The Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission (DAAPIC) is committed to listening to the voices of Denver residents, nonprofits, government agencies, businesses, and religious organizations to identify gaps and strengths for Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community needs. The results from this listening session will be the catalyst for the commission’s goals and actions for the future.

The commission collaborated with a diverse network of community providers who brought a depth of knowledge and insight to a multitude of issues facing the AAPI community during a listening session conducted in February of 2017.

The general results of the listening session found that aggregated data and language access provide barriers to Denver AAPIs receiving the programs and services they need.

DAAPIC’s overarching recommendations are that the City and County of Denver:

- Ensure culturally responsive training is available to City and County of Denver employees
- Collect program and service information by ethnicity
- Develop and implement a citywide language access policy
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission (DAAPIC), the authors would like to thank each of the participating organizations from the Listening Session. Your honesty, transparency, and willingness to participate will help DAAPIC identify and advocate for the needs of the AAPI community.

A special thanks to Katherine Murphy, Membership Assistant Manager with Rocky Mountain PBS, who devoted her personal time to conducting a thematic analysis of transcripts from hours of listening session audio tape. Her analysis provided a breakdown of recurring themes that the Commission used as an empirical foundation for identifying salient areas of need and formulating appropriate recommendations.

About the Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission (DAAPIC)
DAAPIC is a commission under the Denver Agency for Human Rights & Community Partnerships (HRCP). DAAPIC serves as a support liaison and facilitator among the AAPI community in Denver, HRCP, and the Office of the Mayor of Denver. DAAPIC strives to increase awareness and visibility of the AAPI community, advocate for the AAPI community based on empirical assessment of the community’s needs, and educate stakeholders regarding how best to meet those needs.

About Human Rights & Community Partnerships (HRCP)
HRCP is the umbrella agency for nine distinct offices and ten commissions that envision a unified city where capacities and partnerships have been built and leaders from city governments and all corners of our community are empowered and supported. HRCP’s mission is to proactively protect human rights, build capacities, and strengthen connections that result in stronger relationships in the community through collaboration, communication, and advocacy. We address issues concerning older adults, racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, women and families, people with disabilities, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals, immigrants and refugees, neighborhood partnerships, and nonprofit partnerships.
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<td>References</td>
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### ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Asian Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAPI</td>
<td>Asian American Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCD</td>
<td>City and County of Denver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAAPIC</td>
<td>Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRCP</td>
<td>Human Rights &amp; Community Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPI</td>
<td>Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHIAPPI</td>
<td>White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

As with any research endeavor, a baseline is needed to measure progress. For DAAPIC, this listening session and its results are the first major step towards ensuring the commission’s advocacy efforts truly reflect the community’s needs. The Commission’s objective is to create a bottom-up information funneling mechanism, never wanting to dictate the direction forward without first asking the community and identifying their needs and priorities.

Advocacy does not thrive in silos. Thus, by bringing together thirty stakeholders, the commission will help foster a healthier relationship amongst service providers.

The methods, analysis, and recommendations for action are included in this report.

PURPOSE

The purpose of DAAPIC’s listening session was to better understand the needs and issues that face the AAPI community.

The commission aims to have the listening session encourage dialogue and allow DAAPIC to provide recommendations to Mayor Michael B. Hancock and other city leaders to address critical needs.
METHODS

Listening Session

Commissioners organized the listening session from November 2016-January 2017, and conducted the session in February 2017. Some participating organizations prepared handouts and PowerPoint presentations (which can be found in the appendix section of this report).

Participating organizations were asked to provide a ten-minute presentation with an additional ten minutes allowed for Q&A with Commission members. Each presentation was recorded.

Research Questions

DAAPIC asked potential registrants to frame their presentation of issues to the following categories:

- Healthcare issues
- Youth and education issues
- Legal and/or Immigration issues
- Economic development issues

These categories mirror issues of priority identified by the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI).

Upon registration, organizations were asked the following questions four questions.

1. In what capacity (i.e., through what kinds of programs and services) does your organization engage with Denver AAPIs?
2. Within the Denver AAPI community, which subpopulation(s) does your organization serve (e.g., Chinese, Bhutanese, etc.)?
3. What additional demographic characteristics can you provide about the Denver AAPIs you serve (e.g., age range, geographic location within Denver)?
4. What organizations do you collaborate with to provide services for Denver AAPIs?
PARTICIPANTS

In February 2017, DAAPIC heard oral testimony from twenty-nine organizations and written testimony from one organization that provide services for the AAPI community in some capacity. Organizations were selected to cover the Commission’s focus areas of: Education/Youth, Economic, Health Care, Immigration and Legal. DAAPIC identified the organizations by relying on pre-existing relationships with leadership at organizations with an understanding of the Commission’s focus areas and conducting an online web search for local organizations that are responsible for addressing key AAPI-related issues.

The Commission also aimed to ensure prominent cultural organizations were included in the listening session.

The following organizations participated in the Commission’s listening session:

- American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado
- American Immigration Lawyers Association - Colorado Chapter
- Asian Communities Together
- Asian Pacific Development Center
- Asian Roundtable of Colorado
- Colorado Asian Restaurant Association
- Colorado Chinese Language School
- Colorado Dragon Boat Festival
- Colorado Legal Services
- Colorado Refugee Services Program
- Colorado Sikhs
- Colorado Visiting Nurse Association
- Denver Housing Authority
- Denver Human Services
- Denver Office of Economic Development
- Denver Police Department
- Denver Sheriff’s Department
- Filipino-American Community of Colorado
- No Ke Aloha Inc.
- Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs
- Office of Language Access at Colorado Judicial Branch
- Place Bridge Academy
- RMIAN
- Sakura Foundation
- Spring Institute
- Street Fraternity
- The Center for Trauma & Resilience
- University Technology Services at the University of Denver
- University of Colorado - Denver
- American Immigration Lawyers Association - Colorado Chapter
- Asian Communities Together
- Asian Pacific Development Center
- Asian Roundtable of Colorado
- Colorado Asian Restaurant Association
- Colorado Chinese Language School
- Colorado Dragon Boat Festival
- Colorado Legal Services
- Colorado Refugee Services Program
- Colorado Sikhs
- Colorado Visiting Nurse Association
- Denver Housing Authority
- Denver Human Services
- Denver Office of Economic Development
- Denver Police Department
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- No Ke Aloha Inc.
- Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs
- Office of Language Access at Colorado Judicial Branch
- Place Bridge Academy
- RMIAN
- Sakura Foundation
- Spring Institute
- Street Fraternity
- The Center for Trauma & Resilience
- University Technology Services at the University of Denver
- University of Colorado - Denver

Data Analysis

An external vendor transcribed the recordings of the listening session. Katherine Murphy performed the content analysis on all transcriptions, using topical areas and main themes as guiding parameters for examination.

The first level of analysis contains bucket subcategories which were drawn from generalizations made about the content of the transcript. They are aligned with their speakers, who have been identified with a speaker ID (for ease of sorting), and contain applicable quotes or references. In addition, the analysis included references to the Asian and/or Pacific Islander community specifically, or to other indicators if speakers were unable to tie their information directly to these groups (using an ‘Y’ or ‘N’).

The second level of analysis contains quotes by each speaker, as well as quotes/references specific to the six topical categories.
Table 1. Number of AAPIs in Denver¹

| Total AAPI Population in Denver | 32,003 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander alone or in combination with one or more races | 1,960 |
| Asian alone or in combination with one or more races | 30,043 |

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Denver’s AAPI Population²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Asian Alone</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in poverty</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median household income</td>
<td>$51,968</td>
<td>$50,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received food stamps in the past 12 months</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with a disability</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household type (family)</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Educational Attainment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Asian Alone</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate (or equivalent)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or associates degree</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree or higher</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak another language</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak English less than very well</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (age 16-64)</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top industry</td>
<td>Management, business, science, and arts occupations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran status</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results & Recommendations

This listening session offered the Commission a first-of-its-kind opportunity to hear directly from presenters what the gaps and strengths are in addressing AAPI community needs.

The organizations involved brought varying levels of experience, context, insight, and expertise.

The information gathered from the session will inform the Commission’s short, middle, and long-term objectives.
1. Cultural/language barriers for both city and non-city resources

- Create and implement a citywide language access plan
- Research possible funding options for translation services
- Create incentives for hiring employees who speak multiple languages
- Provide cultural awareness training for including but not limited to the following agencies: Denver Police Department, Denver Sheriff’s Department, Denver District Attorney’s Office, and Denver Human Services

**DID YOU KNOW**

Table 3. Language Assessment of Denver’s AAPI Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Group</th>
<th>Percent Speaking English Less Than Very Well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAs who speak another language</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAs who categorize themselves as speaking English less than very well</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPIs who speak another language</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPIs who categorize themselves as speaking English less than very well</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT WE HEARD**

Sometimes people say “how do you get translators? “We don’t. We can’t. English is the unifying language… we move [children] into English as quickly as we can… for children who come with another language, the barriers of learning an American education are very very high...

Annette Garcia, Administrative Assistant
Elvina Htoo, Teacher, Place Bridge Academy

…if we can identify that there is a language barrier, which sometimes folks don’t disclose, we do have some [employees] that are fluent in Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, [etc.], but as a general rule, it’s tough...

Dana Niemela, Community Outreach & Resource Engagement Director, Denver Human Services (referring to a lack of translation services at Denver Human Services)
2. Data disaggregation does not exist

- Work with individual city agencies to identify limitations and challenges to obtaining key demographic data and work with other commissions to identify ways to overcome these limitations
- Create a data disaggregation pilot program with Denver Human Services

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Disaggregating data is paramount to the success of advocating for AAPI needs.

When ethnic categories are aggregated (in the top chart), ethnic disparities are masked. When aggregated, the percentage of Asian Americans with no health insurance is 13% while the percentage of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders with no health insurance is 15%. However, when broken down by ethnicity, the percentage of Asian Americans with no health insurance varies across ethnicities by 16% and by 9% for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

**Table 4. No Health Insurance: Aggregated versus Disaggregated Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>No Health Insurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPI</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT WE HEARD**

Harry Budisidharta, Deputy Director Asian Pacific Development Center

I did a search online and could not find what are culturally responsive approaches to the API community, and partially this is because Vietnamese, Chinese, etc., have different needs, but just [having a general concept will be helpful in determining] how an individual [can] best benefit from interventions based on cultural needs.

Tien Tong, Program Administrator, Denver Sheriff Department

All aggregated data tends to show that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are faring a lot better than the general population but when you parse that down if it’s available, you see that there’s a wide variety and a lot of different subgroups... substance use disorders of the whole AA/PI [population] have lower rates of substance use disorders but when you look at individual ethnic groups that’s not the case.
3. **Lack of coordination amongst organizations serving AAPI communities**

- Host at least one community forum annually with listening session participating organizations
- Connect listening session organizations with one another
- Work on developing stronger and consistent partnerships with participating agencies

During the Commission’s listening session planning process, the Commission identified nearly 150 potential organizations in the Denver metro area that could provide valuable feedback and work with the AAPI community in some capacity. While a couple organizations offer wrap-around services, there is no one entity that works to bring more of these organizations together to serve the AAPI community. DAAPIC has the opportunity to be that bridge for AAPI community serving groups.

4. **Lack of funding**

- Create an Asian American Pacific Islander Community grant for AAPI serving organizations in Denver
- Compile list of grant opportunities for AAPI serving organizations and list those on Commission website and share on social media

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[Partnerships are] one of the things that we are hoping to find out through better engaging in forums like this… We are actually working on a partnership with DPS right now to have more of a presence in southwest Denver, College View Elementary down South Federal area, that we would be partnered with their family and community engagement [program] and the Center for Family Opportunity…

**Dana Niemela**

Community Outreach & Resource Engagement Director, Denver Human Services
5. Lack of AAPI representation in the workforce

- Research what is currently being done to attract AAPI employees, including how many AAPIs are applying vs. how many AAPIs are being hired.
- Work collaboratively with the City and County of Denver’s (CCD) Office of Human Resources to provide outreach to potential AAPI employees.

DID YOU KNOW?

Table 5. AAPI population in the City and County of Denver (CCD) workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA population</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPI population</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA workforce</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPI workforce</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment Gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>1.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPI</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When I was in District 4, I was always trying to get Vietnamese speaking officers out there because of the population… the Asian American population is underrepresented in the Police Department.

Bill Nagle, Denver Police Department
1. Lack of access/outreach to AAPI and refugee communities by city government

- Work with the Office of Economic Development and other organizations to devise a community outreach plan specific to AAPI populations
- Create business how-to fact sheets in different languages and post on DAAPIC webpage
- Hold monthly check-ins with the Office of Economic Development and an assigned member of DAAPIC to continue community outreach to AAPI populations

We have very little participation from the Asian community [in contractual work for the city] so we would really like to reach out to that community and let them know there are opportunities.

Shyvone Goodwin, Cecilia Rivas de Schuermann, Business Development Coordinator, Denver Office of Economic Development

What we found out is... they [restaurant owner] rarely reach out to them [Office of Economic Development, Commerce City Office] ... and what happens is they open... find out the permit they have is not sufficient... they spend a lot of time/resources... the experience is not that good.

Adam You, Director, Colorado Asian Restaurant Association
A lot of people assume that APIs are financially secure and academically prepared, and that is not necessarily the case... there are a couple of federally funded programs that APIs cannot access because they are not considered under-represented.

Soyon Bueno, Director, Asian Student Services – University of Colorado Denver

WHAT WE HEARD

2. Poverty, affordable housing, gentrification are issues happening in the AAPI community

- Ensure the Office of Economic Development, Community Planning & Development, and Housing for People Everywhere are strategically targeting highly concentrated AAPI neighborhoods in Denver
- Create partnership with the Office of Financial Empowerment to connect with AAPI individuals and families who are in need of financial and economic assistance

DID YOU KNOW?

Table 6. National Median Household Incomes by Ethnicity

![National Median Household Incomes by Ethnicity](chart.png)

25,000 50,000 75,000 $100,000

A lot of us have serious concerns and questions around affordable housing, housing access, and the spreading of gentrification in our neighborhoods and other communities of color.

Justin Valas, Organizer, Asian Communities Together
The biggest problem is that they are not aware of where to find good [healthcare] resources. Who can they trust?... If they get pushed to a big health care center [they may have a less than] comfortable [experience].

Alok Sarwal, Executive Director Colorado Alliance for Health Equity and Practice

There have been a lot of conversations about [how to get] my grandmother or myself healthcare, what do I do? How do I get someone to come to my house? How do I get Medicare?

Jen Nguyen, Festival Director, Colorado Dragon Boat Festival

A shift for people who have been here a lot longer [is] to elderly care and long-term facilities. There are a lot of Koreans asking for interpretation at retirement homes and things like that.

Benjamin Jutson, Program Manager, Spring Institute

1. Families don’t have access to affordable healthcare/Lack of education and/or outreach about resources available
   
   • Educate and conduct outreach to AAPI populations about affordable healthcare options
   
   • Create healthcare campaign specifically for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders around the issues of: gout, high blood pressure, and diabetes

2. There’s a need for culturally responsive eldercare
   
   • Work in partnership with the Denver Commission on Aging on ways to engage seniors in AAPI communities
   
   • Create stronger partnerships with churches and businesses in an effort to connect with more of the AAPI aging population
Regarding mental health and illness, one of the things we are looking at is isolation, loneliness, and depression among new immigrants... our community tries to alleviate that by providing support and companionship and language.

Fran Campbell, 1st Vice President, Filipino-American Community of Colorado

3. Mental healthcare is a larger issue in AAPI communities than most realize but due to cultural stigma, it’s often ignored

- During May’s Mental Health month - highlight each week with a specific topic along with a resource(s)
- Partner with the Asian Chamber of Commerce on hosting an AAPI mental health summit
- Conduct separate community workshops for Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders to remove the stigma on mental health, including discussing substance abuse and suicide awareness.

DID YOU KNOW?

Table 7. Mental Health Treatment Rate of Asian Americans vs. Non-Hispanic Whites

- 6.8% of Asian American adults age 18+ received mental health treatment or counseling
- 18% of non-Hispanic white adults age 18+ received mental health treatment or counseling
Citizenship is another priority… two years ago there was an estimated 27,000 legal permanent residents in the city and county of Denver alone who are eligible for citizenship right now. The estimation I just got recently is that it’s as high as 35,000 now… [when asked] why they have not sought out citizenship they mention the fee… it’s up to about $720… [besides that and] language [barriers to passing the test] the number one thing that they mention that they didn’t feel welcome to become a citizen here.

Jamie Torres, Director, Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs

Safety has become one of the biggest topics since the election and more specifically since inauguration day. We’ve absolutely seen more of our communities who are already hard to reach becoming much more difficult to identify and reach out to.

Citizenship is another priority… two years ago there was an estimated 27,000 legal permanent residents in the city and county of Denver alone who are eligible for citizenship right now. The estimation I just got recently is that it’s as high as 35,000 now… [when asked] why they have not sought out citizenship they mention the fee… it’s up to about $720… [besides that and] language [barriers to passing the test] the number one thing that they mention that they didn’t feel welcome to become a citizen here.

Fran Campbell, Filipino-American Community of Colorado

1. **Fear**
   - Create Know Your Rights fact sheets and videos in multiple languages
   - Create engagement strategies that are community-focused – held at churches, nonprofits, local hangouts

We have not been able to access them and offer services in the way that we used to, because just in the past five months they are hiding. A lot of them sold their possessions and moved back to the Philippines.
[There are] an estimated 12,000 undocumented Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders here in Colorado… Right now is a scary time to be undocumented or an immigrant with all of the changing rules regarding who is eligible for deportation, who is a priority for deportation… The more work Denver can do to create those safe, welcoming and inclusive spaces for documents folks in general and also elevate a space for undocumented API’s would be immensely helpful.

Justin Valas,
Organizer, Asian Communities Together

Undocumented clients face a very long list of challenges that I think grows longer each and every day in terms of trying to figure out how to navigate a system that is becoming increasingly unfriendly to undocumented immigrants in the United States.

Brad Hendrick, Chair Elect American Immigration Lawyers Association – Colorado Chapter

We want to make sure that particularly the children in our communities have access to food and medical care… and sometimes if the parents are undocumented that can become a real barrier to getting the children services they need.

Dana Niemela,
Community Outreach & Resource Engagement Director, Denver Human Services

2. Undocumented population

- Identify best practices from other metro areas with respect to establishing a legal defense fund
- Create a resource list for undocumented AAPI immigrants and translate it into multiple languages
- Work in partnership with the Denver Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs to connect undocumented individuals with citizenship resources

DID YOU KNOW?

Table 8. Undocumented Asian Populations in U.S., Colorado, and Denver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of undocumented Asians in the US</th>
<th>Percent share of undocumented Asians of the total undocumented population (~11M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.46M-1.74M</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,687</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Accessibility

- Increase educational opportunities to equip immigrant population on navigating public services (e.g. Driver’s License)
1. Rise in Crimes Against Persons

- Host Hate Crimes Forum for the City of Denver to educate the public on legal and non-legal protections in response to hate crimes.
- Work with individual ethnic populations directly to educate the public on how to report hate crimes.
- Create Hate Crime fact sheets in different languages.

**WHAT WE HEARD**

...people think you’re entitled to a lawyer because of… the Miranda [laws]… Well that’s not true if you’re getting evicted, or if you’re fighting over custody, or if you can’t pay your bills and are considering bankruptcy, or can’t get food stamps... So, outreach and resources.

Jonathan Asher, Executive Director, Colorado Legal Services

One of the more leading local entities that tries to track numbers… is the Anti-Defamation League… [as well as] the Southern Poverty Law Center… it’s just kind of frightening to look at and see how in fact [hate crimes] have gone up.

Denise Maes, Public Policy Director, American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado

In the Sikh faith, followers wear five articles of faith, one being uncut hair and typically men wear that in a turban, but post 9/11 a lot of people correlated the turban with terrorism and often that led to hate crimes, violence in the streets, and that is something we are trying to combat.

Naureen Singh, Policy Director, Colorado Sikhs

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Table 9. Crime Rates in Denver Against Asian Victims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Crime Category</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>&quot;crimes against persons&quot; category for Asian victims in Denver</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>Increase in all crime categories for Asian victims in Denver</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There’s an increase in victimization and crimes against persons, from 124 to 145… while 1.2 [of the specific population are] victims of crimes against persons [which is low]… the bad news is that [the percentage is] rising… [this may be a result of] the immigrant population becoming more victimized [in general].

Where there is crime activity, we try to put our resources there, and we’re talking very limited resources and trying to spread it out where it’s needed… if we don’t get reports we don’t know where it’s needed.

Bill Nagle, Denver Police Department

It erodes trust [between] the immigrant community and local law enforcement. So, we know that immigrants are less likely to report a crime if they’ve been victimized.

Mekela Goehring, Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network, referring to local police forces being able to enforce federal immigration law

2. Lack of outreach and resources
   - Identify low-cost and/or free legal consultations with volunteer attorneys and link AAPI community groups to these resources
   - Work with Legal Aid, the Denver District Attorney’s Office, and the Denver Public Defender’s Office to provide legal fact sheets in different languages
   - Host forums in highly concentrated AAPI communities to educate the public on Know Your Rights information (less immigration-focused and more criminal-focused)

3. Underreporting of crimes
   - Retrieve Denver Police Department data on AAPI victims and perpetrators of crime
   - Work with DPD to translate documents in different languages
   - Host community forums in churches in partnership with DPD to increase trust amongst AAPIs and the police department
1. **Lack of cultural awareness and feelings of loneliness, isolation**
   - Provide education, training, and outreach to city officials, AAPI service providers, and Denver Public Schools (DPS) employees on the model minority myth
   - Work with DPS to recruit and retain more AAPI staff, teachers, and administrators

### Table 10. Suicide Rates of Asian American Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of Asian students in grades 9-12 that attempted suicide</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Asian female students in grades 9-12 that attempted suicide</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Asian male students in grades 9-12 that attempted suicide</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Asian students in grades 9-12 that seriously considered suicide</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Asian female students in grades 9-12 that seriously considered suicide</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Asian male students in grades 9-12 that seriously considered suicide</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of those cultural things [like] what are some other ways to discipline children and still maintain that authority in the home without spanking? It’s a little bit difficult... I would ask for increased community forums... there’s a gap between what schools expect and what really has to happen in schools and what parents perceive sometimes...

Annette Garcia, Administrative Assistant; Elvina Htoo, Teacher, Place Bridge Academy

I think for some of our students, they want to get away [when going to college], to get away from the community initially, and then they realize, because we are such a white campus... [that they] want to go back home... for them to find community where they feel like they can [also] be challenged in the classroom, but come together and have tough discussions on what it is like to be on a very white campus, and [share experiences, that is really important] to them feeling welcome.

JoAnn Cornell, Director, Asian Pacific American Cultural Center – CSU
There is not quite as high of a percentage of Polynesian kids that go to college or even complete college. So, reasons for that may be that there is a lack of scholarship opportunities, or maybe there are opportunities that we are not aware of, and going back to family structure, a family might rely on kids as a source of income.

Shauna Medeiros-Tuilaepa, Owner, No Ke Aloha Polynesian Cuisine

2. Pacific Islanders have lower post high school education
   - Work with DPS to ensure all data separates Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
   - Connect with high schools that have high percentages of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders: High Tech Early College, Southwest Early College, MLK Jr Early College MS, Compassion Road Academy to engage NHPI students

DID YOU KNOW?

Table 11. Colorado Higher Education Enrollment Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Two or more races</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shauna Medeiros-Tuilaepa, Owner, No Ke Aloha Polynesian Cuisine
CONCLUSION

The Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission (DAAPIC) will utilize the results of this listening session to guide its actions moving forward and anticipate other interested stakeholders will benefit from and be encouraged with the same information available to them.

DAAPIC plans to use this report as the starting point for further research efforts, including a listening session with AAPI community members.

DAAPIC will continue to advocate for the AAPI community through multiple platforms and is confident this report will highlight AAPI community needs in the Denver metro area.
REFERENCES

4. AAPI Data Analysis of 2015 Community Survey Microdata
5. City and County of Denver Office of Human Resources
6. Equitable Growth’s analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2013-2015 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (pooled data)
7. SAMHSA, 2015. Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Mental Health Detailed Tables. Table 1.22B
8. The Center for Migration Studies (CMS) and the Migration Policy Institute (MPI)
9. Denver Police Department
FINDING COMMON GROUND:
A REPORT ON DENVER’S
ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY

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