



**NATIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC
CENTER ON AGING**

1511 Third Avenue
Suite 914
Seattle, Washington 98101-1626
(206) 624-1221
www.napca.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 21, 2011 **CONTACT:** Scott Peck, 206.838.8168

SOCIAL SECURITY ANNOUNCES 3.6 PERCENT BENEFIT INCREASE FOR 2012

Seattle, WA - The Social Security Administration recently announced that monthly Social Security benefits will increase 3.6 percent in 2012. This cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is the first since 2009.

The COLA increase will benefit nearly 55 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2012; the increase will also affect 8 million Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries with an increase scheduled to begin at the end of this year. There are other changes to take effect in January as well.

Social Security is a critical income source for the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) elderly population. In 2009, 27 percent of elderly AAPI married couples and 48 percent of unmarried AAPI persons relied on Social Security for more than 90 percent of their income. The COLA is particularly important to AAPI seniors because, generally, they have higher life expectancies. Asian elder life expectancy at age 65 is three years longer than all Americans and Asian American women have the highest life expectancy (85.8 years) of any other ethnic group in the United States. AAPI men can expect to live to 85 compared to 82 for all men. AAPI women in particular rely on Social Security; it keeps 17.2 percent of elder Asian women out of poverty.

There is also a potential complete or partial offset by increases in Medicare premiums. Any Medicare changes for 2012 – when announced – will be available at www.medicare.gov.

For more information about how the COLA is calculated, visit www.socialsecurity.gov.

###

NAPCA is the nation's leading advocacy and service organization committed to the dignity, well-being, and quality of life of Asian American and Pacific Islanders as they age.