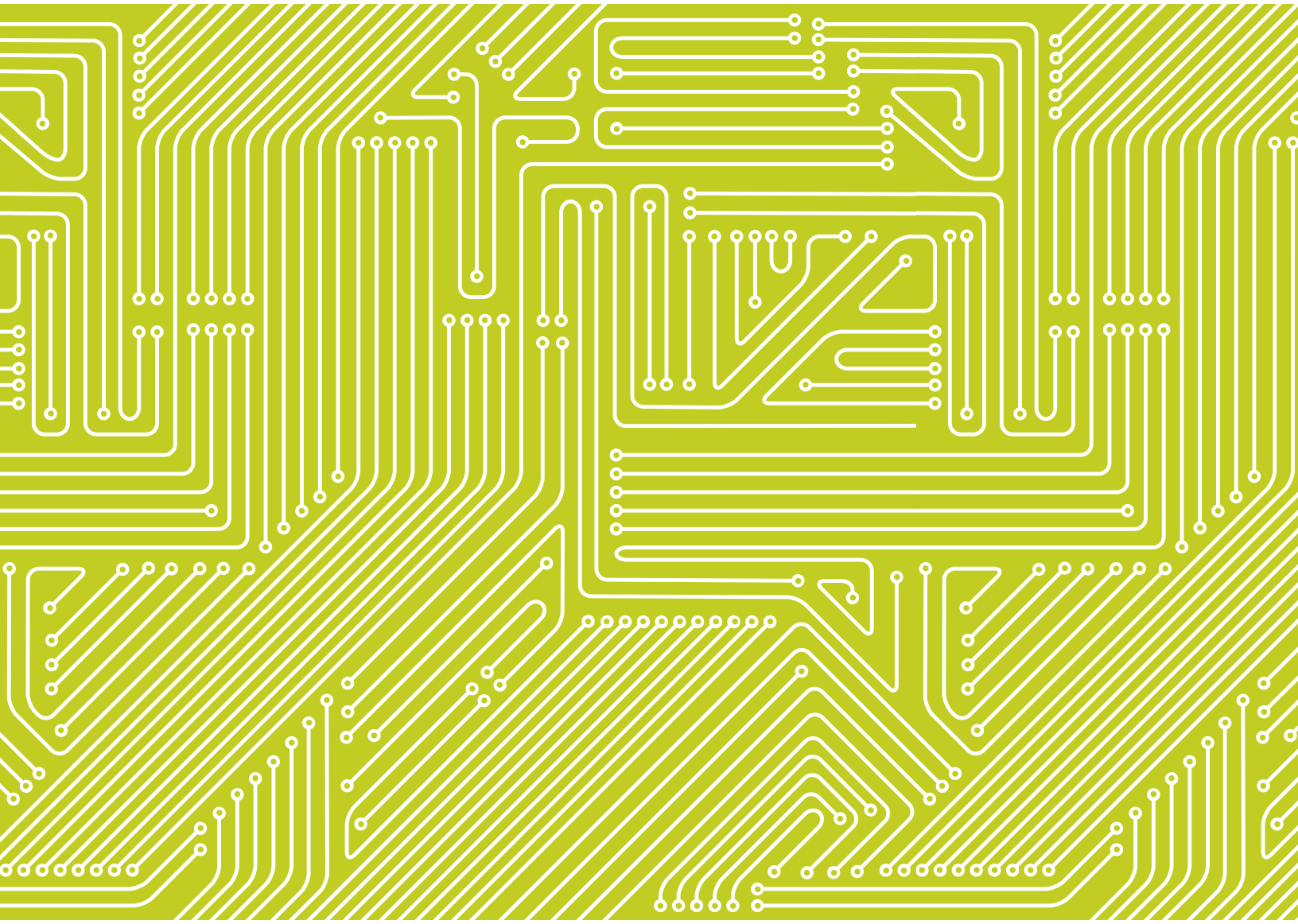
EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES:

Giving and Participation by Silicon Valley Asian American Communities



AAPIP.ORG Building Democratic Philanthropy

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Executive Summary

Introduction

More than any other region in the United States today, Silicon Valley – the birthplace of the technology revolution – is a symbol of both the American dream and global transformation. The *2011 Index of Silicon Valley* reports that 29% of the region's population of three million people is Asian. Immigrants – including many from Asia – have founded pioneering tech companies like Google, Yahoo!, Sun Microsystems and eBay that have generated immense wealth. As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) make their mark in successful companies and entrepreneurial ventures, their contributions do not end there. Many are giving back generously, in time and treasure, to causes that are close to their hearts in their local communities, in the countries of their or their parents' birth, and around the world. AAPIs in the region are forging new approaches to philanthropy that reflect the culture of innovation in Silicon Valley as well as their own cultural, religious and familial values.

To capture and highlight learnings from the giving practiced in this region known for diversity and innovation, AAPIP (Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy) conducted an inquiry into the landscape of Asian American volunteers and donors in Silicon Valley in partnership and with the generous support of the David & Lucile Packard Foundation. The study aimed to better understand the giving experiences, inspirations, interests and values of Asian Americans in the region.

This report is an expression of AAPIP's framework – Building Democratic Philanthropy. It is a call to action to both institutions and individuals to meaningfully engage impacted communities, and to leverage individual action for collective good. Building Democratic Philanthropy encourages organized and emerging philanthropies and individuals to support practices that put communities first, drawing on their assets as the starting place for any blueprint to maximize their potential.

Study Participants & Approach

In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 AAPI donors and volunteers, and two focus groups were conducted with an additional ten young AAPI professionals working in high tech companies in the Valley. The study participants are primarily from Chinese and Asian Indian backgrounds – reflecting the communities in which AAPIP's Silicon Valley relationships are strongest. Beyond the Chinese and Indian communities, AAPIP was able to engage several participants from other Asian American backgrounds including Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Vietnamese. Moreover, we decided to include two donors from Middle Eastern backgrounds in the study. We also interviewed five key informants who are nonprofit leaders with deep experience working with Silicon Valley AAPI donors.

The Giving Landscape in Silicon Valley

Silicon Valley has a distinct culture of philanthropy. Study participants described the overall landscape of giving in Silicon Valley:

Giving is less traditional and more hands-on. AAPI donors interviewed for this study described giving as hands-on and high-touch, in part due to the "new money" that the high tech sector has generated and that many have come into their wealth at a younger age. This type of active engagement with organizations was contrasted with what they referred to as more "traditional" philanthropy that was described as writing checks or gaining personal recognition.

The entrepreneurial culture drives a business approach to philanthropy and social change. New approaches to philanthropy have emerged in areas like Silicon Valley and Seattle where high tech entrepreneurs seek to apply their successful business practices to addressing social issues and creating sustainable organizations. Concepts like social entrepreneurship and attention to measurable results reflect the business approach to philanthropy in Silicon Valley.

Networking while giving back. Networking for either career advancement or meeting potential investors was noted by study participants as an element of the culture of philanthropy in Silicon Valley. Workplace-based giving and events were described by younger professionals as being ways to make new professional contacts in addition to supporting charitable causes.

Giving Influences and Interests

While family had been an initial inspiration for a majority of the study participants, as adults their friends have more of an impact on their giving — with 80% indicating they learn about causes and organizations to support from their friends.

Immigrants had a stronger interest in international giving, but all but one of them also give to organizations in the U.S. The American-born study participants tend to give more to causes in the U.S. A number of younger, second generation professionals do not give internationally and expressed concerns about transparency.

Of the 25 study participants, over two-thirds (68%) indicated that they give to organizations in the U.S. that serve their own ethnic or religious communities. Immigrants tended to support organizations serving their own particular ethnic or religious communities. Second generation donors in this study had a stronger Asian American identity beyond their ethnic identities, and support Asian American organizations that serve multiple communities.

Education was by far the most popular issue area of giving among the study participants, with 15 out of 25 (or 60%) reporting giving to education, broadly defined. Those who give to education-related causes expressed a desire to create opportunities for others — to "pay forward" the opportunities that got them where they are. Other areas of interest included empowering girls and women, civil and human rights, health, disaster

relief, arts and culture, preservation of immigrant history, religious institutions attended by family members, and orphanages in South Asia and the Middle East.

Most of the donors interviewed for this study who have children are actively encouraging them to be philanthropic and to be engaged in the community. Many spoke of how important it is that their kids understand how privileged they are relative to most of the world.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Silicon Valley's culture of entrepreneurship, innovation and opportunity has been a catalyst for immigrant and second generation Asian Americans to shape philanthropy according to their cultural and professional values. Most of the donors we interviewed did not come from wealthy backgrounds and are new to philanthropy. That much of the wealth in Silicon Valley Asian communities is "new money" has implications for how individuals enter into philanthropy and their giving preferences. With less of a family history of American-style philanthropic giving to guide them, new donors may want to be more hands-on and involved in the causes or organizations to which they give.

In interviews and focus groups, study participants affirmed that there is great untapped potential to engage more of their peers in Silicon Valley, who are also new to philanthropy, as donors and volunteers. Ideas and recommendations for inspiring more giving in Silicon Valley AAPI communities include:

- **Encourage companies in Silicon Valley to give more, incentivize and acknowledge employee giving and volunteerism.**
- **Organize social and networking events, especially for younger professionals.**
- **Create intergenerational events or projects that can involve the whole family.**
- **Raise awareness in Silicon Valley of the needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in the U.S.**
- **Promote inclusive dialogue on social entrepreneurship and venture philanthropy, and the impact of these trends on the nonprofit sector.**
- **Use technology for social marketing and to reduce the time factor in giving.**
- **Conduct further research on giving by AAPI subgroups and Middle Eastern communities.**

Both immigrant and American-born donors and volunteers in this study were very involved in their local communities — giving and volunteering to help disadvantaged people of all backgrounds. Among the American-born, even those with strong bicultural identities were more inclined to give in the U.S. and locally, rather than internationally. This suggests that as the American-born AAPI population grows in Silicon Valley, so will their involvement and impact giving to domestic and local causes.

Emerging Opportunities: Giving and Participation by Silicon Valley Asian American Communities

Introduction

More than any other region in the United States today, Silicon Valley — the birthplace of the technology and internet revolution — is a symbol of both the American dream and global transformation. As much as Silicon Valley is a success story of high-risk and high-reward innovations, it is also a story of the immense contributions immigrants make in both their adopted and home countries.

At the height of the civil rights movement President Johnson signed the Immigration Act of 1965 (also known as the Hart-Cellar Act), which put an end to decades of race-based quotas and for the first time opened the door to large-scale Asian immigration to the United States. The 1965 law was a radical departure from the racialized immigration system that had existed until then,[1] significantly increasing the total number of immigrants allowed into the United States and enabling immigration based on both the basis of needed skills and family ties to U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

The transformation of the American immigration system coincided with the growth of new high-technology industries in Silicon Valley. The demand for skilled labor in emerging electronics industries exploded during the 1970s and 1980s, with foreign-born engineers flocking to high tech centers like Silicon Valley in search of the "new gold rush." As AnnaLee Saxenian has noted in her article "Silicon Valley's New Immigrant Entrepreneurs," between 1975 and 1990 Silicon Valley's technology companies created more than 150,000 jobs — and the foreign-born population in the region more than doubled to almost 350,000. By 1990, one third of all scientists and engineers in Silicon Valley's technology industries were foreign-born. Of those, almost two thirds were Asian — primarily of Chinese and Indian descent. The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1990 further promoted the immigration of engineers by almost tripling the number of visas granted on the basis of occupational skills.[2]

Among non-white groups in the United States, Asian Americans have the highest rate of business ownership, and their businesses account for half of all minority business employment in the United States.[3] In Santa Clara County, immigrants are entrepreneurial and are more likely to create their own jobs than native born workers. They contribute about 44% of the region's Gross Domestic Product.[4] Immigrants — including many

As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) make their mark in successful companies and entrepreneurial ventures, their contributions do not end there.

from Asia – have founded pioneering tech companies like Google, Yahoo!, Sun Microsystems, Nvidia, Paypal, eBay as well as many other companies that have generated a growing, affluent class of entrepreneurs and professionals.

As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) make their mark in successful companies and entrepreneurial ventures, their contributions do not end there. Many are giving back generously – in time and with significant financial and social capital – to causes that are close to their hearts in their local communities, in the countries of their or their parents' birth, and around the world. AAPIs in the region are forging new approaches to philanthropy that reflect the culture of innovation in Silicon Valley as well as their own cultural, familial and religious values.

To capture and highlight learnings from the giving practiced in this region known for diversity and innovation, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAPIP) conducted an inquiry into the landscape of AAPI volunteers and donors in Silicon Valley. AAPIP commissioned this study in partnership and with the generous support of the David & Lucile Packard Foundation. The purpose of the study was to better understand the giving experiences, inspirations, interests and values of AAPIs in the region. It provided a significant opportunity for AAPIP to learn from the Silicon Valley region's unique blend of large and diverse AAPI populations, entrepreneurial professionals, high-level donors and active volunteers – lessons we can apply as we expand the movement of building philanthropy within the AAPI community.

AAPIP: Building Democratic Philanthropy

For years, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) have been rendered largely invisible within philanthropy – both within organized philanthropy, and in recognition of AAPI communities' distinct philanthropic traditions. In 1992, AAPIP published *Invisible and In Need*, which found, among other things, that investment in AAPI communities from 1984–1990 amounted to no more that 0.2% of all philanthropic giving by foundations. Fifteen years later, in 2007 AAPIP followed that seminal report with *Growing Opportunities: Will Funding Follow the Rise in Foundation Assets and Growth of AAPI Populations?*, revisiting the same core analysis, finding that foundation funding to AAPI communities from 1990–2002 amounted to no more that 0.4% of all foundation funding although the AAPI population had doubled between 1990 and 2004. More recent data suggests little improvement. Lack of investment in AAPI communities remains an enduring challenge to philanthropy.

Since 1990, AAPIP — a national, member-supported philanthropic intermediary — has met these challenges through a strategic combination of philanthropic advocacy, robust development of community-based philanthropy, and support for AAPIP members in the field, through a framework called Building Democratic Philanthropy.

Building Democratic Philanthropy offers both a critique of, and an aspiration for, philanthropy. As a critique, it surfaces the ongoing need for building greater democracy and increased transparency within organized philanthropy; as well as a more vibrant collaboration between philanthropy and the impacted communities that are the focus of foundation investments. As an aspiration, Building Democratic Philanthropy is a call to action — an opportunity for both organized and emerging philanthropies and individuals to support institutions and embrace practices that put communities first, drawing on their assets as the starting place for any blueprint to maximize their potential.

Building Democratic Philanthropy is a call to institutions and individuals to meaningfully engage impacted communities, and to leverage individual action for collective good.

This report is a powerful expression of Building Democratic Philanthropy, eliciting better-informed strategies to develop the community's enormous philanthropic potential, by reaching out to the local community and developing a deeper understanding of demographic and philanthropic data about AAPIs in the Silicon Valley and surrounding regions.

The nature of capital in the Silicon Valley region — from how it has been developed, to how it is now shared — continues to evolve. AAPIP's role and responsibility in understanding the AAPI community in the Silicon Valley is to provide a clearer lens on what drives and motivates philanthropic behavior and activity in the region. Silicon Valley — with its growing wealth, access to capital, evolving technologies, and expanding AAPI populations — provides a unique and robust context for understanding emerging opportunities to innovate and build more democratic philanthropy.

This report begins by providing some historical and demographic context on AAPIs in Silicon Valley. It then describes the study participants and touches upon the research methodology and limitations. Learnings from the research are organized into three sections: Perspectives on the giving landscape in Silicon Valley; Motivations and interests of AAPI donors and volunteers; and Encouraging philanthropy in the next generation. The report concludes with a set of recommendations for encouraging more AAPI giving and building democratic philanthropy in Silicon Valley.

AAPIs in the region are forging new approaches to philanthropy that reflect the culture of innovation in Silicon Valley as well as their own cultural, familial and religious values.

AAPIs in Silicon Valley Today

Silicon Valley is home to about one million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The Silicon Valley region has been defined as Santa Clara County plus adjacent parts of San Mateo, Alameda and Santa Cruz Counties. Using this definition (but including all of San Mateo County in its demographic analysis), the 2011 *Index of Silicon Valley* reports that 29% of the region's population of three million people is Asian.[5] Silicon Valley's population is relatively young: 88% of residents are under the age of 65, and 37% of the population is between the ages of 20 and 44.

AAPI populations are more concentrated in Santa Clara County, which is home to some of the largest AAPI populations in the country. Santa Clara County's population is one-third AAPI, with over 570,000 people in the County identifying themselves as Asian in the 2010 Census and over 7,000 identifying as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.[6] Two thirds of Santa Clara County's Asian population is foreign-born. Santa Clara County's Asian population increased by 17,000 between 2008 and 2009 — the largest increase in the Asian population nationwide.[7] Subgroup data from the Census Bureau shows that in Santa Clara County, the largest AAPI populations are Chinese (8.6%), Vietnamese (7.1%), Asian Indian (6.6%) and Filipino (4.9%). San Mateo County's population is about 25% Asian and 1.4% Pacific Islander, and these groups together include over 188,000 people. The largest AAPI populations by far in San Mateo County are Filipino (9.8%) and Chinese (9%), followed by Asian Indians (1.9%) and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (1.4%).[8]

Three cities within Silicon Valley are now majority Asian, and the city of Cupertino has the highest percentage of Asians in the region (63%). The neighboring cities of Milpitas and Fremont are 62.2% and 50.6% Asian, respectively, with the largest subgroups being Asian Indians and Chinese. About 110,000 people in Fremont and Milpitas are AAPI. Other Silicon Valley cities that are more than one-third Asian include Sunnyvale, Santa Clara and San Jose.

Table I. Asian American and Pacific Islander Populations in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties

Asian	**748,642**
Chinese	217,497
Filipino	157,603
Asian Indian	131,082
Vietnamese	129,187
Other Asian	45,977
Japanese	33,854
Korean	33,442
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	**17,377**
Other Pacific Islander	10,311
Samoan	4,029
Guamanian or Chamorro	1,548
Native Hawaiian	1,489

Source: U.C. Census Bureau, 2011.

Table II. Silicon Valley Cities with Large Asian Populations

Silicon Valley — with its growing wealth, access to capital, evolving technologies, and expanding AAPI populations — provides a unique and robust context for understanding emerging opportunities to innovate and build more democratic philanthropy.

The success of the Asian American population as a whole in Silicon Valley masks disparities in AAPI subgroups. Aggregated data on Asian American communities in Silicon Valley paint a picture of a highly educated and higher income community. The American Community Survey, conducted in 2009, found that Santa Clara County had the highest median household income in the state — $85,569. Median household income for Asians is even higher — $101,389. The American Community Survey also reported that 71% of Santa Clara County's population growth came from Chinese and Asian Indians, whose median family incomes were $127,000 and $148,000 respectively.[9] These are the first and third largest Asian subgroups in the county.

But not all Asian Americans in Silicon Valley fit the profile of the successful "model minority." For example, while 58% of Asians in Santa Clara County have a bachelor's degree or higher (a greater percentage than the county average), 11% (roughly 60,000 Asians) have less than a high school diploma. Pacific Islanders in Santa Clara County have almost the opposite educational profile as Asians, with only 15% holding a bachelor's degree or higher.[10]

The Vietnamese population is the second largest Asian American subgroup in Santa Clara County, reaching 134,525 in 2010 — roughly 8% of the total

While 58% of Asians in Santa Clara County have a bachelor's degree or higher, 11% (roughly 60,000 Asians) have less than a high school diploma.

county population. San Jose has the largest number of Vietnamese of any American city.[11] While some Vietnamese have prospered, a recent study on the health status of Vietnamese Americans commissioned by the Santa Clara County Public Health Department found that roughly one in ten Vietnamese families lived in poverty between 2007 to 2009, higher than the county average and higher than all other major racial/ethnic groups except Latinos. This study also found that some lower-income Vietnamese families may be at risk for food insecurity, as 16% of Vietnamese adults reported that they or other adults in their family had obtained food from a church, food pantry, or food bank in 2011.[12]

Another Santa Clara County Public Health Department report found that Filipino and Vietnamese subgroups have limited access to healthcare services, higher prevalence of health risk factors, and are least likely to report their general health and/or mental health as good compared to other subgroups and County residents in general. Vietnamese residents in Santa Clara County suffer from higher rates of cancer, tuberculosis and heart disease than most other racial and ethnic groups. More than one-fourth of Vietnamese adults (26%) in Santa Clara County lacked health care coverage, a higher proportion than for adults in the County as a whole in 2011.[13] Sixteen percent of Filipino adults are uninsured.[14]

Pacific Islander groups like Tongans and Samoans face some of the biggest challenges of any racial and ethnic group in the South Bay region. According to the 2010 census, there are 57,183 Tongans in the United States, and about 13,000 of them live in San Mateo County. A smaller concentration of about 2,000 (mostly Tongan) Pacific Islanders can be found in East Palo Alto. Tongan community leaders and organizers report high rates of domestic violence, tobacco and alcohol use, high school dropout rates, gang activity, obesity, lack of access to health care and suicide. Tongan youth have a high drop out and teenage pregnancy rates and are overrepresented in juvenile hall and adult correctional facilities.[15] A 2010 presentation by officials in San Mateo County's Pacific Islander Initiative Program reported that 19% of young Pacific Islanders in the county have tried to commit suicide, 11% carry a weapon for protection, 56% have shoplifted in the past 12 months, and 45% have skipped school in the last month. Tongans in San Mateo County have much higher rates of obesity (46%) and lack of prenatal care (33%) than Latinos, African Americans, whites and Asians.[16]

The disparities in key indicators among different AAPI groups demonstrate the importance of examining disaggregated data in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of AAPI communities in the region.

Study Participants

In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 Asian American donors and volunteers, and two focus groups were conducted with an additional ten young Asian American professionals working in high tech companies in the Valley.

Table III. Demographics of AAPIP's 25 Study Participants

Ethnicity	Female	Male	Immigrant	American-Born
Asian Indian	4	3	5	2
Chinese, Taiwanese or Hong Kong	6	4	1	9
Filipino	1			1
Japanese	1	1	1	1
Korean	1			1
Middle Eastern	2		2	
Thai	1		1	
Vietnamese		1	1	
TOTALS	**17**	**8**	**11**	**14**

The age range of the 25 donors and volunteers who participated was 20s–60s. They work in a broad range of professions including high tech, internet and social media, nonprofits, medicine, law and education.

The study participants are primarily from Chinese and Asian Indian backgrounds — reflecting the communities in which AAPIP's Silicon Valley relationships are strongest.[17] Beyond the Chinese and Indian communities, AAPIP was able to engage several participants from other Asian American backgrounds including Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Vietnamese. Moreever, we decided to include two donors from Middle Eastern backgrounds in the study. Since 9/11, AAPIP's work has evolved to include programming supporting emerging organizations in Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian communities that are generally not on the radar of organized philanthropy. Given that Silicon Valley is home to large concentrations of Middle Eastern American communities, AAPIP decided to include two donors of Middle Eastern backgrounds in this study in order to capture their insights and inform our work with these communities.

We also interviewed five key informants who have deep experience working with Silicon Valley Asian American donors in varying capacities, including leaders of nonprofits that serve Silicon Valley Asian communities.

Study Approach and Methodology

In keeping with old and new forms of generosity practiced by Asian Americans, "philanthropy" and "giving" are defined broadly in this study to include not only tax-deductible gifts to organizations, but also informal giving, volunteering, mentoring and investments in for-profit social enterprises.

In order to engage in deeper conversation with study participants about their giving, AAPIP chose to conduct a small scale, qualitative study rather than a large-scale, randomized survey. As this was our first inquiry into Silicon Valley Asian American giving, to maximize the learning opportunity AAPIP chose not to limit the study to a particular ethnic community. AAPIP reached out through our networks and invited study participants from a range of ethnic and religious communities, and with income levels ranging from middle class to net worth of over a billion. In the course of interviews, donors also referred us to their friends and colleagues. Because the majority of study participants did not want quotes attributed to them, we present all quotes

continued next page

A review of articles, publications and web sites related to AAPI demographics, donors and the culture of philanthropy in Silicon Valley was also undertaken to provide context and additional learnings in the report.

While this study took a broad "pan-Asian" approach, we recognize that each ethnic community has multiple stories and experiences to share about their giving. Our research was informed by other ethnic-specific studies conducted on Asian American giving — in particular, a new study of Silicon Valley's Asian Indian community commissioned in 2011 by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation[18] and a 2001 study on the diaspora philanthropy of Indians in Silicon Valley conducted by Shahnaz Taplin & Associates.[19] AAPIP hopes that the learnings from our study will inspire others to conduct deeper research into the giving of different ethnic and religious communities in Silicon Valley and in other parts of the United States.

Perspectives on the Giving Landscape in Silicon Valley

Silicon Valley has a distinct culture of philanthropy. Before delving into the experiences of individual donors and volunteers, this section provides context on the overall landscape of giving in Silicon Valley.

Giving is less traditional and more hands-on. Donors interviewed for this study described giving as hands-on and high-touch, in part due to the "new money" that the high tech sector has generated and because many have come into their wealth at a younger age. Almost all of those participating in this study were involved as volunteers with organizations they give to. This type of deeper engagement with organizations was contrasted with what they referred to as more "traditional" philanthropy. As one donor explained,

> "It's not like the 'old wealth' way of giving where if you had money you just write a check. It's more a sense of you do something and you connect with the work."

Many of the study participants have given substantial time and expertise to nonprofits as founders of new organizations, board members and fundraisers. For example, five study participants had been involved in the founding of organizations that serve or advocate for their own ethnic or religious communities.[20] As one nonprofit founder noted,

> "Since I founded the India Community Center, I have spent more time in the nonprofit world than in the for-profit world in the last nine years."

Being directly involved in organizations also helps donors see how their money is being spent, helping to maintain the kind of trust that keeps them engaged in giving.

> "The more involved and connected we are to an organization or a cause, the more we give."

Nonprofits benefit from bringing to the table the skills and perspectives of those who have succeeded in the for-profit sector. For example, one donor described how his business and risk-taking approach as a board member made a big impact on his organization's fundraising:

> "My contribution is my optimistic nature of setting goals and helping to get there. With nonprofits you work on best efforts and you don't push yourself. You often think of what's achievable by knowing [what was achieved in] the past. I was more willing to say 'what the hell' and 'let's do it.' This comes from my business background."

The giving circle SV2 (Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund) is another example of hands-on philanthropy, in which donor "Partners" have the opportunity to work directly with nonprofits supported by SV2 to help build their capacity. Currently 100 families are involved in SV2 with a minimum $5,000 annual donation. A few Asian American donors we interviewed are involved in SV2. One study participant described the appeal of SV2's hands-on approach:

> "The SV2 model is very high engagement. It's another reason we joined. It's the way that you give...it's not just check writing — there's much more where you can get engaged in different ways — you can contribute your skills, be an advisor, end up on boards."

Professionals in Silicon Valley also donate their skills, time and money through corporate philanthropy programs such as the Yahoo Employee Foundation and LinkedIn for Good. These newer forms of corporate philanthropy are employee-managed, and focus on leveraging the talents of employees to impact the nonprofit sector. Many believe that human capital is the future of philanthropy. Professionals — particularly Millenials — are looking for more ways they can make an impact through the workplace, where many spend the vast majority of their time.

> "Most of my involvement with the community has been through my workplace... I think we're very fortunate to have good, stable jobs, and just realizing the importance of giving back to the community is the way that I'd hope I have impacted the community around me over the past few years."

Study Approach and Methodology continued

anonymously. A partial list of donors, volunteers and key informants who gave AAPIP permission to be named as study participants is provided in the Acknowledgements section of this report.

Given the non-random approach to participant selection and the small size of the sample, this study should in no way be construed as scientific, and AAPIP does not claim that the learnings from the study are generalizable to Asian Americans in Silicon Valley as a whole. The views of study participants are their own, and while we identify commonalities among study participants' responses, these themes should not be taken as definitive of Asian Americans' views on giving. Because the sample was developed through AAPIP's existing networks, the study learnings are likely skewed in a number of ways — for example the high level of volunteerism, level of knowledge of the nonprofit sector and interests in particular issue areas.

Many believe that human capital is the future of philanthropy.

Busy young professionals in our study highlighted the importance of online and workplace-based giving and volunteering given their longer working hours. Many also take advantage of matching gift programs at their or their partners' companies.

The entrepreneurial culture drives a business approach to philanthropy and social change. New approaches to philanthropy have emerged in areas like Silicon Valley and Seattle where high tech entrepreneurs seek to apply their successful business practices to addressing social issues and creating sustainable organizations. Those participating in this study spoke often of social entrepreneurship and venture philanthropy as characterizing Silicon Valley giving. One donor who runs a venture capital firm described his venture philanthropy approach:

> "I get involved in philanthropy the same way I get involved in a company. The difference is just gains vs. good and generating impact not generating revenue. If a new program is starting, I want to know how you do it. What is your plan on getting there? If I believe in the plan, I am happy to get involved."

In media interviews, prominent Silicon Valley venture philanthropists like Vinod Khosla (founder of Sun Microsystems) and Pierre Omidyar (founder of eBay) have posited that businesses, like microlenders, may be in a better position to help people in poverty than charitable organizations.[21] Even businesses that do not have social benefit missions are seen by Silicon Valley entrepreneurs as having a positive social impact through job creation. A donor we interviewed described her husband's approach to giving in those terms:

> "He sees his form of philanthropy more through his company. If he delivers something through which he creates meaningful jobs for people in India, he creates a good that will transform and that is his contribution."

Social entrepreneurship is a concept that is particularly appealing in Silicon Valley, where the high tech revolution originated. Social entrepreneurs implement new ideas for solving social problems that have the potential to make large-scale impacts. Because of the emphasis on new solutions and social change, social enterprises are often start-ups rather than connected to existing nonprofit organizations. Social entrepreneurs and those who seed them look for return on investment and measurable outcomes, which can be defined in different ways. In some social enterprises, the return on investment is not defined in financial terms but rather as social impact, whereas others are set up to generate revenue or profit while also creating benefits for society. Depending on the mission and business model, a social enterprise may or may not be a nonprofit.

Many of the study participants were very aware of venture philanthropy and social entrepreneurship as major trends in the region, using the language and concepts to describe the philanthropic culture:

> "In Silicon Valley I think it's about scale and thinking on a national and international scale. It's about thinking about big impact and how things can be measured and improved. It has to be different. Those in Silicon Valley are skeptical of things being done the same way. We always assume things should change."

> "In Silicon Valley, it's scrappy, startup-y... I feel like people are always talking about social entrepreneurship. They're always looking for organizations that are just starting out, have a novel idea, the next big thing that'll change the world... for-profits too. And more metrics."

While many observed that Silicon Valley donors are very focused on metrics, when asked how they determine whether their contributions are well used, it was striking that only two of the fifteen donors we interviewed spoke about looking for metrics or measureable results. These two donors were strongly aligned with the business approach and focused on metrics because they wanted to be sure that the nonprofits they support were actually helping people or making change.

> "There are organizations that need to be supported and that are good, but just because a cause exists doesn't mean it should be funded. There needs to be a clear sense, not just well intentions. Having been a recipient of charity I know it can be done poorly."

> "I read this article about all the charities and the money that is given and how the money is hurting them more than helping them. Giving is good but people have to be more intelligent about it. The solution that you come up with may not be helpful."

When asked how they determine if their contributions to organizations have been well-used, a few other donors said they receive grant reports or verbal report-backs from staff. But the majority of those interviewed said that they trust the organizations they support and do not engage in much follow-up evaluative activity. This was the case even among those who were aware of social entrepreneurship and metrics as strong trends in the region, suggesting that other factors may be more important to Asian American donors than measurable outcomes. Donors in our sample who were less scrutinizing of nonprofits tended to have a lot of direct experience working with nonprofit organizations, for example as past or current staff members of nonprofits, or as board members or founders. These donors said they trust the nonprofits they support because they trust people — either the people running the organizations or the people they know who support the organizations.

In Silicon Valley I think it's about scale and thinking on a national and international scale. It's about thinking about big impact and how things can be measured and improved. It has to be different. Those in Silicon Valley are skeptical of things being done the same way. We always assume things should change.

The culture of philanthropy in Silicon Valley is driven by an entrepreneurial culture and they put high emphasis on metrics and measurement. It is also consistent with those that have a science or engineer background where measurement and outcomes are important.

This is both a good thing and has its down side... With some social issues, success is not as easily measureable as how many houses were built.

> "I trust that nonprofits are going to use my funds wisely. The most I think about the contribution is when it's made. I'm not expecting a service in return. I might be thinking about it again when I get the reminder about my pledge. But I just trust when I give that it's going to be used for a good cause. It's implicit when somebody makes 'the ask' and that ask is compelling. It's funny because I work in evaluation... but it's really about trust."

In addition, some donors and key informants expressed a good deal of skepticism and criticism of business approaches to social change. Nonprofits working on deep rooted, longstanding social issues find that tangible outcomes and metrics are not easy to define. Said one key informant:

> "The culture of philanthropy in Silicon Valley is driven by an entrepreneurial culture and they put high emphasis on metrics and measurement. It is also consistent with those that have a science or engineer background where measurement and outcomes are important. Therefore in philanthropy they will ask a lot of questions about measurements, outcome and how do you know it's working. This is both a good thing and has its down side... With some social issues, success is not as easily measureable as how many houses were built."

Another questioned the appropriateness of applying business principles to cash-strapped nonprofits that are providing critical services to people:

> "In this economy, how to explain the return on investment? I understand donors do expect that. But the terminology gets to me. We are already running on a shoe string. Showing donors how to 'do more with less' – this creates a cycle of getting by on less. It's the opposite of what we need. We could do much better with more."

Another critique is that social entrepreneurship is increasing competition for social capital by creating more and more new organizations.

> "I want people to understand that there are a lot of existing organizations, often started by social entrepreneurs years ago, out there that do lots of good work. My concern with the current emphasis on becoming a social entrepreneur is that every college student now seems to be more interested in starting their own nonprofit than in mobilizing support for existing causes or groups. This is troubling because good nonprofits have done a lot to get to where they are and are still struggling. We need to create an environment in which we can ensure that such organizations access sufficient resources, work effectively and collaboratively with others, and continue to make space for new ones. That is an important set of issues about which we should be both mindful and careful."

Social entrepreneurship was also seen as a limited approach to social change because of its lack of attention to the role of civic engagement and policy advocacy in fully addressing the root causes of the inequalities social entrepreneurs try to impact.

> "Social entrepreneurship focuses on making societies better, and doing a bit of business cost recovery. Where does advocacy fit in? I'm worried about that gap. Political participation is where the rubber hits the road."

These debates around social entrepreneurship raise important issues for both new and traditional philanthropists, and for the nonprofit sector as a whole.

Networking and career advancement are part of the culture of giving. Networking and mentoring were noted by study participants as elements of the culture of philanthropy in Silicon Valley.

AnnaLee Saxenian's seminal article on "Silicon Valley's New Immigrant Entrepreneurs" provides an in-depth discussion of Chinese, Taiwanese and South Asian professional associations that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s in Silicon Valley to facilitate immigrant job search, information exchange, access to capital and managerial knowhow, and the creation of shared ethnic identities. These associations include The Chinese Institute of Engineers, the Asian American Manufacturers Association, the Silicon Valley Indian Professionals Association, and The IndUS Entrepreneurs. Saxenian's research shows that part of the impetus for creating ethnic-based professional associations that encouraged entrepreneurship was these immigrants' isolation from mainstream networks and glass ceiling issues experienced working in larger tech companies.[22] Saxenian describes how Silicon Valley's most successful Chinese and Indian entrepreneurs relied heavily on such ethnic resources while simultaneously integrating into the mainstream technology economy:

> "Many of these associations have become important forums for cross-generational investment and mentoring as well. An older generation of successful immigrant engineers and entrepreneurs in both the Chinese and the Indian communities now plays an active role in financing and mentoring younger generations of co-ethnic entrepreneurs. Individuals within these networks often invest individually or jointly in promising new ventures, acting as "angel" investors who are more accessible to immigrants than the mainstream venture capital community and who are also willing to invest smaller amounts of money."[23]

As Shahnaz Taplin & Associates wrote in a 2001 study of Indian diaspora philanthropy in Silicon Valley, "Nowhere is the emerging philanthropic style

Social entrepreneurship focuses on making societies better, and doing a bit of business cost recovery. Where does advocacy fit in? I'm worried about that gap. Political participation is where the rubber hits the road.

more evident than in efforts of The IndUS Entrepreneurs (TiE)."[24] TiE was founded in Silicon Valley in 1992 by successful Indian entrepreneurs and executives. TiE is a nonprofit and does not directly invest capital in enterprises, but rather fosters entrepreneurship and wealth creation through mentoring and networking. TiE now has over 10,000 members worldwide, a global presence in 57 locations, and 2,500 charter members. Charter members, who are successful entrepreneurs, corporate executives, and senior professionals, may join by invitation only and actively participate in mentoring aspiring entrepreneurs and junior members. TiE holds events, conferences and retreats around the world where emerging entrepreneurs have the opportunity to network with one another and with charter members. While not focused on philanthropy, many TiE charter members are also prominent philanthropists. Following the Gujarat earthquake in 2001, TiE chapters raised millions of dollars to aid earthquake victims[25] and prominent TiE members were involved in founding the American India Foundation, the largest U.S. based philanthropy organization focused on catalyzing social and economic change in India.

Asian Americans have faced a glass ceiling in Silicon Valley companies for decades[26] and are still underrepresented in senior leadership of large firms in Silicon Valley, where they make up about 30% of tech professionals but account for only 12.5% of managers in companies in which 80% of the CEOs are Caucasian.[27] This challenge motivates one donor we interviewed to give substantial volunteer time to efforts to addressing the "glass ceiling" in Silicon Valley corporations:

> "I'm retired now. The other thing I spend my time on is helping to solve a problem. The problem is that there are not enough Asians in corporate leadership roles. I noticed there were Asian Americans in senior management, but they were not getting promoted. So I've been going to company executives and making them aware of this through networking and having lunch. Because I think it is something that can be solved with Asians inside of corporations. My work around this manifests itself in many ways – finding leaders, getting press, generating programs that can teach Asian Americans."

Workplace-based giving and events were described by younger professionals as being ways to make new professional contacts in addition to supporting charitable causes. As one younger professional described,

> "Another motivation for giving back to the community was when I started getting involved with Yahoo Employee Foundation, it started off as a way just to meet people as well. After becoming involved I switched [jobs] because of some of the connections I had made."

In part because of the high value placed on networking, many study participants felt that the best way to engage younger Asian American professionals in Silicon Valley in giving was through the workplace.

Giving is more technology-oriented in Silicon Valley. A number of study participants described the culture of giving in Silicon Valley as very technology-focused, reflecting the interests and expertise of the dominant industry.

> "Here there's obviously a big tech focus. You want to give back or volunteer in a way that taps into your passion."

Many of the study participants also reported using technology to facilitate giving to organizations. Websites mentioned by Silicon Valley donors include Kiva, an innovative online lending platform that matches micro lenders to social entrepreneurs around the globe; OneVietnam, an online network that connects Vietnamese Americans to philanthropic projects and is dedicated to raising awareness of social issues in Vietnam, including human trafficking, Agent Orange disabilities and natural disaster relief; DonorsChoose, which allows donors to support classroom projects posted by public school teachers throughout the United States; and Kickstarter, a funding platform for creative projects. Study participants said that using technology for giving and for marketing causes is important to reach younger professionals, especially because they have little time outside of work.

My mom often talks about how when we first came to the states all these people helped us — The idea of you 'pay it forward.' She would say 'people helped us and our job is when you are in the position to help, you help others and that's the only way you can re-pay people back for what they did for you.'

Motivations and Interests of Silicon Valley Donors and Volunteers

The subject of giving does not lend itself to generalization. Each study participant shared with us unique giving stories, experiences, passions and interests. As mentioned in the methodology section, this study does not purport to have "findings" that are generalizable to all Asian Americans or definitive of Asian American giving. The value of this type of study is in giving voice to the experiences and diverse perspectives of community members. As we present the learnings from our conversations and interviews in this section, we strive to honor the donors' unique giving paths while identifying some commonalities and patterns among the study participants.

Inspirations and Influences

Parents and other family members: Sixty percent of interviewees and focus group participants cited family as influencing or inspiring them to get involved in volunteering or giving — either directly or indirectly.

"My mom often talks about how when we first came to the states all these people helped us — The idea of you 'pay it forward.' She would say 'people helped us and our job is when you are in the position to help, you help others and that's the only way you can re-pay people back for what they did for you. It's priceless and you help the next set of people that come after' and that really stuck with me."

"[My father] taught me from early on in fourth grade. He told me for every dollar I raised, he would match. I think they expected me to raise less but I raised a couple hundred dollars and I don't think at the time they had the means for them to really match it, but they definitely raised a culture of philanthropy in me as well."

"My involvement with Angel Island Immigration Station is personal. My story is that my father was at Angel Island. We didn't learn it until he died in 2002... My father came in under false papers. This is what piqued my interest in Angel Island. The reason I am involved is on the most personal level, we lost part of our history and it is gone forever. Our goal is to make sure that this doesn't happen to others so that we can capture stories by original sources while people are still alive."

While a few mentioned their parents having family foundations in the U.S. or abroad, most of their parents' giving was described as informal and non-traditional — to individuals in need or to extended family members. This learning is consistent with previous studies of Asian American philanthropy that highlight informal, anonymous, religious, familial and community-based forms of giving prevalent in Asian societies.[28]

"Where I grew up families are tightly knit and are there for each other and the extended family in other ways. It was close at home and mostly family related. It was whatever the people in the neighborhood needed."

"In Vietnamese culture, we send money back to our family and extended family. As we get older, we realize that we can do more."

"We give money to our parents. We see that as part of our philanthropy... That part is not tax-deductible but it's a significant portion of our income. They are both retired now. We started giving to them when they retired. They sacrificed so much for us, it's our turn to give to them...We have one foot in the old ways of giving, but we also support mainstream nonprofits."

It is worth noting here that while a majority of study participants were inspired by their families to give, several second generation participants

said that inspiration to give or volunteer did not come from their families because their immigrant parents' values were to put family first. For example:

> "I grew up in the U.S. but my parents immigrated here. They weren't philanthropic. They were your typical Asian parents that focused on working hard and education. I didn't really have that role model, but I think that is typical for children of immigrants."

> "My family wasn't very philanthropic in the traditional sense. They cared mostly about taking care of our family. We rarely went beyond our circle. That's the way [my mother] grew up, it was all about family first."

There are significant financial demands on first generation immigrants to support family members in home countries while also providing for their own families in the U.S. that may make it challenging to give to causes.

Religious or faith-based community influences: About one fourth (24%) cited religious traditions or faith-based communities as giving them inspiration or role models for giving back. Of the six respondents who mentioned religion, half were from Muslim backgrounds and religious custom was very prominent in their responses to the question of how they got involved in giving. For example:

> "My family, my parents have always given *zakat* which is a religious obligation. I grew up knowing about *zakat* and participated in it. My first involvement in giving was with *zakat* which is the same lens that my husband and I view our charitable giving today. *Zakat* informs our sense of our religious obligations and the bulk of our charitable giving."

> "I grew up in a family that was very religious on my father's side. When he became a doctor, he took one day a week to help patients who didn't have any money. It was the same with my grandfather, he was very religious. A beggar would come to the door, and it was customary to invite him in to have lunch with us."

> "Philanthropy runs in my family. At a very young age, my father started the first mosque [in the area] and gave heavily to that... I used to go to faith-based events at the local mosque, events that my dad would help put on. He did philanthropic work with non-Muslims as well. He tried to reach out to different faith-based organizations and help them out."

Two of those who mentioned faith traditions as an influence referred to faiths different from their own backgrounds:

My family, my parents have always given zakat which is a religious obligation. I grew up knowing about zakat and participated in it. My first involvement in giving was with zakat which is the same lens that my husband and I view our charitable giving today. Zakat informs our sense of our religious obligations and the bulk of our charitable giving.

"I went to Catholic school. I'm not religious but I was taught values from school."

"One of the biggest influences was the Jewish community. When we saw how they gave, it inspired us to do more giving."

Exposure to poverty and dire need in home countries: About one fourth (24%) also cited exposure to poverty in their home countries as a motivator for their giving. All of those who described being directly exposed to dire poverty in other countries were immigrants, and they were of varying ages and national origins. They were exposed while growing up in those countries and in the present when they visit home countries, or when natural disasters strike.

"We traveled to Bombay not infrequently and I know what kind of suffering I saw firsthand. My family is from Bombay and I want to help people there because I know but for the grace of God that that could have easily been me living in poverty."

"Growing up I learned I have to help people — the elderly, kids who don't have parents. I went to orphanages with my mom, donating food and toys and clothes. All the things I saw growing up in Iran, I thought one day I'll go back and help that region."

"There have been natural disasters in Thailand. The Tsunami in 2007 and the flood that's going on now. My friend and I got people together and raised money for the flood victims. A couple weeks ago, we raised $7,000... It's the least we could do, the least I could do, in that it's really bad seeing the whole country under water."

Younger Asian American professionals born in the U.S. often cited first getting involved in volunteering through schools and through their workplaces. Other reasons mentioned more than once for getting involved in giving and volunteering included significant liquidity events and being influenced by friends.

Giving Interests

Over two-thirds give to organizations in the U.S. that serve their own ethnic or religious communities.

Giving back to their own ethnic and faith-based communities in the U.S. and internationally. Of the 25 study participants, over two-thirds (68%) indicated that they give to organizations in the U.S. that serve their own ethnic or religious communities. Reasons for founding or supporting U.S.-based ethnic or civil rights organizations included educating other Americans about their community, culture or religion; creating bridges between their communities and the mainstream; and protecting the rights of their communities. For example:

"We started the India Community Center because we felt there was a need to bring the Indo community together and celebrate our culture, and take care of seniors and to provide a community for them. It was also to teach the second generation the culture. There was also lots of interest in the local mainstream community and misconceptions [about the Indian community], so we wanted to be a portal and bridge to the community. All of our programming and everything is open to everyone."

"Since working with Muslim Advocates, I understand the value of developing a robust Muslim philanthropic community — it is important to have civic institutions."

Immigrants tended to support organizations serving their own particular ethnic or religious communities. Second generation donors in this study had a stronger Asian American identity beyond their ethnic identities, and support Asian American organizations that serve multiple communities.

"We're Korean American. AACI [Asian Americans for Community Involvement] doesn't serve a lot of Korean Americans but for me, personally, because I see the communities where we live, I see the need. So much of the community in the area are Asian Americans, I want to give back to my own community. Because I'm second generation, my identity is more Asian American."

"It's a generational distinction of people in the second generation that are giving more along the lines I give, from personal interest and a sense of Asian American community and some general sense of civic duty. The thing that is different about the way I invest my giving is because of my Asian American [background] I am not giving to the opera but to Asian arts organizations."

Some donors and key informants in the Indian community felt that first generation immigrants give more in India rather than to the Indian American community, in part because their money can make a greater impact there. This point was echoed in a recent Silicon Valley Community Foundation report on Indian philanthropy, which notes that many Indian donors in Silicon Valley give large amounts of their personal wealth to causes in India[29] and points to a tension in making decisions between giving in India and giving in the U.S.[30] However, donors interviewed suggested that the Indian community is becoming more interested in giving back in the U.S., with one donor saying "Indians are realizing that it's really the environment of America that's caused them to be successful. And now they feel that they want to give back."[31] Among the immigrant donors participating in AAPIP's study who give internationally, all but one also give to causes in the U.S. As one donor we interviewed explained:

It started to sink in for people that after we buy our cars and houses, what are we going to do with this money? And many have gotten more involved in giving by setting up donor advised funds and donating – certainly in India but also in mainstream causes here.

> "The wealth in the Indian community is recent and by that I mean before 1995 there was a relatively small number of those that had money. In the last 15 years that has changed and now you see a lot of angel investors, entrepreneurs, and venture capitalists. It started to sink in for people that after we buy our cars and houses, what are we going to do with this money? And many have gotten more involved in giving by setting up donor advised funds and donating – certainly in India but also in mainstream causes here."

Asian American donors also support other American communities and mainstream organizations. The multicultural identities of those who participated in our study were evident in their giving interests, which were generally not limited to their own communities here or abroad. Only one donor in the study gives only to ethnic-based causes, and only one gives solely to organizations in her homeland. The majority of donors we interviewed who support organizations serving their own communities or diaspora also support American schools and universities, mainstream organizations serving the poor, or organizations serving immigrants and other American communities.

Though the immigrant donors in our sample tended to give more in other countries than second generation donors, only one gives exclusively abroad, and some immigrants did not give to causes in their home countries at all. The study participant who spoke most passionately about cross-cultural giving and supporting other immigrant communities in the U.S. was an immigrant from Hong Kong who has given to Iranian American causes:

> "With other groups outside my own community – it's worth it – you can learn from them. It can lead to collaboration later on...The world is too small to just concentrate on our own community. I saw many similarities with my community and the Persian community."

The American-born study participants tend to give more to causes in the U.S. A number of younger, second generation professionals do not give internationally and expressed concerns about transparency. An exception to this among young professionals in Silicon Valley is Kiva, a U.S. based online lending platform that allows individuals to make micro loans to social entrepreneurs in other countries. Kiva was highlighted as being popular among young professionals in the Valley.

Education is a priority area for giving. Education was by far the most popular issue area of giving among the study participants, with 15 out of 25 (or 60%) reporting giving to education, broadly defined. This includes giving to alma maters, giving to children's schools and giving to education and literacy programs in the U.S. and in other countries.

Those who give to education-related causes expressed a desire to create opportunities for others – to "pay forward" the opportunities that got them where they are. One donor explained,

> "Because folks have either earned it or worked hard to get their wealth, they tend to want to provide opportunity for others so that they can have a chance too...[My husband] gives to educational issues in the state of Orissa. It is a very rural state and not where privileged Indians come from. You get into one of the colleges because you worked pretty hard. He gave to an uncle that was working on sponsoring mass scholarships for rural kids and helping them get into college. He identifies as one of those kids."

As another donor put it,

> "What inspires my wife and me is the recognition that we have had opportunities in our lives. I grew up in India and came from middle class background, and none of this would have happened if we didn't live in America where this can happen. We also recognize that some people paid it forward to get us to where we are. We want to pay it forward so that future generations have opportunities."

In addition to support for alma maters and kids' schools, examples of education-related causes in the U.S. supported by Asian American donors included scholarships for children of Asian immigrants, scholarships for foster children, and tuition assistance so that lower income children could attend their own children's private schools. One donor whose children attend private schools described giving to a local public school to ensure that his employees' children were getting a quality education.

Several donors in our study who support education efforts in their home countries or in their diaspora find educational efforts very impactful and see them as the key to social change.

> "Indian education is at the forefront. I believe in it and it gives folks the opportunity to improve their lives. It gives people a viable chance to change their lives. It gives them the lift they need and makes a dramatic impact."

> "This can change the trajectory of that kid and the family's life by helping them to get educated and then for them to go from making one-to-two dollars a day to making five times that, and get out of poverty."

Empowering girls and women. Over one third (nine out of 25, or 36%) give money or time to girls' and women's causes. Among several immigrant women donors, girls' education and women's empowerment in South Asia and the Middle East was a strong focus. Most of the women donors in our

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Those who give to education-related causes expressed a desire to create opportunities for others – to "pay forward" the opportunities that got them where they are.

study who were from South Asia and the Middle East had a strong interest in efforts to overcome barriers to educating women and girls in those regions. Describing girls and women's causes she supports in Pakistan and India, one donor from that region shared her motivation:

> "There is a prevalent view in India and Pakistan that girls don't need to be educated, they will just get married. It struck home with me to see young women become professionals and be able to provide for their families."

Another said,

> "Mostly I am interested in economic empowerment for women in the Middle East so that they can have more rights and gender equality, and in my thinking empowering them economically is the best and fastest way to get their other rights."

Other girls and women's issues of interest to the donors we interviewed (especially second generation donors) were reproductive rights and domestic violence.

Civil and human rights. Almost one-third (32%) of study participants give to civil or human rights organizations. Most of those in our sample who support civil and human rights organizations are Muslims or from the Middle East, reflecting their communities' civic engagement priorities of addressing post 9/11 discriminatory policies, hate crimes, media bias, ongoing Islamophobia and other negative stereotypes. For example:

> "The mission of Islamic Networks Group coincides with my mission and vision – how important it is to be able to dispel stereotypes about Islam, to educate people... The ignorance is growing based on the media."

> "Muslim Advocates – they do civil rights for Muslims and non-Muslims as well – dispelling stereotypes, changing policies, protecting civil liberties."

> "When we opened Pars Equality Center, we had the idea that we will be helping the Iranian American community who have been discriminated against after 9/11 and who need help when they travel. We are educating the community about the laws and their rights here and making sure they are not scared to come forward. After one year – we realized that we need to have social services to help the community in other areas. There is a need to educate the community to help them find resources."

Several of the donors interviewed also give to the ACLU of Northern California and two support international human rights organizations.

Health: Twenty-eight percent of study participants mentioned giving to health-related causes, including research for cures for diseases like Alzheimer's and cancer, community-based clinics in the Bay Area and LA, local domestic violence agencies, and health care initiatives in South Asia like the Sankara Eye Foundation.

Other causes and organizations that at least a few donors in our study support include the arts and culture organizations, disaster relief, religious institutions attended by family members, and orphanages in South Asia and the Middle East.

How Asian American Donors Learn and Give

Personal connections play a strong role in learning and giving. While family history was cited by a number of donors as an initial inspiration for giving, the vast majority of donors say that their families do not currently influence their decisions about what to support financially. Friends are a much stronger influence, with 9 out 15 donors (60%) responding to this question stating that friends have strongly influenced their giving. As one donor said:

> "We have informal discussions often with friends that are active in giving. Since we go to lots of fundraising events we discuss there."

In addition, 80% of the donors (12 out of 15) interviewed said they learn about causes and organizations to support from their friends or colleagues.

> "It's always through personal contacts. A friend or colleague will invite me to a fundraiser or event. There is always some sort of personal invitation... Other ways that organizations solicit – by phone, email, or people coming to my door – I normally don't respond to those types of solicitations. It's too intrusive, a violation of my privacy."

Other ways that donors described learning about causes was through giving circles, workplace giving, philanthropic advising from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and internet research.

Donor Advised Funds. One-third of the 15 donors interviewed have established a donor advised fund that facilitates their giving. Donors who use this mechanism found benefit in the advice provided by philanthropic advisors, having the time to make giving decisions, and the opportunity to grow their charitable funds.

> "When I set up my donor advised fund in 2005 at the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, it was helpful in getting me to think through things, and they suggested I say what I want rather than to do scattered giving. My focus is Asian education."

80% of the donors interviewed said they learn about causes and organizations to support from their friends or colleagues.

> "When we sold the last company there was a big tax implication and we didn't know what to do with it...If we were really radical we would've just given it away right away and not have a go-between, but we wanted to build it up so that we could have impact later."

Private foundations. Of the donors in our sample, four (27%) give through their own private or family foundations. One donor has established her own private foundation. Three others are involved to varying degrees in their parents' family foundations, either in the U.S. or in their home country.

Giving circles and pooled funds: In addition, 11 of the 25 study participants (44%) were involved in a collective giving mechanism with other donors that pools or raises financial or social capital for certain issues or geographies. Examples include the American India Foundation, the Global Fund for Women, the Muslim Women's Giving Circle, OneVietnam, PARSA Community Foundation, RajeevCircle, the South Asian Giving Circle, SV2, WANDA (a giving circle at the Women's Foundation of California) and the Yahoo Employee Foundation. One donor described the added value she gets from a giving circle: "It's a learning process, you learn alongside peers and other donors. You learn about the issues in a much deeper way."

Some donors strongly value their independence: It is worth mentioning that some of the Silicon Valley donors we interviewed felt very strongly about their independence in making giving decisions or were skeptical of intermediaries that facilitate giving. One donor described her style of giving as "guerrilla giving" – not being tied down to organizations. Another explained:

> "The reason I don't use any of these mechanisms is because I am skeptical of any overhead fees. I work in financial services as a venture capitalist and know about fees so I try to avoid them to see more dollars going directly to a cause. I feel that if we leave money for foundations we have failed."

The entrepreneurial culture of Silicon Valley may foster an individualistic approach to giving. Said one key informant, "The culture is driven by people who believe in the rightness of their vision...this makes collaboration very difficult."

Encouraging Philanthropy in the Next Generation

Most of the donors interviewed for this study who have children are actively encouraging them to be philanthropic and to be engaged in the community. Many spoke of how important it is that their kids understand how privileged they are relative to most of the world.

> "The parents I know – we are all thinking about teaching our kids. How do we prevent our kids from being totally spoiled? How do we teach lessons to them?"

> "When you have more opportunities than other people it is an obligation to give something back and it is very important for me to teach my son to be compassionate. To have gratitude for what he has and give back to the community."

Parents described many ways that their children are getting involved and how they encourage them to be compassionate and philanthropic. Study participants who have children spoke often of the importance of setting an example of giving for their children:

> "My whole philosophy is rather than focusing on what they should do and who they should become, parents need to act as role models. It's not what you say but what you do. The best thing my wife and I can do is to be the best individuals possible. I can tell them to get involved and to give but it's better if they see us doing this instead."

> "We talk about it all the time. They know what zakat is, they know we give away money, why we give, who we give to. We donate to the Hedaya Foundation, they send containers to Pakistan. We always have a few bins at our house of clothes and toys that the kids want to give to Hedaya. They know that they are giving these things to kids that don't have as much money or the things we do."

Learning from their parents' example, some donors' kids are taking the initiative to get involved in giving and activism in their teens. For example:

> "My [13 year old] daughter and her friend are making earrings that they are selling. Originally her friend started it to raise money to support relief efforts in Haiti. My daughter said she wanted her cause to be human trafficking. She did research on the internet and found CAST in LA and Asian Health Services in the Bay."

> "My daughter wants to start a women's group in school – a club so she can educate them about Middle Eastern problems. She wants to sell things and do fundraising. She is 15."

When you have more opportunities than other people it is an obligation to give something back and it is very important for me to teach my son to be compassionate.

The more (our children) get involved in their own community, the better knowledge they have about their own culture and their own people, the better later on they will support their own community. They need to be part of the community and exposed to their own culture.

Two study participants described exposing kids to those less fortunate through travel to poorer countries or site visits to local agencies and shelters.

> "Because we live in Palo Alto, our kids see a particular kind of life and this is not the kind of life that most live and we don't want them to think that most kids live like this. So we travel a lot... We spent the last two summers in Turkey. They know what it is going to be like when they go to India. They save up toys and baseball caps to give to other children."

> "On trips to India we take them to places to see people less fortunate and they are starting to give and help early on...We are trying to teach this notion that there are lots of people that can use our help so let's do as much as possible."

Parents also described taking their children to local agencies and site visits arranged through SV2 Kids, a service learning program for children of SV2 donors.

> "I'm taking every opportunity to show them they are very lucky and not everyone is so lucky. I like the ways SV2 Kids does that. There was an environmental field trip – taught them how to take care of the planet, where water comes from, how not to waste water. It really works – they know when they brush their teeth they have to turn off the water. My seven year old knows that riding a bike is better than driving a car. We went to a family shelter. There they talked to them about how there are homeless kids and they are just like you. Something like SV2 Kids is very rare. I don't think there are enough opportunities like that at a very young age."

Schools in Silicon Valley were described by study participants as doing a lot to encourage young people to learn about social issues, give and fundraise.

"My daughter's school has a global women's program. They want to make sure that children are aware... the world is not like this, we're very fortunate here. There is hunger and famine in many different countries."

"My older son is nine and his private school in Palo Alto does a lot of work with Free the Children that works in Eastern Africa mostly. They are constantly fundraising and talking about the organization. They have kids talk about the organization. We talk about the ways children can help in other areas of the world where they don't have the resources we do."

Donors spoke to the importance of encouraging their children to give back to their own communities, both in the U.S. and abroad.

"I think it is important for the second generation to get involved because they are essentially dual citizens as far as I see it. There are two countries and causes they are a part of and they need to get involved in both. How we do that, there is not one answer but we can start through encouraging them and showing them the impact we are able to make. I think we can do a lot more to encourage giving."

"The more they get involved in their own community, the better knowledge they have about their own culture and their own people, the better later on they will support their own community. They need to be part of the community and exposed to their own culture."

Conclusions and Recommendations: Inspiring More Giving in Silicon Valley

Silicon Valley's culture of entrepreneurship, innovation and opportunity has been a catalyst for immigrant and second generation Asian Americans to shape philanthropy according to their cultural and professional values. Most of the donors we interviewed did not come from wealthy backgrounds and are new to philanthropy. That much of the wealth in Silicon Valley Asian communities is "new money" has implications for how individuals enter into philanthropy and their giving preferences. With less of a family history of American-style philanthropic giving to guide them, new donors may want to be more hands-on and involved in the causes or organizations to which they give. They want to apply their skills while becoming more informed about nonprofits and philanthropy.

In interviews and focus groups, study participants affirmed that there is great untapped potential to engage more of their peers in Silicon Valley, who are also new to philanthropy, as donors and volunteers. Ideas and recommendations for inspiring more giving in Silicon Valley AAPI communities include:

- **Encourage companies in Silicon Valley to give more, incentivize and acknowledge employee giving and volunteerism.** In Silicon Valley, the workplace is an important venue for Asian Americans interested in giving and volunteering in the region. Silicon Valley-based companies like Google, LinkedIn, Yahoo! and others are excellent examples of corporate philanthropy that encourage employees' direct engagement in supporting nonprofits. Google, for example, provides a strong incentive for employee giving and volunteerism by matching up to $12,000 of each employee's charitable contributions, and for every five hours a Google employee volunteers at a nonprofit of his or her choice, the company donates $50 to that nonprofit. Many Silicon Valley companies also allow employees to take time off to volunteer, and some like LinkedIn view volunteerism as a key part of an employee's overall employment profile.

  At the same time, a number of study participants felt that some large Silicon Valley companies could be doing much more financial giving and could be more accessible to local nonprofits seeking grants. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. Study participants recommended that Silicon Valley companies engage in more local grantmaking and provide larger matching incentives for employee giving.

  Strategies for encouraging corporate philanthropy and employee giving should also take into account the large number of successful start-ups and small businesses in Silicon Valley. Last year, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders hosted a "Summit on Entrepreneurship and Small Business Growth in Silicon Valley," recognizing that Asian American-led businesses in the region are a significant engine of economic growth. With such large numbers of Asian American entrepreneurs, there is much potential for expanding philanthropy through promoting employee giving and volunteerism in smaller businesses as well.

- **Organize social and networking events, especially for younger professionals.** Study participants were interested in events where young professionals can learn about issues while networking and meeting others who share their values. Events that are executive-sponsored or feature successful entrepreneurs or top philanthropists from different Asian American communities would be appealing. Some recommended partnering with existing ethnic and religious organizations, groups of Asian American professionals, and schools and universities. An important recommendation is to find ways to "package" events with work to make it easier for busy professionals to hear about them and attend.

- **Create intergenerational events or projects that can involve the whole family.** Because socializing and friendship play such an important role in

supporting AAPIs to engage in giving and volunteering, family-friendly strategies for engaging more AAPIs in giving and volunteering have great potential and should be explored further. Parents interviewed for this study have a strong interest in teaching their children philanthropic values and are looking for more ways to expose them to social issues. Some donors would like to see more intergenerational opportunities for couples, parents, children and even grandparents to volunteer or donate together. Donors with young children said that on weekends they would be more likely to attend volunteer or fundraising events that involve children. Holding such events on weekdays makes it difficult to include children.

This learning resonates with AAPIP's experience with donors throughout the country. AAPI donors and members of AAPI giving circles are interested in including their children in learning about community issues and philanthropy. For example, AAPIP's giving circle members are exploring holding giving circle meetings at members' homes with their children present instead of in conference rooms. Integrating child care into efforts to promote giving and volunteering is also helpful to engage more AAPIs with young families. Other creative ideas include intergenerational giving circles, family-friendly volunteer events in collaboration with schools, and organizing events for families with children close in age who tend to socialize together.

- **Raise awareness in Silicon Valley of the needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in the U.S.** Silicon Valley is so diverse and geographically spread, and there are so many successful Asian American professionals in Silicon Valley, that the needs of lower-income AAPIs and immigrant communities may be obscured. It is worth noting that more than half of the young Silicon Valley professionals born in the U.S. who participated in the focus groups were less likely to target their giving or volunteering to their ethnic, homeland or religious backgrounds. With such large AAPI and immigrant populations in Silicon Valley and surrounded by high profile examples of successful entrepreneurs from these backgrounds, the younger generation may not see that there are needs and barriers to success in their own communities. As one young professional said, "When you walk the streets all you see is Asian people so I don't think people really think that way." When articulating the needs of AAPI and other immigrant communities, framing the issues in terms of expanding opportunities is likely to resonate in Silicon Valley. Recommendations for raising awareness of AAPI issues and community needs include publicizing statistics on AAPI communities and information about AAPI organizations. In addition, giving circles and learning circles focused on specific issues were appealing to a number of study participants.

  The lack of awareness among younger Asian Americans working in high tech companies that there are low-income, struggling AAPIs in Silicon Valley speaks to the importance of disaggregated data sets in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of AAPI communities in the region. Subgroup analyses of raw Census 2010 data (which included more ethnic sub-categories than the Census 2000) by advocacy organizations across key socio-economic indicators is likely to be released over the next few years and will provide a more accurate picture of the diverse circumstances of AAPI subgroups in Silicon Valley. In addition, last year California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law Assembly Bill 1088 requiring state agencies to disaggregate data by additional Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander ethnicities. AB 1088 requires the Department of Industrial Relations and the Department of Fair Employment and Housing to collect demographic data that is disaggregated using the same ethnic categories as the Census Bureau. The new law requires agencies to make this data readily available to the public on its websites. Similar policy changes are needed to further disaggregate the AAPI categories in public health and education data.

- **Promote inclusive dialogue on social entrepreneurship and venture philanthropy, and the impact of these trends on the nonprofit sector.** Our interviews with donors and key informants uncovered very different views about social entrepreneurship and the importance of performance metrics. Despite the high profile nature of these trends within the philanthropic culture of the region, most of the donors we interviewed were not focused on metrics in evaluating the organizations they support. Moreover, a number of interviewees were critical of social entrepreneurship and applying business frameworks to nonprofit and social change work, and are concerned about their impact on established nonprofits and social movements. Healthy debate bringing together proponents and critics of these philanthropic trends is encouraged.
- **Use technology for social marketing and to reduce the time factor in giving.** Study participants, especially younger professionals, favored using online giving or volunteering platforms like Kiva, Sparked, Taproot and Kickstarter. They are popular in part because they offer busy professionals ways to give without taking a lot of their time. The Internet also allows people to collaborate or crowdsource knowledge, insights and information about the nonprofit sector both in the U.S. and abroad. Younger professionals, many of whom were unaware of AAPI organizations in the region, pointed out that effective marketing to their generation is done online and through social media.
- **Conduct further research on giving by AAPI subgroups and Middle Eastern communities.** AAPIP recognizes that with this small study, we have just scratched the surface of AAPI giving in Silicon Valley. Due to resource limitations, this study could not focus on Pacific Islander communities. We encourage foundations and universities to support further research on giving within Asian and Pacific Islander ethnic and religious groups in the region to capture the diversity of giving styles and preferences within the AAPI groupings. In particular, our interviews with Silicon Valley donors from Muslim backgrounds offered a glimpse of a global diaspora of religious-based giving that transcends nationalities and ethnicities, and warrants further research.

Both immigrant and American-born donors and volunteers in this study were very involved in their local communities — giving and volunteering to help disadvantaged people of all backgrounds. Among the American-born, even those with strong bicultural identities were more inclined to give in the U.S. and locally, rather than internationally. This suggests that as the American-born AAPI population grows in Silicon Valley, so will their involvement and impact giving to domestic and local causes.

In this report, AAPIP has attempted to illuminate the changing face of philanthropy in Silicon Valley, and to give voice to the experiences and perspectives of donors and volunteers from immigrant family backgrounds in a dynamic philanthropic environment. It is AAPIP's hope that their stories will inspire and activate a new generation of Asian Americans in the region to become more involved in their communities as agents of change.

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ABOUT AAPIP

Founded in 1990, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy is a national member-supported philanthropic advocacy organization dedicated to advancing philanthropy and Asian American/Pacific Islander communities. Our members include foundations, staff, and trustees of grantmaking institutions, and nonprofit organizations in ten regional chapters in the United States — including Silicon Valley.

AAPIP engages communities and philanthropy to address unmet needs; serves as a resource for and about AAPI communities; supports and facilitates giving by and to our communities; and incubates new ideas and approaches for social justice philanthropy.

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