



January 20, 2021

Chris Steller
Legislative Reference Library
645 State Office Bldg.
100 Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

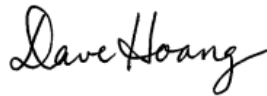
Mr. Steller:

Each year, the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans reports the previous year's efforts, achievements, and progress as requested in Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, Subd. 8. Our 2020 report is attached.

The report highlights a number of the Council's 2020 legislative and research achievements, community engagement efforts, and ongoing projects, and includes our expenditures report. Additionally, please find the following supporting documents enclosed: our 2020-2021 biennial legislative agenda and five one-pagers that preview the Council's forthcoming report on Minnesota's emerging Asian Pacific communities.

Thank you for entrusting the Council with the role and responsibility of advising the Legislature and the Governor's Office, and in doing so, serving as the advocate for our Asian Pacific Minnesotan communities within state government.

Sincerely,



Dave Hoang
2020 Board Chair
hoan0042@umn.edu
651-757-1740



Sia Her
Executive Director
sia.her@state.mn.us
651-757- 1741



m COUNCIL ON
ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS
A STATE AGENCY SINCE 1985



2020 Annual Report

A report to the Legislature as requested by Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, Subd. 8



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Welcome Letter from the 2020 Chair



Dear Community,

The Council's 2020 report tells a story—and it's not a simple one. It's a story of struggle, of adaptation, and of loss and perseverance. It's the story of why the Council's work is so crucial to the safety and livelihood of Asian Pacific Minnesotans (APMs), and to the betterment of our great state.

We, as APMs and as Americans, saw some very dark days in 2020. In an ideal world, we would be each other's keepers. But the truth is, we have seen this year unfold with acts of xenophobia, racism, and macro and micro aggressions. We are living in a time when many Americans are at odds with each other. And yet, there is hope on the horizon. For we saw the year end with an election in which the American people voted for the country they desire—an election in which Minnesota achieved the highest voter turnout in the nation.

Today, the work of the Council is more crucial than ever to lifting up the voices, the experiences, and the potential of our community.

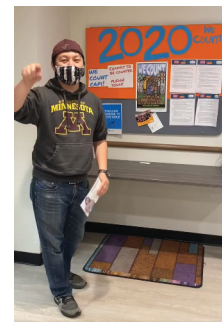
Despite the inordinate challenges of the year, our Council did more than fret and react. We celebrated—this year marked the 45th anniversary of the beginning of the Southeast Asian diaspora, and we collaborated with local leaders to spotlight the beauty that diaspora has brought to Minnesota. This year, we invented—where doors were closed due to the pandemic, we built new roads and invited APMs to walk them with us. This year, we loved—we saw how generations of racism and fear have harmed us all, and we committed to finding new ways to move forward with empathy, compassion, and action.

In the following pages, we'll show you how we've worked with others in state government to ensure our community is heard, understood, and reflected in key decisions. We'll illuminate how our work has strengthened our collective sense of civic belonging and helped maintain hope while the world battles an invisible enemy.

Warmly,

Dave Hoang

Dave Hoang



LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

Minnesota's 2020 legislative session began with a predicted budget surplus and an expectation that legislators would focus on policy issues and a bonding bill over major new programs. Minnesota has the only divided legislature in the country, requiring bipartisan cooperation and compromise to achieve results. In March, as the pandemic became a reality across the country and in Minnesota, the Legislature adjourned mid-session in recognition of a peacetime emergency declared by Governor Walz.

When the session reconvened in April, the world had changed. Legislative priorities across the state were aimed at the survival of

people and businesses. The budget outlook cratered, plans dissipated, and much of the remaining work of the Legislature took place behind closed doors. Then, on Memorial Day, a Minneapolis man named George Floyd died under the custody of his local police department. For a time, Minnesota became the center of the world.

In the midst of this turbulence, we dedicated much of our capacity during the 2020 legislative session to one of our key statutory charges: advising policymakers on legislation that advances equity and, therefore, our communities' capacity to thrive. Although the Council's legislative work is guided by our

biennial legislative agenda, this year, our work drew as much from this legislative agenda as it did from the new realities of life during a pandemic.

Increase Teachers of Color Act – H.F. 3201 (Rep. Kunesh) / S.F. 4166 (Sen. Abeler), H.F. 4157 (Rep. Noor) / S.F. 4041 (Sen. Abeler), and H.F. 4088 (Rep. Noor) / S.F. 4165 (Sen. Abeler)

This package of legislation, designed to build upon the successful 2019 Increase Teacher of Color Act, received bipartisan support during the 2020 session. This act requests that the state invest in the recruitment and retention of teachers of color as one of the strategies to address the achievement gap. This initiative is an ongoing joint effort of the state's ethnic councils and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. For our part, Council staff testified in support of this legislation before committees and worked on joint letters of support. The E-12 provisions of H.F. 3201 advanced in the House to the Education Finance Division, and in the

Senate S.F. 4166 advanced to the E-12 Finance and Policy Committee. However, the legislation stalled in both the House and Senate after the pandemic shutdown.

Spoken Language Health Care Interpreting Registry Bill – H.F. 1400 (Rep. Morrison) / S.F. 875 (Sen. Wiklund)

The purpose of this legislation is to ensure that all Minnesotans who rely on interpreters for healthcare purposes have equitable access to quality medical interpreters. If enacted into law, this legislation would establish a verified registry system for spoken language health care interpreters in Minnesota, to replace the current unverified roster system housed within the Minnesota Department of Health. Medical interpreters across the state have expressed frustration with the current roster system and an overall lack of wage growth, leading to more interpreters exiting the field each year. Moreover, the inconsistent quality of interpreters available to limited English proficient (LEP) patients and their providers has been demonstrated to increase medical errors and resulting complications, putting the health and safety of LEP Minnesotans directly at risk.

During the 2020 session, the Council worked with the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs and a coalition of diverse stakeholders to advocate for this much-needed legislation. Although this bill was heard in the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee and the House Government Operations Committee, it did not advance due to the pandemic shutdown. The Council remains committed to advancing the needs of LEP populations in Minnesota and will continue to pursue legislative changes to address the needs of this vulnerable population in future.

Alec Smith Insulin Affordability Act – H.F. 3100 (Rep. Howard) / S.F. 3164 (Sen. Jensen)

Lack of access to insulin can become a life-threatening emergency in very short order. Asian and Pacific Islanders (APIs) comprise 5% of the U.S. population, but some API communities have a prevalence of Type 1 diabetes as high as 19.9%. This year, Council staff met with community members to discuss the importance of addressing the need

for emergency access and affordability of insulin and how we can support them in their advocacy efforts. This bill, signed into law by Gov. Walz, allows for special affordable rates for qualifying Minnesotans with less than a seven-day supply of insulin. This is a historic move that lowers barriers to the life-saving medication for our state's most vulnerable residents facing emergency situations.

Small Business Relief Grants – H.F. 5 (Rep. Stephenson) / S.F. 2 (Sen. Anderson)

In June, during the first special session of the 2020 Legislature, policymakers approved funding for this small business grants program to be administered by the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). Applicants were selected using a lottery process after a submission deadline, to reduce the barriers to selection that were

present in earlier federal and state assistance. The Council met with community members to discuss the impact of the pandemic and civil unrest on their businesses. We then actively advised key policymakers, in meetings and in writing to ensure APM business owners were considered in this legislation. Additionally, we met with DEED on behalf of our nonprofits to ensure that community members were informed about the availability of resources and were adequately supported in the application process.

The Minnesota Small Business Relief Grants program made a total of \$60 million in grants available, to be disbursed as \$10,000 grants to Minnesotan-owned businesses that demonstrate financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Priority funding was provided for minority, veteran, and women-owned businesses, as well as cultural malls.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In a traditional year, the Council would list some of the dozens of API community events at which we connected with community members. This year changed the way we enacted our statutory charge—but our work engaging community, striving for equality, and connecting the experiences of constituents to

the leaders of our state has continued with full force. The following events are glimpses into our commitment to fostering more informed and engaged APM communities.

API Day at the Capitol

The API Day at the Capitol is a signature

Council event offering a one-of-a-kind opportunity to connect our community directly to legislators, the governor, and other state leaders. The Day at the Capitol is, for some attendees, the first time they ever meet a state-level policymaker. This year, to accommodate the sudden limitations of the pandemic and the implementation of peacetime emergency stay-at-home orders, the Council was unable to host the Day at the Capitol. We are exploring ways to achieve API Day objectives in 2021 that take into consideration our new reality.

Town Hall Listening Sessions

Following the peacetime emergency

adjournment of the Legislature and the move to distance learning for school-age children, in April the Council facilitated a virtual town hall listening session with Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker of the Minnesota Department of Education and APM parents across the state. Our partners, key community-based organizations—Hmong American Partnership, the Karen Organization of Minnesota, the Bhutanese Community Organization of Minnesota, and Karenni community leaders—provided Bhutanese, Karen, and Karenni translation services to attendees.

Additionally, in May the Council worked with nonprofit and business leaders across Minnesota to host a virtual question-and-answer session with DEED Commissioner Steve Grove, allowing the Commissioner to hear from business owners and community leaders as well as answer questions related to resources available through the federal CARES Act.

As the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic changed throughout the year, the Council also recognized the important and influential role of faith groups in helping to mitigate community spread. To that end, the Council hosted several conversations between Commissioner John Harrington of the Department of Public Safety, Commissioner Jan Malcolm of the Minnesota Department of Health, and faith leaders from across the state to ensure our diverse communities remained informed about safety guidelines and precautions urged by state health officials.

Asian Pacific Islander Complete Count Committee (API CCC)

In 2019, the Council launched the API CCC, a statewide coalition of over 50 member organizations. The committee represented more than 20 distinct Asian Pacific ethnic groups charged with raising awareness of the importance of completing the 2020 Census. Members established 35 sub-Complete Count Committees within their own communities, which were officially recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau and the State Demographer's Office. The API CCC designed and implemented culturally responsive strategies to reach API communities in Minnesota and hosted more than 200 census commitment activities to educate our communities about the

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Research Achievements

The statutory charge of Minnesota's ethnic councils is to advise policymakers on both issues confronting the constituency of the Council as well as changes needed to improve the economic and social condition of the constituency. Our ongoing research initiatives serve to inform and empower Minnesotans with up-to-date facts and information about our ever-evolving APM community.

Legislative Priorities Survey

In preparation for the 2021-2022 legislative biennium, we developed and implemented our biennial survey to identify and understand the most pressing issues in APM communities across the state. In 2020, circumstances required the survey to take place entirely online, unlike previous surveys that were administered at community events across the state. In recognition of technological access barriers for some APM communities, Council staff partnered with nonprofit organizations to help disseminate the survey online through social media channels, email distribution lists, and virtual events. As result of these partnerships, the survey reached a representative sample of the APM community and collected nearly 250 unique responses. The results of this survey will directly inform our legislative agenda over the coming two years and are used to help prioritize legislative actions taken by Council staff.

In recognition that certain vulnerable populations have linguistic and technological barriers which prevent their participation in the survey, the Council also hosted supplementary listening sessions with APM communities in greater Minnesota and in emerging communities.

APM Parent Distance Learning Survey

In response to the challenges of distance learning arising from the pandemic, the Council deployed a survey to codify the issues and challenges parents are experiencing. The survey was shared widely across APM community groups online. The results of the survey revealed that refugee-experienced families struggled with distance learning more than established APM communities. In addition, students and families with limited English proficiency lacked language assistance they could typically access during in-person learning. The Council shared the findings of this survey with the Minnesota Department of Education, the governor's office, and other key stakeholders to help guide development of ongoing distance learning efforts for the 2020-2021 academic school year.

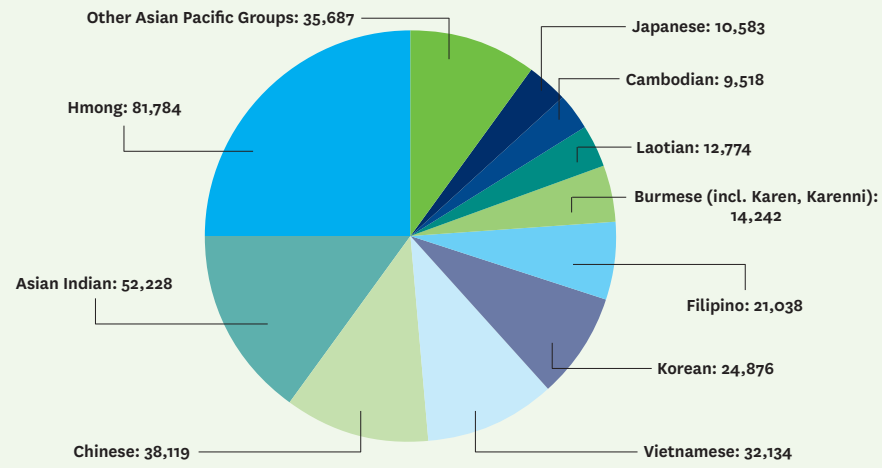
Emerging Communities Report

As the API population continues to grow within Minnesota, the Council recognizes that new and emerging communities will play a role in the future of our state. To that end, the Council continues to compile this groundbreaking report covering five emerging APM communities. These communities are the Karen, Karenni, Bhutanese, Guyanese, and Micronesian peoples. This is an ongoing study encompassing the resettlement history, an assessment of current population in Minnesota, and an analysis of trending issues among each of these unique communities.

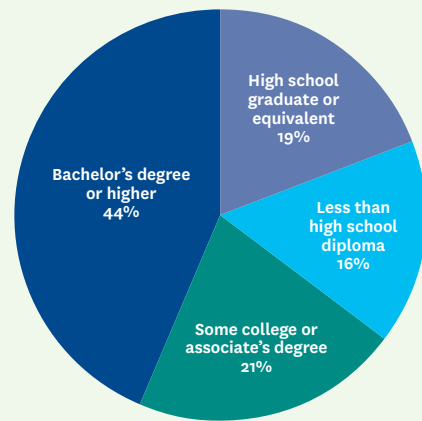
As these emerging communities grow, it is critical that policymakers, school districts, and community organizations have a basic understanding of each group's unique attributes and needs. By conducting primary qualitative data collection, the Council hopes to increase awareness of the unique experiences of these communities, and in doing so, compile critical information on smaller communities that are vulnerable to being overlooked and underserved by policymakers. Given the unexpected emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the limitations it placed on travel and in-person events, research on the critical needs of these communities continues as circumstances permit.

Total Population of Asian Pacific Minnesotans: 324,984¹

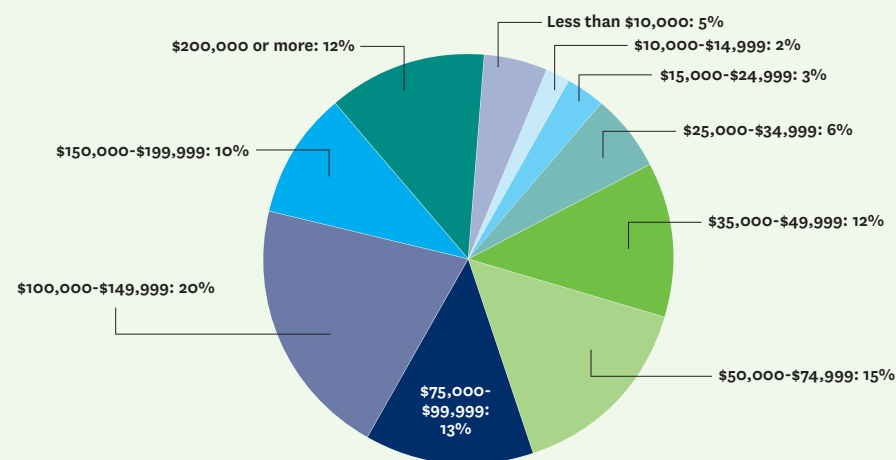
I. POPULATION, BY COMMUNITY.¹



II. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, ADULTS OVER AGE 25.¹



III. HOUSEHOLD INCOME, IN 2019 DOLLARS.



¹ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey.

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2020 Census. Committee members faced significant challenges as a result of the U.S. Census Bureau's shift to an online census, the COVID-19 pandemic, and ongoing legal battles. Despite these challenges, the API CCC remained a vital resource to our community and Minnesota's overall census outreach effort throughout the year.

The API CCC exemplified the Council's commitment to ensuring the APM community was fully counted in the 2020 Census. The leadership of the committee's members and co-chairs will remain a model for the next decade of how our APM communities can come together and be empowered to participate in our democracy.

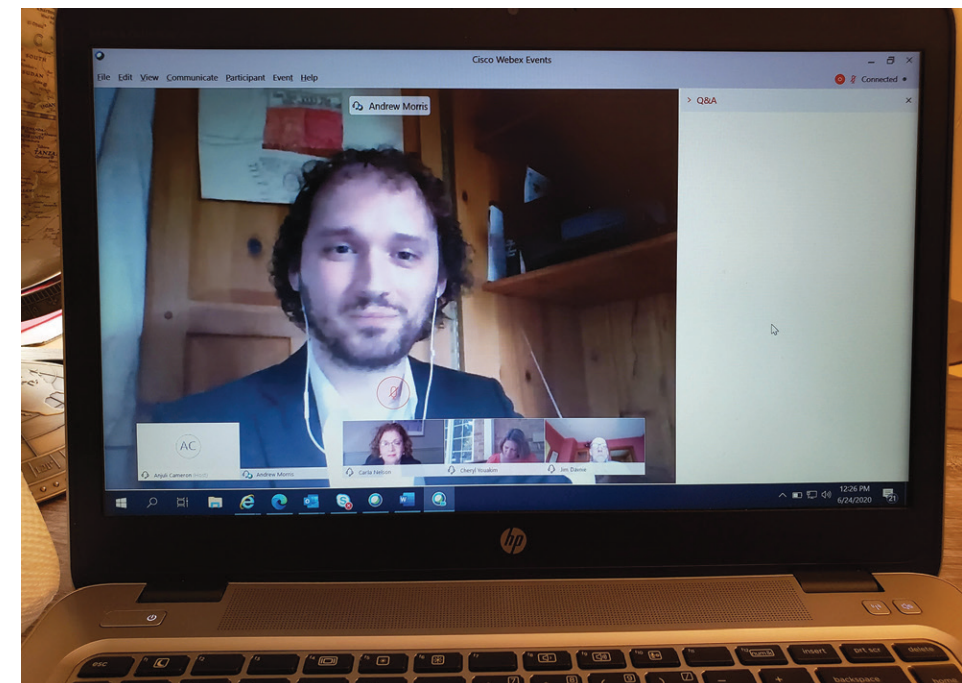
Session Recap Panel Discussions

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council took a new approach to its annual legislative session overview. We convened three virtual listening sessions featuring key legislators who spoke about areas of progress and opportunities in key fields of governance in a limited session. Community members took advantage of these opportunities to speak directly to committee chairs, sharing their experiences and asking questions during an extended question-and-answer portion of each session.

On the topic of Jobs and Economic Development, Chair Eric Pratt and Rep. Zack Stevenson addressed issues of economic uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The legislators outlined support opportunities for small businesses and unemployed individuals and discussed the state's economic outlook in the event of an economic downturn.

On the topic of E-12 Education, Chairs Jim Davnie, Cheryl Youakim, and Carla Nelson offered their thoughts on the challenges facing students, families, and educators during the pandemic as the state transitioned to a distance learning model. Many existing challenges, from a lack of technological access to an imbalance of teachers of color, have been exacerbated by the onset of the pandemic and present ongoing challenges for APM communities, which the legislators addressed.

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Farewell Letter from Senator Laine

Dear Community,

I have been blessed by the opportunity to work with the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans since 2013. Back then, my deepening connection to the Tibetans living in my district prompted me to ask to be appointed as the Minnesota House Representative on the Council. Over the years, my heart has filled with warm connections to the gracious people of the state's many API communities. Together, we have worked to create a more vital council operation and good legislation that serves all Minnesotans.

Therefore, it is with pride for the Council's work and its community impact that I regret to announce my retirement from the Senate at the end of 2020, and my departure from the Council Board.

When I first joined the Council, this small state agency had been in existence nearly 30 years and had operated mostly as a social connector within the API community—an important yet limited function. Soon a new executive director was hired, who encouraged a more enlivened vision based on a fuller recognition of the duties inherent in the enabling statutes, and a transition began.

I found this dynamic vision inspiring. As other legislators in both the House and the Senate considered disbanding the state's three ethnic councils, I moved in a different direction. My belief in the creativity and power of collaboration led me to pass legislation that clarified and supported the councils' operation, enabling their board members to work with their directors to better benefit their communities.

I am very proud of the Council's Board members. They have proved that, given foundational support and good leadership, they can do excellent work together. Their strength showed in how they met challenges that threatened to divide them. Instead, they surmounted the challenges—together.

And that brings me to today. We as Americans stand at a crossroads: will we address our differences and prevail over them by working together, or will we separate into factions of accusation?

At the core of democracy is the connecting nature of community. Our connections to one another enable us to work together for the common good; this, in turn, builds the bedrock of community. When peoples of different cultures and different backgrounds work together with respect and open minds, they weave a tapestry that is strong and beautiful. On this we depend.

We at the Council know the power of this tapestry. As we close a challenging year, as we look to the next, and as I pass the torch of state leadership, I invite us to come together. Let us stand for community. Let us say "no" to hate. Let us welcome all who will work for the good of the whole. In so doing, we will weave and strengthen the tapestry of America, and the democracy we love will be preserved.

Thank you for the precious opportunity to serve with you in both building and manifesting democracy.

Sincerely,



Senator Carolyn Laine (SD 41)



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On the topic of Health and Human Services, Chairs Tina Liebling, Rena Moran, and Jim Abeler shared insights on services available to support Minnesotans during the pandemic, recognizing additional barriers many APM communities face in accessing these systems of support.

Video recordings of all three of these recap conversations are available on the Council's website.

Community in the Time of COVID

In response to the collective sense of confusion and fear in the early days of the pandemic, as well as anti-Asian discrimination here and across the nation, the Council worked with community-based organizations and leaders to showcase some

of our community members who stepped up and led with grace and generosity during challenging times. At the start of the pandemic, the Association of Minnesota Chinese Physicians helped procure personal protective equipment for donation to local hospitals and clinics. Members of the Fil-Minnesotan Association delivered care packages with dried goods and hygiene supplies to senior residences. The Indian Association of Minnesota provided meals for local food distribution sites and sewed and distributed cloth masks. These and many more spotlights of community in the time of COVID-19 can be found on the Council's Facebook page.

Special Projects Committee

Following the tragic death of George Floyd, members of the Council's Board of Directors established a unique committee to facilitate meaningful discourse about the present and future roles of APMs during an age of American identity crisis. This Special Projects Committee has since convened, and acts in the spirit of collaboration, community engagement, and leadership. Its first public initiative took place this fall in the form of a public, live-streamed overview of the general election and voter participation, featuring Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon as well as Director of Elections—and the Council's Vice Chair—David Maeda.

45th Anniversary of the Southeast Asian Diaspora

The year 2020 marked the 45th anniversary of the beginning of the Southeast Asian diaspora in the U.S., comprising our Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodian, and Laotian communities. In celebration and recognition of this historic year, the Council, in partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center, curated a series of videos spotlighting the smallest of these Southeast Asian refugee-experienced communities: the Cambodian Minnesotan community. These videos, published to Facebook, tell the stories of five Cambodian community leaders whose personal and professional experiences are examples of resiliency, hope, perseverance, and triumph.

Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Community,

As we begin a new year and a new legislative biennium, we're seeing our communities divided in ways we have not seen before. We're also headed into a chapter of state history in which we will debate which acts, services, and efforts will allow us to continue to sow dignity and focus on the common good.

The work the Council is doing is led by the following questions: what does a better society look like and

what is the role of government in facilitating the fruition of this vision? In a system that rewards polarization and leaves so many behind, where do we find our path forward? The answers start with a strong understanding of and faith in the principles of American democracy.

In 2021, we will endeavor to work with policymakers to address the ongoing needs within our community. Our forthcoming biennial legislative agenda identifies healthcare access, equity and social justice, the achievement gap, immigration rights, and affordable housing as the highest priority issues for APMs.

In 2021, we will also continue our advocacy work carried over from past years. We will continue our work to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault using community-driven, culturally relevant practices. We will continue to promote economic development to end the cycle of generational poverty within our refugee-experience communities, which includes addressing the significant disparities within our APM community that persist in accessibility to jobs, healthcare, education, and housing. And we will continue advocating for certain legal permanent residents (LPRs) by re-examining criminal justice and immigration reform through a refugee-experienced lens.

Finally, we cannot look forward without seeing a great gap left by the death of some of our community leaders from the cruel reality of COVID-19. We wouldn't be where we are today without the great shoulders on which we have stood. We look forward from this unnerving time with hope, but also with exhaustion and trauma. More so than ever before, we lean into our belief that the dedication and hope of the human spirit will carry us through the darkest times and the most insurmountable challenges.

The path before us will be difficult. To ensure we succeed when traversing the distance ahead of us—successfully, healthfully, and together—we, as Minnesotans and as Americans, must strive to ensure the path is paved with honesty, integrity, and the values inherent in a free democracy.

Sincerely,



Sia Her

COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS

Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, Subd. 8

Subd. 2. Membership.

- (a) Each council has 15 voting members. Eleven members of each council are public members appointed by the governor. Four members of each council are legislators.
- (b) The governor shall appoint 11 members of each council as follows:

(c) The Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans must include one member from each of the five ancestries with the state's highest percentages of Asian-Pacific populations, as determined by the state demographer. The other six members must be broadly representative of the rest of the Asian-Pacific population, with no more than one council member from any one

ancestry. The council must include at least five women. For purposes of this clause, ancestry refers to heritage that is commonly accepted in Minnesota as a unique population.

(d) Four legislators are voting members of each council. The speaker of the house and the house minority leader shall each appoint one member to each council. The

Subcommittee on Committees of the senate Committee on Rules and Administration shall appoint one member of the majority caucus and one member of the minority caucus to each council.

Subd. 7. Duties of council members.

A council member shall:

- (1) attend and participate in scheduled meetings and be

- prepared by reviewing meeting notes;
- (2) maintain and build communication with the community represented;
- (3) collaborate with the council and executive director in carrying out the council's duties; and
- (4) participate in activities the council or executive director deem appropriate and necessary to facilitate the goals and duties of the council.



DAVE HOANG,
Chair
Term start: 5/2020
Term expire: 1/2024
Ancestry representing:
Vietnamese



DAVID MAEDA,
Vice-Chair
Term start: 6/2018
Term expire: 1/2022
Ancestry representing:
Japanese



GRACE LEE,
Treasurer
Term start: 7/2/2019
Term expire: 1/2/2023
Ancestry representing:
Korean



CHANG WANG
Term start: 5/17/2020
Term expire: 1/4/2021
Ancestry representing:
Chinese



SARASWATI SINGH
Term start: 5/17/2020
Term expire: 1/1/2024
Ancestry representing:
Asian Indian



BRYAN THAO WORRA
Term start: 7/1/2018
Term expire: 1/3/2022
Ancestry representing:
Lao



HAFIZ MUNIR
Term start: 2/2017
Term expire: 1/04/2021
Ancestry representing:
Pakistani



TSEWANG NGODUP
Term start: 2/2017
Term expire: 1/4/2021
Ancestry representing:
Tibetan



VACANT
Term start:
Term expire:
Ancestry representing:
At-large



VACANT
Term start:
Term expire:
Ancestry representing:
At-large



FAAMATI WINEY
Term start: 7/2/2019
Term expire: 1/2/2023
Ancestry representing:
Polynesian/Samoan



SENATOR CAROLYN LAINE (D)
Term start: 2/2017
Term expire: N/A



SENATOR ERIC PRATT (R)
Term start: 2/2019
Term expire: N/A



REPRESENTATIVE ROD HAMILTON (R)
Term start: 2/2017
Term expire: N/A



REPRESENTATIVE KAO HLY HER (D)
Term start: 2/2019
Term expire: N/A



Council Staff Members



Sia Her, Executive Director

Sia has been executive director of the Council since 2013. Before joining the Council, Sia served as campaign manager for the successful Saint Paul Public Schools' "Strong Schools, Strong Communities" levy referendum. She has a master's degree in public policy from the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs and a bachelor's degree in political science from Macalester College. *Sia manages all operations and projects, and develops and implements strategic and well-informed plans to ensure that the Council delivers on its statutory duties. Contact: sia.her@state.mn.us*



Anjali Mishra Cameron, Research Director

Anjali joined the Council in 2016. Prior to her work at the Council, Anjali conducted public health research at the University of Minnesota and the University of Chicago, and worked with community-based organizations in Minnesota on advancing health equity. She has a master's degree in biomedical sciences from Rosalind Franklin University and a bachelor's degree in neuroscience from Carleton College. *Anjali conducts original research, assists the executive director with advancing the Council's major initiatives, and produces research reports to inform the Council's key constituencies about the state of Asian Pacific Minnesotan communities. Contact: anjali.cameron@state.mn.us*



Virakcheath Hing, Office Manager/Executive Assistant

Virakcheath (Virak) joined the Council in September 2019. Prior to his work at the Council, Virak served as a public servant at the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, and most recently, at the Department of Public Safety for more than two decades. He has a degree from the Center for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement. *Virak manages the office of the Council, administers and monitors the Council budget, assists with supervision of the Council's staff, and performs and coordinates numerous administrative functions as the assistant to the executive director. Contact: virakcheath.hing@state.mn.us.*



Andrew Morris, Legislative and Public Affairs Liaison

Andrew (Andy) Morris joined the Council in December 2019. A native of Minneapolis, Andy has lived and worked in Minneapolis; Washington, DC; and Tokyo, Japan across the non-profit, higher education, government, and private sectors in international exchange, government affairs, and policy analysis roles prior to joining the Council. He has a master's degree in Asian Studies from Georgetown University's Graduate School of Foreign Service and a bachelor's degree in Asian Studies from Saint John's University. *Andrew educates, informs, and engages Asian Pacific Minnesotans on issues of importance to these communities; assists in developing the Council's policy positions and legislative initiatives; and maintains close connection between the Council and its stakeholders. Contact: andrew.morris@mn.state.us*



Daniel Yang, Research Assistant

Daniel joined the Council in December of 2019 after completing a year of work and studies as a Fulbright scholar in Thailand. During his undergraduate years, Daniel co-founded the JUSTICE mentoring program, which serves students from underrepresented and under-resourced communities. Daniel has also worked with multiple organizations through the Minneapolis Urban Scholars program, including Minnesota Management and Budget and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board. He has a bachelor's degree in political science from Saint John's University. *Daniel assists with research projects and community outreach; drafts social media content, graphic content, and the Council's community newsletter; and assists with support tasks as necessary. Contact: daniel.y.yang@state.mn.us*



FY20 EXPENDITURES	
General Fund	\$ 487,404.22
Revenue Funds	
(Annual Dinner Registration Fees)	\$ 0.00
	\$ 487,404.22
Expenditures	
Full-Time	\$ 335,053.27
Part-Time	\$ 21,407.10
Over-Time and Premium Pay	\$ 6,125.08
Other Employee Cost	\$ 2,345.88
Space Rental, Maintenance, and Utility	\$ 24,599.62
Repairs, Alterations, and Maintenance	\$ 748.64
Printing and Advertising	\$ 399.14
Prof/Tech Services Outside Vendor	\$ 32,283.00
Communications	\$ 679.28
Travel and Subsistence-In State	\$ 2,652.93
Travel and Subsistence-Out of State	\$ 562.40
Supplies	\$ 4,446.09
Employee Development	\$ 714.97
Other Operating Costs	\$ 9,282.48
Equipment-Non Capital	\$ 3,077.70
Equipment	\$ 6,882.64
Centralized IT Services	\$ 16,750.98
Agency-Specific Other Services	\$ 1,995.06
State Agency Other Services	\$ 0.00
Annual Dinner Expenses	\$ 0.00
Total Expenditures	\$ 470,006.26
Net Balance	\$ 17,397.96



“We cannot look at what 2020 changed without acknowledging the huge footsteps left by outgoing Legislative Coordinating Commission (LCC) Executive Director Greg Hubinger. Greg’s guidance of the ethnic councils since 2015 has helped our Council grow into the community and legislative mechanism that it is today.”

DAVE HOANG, CHAIR

STATUTORY PURPOSE

The Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans was created by the Minnesota State Legislature in 1985 to advise the Governor and the Legislature on issues pertaining to Asian Pacific Minnesotans; to advocate on behalf of this community on these issues; and to act as a broker between the Asian Pacific community and the rest of Minnesota. The Council, an executive branch office, represents Minnesotans descended from more than 40 nations.

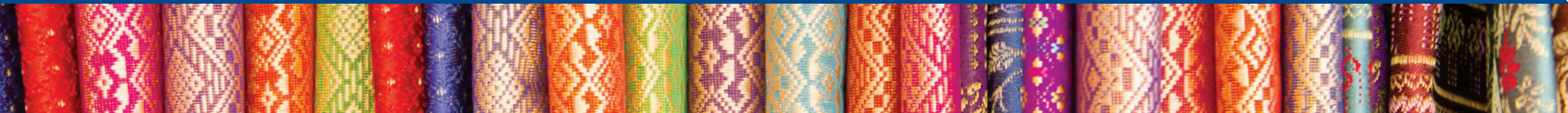




mi COUNCIL ON
ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS

A STATE AGENCY SINCE 1985

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2021-2022 Biennial Legislative Agenda

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans is a state agency created to advise the Legislature and the Governor on issues of importance to Asian Pacific Minnesotans, advocate on behalf of this community on these issues, and serve as a broker between the Asian Pacific community and the rest of Minnesota.

Priority Issues*

The Council will actively track and pursue legislation in the following areas:

- Healthcare access
- Equity and social justice
- Achievement gap
- Immigration rights
- Affordable housing

Ongoing Positions

The Council, in addition to its annual legislative priorities derived from community input, will actively advocate for legislation that achieves the following:

- Programs and services that are respectful of and responsive to the linguistically and culturally diverse communities of Minnesota, including Asian Pacific Minnesotans.
- Collection of disaggregated data to better inform policy making on issues of importance to Asian Pacific Minnesotans.
- Increased understanding of violence against Minnesota's Asian Pacific women and children.

*These issues were self-identified as high priority in the 2021 Legislative Priorities Survey.

Pending Board Approval

1 OF 5 Communities in the “MINNESOTA’S EMERGING ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITIES” Report

Who are the Bhutanese?

The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese families in Minnesota are Bhutanese citizens of Nepalese origin. Beginning in the late nineteenth-century, large groups of Nepali migrants came to southern Bhutan for work and economic opportunities, eventually staying to raise families. These families became known as the “Lhotshampas,” which translates to the phrase “people from the south.” The Lhotshampas integrated into Bhutan and attained citizenship following the Citizenship Act of 1958, and by the 1988 census the Lhotshampas made up over 1/6th of the total population of Bhutan.

Estimated Population in Minnesota – 1,142

Major Religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Kirat, and Christianity

Why did they leave Bhutan?

Beginning in 1985, the Buddhist Drukpa majority became concerned about the growing economic power of the Lhotshampas, who were majority Hindu. By the late 1980’s, the government census branded the Lhotshampa population as illegal immigrants, despite their ability to demonstrate citizenship and land ownership. The Bhutanese government adopted a “One Bhutan, One People” policy, mandating uniform language, clothing, and cultural practices. Individuals who were unwilling, or unable, to comply with new laws to match the culture and language of the North Bhutanese, were severely punished. The Lhotshampas protested, and in response, the government further restricted resistant efforts. As a result, many Bhutanese were arrested, detained, and tortured. In 1992, the UNHCR built camps in Eastern Nepal that housed more than 105,000 refugees, while others fled to the neighboring India and other regions of Nepal.

The Bhutanese in Minnesota.

In 2008, approximately 6,000 Bhutanese refugees arrived in the United States, scattered through a number of different states. Ninety-eight percent of Bhutanese refugees in Minnesota are of Lhotshampa ethnicity. Bhutanese refugees tend to have higher English proficiency rates compared to other new refugee groups, because of higher quality language classes taught in Nepali refugee camp schools. It is estimated that thirty-five percent of Bhutanese refugees speak English upon arrival to Minnesota.

Many of Minnesota’s Bhutanese population are clustered in the suburbs of Roseville, Lauderdale, and East Saint Paul. Unlike other new immigrant communities, many Bhutanese are vegetarians, and therefore do not seek employment in the meat packing industry. Instead, community members rely on English proficient community leaders for assistance with job placement opportunities.



Minn. Stat. § 15.0145 — Ethnic Councils.

Subd. 6. Duties of council. (f) A council shall perform or contract for the performance of studies designed to suggest solutions to the problems of the constituency of the council in the areas of education, employment, human rights, health, housing, social welfare, and other related areas.

The Emerging Communities Report focuses on five emerging Asian Pacific communities in Minnesota, including the Karen, Karenni, Bhutanese Lhotshampa, Guyanese, and Chuukese peoples. The report's findings will feature an overview of each community's resettlement history; an assessment of each community's current population in Minnesota; and an analysis of each community's trending issues. As the demographic numbers for these communities grow, it is critical that policy makers, school districts, and community organizations have a broad understanding of each group's communal history. The Emerging Communities Report will shape our efforts to support these growing populations as they build communities in Minnesota.

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2 OF 5 Communities in the “MINNESOTA’S EMERGING ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITIES” Report

Who are the Chuukese?

The Chuukese population come from the Chuuk Islands located in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), a nation composed of 607 islands located in the Pacific Ocean. While Chuuk is one of four states within FSM, the Chuukese constitute almost fifty-percent of the total national population of Micronesia. The Chuuk language is primarily an oral traditional that is heavily rooted in music.

Estimated Population in Minnesota – 1,003

Major Religions – Christianity, specifically Catholic and Protestant

Why did they leave Micronesia?

Many Chuukese are practitioners of the traditional trades on the island, surviving on subsistence farming and fishing for their extended families. There are limited opportunities for higher education and employment on the Chuuk islands. In addition, the agricultural environment on their native islands is being compromised by increasing ocean water levels, which has led to island erosion, flooding, and crop degradation.

Immigration to the United States from the Federated States of Micronesia began in 1986, when the Pacific Island state signed a Compact of Free Association. Provisions in the Compact included aid for economic development, and the ability for citizens of Micronesia to freely move between the United States and their native islands. Under the Free Association Compact, Micronesians may work and reside within the United States, but are limited in options to attain citizenship, leaving them unable to fully integrate into a community. Without a pathway to citizenship, most do not qualify for federal loan programs or other federal support services.

The Chuukese in Minnesota.

The Chuukese migrated to Milan, Minnesota, in Chippewa County, after a local Minnesota banker lived with a host family on the Romanum Island of the Federate States of Micronesia. He helped this first family migrate to Milan, and many more families have come since that time. Religious service attendance is generally very high, and congregations support their churches, and are majority Christian.

Today, Micronesians are estimated to makeup over seventy-five percent of the Milan population. Approximately, 420 Chuukese reside in Chippewa County and the surrounding areas, working in poultry production facilities.



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3 OF 5 Communities in the “MINNESOTA’S EMERGING ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITIES” Report

Who are the Guyanese?

The Indo-Guyanese population come from the nation of Guyana, located between Venezuela and Suriname. Guyana is a small nation in South America, covered with dense jungle on its southern border. As a result most Guyanese citizens live in settlements along the coast, and are heavily influenced by Caribbean culture. The population of Guyana is approximately fifty-percent Indian ancestry (Indo-Guyanese) and thirty-percent African (Afro-Guyanese). Guyana’s official language is English, but residents also speak a creolized version of English which heavily mixes in African languages and Hindi.

Estimated Population in Minnesota – 1,939

Major Religions – Hinduism and Christianity

Why did they leave Guyana?

From 1840 to 1920, the British government brought about 250,000 Asian Indians from northern India to Guyana to become indentured servants on the colony’s sugar plantations. Unlike indentured servants migrating from Western Europe, these Indian indentured servants were treated brutally by land-owners. The Indian populations were used to replace the African slave labor force, which had been outlawed within the British Empire.

In the late 1960’s, the People’s Progressive Party took control of the country for 20 years after independence. Guyana became a soviet, socialist state with 75% of businesses under government control. Indo-Guyanese residents were discriminated against under the People’s Progressive Party. An estimated 500,000 Guyanese have immigrated to the United States in the past 40 years, to escape Guyana’s corrupted government control.

The Guyanese in Minnesota.

The Indo-Guyanese have immigrated to the United States since the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, searching for better economic prospects and a safer standard of life. The largest population resides in New York where they make-up the third largest minority group.

The majority of Minnesota’s Indo-Guyanese population reside in Hennepin County. Many are devout Hindus and attend regular temple service at Guyanese temples in Minneapolis and Farmington. The first wave of Guyanese Minnesota residents came from New York state, however, more populations are arriving to Minnesota directly from Guyana.



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4 OF 5 Communities in the “MINNESOTA’S EMERGING ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITIES” Report

Who are the Karen?

The Karen are the second largest ethnic nationality group from Burma. In 2011, estimates for the worldwide population ranged from five to ten million. “Karen” is an English pronunciation of the Burmese word “Kayin”. While the Karen people may speak one of at least 12 different dialects, the Karen language has three main branches: Sgaw, Pwo, and Pa’o.

Estimated Total Population in Minnesota - 12,000

Major Religions - Christians, Buddhists, Animists, and very few Muslims

Why did they leave Burma?

Since 1949, many Karen populated areas have been subject to government insurgency and often persecution. Tens of thousands of Karen villagers have been forcibly relocated from their homes and many have fled to the neighboring nation of Thailand. In their native Burma, the Karen have suffered executions, forced labor, forced relocation, confiscation of land, human minesweeping, sexual violence and the burning of entire villages, in addition to open discrimination.

Nearly all Karen fled from the fighting and oppression, beginning in 1996. The United States made an open-ended offer in 2005 to resettle those Karen refugees residing in camps in Thailand.

The Karen in Minnesota.

An estimated twelve thousand Karen refugees and immigrants live in Minnesota. Most families reside in Ramsey County, with Saint Paul having the highest and fastest-growing Karen population in the state. In Greater Minnesota, there are smaller populations of the Karen community in Marshall, Worthington, Austin, Albert Lea, and Faribault.

Secondary migration from other states is growing as families reunite with relatives who have already settled in Minnesota. Many Karen refugees choose Minnesota as their new home because of the social services and support infrastructure offered to refugees exceeds those offered in other parts of the country. The Karen are quickly replacing other immigrants in meat processing centers in Worthington, Albert Lea, and Austin.



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5 OF 5 Communities in the “MINNESOTA’S EMERGING ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITIES” Report

Who are the Karenni?

Karenni (-ni means “red”) refers to approximately 9 different ethnic groups, speaking many different languages and dialects, all residing in the Kayah state of Myanmar (Burma). The largest group in the Kayah state are the Kayah Li Phu people. The major language spoken by the Karenni people is Kayah Li. The Kayah state is also frequently referred to as the “Karenni” state.

Estimated Population in Minnesota - over 2,000

Major Religions - Mostly Christians, Buddhists, and Animists

Why did they leave Burma?

The Karenni are the ethnic majority from the Karenni state, a mountainous region in Burma, bordering Thailand to the east, Shan state to the north, and the Karen state to the south. There are an estimated 250,000 people living in the state. The Karenni state is one of Burma’s poorest, with weak infrastructure, poor healthcare, malnutrition, few educational opportunities, and very little economic development.

Like the Karen and other Burmese minority ethnic groups, the Karenni allied with the British forces during World War II. Upon the independence of Burma in 1948, the Karenni did not agree to sign the Panglong Agreement, which would have acceded their state to form the Union of Burma. Since that time, the Karenni population has experience Burmese occupation and suppression.

The humanitarian situation in the Karenni state has continued to deteriorate. The Burmese government does not permit foreign individuals to travel into the Karenni state. Therefore no access is granted to any third party impartial observers or humanitarian aid organizations. Suspected human rights violations include forced labor, land confiscation, torture, arbitrary executions, and sexual violence.

The Karenni in Minnesota.

Due to their small numbers, it is uncertain exactly how many Karenni live in Minnesota at this time. Based on aggregate data from community organizations, an estimated one to two thousand Karenni individuals reside in Ramsey County, and other areas of the state with high Karen populations. Many Karenni refugees find work in the meat processing industry or work in agriculture and manufacturing in Southwestern Minnesota.



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