

PROGRAMS, ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

Civil Rights Conversations

Due to the pandemic canceling our annual AAPI Civil Rights Forum, the AAC continued to host vital conversations around civil rights issues that affect the AAPI community. In these talks, we addressed conversations about discrimination, xenophobia, racism, taking action, and getting involved in the community to create change.

- Anti-Asian Violence and Islamophobia with Commissioner Haniya Syeda & other community leaders
- APIA and Civic Engagement with Helena Barbano
- Southeast Asian and Black Liberation with Freedom, Inc.

#COVIDTalks

COVID-19 Talks provided online discussions about how to go about everyday life in the time of COVID-19. We were able to engage our audience in discussion about how to cope with feelings of uncertainty, stress, and anxiety; where to report hate crimes; and how to channel struggles into advocacy & art.

- Attorney General's Office Civil Rights Division: Providing Resources & Support for the AAPI Community w/ Assistant AG, Shafaq Islam
- Mental Health During Quarantine with Commissioner Mabel Lam
- #IAMNOTAVIRUS Campaign
- AAPI History: Debunking Stereotypes and Finding Our Voices

Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

The AAC celebrated #AAPIHM by dedicating each week of May to a specific issue relevant to the AAPI community. Each week was accompanied by compelling infographics and interactive webinars! Importantly, the AAC also held intentional space to highlight the unique experiences and histories of Pacific Islanders across Massachusetts.

Week 1: AAPI History

- Provided education on the importance of knowing Asian American history, ethnic studies, and being an ally to communities of color.

Week 2: Pacific Islander Week

- Spotlights the personal experiences and voices of Pacific Islanders in MA, highlighted Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander activists and leaders in the US, discussed how to be an ally with Pacific Islanders, explained the breakdown of Oceania, and provided education of the Hawaiian lei.

Week 3: Representation Week

- Highlighted books, documentaries, movies, and shows depicted the Asian American & Pacific Islander experience. All resources were written, produced, directed by AAPI creators. We also held a paint night with an Asian American artist, Fiyabomb, and had a Q&A session about how her personal experience informed her art.

Week 4: Cultural Appreciation Week

- Featured Asian American small business restaurants and cafes in Massachusetts in a master list and showcased traditional dresses of various Asian countries in a video presentation.



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Pride Film Festival

During June, the AAC hosted our very first Pride Film Festival! We screened documentaries and short films of Asian Americans in the LGBTQ+ community & held Q&A sessions with the creators of these films. We hosted conversations centering identity, intersectionality, and the creative process with the creators and our audience.



- *Searching For Queer Asian Pacific America*
by Patrick G. Lee
- *Finding the Fierce Gaysian Within*
by Candace Nguyen
- *Kumu Hina*
by Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson

LIFE OUTSIDE OF THE PHILIPPINES
-INTERVIEW SERIES-

Bill & Hazel Solar PALMARE	Billy King Asian American Commissioner	Cristina Castro Hawalehng Filipino
OCTOBER 15th @6:30PM	OCTOBER 18th @6:30PM	OCTOBER 19th @6:30PM

***REGISTER FOR EACH ZOOM SESSION*
OR TUNE IN ON FACEBOOK LIVE!**

Moderated by Commissioner Philjay S. Solar
Philjay is a Filipino American community leader working as an act-up manager in the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office for Civil Rights. In his spare time, he hosts a podcast called 'The 100' and co-edits a book called 'The 100' which explores the lives of young Asian American leaders.

In celebration of Filipino American History Month, AAC presents

FILIPINX HISTORY: PAST & PRESENT
with Prof. Richard Chu
Mod. by Philjay Solar

TUNE IN ON FACEBOOK LIVE & ZOOM
OCT. 22nd | 5:30PM EST

Filipinx Businesses & Organizations in Massachusetts

SWIPE & SUPPORT >>

Let's talk about
MAUNA KEA

HOW TO BE AN ALLY TO THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY

SWIPE LEFT!

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS

#NativeAmericanHeritageMonth

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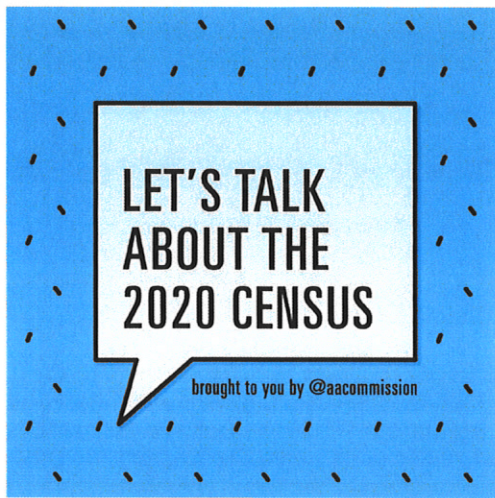
Filipino American History Month

Another first in 2020 was celebrating Filipino American History Month in partnership with Commissioner Philjay Solar. The AAC highlighted the Filipino American experience and culture through oral history talks with three community members, held a webinar presentation of the past and present history Filipinx American community with Professor Richard Chu, and spotlighted Filipinx businesses and organizations in MA.

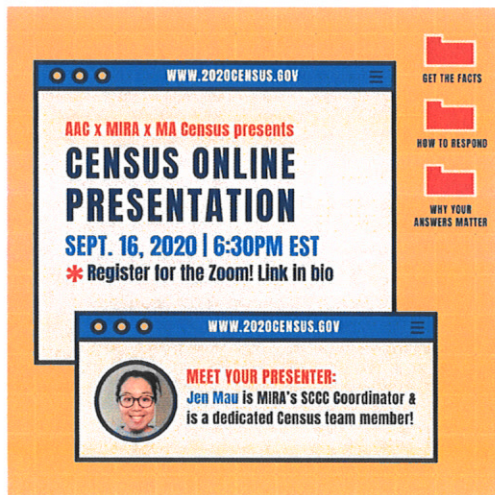
Native American Heritage Month

For this year's Native American Heritage Month, we wanted to acknowledge the shared experiences and struggles between the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community and indigenous and Native American communities. When people use the term 'AAPI,' they often forget the challenges the PI community faces.

We must be mindful when mentioning 'AAPI' or 'AANHPI' in conversation and consider how each group has unique needs regarding education, housing, employment, health, etc. During the month, we highlighted these experiences and stories through infographics.



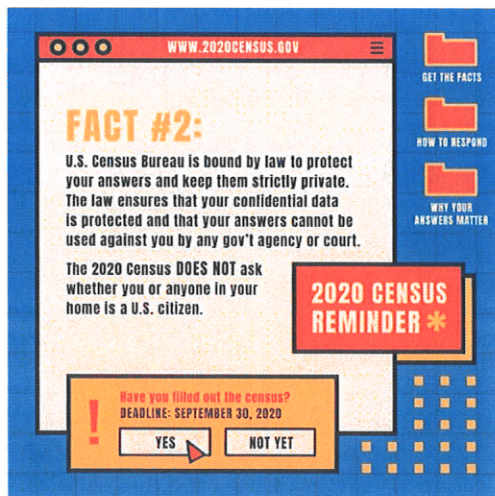
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2020 Census

We partnered with the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) and Massachusetts Complete Count for an online Census Presentation.

We informed our audiences by sending out reminders on a bi-weekly basis with information regarding the census. We also teamed up with college organizations in MA to distribute infographics and a pledge form to take the census.



Special thanks to these college institutions:

Northeastern University
 Mount Holyoke College
 Boston University
 Simmons College
 Amherst College
 Boston College
 UMass Boston
 UMass Amherst
 UMass Lowell
 Smith College

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2020 Election

With our Research & Policy intern, Lily Tang, the AAC translated voting information into seven different languages: Vietnamese, Chinese Simplified, Khmer, Tagalog, Nepali, Japanese, Korean. Translations were uploaded as PDFs on our website. They were also made into shareable infographics on social media.



These translations were undertaken by:

Massachusetts Youth Leadership
Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
Springfield Vietnamese Cultural Association
Chinese Associations of Western MA
Bayanihan Association of America
Bhutanese Society of Western MA
Japanese Bostonians Support Line

RESOURCES

COVID Relief Grant Recipients

To support some of our most vulnerable communities at the start of the pandemic, the AAC launched the COVID-19 Emergency Fund Grant for \$10,000 to support small businesses. These one-time grants ranging from \$200 to \$1000 were available on a rolling basis. We were able to help support 14 businesses in Massachusetts.

- Amherst Community Connections
- Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK)
- Filipino Cancer Network of New England Foundation, Inc (FCNNEF)
- Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center
- Philippine-American Mainstream Advocacy for Nonpartisan Associations, Inc. (PAMANA)
- United Hmong of MA
- Springfield Vietnamese Culture Association
- Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
- National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NFFAA)
- Volumelithic
- Joy in Tutoring
- Tuan Pham

COVID-19 Resources

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been devastating to many communities, resulting in a surge of racial violence against the Asian community, a significant loss of jobs, increased domestic violence, anxiety, and increased depression with quarantining, etc.

The AAC found it essential to create a living document explicitly catered to the Asian community that provides updated information on COVID-19 resources, mental health services, domestic/family violence, reporting hate crimes, translation services, legal aid, etc.

go to: www.aacommission.org

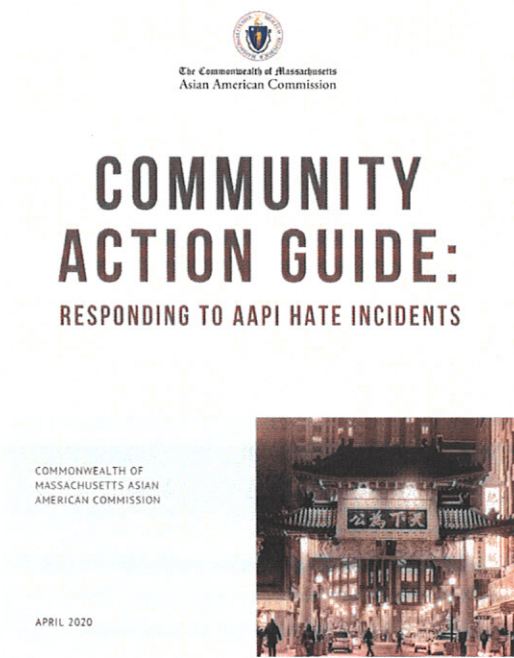
RESOURCES

Racial Violence Against the Asian Community Resources

Violence, racism, and xenophobia targeted toward the Asian community is not a new phenomenon. It is deeply embedded in the fabric of American history and it has been manifested against different Asian American Pacific Islander communities in many ways over the years. Alongside the pandemic, we have seen a substantial rise in harassment, discrimination, and violence directed towards the AAPI community in Massachusetts and across the nation.

Organizations like Asian Americans Advancing Justice have been documenting hate crimes and hate incidents since 2017 at www.StandAgainstHatred.org, which is available in English, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese.

The staff at the Asian American Commission also created a Community Action Guide to help the community respond to the rise in hate incidents against the AAPI community.



To access, go to our website > Resources > Anti-Asian Racism Resources

go to: www.aacommission.org

Special Thanks To Our Supporters

We are always grateful to our supporters but especially so in this year of many challenges. Thank you for your steadfast support!

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Asian & Asian American Studies Certificate Program
Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation
Springfield Vietnamese Cultural Association
Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
Bayanihan Association of America
Chinese Association of Western MA
Bhutanese Society of Western MA
Japanese Bostonians Support Line
Massachusetts Complete Count
Iskwelahang Pilipino
#IAMNOTAVIRUS
Amazon Smile
Eastern Bank
Freedom INC.
APIs CAN

Treasurer, Deborah Goldberg
Boston City Councilor, Michelle Wu
Assistant Attorney General, Shafaq Islam
Professor Richard Chu & Professor C.N. Le
Jen Mau
Leverett Wing
Dr. Mabel S. Lam
Dr. Liza Talusan
Helena Berbano
Zon Moua & M. Adams
Fiyabomb, Olivia Nguyen
Mike Keo & Moses Farrow
Cristina Castro, Bill & Francel Solar
Nazia Ashraful, Sumaiya Zama, Sumaiyea Uddan
Candace Nguyen, Patrick G. Lee, Dean Hamer & Joe Wilson
Elaona Lupetu'ulelei Lemoto, Kalo Daley, Vini Aaron Ciao Saolotoga Daley, La'i Yuen

UMass Boston, UMass Amherst, UMass Lowell, Northeastern University, Boston University, Mount Holyoke College, Simmons College, Amherst College, Boston College, Smith College

FY2021 Programs and New Initiatives



During FY2021, the AAC will continue its successful and well-received events from the previous year, including our Advocacy Day, the Young Leaders Symposium (YLS), traveling Resource Fairs, and the Unity Dinner. We are also introducing new initiatives to address the needs & challenges facing a disproportionate amount of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. These new initiatives will build upon our capacity and increase our geographic and ethnic reach.

The AAC will continue to address financial literacy and economic development within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community by working with the Treasurer's office and local banks to promote financial literacy further and assist small businesses harmed during the pandemic.

The AAC looks forward to representing the interests of and advocating on behalf of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders throughout the Commonwealth!