



Dear Members, Colleagues, and Esteemed Community Leaders,

When Asian Health and Social Service Council, Inc. (AHSSC) evolved in 2009 from the former Chinese Community Social Service and Health Council (CCSSHC) originally established in 1979, AHSSC has seen amazing growth and commitment. With monthly meetings drawing an average of 40 participants, a roster of over 24 agency and 13 individual members, AHSSC is propelling forward in our mission to better serve, connect, advocate, and address the health, social service and behavioral health needs of all Asians in New York City. With generous individual donations and in-kind support to our North Star Project-Scholarship, we welcome you to view recent activities and upcoming meetings as well as community events in our website: www.ahssc.org. With your continued support, AHSSC is sure to continue to succeed.

As community leaders and service providers in the field know, AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islanders) in New York City continue to suffer significant service disparities affecting all aspects of life; from, socio-economic impacts, to access to care and culturally congruent, effective treatment. Following are just some of the statistics that AAPI in NYC struggle with; sometimes in silence, sometimes alone, but definitely always underserved. Please take a look at the statistics and we hope you feel what we feel, which is an urgency to push forward and change the statistics. Take the next step with us and join the North Star Project. Let's change the numbers together.

Sincerely,

John Tsoi

John Tsoi, LMSW
President
Asian Health and Social Service Council

May Lai

May Lai, LCSW
Chair, North Star Project
Asian Health and Social Service Council

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North Star

The Asian Health and Social Service Council, Inc. (AHSSC) identified the lack of adequate culturally appropriate and diverse bilingual, bicultural social service providers serving the growing Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in New York City (NYC). AHSSC will actively address recruitment, development and retention needs of AAPI in the social service and advocacy communities in NYC.

For the 13.9% of New Yorkers who live in the city and are of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent, current statistics continue to point to an overwhelming need for services, intervention and advocacy to address needs of medical, and mental health disparities. As noted by the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), health disparities are highest among those living in poverty and with the least education; and, are associated with differences in the occurrence of death and illness.

Accordingly, in the area of poverty and health:

- in NYC, 51% of AAPI working adults and 73% of AAPI elderly self rate as limited in English fluency as compared to 25% and 27% of all NYC working adults and elderly respectively;
- 18.5% of AAPI in NYC live at the poverty level as compared to 11.6% of Non-Hispanic Whites;
- 21.9% of AAPI children in NYC live in poverty as compared to 16.3% of Non-Hispanic White children;
- 25.3% of AAPI elders live in poverty in NYC as compared to 18.3% of all NYC elders; and,
- nationally, 19%-27% of AAPIs are uninsured as compared to 12% of whites, 19% of blacks and 27% of Hispanics;

In the area of mental health:

- Chinese elderly women ages 65+ have the highest rate of suicide for their age group;
- nationally, AAPI girls have the highest rate of suicide for females between ages 15 and 24 with 30% of Asian American girls in grades 5 to 12 reporting symptoms of depression; and,
- in NYC, AAPI have the second highest suicide mortality rate at 4.6 per 100,000 as compared to 5.2 per 100,000 of the general NYC population.

It is because of these and other significant continued struggles and disparities in the AAPI communities in New York City that AHSSC, the Asian Health and Social Services Council, is turning to you, a community leader, advocate and care provider.

Join us in building a workforce that answers to the need to increase culturally competent, culturally congruent, culturally accessible care for the AAPI communities that will leverage change and service for treatment access and care. A commitment to action is needed. While workforce development to match the needs of the AAPI community is recognized from agencies such as the DHHS Office of

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Minority Health, to the NY State Medicaid Redesign Team Health Disparities Work Group, it will also take those currently impacting and serving the community to speak to the expertise and specialized care needed. This is where you can be part of the leverage and add your support and voice.

AHSSC is sponsoring three key events in the next several months to build social action research projects, community action plans, and career building support systems to address engagement and retention of potential and new AAPIs into the social service, behavioral health and medical care fields. The first two phases were: recruitment of current and recent AAPI graduate students in the service sectors to take part in a needs assessment survey; and, the completion of a discussion and action plan meeting regarding recruitment and retention of AAPIs into the service sectors. The culmination, the Career Fair, will launch the North Star Program, a program with a mission to offer financial assistance as well as mentorship and career guidance to new AAPI professionals joining in the work of serving the AAPI communities in NYC.

It is with respect to your service, a plea to your commitment and a call to action that AHSSC and the planning committee of the North Star Project are turning to you. Your participation at the upcoming events, an organizational sponsorship of a networking and career fair booth, and/or a direct tax deductible donation to the North Star Project are just some of the ways that your support can make an impact. Donations and support of any amount would be helpful.

Please feel free to contact Teresa Lin at teresa.lin@vnsny.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration!