



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, February 28th, 2020

CONTACT:

Tasfia Rahman

212-809-4675 x109

trahman@cacf.org

PRESS RELEASE

12TH ANNUAL ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN CITY ADVOCACY DAY

OVER 50 COMMUNITY GROUPS UNITED FOR A FAIR BUDGET

New York, NY - Over 300 community members, service providers, advocates and elected allies gathered today at 1 PM at the steps of City Hall for the **12th Annual Asian Pacific American (APA) City Advocacy Day** under the **15% & Growing Campaign**, led by the [Coalition for Asian American Children & Families \(CACF\)](#). As a collective voice demanding equitable funding for the APA community, the 15% & Growing Campaign united over 50 Asian-led and serving organizations in New York City to advocate for a fair budget.



(l-r) CACAF Co-Executive Directors Vanessa Leung and Anita Gundanna, CACAF Policy Coordinator Hallie Yee, and Council Member Margaret Chin



(l-r) CACAF Policy Coordinator Hallie Yee, Council Member Daniel Dromm, Womankind Executive Director Niketa Sheth, CACAF Co-Executive Director Vanessa Leung, and Homecrest Community Services Chairman Don Lee

The following City Council Members joined the 15% and Growing Campaign's rally in solidarity and called for greater funding equity to the APA community: **Council Member Margaret Chin, Council Member Daniel Dromm, Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Council Member Ben Kallos, Council Member Mark Gjonaj, Council Member Robert Holden, Council Member Mark Levine, and Council Member Carlina Rivera.**

The 15% and Growing Coalition met with nearly half of all of New York City Council to raise their awareness of APA community needs:

Council Member Adrienne Adams, Council Member Fernando Cabrera, Council Member Margaret Chin, Council Member Andrew Cohen, Council Member Costa Constantinides, Council Member Robert Cornegy, Jr., Council Member Laurie Cumbo, Council Member Daniel Dromm, Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Council Member Robert Holden, Speaker Corey Johnson, Council Member Ben Kallos, Council Member Rory Lancman, Council Member Brad Lander, Council Member Mark Levine, Council Member Daneek Miller, Council Member Keith Powers, Council Member Carlina Rivera, Council Member Deborah Rose, Council Member Rafael Salamanca, Jr., Council Member Mark Treyger, Council Member Eric Ulrich, and Council Member Paul Vallone.



(l-r) CACF Co-Executive Director Vanessa Leung, CACF Policy Coordinator Hallie Yee, Council Member Carlina Rivera, CPC Director of Education and Career Services Brian Chen, Womankind Executive Director Niketa Sheth, and KAFSC Executive Director Jeehae Fischer

The diverse and growing APA community's population reaches over 15% of NYC, but does not receive adequate resources. **In FY 2020, APA-led and serving organizations received only 4.37% of all discretionary funding despite the communities' growth and vast needs.** This lack of resources oftentimes undermines marginalized APA New Yorkers from reaching their full potential, particularly when nearly 50% of APA New Yorkers are Limited English Proficient. APA-led and serving organizations provide culturally competent and linguistically accessible services that are oftentimes the most effective and impactful resource for APA New Yorkers to meet their health and social service needs. Adequate funding is critical. The 15% and Growing Campaign's FY 2021 Budget Priorities are to restore and expand initiatives that address the following issue areas: nonprofits of color; children and youth services; older adult services; immigrant services; health and well-being; housing and economic security; violence prevention and intervention; and immigrant workforce development.

Anita Gundanna, Co-Executive Director of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families said, "Today, we stand united as an APA community with our allies in City Council to demand fair funding for our robust and diverse communities. Asian American-led and serving organizations provide culturally and linguistically competent services that are too often the critical life-lines for our marginalized community members. Being underfunded has led our organizations to experience growing wait lists, rising costs, and inadequate resources to fully support our communities to sustain vital services. We look forward to working together with the City Council and building stronger APA communities."

"Contrary to the Model Minority Myth, APA New Yorkers face the highest rates of poverty and

linguistic isolation. The highly diverse APA community continues to grow across the City, and the need for more culturally competent and linguistically accessible services grow as well," said **Vanessa Leung, Co-Executive Director** of the **Coalition for Asian American Children and Families**. "We are grateful for the support from our Council Members who continually advocate for their APA constituents and fight for budget equity."

"Our Asian Pacific American families need their fair share of city dollars," said **NYC Council Finance Chair Daniel Dromm** (District 25). "APAs are one of the fastest growing communities in NYC. They have contributed greatly to the city; yet sadly, many APAs are living their lives in the margins of society. As elected officials, we must adequately fund the grass roots service providers who work night and day to reach these at-risk community members. While I am proud to have successfully fought for increased funding for APA-led service providers throughout my tenure in the Council, more work remains to be done. I will continue to stand with the 15% and Growing Campaign to advocate for more dollars for APA organizations."

"I am pleased to join the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families for Asian Pacific American Advocacy Day. I have been honored to work with many of the coalition members, to allocate discretionary funds, and to join the fight for funding for the outstanding social service organizations that serve the residents of Eastern Queens and neighborhoods across the city," said **Council Member Barry S. Grodenchik** (District 23).

"Asian and Pacific American communities are a vibrant and growing part of our city, but investment in the community-based organizations that serve APA youth, families and seniors has not kept pace with the need. I represent a large Bangladeshi Muslim community in Kensington, where there are some incredible organizations doing the work on the ground like AYA, AAFSC, Sakhi for South Asian Women, Shetu, Asiyah Women's Center, and others. I am committed to supporting them, and working alongside them to improve language access so that communities can get the services they need," said **Council Member Brad Lander** (District 39).

Council Member Ben Kallos (District 5) said, "Striving to fulfill the needs of the City's Asian Pacific American community, I am proud to support continued funding for the Communities of Color Nonprofit Stabilization Fund (CCNSF) as they continue serving over 200 community-based organizations across New York City. These agencies are economic drivers, employing tens of thousands of local community residents and providing communities of color with economic stimuli. Advocating for these provisions is a crucial investment by City Council in developing the next generation of leaders, especially within Black, Latino, and Asian Pacific American communities."

"Since I was elected to office, I have worked with local organizations like CACF to build bridges for the Asian American families who call New York City home and make important contributions to our local communities every day," said **Council Member Paul Vallone** (District 19). "I'm proud to stand with the community groups participating in the 15% and Growing campaign, who know a fair and inclusive budget will help ensure Asian Americans and their families have every resource they need to thrive and succeed."

The 15% & Growing Campaign continues to work with and urge the City Council to address the lack of resources to the underserved APA community through City Council controlled funding. City Council discretionary funding is a crucial resource for small community based organizations and often the first sources of city funding organizations can access.

Members of the 15% & Growing Campaign will meet with over 23 City Council Members and urge them to provide resources to the most vulnerable APA New Yorkers including immigrants and low-income families, seniors, children, youth and women. Three impactful initiatives highlighted in today's legislative meetings and rally, among others, will be:

- **Communities of Color Nonprofit Stabilization Fund.** For the past five fiscal years, the New York City Council allocated funds to the Communities of Color Nonprofit Stabilization Fund, which addresses the need for capacity-building resources for nonprofit organizations serving primarily communities of color (including Asian, Latinx, and African American communities as well as emerging immigrant groups). For FY 2020, we are requesting the City Council for an enhancement of this initiative to \$5 million.

- **Access Health NYC.** Almost 15% of APAs in NYC ages 18 and over are uninsured and over a majority (89%) of uninsured APAs are foreign-born. Health care access problems are exacerbated in the APA community by immigration status-related challenges and fears, language barriers, cultural stigmas, and low utilization of primary and preventive care. The 15% & Growing Campaign is calling on City Council to continue supporting the Access Health NYC initiative by restoring it at \$2.5 million. This initiative helps train and inform disenfranchised New Yorkers on their health rights and options.
- **Older Adult Services.** With 23% of APA seniors living in poverty and more than 2 in 3 APA seniors experiencing Limited English Proficiency, we call on City Council to restore \$2 million to Support Our Seniors that provides funding for senior services citywide; enhance \$2.5 million to geriatric Mental Health funding to support organizations that provide a range of mental health services to older adults in non-clinical settings; and restore funding for the Healthy Aging Initiative to continue providing key support for aging adults. These funds are critical to support the work of APA and aging adult-serving organizations whose work is made more complex with language accessibility, bridging cultural and other divides and more.

Nearly 25% of Asian Americans live in poverty in New York City, the highest poverty rate across all ethnic groups in the City. Those struggling with poverty are also more likely to be recently arrived immigrants, and limited English proficient individuals, children, and seniors. The City must continue to increase funding and support for the services that promote the health, well-being, educational, and economic vitality of our most vulnerable New Yorkers.

Therese Rodriguez, Chief Executive Officer of APICHA Community Health Center said, "Although there has been significant progress in reducing new infection rates for most communities, the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community faces staggering health inequities. New infections of HIV among API populations have decreased only 3 percent within New York State. New York City can do better. To address this inequity we must implement effective strategies that provide culturally-sensitive, linguistically-appropriate strategies to reach the at-risk APIs and link them HIV prevention tools, like PrEP. With adequate funds and resources we can resolve those inequities and improve the well-being of APIs living with and affected by HIV/AIDS."

"The Arab-American Family Support Center proudly supports immigrants and refugees across New York City. As members of the 15% & Growing Campaign, we are steadfast in our commitment to serve vulnerable communities and will continue to raise awareness of funders and decision-makers to adequately fund service providers that are skilled to provide culturally competent services. We look forward to continuing our partnership with CACF members to ensure our under-resourced communities are protected; and we also look forward to partnering with the City and State to meet the unique needs of all marginalized communities and to ensure that they are protected through a fair allocation of funding," said **Rawaa Nancy Albilal, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Arab-American Family Support Center.**

"As an organization that fights for opportunities for Asian American artists, we at A4 understand the importance of representation and equity. In New York City, where Asian Americans represent almost 15% of the population, our cultural organizations receive less than 5% of city funding and we are incredibly underrepresented in arts and cultural fields. It's critical that our communities see ourselves and hear our stories in the media and in our cultural institutions —not only for ourselves but to erode the racial bias we face even in a city like New York," said **Lisa Gold, Executive Director of the Asian American Arts Alliance.**

"It's time to bring real equity to Asian American New Yorkers through equitable City funding," said **Annetta Seecharran, Executive Director, Chhaya CDC.** "Organizations such as Chhaya provide language accessible services that address the critical needs of the most vulnerable South Asian and Indo-Caribbean New Yorkers. The work AAPI organizations do is necessary, and so is fair funding."

Karen Zhou, Executive Director of Homecrest Community Services said, "It is not easy to be a non-profit service provider in senior services these days because of rising cost all around us. We are one of many senior centers serving Asian immigrant populations in NYC

that face this problem, we'd like to highly recommend restoring \$2 million to "The Senior Centers for Immigrant Population Initiative" as well as restoring \$5 million to Support Our Seniors and Healthy Aging Initiative. A lack of funding puts the Asian American immigrant communities at risk and would result in growing wait-list for services."

"KAFSC supports the 15% and Growing Campaign led by CACF. The Campaign aims for New York City governments to have fair budgets that impacts the most vulnerable Asian Pacific American (APA) New Yorkers," said **Jehae Fischer, Executive Director** of the **Korean American Family Service Center**. "As an APA-led and serving organization, KAFSC provides culturally and linguistically tailored services to immigrant survivors who are affected by Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Child Abuse - a population that is already underserved, under-reported, and marginalized. Therefore, KAFSC stands with other APA-led and serving organizations to fight for the budget equity that represents the growing demographics of NYC APA community."

"As a social service provider for the Asian Pacific American community, Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc. (KCS) is urging City Council to restore and increase City Council discretionary funding in FY 2021. In FY 2020, APA communities did not receive a fair share of City funding dedicated to social services. The APA community has the highest uninsured rate in healthcare, and roughly one in four APA seniors (23%) live in poverty. Seventy-eight percent of APAs in NYC are foreign-born, thus APA individuals are faced with social, cultural and linguistic barriers, and have limited knowledge of the healthcare system and social services," said **Linda Lee, President and Chief Executive Officer** of the **Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc.** "To protect this vulnerable population, we need to secure vital services such as mental health counseling, meals on wheels, and senior job training to ensure that their economic, social, health and emotional needs are met. Our community needs organizations like KCS who can assist them linguistically and deliver culturally sensitive services. It is more crucial than ever City Council continues its support for CBOs in providing such vital services to the under-served APA population."

John Park, Executive Director of **Minkwon Center for Community Action** said, "Budgets are a reflection of values, and this is also true for NYC's budget. Asian Americans in NYC have had the highest rate of poverty for more than a decade, and for each of the last ten years we've been coming out to City Hall to bring attention to the 15 percent of the City who are significantly under-resourced. As a Flushing-based organization that provides thousands of direct services every year to local Asian Americans who are almost exclusively low-income and limited English proficient immigrants, we see every day the impact of a City budget that is not aligned with the actual needs on the ground. For this budget cycle, we call on our City's elected officials to pass a fair budget that truly values Asian American New Yorkers."

"Every year, UCA participated in the 15% & Growing Campaign Rally with the Asian Pacific American (APA) community in New York City, where we gather and stand up against racial discrimination and hate crime activity that took place in our neighborhood", said **Stephanie Wong, Executive Director** and **President** of **United Chinese Association of Brooklyn**. "Our recent efforts also include increasing the voter registration in Bensonhurst, encouraging participation in the 2020 Census within the neighborhoods, and to pledge the support to prevent hate and crime in our neighborhood by joining the Neighborhood Safety Coalition. As well as by helping new immigrant students to pursue equal education opportunities and promoting coalition politics at the local level. We hope to continuously provide and bring more services to anyone who is in needs in the Bensonhurst community."

"Women for Afghan Women (WAW) stands steadfast and proud with New York City's Asian Pacific American organizations today, and always," said **Roshni Ahmed, Coalition/Outreach Coordinator** for **Women For Afghan Women**. "It is incredible to witness the resiliency of survivors of gender-based violence and immigrant families when they are invested in and supported. We are united with the diverse APA community to ensure equitable resources uplift our vulnerable APA New Yorkers!"

Organizations who attended the press rally:

- Academy of Medical & Public Health Services
- Adhikaar
- Arab-American Family Support Center

- Asian American Arts Alliance
- Asian American/Asian Research Institute-CUNY
- CMP
- Charles B. Wang Community Health Center
- Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.
- Chhaya CDC
- Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
- Homecrest Community Services
- Indochina Sino-American Community Center
- Japanese American Social Services, Inc.
- Japanese American Association of New York
- Korean American Family Service Center
- Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York
- Leviathan Lab
- Mekong NYC
- NYU Center for the Study of Asian American Health
- Sakhi for South Asian Women
- Sapna NYC
- South Asian Council for Social Services
- South Asian Youth Action
- Turning Point for Women and Families
- United Chinese Association of Brooklyn
- Womankind
- Women for Afghan Women

###

The 15% & Growing Campaign is comprised of over 50 Asian led and serving organizations in New York City aiming for the State and City governments to have fair, inclusive budgets that protect the most vulnerable Asian Pacific American New Yorkers. Campaign members employ thousands of New Yorkers and serve hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.

Academy of Medical & Public Health Services ▪ Adhikaar ▪ Alliance of South Asian American Labor ▪ Andolan - Organizing South Asian Workers ▪ Apex for Youth* ▪ APICHA Community Health Center* ▪ Arab American Family Support Center ▪ Asian American Arts Alliance ▪ Asian American / Asian Research Institute - CUNY ▪ Asian American Federation ▪ Asian Outreach Clinic, The Child Center of New York ▪ Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund ▪ Asian Americans for Equality ▪ Asian Outreach Clinic, Child Center of New York ▪ Center for the Integration and Advancement of New Americans ▪ Chhaya CDC* ▪ CMP* ▪ Chinese-American Planning Council* ▪ Chinese Progressive Association ▪ Coalition for Asian American Children & Families (lead) ▪ Council of Peoples Organization ▪ Damayan Migrant Workers Association ▪ DRUM – South Asian Organizing Center ▪ Filipino American Human Services, Inc. ▪ Greater Chinatown Community Association ▪ Hamilton Madison House ▪ Homecrest Community Services ▪ Indo-Caribbean Alliance ▪ Indochina Sino-American Community Center ▪ Immigrant Social Services* ▪ Japanese American Association of New York* ▪ Japanese American Social Services Inc. ▪ Korean-American Family Service Center* ▪ Korean American League for Civic Action ▪ Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc.* ▪ Korean Family Counseling and Research Center ▪ Korean American League for Civic Action ▪ Leviathan Lab ▪ Lower East Side Family Union ▪ MAAWS for Global Welfare, Inc. ▪ Mekong NYC* ▪ MinKwon Center for Community Action* ▪ New York Coalition for Asian American Mental Health ▪ NYU Center for the Study of Asian American Health ▪ NYU South Asian Health Initiative ▪ SAKHI for South Asian Women ▪ Sapna NYC* ▪ Sikh Coalition ▪ South Asian Council for Social Services* ▪ South Asian Youth Action* ▪ Turning Point for Women and Families ▪ United Chinese Association of Brooklyn ▪ United Sikhs ▪ Womankind* ▪ Women for Afghan Women* ▪ YWCA of Queens*

(*Steering Committee)

CACF Coalition For
Asian American
Children+Families

Phone | Fax
212-809-4675 | 212-785-4601
www.cacf.org

