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**Asian American Legal Defense
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**OUTLOOK
Spring 2012**

AALDEF
99 Hudson St., 12F
NYC 10013-2815

SAVE THE DATE: June 18

Our annual Summer Cocktail Party will take place on Monday, June 18, 6-9 pm at Crimson, 915 Broadway, and cash bar. Advance tickets: \$50 non-members, \$40 AALDEF members. \$55 at the door.

For more info, email events@aaldef.org

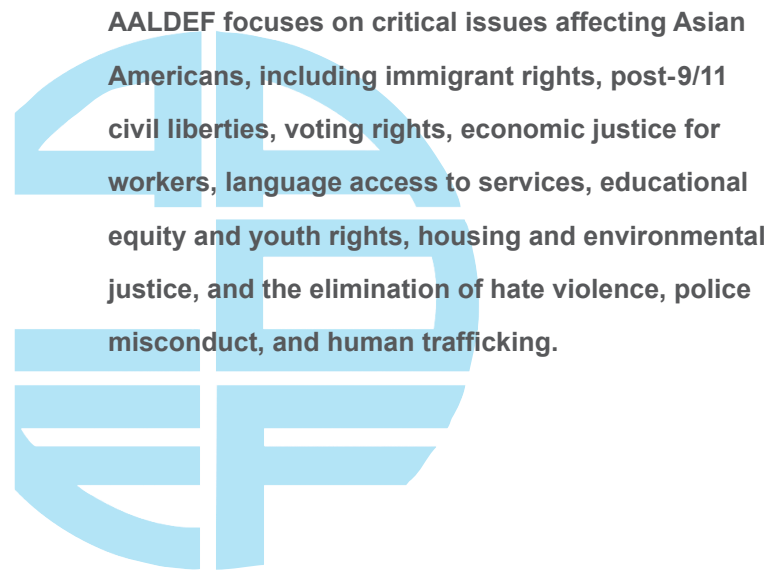


April 27

AALDEF Executive Director Margaret Fung receives the Yuri Kochiyama Lifetime Achievement Award at the Asian Law Caucus 40th anniversary dinner in San Francisco. For more information, visit <http://asianlawcaucus.org>

May 24

The AALDEF Young Professionals Committee is hosting a film screening of "Sing Your Song," the new documentary about singer and activist Harry Belafonte, followed by a discussion on voting rights with the director and AALDEF staff, at Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft. To RSVP, email events@aaldef.org



Catch up on the latest highlights from AALDEF's fight for civil rights:

Economic Justice

New Legal Victories for Immigrant Workers

In February alone, AALDEF won three legal victories for a Nepali nail salon worker, a Chinese hotel housekeeper, and one Latino and two Korean-Chinese former kitchen workers. After enduring abusive working conditions, racist remarks, inhumane working hours, and denial of wages, these immigrant workers were brave enough to stand up for their rights. "They have given others hope that legal recourse is still possible in the midst of a recession," said staff attorney Shirley Lin.

Post 9/11 Civil Liberties

Go FOIL Yourself!

The NYPD reportedly kept hundreds of files on Muslim American students, businesses, and other innocent citizens. So how do you stand up for your rights? We say: Go FOIL Yourself! Join the countless individuals in AALDEF's mass campaign for NYPD transparency by using our resources to file a New York Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request to find out if the police are spying on you. The more requests that are filed, the stronger our message to the NYPD!

Who Watches the NYPD?

AALDEF has joined over 100 social justice organizations in asking the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate the NYPD's surveillance of Muslim Americans across the Northeast. We also filed a Freedom of Information Law request to find out how the NYPD is paying for this massive program. "Very little information is publicly available regarding how the NYPD funds these vast surveillance programs," said staff attorney Nermeen Arastu. "We deserve to know how our taxpayer dollars are being spent."

Anti-Trafficking Initiative

Embassy Couple Indicted for Trafficking

AALDEF is representing an Indonesian woman who, along with her daughter, was forced by a former UAE embassy worker and her husband to do domestic work in their Virginia home. Both women faced forced labor, imprisonment, threats, and sexual assault. Recently, the couple was charged in a 17-count criminal indictment by a federal grand jury. "Because of diplomatic immunity, criminal charges against diplomats are rare, despite the many reports of labor trafficking," said staff attorney Ivy Suriyopas. "This indictment is an important step."

1. 2012 Justice in Action honorees Parkin Lee, Jean Koh Peters, and Fareed Zakaria 2. Former JIA honoree Art Chong joins 2012 honoree Parkin Lee and gala co-chair Moses Silverman of Paul Weiss 3. *Daily Show's* Aasif Mandvi borrows Fareed Zakaria's award for a group photo 4. Gala co-chair Katy Choo, former JIA honoree Alice Young, and AALDEF assistant director Lillian Ling 5. Co-emcees Sree Sreenivasan and Juju Chang with Aasif Mandvi 6. AALDEF staff



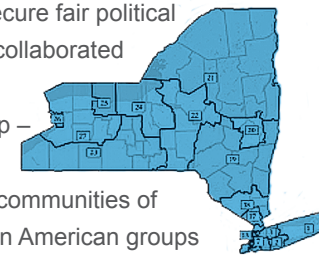
Justice in Action 2012

For the Year of the Dragon, AALDEF presented the 2012 Justice in Action Awards to Fareed Zakaria of *TIME* and CNN, Jean Koh Peters of Yale Law School, and Parkin Lee of The Rockefeller Group at its lunar new year celebration on Feb. 8. With the help of our spirited emcees Juju Chang, Emmy Award-winning correspondent for ABC News *Nightline*, and Sree Sreenivasan, Dean of Student Affairs at Columbia Journalism School, plus the razor-sharp satire of *Daily Show* correspondent Aasif Mandvi, it was an unforgettable evening. Before an audience of over 850 people, all three Justice in Action honorees spoke about the power of the immigrant experience and the importance of giving back to one's community.

Voting Rights

Asian Americans Make Strides in NY Redistricting

Redistricting, or the drawing of new voting district lines, is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to secure fair political representation. Last fall, AALDEF collaborated with a multiracial coalition of civil rights groups to draw the Unity Map – our district plan for protecting minority voting rights and keeping communities of interest together. We assisted Asian American groups across New York City and testified at public hearings. With pro bono co-counsel Kaye Scholer LLP, we intervened in a federal lawsuit on behalf of Asian Americans.



"We have fought for the voting rights of Asian Americans at every step of the redistricting process," said staff attorney Jerry Vattamala. AALDEF achieved a major outcome: the New York Congressional redistricting map closely resembles our Unity Map and keeps communities of interest together. Now, there is an open congressional seat in Queens that is almost 40% Asian American.

Next Up: City Council Redistricting

Our work isn't over yet! As state redistricting winds down, the New York City Council redistricting process is starting to pick up. As we have done in the last two decades, AALDEF will propose new council district lines that reflect the City's Asian American population growth.

Educational Equity

National Summit for Youth Education Advocates

In April, AALDEF will host the second national summit of the National Asian American Education Advocates (NAAEA) Network in New York City. NAAEA is a national collaborative of youth and parent organizers, education lawyers, policy advocates, and community organizations. Our summit will develop best practices for serving Asian American youth on issues such as anti-Asian bullying and harassment, English Language Learner (ELL) programs, and the DREAM Act.

Housing and Environmental Justice

Chinatown Charged With \$400,000 in Illegal Fees

The NYC Department of Finance overcharged Chinatown small business and property owners thousands in Business Improvement District (BID) fees for four months, even before there was a Chinatown BID. After AALDEF spoke out for the owners and threatened to file a lawsuit on their behalf, the City conceded its mistake. Chinatown property owners will now reportedly be reimbursed as much as \$400,000 in total. "This is a real victory," said staff attorney Bethany Li.

Immigrants' Rights

The New York State DREAM Act

At our immigration clinics, undocumented students tell us that one of the biggest issues they face is how to pay for college tuition. AALDEF is launching a local youth group and has urged the New York City Council to support a statewide DREAM Act.

In Memoriam: Gordon Hirabayashi

Gordon Hirabayashi, who challenged the U.S. government's incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, passed away on Jan. 2, 2012 at the age of 93. Hirabayashi was imprisoned for defying a curfew law imposed on Japanese Americans and took his case to the Supreme Court. Forty years later, his wartime conviction was vacated. He said: "There was a time when I felt that the Constitution failed me. But...the U.S. government admitted it made a mistake. A country that can do that is a strong country." AALDEF presented Hirabayashi with its Justice in Action Award in 1992 and has created the Hirabayashi Social Justice Fellowship to carry on his legacy.