

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES:

How Organized Philanthropy Can Help Meet the Needs of LGBTQ Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander Communities



Acknowledgements

Many people generously helped in the creation of this report. Thank you to the following key individuals for their assistance and efforts in contributing to *Missed Opportunities*, which AAPIP hopes will strengthen and build a more just and equitable philanthropic community. This report and the Queer Justice Fund are supported in part by a grant from the Open Society Foundations.

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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. 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.

FRONT COVER PHOTOS:

top left to right: 2010 Satrang and South Asian Network, "South Asian Queer Visibility Procession in Little India," Artesia, CA; 2010 Tet Festival Parade, Westminster, CA

bottom left to right: 2010 "Being Queer As A Homecoming," One Love Oceania; 1979 March on Washington for Gay Rights; Network on Religion and Justice for API LGBTs.

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Note from the President/Executive Director

“The personal IS the political.” When my daughter, Miya, was in middle school she came home one day and I could tell she was troubled by something that had happened. As we began to talk, I realized that she had been hearing homophobic remarks at school and didn’t have the tools to respond or engage. She could visualize her beloved “Uncle Eddie” and felt despondent that she could not defend him to the kids at school. I remember my amazing friend, Doreena Wong, in the 1980’s when I was doing everything in my power to recruit her to work for the Asian Law Caucus, asking me if it was going to be a problem that she was a lesbian. As I once again have the privilege of working day-to-day with Joe Lucero, I see him as the nineteen year old from UC Berkeley who came to the Asian Law Caucus and taught me about “coming out” and allowed me into that space to walk with him.

These memories among many others are flash points in my life journey that keep reminding me, encouraging me –pushing me–to keep fighting for the just and equitable society that I know we can be. Children and schools, work and employment, the process of coming out—these are all environments and aspects of the ways in which we inflict pain and suffering, and marginalize people because of their sexual orientation.

When I first met Alice Y. Hom in 1996, we were at the founding gathering of the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum in Los Angeles. I was up at the podium and she was one of several queer AAPI women that confronted us about the lack of visibility/

leadership of queer AAPI women in the program and in organizing the gathering. What an incredible moment for all of us to learn and grow—for queer AAPI women to feel empowered, confident, able to voice their concerns and hold accountable those of us who had organized the event. Alice became a vital member of AAPIP’s National Gender & Equity Campaign team in 2007, which led to the birthing of the Queer Justice Fund. As the principal author of *Missed Opportunities*, Alice brings into sharp focus the dual challenges of meager philanthropic investments and fragile community infrastructure that together continue to perpetuate the invisibility of LGBTQ AAPI communities and issues.

Knowing these things, how can I be in this privileged position at AAPIP and not speak out and name these conditions? How can AAPIP as a national organization originally created to advocate for and build a more just and inclusive philanthropic sector not speak out to change the systemic conditions that still confront many communities in our society and, in particular, our own LGBTQ AAPI communities?

If there are movement moments, than the launch of *Missed Opportunities* is one that I hope you will not miss. This is once again a time for us to gather, reflect, strategize and take action. Thank you, Alice, for your wisdom, leadership and insistence on creating a sign of hope—a tool to engage and move forward.

–Peggy Saika

Executive Summary

Missed Opportunities: How Organized Philanthropy Can Help Meet the Needs of LGBTQ Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander Communities, explores the deep disparities in funding to LGBTQ AAPI communities. It extends the findings of AAPIP's 2007 report, *Growing Opportunities: Will Funding Follow the Rise in Foundation Assets and Growth of AAPI Populations?*, which found that funding to AAPI communities for the period from 1990–2002 amounted to no more than 0.4% from national foundations. More recent analysis reveals that this figure has not significantly changed, and is even smaller in many regions where there are significant AAPI populations. *Missed Opportunities* draws this data into more granular detail, surfacing the opportunities and challenges to investing in LGBTQ AAPI communities.

Who are LGBTQ AAPIs?

LGBTQ Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and their issues, needs, and assets are not well known nor are they well resourced. AAPI communities make up the fastest growing racial group in the United States. In stride with the growth in the general population, more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) AAPIs are coming out, building community, and creating organizations to support their needs. In 2007 the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF)

conducted a national survey of LGBTQ AAPI individuals in the United States, and found that:

- The top five states with the largest concentration of LGBTQ AAPIs are California (37%), New York (18%), Illinois (5%), Massachusetts (5%), and District of Columbia (4%).
- More than a dozen ethnic identities are represented in LGBTQ AAPI communities including

Chinese (40%), Filipino (19%), Japanese (11%), Asian Indian (10%), Vietnamese (8%), and Korean (7%).

- 55% were U.S. born citizens, 27% naturalized citizens, 19% non-citizens.
- 50% identified English as their native language. Other frequently cited native languages include:

Mandarin (11%); Cantonese (8%); Tagalog (6%); and Vietnamese (5%).

- 53% identified as men, 41% as women, 10% transgender.
- 47% identified as gay, 19% as lesbian, 9% as bisexual, 20% as queer.

Key Issues Facing LGBTQ AAPI Communities

- **Discrimination and Harassment.** Discrimination and harassment are common and daily occurrences for LGBTQ AAPI people. LGBTQ people often encounter a heterosexist work culture and lack of employment protections based on sexual orientation.
- **LGBTQ AAPI Youth at High Risk.** Both LGBTQ and AAPI youth experience harassment and physical violence at school at much higher rates than other groups. A recent study found that 84.6% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 40.1% reported being physically harassed and 18.8% reported being physically assaulted at school because of their sexual orientation. AAPI youth are 20% more likely than other racial groups to be bullied in the classroom.
- **Social and Cultural Stigma.** There are strong cultural and religious barriers to coming out within AAPI communities and families that create feelings of shame and the belief that one's sexual orientation will reflect negatively on their family or ethnic community.
- **Immigration Challenges.** Two-thirds of all Asian Americans are foreign-born, one third of Asians in the U.S. are not citizens and approximately one million are undocumented. Undocumented LGBTQ AAPIs are affected by immigration policies. Immigrants, particularly South Asian immigrants and Southeast Asian refugees, have been targets of racial profiling, detentions, and deportations.
- **Poverty and Economic Insecurity.** Hmong, Bangladeshi, and Cambodian Americans have



poverty rates similar to African Americans and Latinos, with Hmong Americans having the lowest per capita income of any racial or ethnic group. Hmong, Laotian, and Cambodian Americans have unemployment rates higher than the national average.

- **Health Disparities.** Factors that contribute to health disparities of LGBTQ people include reduced access to health insurance, social stigma, and lack of cultural competency in the health care system. Among LGB people, LGB AAPIs are more likely to experience psychological distress than any other racial group.
- **Homophobia in Religious and Faith-based Communities.** AAPI communities are comprised of diverse religious and faith-based traditions, some of which view homosexuality negatively and interpret religious teachings in ways that denigrate the moral integrity of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in order to justify denying them equal rights and acceptance.

LGBTQ AAPI Organizations and the Current Level of Philanthropic Investment

LGBTQ AAPI organizations exist because individuals face racism and anti-immigrant bias in LGBTQ communities and homophobia in AAPI communities. LGBTQ AAPI groups vary greatly in terms of infrastructure, budget, and leadership structures. Less than one quarter of the groups have 501(c)3 status and more than one-third are fiscally sponsored. The majority of LGBTQ AAPI groups are volunteer-led. Groups with paid staff are actually part of larger AAPI organizations. Many groups are informal or even virtual, while others serve as vehicles for grassroots organizing and political advocacy.

In 2009, grants to all LGBTQ organizations and projects represented slightly more than 0.2 percent of all foundation giving in the United States. Funding for LGBTQ organizations in general doubled between

2002 and 2009, from \$50 million in 2002 to a high of \$107 million in 2008. Investment in LGBTQ AAPI organizations was \$81,950 in 2002, representing 0.3% of the funding to LGBTQ organizations. For a number of years after 2003, LGBTQ AAPI funding increased to at or near 1% of total funding to LGBTQ organizations and projects, and reached a high of \$980,050 in 2008. In 2009, possibly reflecting the impact of the economic crisis that began in late 2008, the amount of funding granted to LGBTQ AAPI organizations fell to \$648,939 or 0.7% of the total granted to LGBTQ organizations. Many LGBTQ AAPI groups survive financially on individual donations, in-kind support, and fundraising events. Groups wishing to launch large-scale campaigns or programs may be hampered by the lack of support from organized philanthropy.

Recommendations for Philanthropic Investment

LGBTQ AAPI groups have identified a pressing need to share best practices among groups and connect organizations working in diverse communities across the country. Grantmakers can help create these spaces for strategic discussions to create solutions to the needs and challenges of LGBTQ AAPI communities. AAPIP offers the following funding strategies to address this need for connection and to help build a stronger network of organizations.

- **Strengthening LGBTQ AAPI organizations' capacity and civic engagement.** Capacity building and core operating support are needed to build the infrastructure, civic engagement, and leadership of autonomous LGBTQ AAPI organizations. Capacity building investments should be geared not only to organizational development but also to building skill sets related to community organizing and policy advocacy.
- **Building links to allies.** This grantmaking strategy supports alliance-building work between heterosexual AAPI organizations and LGBTQ AAPI

groups, as well as alliance building between LGBTQ AAPI organizations and other queer communities of color. Examples of alliance-building funding strategies include bringing together ally organizations to share best practices on successfully integrating LGBTQ AAPI issues and populations into organizations' missions, priorities, and programs; and supporting more convenings that bring together LGBTQ People of Color organizations for peer learning and strategy discussions.

- **Building links to mainstream LGBTQ organizations.** Funders can help strengthen and diversify the LGBTQ movement by creating opportunities for queer people of color organizations to be "at the table" with mainstream LGBTQ organizations. Through convenings and grants to organizations, leaders from LGBTQ AAPI and other communities of color can engage more frequently in sharing information about the issues and perspectives of queer people of color and strategizing with mainstream LGBTQ organizations.

■ **Support to build strong relationships between secular organizations and interfaith groups** to develop strategies to welcome LGBTQ people and issues into religious and faith-based AAPI communities. This funding strategy seeks to integrate LGBTQ AAPI issues and populations into faith-based communities as reflected in their leadership, membership, outreach activities, ministries, and programs.

■ **More community-based and quantitative research.** For example, there exists very little documentation about Muslim, Pacific Islander, South Asian, and Southeast Asian LGBTQ groups and issues, as well as about groups working on LGBTQ AAPI issues and communities in different geographic areas, specifically the Midwest, New England states, Pacific Northwest, and the South. Language issues pose a barrier because most materials are in English and are not accessible to those who speak and read other languages. Translation and materials in different languages are needed for AAPI communities.



Missed Opportunities: How Organized Philanthropy Can Help Meet the Needs of LGBTQ¹ Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander Communities

Even though the API community is one of the fastest-growing ethnic groups in California, we are still for the most part overlooked. Myths still prevail of the “model minority” who has access to wealth and privilege. API LGBT members of our community are particularly invisible and have been one of the most under-researched, under-funded, under-supported groups in the country. We have been working to increase our visibility in the community ... break stereotypes, and empower our community to be voices for marriage equality, fair treatment in classrooms and the workplace, and the continued creation of safe spaces for people to come out. We need...help to keep the momentum growing.

– Rev. Dr. Jonipher Kwong, former Executive Director, API Equality Los Angeles

Introduction

Asian Americans, South Asians, Southeast Asians, and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are one of the fastest growing groups in the United States. In stride with the growth in the general population, more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) AAPIs are coming out, building community, and creating organizations to support their needs. Yet this group remains isolated, facing discrimination from AAPI and LGBTQ communities as well as from mainstream society.

Since the amounts of philanthropic giving to LGBTQ

communities and AAPI communities, respectively, are less than one percent of total foundation giving, it is not surprising that the amount of capital to the LGBTQ AAPI community is very low as well. Within the realm of organized philanthropy, LGBTQ AAPI communities and their issues/needs are not well known nor are they well resourced. In the emerging body of published reports on LGBTQ communities, there is rare mention of LGBTQ AAPI information or experiences. This briefing paper seeks to address some of the gaps in knowledge and support discussions among social justice funders of

the importance of including LGBTQ AAPIs (and LGBTQ people of color more generally) in their funding strategies. To help introduce funders to LGBTQ AAPI issues, AAPIP's briefing paper responds to the following questions:

1. Who are LGBTQ AAPI people?
2. What are key issues facing LGBTQ AAPI communities?
3. How are LGBTQ AAPI communities organized?
4. What is the current level of investment in LGBTQ AAPI communities and issues?
5. How and why should funders support LGBTQ AAPI organizations?

AAPIP: Building Democratic Philanthropy

Founded in 1990, AAPIP (Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy) is a national, member-supported organization with ten chapters around the country dedicated to advancing philanthropy and Asian American/Pacific Islander communities. AAPIP is committed to building democratic philanthropy and to building greater access to capital for communities to achieve social justice.

Building Democratic Philanthropy is a framework developed by AAPIP that calls on both organized philanthropy and individuals to support the development of practices that begin with the vision of communities first, and that draws on the assets of those communities as the starting place for any blueprint to maximize their potential. The Queer Justice Fund (QJF) is a powerful expression of building democratic philanthropy, leveraging the voices, and resources of LGBTQ AAPI communities to expand its capacity to meet a growing and complex set of issues related to homophobia, racism, and gender discrimination.

QJF originally emerged in 2009 as an Opportunity Investment (OI) from AAPIP's groundbreaking incubation of the National Gender and Equity Campaign (NGEC). NGEC works with community-based

This briefing paper has emerged from an analysis of data collected on the amount of funding directed to LGBTQ AAPI organizations and programs; a community engagement process of meeting with, listening to, and partnering with LGBTQ AAPI organizations across the country; a brief literature review on LGBTQ people of color; and ongoing relationships and discussions with 12 grantee partners of AAPIP's National Gender & Equity Campaign. It concludes with a set of recommendations of ways for funders and other philanthropic institutions to join in making change for this community as well as the broader LGBTQ people of color communities of which AAPIs are a part.

organizations to build social justice movements that fully embrace a clear and intentional gender equity lens. One of NGEC's long-term strategies has been to provide seed support in the form of Opportunity Investments to incubate key strategic social justice initiatives. OI support represents the agile, nimble, and highly-responsive type of philanthropy required to fund social justice initiatives.

Missed Opportunities: How Organized Philanthropy Can Help Meet the Needs of LGBTQ Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander Communities, explores the deep disparities in funding to LGBTQ AAPI communities. This report builds on and extends the findings of AAPIP's 2007 report, *Growing Opportunities: Will Funding Follow the Rise in Foundation Assets and Growth of AAPI Populations?*, which found that funding to AAPI communities for the period from 1990-2002 amounted to no more than 0.4% from national foundations. More recent analysis reveals that that figure has not significantly changed, and is even smaller in many regions where there are significant AAPI populations. *Missed Opportunities* builds on this data in even more granular detail, surfacing the challenges and opportunities to invest in LGBTQ AAPI communities.

AAPIP believes philanthropy can be a powerful vehicle to engage individuals, communities, and organizations in civic participation. QJF is a concerted effort to learn, research, and listen to LGBTQ AAPI groups and leaders, and to determine how to better partner and support a community that has significant assets, challenges, and needs.



I. Who are LGBTQ AAPIs?

According to the U.S. Census, AAPIs are the fastest growing racial group in the U.S. with an estimated 18.4 million AAPIs residing in the U.S. and representing 6.4 percent of the U.S. population.² At current growth rates, almost one in ten people in the United States will be Asian or Pacific Islander by the year 2050—about 40 million people in number. AAPIs represent over 30 countries and ethnic groups speak over 100 different languages.³

The White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders has identified poverty, health, education, labor and employment, immigration, and housing as priority issues that AAPIs face.⁴ For example, the poverty rate of Asians is 12.6% (U.S. average is 12.4%) but when looking at specific ethnic groups, the rate is higher for Hmong: 37.8%, Cambodian: 29.3%, Laotian: 18.5%, Vietnamese: 16.6%, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI): 15.1%.⁵ In terms of health, Asians have high rates of Limited English Proficiency, which results in difficulty with communicating with health care providers and accessing health care. On Education issues, the drop-out rate among Southeast Asian Americans is high: 40% of Hmong, 38% of Laotian, and 35% of Cambodian populations do not complete high school.⁶ In terms of higher educational attainment, 14% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders 25 years and older have a bachelor's degree in comparison to the 27% of the total U.S. population.⁷ Labor and employment issues are important for AAPIs. According to a Gallup Poll, 30–31% of AAPIs reported incidents of employment discrimination, the largest group of those surveyed. In the same survey, African

Americans were the second largest at 26%. Immigration concerns are of importance to AAPIs. Nearly two thirds of AAPIs are foreign-born and constitute about one third of the one million legal immigrants who enter the U.S. annually.⁸

There is a lack of published and accessible information and research on LGBTQ AAPI populations, partly because quantitative socioeconomic and demographic data on AAPI populations and LGBTQ populations are not widely available and because data is not disaggregated based on ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.⁹ Based on a brief review on current studies about LGBTQ people, the emphasis remains on LGBTQ as a generalized whole with some attention given to people of color, specifically African American and Latino/a populations and less so on AAPIs and Native Americans.¹⁰ Not only is there a lack of research focusing on LGBTQ AAPI populations, there is also a marginalization within research done on LGBTQ people of color. For example, in the *Momentum Report 2011 Edition: An Analysis of Key Indicators of LGBT Equality*, there is only one specific reference to LGBTQ AAPIs, “studies consistently find that LGBT people of color face economic challenges. For example, Census data show that Black African American and Latino same sex couples—male and female alike—have substantially lower income levels than either white or Asian/Pacific Islander same sex couples.”¹¹ With comparisons like the above example, one might mistakenly conclude that Asian American and Pacific Islander people are on par economically with white same sex couples. However, with disaggregated data for all the different Asian



ethnic and Pacific Islander groups, we might yield a vastly different picture, one where certain Asian ethnic and Pacific Islander groups are also in the same position as African American and Latino/a populations.

Typically, research surveys focused on AAPI populations do not ask about sexual orientation and those focused on LGBTQ populations do not ask for race identifications and if they do, the sample size for AAPIs is so negligible that the information is not usable.¹² Sel J. Hwahng and Alison J. Lin note, “studies have documented numerous health disparities that affect LGBTQ individuals, although the majority of this information is based on research within the white, Black, and Latino populations.”¹³ Additionally, the National Coalition for LGBT Health states, “Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people of color are left vulnerable to cumulative negative health outcomes by a combination of persistent racism and the stigma attached to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The available studies are unambiguous about the disparities affecting the health of LGBT people of color: research indicates that Black and Latino LGBT people are more likely to be in poor health than both their heterosexual and non-transgender counterparts within communities of color and their White counterparts within the LGBT community. Asian and Pacific Islander American LGBT and Native American LGBT/Two-Spirit communities undoubtedly bear similarly disproportionate burdens, though there is a serious lack of research in this area.”¹⁴

Because of the lack of demographic information and research documentation specifically focused on LGBTQ AAPI populations, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s (NGLTF) national survey in 2007 yields important information on this population. Responses were received from 860 individuals, making this the largest survey of LGBTQ AAPI individuals in the United States.¹⁵ The study found based on the 860 respondents that:

- The top five states with the largest concentration of LGBTQ AAPIs are California (37%), New York (18%), Illinois (5%), Massachusetts (5%), and District of Columbia (4%).
- More than a dozen ethnic identities are represented in LGBTQ AAPI communities including Chinese (40%), Filipino (19%), Japanese (11%), Asian Indian (10%), Vietnamese (8%), and Korean (7%).
- 55% were U.S. born citizens, 27% naturalized citizens, 19% non-citizens.
- 50% identified English as their native language. Other frequently cited native languages include: Mandarin (11%); Cantonese (8%); Tagalog (6%); and Vietnamese (5%).
- 53% identified as men, 41% as women, 10% transgender.¹⁶
- 47% identified as gay, 19% as lesbian, 9% as bisexual, 20% as queer.¹⁷

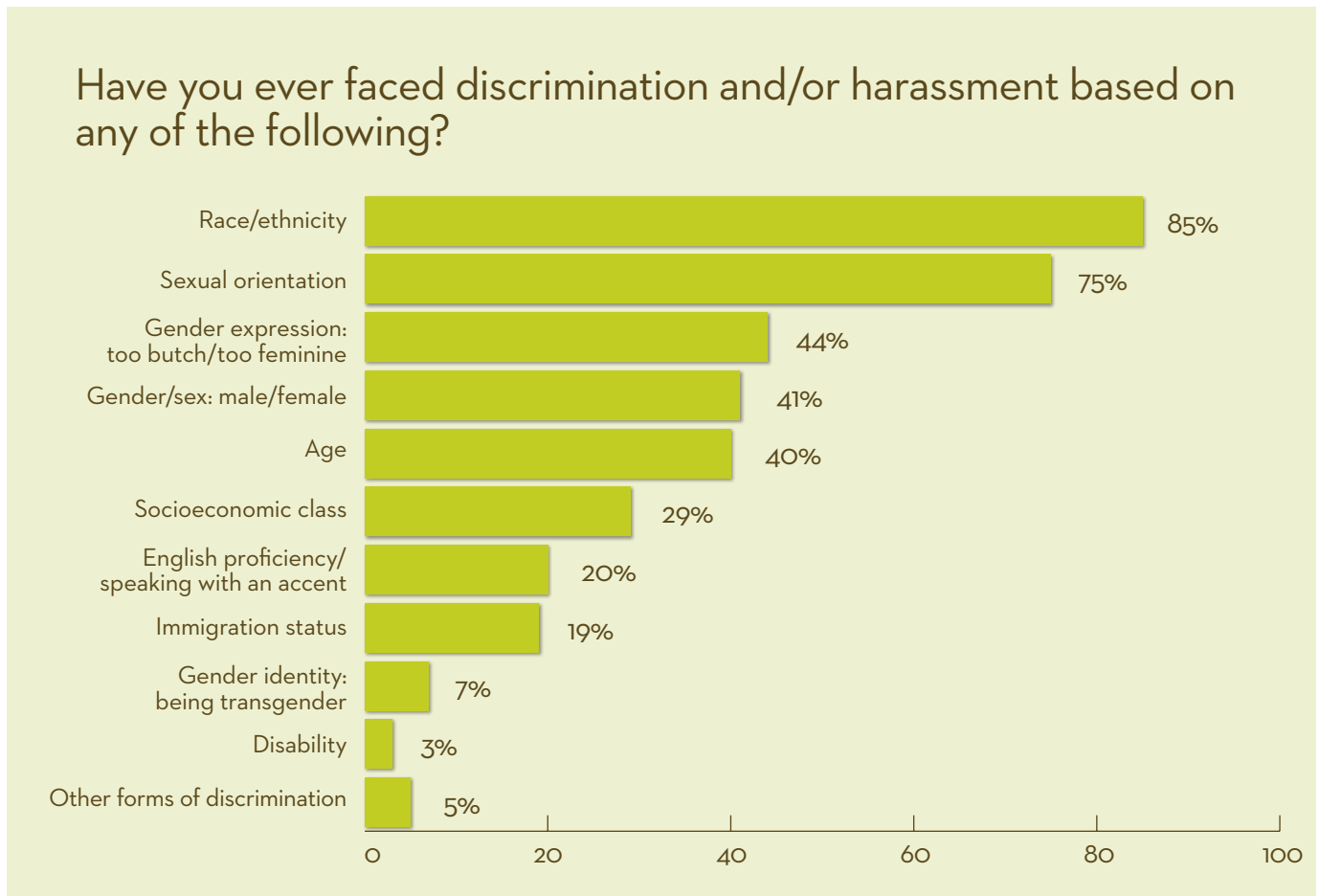
II. What are the Key Issues Facing LGBTQ AAPI Communities?

While LGBTQ AAPI people experience the same issues that AAPI communities and LGBTQ communities face, they also deal with some specific challenges that demonstrate the interconnectedness of race, gender, and sexual orientation in their lives. This section highlights a range of challenges specific to LGBTQ AAPIs identified from existing research.¹⁸

Discrimination and Harassment. Discrimination and harassment are common and daily occurrences for LGBTQ AAPI people. Nearly every respondent of the NGLTF survey (98 percent) reported experiencing at least one form of discrimination and/or harassment in their lives, ranging from acts of verbal and physical

violence by individuals to acts of oppression on an organizational or societal level. Examples of institutional level oppression includes when LGBTQ AAPI groups are prohibited from marching in ethnic pride parades and religious groups prevent LGBTQ people from holding leadership positions within their institutions.

The NGLTF survey found that LGBTQ AAPI individuals face discrimination on a number of different fronts. While the accompanying chart breaks out the discrimination based on individual identity characteristics, we are conscientious of the interconnectedness of these identities and that are not easily separated from one other.



(Chart is from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's 2007 report, *Living in the Margins: A National Survey of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Asian and Pacific Islander Americans.*)

Most of the issues of greatest concern¹⁹ cited by LGBTQ AAPIs who responded to the NGLTF survey were related to discriminatory treatment in society and in the media, including hate violence/harassment (39%), media representations (37%), marriage equality (35%) and job discrimination/harassment (29%). Other studies have shown that LGBTQ AAPI communities are affected by discrimination based on race and sexuality in the workplace and housing. LGBTQ people often encounter a heterosexist work culture and lack of employment protections based on sexual orientation.²⁰ The Movement Advancement Project cites a Williams Institute analysis of 15 studies that found between 15% and 43% of LGB people reported experiencing employment discrimination.²¹ According to a study undertaken by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, one in five AAPIs experience discrimination in the rental and home buying process.²² The discrimination in employment and housing that LGBTQ and AAPI people face may be compounded for those who are both LGBTQ and AAPI.

LGBTQ AAPI Youth at High Risk. LGBTQ youth face the constant threat of harassment and physical violence at school. A 2009 survey conducted by the Gay Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) found that 84.6% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 40.1% reported being physically harassed and 18.8% reported being physically assaulted at school because of their sexual orientation. 63.7% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 27.2% reported being physically harassed and 12.5% reported being physically assaulted at school because of their gender expression.²³ AAPI youth are also targeted due to their ethnic and religious backgrounds. A 2009 survey of 6,500 students funded by U.S. Departments of Justice and Education found that AAPI youth are 20% more likely than other racial groups to be bullied in the classroom, and three times as likely to be cyber-bullied once or twice a month.²⁴ Sikh and Muslim youth are frequent targets of bullying; for example, research by the Sikh Coalition has found that 65% of Sikh students in New York and 69% of Sikh students in the San Francisco Bay Area report being bullied at school, and the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding reports that bullying of Muslim students

is on the rise. Approximately 15% of Asian American high school students have seriously considered suicide, a rate higher than both African Americans and non-Hispanic whites.²⁵ A recent study of LGBTQ youth of color found that AAPIs were least likely to have told their parents they are LGBTQ compared to Latinos and African Americans. LGBTQ AAPI youth often feel ashamed that they have not followed cultural expectations and pressured to choose between their sexual identity and ethnic/racial identity.²⁶

Social and Cultural Stigma. LGBTQ AAPI people of all ages have difficulty sharing their sexual orientation with family or in community settings. There are strong cultural and religious barriers within AAPI communities to coming out that create feelings of shame and the belief that one's sexual orientation will reflect negatively on their family or ethnic community. Familial homophobia is one reason that prevents LGBTQ people from openly expressing their sexual identity. This fear is tied to the lack of positive and visible LGBTQ AAPI role models and the plethora of negative portrayals of LGBTQ people in the mainstream media.

Immigration Challenges. In the 2007 NGLTF survey, 32% of LGBTQ AAPIs identified immigration as an important issue. The publication *Queer Asian Compass: A Descriptive Directory of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Asian American, South Asian, and Pacific Islander Organizations* notes that two-thirds of all Asian Americans are foreign-born and 80% speak a language other than English in their homes. One third of Asians in the U.S. are not citizens and approximately one million are undocumented.²⁷ Undocumented LGBTQ AAPIs are affected by immigration policies and face another layer of invisibility because of their status. Immigrants, particularly South Asian immigrants and Southeast Asian refugees have been targets of racial profiling, detentions, and deportations—especially in the post 9/11 context.

Poverty and Economic Security. AAPI communities consist of various ethnic groups and some struggle with severe poverty while other groups enjoy relative economic security and success. Hmong, Bangladeshi, and Cambodian Americans have poverty rates similar to African Americans and Latinos, with Hmong Americans

having the lowest per capita income of any racial or ethnic group nationwide.²⁸ Unemployment has impacted Southeast Asian American communities with Hmong, Laotian, and Cambodian Americans having unemployment rates higher than the national average.

Health and Well-Being. In the demographic section of this report, we identified the difficulty of having a comprehensive picture of physical and mental health issues for LGBTQ AAPIs because of the lack of research. Generally, there are three main factors that contribute to the health disparities experienced by LGBTQ people: “reduced access to employer-provided health insurance, the social stigma that exists against LGBTQ people, and a lack of cultural competency in the health care system. For people of color, a lack of affordable health care and insurance and culturally competent service providers—along with persistent racism in society—are some of the largest causes of health disparities.”²⁹ One statistic shows that LGB AAPIs are most likely to experience psychological distress than any other racial group, 25 percent compared to the second highest group, African American LGB people at 23 percent.³⁰

Homophobia in Religious and Faith-Based Communities.

AAPI communities are comprised of diverse religious and faith-based traditions, some of which view homosexuality negatively and interpret religious teachings in ways that denigrate the moral integrity of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in order to justify denying them equal rights and acceptance. Christian evangelical and fundamentalist, Catholic, Mormon, Muslim and Islamic religious leaders and institutions have historical and strong ties to AAPI communities and have sometimes mobilized their constituencies against the rights for LGBTQ people. For instance, the Religious Right mobilized Chinese and Korean Christian Churches and Mormon-based Pacific Islander communities to support California’s Proposition 8, the anti same-sex marriage bill. In a more current example, Korean churches have been contacted to gather signatures to place a ballot measure to overturn California’s FAIR Education Act signed into law that ensures the history of people with disabilities and LGBT people are included in history and social studies texts.



III. How are LGBTQ AAPI communities organized?

Historical Background

Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people have always existed in AAPI communities in the United States and in their countries of origin throughout time. However, they may not have been able to live safely, openly, and visibly as people with a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a transgender identity. The first formal gay and lesbian AAPI groups were established in the late 1970s and 1980s in urban centers with large AAPI populations—Boston, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. Many began as co-gender, pan-Asian groups to involve the largest numbers of lesbians and gay men with the goals of ending racism within LGBTQ and heterosexism in racial/ethnic communities and to build political spaces for multi-issue, anti-oppression organizing while also creating cultural and social spaces for coming together for visibility and self-empowerment. Gay men and lesbians also formed their own separate groups to address their desires for community and spaces to address their specific needs and issues based on gender. In the late 1980s and 1990s, some groups formed based on ethnicity to meet specific language and cultural needs because of great diversity within the AAPI rubric and the pan-Asian groups were not able to meet all of the needs of their community members. LGBTQ single-gender and multi-gender groups formed around Chinese, Filipino/a, Japanese, Korean, South Asian, and Vietnamese ethnicities in cities across the country.

Community Infrastructure and Activities

Today, autonomous LGBTQ AAPI organizations continue to exist because individuals face racism and anti-immigrant bias in LGBTQ communities and homophobia in AAPI communities and these community groups provide cultural, social, political support and education. These organizations provide spaces for community, connection, political power, and coming out of isolation and fear where they can. They promote a stronger and positive sense of self based on multiple identities, increase the civic engagement of their members, and



educate the broader communities of which they are a part. In 2009, the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA) published a directory profiling 34³¹ groups serving LGBTQ AAPI communities across the U.S. They found:

- California had the highest concentration of groups, with 15 total. Two national groups were profiled.
- Most organizations are multi-gender, but some specifically serve only men, women, or transgender individuals.
- Some groups serve ethnic specific communities.
- Organizations serve both foreign-born and US-born members.

Infrastructure. LGBTQ AAPI groups vary greatly in terms of infrastructure, budget, and leadership structures. Similar to LGBTQ groups in other communities of color, the majority of LGBTQ AAPI groups are volunteer-led, with only five groups having paid staff. Groups with paid staff are actually part of larger AAPI organizations. Many groups are informal, existing primarily to facilitate social and cultural support, build community, share information, and network with others. Some groups serve as vehicles for grassroots organizing and political advocacy. Some groups are virtual communities, using social media to provide information and support.

Less than one quarter of the groups has 501c3 status and more than one third are fiscally sponsored. Half of the groups have annual budgets of \$1,000 to \$10,000; one quarter have budgets of less than \$1,000, and one quarter have budgets over \$10,000. The majority of groups do not receive foundation funding; their

funding comes from events, individual donations and membership dues.

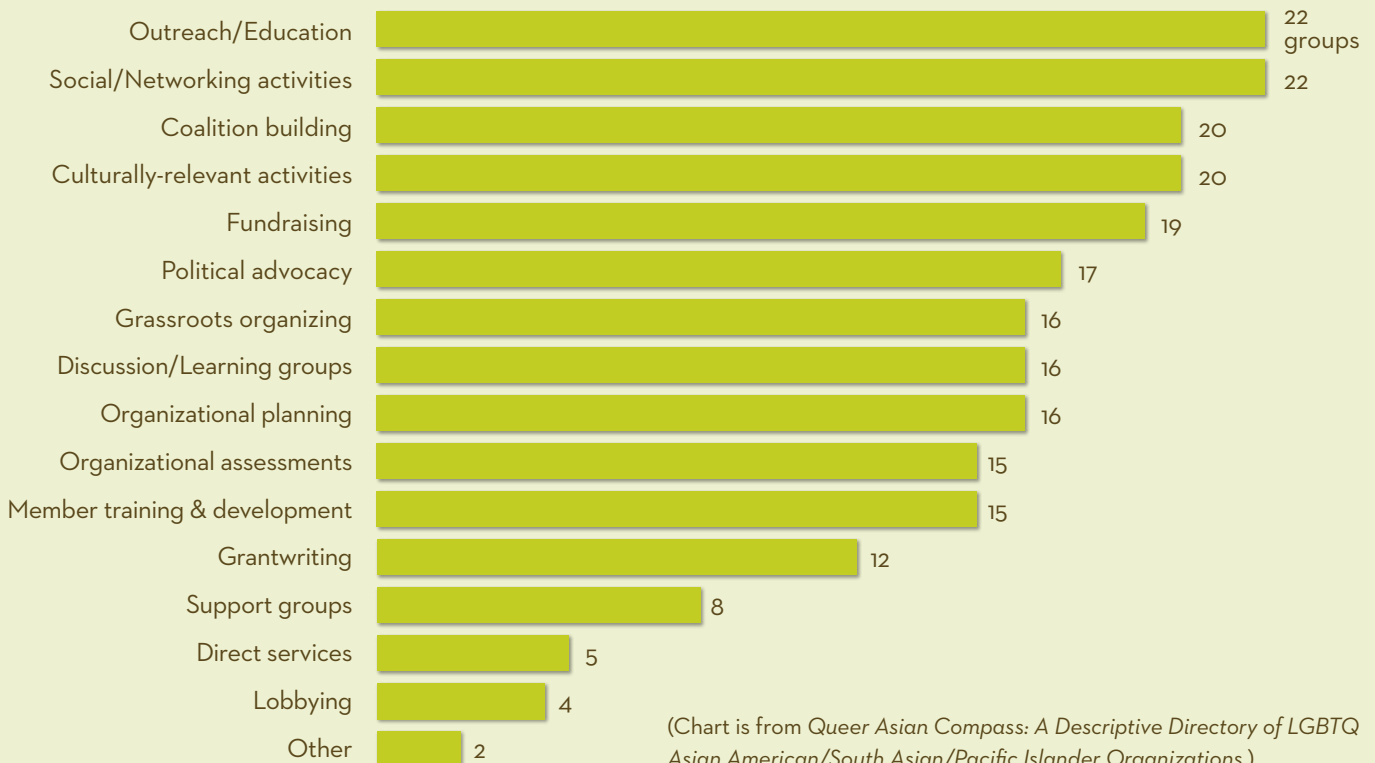
Activities. LGBTQ AAPI groups engage in a range of activities to meet the diverse needs of their constituents. Programs include support groups, educational activities (forums, film and video series, training and workshops), outreach and visibility activities (speakers' bureaus, pride parades), political activism and advocacy (political rallies, lobbying efforts) and coalition-building. NQAPIA found that groups are engaged in a variety of activities. See chart below.

Challenges. These groups face many challenges including:

- Balancing between political activities and social events, difficulty meeting the diverse needs of their constituents;
- Difficulty transitioning in new organizational leadership;

Social, Support, Educational, Outreach, Political

Groups have a number of activities planned for the upcoming year, including the following:



(Chart is from *Queer Asian Compass: A Descriptive Directory of LGBTQ Asian American/South Asian/Pacific Islander Organizations.*)

- Motivating members to attend events and participate in activities;
- Leadership burnout with few individuals taking on the most of the work;
- Limited ability for some to take on leadership roles because of immigration status or because they are not out publicly;
- Understanding community needs and the organization's role and capacity to address those needs;
- A lack of published reports and research describing LGBTQ AAPI communities. This lack of documentation helps keep these communities and the groups that serve them invisible and under-resourced.

LGBTQ AAPI groups expressed a need for technical support, financial support, and human resources to help their groups grow stronger and be more effective. Groups participating in the NQAPIA directory project highlighted leadership development and recruitment of new leaders as priorities.

To help paint a picture of the ways groups are organizing their communities, brief profiles of autonomous LGBTQ and Ally AAPI organizations are provided in the Appendix to this briefing report. These organizations are community partners in AAPIP's incubation programs—the National Gender & Equity Campaign and Queer Justice Fund. They are highlighted to provide examples of the kind of community building and organizing work that is happening on the ground in LGBTQ AAPI communities.

IV. Current Level of Philanthropic Investment in LGBTQ AAPI Communities

LGBTQ Philanthropy

In 2009, grants to all LGBTQ organizations and projects represented slightly more than 0.2 percent of all foundation giving in the U.S. For the most part, foundation support for LGBTQ communities tends to come from a small group of foundations. Children and youth, advocacy and civil rights continue to rank as the LGBTQ populations, strategies and issues most frequently supported by U.S. grantmakers. In 2009, 304 U.S.-based grantmakers awarded 3,401 grants supporting LGBTQ communities and issues totaling \$93.5 million dollars. LGBTQ communities of color received almost 10 percent of these dollars, representing 9.7 million dollars of the total giving to LGBTQ communities.³² The following chart provides a breakdown of philanthropic resources directed towards LGBTQ people of color communities color and issues in 2009.

LGBTQ People of Color (POC) Funding 2009³³

Groupings	Amount Granted	% of Total LGBTQ Dollars	Number of Grants
All POC	9,692,398	9.9	318
POC, general	5,407,485	5.8	161
People of African Descent	2,591,645	2.7	76
AAPI	648,939	0.7	38
Latino/a	684,432	0.7	33
Native American/Two-Spirit	149,897	0.1	10

Recognizing the low level of funding directed to LGBTQ people of color organizations and programs, in 2008 Funders for LGBTQ Issues launched a Racial Equity Initiative, “a national, multi-year effort to support the leadership of LGBTQ people of color and their organizations by generating support from the broader philanthropic sector.”

Snapshot of Funding to LGBTQ AAPI Communities³⁴

To provide some context for the level of funding to LGBTQ AAPI organizations and projects, the following chart lists the amount of funding since 2002 when Funders for LGBTQ Issues began tracking this information.³⁵

Calendar Year	Amount Granted to LGBTQ AAPI Orgs	% of Total	Total LGBTQ Amount	Number of Grants
2009	\$648,939	0.7	93.5 Million	38
2008	\$980,050	0.9	107.2 Million	40
2007	\$864,750	1.0	77.2 Million	24
2006	\$398,700	1.0	65.5 Million	27
2005	\$466,026	1.0	52.8 Million	16
2004	\$418,490	0.8	50.1 Million	21
2003	\$91,750	0.3	28.7 Million	8
2002	\$81,950	0.3	30 Million	9

As the chart shows, grantmaking dollars to LGBTQ AAPI communities and projects remain miniscule compared to the total amount of LGBTQ dollars. Funding for LGBTQ organizations in general doubled during this period, from \$50 million in 2002 to a high of \$107 million in 2008. Investment in LGBTQ AAPI organizations was \$81,950 in 2002, representing 0.3% of the funding to LGBTQ organizations. For a number of years after 2003, LGBTQ AAPI funding increased to at or near 1% of total funding to LGBTQ organizations, and reached a high of \$980,050 in 2008. In 2009, possibly reflecting the impact of the economic crisis that began in late 2008,³⁶ the amount of funding granted to LGBTQ organizations in

general fell by \$13.7 million to \$93.5 million, and funding for LGBTQ AAPI organizations fell to \$648,939 or 0.7% of the total granted to LGBTQ organizations.

In 2007, sixteen funders³⁷ provided \$864,750 to fifteen LGBTQ AAPI groups, including AIDS/HIV organizations.³⁸ If we subtract the funding targeted towards AIDS/HIV issues, the financial figure drops to \$149,250 that went to other issues addressing civil rights, community building, education, gender identity, health, homophobia, and visibility.

In 2008, fifteen funders³⁹ provided forty grants to twenty-three LGBTQ AAPI organizations or projects for a total amount of \$980,050 with \$100,000 directed towards an international conference. The foundations supported LGBTQ AAPI groups in the following issue areas: Civil Rights (\$342,500); Community building (\$217,000); HIV/AIDS (\$120,050); Human Rights (\$100,000); Marriage (\$79,000); Health (\$51,000); Education (\$50,000); Visibility (\$20,000); and Gender Identity (\$500). The following strategies supported by the foundations in the order of most support were: community organizing, advocacy, conferences, direct services, capacity building, leadership development, and training/technical assistance. The type of support that received the most number of grants was project/program related and the rest was general operating support.

This funding analysis supports NQAPIA's findings that many LGBTQ AAPI groups survive financially on individual donations, in-kind support and fundraising events. Groups wishing to launch large-scale campaigns or programs may be hampered by the lack of support from organized philanthropy.



V. Recommendations for Philanthropic Investment

Why support LGBTQ AAPI Organizations?

Organizing for racial justice and equity is a necessary component of building effective progressive movements for social change—including an effective LGBTQ movement. In a time of rapid demographic change, the LGBTQ population is becoming more and more diverse, and that means that the issues of people of color are also the issues of the LGBTQ movement. It is critical to support the leadership and infrastructure of diverse LGBTQ organizations, including those in the AAPI community, to ensure that the issues of queer people of color have a place at the table in the broader LGBTQ movement.

Moreover, supporting LGBTQ leaders and organizations of color is an effective strategy to help both LGBTQ movement and communities of color go beyond their issue silos and broaden and diversify the constituency supporting progressive social change. LGBTQ organizations in communities of color not only provide safe spaces for people of color to come out and get engaged in the fight for LGBTQ rights, they are also positioned to build the kinds of alliances with straight allies that are necessary to grow the constituency supporting LGBTQ rights. At this political moment in the struggle for LGBTQ rights, social justice funders should recognize the strategic role that race-based LGBTQ organizing play by engaging with communities of color to address homophobia from within and counteract the forces of political opportunism. For example, the religious right has targeted AAPI communities, particularly the Korean American community, to support homophobic policies such as California's ban on same-sex marriage (Proposition 8), and to oppose pro-LGBTQ policies like the FAIR Education Act (SB48 in CA). Prop 8 exit polls showed that young, educated, U.S.-born Asian Americans voted against Prop. 8, but older, foreign-born, and voters with limited English proficiency supported Prop. 8. LGBTQ AAPI organizations and AAPI ally organizations are in a position to do the

deeper work of shifting homophobic attitudes at the community level, but need funding in order to expand their operations and make a greater impact.

Recommendations for funding

LGBTQ AAPI groups have identified a pressing need to share best practices among groups and connect organizations working in diverse communities across the country. Grantmakers can help create these spaces for strategic discussions to create solutions to the needs and challenges of LGBTQ AAPI communities. AAPIP offers the following funding strategies to address this need for connection and to help build a stronger network of organizations.

Strengthening LGBTQ AAPI organizations' capacity and civic engagement. Capacity building and core operating support are needed to build the infrastructure and leadership of autonomous LGBTQ AAPI organizations. This strategy seeks to strengthen existing groups to develop their leadership, increase the civic engagement of their memberships, and become more sustainable and effective. Capacity building investments should be geared not only to organizational development but also to building skill sets related to community organizing and policy advocacy.



Building links to allies. This grantmaking strategy supports alliance-building work between heterosexual AAPI organizations and LGBTQ AAPI groups, as well as alliance building between LGBTQ AAPI organizations and other queer communities of color. Alliance-building at all these levels will strengthen the work of LGBTQ AAPI and AAPI ally organizations. Examples of alliance-building funding strategies include bringing together ally organizations to share best practices on successfully integrating LGBTQ AAPI issues and populations into organizations' missions, priorities, and programs; and supporting more convenings that bring together LGBTQ People of Color organizations for peer learning and strategy discussions.

Building links to mainstream LGBTQ organizations. Funders can help strengthen and diversify the LGBTQ movement by creating opportunities for queer people of color organizations to be “at the table” with mainstream LGBTQ organizations. Through convenings and grants to organizations, leaders from LGBTQ AAPI and other communities of color can engage more frequently in sharing information about the issues and perspectives of queer people of color and strategizing with mainstream LGBTQ organizations.

Strengthening ties to faith-based communities. Support is needed to build strong relationships between secular organizations and interfaith groups to develop strategies to welcome LGBTQ people and issues into religious and faith-based AAPI communities. This funding strategy seeks to integrate LGBTQ AAPI issues and populations into faith-based communities as reflected in their leadership, membership, outreach activities, ministries, and programs.

More community-based and quantitative research. There are major gaps in documentation and research on LGBTQ AAPI communities, as reflected in this briefing paper. In order to better understand groups for which we currently do not have much information, funders can support more community-based and quantitative research needs. For example, there exists very little documentation about Muslim, Pacific Islander, South Asian, and Southeast Asian LGBTQ groups and issues, as well as about groups working on LGBTQ



AAPI issues and communities in different geographic areas, specifically the Midwest, New England states, Pacific Northwest, and the South. Language issues pose a barrier because most materials are in English and are not accessible to those who speak and read other languages. Translation and materials in different languages are needed for AAPI communities.

Other steps that funders new to LGBTQ AAPI communities can take:

- Conducting an audit of your foundation's grantmaking related to LGBTQ issues and racial justice and equity
- Providing matching funds to support the development of LGBTQ AAPI giving circles⁴⁰ that focus on serving local groups that don't meet foundations' criteria
- Engaging in strategic conversations that support LGBTQ people of color communities and issues while also understanding the specific racial/ethnic differences
- Joining a learning group of funders to further push the needle on racial justice and equity
- Exploring collaborative funding partnerships in your region

Conclusion

While we are reminded every day of the enduring challenges that LGBTQ AAPI communities face, there are hopeful signs that increased support and visibility for LGBTQ organizations in communities of color can be realized. Funders for LGBTQ Issues' Racial Equity Initiative is a pioneer in the field, and has done much to raise more philanthropic resources for autonomous LGBTQ people of color organizations and increase awareness of their work among funders. Other foundations that have a history of supporting LGBTQ AAPI communities include: Arcus Foundation, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, Horizons Foundation, Liberty Hill Foundation, and the Pride Foundation. In 2010, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and the Office of Public Engagement co-hosted the first-ever AAPI LGBT Pride and Heritage event at the White House. AAPIP's Queer Justice Fund, NQAPIA, and the API Wellness Center organized this event, where our youth provided testimonies about their experiences of homophobia and racism and advocates made policy recommendations to federal agencies. Also in 2010, in an effort to develop a deeper understanding of the organizing and community building efforts in LGBTQ AAPI communities, and in response to the lack of financial support to this community, AAPIP regranted \$195,000 to six

organizations and projects (please see the Appendix for more information on these organizations). Since 2005, AAPIP has supported LGBTQ AAPI organizations with grants totaling \$415,000.

But much more support is needed to expand progressive movements at this critical moment to effectively take on timely issues such as health care reform, immigration, marriage equality, the safety of our youth, and unemployment/economic security. Stronger constituencies need to be built on the ground in diverse communities to achieve critical mass and effect social change over the long term. Organizations in LGBTQ communities of color, including AAPI groups, are well positioned to engage communities and allies that have not historically been part of the LGBTQ movement. Funders can contribute to building stronger constituencies for LGBTQ rights and other social justice issues by directing more philanthropic resources to LGBTQ AAPI groups and AAPI ally organizations that are taking up LGBTQ issues as a part of their community building, organizing, and advocacy work. AAPIP joins funders already involved in racial equity and justice work in LGBTQ communities and invites others to join us in this critical opportunity to engage, to push for, and to share our commitments to our values of democracy, equity, and justice for all.

Appendix

Profiles of LGBTQ and Ally AAPI Organizations Supported by AAPIP

API Equality-Los Angeles (APIELA). Founded in 2005, API Equality-LA has been a tireless advocate in the Greater Los Angeles Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities for fair treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people and marriage equality for same-sex couples. APIELA's coalition has brought together veteran and newer activists who represent the ethnic, linguistic, age, professional, and gender diversity in the Asian American community. API Equality-LA has garnered tremendous broad-based support, including the endorsements of more than 50 organizations and numerous community leaders. Every year, their dedicated volunteers have one-on-one conversations with thousands of Asian voters about marriage equality, participate in parades and protests, reach out to ethnic media, build bridges to faith communities, and organize educational events on a broad array of social justice issues of importance to API

LGBT people. API Equality-LA advocates in the Greater Los Angeles API Community for the fair treatment of LGBT people and marriage equality. Their vision statement is to create a society that celebrates the loves and lives of all people—free from discrimination and injustice.

<http://www.apiequalityla.org/>

API Equality-Northern California (APIENC). API Equality-Northern California was founded in 2004 in response to a 6,000-person rally against marriage equality organized by Chinese Christian leaders in the San Francisco Bay Area. Formerly a national ad hoc coalition of Asian & Pacific Islander (API) individuals and organizations committed to marriage equality, API Equality-Northern California is now full-fledged organization working to actively promote equality and justice in Northern California and, in partnership with our sister coalition API Equality-LA, the state's API and LGBTQI communities. In January 2007, API Equality-Northern California merged and became a project of Chinese for Affirmative Action a prominent API civil rights organization with nearly 40 years of history in advancing social justice for the Chinese and API communities.

Working from the intersection of the Asian & Pacific Islander (API) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender,



Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) communities, API Equality-Northern California employs diverse strategies, including public education, organizing, research, and advocacy, to achieve the following objectives:

- Reduce and eliminate prejudice and discrimination based on gender, gender identity, and/or sexual orientation in Asian and Pacific Islander American Communities
- Reduce and eliminate racism, xenophobia, and other race or ethnic-based discrimination, behavior, and/or attitudes in LGBTQ Communities

As a grassroots and movement-building organization, API Equality-Northern California is committed to empowering community members, advancing civil rights protections, and promoting respect and understanding for cultural and community diversity.

www.apiequality.org, www.caasf.org



National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA).

NQAPIA's formation stems from several previous attempts at creating a national LGBTQ AAPI organization and a series of national convenings in 2002, 2004, and 2005. The roundtable meeting in 2005—when leadership from each of the established LGBTQ Asian American groups from across the nation gathered to share, discuss and strategize about their organizations, issues, and challenges—provided the momentum to create a national organization. This group evolved and NQAPIA was founded as a federation of LGBTQ Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander organizations to build organizational capacity of local LGBTQ AAPI groups, promote visibility, educate our community, enhance grassroots organizing, expand collaborations and challenge homophobia and racism. NQAPIA's programs include: an annual training and issue briefing for leaders of LGBTQ AAPI organizations, a national conference, an educational and advocacy campaign on immigrant rights and immigration reform, a multilingual visibility campaign of LGBTQ AAPIs, and capacity building and training for local organizations.

<http://www.nqapia.org/>

Network on Religion and Justice for API LGBTs (NRJ),

based in the Bay Area, formed in 2005 as a network of API-LGBT organizations, individuals and their faith community, family, and friends working to nurture and support efforts toward a fully LGBT-inclusive Asian and Pacific Islander faith community. NRJ has partnered with API reconciling churches and have held two annual training retreats to support and educate LGBTQ AAPI people of faith and allies who work together to create LGBT-affirming API ministries. They also have created curriculum, workshops, and a video to highlight the experiences of LGBTQ AAPI people of faith and to combat homophobia in churches.



<http://www.netrj.org/>

Before NRJ there was no space, no voice, no visibility of AAPI LGBTQ folks in religious spheres...there was no space for their experience to be...seen—as AAPI, as LGBTQ, as people for whom religion and spirituality was an important part of their lives. In AAPI communities, it felt impossible to be LGBTQ because they...asserted that AAPI LGBTQ people did not exist. In LGBTQ spaces, it was hard to be recognized and affirmed for one's AAPI culture. LGBTQ spaces...were hostile to religion and people couldn't "come out" as religious people. It was incredibly isolating, terrifying, and painful to have no place to be home. Through the work of NRJ, we...created visibility and spaces, so people can see...that they're not alone.... We've done the work on a shoestring budget, out of people's personal convictions that this is life-saving and transformative work. Funders often think that the AAPI population is not big enough to warrant investment. When we do this work it's not just for the AAPI LGBTQ community, it is for the liberation of everyone.

— Rev. Deborah Lee, Network on Religion & Justice for AAPI LGBTs (NRJ)

Providence Youth Student Movement (PrYSM), based in Providence, Rhode Island, is a Southeast Asian youth leadership and community organizing organization that is 10 years old. Their mission is to confront and end state, street and interpersonal violence affecting the Southeast Asian community in Rhode Island. Their purpose is to mobilize Southeast Asian youth into community organizing campaigns that foster the process of healing, dialogue, building support, love and power for those who are isolated and marginalized in the Southeast Asian community. PrYSM has two programs, Students Organizing for Unity and Liberation (SOUL), and seaQuel (Southeast Asian Queers United for Empowerment and Leadership) and both programs



target youth between the ages of 13-19 years old from not only Southeast Asian communities, but communities who are socioeconomically disadvantaged within the Providence, Rhode Island area.

seaQuel (Southeast Asian Queers United for Empowerment and Leadership) youth address LGBTQ topics within the Southeast Asian community. seaQuel is known for their crafty event planning and artistic display around queer topics such as homophobia and gender identities. seaQuel's work focuses on creating consciousness, visibility, and education about queer Southeast Asians that are largely underrepresented nationally and locally. Youth who are active in both programs are given responsibilities as youth leaders, youth organizers, and youth coordinators take the lead roles in establishing consensus for activities with the

support of staff. PrYSM's membership base is deeply involved and they contribute their free time to organizing activities and outreaching to the community. It is through collaborative efforts from SOUL, seaQuel, and volunteers that decisions are made. Youth from both programs and volunteers have meetings once a week called "The Organizing Circle" to talk about important issues within PrYSM. As a whole, we organize around topics affecting the Southeast Asian community in RI and people of color at large.

<http://www.prysm.us/>

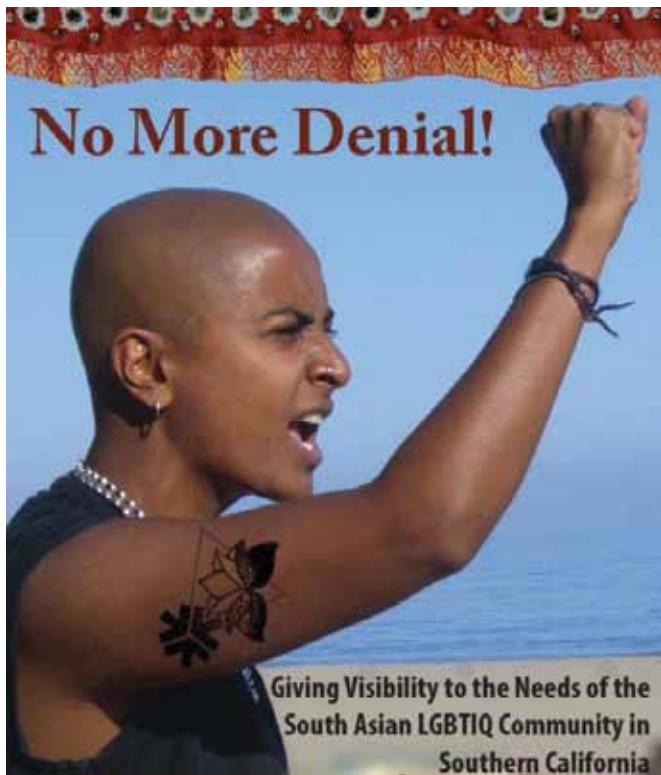
I am a Khmer refugee, male, low-income, and queer. My experiences are often fragmented and my identities are often split across different groups, organizations, crowds, and spaces. This past July, my dream came true. PrYSM...made history...we organized the nation's first LGBTQ Southeast Asian conference! What I walked away with, what I carry with me to this day, is that there was this phenomenal glow and energy carried on each conference attendee.

– Sarath Suong, Co-Founder & Board Chair, PrYSM

Shade of Yellow (SOY), based in St. Paul, Minnesota, is the first LGBTQ organization for the Hmong community. The group's two founders started the organization not only out of their own personal experience as gay Hmong men, but out of a recognition that many LGBTQ members of their community were feeling invisible, marginalized and in desperate need of support. SOY has taken on the role of confronting this isolation through services in education, cultural awareness, social gatherings and advocacy. There is a range of acceptance levels and understanding amongst the Hmong community regarding accepting LGBTQ people and issues. SOY has developed and strengthened their relationships with Hmong and other Southeast Asian community organizations. SOY along with other organizations including PrYSM in Providence, RI, Khmers in Action in Seattle, WA, and Freedom, Inc. in Madison, WI organized the first National Queer Southeast Asian conference held in July 2010.

<http://www.shadesofyellow.org/>





South Asian Network and Satrang. South Asian Network (SAN) is a community based organization founded in 1990 whose mission is dedicated to advancing the health, empowerment and solidarity of persons of South Asian origin in Southern California. Satrang, formed in 1997, is a social, cultural and support organization providing a safe space to empower and advocate for the rights of the South Asian LGBTIQQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer and Questioning) community in Southern California through education, networking and outreach.

SAN and Satrang worked together on *No More Denial: Giving Visibility to the Needs of the South Asian LGBTIQ in Southern California*, a needs assessment report that provides important information about this community that is under-researched and brings to light the difficulty for South Asian LGBTQ people to feel safe, healthy and whole when they have to fight homophobia within the South Asian communities and racism within the LGBTQ community. Collaborative projects like this are crucial to democratize our social justice movements and are examples of how AAPI organizations have engaged LGTBQ groups as allies in building a stronger social justice movement together.

<http://southasiannetwork.org/>

<http://www.satrang.org/>

Endnotes

- 1 Terminology: The term “Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders” (AAPI) is used with the recognition that this categorization represents a very diverse group of ethnic sub-groups including South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islanders. “Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders” is also a term used in this report and will be identified as “NHPI.” “LGBTQ” is used to denote, lesbians, gay men, bisexual, transgender, and queer people also recognizing the diversity of this umbrella term of sexual and gender identities.
- 2 Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans in the United States: 2011*, p. 6.
- 3 The UN recognizes over 30 Asian countries. <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>. Official spoken languages of Asian countries. http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/asian_languages.htm.
- 4 In 2009, President Obama re-established the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, an initiative to work towards improving the quality of life for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by increasing access and participation in federal programs where they remain underserved.
- 5 2008 Report by the National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education, Steinhardt Institute for Higher Education Policy, Asian/Pacific/American Institute at NYU, and College Board. The statistic for the NHPI is from: <http://www.aasc.ucla.edu/archives/stats2011.asp>.
- 6 2006 American Community Survey.
- 7 UCLA Asian American Studies Center, Census Information Center, Pacific Islanders Lagging Behind in Higher Educational Attainment (2006).
- 8 U.S. Census Bureau News, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/22/us/22census.html> and <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=414>.
- 9 There is a growing body of scholarly work on LGBTQ AAPI communities and issues that has focused in the fields of Anthropology, Cultural Studies, History, Literature, and Sociology.
- 10 We also note that there continues to be a dearth of studies and research on LGBTQ people of color, in general.
- 11 *The Momentum Report 2011 Edition: An Analysis of Key Indicators of Equality in the U.S.* (August 2011) Movement Advancement Project, p. 22.
- 12 Jeff Krehely, “How to Close the LGBT Health Disparities Gap: Disparities by Race and Ethnicity.” Center for American Progress (December 21, 2009). This article notes that few representative health studies ask questions about sexual orientation or race and ethnicity and never ask about gender identity.
- 13 Sel J. Hwahng and Alison J. Lin, “The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning People,” in *Asian American Communities and Health: Context, Research, Policy, and Action*, eds. C. Trinh-Shevrin and N.S. Islam, and M.J. Rey. San Francisco: Jossey Bass 2009, p. 226–82.
- 14 National Coalition for LGBT Health, “All of the Above: LGBT People of Color.” <http://lgbthealth.webrevolutionary.com/sites/default/files/LGBT%20POC.pdf>.
- 15 Dang, A and Vianney, C (2007). *Living in the Margins: A National Survey of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Asian and Pacific Islander Americans*. New York: National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute. Another survey that is important to note is the Social Justice Sexuality Project which is one of the largest national surveys of Black, Latina/o, and Asian and Pacific Islander, and multiracial lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. This is a more current project led by New York University Professor Juan Battle that focuses on African American, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latino/a LGBTQ populations. The data collection ended in 2010 with reports on the African American and Latino/a data being analyzed and written up. A conversation with Professor Battle indicated that initial funding for this project focused on the African American and Latino/a respondents and that additional funding was needed to create a report on the Asian and Pacific Islander data.
- 16 The survey allowed people to mark off all boxes that applied. Respondents were counted in both categories if they marked off “man,” “woman” and “transgender.”
- 17 Women were more than twice as likely as men to identify as “queer.”
- 18 Information derived from *Living in the Margins; The Impact of Racism and Homophobia on GLBTQ Youth of Color*; Fact Sheets on AAPI LGB population by the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce; Queer Asian Compass: A Descriptive Directory of LGBTQ Asian American/South Asian/Pacific Islander Organizations. It should be noted that in addition to the issues identified in these sources, there are other concerns for LGBTQ AAPIs that have not been identified because full-scale studies have not been taken with this population in mind.
- 19 This study conducted in 2007 may not reflect the current realities of the serious and ongoing economic downturn of the past three years. It is also likely that there are other issues of concern for LGBTQ AAPIs that have not been identified because full-scale studies have not been taken with this population in mind.

- 20 There are 15 states including DC with non-discrimination laws covering sexual orientation and gender identity. There are 6 states with non-discrimination laws covering sexual orientation.
- 21 *The Momentum Report 2011 Edition: An Analysis of Key Indicators of Equality in the U.S.* (August 2011) Movement Advancement Project, p. 23.
- 22 <http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/hsgfin/hds.html>.
- 23 *The 2009 School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools.* Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, 2009.
- 24 Jill DeVoe and Christina Murphy, *Student Reports of Bullying and Cyber-Bullying: Results From the 2009 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey.* U.S. Department of Education, August 2011.
- 25 Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans in the United States: 2011*, p. 48.
- 26 Elizabeth M. Diaz and Joseph G. Kosciw. *Shared Difference: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students of Color in Our Nation's Schools.* New York: GLSEN, 2009.
- 27 *Queer Asian Compass: A Descriptive Directory of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBTQ) Asian American, South Asian, and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Organizations.* National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (2009), p. 2.
- 28 Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, *A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans in the United States: 2011*, p. 4.
- 29 Jeff Krehely, "How to Close the LGBT Health Disparities Gap: Disparities by Race and Ethnicity." Center for American Progress (December 21, 2009) p.2.
- 30 Jeff Krehely, "How to Close the LGBT Health Disparities Gap: Disparities by Race and Ethnicity." Center for American Progress (December 21, 2009) p.3.
- 31 This number is subject to change as it reflects the number of groups that turned in profiles in time for publication of the directory. Other groups exist, and some groups profiled might no longer be in existence. This list of groups does not include the AAPI AIDS/HIV organizations.
- 32 *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations (Calendar Year 2009)*, Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2010.
- 33 *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations (Calendar Year 2009)*, Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2010.
- 34 Research Snapshot: Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations to LGBTQ API Organizations & Projects (2008), Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2010. Robert Espinoza, formerly of Funders for LGBTQ Issues, created this research snapshot for AAPIP. The 2007 information was from raw data files generously supplied by Funders for LGBTQ Issues.
- 35 Reports are from each calendar year. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations (Calendar Years 2002-2009)*, Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2003-2010.
- 36 For additional context see the Foundation Center's report *Diminishing Dollars: The Impact of the 2008 Financial Crisis on the Field of Social Justice Philanthropy*, November 2011.
- 37 Funding Exchange, Delaware Valley Legacy Fund, H. van Ameringen Foundation, Horizons Foundation, The Paul Rapoport Foundation, Haas Jr. Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, Liberty Hill Foundation, Babson Charitable Foundation, Philanthrofund Foundation, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, Resist, Rhode Island Foundation, The California Endowment, Open Meadows Foundation, Pride Foundation.
- 38 *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations (Calendar Year 2007)*, Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2008.
- 39 Currents of Change, Funding Exchange, Delaware Valley Legacy Fund, H. van Ameringen Foundation, Horizons Foundation, The Paul Rapoport Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, Liberty Hill Foundation, Babson Charitable Foundation, Philanthrofund Foundation, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, Rhode Island Foundation, The California Endowment, Open Meadows Foundation, Pride Foundation.
- 40 Giving circles are grassroots vehicles for community members from a variety of economic backgrounds to be involved in philanthropy, rather than just an elite few. Giving circle grants, though small, are a significant source of funding and capacity building for smaller organizations that are typically not on the radar of mainstream philanthropy. AAPIP is developing LGBTQ AAPI giving circles as part of our five year Giving Circle Campaign, which aims to grow the number of AAPI giving circles across the country from 14 to 50. AAPIP is currently providing a match to all its giving circles. In 2011, two new queer AAPI giving circles were established—a Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender giving circle in San Francisco and a LGBTQ giving circle in Washington, DC. QJF plans to establish two additional giving circles in 2012. Please contact Alice Y. Hom at AAPIP for more information about our giving circles and matching funds.





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