

# Asian American Health Initiative

Montgomery County, Maryland

Department of Health and Human Services



# Annual Report FY 2013



Department of Health and Human Services  
Montgomery County, MD

Together To Build A Healthy Community  
[www.AAHIinfo.org](http://www.AAHIinfo.org)

Together to Build a Healthy Community

# Message from Leadership

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services' (MCDHHS) Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) is proud to release its Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Annual Report to highlight its systematic efforts to eliminate health disparities affecting the Asian American community in Montgomery County. As the nation's fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in 2012, it is critical to understand and address the unique health needs of this diverse population. In FY13, AAHI implemented programs to improve access to culturally and linguistically competent care, and promoted health equity through community empowerment. AAHI also continued its efforts to enhance data collection and strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders within the County.

Together with the strong leadership and support of MCDHHS, the AAHI Steering Committee, community partners, and multilingual Health Promoters, AAHI completed yet another successful year. AAHI continued its commitment to reach the isolated and medically underserved Asian American community, from offering free hepatitis B screenings and vaccinations to conducting on-site health education and referrals to care for local small business employees.

In FY13, the MCDHHS Minority Health Initiatives/Program (MHI/P) continued to evolve. Leadership of MCDHHS, AAHI, the African American Health Program, and the Latino Health Initiative formed an advisory group to address equity and elimination of disparities. In FY14, the Leadership Institute for Equity and Elimination of Disparities (LIEED) will be established to enhance HHS practice, policy, and infrastructure to better serve racially, linguistically, and ethnically diverse communities, including emerging populations.

On behalf of AAHI leadership, we hope that you recognize our progress and take pride in our achievements of the past year. While much work remains to be done, we are dedicated to working alongside our committed partners and community members to achieve our vision *to build a healthy community*.



Sam Mukherjee, PhD, LCTC  
AAHI Steering Committee Chair



Chun Man (Perry) Chan, MS, CHES  
AAHI Program Manager

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# About AAHI

## BACKGROUND

AAHI was established in FY05 under MCDHHS with the support of the Montgomery County Executive, the County Council, and community leaders. Since its inception, AAHI has worked to address the unique health needs of the County's Asian American residents and eliminate the health disparities between them and their non-Asian counterparts. To do this, AAHI partners with various community- and faith-based organizations to collaboratively identify health care needs of the Asian American community and implement culturally competent and linguistically appropriate programs.

## MISSION

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

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Asian Americans are the fastest growing racial population in the nation. Montgomery County's Asian American population reflects this rapid growth, increasing 37.3 percent between 2000 and 2010, making it the second fastest growing minority group in the County. The County's Asian American residents represent 13.9 percent (135,451) of the County's total population and 42.5 percent of Maryland's total Asian American population. Asian Americans are a linguistically and culturally diverse group with unique needs within each subgroup. The 2010 American Community Survey data shows that almost 75 percent of Montgomery County's Asian population are foreign born and 33 percent are linguistically isolated.





# Fiscal Year 2013 at a Glance



Community Outreach  
Events



Health Promoters  
Program



Hepatitis B Prevention  
Services Project



Health Education  
Workshops



Empowering Community Health  
Organizations Project



Small Business  
Outreach

# Fiscal Year 2013 Accomplishments at a Glance

Please see the respective sections for details.

## Enhancing Access to Culturally and Linguistically Competent Care

### ■ Patient Navigator Program

- 5,798 client encounters
  - 4,225 calls received
  - 1,149 on-site medical interpreting sessions
  - 424 medical interpreting sessions by phone

95% of clients linked to County services  
72% of callers reported not having insurance

### ■ ABCS Project

- 85 small businesses reached
- 834 educational encounters
- 792 pieces of literature distributed
- 31 referrals
- 84% of referrals resulted in appointments

### ■ Smoking Cessation Services

- 579 pieces of literature distributed
- 520 educational encounters
- 218 carbon monoxide screenings

### ■ Health Education in Ethnic Media

- 8 articles published
- 5 media sources
- 5 topics covered

## Promoting Community Mobilization and Empowerment

### ■ Health Promoters Program

- 35 Health Promoters
- 15 languages and dialects spoken
- 15 ethnic communities represented
- 4 trainings offered
- 12 new Health Promoters in FY13
- 16 Health Promoters with 1-2 years of experience in the program
- 19 Health Promoters with 3+ years of experience in the program

### ■ Community Outreach Events\*

- 54 outreach events
- 20 ethnic communities reached
- 9,167 pieces of literature distributed
- 6,118 educational encounters
- 854 health screenings/vaccinations
- 758 health service referrals

### ■ Empowering Community Health Organizations Project

- 2 workshops
- 84 individuals attended
- 41 organizations represented

\*Cumulative total from ABCS project, smoking cessation services, Connecting Communities to Services, Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project, health education workshops, and Komen Community-Assisted Mammogram Program.

### Connecting Communities to Services

294 small businesses and communities reached

- 11 clinic outreach events
- 4 resource information tables
- 3,257 pieces of literature distributed
- 1,566 educational encounters
- 198 health service referrals

### Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project

38 participants  
100% of at-risk participants referred to vaccinations, of whom 85% completed the three-shot vaccination series  
50% of participants were not planning to get screened prior to participating in the project

96% of participants reported they would urge family and friends to be screened and/or vaccinated

96% of participants reported overall satisfaction with program

### Health Education Workshops

- 9 workshops conducted
- 6 topics covered
- 1,709 pieces of literature distributed
- 1,314 educational encounters
- 361 health service referrals

## Strengthening Partnerships and Collaborations

### ■ Komen Community-Assisted Mammogram Program

- 461 breast self-exam demonstrations
- 360 referrals

### ■ Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Blogger

- 6 AAHI e-newsletters sent
- 189 social media posts
- 3,333 views of AAHI's Facebook and Blogger posts

## Enhancing Data Collection and Reporting

- 2 hepatitis B evaluation reports published electronically
- 1 annual report published electronically



# Enhancing Access to Culturally and Linguistically Competent Care

Montgomery County's Asian American community is tremendously diverse, encompassing over a dozen countries as well as speaking more than two dozen languages and dialects. Given the diversity and growth of the population, health care systems must implement culturally and linguistically tailored services in order to respond effectively to the community's health and social needs.

According to the Asian American Health Initiative's (AAHI) 2008 County-wide health needs assessment, Asian Americans experience challenges to accessing quality health care due to lack of health insurance, inadequate coverage, financial difficulties, transportation (particularly for seniors), language barriers, and limited access to Asian language health care providers.

In Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13), AAHI continued its longstanding initiatives— the Health Promoters and Patient Navigator Programs, in addition to the Health Education in Ethnic Media campaign— to eliminate such barriers as well as link County residents with essential primary and specialized health care services. AAHI also initiated efforts to provide information on health resources including smoking cessation services and the “ABCS” heart disease and stroke prevention project.

Through these efforts, AAHI continued its goal to reach the most underserved and vulnerable communities in the County, in particular, Asian Americans who experience limited English proficiency as well as social and cultural isolation. Moreover, AAHI continues to work with existing partners to forge new collaborations in order to increase access to free or low-cost preventative health services and treatment.



# Highlights: Patient Navigator Program

The 2011 American Community Survey reported that 76.7% of Asian Americans spoke a language other than English at home. Of those individuals, 47% spoke English less than "very well."

- [2011 American Community Survey](#)



Limited English proficiency (LEP) is a barrier to quality health care for many Asian Americans. When patients have difficulty communicating in a language comfortable to them, they may not successfully express their needs to providers. This may lead to inaccurate assessments, lower adherence to medication or follow-up care, decreased patient satisfaction, and ultimately poor health outcomes.

Providing LEP patients access to medical interpreters helps to overcome communication barriers. In partnership with Cross Cultural InfoTech, AAHI established the [Patient Navigator Program](#) in 2008. AAHI Patient Navigators go through rigorous training and certification in order to help community members navigate through the wide network of health and social services in Montgomery County.

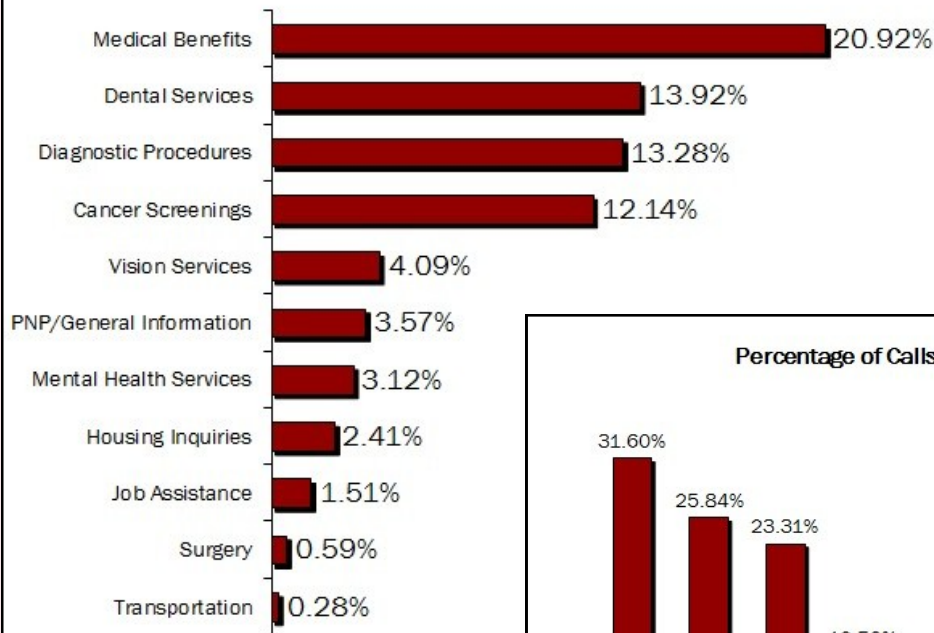
The program is comprised of two components: (1) the Multilingual Health Information and Referral Telephone Line which provides general health information and navigates callers to health care services and (2) Trained Multilingual Medical Interpreters who accompany clients to medical appointments providing face-to-face interpretation and translation of medical forms. Interpretation is available in four Asian languages: Chinese, Hindi, Korean, and Vietnamese.

- **5,798 client encounters**
  - 4,225 calls received
  - 1,149 on-site medical interpreting sessions
  - 424 medical interpreting sessions by phone
- **95% of clients linked to County services**
- **72% of callers reported not having insurance**

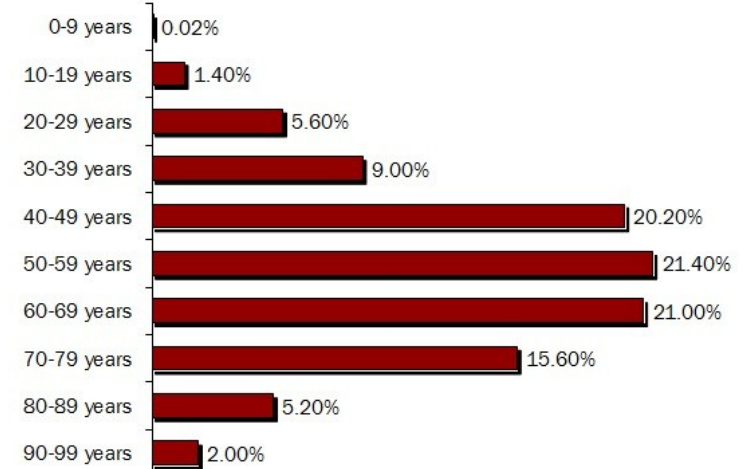


# Highlights: Patient Navigator Program

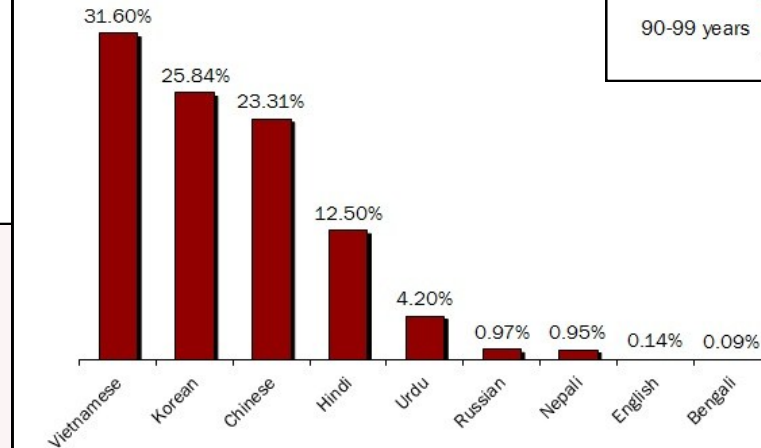
Percentage of Calls by Category



Percentage of Calls by Age Group



Percentage of Calls by Language



# Highlights: ABCS Project

Heart disease is the second leading cause of death for Asian Americans.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Be One in a Million Hearts™

## About Heart Disease & Stroke

### Risk Factors

We're all at risk for heart disease and stroke. However, certain groups—including African Americans, older individuals, and women—are at higher risk than others. With more than 2 million heart attacks and strokes happening every year in the United States, it's important to know the risks.

### Heart Disease and Age

Many people mistakenly think of heart disease and stroke as conditions that only affect older adults. However, a large number of younger people suffer heart attacks and strokes. More than 150,000 heart disease and stroke deaths every year are among people younger than 65.

### Heart Disease and Race

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States for adults of all races. However, there are big differences in the rates of heart disease and stroke between different racial and ethnic groups. Some minority groups are more likely to be affected by heart disease and stroke than others—which contributes to lower life expectancy found among minorities. As of 2007, African American men were 50% more likely to die from heart disease than were non-Hispanic white men. African American adults of both genders are 40% more likely to have high blood pressure and 10% less likely than their white counterparts to have their blood pressure under control. African Americans also have the highest rate of high blood pressure of all population groups, and they tend to develop it earlier in life than others.

The ABCS project is part of the [Million Hearts](#) initiative, a national effort launched by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with the goal to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. [Maryland's Million Hearts](#) campaign plans to achieve this goal by improving the quality of care for heart disease and stroke prevention through the following ABCS approach:

- Appropriate Aspirin Therapy
- Blood Pressure Control
- Cholesterol Management
- Smoking Cessation

Through ABCS, AAHI works to increase awareness of the risk factors associated with heart disease and connect high-risk Montgomery County residents to preventative health services at local participating community clinics. AAHI's aim is to ensure that the Asian American community is well-informed about how to maintain heart health and the importance of getting screened for heart disease.

AAHI Health Promoters outreach to local small businesses as well as community- and faith-based organizations where most residents they encounter do not have time to obtain information about heart health nor visit a clinic for preventative checkups. Health Promoters conduct brief health education sessions on ABCS and work closely with community members to schedule appointments on their behalf. This interaction creates trusting bonds between Health Promoters and the community members they serve.

- 85 small businesses reached
- 31 referrals
- 834 educational encounters
- 84% of referrals resulted in appointments
- 792 pieces of literature distributed

# Highlights: Smoking Cessation Services



AAHI has engaged in tobacco use prevention and smoking cessation outreach since its inception. In addition to outreach and education, AAHI recognized that telephone quitline services have been proven to double a smoker's chance of quitting. In past years, AAHI promoted the statewide Maryland Quitline service to County residents. In FY13, AAHI expanded its efforts to increase Asian Americans' access to linguistically competent smoking cessation services through a partnership with the nationwide Asian Smokers' Quitline program.

The [Maryland Quitline](#) is a free service that offers one-on-one telephone counseling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Eligible callers can also receive a free supply of nicotine patches or gum. Asian Americans comfortable with English are referred to the Maryland Quitline.

The [Asian Smokers' Quitline](#) is a free nationwide program that offers self-help materials, one-on-one telephone counseling, and a free two-week starter kit of nicotine patches. Services are available in four languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, and Vietnamese. In FY13, AAHI received a mini-grant from the Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL) to promote the use of the Asian Smokers' Quitline. For further details, please see to the "Financials" section of this report.

## More About the Quitline

How can the Asian Smokers' Quitline help you to quit?

Self-help materials, if you would like to quit on your own.

A referral list of other programs in your area, if you would like to attend a group or a clinic.

Confidential, one-on-one telephone coaching, if you are ready to quit smoking and want some help.

Free nicotine patches, if eligible, to improve your chances of successfully quitting.

Does the telephone coaching really work?

Yes. People who receive coaching are twice as likely to stay quit as those who try to quit on their own. These results are from a research study of over 3,000 smokers.

Will some insurance programs pay for the nicotine patch?

Many insurance programs will pay for the patch for those enrolled in a quit smoking program, such as the Asian Smokers' Quitline. Check with your insurance company to find out whether you are covered for Nicorette, Chantrel, or a nicotine replacement product such as the gum, inhaler, patch, or spray.

**Asian Smokers' Quitline**

Call Today!

Mandarin & Cantonese  
1-800-838-8917

Vietnamese  
1-800-778-8440

Korean  
1-800-556-5564

Visit [www.asiansmokersquitline.org](http://www.asiansmokersquitline.org)

Want to Quit Smoking?

Asian Smokers' Quitline

- 579 pieces of literature distributed
- 520 educational encounters
- 218 carbon monoxide screenings



# Highlights: Health Education in Ethnic Media



Three years ago, AAHI initiated the Health Education in Ethnic Media campaign as a means to reach even further into the County's Asian American community. Throughout the year, AAHI develops educational articles on various health topics affecting Asian Americans. AAHI also works with experts in the health care field to review the content. The culturally and linguistically tailored articles are published in a number of print and online ethnic media news sources, in both English and Asian languages.



Many Asian Americans look to local ethnic media as a reliable source of news and information. By translating health education articles into multiple Asian languages, AAHI is able to reach a larger portion of Asian Americans and inform them of free or low-cost health services in the area.

## ■ 8 articles published

### ■ 5 media sources:

- Asian Fortune
- Epoch Times
- India This Week
- Migrant Heritage Chronicle
- World Journal

### ■ 5 topics covered:

- Barriers to Health Among Asian Americans
- Breast Cancer
- ECHO Project
- Hepatitis B
- Lyme Disease



# Promoting Community Mobilization and Empowerment

Promoting community mobilization and empowerment is a fundamental principle of the Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI). Empowering communities to define and address their own health priorities leads to more sustainable and favorable outcomes. Community involvement also promotes empowered decision making, reduction in service redundancy, and the creation of a unified effort and voice, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \*Community Mobilization Guide\*](#).

In Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13), AAHI continued to actively engage the County's Asian American community in health promotion and wellness initiatives. Insight gained through the Health Promoters Program, community outreach events, small business outreach, and health education workshops helped inform as well as advise AAHI on the emergent health concerns and issues among the Asian American community.

Additionally, AAHI continued to provide technical assistance to local Asian American leaders and organizations through specific ventures such as the Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project and through capacity-building workshops such as the Empowering Community Health Organizations (E.C.H.O.) Project. The intention of these efforts was also to motivate and mobilize the local community and grassroots organizations to undertake their own self-directed projects that were uniquely tailored to respond to the needs of their respective communities.



# Highlights: Health Promoters Program



The purpose of the [Health Promoters Program](#) is to help reduce cultural and linguistic barriers to accessing health services for Asian Americans in Montgomery County. As gatekeepers to their respective communities, Health Promoters enable AAHI to better understand and serve a larger network of the County's Asian American population.



In FY13, six AAHI Health Promoters participated in Holy Cross Hospital's *Ethnic Health Promoter Certification Course* sponsored by the Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance (MOTA) grant. The purpose of the course was to develop a foundation of knowledge and skills surrounding health disparities relevant to Montgomery County's minority populations.

## AAHI Health Promoter:

*A bilingual and bicultural health advocate who receives training to assist with outreach activities, provide language assistance, conduct health screenings, connect residents to County services, and promote the overall health of their community.*



- 35 Health Promoters
- 15 languages and dialects spoken
- 15 ethnic communities represented
- 4 trainings offered
- 12 new Health Promoters in FY13
- 16 Health Promoters with 1-2 years of experience in the program
- 19 Health Promoters with 3+ years of experience in the program



# Highlights: Community Outreach Events



In collaboration with its network of partners, AAHI plans and participates in community outreach events that promote the health and wellbeing of the Asian American community. Emphasizing the importance of prevention, screening, and early detection, AAHI reaches out to individuals, small businesses, and community- and faith-based organizations. As an important part of AAHI's health promotion efforts, outreach events provide AAHI opportunities to relay the latest health information and resources to various Asian American communities. Outreach events also allow AAHI to observe and assess ongoing community needs.



In FY13, AAHI coordinated a range of events, including health fairs and resource information tables, where staff and volunteers disseminated valuable health information as well as referred community members to free or low-cost screenings and health services in the County. AAHI also provided technical assistance to local organizations to build leadership capacity and skills to implement their own health-focused initiatives.

- 54 outreach events
- 20 ethnic communities reached
- 9,167 pieces of literature distributed
- 6,118 educational encounters
- 854 health screenings/vaccinations
- 758 health service referrals

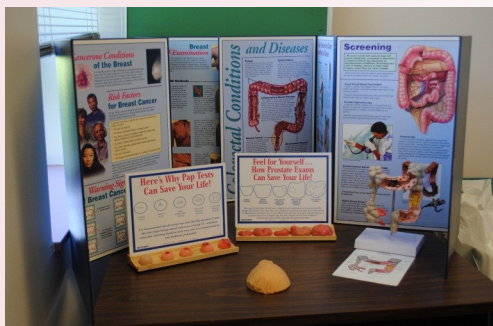


*In FY13, AAHI's community outreach events included ABCS project, smoking cessation services, small business outreach (Connect), the Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project, health education workshops, and breast self examination outreach (KCAMP).*

# Highlights: Connecting Communities to Services

In 2007, 12.1% of the businesses in Montgomery County were owned by Asian Americans.

- *Survey of Business Owners, 2007*



In FY13, Connecting Communities to Services (Connect) encompassed small business outreach, outreach to [Montgomery Cares Clinics](#), and resource information tables. The goal of Connect is to reach out to segments of the Asian American community that are medically underserved and isolated, such as small business owners and their employees.

There is a great need for this type of focused approach given the number of Asian American-owned small businesses in Montgomery County. Through Connect, AAHI provides on-site education and health service referrals to many hard-to-reach community members who otherwise may not have the time nor resources to address their personal health needs.

For clinic outreach, bilingual Health Promoters provide one-on-one health education to patients at Montgomery Cares Clinics and inform them of local health services.

- 294 small businesses and communities reached
- 11 clinic outreach events
- 4 resource information tables
- 3,257 pieces of literature distributed
- 1,566 educational encounters
- 198 health service referrals

# Highlights: Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project

Approximately 1 in 12 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders is living with hepatitis B.

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

While Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders make up less than 5 percent of the total U.S. population, they account for more than 50 percent of Americans living with chronic hepatitis B. Acknowledging the need for continued community-driven hepatitis B efforts in the County, AAHI collaborated with the Filipino American (Fil-Am) Ministry of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, a local faith-based organization, on a hepatitis B project for the Filipino American community in Montgomery County. The FY13 Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project provided free hepatitis B education, screenings, vaccinations, and treatment referrals to County residents over the age of 18, regardless of income level or insurance status. Services were provided by the Fil-Am Ministry in cooperation with the Migrant Heritage Commission, Inc. Health Care Resource Program, with support from AAHI.

AAHI provided technical assistance throughout the project as well as shared its experiences and lessons learned from past hepatitis B initiatives. AAHI is committed to empowering organizations with the leadership and technical skills to develop, implement, and evaluate successful health projects for community benefit. For more information, please see the [AAHI website](#).



- 38 participants
- 100% of at-risk participants referred to vaccinations, of whom 85% completed the three-shot vaccination series
- 50% of participants were not planning to get screened prior to participating in the project
- 96% of participants reported they would urge family and friends to be screened and/or vaccinated
- 96% of participants reported overall satisfaction with program



# Highlights: Empowering Community Health Organizations Project

Since its launch in FY11, AAHI's Empowering Community Health Organizations (E.C.H.O.) Project has been well-received by community leaders and stakeholders. The E.C.H.O. Project is a series of technical assistance and training workshops aimed to build the capacity and sustainability of community organizations that serve Asian Americans in the County. Through the E.C.H.O. Project, AAHI seeks to enhance the ability of community leaders to develop culturally and linguistically competent health programming.



Initially, AAHI performed an informal interest assessment of community leaders to solicit topics that would be appealing and useful to address. Potential training subject areas were then vetted, and AAHI began planning and implementing workshops twice a year.



In FY13, AAHI hosted two workshops. The fall 2012's workshop entitled, "Tackling Grant Budgets," complemented the two previous grant writing workshops, a topic of great interest. Led by Kathleen Sheedy, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) Grants Manager, attendees learned how to develop a realistic grant budget and how they can help build trust with a funder. The spring 2013's workshop entitled, "The Affordable Care Act (ACA) in Montgomery County: What You Need to Know," was led by Uma Ahluwalia, MCDHHS Director. She presented an overview of how the ACA will be implemented at the County level. Attendees learned how the new health care law will impact Montgomery County residents.



## December 2012: Tackling Grant Budgets

- 31 attendees
- 14 organizations represented

## May 2013: ACA in Montgomery County

- 53 attendees
- 27 organizations represented

# Highlights: Health Education Workshops



Part of AAHI's health promotion strategy includes health education workshops for the community. The smaller sessions create a more interactive and in-depth learning environment than the traditional large-scale health fair or outreach event. The main goals of the health education workshops are to educate on chronic conditions and health issues pertinent in the Asian American community, to promote the importance of preventative screenings for better health outcomes, and to link the Asian American community to free or low-cost screenings. AAHI engages health experts throughout the planning and implementation of the workshops.



In FY13, AAHI partnered with the Bait-ur-Rahman Mosque, Bethany Church, Burmese American Buddhist Association, Housing Opportunities Commission, International Rescue Committee, Montgomery County Public School's Division of ESOL/Bilingual Programs, and the Muslim Community Center to conduct these workshops. AAHI and community partners worked hand-in-hand to ensure each workshop was tailored to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of the audience.



- 9 workshops conducted
- 6 topics covered: Breast Cancer, Diabetes, Heart Health, Hepatitis B, Nutrition, Osteoporosis
- 1,709 pieces of literature distributed
- 1,314 educational encounters
- 361 health service referrals

# Strengthening Partnerships and Collaborations

Over the years, the Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) has forged many mutually beneficial partnerships with stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels. Collaborations are critical for developing comprehensive strategies to address the health needs of underserved and vulnerable communities. Strategic partnerships are also incredibly valuable in maximizing and optimizing resources for community benefit, including reducing the duplication of services and thus supporting a larger scope of service delivery. AAHI continuously looks to connect with organizations with aligned missions in order to collectively better serve the Asian American community.

In Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13), AAHI nurtured existing partnerships as well as fostered new collaborations with entities of similar vision and community dedication. AAHI engaged in a number of public-private partnerships with local hospitals, non-profit organizations, and universities to provide technical assistance on cultural competency and to share the lessons learned in implementing community health projects. One of AAHI's most longstanding collaborations is with Holy Cross Hospital. For eight years, AAHI has partnered with Holy Cross Hospital on the Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance (MOTA) grant that partially supports the AAHI Health Promoters Program and outreach initiatives. The new ABCS project for heart disease and stroke prevention is also part of the MOTA grant. In addition, AAHI continued the Komen Community-Assisted Mammogram Program (KCAMP), in collaboration with Holy Cross Hospital, to provide breast health outreach and community referrals.

Building strong and viable collaborations is a multidimensional process that requires great investments in time and attention. AAHI would like to thank its network of partners for yet another successful year of coming together to build a healthy community.





# Highlights: Minority Communities Empowerment Project



Since FY05, AAHI has been a part of the Minority Communities Empowerment Project (MCEP), a program funded by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Minority Outreach Technical Assistance (MOTA) grant. In collaboration with the Community Health Division at Holy Cross Hospital, the Community Ministries of Rockville, the African American Health Program, and the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, AAHI conducts educational outreach and trainings to minority communities on topics such as cancer prevention and tobacco cessation.



On March 23, 2013, MCEP/MOTA hosted the 6th annual *Diversity in Action Conference* at Holy Cross Hospital. The purpose was to explore the adverse effects of diseases and the barriers within health care, as well as to discuss solutions to reduce health disparities facing racial or ethnic communities. Along with representatives of other MOTA partners, two AAHI Health Promoters participated in a segment of the conference by providing accounts in the *A Day in the Life of a Health Promoter* panel.

AAHI has been a recipient of this grant since 2005. Please see the "Financials" section for more information.



# Highlights: Komen Community-Assisted Mammogram Program



Since 2009, AAHI has continued its partnership with the Community Health Department at Holy Cross Hospital on the Susan G. Komen Community-Assisted Mammogram Program (KCAMP). Other collaborators included the Community Ministries of Rockville, CASA de Maryland, and the African American Health Program.

The purpose of KCAMP is to conduct culturally-competent community outreach on breast health and provide referrals to community clinics for clinical breast exams or mammograms. Throughout the year, AAHI Health Promoters provide breast self-exam demonstrations and breast cancer education, as well as refer community members to local clinics for preventative breast cancer screenings. All outreach efforts are linguistically and culturally tailored to the specific Asian American community in order to reduce stigma and fear associated with breast cancer screening and treatment. Through this effort, AAHI aims to reduce the cultural, linguistic, and financial barriers to accessing preventative breast health services.



This grant ended in December 2012. Please see the "Financials" section for more information.



- **461 breast self-exam demonstrations**
- **360 referrals**

*In FY13, AAHI's referrals for preventative breast cancer screenings included KCAMP and the Women's Cancer Control Program (WCCP).*

# Highlights: AAHI in Social Media



As an emerging trend in public health, communication tools such as social media and electronic newsletters are innovative methods for engaging partners, local leaders, and the community. Utilizing social media, AAHI has the ability to promote regional health events, share information on community resources, and increase awareness of local volunteer opportunities in a timely and user-friendly manner.



[Like AAHI on Facebook](#)



[Follow AAHI on Twitter](#)



[Read AAHI's community blog](#)

- 6 AAHI e-newsletters sent
- 3 AAHI media sources: Facebook, Twitter, Blogger
- 189 social media posts
- 3,333 views of AAHI's Facebook and Blogger posts



# Highlights: AAHI 101 Presentations



In FY13, AAHI continued to provide educational presentations to community partners on the health needs of Asian Americans. Through its *AAHI 101* presentations, AAHI staff shared a comprehensive overview of the diverse health needs and concerns of the Asian American community, both from a local and national perspective. Each presentation included information on demographics, access to care challenges, health disparities, and the importance of cultural and linguistic competency when engaging Asian American populations. Additionally, the *AAHI 101* presentations provided audience members with an overview of AAHI and its programs and services. Presentations were also a valuable opportunity to exchange information as well as explore potential areas of collaboration between traditional and non-traditional partners.



## Organizations presented to:

- Bethany Presbyterian Church
- Chinmaya Mission
- Guru Nanak Foundation of America
- Hopeside Community Church
- International Rescue Committee
- Manna Food Center
- New Covenant Fellowship Church
- On Our Own of Montgomery County
- St. Andrew Kim Catholic Church



# Highlights: Equity and Social Justice Initiative



In FY13, AAHI continued to take part in the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Service's Equity and Social Justice Initiative. The Initiative is a cross-disciplinary, Department-wide effort that focuses on the use of fair policies, decisions, and actions to positively impact the lives of individuals in Montgomery County. To date, the Initiative has developed a set of equity principles and is currently designing a communication plan and equity tools. Ultimately, the Initiative aims to help the Department integrate a comprehensive equity plan to ensure equitable service delivery in the County.



On October 25, 2013, AAHI and Initiative members participated in a peer learning conference call with colleagues from [Seattle's King County Equity and Social Justice Team](#). King County has worked with Montgomery County to share how they have transformed their work on equity and social justice from a grassroots initiative to an integrated County-wide effort that engages employees and community members to achieve equitable opportunities for all.



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

*"Fair policies, decisions, and actions that guides the way that we work with our customers, our colleagues, and our community to promote health, safety, well-being and self-sufficiency."*

# Highlights: Local, State, & National Collaborators

*Please note this is not a comprehensive list of all AAHI partners.*

- Adventist HealthCare – Center on Health Disparities
- African American Health Program
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- America-Nepal Women's Association of Greater Washington, DC
- Asian American Political Alliance
- Asian Indians for Community Service
- Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
- Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association
- Asian Pacific Islander Caucus for Public Health in official relations with the American Public Health Association
- Asian Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project
- Association of Vietnamese Americans
- Bait-ur-Rahman Mosque
- Bethany Presbyterian Church
- Boat People, SOS
- Burmese American Buddhist Association
- Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc.
- CCACC Pan Asian Volunteer Health Clinic
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Chinese American Senior Services Association (CCACC)
- Chinese Culture and Community Service Center, Inc.
- Chinmaya Mission
- Community Health and Empowerment through Education and Research
- Community Ministries of Rockville
- Cultural Infotech
- DC Japanese Mental Health Network
- DC Muslim Inter-scholastic Tournament
- Epoch Times Newspaper
- Filipino-American Ministry of Saint Michael the Archangel Catholic Church
- Gaithersburg Chinese Alliance Church
- Global Mission Church
- Guru Nanak Foundation of America
- Hepatitis B Initiative-DC
- Holy Cross Hospital
- Hope Chinese School
- Hopeside Community Church
- Hopewell Health
- Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County
- Idara-e-Jaferia Islamic Center
- Indonesian American Association
- International Buddhist Center
- International Rescue Committee
- Islamic Center of Maryland
- Jain Society of Metropolitan Washington
- Japanese Americans Care Fund
- Japanese Christian Community Center of Washington DC
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Korean American Association of the Washington Metropolitan Area
- Korean Community Services Center of Greater Washington
- Latino Health Initiative
- Manila Mail
- Manna Food Center
- Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities
- Maryland Insurance Administration
- Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform
- Mary's Center
- MedStar Montgomery Medical Center
- Migrant Heritage Commission
- Mobile Medical Clinic
- Montgomery College
- Montgomery County Cancer Coalition
- Montgomery County Commission on Aging
- Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
- Montgomery County Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships
- Montgomery County Public Schools, Division of Family and Community Partnerships
- Muslim Community Center (MCC)
- MCC Medical Clinic
- National Council of Asian Indian Associations
- New Covenant Fellowship Church
- National Institutes of Health
- On Our Own Montgomery
- Organization of Chinese Americans- DC Chapter
- Organization of Chinese American Women
- Our Lady of Vietnam Church
- Philippine Nurses Association of Maryland
- Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County
- Recovery Partners Montgomery
- Shady Grove Adventist Hospital
- South Asian Public Health Association
- Southern Asian Seventh Day Adventist Church
- St. Andrew Kim Catholic Church
- St. Rose of Lima Church
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Suburban Hospital
- Thai Alliance of America
- University of Maryland College Park, School of Public Health
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration
- U.S. Public Health Service-Asian Pacific American Officers Committee
- Vietnamese American Senior Association
- Viet Nam Medical Assistance Program
- Washington Adventist Hospital
- Wat Thai Washington, DC
- White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
- Woman's Cancer Control Program
- Women, Infants & Children
- World Journal Newspaper





## Highlights: Work Group Participation

- Asian Pacific Islander Caucus for Public Health in official relations with the American Public Health Association – Executive Committee
- Adventist HealthCare Center on Health Disparities – Advisory Group
- Minority Communities Empowerment Project (MCEP) sponsored Local Health Disparities Committee
- Minority Communities Empowerment Project (MCEP)/Minority Outreach Technical Assistance (MOTA)
- Montgomery County DHHS Equity & Social Justice Initiative
- Montgomery County DHHS Cancer Coalition
- Montgomery County DHHS Tobacco Free Coalition
- Montgomery County DHHS Quality Service Review
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Disease – Multicultural Outreach Workgroup

# Enhancing Data Collection and Reporting

Data can be a powerful tool for helping organizations understand the health needs of the community and to develop and evaluate programs to better meet such needs. Because Asian Americans are a heterogeneous population, collecting disaggregated data is essential to accurately capture and measure the health status of each unique subgroup. Aggregated data can inaccurately portray the disparities in health care access and coverage of Asian Americans. As a result, the health needs of the population remain unrecognized or inadequately understood. Moreover, without accurate data, the provision of health care resources, programs, research, and policy initiatives may not reflect the needs of the community.

In Fiscal Year (FY13), the Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) continued to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to monitor the health status of Asian Americans in Montgomery County. Recognizing the importance of program evaluation, AAHI employed various tools, such as the Hepatitis B Project Evaluation Reports, to assess immediate and long-term outcomes of its projects as well as to indicate areas of improvement. AAHI developed these evaluation reports to not only disseminate results to its project partners, but also to provide other organizations with a working framework of how to implement similar hepatitis B outreach efforts in their communities.

The AAHI Steering Committee also maintained its involvement in the Healthy Montgomery community health improvement process, a collaborative, local data surveillance project. AAHI recognizes that the availability of accurate data is important to community leaders, government officials, and policymakers, and thus continues to enhance the breadth and depth of Asian American health data in Montgomery County.



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

**ABOUT AAHI:**  
A part of Montgomery County's Department of Health and Human Services, the Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) was established in 2004 as the first health-focused agency for pan-Asian Americans in the County. Since its inception, AAHI has worked to eliminate health disparities that exists between Asian Americans and their non-Asian counterparts. AAHI is supported by its Steering Committee that is composed of stakeholders representing various ethnic and professional groups in the community. They are responsible for advocating, advising and assisting AAHI in achieving its mission.

**Mission:**  
AAHI's mission is to identify the health care needs of Asian American communities, to develop culturally competent health care services, and to implement health education programs that are accessible and available to all Asian Americans in Montgomery County.

**DEMOGRAPHICS:**  
Asian Americans constitute 13.9% of Montgomery County's population.

The demographic section includes three charts: a bar chart titled 'Population Trends in Montgomery County, Maryland' showing growth from 2000 to 2010; a pie chart titled 'Asian American Subgroups' showing the distribution of various ethnicities; and a funnel chart titled 'Asian American Births' showing the number of births from 2000 to 2010.



# Highlights: Hepatitis B Project Evaluation Reports

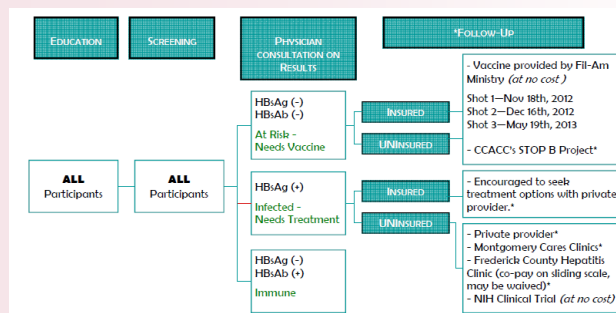


Hepatitis B has been a priority area for AAHI since its inception. Through each of its hepatitis B outreach projects, AAHI incorporated data collection tools and evaluation measures into the program planning.

Last year, AAHI partnered with the Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington (KCSC) and the Viet Nam Medical Assistance Program (VNMAP) to produce evaluation reports on their respective hepatitis B programs held in FY12. Reports on the Active Care & Treatment of Hepatitis B (ACT Hep B) Program with KCSC and the Screening, Management, Awareness, and Solutions for Hepatitis B (SMASH B) Program with VNMAP are now available on [AAHI's website](#).

In FY13, AAHI collaborated with the Filipino American (Fil-Am) Ministry of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, a local faith-based organization, on a hepatitis B outreach project for the Filipino American community in Montgomery County. The FY13 Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project provided free hepatitis B education, screenings, vaccinations, and treatment referrals to County residents over the age of 18, regardless of income level or insurance status. Data from the FY13 Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project will be published in an evaluation report outlining program implementation steps, outcome data, recommendations, and lessons learned by AAHI and the Fil-Am Ministry. Please look for the evaluation report on the FY13 Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project in the future.

The evaluation reports of AAHI's hepatitis B projects can be viewed on [AAHI's website](#).





# Highlights: Healthy Montgomery

In FY13, AAHI's Steering Committee continued to participate in the Healthy Montgomery community health improvement process. Launched in June 2009, Healthy Montgomery brings together individuals from the public and private sectors to identify and address key priority areas that will improve the health status and well-being of the County.

The Healthy Montgomery team compiled quantitative and qualitative health data across various sectors, populations, and communities to help inform the priority-setting process initiated in October 2011. Through the process, the Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee (HMSC) identified six priority areas for action:

- Behavioral Health
- Cancers
- Cardiovascular Health
- Diabetes
- Maternal and Infant Health
- Obesity

The HMSC also selected three overarching lenses through which the action plans for each of the six priority areas should consider:

- Lack of access
- Health inequities
- Unhealthy behaviors

In May 2012, the HMSC established workgroups of experts in the respective priority areas with the responsibility to develop, execute, and evaluate specific action plans. The first two focus areas to complete action planning were Behavioral Health and Obesity. Please visit the [Obesity Work Group web page](#) or [Behavioral Health Work Group web page](#) for more information on each group's respective action planning activities.



The [Healthy Montgomery website](#) is a one-stop, online resource for population-based data and information about the County's health.



# Professional Development

The Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) is committed to the development and empowerment of the future generation of public health professionals. Through the AAHI Internship Program and its own staff development initiatives, AAHI actively supports continuous learning, mentoring, and skill building for its interns and employees.

Each year, the AAHI Internship Program offers fall, spring, and summer internships for students and recent graduates who are interested in the community health field as well as those who are seeking firsthand experience and practical skills. Through this program, interns are given opportunities to be involved in a variety of AAHI projects ranging from research, to educational material development, to program implementation. For a meaningful experience, AAHI tailors the internships to meet both programmatic needs and the interns' interests. Interns learn about public health in a community setting while also building professional relationships across public and private sectors. AAHI's vision is for interns to expand their field-experience, knowledge, and professional connections for future career development.

In addition to its internship program, AAHI and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) support trainings and seminars for its staff. These learning opportunities allow the staff to share their ideas, knowledge, and insight with other professionals as well as to stay up-to-date on new developments in the field. Continual professional development opportunities facilitate staff enrichment and program enhancement.



# Highlights: AAHI Internship Program

## FALL 2012 INTERN

Jasmine Vinh, *University of Maryland, School of Public Health*



### Highlights:

- Provided health education and information on local resources at faith-based organizations, small businesses, and cultural events.
- Supported numerous projects including the E.C.H.O workshops, Health Promoters Program trainings, and the Hepatitis B Prevention Services Project.
- Conducted literature reviews of current diabetes research, mental health in the Asian American community, as well as non-traditional methods of health education and promotion.

# Highlights: Staff Development/Trainings



- NIH Health Disparities Seminar: *A Community-Based Participatory Approach to Hepatitis B Intervention for Underserved Korean Americans*
- California Medical Association Foundation Webinar: *Multicultural Communications- Patients & Clinicians Addressing Childhood Obesity within the Asian Pacific Islander Community*
- University of California San Diego's Asian Smokers' Quitline Webinar: *California Smokers' Helpline- Serving the Asian Community*
- Alliance to Reduce Disparities in Diabetes Webinar: *Community Health Workers and Reducing Disparities in Diabetes- Lessons Learned From the Front Lines of Care*





# Financials

The Asian American Health Initiative's (AAHI's) core budget went from \$403,209 in FY12 to \$413,836 in FY13. FY13 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 24.7% of AAHI's core budget expenditures.

2. Contract with Primary Care Coalition: This category accounts for 75.3% of AAHI's core budget expenditures.

Through collaborations with Holy Cross Hospital and other community partners, AAHI also received a \$11,600 grant from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance (MOTA) program and a \$5,000 grant from the Susan G. Komen Community-Assisted Mammogram Program. In addition, AAHI received a \$10,570.69 grant from the Million Hearts initiative and a \$642.85 mini-grant from the Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership to promote the use of the Asian Smokers' Quitline.

# AAHI Steering Committee

The [Asian American Health Initiative Steering Committee](#) consists of 17 professionally diverse individuals from the local community who advocate, advise, and assist AAHI staff in their efforts to achieve health equity in Montgomery County. They represent various ethnic groups and serve as voices for their respective communities. With expertise and intimate knowledge of various communities, the Steering Committee provides invaluable insight and support to the work of AAHI and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS). In FY13, the Steering Committee members continued to work diligently with their unwavering motivation and efforts to serve the Asian American community. Some of their efforts included:

- Volunteered over 551 hours in support of AAHI's programmatic efforts.
- Advocated in meetings with key leaders in Montgomery County.
- Advised AAHI programmatic efforts throughout the year.
- Heavily involved on the MCDHHS Advisory Board assessing the evolving role of the Minority Health Initiatives/Program in addressing racial and ethnic health disparities and well-being with the leadership of the African American Health Program Executive Committee and the Latino Health Initiative Steering Committee.
- 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.
- Assisted AAHI in reviewing ethnic health media for accuracy of content and cultural competency.
- Supported planning of two Empowering Community Health Organizations (E.C.H.O.) workshops, Tackling Grant Budgets and the ACA in Montgomery County.
- Presented with a proclamation by the Montgomery County Council in recognition of National Minority Health Month with other Minority Health Initiatives/Program.

## Members

Chair: Sam Mukherjee  
Anis Ahmed  
Ji-Young Cho  
Nerita Estampador-Ulep  
Wilbur Friedman  
Yan Gu  
Harry Kwon  
MunSu (Moses) Kwon  
Lester (Jao) Lacorte  
Meng K. Lee  
Sunmin Lee  
Michael Lin  
Mayur Mody  
Nguyen Nguyen  
Wendy Shiau  
Stan Tsai  
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](#) 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 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](#) 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 deepest appreciation to the County Executive, members of the Montgomery County Council, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the AAHI Steering Committee, the AAHI Health Promoters, community partners, staff, and volunteers for their support and dedication during FY13.

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Former AAHI Staff

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