



Together To Build A Healthy Community

# Annual Report

FY2011

Asian American Health Initiative  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
Department of Health and Human Services

# Message from Leadership

The Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI), a program under the Montgomery County, Maryland, Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS), is proud to release its Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11) Annual Report. This past year has been one of both progress and transition at AAHI as we built upon our mission to provide the Asian American residents of Montgomery County with culturally and linguistically competent healthcare services and educational programs in the backdrop of an uncertain national economy. In FY11, we were able not only to maintain the high level of service that our constituents have come to expect from our core programs, but also were able to enhance our efforts in priority areas, such as community mobilization and data collection, introducing several new initiatives that address our five-year organizational strategic targets.

With support from our friends and partners in the community, a cohort of trained volunteer health promoters, MCDHHS, and the dedicated members of the AAHI Steering Committee, we were able to provide essential services to at-risk populations throughout the County, offering hepatitis B screening, vaccination, and treatment consultation to hundreds of area residents; linking low-income community members to life-saving cancer screening services; and empowering local nonprofits and community organizations to identify and define their own unique health needs.

Mirroring a national trend, the Asian American community in Montgomery County has been one of the fastest growing segments of the population during the past 20 years. To ensure that resources are available when and where they are needed, health organizations serving Asian Americans must plan flexible programs that work among a diverse and growing population. Guided by the five targets identified in our recently released strategic plan, we were able to respond to the needs of our growing community through key partnerships and collaborations with organizations throughout the metropolitan D.C. area. We continued to work with public health experts and medical practitioners in order to enhance access to quality healthcare services and educational programs, while teaming with public, private, and nonprofit organizations to improve community outreach, augment service delivery, and reduce overlap.

We hope as you read this report detailing our achievements during the past year that you share our pride in the progress that has been made. We recognize, however, there is still much work to be done to eliminate health disparities, achieve health equity, and ensure that all residents of Montgomery County have equitable access to quality care.



Harry Kwon, PhD, MPH, MCHES  
AAHI Steering Committee Chair



Meng K. Lee  
AAHI Steering Committee Vice Chair



Chun Man (Perry) Chan  
AAHI Senior Program Coordinator





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# About AAHI



## BACKGROUND

With the support of the Montgomery County Executive, County Council, and community leaders, the Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) was formed in 2004 under the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) to address the unique and neglected health needs of the County's Asian American residents. With an organizational mission and goals designed to meet recommendations from the scientific health literature, gaps in existing services, and knowledge of social and cultural issues special to Montgomery County's Asian American population, AAHI formulated its programs to target specific disparities, offer desired services that previously had been unavailable to community members, and improve access to existing resources.

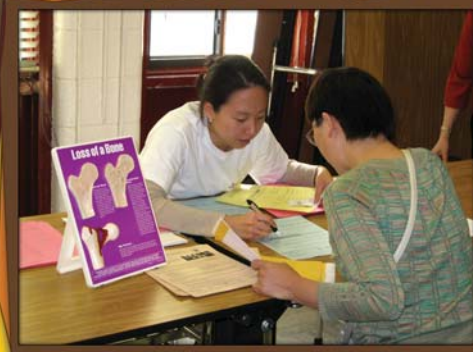
## MISSION

To identify the health care needs of Asian American communities, develop culturally competent health care services, and implement health programs that are accessible and available to all Asian Americans in Montgomery County.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, Asian Americans represent a linguistically and culturally diverse community of people tracing origins to any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. Montgomery County's Asian American population—comprising 13.9 percent of the County's total population—is similarly diverse and continues to expand, having grown 37.3 percent between 2000 and 2010. In fact, the County's 135,451 Asian American residents represent 42.5 percent of the state of Maryland's total Asian American population, according to the decennial census data.

American Community Survey data from 2007- 2009 show that, overwhelmingly, this community is comprised of recent immigrants—nearly three-quarters are foreign born—and more than a quarter of all households are linguistically isolated. Community representatives from many of the Asian American ethnic subgroups work with AAHI to ensure that no community goes unnoticed and AAHI and County programs and resources are accessible to all.

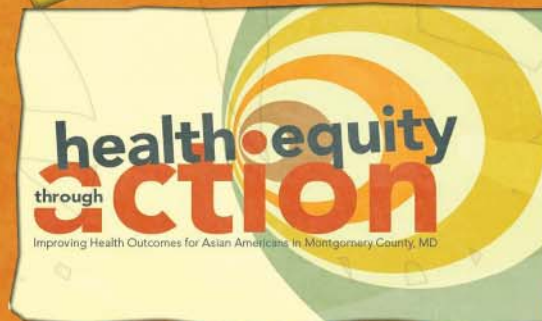




# FY11 At A Glance



**Launch of AAHI Website**



**Strategic Plan 2011-2015**



**E.C.H.O. Project**



**Health Education Articles**



**Hepatitis B Project**



**AAHI in the Community**





# Access To Culturally & Linguistically Competent Care



Asian Americans in Montgomery County trace their roots to more than 16 countries and speak more than two dozen languages and dialects. Coupled with substantial Latino and African American populations, Montgomery County's rich diversity is perhaps one of its greatest assets. Many segments of minority communities, however, are also among the most vulnerable to shifts in the economy and are more prone to suffer from poor health outcomes. To combat these trends, public health professionals must strive to ensure that all members of the community have access to culturally and linguistically competent services tailored to the County's evolving demography.



In addition to language and cultural barriers, the Asian American Health Initiative's 2008 countywide health needs assessment found that community members experience variable challenges in accessing optimal health and human services. From lack of insurance and financial concerns to limited transportation—particularly among seniors—and a dearth of Asian-language medical providers, the barriers to health care access are numerous.



In response to the concerns and opinions expressed by the community, AAHI has developed and implemented several initiatives that enable residents to access appropriate health care services. In FY11, AAHI initiated the Health Education in Ethnic Media Campaign. Along with the flagship Patient Navigator and Health Promoters programs, the project increases public awareness of relevant health issues by providing education and information regarding community resources and expanding the organization's reach in limited-English speaking and socially isolated households.

Through continued collaboration with long-standing community partners and by redoubling efforts to forge new partnerships, the work documented in this section highlights some of AAHI's greatest successes this fiscal year in enhancing access to linguistically and culturally competent care.





## Highlights

## PATIENT NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

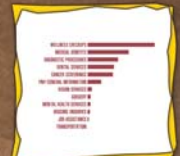
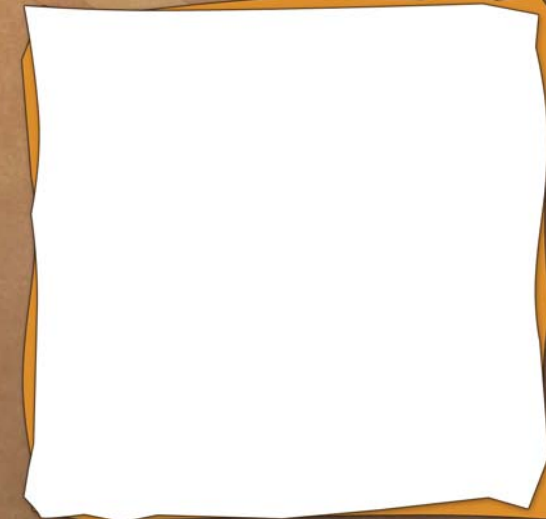


In response to concerns regarding access to health care among the County's Asian American population, AAHI created the Patient Navigator Program (PNP) in 2008. As a group, AAHI patient navigators cover a multitude of languages and dialects spoken by Asian Americans, including Chinese, Hindi, Korean, and Vietnamese.

The Patient Navigator Program provides two essential services: (1) a multi-lingual health information and referral line; and (2) trained multi-lingual medical interpreters for on-site, face-to-face interpretation during medical appointments.

For the past four years, AAHI patient navigators have assisted low-income residents, the uninsured, and individuals with limited English skills in accessing County services via scheduling medical appointments, seeking out suitable clinics based on individual needs, and providing no-cost medical translation services.

- 5471 total client encounters
- 4066 calls received
- 88.27% of clients linked to county services
- 84% of callers had no insurance
- 1099 on-site medical interpreting sessions
- 306 medical interpreting sessions by phone







# Highlights HEALTH EDUCATION IN ETHNIC MEDIA

Community outreach and health education are crucial components of any successful public health initiative. Especially among Asian American populations, a comprehensive outreach strategy assures that residents increase their knowledge and awareness regarding specific health concerns impacting their community and resources available to address those needs. In tandem with enhancing its online and social media strategy, in FY11, AAHI launched the Health Education in Ethnic Media Campaign, a series of culturally relevant health education articles published in both print and online English- and Asian-language news sources.

AAHI's health education articles are reviewed by experts in the field and provide pertinent information regarding health access and available community resources and services. Considering the demographic composition of Montgomery County's Asian American community, utilization of the local ethnic media, which many non-English speakers in the community rely on as a primary source for news, is and will remain an essential component of AAHI's strategy to educate the community and enhance access to culturally competent care.

- 4 health education articles
- 4 media sources: The Washington Chinese News, The Korea Daily, India This Week, The Muslim Link Paper
- 4 topics covered: Breast cancer, Diabetes, Cancer Prevention, Mental Health



## Highlights

## AAHI LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

When AAHI's website first launched six years ago, its multilingual functionality was a tremendous asset in the organization's early efforts to reach out to diverse and linguistically isolated communities. As AAHI broadened the scope of its programs, however, the need for an online strategy with greater flexibility and increased opportunity to interact with partners and Asian American health organizations—not just locally but nationwide—became increasingly apparent.

After months in development, the enhanced [www.AAHIInfo.org](http://www.AAHIInfo.org) went live in March 2011. The new site maintains its multilingual features, with pages in Chinese, Hindi, Korean, and Vietnamese, translated by professional translators. Each language page is culturally tailored to the needs of individual communities, but also has newly-added functions that provide AAHI staff the opportunity to disseminate information with greater ease and wider reach. With links to [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), an [AAHI community blog](#), media sharing on [Vimeo](#) and [Picasa](#), and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) health updates, [AAHIInfo.org](http://AAHIInfo.org) is a valuable tool for County resources, Asian American health information, and the latest news and publications from AAHI.







## Highlights

## EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services has a clearly established vision for a healthy, safe, and strong community. To this end, AAHI participates in the Montgomery County Equity and Social Justice Initiative, a cross-disciplinary and demographically diverse team that focuses on the use of fair policies, decisions, and actions to positively affect the lives of people.

The Equity and Social Justice Initiative, which has formed a principal workgroup to lead efforts within the initiative, convenes to plan, implement, and evaluate activities that will ultimately assist the department in integrating equity as a core value in all related work. The Asian American Health Initiative and its partners believe that effective, equity-focused strategies will, ultimately, promote better outcomes for all.

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Definition of Equity:

*“Equity – defined as: fair policies, decisions, and actions – guides the way that we work with our customers, our colleagues and our community to promote health, safety, well-being, and self-sufficiency.”*

ACCESS to Culturally and Linguistically Competent Care





# Promoting Community Mobilization and Empowerment



In the *Strategic Plan 2011-2015: Health Equity through Action – Improving Health Outcomes for Asian Americans in Montgomery County*, AAHI put forth as a primary organizational objective the promotion of community mobilization and empowerment among the County’s Asian American population. Engaging all sectors of the populace in a community-wide effort to address specific health outcomes, community mobilization brings together policymakers and local government agencies, community leaders, professional associations, and faith-based organizations to empower groups and individuals in the community to work toward positive change.



The advantages of community mobilization efforts are myriad. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in its *Community Mobilization Guide* enumerates the benefits of a sound community mobilization strategy to include the introduction of new energy into an issue through community buy-in and support, promotion of local ownership and decision making about a health issue, reduction of competition and redundancy of service, and the creation of a unified voice in efforts to change public policies and health practices.



This past year, AAHI carried out several initiatives that help empower organizations and individuals to identify health priorities, address specific issues of concern, and affect positive change in their respective communities. AAHI once again demonstrated its ability to create meaningful relationships in the community, providing partners with consultation and technical assistance, health education resource planning, and linkage to a vast network of community- and faith-based organizations active in Montgomery County.

With the sustained success of well-established programs throughout the metropolitan D.C. area, in addition to the introduction of several new and inspiring initiatives, FY11 proved another successful year in AAHI’s efforts to mobilize individuals and groups from diverse segments of the community.



## Highlights

## HEALTH PROMOTERS PROGRAM



AAHI's first initiative designed to promote community mobilization and empowerment, the Health Promoters Program relies on active, bilingual and bicultural members of diverse Asian American communities to facilitate AAHI's delivery of culturally competent resources and expand the organization's network of partners. In their efforts to raise awareness of important health concerns, promote wellness, and encourage community members to take individual action to better health, AAHI's health promoters participate in a variety of trainings on disease-specific conditions, community outreach strategies, and the social determinants of health.

Often referred to as community health workers, AAHI health promoters, who are members of the communities they serve and are familiar with mainstream institutions, processes, and resources available throughout the County, lend support to the AAHI in its endeavors to reach out to new segments of the population and create lasting partnerships in the community.

- 31 health promoters
- 17 languages and dialects spoken
- 16 ethnic communities represented
- 19 trainings attended
- 14 new health promoters in FY11
- 14 health promoters with 3+ years of experience in the program







## Highlights

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS

A basic tenet of the Asian American Health Initiative has always been to provide outreach events that inform and educate the diverse pan-Asian American communities in Montgomery County. Since its founding, AAHI has participated in and carried out hundreds of health fairs, educational seminars, and community-based activities that increase awareness of diseases and health risks of particular concern.

Partnering with organizations in more than 14 ethnic communities in FY11, AAHI's activities facilitate the dissemination of important health information and provide technical assistance and support to community members. Through its outreach events, AAHI also provides links to free and low-cost screening and referral services throughout the County.

- 77 outreach events
- 14 ethnic communities reached
- 4801 educational encounters
- 7870 literature distributed
- 342 health service referrals
- 1688 health screenings performed

In FY11, AAHI's community outreach events included health fairs, hepatitis B projects, health education workshops, and the independent outreach project.





## Highlights

## HEPATITIS B PROJECT



Though Asian Americans represent less than 5 percent of the United States' total population, along with Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders they account for more than half of the estimated 2 million Americans living with chronic hepatitis B.

This past year, AAHI teamed with the Hepatitis B Initiative of Greater Washington, D.C., the Organization of Chinese Americans – D.C. Chapter, and a cohort of public, private, and nonprofit organizations to carry out a free screening, vaccination, and treatment consultation program in October 2010. More information on this collaboration can be found on [page 22](#).

In FY11, AAHI also provided in-depth assistance to the Viet Nam Medical Assistance Program (VNMAP), a community-based nonprofit organization, offering expertise during the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Screening, Management, Awareness, and Solutions for Hepatitis B (SMASH-B) project, targeting the County's Vietnamese American community. AAHI staff provided technical assistance and support throughout the project, empowering VNMAP to raise awareness among its constituents and better respond to this serious health risk within the community.

- 114 participants
- 100% of hepatitis B at-risk participants referred to vaccinations, of whom 80% completed the three-shot vaccination series
- 100% of hepatitis B infected participants referred to follow up care, of whom 64% accessed treatment
- 100% of participants reported they will urge family and friends to be screened and/or vaccinated
- 100% of participants reported overall satisfaction with the project

Promoting Community Mobilization and EMPOWERMENT





## Highlights

## HEALTH EDUCATION WORKSHOPS



Congruous with its mission to provide culturally competent healthcare services and educational programs, AAHI complemented its outreach efforts in FY11 with the introduction of in-depth health education workshops.

Planned in close cooperation with community- or faith-based organizations, the workshops provide topical health information in a smaller, more interactive setting than the traditional outreach event or health fair. Collaboratively, AAHI and the organization's leadership select a topic based on the community's interest in and concern regarding a specific health issue. Workshop participants attend an informative lecture presented by an expert in the field, partake in a question-and-answer session, and are invited to take home relevant literature that encourages healthful habits.

The workshops also provide an opportunity to link participants to health screenings in the area, serving as a valuable tool in empowering participating communities to take greater control in shaping their individual health outcomes

- 4 workshops conducted in the community
- 4 topics covered: Osteoporosis, Breast Cancer, Mental Health, and Nutrition & Well-being
- 130 educational encounters





## Highlights

## INDEPENDENT OUTREACH PROJECT

One of the greatest impediments to achieving health parity in minority communities is a lack of access to the many smaller, isolated, and often marginalized pockets within these populations. Recognizing this concern, AAHI established another pilot initiative in FY11, the Independent Outreach Project (IOP).

AAHI created a manual to enhance the ability to connect with hard-to-reach members of the community. The IOP, piloted from February to June 2011, places particular emphasis on small-business owners and their employees, as well as the congregants of smaller community and religious organizations. Through independent outreach, conducted on-site, business owners and their employees learn about the health risks impacting their communities and the local resources available to assist them.

- 36 small businesses and communities reached
- 202 educational encounters
- 440 literature distributed
- 86 health service referrals





## Highlights

## E.C.H.O. PROJECT



The social fabric of Montgomery County is a complex union of racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic diversity. Particularly among the Asian American population, the specific health needs and concerns of ethnic subgroups vary greatly, rendering it necessary for the faith- and community-based organizations that serve these ethnic communities to establish their own unique health agendas.

With this in mind, AAHI initiated the **Empowering Community Health Organizations (E.C.H.O.)** Project, a new series of practical and professional technical assistance training workshops designed to empower and enhance the ability of community leaders to develop culturally and linguistically competent health programming. Launched in May 2011, in honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, AAHI hosted its first free workshop to strengthen the capacity of organizations that serve the County's diverse Asian American community. The first workshop, MCDHHS 101, discussed the numerous services and resources available through Montgomery County's Department of Health and Human Services and how community organizations can utilize this information to better serve their constituents. Prior to planning and implementation, AAHI conducted a thorough assessment of the communities' training needs and interests in order to establish seminar topics that would offer the greatest benefit. Through the E.C.H.O. Project, AAHI is working to ensure that communities maintain the momentum necessary to take charge of their own health.

- 30 individuals attended
- 13 organizations represented





# Partnerships and Collaboration



AAHI has developed an extensive network of partners within Asian American communities throughout Montgomery County, as well as public and private collaborators at the local, state, and national levels. Collaborative work is extremely important in building a healthy community, especially considering the overlap of social and economic factors that impact health and wellness. Effective coalitions enable a large scope of service delivery and resource distribution while ensuring that efforts have minimal duplicative properties.



The importance of strong, lasting partnerships between public health agencies and community- and faith-based organizations cannot be overstated. They lead not only to improved efficiency, but also to greater cultural awareness. Especially when working with minority populations, government public health agencies must work doubly hard to understand fully the values, norms, and mores of a particular community. By creating partnerships with local community organizations and their leaders, AAHI gains access to trusted authorities within the County's many communities, ensuring that community members will place similar confidence in AAHI and the Montgomery County government.



As a strategic goal for the next five years, AAHI will work to strengthen its existing partnerships in order to enhance collaborative provision of services and resources. FY11 provided an opportunity for the Asian American Health Initiative to do just that: fortifying ties with existing partners and creating new collaborations with local nonprofits. From partnering with an area hospital to provide breast health education programs and mammogram assistance, to teaming with a collection of public and private partners to offer free hepatitis B education, screening, vaccination, and treatment consultation, AAHI continued to nurture relationships that foster the implementation of culturally competent healthcare services and educational programs.





## Highlights **M.C.E.P.**

AAHI has a long-standing partnership with Holy Cross Hospital, Casa De Maryland, Community Ministries of Rockville, the African American Health Program, and Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs to coordinate the implementation of the **Minority Communities Empowerment Project (M.C.E.P.)**, a grant-funded outreach initiative supported by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Minority Outreach & Technical Assistance program (M.O.T.A.).

The project, which builds capacity in racial and ethnic communities through outreach, empowerment and education, creates an opportunity for AAHI to work collaboratively with other minority health organizations throughout the County and share important knowledge of the health challenges faced by diverse populations.





## Highlights

## HEALTH DISPARITY CONFERENCE



The Center on Health Disparities at Adventist HealthCare was formed to raise community awareness about local health disparities, improve capacity to deliver population-based care, and develop solutions to eliminate gaps in local health coverage and treatment. In November 2010, the Center—in partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and the health departments of Frederick and Prince George's counties—hosted its 4th Annual Health Disparities Conference.

As a part of the conference planning committee, AAHI worked closely with the group's members to set forth an engaging agenda. The conference, under the banner *Social Determinants of Health: the Role of Healthcare in Leading Social Change in Local Communities*, provided community leaders from different sectors across the region an opportunity to learn about how environmental, socioeconomic, and political factors impact health outcomes.

With presentations and panel discussions by nationally recognized leaders from the fields of public health, healthcare management, and policy, participants had the opportunity to learn from and network with diverse professionals dedicated to improving community health.

AAHI congratulates the Chinese Cultural and Community Service Center (CCACC), their long-standing partner, for receiving the Blue Ribbon Award, recognizing their efforts in promoting health equity, at the annual conference.







## Highlights

## PUBLICATIONS QUALITY CHECK

The National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), of the National Institutes of Health, is tasked with supporting research into the causes, treatment, and prevention of arthritis and musculoskeletal and skin diseases and the dissemination of these findings.

AAHI and NIAMS first partnered in 2008 to develop culturally and linguistically appropriate education materials for distribution at outreach events and translate literature into several Asian languages. In 2011, the organizations teamed up again on the development and promotion of audio materials for educational use. With NIAMS expanding its library of foreign-language audio files, AAHI health promoters were tasked with ensuring the quality and linguistic accuracy of the six Chinese-language publications, produced for individuals with visual impairments or limited literacy skills. Since the release of these valuable resources, AAHI has also assisted NIAMS with their promotional efforts, informing the Chinese American community of Montgomery County of their availability.

### Topics reviewed:

- Acne
- Back Pain
- Knee Problems
- Osteoarthritis
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Sprains & Strains





## Highlights

## COMMUNITY HEPATITIS B EVENT



Concerned about the prevalence of hepatitis B and lack of awareness surrounding the disease in Asian American communities in the Greater Washington, D.C. area, a team of non-profit organizations and private and public entities coordinated a free hepatitis B education, screening, vaccination, and treatment consultation program in Rockville, Maryland attended by more than 200 people in October 2010.

Led by the Hepatitis B Initiative of Greater Washington, D.C., other collaborators included the Chinese Culture and Community Service Center, the Chinese American Medical Society – Mid Atlantic Region, the Organization of Chinese Americans – Greater D.C. Chapter, Bristol-Myers Squibb, the University of Maryland's Phi Delta Sigma, Inc., and the Asian American Health Initiative. A truly collaborative effort, more than 60 volunteers gave their time and resources to combat one of the greatest health threats facing Asian Americans today.





## Highlights

## AAHI 101 PRESENTATIONS



As the United States continues to grow in terms of its ethnic, racial, and religious diversity, the need has also grown for healthcare systems and providers who are able to respond effectively to these shifting demographics. To eliminate gaps in access and quality of care, it has become essential for practitioners to study the values, beliefs, and behaviors as they pertain to the health of the nation's diverse population.

In order to facilitate the development of a health sector that is informed about needs specific to the Asian American population, AAHI initiated AAHI 101 presentations in the community. An all-inclusive introduction to AAHI and the Asian American community, AAHI 101 presentations inform partners and collaborators in the community, as well as interested individuals and healthcare providers, about Asian American demographics, barriers to accessing care, Asian American health disparities, AAHI's mission and programs, and the critical importance of cultural and linguistic competency in the Asian American community.

### Organizations presented to:

- American Heart Association
- Asian American LEAD
- Child Center and Adult Services, Inc
- Mental Health Advisory Committee of Montgomery County
- Morgan State University, School of Community Health and Policy
- Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation
- Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County
- Sri Lankan Association of Washington DC
- The Danya Institute
- University of Maryland, Asian American Studies Program
- University of Maryland, School of Public Health, Department of Behavioral and Community Health Internship Program

**PARTNERSHIPS** and Collaboration





## Highlights

## LOCAL, STATE & NATIONAL COLLABORATORS

- Adventist HealthCare Center on Health Disparities Advisory Group
- African American Health Program
- African Women's Cancer Awareness Association
- Alpha Kappa Alpha
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- Asian American LEAD
- Asian Indians for Community Service
- Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
- Asian Pacific Islander Caucus for Public Health
- Asian Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project
- Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment and Leadership
- Bait-ur-Rahman Mosque
- Bethany Presbyterian Church
- Boat People, SOS
- Burma American Buddhist Association
- Cambodian Buddhist Society
- Cambodian Senior Association
- CCACC Pan Asian Volunteer Health Clinic
- Child Care & Adult Services, Inc.
- Chinese American Senior Services Association
- Chinese Bible Church of Maryland
- Chinese Culture and Community Service Center, Inc
- Cigarette Restitution Fund Program
- Community Ministries of Rockville
- Coordination Council of Chinese American Associations
- Cross Cultural Infotech
- Crusader Lutheran Church
- Danya Institute
- East County Citizens Advisory Board
- Ebenezer Korean Church
- Family Services, Inc.
- Food & Drug Administration, Women's Group
- G.O.S.P.E.L. Program
- Gaithersburg Chinese Alliance Church
- Gaithersburg Upcounty Senior Center
- Global Mission Church
- Guru Nanak Foundation of America
- Healthy Montgomery Community Health Improvement Process
- Hepatitis B - Patient Advocacy Liaison Program, Bristol Myers Squibb
- Hepatitis B Initiative-DC
- Hepatitis B Taskforce
- Holy Cross Hospital
- Indonesian Muslim Association of America
- International Buddhist Center
- International Rescue Committee
- Islamic Center of Maryland
- Japanese Christian Community Center
- Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
- Johns Hopkins University National Children's Study Center - Advisory Board
- Korean Community Services Center of Greater Washington
- Korean Presbyterian Church
- Latino Health Initiative
- Long Branch Senior Center
- Maryland Asian American Cancer Program
- Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Center Health Promotion Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities
- Maryland Insurance Administration
- MCC Medical Clinic
- Maryland Vietnamese Mutual Association
- Mobile Medical Clinic
- Montgomery College
- Montgomery County Cancer Coalition
- Montgomery County Cancer Crusaders
- Montgomery County Equity & Social Justice Initiative
- Montgomery County Gastroenterology
- Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
- Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships
- Montgomery County Tobacco Coalition
- Montgomery General Hospital
- Muslim Community Center
- NIH, Asian Pacific American Organization
- NIH, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases
- New Covenant Fellowship Church
- Nueva Vida
- Organization of Chinese Americans- DC Chapter
- Our Lady of Vietnam Church
- People's Community Wellness Center
- Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County
- Shady Grove Adventist Hospital
- Southern Asian Seventh Day Adventist Church
- St. Rose of Lima Church
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Suburban Hospital, Johns Hopkins Medicine
- Sri Lanka Association of Washington DC
- Thai Alliance of America
- U.S. Census Bureau
- United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education
- University of Maryland College Park, Office of Multicultural Involvement & Community Advocacy
- University of Maryland College Park, School of Public Health
- Viet Nam Medical Assistance Program
- Vietnamese American Senior Association
- Washington Adventist Hospital
- Washington Japanese Alliance Church
- Washington Kali Temple
- Wat Thai Washington, DC
- Woman's Cancer Control Program
- Women, Infants & Children
- YMCA





## Highlights

## WORK GROUP PARTICIPATION

- Adventist HealthCare Center on Health Disparities – Advisory Group
- Asian Pacific Islander Caucus for Public Health in official relations with the American Public Health Association – Executive Committee
- Healthy Montgomery Community Health Improvement Process
- Johns Hopkins University National Children's Study Center – Advisory Board
- Maryland Asian American Cancer Program, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and University of Maryland School of Public Health – Community Advisory Board
- Montgomery County DHHS Cancer Coalition
- Montgomery County DHHS Equity & Social Justice Initiative
- Montgomery County DHHS Tobacco Free Coalition
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Disease – Multicultural Outreach Workgroup

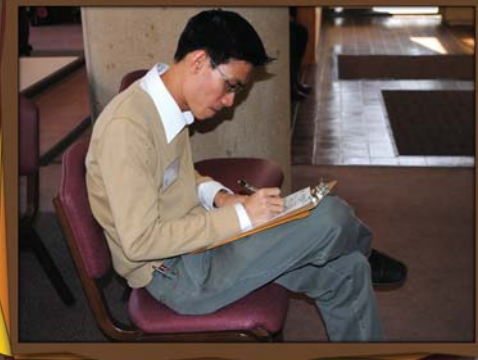




# Data Collection and Reporting



Given the rich diversity of the Asian American population, scholars and public health professionals have been advocating for the collection of disaggregated, subgroup-specific data for years. Without this information, significant disparities facing particular subgroups are attenuated by inclusion with non-affected subgroups. Concurrently, lumped data lead to inaccurate assumptions about Asian Americans as a homogenous group with common needs. Without solid data concerning the specific needs of individual Asian American communities, resources may not be allocated appropriately to ensure that the health needs of underrepresented ethnicities are addressed. Disaggregating the heterogeneous Asian American population through large-scale and community-based surveillance efforts will help to identify high-risk subgroups and facilitate the development of effective targeted interventions.



In line with its mission, AAHI endeavored to address gaps in data through its 2005 and 2008 community health needs assessments and has continued through FY11, carrying out initiatives that incorporate data collection as a fundamental component. While the Patient Navigator Program uses an internal database to track the demographics and health needs of its clients, AAHI collects comprehensive evaluations from health fair participants, community partners, and health care providers. In addition to providing a more robust representation of the local community, AAHI program data are used to gauge program satisfaction, quality, and indicate areas where AAHI programming could be enhanced or expanded.

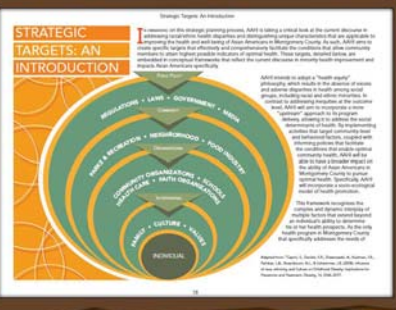
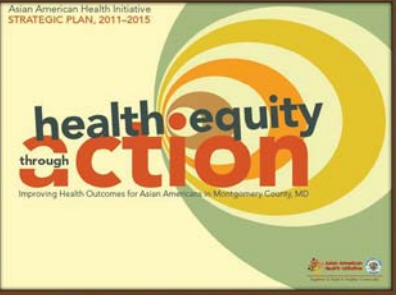


In FY11, AAHI completed and successfully disseminated three comprehensive documents as part of a continued effort to improve the quality and quantity of local health data. In addition, AAHI has continued its collaboration with MCDHHS and agencies participating in the Healthy Montgomery's Community Health Improvement Process. The group's eponymously named website is an in-depth source of population-based data and information about community health and the social and environmental determinants of health.

These efforts help policymakers and health agencies further understand the complexities of the Asian American community and other minority populations of Montgomery County.







## Highlights

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2015

As a management tool, a well-designed, effective strategic plan helps an organization focus its efforts in support of clearly identified final outcomes, serving as a road map for future success. To address the shifting and unidentified needs of the growing Asian American population, AAHI developed a comprehensive, five-year strategic plan, *Health Equity Through Action— Improving Health Outcomes for Asian Americans in Montgomery County*, that proposes a framework for enhancing access to culturally and linguistically competent care, promoting community mobilization and empowerment, strengthening partnerships and collaborations, enhancing data collection and reporting, and establishing organizational sustainability.

To define feasible target areas through 2015, AAHI consulted a variety of sources relevant to moving the organization forward, including recommendations of the 2005 and 2008 county-wide Asian American health needs assessments, perspectives articulated at the 2006 and 2009 Asian American Health Conferences, MCDHHS priorities, and state and national trends. In addition, feedback collected at community health fairs and outreach events and input from community members, community partners, and the AAHI Steering Committee were integral in the development process. The publication is available electronically on the AAHI website, [www.AAHIinfo.org](http://www.AAHIinfo.org).



## Highlights

# HEPATITIS B PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION



Montgomery County, Maryland  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Asian American Health Initiative



### Executive Summary

The Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI), in partnership with the Chinese Culture and Community Center (CCACC), piloted a hepatitis B outreach project in the Chinese American community in Montgomery County, Maryland in fiscal year 2010. The project provided free hepatitis B education, screenings, and referrals to vaccination or treatment to residents of the County over the age of 18, regardless of income level or insurance status. In total, 121 individuals participated.

The project achieved considerable success through its initial launch among Chinese Americans and aimed to increase public awareness about hepatitis B and open the door to treatment and vaccination options for at-risk and infected individuals. Program feedback provided insight into both the Chinese American and other Asian American communities of Montgomery County, particularly with regard to attitudes and behaviors regarding health and healthcare. Through the lessons learned of the pilot project, AAHI is able to further identify gaps and continue efforts to eliminate hepatitis B disparities in the Asian American community.

### III. About the Pilot Project

**Purpose:** To provide culturally and linguistically competent hepatitis B education, screening, and referrals to vaccination or treatment for Chinese American adults through a pilot project in Montgomery County, MD

#### Goals:

- To increase knowledge and awareness about hepatitis B
- To increase access to hepatitis B screening and vaccination
- To engage community members and strengthen capacity to address hepatitis B related issues
- To enhance data collection on hepatitis B

#### Planning

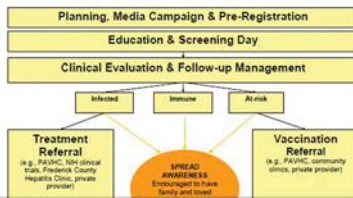


Strong partnerships and effective community engagement with a variety of community- and faith-based organizations was critical during the



### IV. Outcomes

Figure 3. Follow-up Flow Chart



In FY10, AAHI piloted a hepatitis B education, screening, and referral to vaccination or treatment project in partnership with the Chinese American community in Montgomery County. AAHI staff developed qualitative and quantitative data collection tools to analyze and evaluate the project.

The findings of that evaluation were released in a report designed to inform future efforts in the community through a series of conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned. The publication is available electronically on the AAHI website, [www.AAHIinfo.org](http://www.AAHIinfo.org).

A similar evaluation report for the SMASH-B project 2011, conducted with the Vietnamese American community in collaboration with the Viet Nam Medical Assistance Program, is currently in development.





## VOICES AMONG THE SILENT

Stories of Struggle and Strength from Asian Americans in Montgomery County, Maryland



## Highlights

## LAUNCH OF STORYBOOK PUBLICATION

As part of AAHI's continuing efforts to dispel the notion of Asian Americans as a "model minority", unbound by the constraints of poverty and disease, AAHI released a collection of personal stories that illustrate the triumphs and tragedies of the County's Asian American residents. *Voices among the Silent: Stories of Struggle and Strength from Asian Americans in Montgomery County, Maryland* raises awareness about the wide range of challenges faced by the Asian American community, including problems related to health, healthcare access, immigration, and language proficiency.

Joined at the launch in December 2010 by County Executive Isiah Leggett and Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Director Uma Ahluwalia, AAHI and its Steering Committee brought together a diverse group of attendees from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to draw attention to the health struggles of Montgomery County's Asian American residents. The publication is available electronically on the AAHI website, [www.AAHIinfo.org](http://www.AAHIinfo.org).







# Highlights

## HEALTHY MONTGOMERY WEBSITE LAUNCH

In FY11, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services launched the Healthy Montgomery website, [www.HealthyMontgomery.org](http://www.HealthyMontgomery.org), a comprehensive source of population-driven data and information as it pertains to the health status of the residents of Montgomery County. The 100 health indicators presented on the site provide substantive data from which planners, policymakers, and health and social service providers can begin to describe more accurately the health of the entire community.

A product of the Healthy Montgomery community health improvement process, a cross-disciplinary effort that brings together representatives from public and private organizations throughout the County, the initiative collects data, identifies areas for improvement, and monitors the success of the improvement efforts. AAHI actively participates in the community health improvement process.





## Highlights

## PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

### OCTOBER 2010

Diversity Rx Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations

Oral Presentation: *Translating Findings from Health Needs Assessment to Action: A Five Year Strategic Plan*

Poster Presentation: *A Culturally Competent Model to Eliminate Health Disparities among Diverse Asian Americans*

### NOVEMBER 2010

American Public Health Association 138th Annual Meeting & Exposition

Oral Presentation: *Hepatitis B Pilot Program 2010: A Roadmap to Health Parity in the Asian American Community*

### NOVEMBER 2010

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Maryland Breast and Cervical Cancer Program

Oral Presentation: *Successfully Outreaching to Asian Americans*



# Professional Development



The Asian American Health Initiative is built on a foundation of volunteerism and community empowerment. To help foster a future generation of culturally competent health professionals, AAHI offers fall, winter, and summer internships for exceptional high school, undergraduate, and graduate students interested in pursuing careers in health-related disciplines. The development of an incoming workforce comprised of qualified, enthusiastic, and compassionate professionals is a critical step to guaranteeing the implementation of quality public health programs and support services.

The AAHI Internship Program gives students an opportunity to apply their knowledge in a real-world setting and helps them to develop practical skills and build professional relationships that will prove beneficial throughout their careers. AAHI interns work with staff to develop individualized learning plans and design independent projects that allow them to enhance their skills in a variety of ways. Additionally, interns have an opportunity to assist staff with research, develop educational materials, and implement outreach programs that benefit the Asian American communities of Montgomery County.

AAHI also believes, however, that an individual's education should not end at a commencement ceremony. In addition to its internship program, AAHI and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services provide opportunities for its staff to enrich their professional capabilities through participation in professional development programs and County-sponsored trainings. AAHI understands that the key to successful programs in public health is an educated, dedicated, and ever-learning workforce.





## Highlights

## FY11 INTERNS



### FALL 2010 INTERNS

Karishma Dhru

*University of Maryland, School of Public Health*

Kristina Yee

*University of Maryland, School of Public Health*

Shaiza Khalil

*University of Maryland, School of Public Health*

- Produced a photostory video chronicling a personal journey from Voices Among the Silent, an extension of the storybook project
- Researched and developed an educational presentation on geographic information system (GIS)

### SPRING 2011 INTERNS

Patricia Nguyen

*University of Maryland, School of Public Health*

Rebeka Sultana

*University of Maryland, School of Public Health*

- Researched and developed educational presentations and health promotion tools on mental health among Asian American adolescent females and health of nail salon workers
- Provided support on AAHI's hepatitis B project





## Highlights

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT/TRAININGS

July 2010, Jamie Weng was selected to participate in the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC) Leadership and Advocacy Training in Washington, D.C. The forum provided Southeast Asian American community leaders an opportunity to strategize and collaborate on issues related to education, health policy and immigration.

July 2010, Perry Chan attended the Quality Service Review (QSR) training through the Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services. The trained QSR reviewers meet quarterly to evaluate case studies spanning the entirety of service areas offered by MCDHHS. The evaluation consists of reviewing protocol for effectiveness and efficiency.

May 2011, Atyya Chaudhry and Sanjana Quasem participated in a training on Montgomery County's implementation program for limited-English proficient (LEP) residents in Rockville, Maryland. The training provided technical assistance and information to County staff for working with LEP populations.





# Financials

FY11 was challenging for public health and social service agencies reliant on government funding. AAHI's core budget was reduced from \$719,445 to \$552,822. AAHI persevered despite programmatic reductions and continued meeting the needs of the Asian American community.

FY11 expenses for core appropriated funds were captured in two broad categories:

1. **In-House Programs and Administrative:** These include program staff, special projects, office equipment, supplies, printing, and mileage. This category accounts for 19.6% of AAHI's core budget expenditures.
2. **Contracts:** These include contracts with Cross-Cultural InfoTech and Primary Care Coalition. This category accounts for 80.4% of AAHI's core budget expenditures.

In FY11, through collaborations with Holy Cross Hospital and other community partners, AAHI received a \$10,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) Minority Outreach Technical Assistance (MOTA) program. AAHI was also the recipient of a \$10,000 Komen Community Assisted Mammogram Program (KCAMP) grant, supported by Susan G. Komen for the Cure.



# Steering Committee

The Asian American Health Initiative Steering Committee (AAHI SC) comprises a professionally and ethnically diverse group of individuals from the local community who advocate, advise, and assist AAHI staff in their efforts to achieve health equity in Montgomery County. The dedicated members of the Committee provide a wealth of expertise and intimate knowledge of their respective communities.

In FY11, the 16 Steering Committee members upheld their reputation as dedicated servants to the Asian American community through their invaluable support to AAHI and MCDHHS efforts. During the past year, Steering Committee members:

- Volunteered approximately 530 hours in support of AAHI's programmatic efforts
- Advocated in meetings with key leaders in Montgomery County
- Advised AAHI programmatic efforts throughout the year
- Assisted AAHI in reviewing health education columns for accuracy of content and cultural competency
- Assisted AAHI in planning the public launch of the storybook, *Voices Among the Silent: Stories of Struggle and Strength from Asian Americans in Montgomery County, Maryland*
- Contributed to the development of the Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Report
- Supported planning of the Empowering Community Health Organizations workshop
- Developed letters of support to the County Council and key DHHS leaders
- Participated in a training about the Montgomery County Council to better understand the legislative process
- Collaborated with leadership of the African American Health Program and Latino Health Initiative to write letters of support advocating for programs that address minority health inequities
- Served as liaisons to external community workgroups including the Asian American Advisory Group to the County Executive, Maryland Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, County Commission on Health, and Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee
- Offered letter of support to Health Resources and Services Administration Head Start Program

## MEMBERS

Harry Kwon, Chair  
Meng Lee, Vice-Chair  
Anis Ahmed  
Ji-Young Cho  
Nerita Estampador  
Wilbur Friedman  
Lewis Hsu  
Karen Kar-Yee Ho  
MunSu Kwon  
Sunmin Lee  
Michael Lin  
Betty Luan  
Alvin Madarang  
Sam Mukherjee  
Wendy Shiau  
Sovan Tun





# How To Get Involved

## HEALTH PROMOTERS

Applications for the Health Promoters Program are accepted on a rolling basis. Health promoters are trained by AAHI in areas of health education, health resources, and County and AAHI services. Health promoters, in turn, educate and connect their communities to these sources. For more information about the program, or to apply, visit the AAHI website [www.AAHIinfo.org](http://www.AAHIinfo.org) to download an application form.

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers have the opportunity to assist with health fairs and outreach events. Participation ranges from translation and cultural competency support to event planning and implementation. AAHI is continually searching for dedicated volunteers. Please contact AAHI staff if you are interested.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

AAHI has long-standing partnerships with many community- and faith-based organizations. With these organizations, AAHI plans health events and participates in cultural festivities. If you are interested in partnering with AAHI or would like for AAHI to visit your community, please contact AAHI staff.

## INTERNS

AAHI seeks interns during the summer, fall, and spring semesters. Interns have a multifaceted opportunity to assist staff with research, develop educational materials, and implement outreach programs. Interns gain hands-on experience in the areas of public and community health. If you are a current student or recent graduate interested in a meaningful internship at AAHI, visit the AAHI website [www.AAHIinfo.org](http://www.AAHIinfo.org) for details and to download an application form.

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The AAHI Steering Committee is comprised of a professionally and ethnically diverse group of stakeholders from the local community who advocate, advise, and assist AAHI with its efforts to attain health parity in Montgomery County. The dedicated members of the Committee provide a wealth of expertise and intimate knowledge of their respective communities. AAHI is currently recruiting additional members who can actively support the organization to achieve its mission and goals. If interested, please download an application form from the AAHI website.



# Acknowledgements



AAHI would like to express its deep appreciation to the Montgomery County Executive, Montgomery County Council, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the AAHI Steering Committee, community partners, staff, and volunteers for their unwavering support during the 2011 fiscal year.

## AAHI STAFF

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Senior Program Coordinator

Atyya Chaudhry  
Program Coordinator

Sanjana Quasem  
Program Coordinator

Jamie Lok Weng, MPH, CHES  
Program Specialist

## SPECIAL THANKS

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Montgomery County  
Department of Health and Human Services

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Ann Bevans Collective

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