



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

CACF STATEMENT ON NEW \$4 MILLION AAPI COMMUNITY SUPPORT INITIATIVE

New York, NY: The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF) applauds the New York City Council and Mayor Bill DeBlasio for **creating a new and pioneering \$4 million AAPI Community Support initiative**. We are ever-grateful for the leadership and support of our allies in the City Council for pushing this monumental initiative forward and championing an equitable recovery for our Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. With this new investment into our communities and the organizations who serve them, CACF is excited for strengthened partnerships with City Council to support and empower AAPI communities across our city.

This \$4 million citywide initiative funding will directly support AAPI-led and -serving organizations who offer critical programming to our AAPI communities, including direct services, mental health support, youth programs, racial literacy, and other culturally competent services.

The creation of this new and vital initiative more than doubles City Council's investment towards our AAPI community based organizations, who received less than 5% of City Council's discretionary funding in FY 2021, despite serving more than 15% of New York City's diverse and growing population.

CACF, along with our coalition members and partners, has been advocating for an equitable City budget and needed investments in the AAPI community for almost 15 years. This win was only made possible through the collaborative effort of a diverse group of CACF's organizational members and partners who are part of **CACF's 15% and Growing Campaign**.

Anita Gundanna and Vanessa Leung, Co-Executive Directors of CACF said, "We stand united as an AAPI community with our allies in City Council to move towards a more equitable future for all AAPI New Yorkers. Throughout the pandemic, our AAPI community based organizations have been on the front lines, providing vital culturally competent and linguistically accessible social services to our most vulnerable community members. And even prior to the

pandemic, historical underfunding led our organizations to experience growing wait lists and inadequate resources to fully support our communities most in need. Coupled with the steep rise in anti-Asian violence resulting from racist and dangerous scapegoating surrounding COVID-19, our families and communities have needed a focused effort from New York City to help us recover and heal.”

NYC Council Speaker Corey Johnson said, "The troubling rise in violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders has been devastating for our communities. This Council is proud to commit \$4 million to create the AAPI Community Support initiative, which will fund Asian-led and Asian-serving organizations so they can provide mental health services, racial literacy programs, anti-bias and hate crime work. We must be laser-focused on helping our communities recover and heal, and this initiative is one of the ways we are doing just that,"

NYC Council Finance Chair Daniel Dromm said, “Supporting our AAPI communities has long been a top priority for me. I have long fought for equity in the budget for AAPI people and finally we are getting there with this commitment of \$4 million. This is a huge accomplishment and I congratulate all the advocates who have struggled so hard to get to this milestone. More remains to be done but finally, the Council is realizing its obligation to AAPI folks. I am proud of our work together.”

Council Member Carlina Rivera said, “I am proud to have helped fight for and win \$4 million in funding to support CACF’s work advocating for equity and opportunity for pan-Asian children and their families. This is the sort of community-focused investment we must prioritize in our pursuit of an equitable recovery and brighter future, and these funds will prove critical in the growth of culturally competent, language accessible community resources, including direct services, mental health and racial literacy work.”

Council Member Peter Koo said, "The AAPI community has long advocated for more resources from the city so that the organizations and non-profits with a direct line to their constituents can properly address the inequities they face every day. This \$4 million influx of citywide funding for AAPI Community Support is a great first step that I hope will become a permanent commitment to addressing the systemic disparities that exist in our community."

Council Member Barry S. Grodenchik said, “The AAPI community support initiative will help organizations across the city that are providing critical services to New Yorkers every day,” said Council Member Barry S. Grodenchik. “At a time when horrific attacks and unfathomable hatred has been directed at our AAPI family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors, local community-based nonprofits are well positioned to respond and will now have more adequate resources to do so.”

Ansen Tang, Executive Director of the United Chinese Association of Brooklyn said, "The funding is extremely critical to support the AAPI Community works in our communities to help address hate, lift up data and stories about the impact of multiple crises, and offer tangible access points to report hate incidents and ways to help victims and communities recover. The

degree of collaborations over the past months during this unprecedented time has been acknowledged and fulfilled. Recognizing this tremendous growth and the unique needs within AAPI communities, it is imperative to recognize that all our efforts to support our AAPI community goes hand in hand with supporting all who are impacted by these imperfect systems. UCA will continue our work and commitment to facilitating increased access and participation and to increase AAPI representation in federal programs, where AAPIs remain underserved."

Diya Basu-Sen **দিয়া বসু সেন**, Executive Director of **Sapna NYC, Inc.** said, "Our community is struggling. We are continuing to see an increase in domestic violence, persisting housing and food insecurity, and continued unemployment. This coupled with continually evolving COVID-19 recommendations and new policies and benefits mean that more and more families are coming to Sapna for in-language assistance that they aren't able to get anywhere else. This new \$4 million AAPI Community Support Initiative is invaluable in funding survivor services, workforce development programs, mental health services, application assistance, emergency assistance, community outreach and so much more so that we have a chance at an equitable recovery from the pandemic. We are grateful to CACF for spearheading this push for much-needed investment in our AAPI communities and for all the organizations that worked alongside us in making this a reality for our communities."

Guneet Kaur, Associate Director of **UNITED SIKHS** said, "UNITED SIKHS wants to thank the New York City Council for approving a \$98.7 billion budget for the Fiscal Year 2022 with significant increased investments in our AAPI communities and the organizations who serve them. We are incredibly grateful to the CACF for initiating the 15% Growing campaign and the more than 40 Asian American organizations who came together to support this bill. This initiative recognizes the crucial role of our community-based organizations in providing culturally competent and linguistically accessible services to the communities. These funds will help the Asian American and Pacific-Islander communities get better healthcare, education, food access, mental health and receive racial and social justice. We welcome this new beginning and hope this movement forward is sustained!"

Jeehae Fischer, Executive Director of the **Korean American Family Service Center** said, "KAFSC applauds the new \$4 million initiative called AAPI Community Support, and are thankful to the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, who has led the charge and worked feverishly to secure this initiative. This investment will help support KAFSC and other Asian-led and Asian-serving organizations to provide direct services, mental health support, youth programs, racial literacy, and other culturally competent services to help support the diverse Asian American community, particularly the AAPI survivors of gender-based violence. This significant investment will jumpstart KAFSC to assertively expand enrichment and continue to directly support our culturally and linguistically services which would support the critical and community-based work to supporting our immigrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse and other support for the sustainability of the organization for the past 32 years."

Kavita Mehra, Executive Director of **Sakhi for South Asian Women** said, "We are thrilled to see this \$4M investment in our communities, and are thankful to the Coalition for Asian

American Children and Families, who worked tirelessly in the spring to secure this initiative. This win is a hard-fought starting point that demonstrates our collective power. Sakhi for South Asian Women has been serving survivors in the New York area since 1989, with thousands of survivors having counted on us to offer support and sanctuary throughout our thirty-two years. This funding will enable us to broaden the depth and breadth of our culturally-responsive services, and we understand it as an investment in our movement to end gender-based violence. Our institutions frequently neglect both survivors and the systemic oppression that re-traumatizes our community members—this investment is thus a marker of visibility; we refuse to be ignored.”

Lisa J. Gold, Executive Director of the Asian American Arts Alliance said, “We are so grateful to the City Council and the Mayor for supporting this new initiative. We are thrilled to be able to launch programs that will help the AAPI creative community share their voices to help all AAPIs see themselves and the value they bring to the cultural fabric of our city! I am so proud to be part of this coalition--this COMMUNITY--that works to uplift each other and demonstrates the power of collaboration.”

Naheed Samadi Bahram, US Country Director of Women for Afghan Women (WAW) said, “Through this historic new initiative, Women for Afghan Women (WAW) now has the capacity to address the complex mental health needs of the Afghan, South Asian, and Muslim immigrant communities that we serve in NYC. WAW will utilize this initiative funding to provide culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate mental health support to newly arrived immigrants and asylum seekers who are most in need and yet face many barriers to obtaining support. WAW continues to stand with our fellow AAPI organizations in NYC and is a proud steering committee member of the 15% and Growing Campaign, which has organized the City's diverse AAPI groups into a collective and powerful voice for an equitable NYC. Together, we will continue to provide and fight for equitable and meaningful access for AAPI New Yorkers to lead safe and productive lives.”

Robina Niaz, Founder & Executive Director at Turning Point for Women and Families said, “We express our deepest gratitude to the New York City Council and the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families for uplifting the voices of the Asian American community and for mobilizing communities to secure a \$4 million investment. Turning Point for Women and Families is the first social service agency in NYC to provide culturally competent and religiously sensitive services to Muslim women and their families since 2004. This funding will further our vision to end gender based violence and expand services to survivors of domestic violence through transitional housing, individual counseling, support groups, outreach, and education. This investment makes it possible for our communities to receive essential services in the languages they speak so they can pave a road to safety and self-sufficiency. We are so honored to be part of a coalition that works together to combat violence and elevate the AAPI community!”

Wayne Ho, President and CEO of the Chinese-American Planning Council said, “CPC applauds the creation of a \$4 million initiative called AAPI Community Support. This funding will enable CPC and other Asian-led and Asian-serving organizations to provide direct services,

mental health support, youth programs, racial literacy, and other culturally competent services for diverse Asian American community members. We encourage the City Council to quickly designate this funding to community-based organizations as intended, particularly to smaller organizations that are often left out of the budget and serve emerging populations."

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