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**m** COUNCIL ON  
ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS  
A STATE AGENCY SINCE 1985

# 2018 Annual Report

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



# Welcome to the 2018 Annual Report

Dear Community Member,

It is with great pride that I present the 2018 Annual Report of the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans. Once again, it has been an honor to lead the Board of the Council.

The year began with the adoption of a new strategic plan. The product of almost two years of community engagement and input, the strategy was designed to clarify our goals and to provide the road map for reaching them.

With the strategic plan as our guide, we focused our work on initiatives that will have a positive impact on Minnesota's Asian Pacific communities for years to come.

At the Legislature, we advocated for safer homes and healthy relationships by leading the legislative effort to create the state-wide Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program. We advocated for improved patient-medical provider understanding, by supporting an improved registration system for professional health care interpreters. We advocated for data-driven improvements in the education of our children through maintaining the All Kids Count law. All of this work was focused on helping Asian Pacific Minnesotans thrive and give back to the state.

The Council contributed to Minnesotans' knowledge of our communities through intensive research efforts including the Emerging Communities Report and our biennial legislative priorities survey, which serve to help increase understanding of our communities. We also connected state government with Asian Pacific Minnesotans through our statewide and strategically tailored community engagement efforts, including partnering with key community and government organizations. We believe that our work in 2018 has contributed to a more engaged and informed Minnesota, on the part of both the people and their state government.

I am proud of the work that our Board, staff, and active supporters have done to engage with and advocate on behalf of Asian Pacific Minnesotans. We look forward to continuing this important work in 2019 and beyond.

Regards,

David Maeda  
2018 Chair  
Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans



## LEGISLATIVE

At the core of the Council's mission is engaging Asian Pacific Minnesotans in creating state-level public policy. We go about our work in a variety of ways to shape laws and policies that will help eliminate barriers to success for members of our communities and, by extension, all Minnesotans.

In the 2018 legislative session, the Council supported legislative initiatives that addressed important concerns of the Asian Pacific community. These initiatives targeted medical interpreting, domestic violence and sexual assault prevention, and the collection and dissemination of disaggregated data to better meet the needs of children in our public education system.

These legislative efforts are illustrative of the Council's status as a state agency and its role as an advocate working within state government to assist Asian Pacific Minnesotans with achieving economic, social, legal, and political equality.

### **Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Prevention Program Bill (H.F. 3304/S.F. 3067)**

Nationally, between 21% - 55% American woman of Asian Pacific heritage reported having experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. The Council has long sought to address the disproportionately high rates of domestic violence and sexual



## Research Achievements

### Community Legislative Priorities Survey

In addition to our direct engagement with Asian Pacific community-based organizations and community members, the work of the Council is driven by research. We continued to track the evolution of our community and the issues that matter to them using a variety of tools, including biennial community-based surveys. To achieve a greater understanding of our community, the Council conducted a legislative priorities survey of community members across the many ethnicities we represent throughout the state. The findings of this survey will guide the legislative work of the Council for the next two years.

### Emerging Communities Report

Throughout 2018, we continued to advance our study on Minnesota's emerging Asian Pacific communities: the Karen, Karenni, Bhutanese, Guyanese, and Chuukese. We focused on conducting interviews and focus groups with these communities, both in the metro area and in greater Minnesota. When completed, this report will feature an overview of each community's resettlement history; an assessment of each community's current population in Minnesota; and an analysis of each community's trending issues. At the Council, we believe that as these communities continue to grow, it is critical that policy makers, school districts, health care organizations, and community-based organizations have a broad understanding of each group's communal history. The Emerging Communities Report will shape our efforts to ensure that state government effectively serves both new and long-standing Minnesotan communities.

# ACHIEVEMENTS

assault in our Asian Pacific communities. House File (H.F.) 3304/Senate File (S.F.) 3067 requested the creation of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program within the Department of Health's (MDH) Injury and Violence Prevention Unit. The program was designed to be funded through an increase to the civil marriage license fee in Minnesota.

Under H.F. 3304/S.F. 3067, MDH would create a statewide competitive-grants program to support community-driven practices to reduce domestic violence and sexual assault. The program would support initiatives that aim to reduce intimate partner violence, sex trafficking, domestic abuse, sexual assault crimes, abusive international marriages, and forced

marriages throughout Minnesota.

Grantees would, under this legislation, develop prevention and outreach strategies, and create culturally-relevant and linguistically-appropriate programming throughout Minnesota, including its rural and historically underserved populations. Each program would be evaluated biennially based on benchmarks established by MDH.

The proposed \$15 increase to the marriage license fee in Minnesota would establish a program with an estimated half a million dollars annual budget. Currently, the state has dedicated limited funds to the area of gender-based violence prevention, and only with respect to sexual assault. Survivors, advocates, and communities

“With the strategic plan as our guide, we focused our work on initiatives that will have a positive impact on Minnesota’s Asian Pacific communities for years to come.”

**DAVID MAEDA, 2018 CHAIR  
COUNCIL ON ASIAN PACIFIC  
MINNESOTANS**

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >



agree that gender-based violence is a public health crisis, and urgently requires the state to take action.

In 2018, H.F. 3304/S.F. 3067 was not heard; however, we are optimistic about this bill in the 2019 Legislature.

**Spoken Language Health Care Interpreting Registry Bill (H.F. 2023/S.F. 1708)**

With approximately one-third of Minnesota’s Asian Pacific residents identified as Limited English-Proficient (LEP), communication is an ongoing health care challenge in the communities we serve. House File (H.F.) 2023/ Senate File (S.F.) 1708 sought to ensure that Medicaid recipients have access to competent medical interpreters.

H.F. 2023/S.F. 1708 proposed that the state replace its current roster of interpreters with a registry system. The current system within the Department of Health (MDH) does not recognize interpreters’ qualifications; whereas, this bill sought to establish two categories of interpreters - “registered” and “certified.” Each category would require a specific level of training and/or testing on medical terminology, ethics, and best practices in the field of medical interpreting. The registry would be funded by registration fees paid by interpreters.

The new baseline standards of the registry would help increase transparency and quality of medical interpreters, while reducing the risk of medical errors and complications as a result of miscommunications between medical providers and patients. Our Council helped lead a strong coalition of government agencies, nonprofits, practitioners, and community members in support of this bill. Together, we are committed to working with the Legislature to ensure that LEP patients have access to the same quality of care provided to all Minnesotans.

H.F. 2023/S.F. 1708 was heard in the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee, but was then tabled.

**Legislation to Repeal the All Kids Count Law (A44 and A87 Amendments)**

The model minority myth overshadows the real struggles that our diverse Asian Pacific students face in our education system. For example, the 2011 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) II Reading test showed that whereas 66% of Minnesota’s Asian students are proficient in reading, the Hmong and Burmese-heritage students are far behind – at 46.6% and 16.9% proficiency rates, respectively.

At the request of opponents of the law, legislators introduced the A44 (Senate) and the A87 (House) amendments to repeal the All Kids Count law, which mandates that the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) collects and reports on detailed data pertaining to student performance.

The Council supports measures to reduce the achievement gaps for all children in Minnesota. The All Kids Count law is a move in the right direction. Contrary to the model minority myth, the achievement gap is an issue of great importance to Minnesota’s Asian Pacific community. We are arguably the most linguistic, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse cultural community. By collecting more nuanced data, we can begin to have a more clear understanding of the needs of Minnesota’s students.

Under the All Kids Count law, MDE is currently piloting the collection of disaggregated data for the following ethnicities in the Asian Pacific community: Hmong, Asian Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Laotian, Filipino, and Karen.

The Council recognizes that there are members of our community who disagree with this law. However, we believe that, as Minnesota’s Asian Pacific community changes, up-to-date information is necessary if we are to succeed in carrying out our statutory responsibilities and promoting public policy that truly reflects community needs.

Through joint efforts between our Council and other organizations, supporters of the law succeeded in preventing these repeal efforts made in 2018.

“The Council [on Asian Pacific Minnesotans] serves well as the symbol of the Asian Pacific presence in Minnesota. May it continue to serve the needs of the community, while at the same time making our Minnesota friends aware of the valuable contributions that the Asian Pacific people make to the great State of Minnesota.”

**FIL-MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**COUNCIL EVENTS**

The Council seeks to lift up and increase visibility of the voices of the community we represent. The diversity of the Asian Pacific community in our state – ethnically, economically and geographically – makes it particularly important that our staff and Board continually engage with and listen to our communities through regular Council-organized events. We also work alongside Minnesota’s other ethnic councils to assure that Minnesotans of Asian Pacific, Latino, and African heritage have the means to participate more fully in our state.

**Asian Pacific Islander Day at the Capitol**

Asian Pacific Islander Day at the Capitol is an annual Council event designed to help community members learn about the policy making process at the state level, build their capacity to self-advocate, and engage directly with legislators. On April 12, 2018, we facilitated more than a dozen legislative visits for our community members.

More than 25 members of the Legislature participated including Representatives J.A. Ward, D. Christensen, K. Fenton, and D. Hilstrom; and Senators R. Chamberlain, S. Kent, F. Hawj, and C. Nelson.

**Joint Ethnic Councils Legislative Recap**

The state’s ethnic councils – our Council, the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs, and the Council on Minnesotans of African Heritage – held a joint review of the 2018 legislative session on May 22nd. Each of the participating councils talked about their legislative work and their ongoing legislative challenges. Key community members were invited to share with the attendees their experiences in working with us, and why community engagement is essential to state government’s efforts to meaningfully address equity issues throughout Minnesota. Each council then hosted a forum for its respective community, during which community members were able to interact directly with the councils’ board members and staff, state department commissioners, and legislators.

**Community Legislative Priorities Survey**

At the end of each legislative biennium, the Council deploys a community survey to gain a deeper understanding of the issues of greatest concern for Minnesota’s approximately 309,000

Asian and 7,700 Pacific Islander residents. The 2018 survey was designed and administered by Council research staff, and the content structure of the survey was devised from previous biennial survey responses. Over a period of four months, the Council actively encouraged



Asian Pacific Minnesotans to complete the survey, in person at community events, or online. With a record number of respondents, the survey provided us with insightful and actionable information.

In addition to the survey, the Council evaluates the needs of Minnesota's Asian Pacific communities through community listening sessions and events, legislative forums, Asian Pacific Islander Day at the Capitol, regular discussions between the Council Board and agency staff, as well as print and online media. The results of these various engagement efforts inform the Council's legislative priorities for the subsequent biennium.

### COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

Following 15 months of intense work by the Council's staff and Board, the Board approved a new strategic plan for the Council on January 18, 2018. The plan, a roadmap for how the Council will deliver on its statutory responsibilities over the next several years, is as follows:

#### Mission

The Council works toward economic, social, legal, and political equality for Asian Pacific Minnesotans.

#### Goals

The following strategies support our goal of ensuring that Asian Pacific communities benefit from our work:

- Advocate for the needs of Asian Pacific communities
- Engage with diverse Asian Pacific communities, from newly-arrived to long-established, to understand their evolving needs
- Build and maintain strong and diverse partnerships

The following strategies support our goal of ensuring that Asian Pacific communities trust the Council as their statewide advocate:

- Participate strategically in community settings
- Build intentional and relevant partnerships
- Actively engage with diverse Asian Pacific communities

The following strategies support our goal that the Council is an agent of change within state government:

- Build Asian Pacific communities' capacity to inform and influence public policy
- Help policy makers understand the nature of issues facing Asian Pacific communities
- Broaden and deepen the Council's ability to successfully influence public policy

The following strategies support our goal that the Council continues to lead dynamically and effectively:

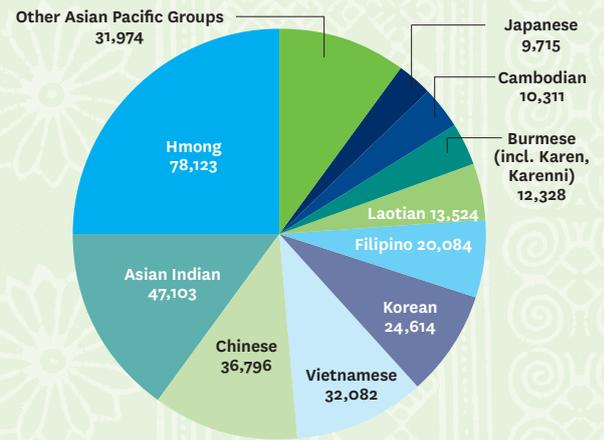
- Anticipate emerging trends and issues, and lead relevant public policy initiatives
- Actively build community leadership
- Ensure an inclusive and vibrant Council culture
- Enhance Council infrastructure to improve the Council's capacity to carry out its mission

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

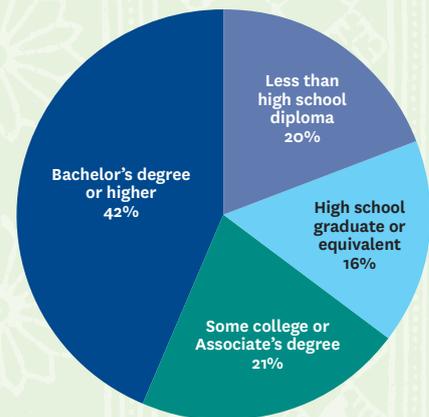
Our communities gather and celebrate and, when necessary, grieve together. Along with events convened by the Council, staff and board members recognize the importance of being present at events in our communities. Among the events we attended in 2018 were Karen New Year Celebration; Lunar New Year; Chinese New Year; Vietnamese New Year; Minnesota Asian Peace Officers 10th Year Anniversary; Council For Minnesotans' of African Heritage Day at the Hill; Lao New Year; Martin Luther King Jr. Panel; Hmong International Studies Conference; Thai Songkran Festival; Cultural Society of Filipino Americans of Minnesota - 31st Annual Philippine Day; SEWA Annual Health Fair; Marshallese Poetry Reading; Cambodian New Year; Songkran Uptown Block Party; Immigrant and Refugee Medicine in Minnesota; Hmong Lao Veteran's Ceremony on Capitol Ground; Karen Advocacy Day; World Refugee Day (University of Minnesota); Hmong Town Festival; Voices of St. Paul's Immigrant Youth; Hmong Freedom Festival; Little Mekong Night Market; Diversity Council Annual Celebration; Karen Martyrs' Day; 18 Clans Council Walk Against Domestic Violence; and many others.

# Total Population of Asian Pacific Minnesotans: 316,654<sup>1</sup>

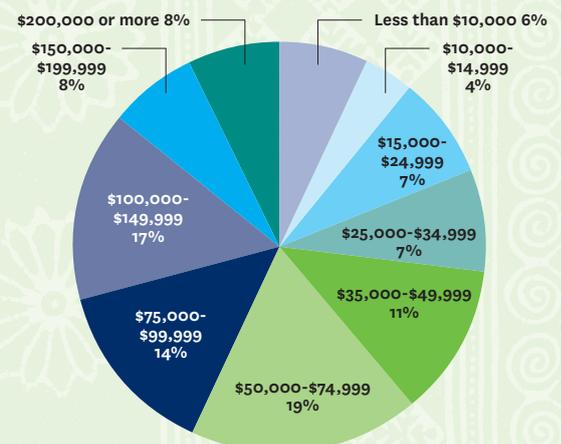
## I. POPULATION, BY ANCESTRY.<sup>1</sup>



## II. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, ADULTS OVER AGE 25.<sup>2</sup>



## III. HOUSEHOLD INCOME, IN 2017 DOLLARS.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. B20018 & B20019, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.  
<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. B19001D & B19001E, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.  
<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. C15002D & C15002E, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

# Looking Forward

Dear Community Member,



Our team at the Council looks forward to 2019 with optimism and excitement. As the only state agency of its kind in the nation we are proud of the leadership we have provided since our establishment in 1985. Our Council remains the chief advisor, connector, and convener on behalf of Asian Pacific Minnesotans to both the executive and legislative branches of state government.

Beginning in January of 2019, we will be advising a new governor and legislature, including four newly-elected legislators of Asian heritage in the House of Representatives, about issues of importance to Asian Pacific Minnesotans. Even as the number of legislators of Asian Pacific heritage increases, there remains the need to connect all Asian Pacific Minnesotans with state government. Electing officials of

Asian Pacific heritage is helpful for ensuring community issues are addressed, but that alone is insufficient. A representative government works best when the people have the knowledge and the skills to meaningfully engage in its own governance beyond elections.

Minnesota's Asian Pacific community is made up of immigrants and refugees with roots in more than 40 nations. The Council recognizes that while some of our communities are successful, many still experience significant disparities. Supported by research and community engagement, the work of the Council is directed by the realities that our communities face so that we may foster a greater vision of health and security for all Asian Pacific Minnesotans.

The diversity of our community means that our visions of what success looks like may differ, but we can hold these multiple visions while still sharing a desire for better outcomes for all Asian Pacific Minnesotans. The Council remains uniquely positioned to facilitate this ongoing effort to ensure that all Minnesotans move from surviving to thriving. Ensuring that all community members flourish is part of maintaining our shared success; in a diverse state, we cannot afford to leave entire communities behind.

This year was the first year the Council's work was guided by our new strategic plan. In 2019, to ensure that we continue to deliver on our statutory duties and policy objectives as we have laid out in this plan, we are committed to several initiatives. First, we will work with the Legislature and the Governor's Office to secure our FY20-21 biennial budget requests. Second, we will work with the Legislature to pass two bills: 1) a bill that will further address gender-based violence in our state, and 2) a bill that will help ensure Minnesotans have access to quality medical interpreters. We will also release our Emerging Communities Report on newer Asian Pacific populations in Minnesota, as well as deploy a comprehensive communications plan to ensure that we maintain robust relationships with our constituency groups.

As we have done throughout our 33-year history, we will continue to respond to emerging issues as our community grows and develops in Minnesota. We hope that you will see the Council as a resource that will help you understand the needs, contributions, and vitality of our diverse Minnesota community.

Sincerely,

Sia Her, Executive Director

“These are trying times for the Cambodian American community, many of whom came here as refugees. They thought their fears ended with the end of the Khmer Rouge. With new threats of deportation tormenting the families of Cambodian refugees once again, we need the advocacy that the Council provides.”

**KIM SIN, COMMUNITY LEADER AND ACTIVIST, ROCHESTER, MN**

## FY18 Receipts and Expenditures

<b>General Fund</b>	\$ <b>457,000</b>
<b>Revenue Funds</b>	
(Annual Dinner Registration Fees)	\$ 20,112.48
	\$ <b>477,112.48</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Full-Time	\$ 305,088.38
Part-Time	\$ 19,617.70
Over-Time and Premium Pay	\$ 2,802.39
Other Employee Cost	\$ 4,957.10
Space Rental, Maintenance, and Utility	\$ 21,244.31
Repairs, Alterations, and Maintenance	\$ 791.73
Printing and Advertising	\$ 4,036.76
Prof/Tech Services Outside Vendor	\$ 10,000.00
Communications	\$ 956.06
Travel and Subsistence-INST	\$ 3,139.94
Supplies	\$ 3,641.89
Employee Development	\$ 4,285.00
Other Operating Costs	\$ 8,780.54
Equipment-Non Capital	\$ 802.96
Equipment	\$ 1,920.35
Centralized IT Services	\$ 13,410.01
State Agency Other Services	\$ 6,160.00
Annual Dinner Expenses	\$ 22,076.86
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$ <b>433,711.98</b>
<b>Net Balance</b>	\$ <b>43,400.50</b>

# Council Staff Members



**Sia Her**, *Executive Director*

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



**Anjali Mishra Cameron**, *Research Director*

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



**Karina Vang**, *Office Manager/Executive Assistant*

Karina joined the Council in 2013. Prior to her time at the Council, Karina spent more than a decade in the private sector, providing high-level administrative support to managers and vice presidents. *Karina manages the office of the Council; administers and monitors the Council budget; assists with supervision of the Council's support staff; and performs and coordinates numerous administrative functions as the assistant to the Executive Director. Contact: [karina.vang@state.mn.us](mailto:karina.vang@state.mn.us)*



**Katy Sly**, *Legislative and Public Affairs Liaison*

Katy joined the Council in 2018. Before joining the Council, Katy worked with the Asia Foundation in Sri Lanka on policy issues of gender-based violence, police reform, and economic development. She has a master's degree in public policy from the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and a bachelor's degree in international studies from Kalamazoo College. *Katy educates, informs, and engages Asian Pacific Minnesotans on issues of importance to these communities; assists in developing the Council's policy positions and legislative initiatives; and maintains close connection between the Council and other stakeholders. Contact: [katy.sly@state.mn.us](mailto:katy.sly@state.mn.us)*



**Dave Sukharan**, *Research Assistant*

Dave joined the Council in 2016 as an intern while he was a student at the University of Minnesota. At the University, Dave assisted other nonprofit organizations such as the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in microbiology, Dave is leveraging his experiences to delve deeper into public policy research. *Dave assists with research projects and community outreach; drafts social media content, graphic content, and community newsletter; and assists with support tasks as necessary. Contact: [dave.sukharan@state.mn.us](mailto:dave.sukharan@state.mn.us)*

## STATUTORY PURPOSE

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



“As we have done throughout our 33-year history, we will continue to respond to emerging issues as our community grows and develops in Minnesota. We hope that you will see the Council as a resource that will help you understand the needs, contributions, and vitality of our very diverse Minnesota community.”

**SIA HER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

“The India Association of Minnesota (IAM) is grateful for the work the Council has done to build bridges between our community and our state government. These bridges have allowed our community to bring proposals to our lawmakers and turn them into public policy. We look forward to bringing our partnership to new heights.”

**RAVI SAGI, PRESIDENT, INDIA ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA**

**mi COUNCIL ON  
ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS**

**A STATE AGENCY SINCE 1985**

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# 2019-2020 Biennial Legislative Agenda

The Council works toward economic, social, legal, and political equality for Minnesotans of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage (Minn. Stat. § 15.0145)

## **Priority Issues\***

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

- Higher education affordability and access
- Data disaggregation
- Healthcare access
- Equity and social justice
- Immigration rights

## **Ongoing Positions**

*The Council will actively advocate for legislation that achieves the following:*

- Programs and services that are respectful of and responsive to the linguistically and culturally diverse communities of Minnesota, including Asian Pacific communities
- Continued collection of more nuanced data, such as data being collected by the Department of Education pursuant to the All Kids Count Act, to better inform policy-making on issues of importance to Asian Pacific Minnesotans
- Increased understanding of the causes and prevention of violence against Minnesota's Asian Pacific women and children

\*These issues were self-identified by respondents as high priority in the 2019 Legislative Priorities Survey

Approved by the Board on November 15, 2018

## Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, Subd. 8

### Subd. 2. Membership.

- (a) Each council has 15 voting members. Eleven members of each council are public members appointed by the governor. Four members of each council are legislators.
- (b) The governor shall appoint 11 members of each council as follows:
- (c) The Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans must include one member from each of the five ancestries with the state's highest percentages of Asian-Pacific populations, as determined by the state demographer. The other six members must be broadly representative of the rest of the Asian-Pacific population, with no more than one council member from any one ancestry. The council must include at least five women. For purposes of this clause, ancestry refers to heritage that is commonly accepted in Minnesota as a unique population.
- (d) Four legislators are voting members of each council. The speaker of the house and the house minority leader shall each appoint one member to each council. The Subcommittee on Committees of the senate Committee on Rules and Administration shall appoint one member of the majority caucus and one member of the minority caucus to each council.

### Subd. 7. Duties of council members.

A council member shall:

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



**DAVID MAEDA, Chair**  
Term start: 7/1/2018  
Term expire: 1/3/2022  
Ancestry representing:  
Japanese



**DAI HOANG, Vice-Chair**  
Term start: 2/2017  
Term expire: 1/6/2020  
Ancestry representing:  
Vietnamese



**ZOE ZHI, Treasurer**  
Term start: 2/2017  
Term expire: 1/4/2021  
Ancestry representing:  
Chinese



**GRACE LEE**  
Term start: 9/13/2015  
Term expire: 1/7/2019  
Ancestry representing:  
Korean



**ANIL HURKADLI**  
Term start: 3/5/2016  
Term expire: 1/6/2020  
Ancestry representing:  
Asian Indian



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



**SHARON LIM**  
Term start: 2/2017  
Term expire: 1/4/2021  
Ancestry representing:  
Malaysian



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



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



**PAVOUA LEE**  
Term start: 9/15/2018  
Term expire: 1/6/2020  
Ancestry representing:  
Hmong



**FAAMATI WINEY**  
Term start: 9/13/2015  
Term expire: 1/7/2019  
Ancestry representing:  
Polynesian/Samoan



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



**SENATOR ROGER C.  
CHAMBERLAIN (R)**  
Term start: 2/2017  
Term expire: N/A



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



**REPRESENTATIVE  
JOANN WARD (D)**  
Term start: 2/2017  
Term expire: N/A

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

### Who are the Bhutanese?

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

Estimated Population in Minnesota – 1,142

Major Religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Kirat, and Christianity

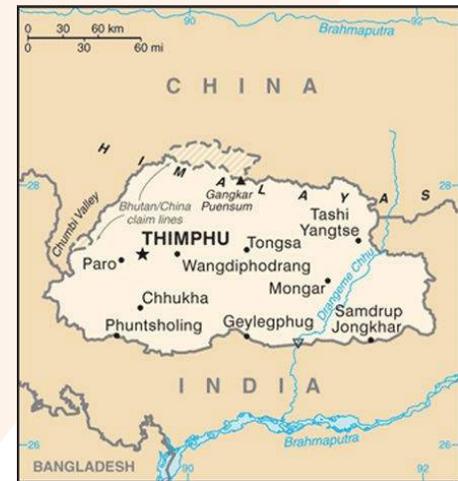
### Why did they leave Bhutan?

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

### The Bhutanese in Minnesota.

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

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



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

### Who are the Chuukese?

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

Estimated Population in Minnesota – 1,003

Major Religions – Christianity, specifically Catholic and Protestant

### Why did they leave Micronesia?

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

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

### The Chuukese in Minnesota.

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

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



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

### Who are the Guyanese?

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

Estimated Population in Minnesota – 1,939

Major Religions – Hinduism and Christianity

### Why did they leave Guyana?

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

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

### The Guyanese in Minnesota.

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

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



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

### Who are the Karen?

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

Estimated Total Population in Minnesota - 12,000

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

### Why did they leave Burma?

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

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

### The Karen in Minnesota.

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

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



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

### Who are the Karenni?

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

Estimated Population in Minnesota - over 2,000

Major Religions - Mostly Christians, Buddhists, and Animists

### Why did they leave Burma?

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

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

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

### The Karenni in Minnesota.

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



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