserved area), award with letters of recommendation from the Office of the Governor. These letters aid such immigrants in seeking "extraordinary ability" visas or green cards.
- Encourage affiliations with foreign nursing and physical therapy universities to enhance quality of non-physician healthcare throughout the Commonwealth.
- Encourage more entities within Virginia to apply to be designated J-1 visa sponsors. J-1 visas (exchange visitors) include short and long-term scholars, au pairs, physicians, camp counselors, and teachers, among others. While these are typically from a university, Virginia can expand short-term foreign visitorship to catalyze culture and idea exchange. As a policy, this will enhance Virginia's standing as a destination from Asian countries for travel, tourism, and trade and other economic activity. When many of these visitors go back, they will remember the Commonwealth.

Virginia as a Tourism Destination for Asia's Growing Tourist Class

Tourism is doing well with over 9.5% increase in revenues under Governor Northam leadership. We are very grateful to the Governor for his interest in improving I-81 and by extension Southwest Virginia tourism. The tourism industry and the entire community are excited to see resolution on issues discussed well over 15 years.

Use Hampton Roads' Deep-water Port to Enhance Trade with Asia

This summer, the VAAB toured the Port of Virginia. Hampton Roads has one of the largest deep-water ports on the Eastern seaboard. The state budget allocated \$350 million to widen and deepen the Norfolk Harbor channel to 55 feet. Ultra large container ships (ULCS) capable of carrying 18,000 or more twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) will be able to visit the Hampton Roads port. This will allow the newest Panamax container, bulk and auto carriers to come from Asia, through the Panama Canal, and offload in Hampton Roads. Additionally, the logistics coverage in the Commonwealth is of high quality, with Chesterfield County ranked #1 in the

nation for logistics-related businesses. Combining and marketing the two services together will help increase trade flow throughout the Commonwealth.

- Market Virginia's port and logistics offerings to Asian countries, specifically in the 10 ASEAN member countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.
- Host a business symposium in Hampton and invite the Port Authority and trade and economic development officials from Asian countries. The event could also be used to connect Virginia businesses with the economic ministries from Asia.
- Leverage the VAAB, when appropriate, to bridge interactions with trade representatives from various Asian countries

Navigate Virginia's Economic Ties with Asia Amidst Continuing US-China Trade Issues

The VAAB is charged to report to the Governor on, among other things, links between the Commonwealth and Asian nations with a focus on the areas and issues of commerce and trade. In the past year, there have been a few matters taken at the federal government level that impact commerce and trade.

This year, Asian and U.S. companies are choosing to invest in Asian countries, such as Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, and Indonesia; and reduce their investments in China. These countries are growing markets for exports by Virginia companies and the Commonwealth export promotion efforts should focus on these countries.

Several API ambassadors have shown interest in meeting with the Governor and his cabinet to discuss one-on-one bilateral trade between the Commonwealth and their respective countries. The Commonwealth has agricultural (soy beans, cattle, seafood, tobacco) and non-agricultural products (machineries, chemicals) to export to these Asian countries. More Halal-certified facilities in Virginia would likely increase beef export to some countries. This would be an ideal time for the Commonwealth to build and grow trade with Asian countries amidst continuing US-China trade issues.

Be Aware of Other Potential Business and Trade Matters

The Possible Purchase by the WMATA of Rail Cars from a Chinese State-Owned Enterprise. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) was created by an interstate compact in 1967 to plan, develop, build, finance and operate a regional transportation system in the national capital area. Metro's proposed FY 2019 budget is \$3.2 billion. It receives funding of about \$500 million from the federal government with state and local funds providing about \$1.9 billion more.

WMATA late last year put out Request for Proposal (RFP) worth over \$1 billion to purchase up to 800 of Metro's 8000 series rail cars. It became public knowledge that several bids were received.

On January 18, 2019, Senators Warner, Kaine, Cardin (MD), and Van Hollen (MD) wrote a letter to Paul Wiedefeld, the CEO and General Manager of WMATA, expressing concerns about WMATA possibly buying rail cars from a Chinese state-owned company, whose government they stated, "*sought to undermine our country's economic competitiveness and national security.*" They explicitly raised cybersecurity and other concerns.

On January 19, 2019, the Washington Post referred to that letter in an article it published entitled, "*Senators Urge Metro to Guard against Chinese Spying in New Subway Cars.*" The Post article noted that the state-owned China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation could win the contract as it had other contracts in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia by using state subsidies to underprice other bidders.

Bills with bipartisan support in both the Senate and the House were passed that would prevent federal funds from being used by any transit authority to purchase rail cars from China. Senators Warner and Kaine are cosponsors of the Senate bill and Congressman Beyer is a cosponsor of the House bill. Those bills are now in a House/Senate conference. Mass transit is an industry the Chinese set forth in their Project 2025 plan as one they want to dominate. The purchase of Chinese rail cars by WMATA would involve money from local and state taxpayers. The RFP issued by WMATA closed on May 31, 2019, so which company should win the contract is now before WMATA officials.

In addition to the matters noted above, the Governor should be aware that the Democratic Party of Virginia in June unanimously adopted a resolution urging Virginia's elected officials at the federal, state, and local levels to support measures that will prevent the WMATA from awarding contract to build its new railway cars to a Chinese state-owned or controlled corporation.

U.S. Japan Trade Agreement Signed on September 26, 2019. After months of negotiations, the U.S. and Japan agreed on a new trade agreement that will provide America's farmers and ranchers enhanced market access to our nation's third largest agricultural export market. When implemented, this agreement will enable American producers to compete more effectively with countries that currently have preferential tariffs in the Japanese market. The deal will provide our farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses with market access for high quality U.S. food and agricultural products to 127 million Japanese consumers.

In the agreement, Japan has committed to provide substantial market access to American food and agricultural products by eliminating tariffs, enacting meaningful tariff reductions, or allowing a specific quantity of imports at a low duty (generally zero). Importantly, the tariff treatment for

the products covered in this agreement will match the tariffs that Japan provides preferentially to countries in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

A key element is the U.S. agricultural exports to Japan. Out of the \$14.1 billion in U.S. food and agricultural products imported by Japan in 2018, \$5.2 billion were already duty free. Under this first-stage initial tariff agreement, Japan will eliminate or reduce tariffs on an additional \$7.2 billion of U.S. food and agricultural products. Over 90 percent of U.S. food and agricultural imports into Japan will either be duty free or receive preferential tariff access once the Agreement is implemented.

This agreement will provide new opportunities for Virginia's agricultural producers to find new opportunities in the large Japanese market. The Governor might consider whether the Commonwealth should sponsor a trade mission to Japan to explore growing market opportunities there made possible by this new agreement.

New Emphasis on the U.S. Commerce Department Select USA Program. The United States Department of Commerce has for several years sponsored a *Select USA Program*, whose purpose is to bring the full powers of the U.S. government to help attract qualified business investors, and to support state and local economic development organizations as they compete for foreign investment. The program facilitated investors in finding business connections and navigating regulatory hurdles. The Commerce Department recently announced that due to the success of this program and the urgent need to foster and promote manufacturing in the U.S., it is adding to its portfolio a *Reselect USA Program* aimed at American companies that might choose to bring factories and jobs back from abroad to communities in the U.S. The overall goal of this additional program is to provide traditional Select USA services to U.S. companies that want to expand investments in the U.S. or to return some portion of the investment they now have abroad. The Department has reconstituted its Investment Advisory Council to design incentives to help with this new initiative. The council now includes new members from the states of Maryland, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Indiana, Idaho, and the city of Detroit. The economic development officials of Virginia should investigate whether this new federal initiative creates new opportunities to assist its own program in attracting new investment into our Commonwealth.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

“Counting All Virginians”

Census Overview. As required by the United States Constitution, the U.S. Census has been conducted every 10 years since 1790, and participation in the U.S. Census is required by law under Title 13 of the United States Code. The decennial census, and the data collected therein, is the basis for per capita federal funding, representational apportionment, and private sector business spending. As such, it is critical that everyone is counted, only once, and in the right place.

Impact to Virginia. An accurate count is critical to Virginia. The federal government distributes over \$675 billion in federal funds to states and localities based on U.S. Census Bureau data. For each individual uncounted, it equates to a loss of roughly \$2,000 per year, or roughly \$20,000 in funds over the 10-year period, dedicated to a variety of residential needs such as roads, schools, and emergency services. If federal funds allocated to Virginia are insufficient due to an undercount, then the state funds these shortfalls to ensure continuation of critical services to Virginia residents. The census also determines how many U.S. Representatives will represent the state in Congress. Each member of Congress represents roughly 700,000 residents. If population trends continue through the end of the decade, states such as Texas, Colorado, Florida, and North Carolina will gain congressional representation, while the states of New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota are expected to lose seats.⁴ While Virginia is not expected to lose any seats, assuming an accurate census count, the census data will affect the determination of its congressional districts.

Census data is also used by private ventures or other non-governmental entities to identify market conditions that will help determine the locations of new brick and mortar stores, areas where new services are needed or populations that have specific needs or issues.

The API Community & Data Disaggregation. The VAAB also utilizes U.S. Census Bureau data in a variety of ways to address the issues, needs and opportunities in and around the API community within the Commonwealth. This is particularly important as the common misconception of APIs is that we are homogenous. That is not the case. Instead, there are more than 50 distinct racial groups within the API community that differ significantly across important social and economic indicators. This “*Model Minority Myth*” that all APIs are affluent and well-educated is perpetuated by aggregated data. Disaggregated data from our disparate communities paint a much more complex, and sometimes, disconcerting picture. For example, while our communities have some of the highest educational achievement with more than 61% of our communities with

⁴ Election Data Services “2017 Reapportionment Analysis” 12-20-2017

bachelor's degrees or higher, the Cambodian (71%), Laotian (75%), and Vietnamese Americans (77%) are the least likely to have a high school diploma.⁵ For example, while only 3 in 50 Filipino Americans nationwide live below the poverty line, approximately 1 in 4 of Hmong Americans are poor. Similarly, about 1 in 2 of Marshallese live below the poverty line, while only 1 in 20 Fijians are poor.⁶ Pay equity is another example of where disaggregating data is critical to understand the needs and concerns of specific subgroups. While API women are paid an average of 86 cents for every dollar a Caucasian male is paid, disaggregated data demonstrates that Native Hawaiian women are paid only 66 cents for every dollar a white male is paid. Additionally, in contrast to what a Caucasian male is paid, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Samoan American women earn 61 cents.⁷

The importance of studying this group is further highlighted by the fact that APIs are the fastest growing racial group in the United States. The API population is projected to more than double, from 15.9 million in 2012 to 34.4 million in 2060, with its share of nation's total population climbing from 5.1 percent to 8.2 percent in the same period.⁸ This is a growing demographic in Virginia as well, and one that is playing an increasingly significant role in the electoral process. From 2000 to 2010, the number of eligible AAPI voters (citizen voting age population, or "CVAP") in Virginia grew by 57%. This AAPI growth rate compares to 13% for the statewide eligible voting population between 2000 to 2010. From 2008 to 2012, the number of eligible AAPI voters in Virginia grew 23%. This compares to a 5.4% growth rate for the statewide eligible voting population between 2008 to 2012.⁹

With growing numbers in the Commonwealth comes the need to better understand and address the unique issues facing this diverse community. It is therefore critical to APIs that a complete count is undertaken to provide detailed snapshots of our growing, changing and disparate communities.

⁵ Asian Americans Advancing Justice, "A Community of Contrasts, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the South", 2014

⁶ A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans in the United States: 2011, Asian Pacific American Legal Center & Asian American Justice Center 36 (2011)

⁷ Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Policy Platform, National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA), 2016

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. Census Bureau Projections Show a Slower Growing, Older, More Diverse Nation a Half Century from Now", Dec 12, 2012

⁹ Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote, "Virginia's AAPI Electorate in Virginia 2016"

2020 Census. The 2020 Census will be the first census to allow responses online, by phone, or by mail. The implementation of new digital technologies is to mitigate challenges from the more cumbersome process with mail-in responses. It will, however, still encounter significant challenges.

The Census has unveiled a variety of new technologies as part of the 2020 Census. In addition to the new online system that will host the Census, tools such as BARCA, (Block Assessment Research and Classification Application), ROAM (Response Outreach Area Mapper), ECaSE (Enterprise Censuses and Surveys Enabling) and other new technologies are designed to make the Census more efficient before and during the Census. However, without adequate testing, new technology rollouts inherently present challenges. The new system was originally planned to undergo more rigorous testing with three end-to-end tests. Budget constraints and other issues have resulted in only one end-to-end test undertaken in Providence County, Rhode Island. When the system goes live in mid-March 2020, it could encounter technical difficulties such as connectivity, data collection, reconciliation, or security issues. The last time the federal government attempted to roll out a large-scale technology platform was in 2013, when Healthcare.gov crashed after a few thousand individuals attempted to register. Additionally, there will be vulnerabilities that fall outside of the Census purview but will exist because of the digital nature of the survey. These include concerns about hacking, phishing, or outright fraud. This is such a concern that a group of cybersecurity experts sent a letter, in July of 2018 to Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and Dr. Ron Jarmin, Acting Director of the Census Bureau expressing their concerns.¹⁰

Additionally, the potential of inadequate funding will further compromise the execution of the 2020 Census. The 2020 Census is expected to cost roughly \$15.6 billion. This is more than the \$12.3 billion spent on the 2010 Census, which until now was the most expensive census in U.S. history. It should be noted that more than 70% of the expected census spending occurs in the last two years of a census cycle. Although Congress had increased the budget allocation for Fiscal Year 2018, census advocates are concerned that budgets for Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020 will be compromised or overspending will hinder a complete count. We thank the Governor for his commitment of \$1.5 million in funding for Census Outreach in the Commonwealth. However, it is noted that these funds will only be utilized for certain in language marketing and data purposes and not available for grassroots organizing.

The failed inclusion of the citizenship question, as requested by the U.S. Department of Justice with the approval of the Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, will be another significant barrier

¹⁰ Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection Georgetown University Law Center letter to The Honorable Wilbur Ross, Secretary, Department of Commerce & Dr. Ron S. Jarmin, Acting Director, U.S. Census Bureau, July 16, 2018 TS

to achieving a complete count. Even the failed inclusion of this question will have a chilling effect and will further depress response rates. The attempt to add the question bolsters the erroneous belief that collected census data will be used against communities of color. In an internal report released in early 2019, it is noted that 45% of the API respondents do not intend to respond to the Census. Of the respondents 41% have concerns about the confidentiality of the answers and fear repercussions from the government, while some believe that the Census will be used to locate undocumented persons in the country (19%).¹¹ This is of concern to the VAAB and the API communities in the Commonwealth as any undercount of the API community in 2020 will not be corrected until 2030. API communities and other immigrant communities are already concerned about how the information collected will be used. The addition of this sensitive question has been very alarming to our communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue Support for the Virginia Complete Count Commission and Earmark More Resources Toward Outreach to the API Populations

- Funding to ensure high quality technology rollout
- Funding for in language media outreach
- Funding for information sessions/gatherings
- Funding for recruitment of enumerators and critical outreach personnel

Mandate the Collection and Disaggregation of API Subgroup-specific Data

- Virginia Department of Education – Education disparities by API subgroup
- Virginia Department of Health – Health disparities by API subgroup
- Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity – Procurement figures by API subgroup and business type
- Virginia Employment Commission and the VA Dept of Taxation – Data on business revenues and payroll

Enhance API Policy Advocacy & Voter Engagement

- Continue the “Office Hour” tours with Saman Agraebrahim, Director of AAPI Outreach, Governor’s Office
- Regular policy briefings with the VAAB and the Governor, his cabinet, and other relevant state officials.
- Require policy makers to include racial equity criteria in all state plans. Examples include:
 - State Aging Plan – created every four years as the current aging plan did not include feedback or buy-in from API resources.
 - SOL Innovation to include API history in K-12 social studies curriculum

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, “Census Barriers and Motivations Survey”, 2019

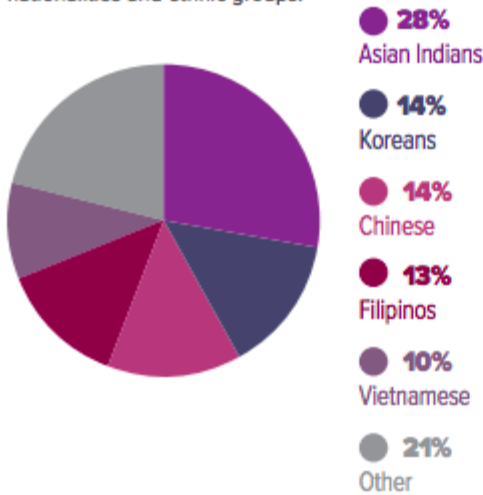


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VIRGINIA'S HARD TO COUNT COMMUNITIES ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI)

AAPI POPULATION IN VIRGINIA

The Asian American and Pacific Islander population is heterogeneous, comprised of more than thirty different nationalities and ethnic groups. ⁽²⁾



FACTORS IN UNDERCOUNTING OF AAPI'S



Language Proficiency: "About one in five Asian households is linguistically isolated—that is, no one in the household older than 13 can speak English exclusively or "very well," which the Census defines as the highest level of English proficiency." ⁽³⁾

Historically, areas with low rates of English proficiency have been undercounted. ⁽³⁾



Misconception: There is a misconception where AAPIs are perceived as doing very well, and thus data collection is not needed. This also leads to the misconception that they are a single group when in reality, are a diverse group of people who encompass a wide range of migration pathways, socio-political histories, languages, and cultures. ⁽³⁾



Housing Insecurity: Irregular housing is considered a factor that can hinder enumeration. Almost half of AAPI's who are low-income live in locations with the highest housing costs in the country, often leading to greater challenges in finding stable and affordable housing. ⁽³⁾

UNDOCUMENTED POPULATION OF AAPI'S IN VIRGINIA (Based on 2015 Data)

There are nearly

58,000

undocumented AAPI's in the Commonwealth. ⁽⁵⁾

They represent



ONE IN FOUR

of the undocumented population in Virginia. ⁽⁵⁾

This population accounts for

7%

of all Virginians. ⁽²⁾

Sources

1. U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Virginia. www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/VA/RH1725217#RH1725217.
2. Diversity Among Asians in Virginia <http://statchatva.org/2019/01/11/diversity-among-asians-in-virginia/>
3. Census 2020: Ensuring "hard-to-count" Asian Americans count at the federal, state, and local level <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/census-2020-ensuring-hard-count-asian-americans-count-federal-state-and-local-levels>
4. Will You Count? Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPIs) in the 2020 Census <http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/2020/Fact-Sheet-AA-NHPI-HTC.pdf>
5. Data on Undocumented Asian Americans <https://aapidata.com/undocumented/>

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Sociological research and national survey reports find that API students encounter experiences of discrimination based on national origin, race, color, and religion in the school setting, by their peers and by adults in positions of authority. Virginia is no exception. It is critical for educators and administrative leaders to be aware, mindful, and attentive to API students' experiences and take affirmative steps to prevent and deter the potential for discrimination. The fact remains that all humans have implicit bias.

As a result, recent studies and national surveys show that API students are at a higher risk to experience mental health issues compared to other racial groups. Three-quarters of API students reported in a national survey that they experienced bullying, harassment, and unfair treatment from their peers with most of those surveyed attributing their race as the primary cause. Other factors such as generational conflict, cultural stigmatization, a lack of awareness of mental health resources, among other factors contribute to APIs having a higher rate of depression and suicide compared to other racial groups.

One of the other factors is language proficiency. According to U.S. Census data, the API population in Virginia has been growing steadily from 2.5 % of the population in 1990 to 5.5% of the population in 2010, and currently make up 6.9% of the population. While the English proficiency rate among API children is 86.6%, 27% of all APIs do not speak English well or not at all. While the API population appears to be a highly educated demographic, the growing population of the API community has limited English proficiency, particularly among the older, adult immigrant API population. Limited proficiency in English hinders their ability to effectively navigate basic and important services such as medical, health, human and social services programs. API students tend to have a much lower case of limited English proficiency. Regardless, we need to ensure these groups, however small, are not marginalized, overlooked, or ignored within the education system.

We also cannot overlook the role a teacher plays. Elementary and secondary school teachers are among the early influencers in shaping leadership mindset and cultivating leadership skills in students. Having access to role models that reflect diversity in positions of leadership and authority is one factor that can encourage early API student participation in student leadership roles.

Several factors likely contribute to the low representation of APIs choosing elementary and secondary school teaching as a profession. These may include:

- Cultural perceptions (e.g., prestige)
- Language barriers
- Cost of entry (e.g., debt burden)

Growth in the API population is not reflected in the makeup of teachers in Virginia public schools. Available statistics suggest that in 2011-12 the percent of teachers who identified as “Asian, non-Hispanic” totaled 1.5% of public-school teacher population in Virginia. Some counties such as Fairfax are taking steps to push for diversity of teachers to reflect the makeup of the students in the classroom.

Lack of API representation goes beyond the teaching profession. In 2016, APIs made up 6% of the U.S. workforce. There are stereotypes that perpetuate the idea that APIs mainly thrive in industries such as health care, law, finance, and technology. These stereotypes play into the “model minority” myth and is further reinforced by the limited representation of APIs in fields related to politics, education, social services, and in performing/visual arts. Of those who have attained higher education degrees, there is an overrepresentation of APIs in STEM fields. While APIs make up 13% of the STEM industry, they make around 3% in the police force, around 2% of educators, and less than 1% of leading actors in Hollywood.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In our last annual report, the VAAB recommended education policies in the areas of cultural competence, bullying prevention and mental health, English language proficiency, and support of diverse career and leadership and educational opportunities for APIs. As a follow-up, the VAAB proposes specific state government initiatives that may form the basis of legislative, Cabinet, and state agency action.

The following recommendations all fall under the purview of the Secretary of Education:

- Require cultural competence training for all Virginians seeking initial teaching licensure through the Virginia Department of Education.
- Incentivize local school divisions to conduct independent equity assessments that gauge student experiences of bullying and harassment in the school setting. The assessment will serve as a foundation to develop district wide systematic initiatives to better serve the mental health needs of underserved populations, including API students, who have experienced mental health effects of discrimination in the school setting.

- Pilot a volunteer English Language Learners (ELL) curriculum for newcomer immigrant parents and students with a focus on language and cultural competence.
- Direct the newly appointed Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to develop an initiative focused on active recruitment of teachers and school administrators from diverse backgrounds.

EXHIBIT A.

Member	2/12/2019 Richmond	5/2/2019 Richmond	7/18/2019 VA Beach	9/20/2019 Blacksburg	11/7/2019 NOVA	12/5/2019 Richmond
Hassan Ahmad	P	A	P	A	P	P
Julia Chun	P	P	A	A	P	A
Atiqua Hashem	P	A	P	P	P	P
Razi Hashmi	A	P	A	A	P	P
Hyun Lee	NA	P	P	P	P	P
Eric Lin	P	P	P	P	P	P
Bao "Bobby" Ly	NA	P	P	A	P	A
Vicki Mirandah	P	P	P	P	Resigned	
Komal Mohindra	P	P	A	A	P	P
Rumy Mohta	A	P	P	A	A	P
Patrick Mulloy	P	P	P	P	P	P
May Nivar	P	P	P	P	P	P
Osman Parvaiz	P	P	P	A	A	Resigned
Ssunny Shah	P	A	P	P	P	A
Mona Siddiqui	P	P	A	A	P	P
J.R. Smith	P	P	P	A	A	P
Karla Soloria	P	P	P	Resigned		
Leonard Tengco	P	P	P	A	P	P
P = Present / A = Absent / NA = Not yet appointed						