



Summer 2011

Voices

The National Asian Pacific Center on Aging

AAPI Agencies Voice Their Concerns About Federal Budget Cuts



At a press conference on March 17, 2011, NAPCA SCSEP Los Angeles Project Director Miriam Suen spoke about the impact of the proposed federal budget cuts on unemployed low-income older adults. The press conference was part of a multi-city press coordination effort in Seattle, New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, co-hosted by the National Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Community Development (National CAPACD). The Los Angeles press conference was hosted

with the Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council (A3PCON), and featured ten representatives from community based organizations in Los Angeles, and their clients. They shared with the media how the cuts to safety net services and vital federal programs would leave thousands of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) low-income families, children, and seniors with their basic needs unmet.

Please see "Budget Cuts" on page 2

NAPCA Partners with APARN for Community Event

On Saturday, September 17, APARN will be holding a Community Event at the Everest College in Renton, Washington, featuring health information and screenings.

Asian Pacific American Resource Network (APARN) is made up of the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, Chinese Information and Service Center, India Association of Western Washington, Korean Women's Association, International Community Health Services, Kin On Community Health Care, WA State Department Of Insurance-SHIBA HelpLine, Social Security Administration, Office of Minority Health, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs.

This event is organized in partnership with Everest College-Renton, Cornerstone Clinic-Renton

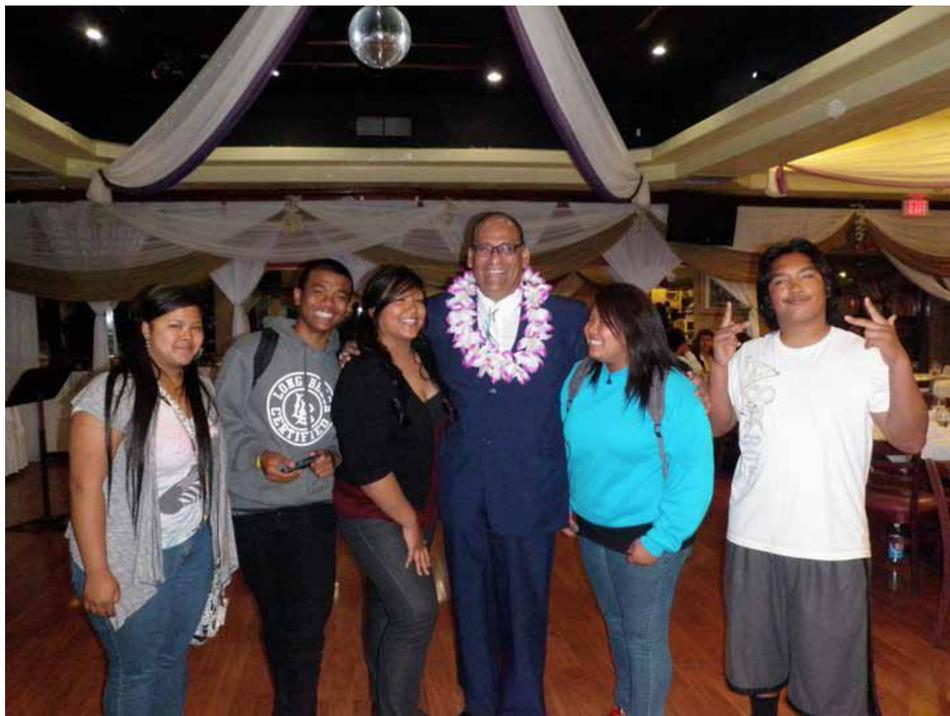
"Budget Cuts" continued from page 1

In Seattle, NAPCA Director of Policy Scott Peck addressed the impact of budget cuts on the AAPI elder community. The Seattle press conference was hosted with InterIm CDA and featured Mayor Mike McGinn, members of the Seattle City Council and the King County Council, and representatives from community based organizations in the greater Seattle area.

During the Los Angeles press conference, Miriam Suen pointed out that the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is the only federal employment program targeted to assist unemployed low-income seniors, and NAPCA SCSEP was the only employment program focused on serving the disadvantaged AAPI aging community. With the proposed budget cuts, hundreds of seniors would be terminated from SCSEP nationally, and these cuts would also negatively affect the capacity of SCSEP partners, many of which are community based organizations, to provide services to their communities.

Other organizations that participated in the Los Angeles press conference included: Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC), Chinatown Service Center, Korean American Coalition, Korean Church Community Development, Korean Resource Center, Little Tokyo Service Center, Search to Involve Pilipino Americans, and Thai Community Development Center. Participants in the Seattle press conference included SCIDpda, HomeSight, Asian Counseling and Referral Services (ACRS) and International Community Health Center (ICHHS).

NAPCA "Healthier Living" Graduates Recognized



Graduates of the Healthier Living workshop (also known as CDSMP – Chronic Disease Self-Management Program) offered at the United Cambodian Community (UCC) were recognized at the Hep B Free Dinner Reception held at Hak Heang Restaurant in Long Beach, CA on May 19, 2011. May 19th was World Hepatitis Awareness Day, and UCC, a co-chair of Hep B Free, held a dinner reception in recognition of this day. Cambodian representatives from eighteen various agencies were present and a total of 190 Cambodian leaders, residents, and organizations attended this event. During the dinner, UCC gave a presentation about the Healthier Living workshop to many new leaders and organizations, enabling them to reach out to more Cambodian groups to support the CDSMP. Dr. Christina Lee, of Talbert Medical Center, noted that Hepatitis B is a chronic disease and encouraged everyone to sign up for the class.

The Samoan Federation of America also held a graduation ceremony for their participants on April 21, 2011 at their facilities in Carson, CA.

NAPCA partners with local community based organizations to offer the Healthier Living workshops as part of our Healthy Aging Program. NAPCA Healthy Aging, funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging, supports implementation of evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs for AAPI older adults. For more information about this program, contact Alula Jimenez Torres, NAPCA Healthy Aging Program Manager, at alula@napca.org or (206) 838-8165.

See more Healthy Living Graduates Recognition photos on page 8

NAPCA Workshop at the ASA Conference



NAPCA staff attended a conference hosted by the American Society on Aging (ASA) from April 26 to April 30, 2011 in San Francisco. SCSEP National Director, Eun Jeong Lee, and SCSEP Regional Coordinator, Kun Chang, hosted a workshop, titled “Opportunities and challenges

to employment among older AAPI workers”, on April 30. Through the workshop, Mr. Chang and Dr. Lee addressed uniqueness and specific challenges AAPI seniors have faced while participating in training programs and employment. Most workshop attendees were field workers

in job training or employment programs, who want to approach AAPI population. They also discussed how NAPCA has supported AAPI seniors to overcome their employment barriers in Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

Call the NAPCA Helpline to Find a “Healthier Living” Workshop Near You!

“Healthier Living,” also known as the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP), is a six-week workshop, with weekly 2.5 hour sessions that teach self-management for chronic disease. These workshops teach valuable skills for people with chronic conditions. Topics covered in the workshop include: developing an action plan, problem-solving, healthy eating and exercise, pain and fatigue management, communication with health professionals and much more!

Here’s what our participants are saying about “Healthier Living”:

“I love the class because it really puts me into action. Before I was careless, but then it really helped me for the betterment of myself and my health. Sharing with other people and help-

ing them is really great.”

“This class is very good. It made me learn more how to take care of myself.”

“This program helped me a lot in regards to my health issues.”

“I changed a lot about my routine – walking, watching my diet, eating healthy food, and taking my medication.”

“The class is great. There are some things you learn from it and it gives you the ability to work to overcome your illness and cope with it, and problem solving, and exercising.”

CDSMP is offered nationally under different names (such as “Healthier Living”). While most workshops are

offered in English, some cities and organizations also offer it in other languages. Call the NAPCA Toll-Free Multilingual Helpline to find a workshop near you.

Contact the NAPCA Helpline at:
800-336-2722 (English),
800-582-4218
(Cantonese and Mandarin),
800-582-4259 (Korean)
,800-582-4336 (Vietnamese).

If your organization is offering the CDSMP and you want to make sure you are in our referral database, please contact Alula Jimenez Torres, NAPCA Healthy Aging Program Manager at alula@napca.org or (206) 838-8165.

NAPCA National Toll Free Multilingual Helpline Serves Seniors with Medicare

Helping Seniors From the Start

By January 2007, the NAPCA Helpline had been in operation for a little over two years, and just two months earlier, had enrolled hundreds of seniors in the new Medicare Part D program. The real test was to come, however, as low income, limited English proficient Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese seniors across the country would visit their pharmacies for refills of their medications, something they had done before without a problem, only to discover, to their dismay, that their state's Medicaid program no longer covered their medications. Unfortunately, they had been randomly assigned to a Medicare Part D plan that in most cases didn't cover all their medications and, in the worst cases, didn't cover any of them. This didn't come as a surprise to the Helpline as they had earlier evaluated the plans that were randomly assigned to Helpline clients and found seventy percent of those needed to be changed to a new plan. What did come as a surprise were the problems that went beyond the assignment of inadequate plans, which required Helpline intervention.

Medicare recognized that there would be some beneficiaries who were randomly assigned to plans that didn't cover all their medications, so as a temporary fix, all medications would be covered through a third party until a beneficiary had a chance to transfer to an appropriate plan. Unfortunately, many pharmacies, especially smaller, independent ones, many of which served API seniors, didn't know how to implement this fix. As a result, the NAPCA Helpline began work-

ing with the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and pharmacies to access the temporary drug coverage. Part of the problem was that some of the pharmacies had not installed the necessary software to determine a beneficiary's current drug coverage and the appropriate cost sharing amounts. As a solution, NAPCA Helpline staff went to a few pharmacies in the Seattle area to help them install the software. NAPCA Helpline staff worked with community based organizations across the country to resolve issues like this and others, to do what was needed to ensure that seniors got their medications.

Core Principles

NAPCA established the Helpline to assist limited English proficient Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese seniors in getting the most out of their Medicare coverage. This included not only helping seniors with Medicare Part D, but also enrolling in Medicare Part A and B, and to ensure that qualified seniors were accessing Medicare assistance programs like the Low Income Subsidy (LIS) and the Medicare Savings Programs.

There are three core principles driving the Helpline. First, the Helpline has to serve at the national level, so we can provide a resource for our partners anywhere in the country, and so the Helpline can "close the loop" when we conduct outreach nationwide. Second, no English is required to access the service, each language is a separate phone number and greeting, and the call itself is conducted entirely in the appropriate language.

Third, and perhaps most important, Helpline staff are not just interpreters, they are also well versed in the basics of the subject matter, so counseling is done directly, and since staff and client share a culture as well as a language, cultural competency is assured.

Through the years, the Helpline's role has expanded to accommodate needs introduced with new relevant programs. The Helpline notified seniors about the 2008 Income Tax Rebate program and helped them apply for it. We assisted seniors with the Digital Television (DTV) transition in 2009, when many seniors were scheduled to lose a primary source of information and entertainment unless they acted quickly. The Helpline helped seniors understand the importance of the Decennial Census in 2010 and encouraged them to "be counted". This year, the Helpline is engaged in informing seniors about the Affordable Care Act and making sure they take full advantage of the early provisions like free preventive services and free wellness checks.

Thousands Served

Since it began in 2005, the NAPCA Multilingual Helpline has taken nearly 75,000 calls, submitted over 1,500 Low Income Subsidy applications, run over 6,000 Medicare Part D plan finders, and enrolled almost 2,500 seniors into a Medicare Part D plan. The Helpline continues to be a valuable resource to limited English proficient seniors across the country.

Chicago SEE Enrollee Nancy Jih

Nancy Jih is an enrollee in the Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) Program in Chicago. Here is her story:

I came to the United States in 1979 as the wife of a foreign student who was working on his Ph.D. In 1986, I decided to look for a job so I could become more familiar with the workforce in America even though at the time I was raising three energetic children, taking care of a house, and returning to school for my MBA. Always love to be busy!

In my spare time, I started volunteering at nursing homes and found much satisfaction with that. When our children had all graduated from college, I told my husband I would like to retire and do volunteer work full time. He gave me two years to apply my plan. During this time, I did my nursing home visits, plunged into gardening and horticulture, and came to understand more about life and to appreciate even more what I have. I decided I would like to help people for the rest of my life. My two-year quest helped me see myself more clearly and made me realize I was ready for the next challenge.

The charity I'm involved with, Tzu Chi, conducts a recycling program, and I started collecting aluminum cans at the office so they could be redeemed and the proceeds sent to help needy people. I also enlisted my friends in the recycling program. I believe in the slogan, "Love the earth, do the recycle and help the people." How wonderful that one person's trash can become another's treasure.

I heard about the SEE program through a former enrollee, Frank



Wu, who was my tennis coach at the time. I applied for a SEE position at EPA and was hired in October 2009 as an Executive Assistant in the Office of Regional Administrator. At first, I thought it was just another job. But to my surprise, I gained much valuable information on environmental issues, especially recycling, reusing, reducing, and composting. I had been doing all those things, but at EPA, I added a clearer understanding of why we should all be more environmentally conscious.

My job as Executive Assistant and 19th Floor Receptionist gives me a lot of personal contact with dozens of people in the EPA Chicago office. Through this channel, I have the opportunity to secure first-hand information about the environment, and what I have learned certainly makes me believe even more strongly that everyone should be extra attentive to loving the only earth we have. I want to be spreading that seed and planting those thoughts into people's

minds and then watching that attitude grows into action.

Being an enrollee of the SEE program broadened my world outlook and confirmed how important the environment is. I am grateful for the EPA family and thank NAPCA for sending me to a nice neighborhood!

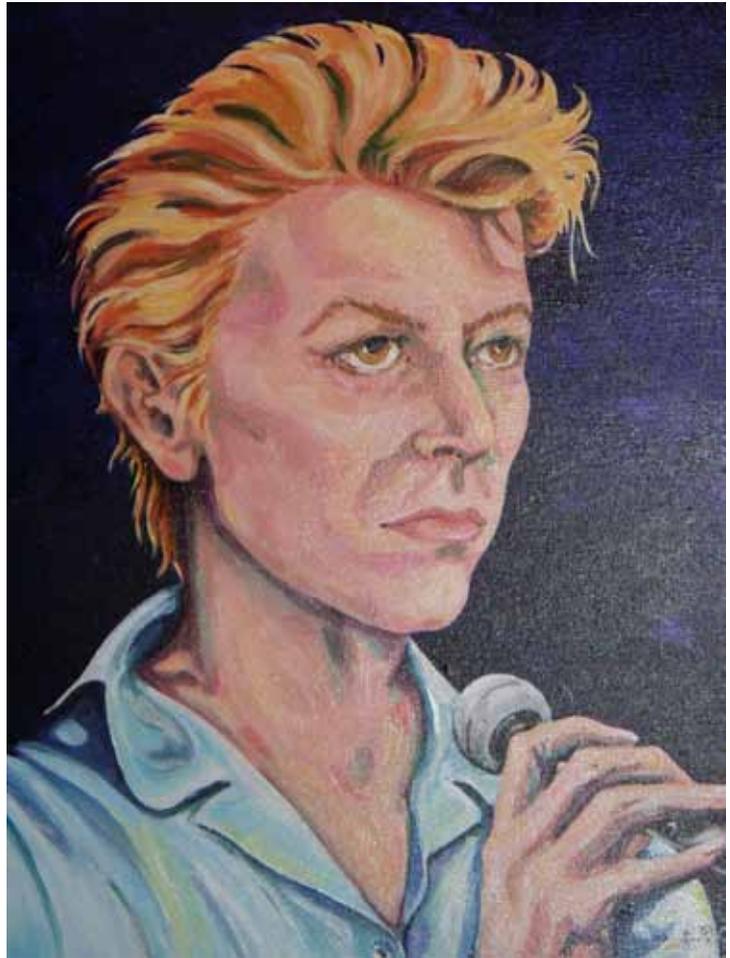


Seattle SEE Participant

Katherine O'Hara

Katherine O'Hara has been an Enrollee in the Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) program for the past four years, working in EPA's Community Involvement and Public Information Unit (CIPI). CIPI is one of six units that comprise the Office of Ecosystems, Tribal and Public Affairs. Katherine feels that the skills gained and her experiences prior to becoming a SEE Enrollee have been pivotal in contributing to meeting the needs of the five Community Involvement Coordinators of CIPI. Her career in the legal profession included employment at a prominent environmental law firm and at the University of Washington Law School. Environmental issues, awareness of legal sensitivities, and being conversant in both environmental and legal terminology have been a huge benefit for her and the EPA staff she supports.

Two years as an Administrative Specialist, followed by (so far) two more years as a Community Information Specialist, Katherine's responsibilities expanded to an area that impacted the regional office outside of her own particular administrative office. Katherine is personally endowed with talents of the creative arts: she's an artist; trained jeweler, and fiction writer. These talents, skills, and insights have been of great value to the regional office's development of display ads for Superfund sites. These mandated ads were quite bland and uninspiring, and very text-heavy, until Katherine's SEE Monitor, Jeff Philip, solicited her participation in his efforts to upgrade CIPI's approach to these announcements for the re-



Although a photo of her artwork does not do it much justice, Katherine has opted to share her painting "David Bowie" with us, instead of a photo of herself at work.

gion as a whole. Katherine's suggestions on making the ads with a more graphic impact have helped make CIPI's ads into the standard bearer for all other administrative units in the region.

It is important to know that the impact of Katherine's products and duties span well beyond the specific office to which she is assigned and works in; her work is recognized agencywide, yet most may not even know where this work is generated. Katherine's perspective is that her work at the EPA has enhanced her

appreciation of the process of maintaining the environment. Katherine says this position has allowed her to enhance her computer skills, and enabled her to pay for living expenses, too.

Seattle SCSEP Participant Fe Elefante



Fe Elefante was a small business owner in the Philippines, who decided to immigrate to the United States with her husband to reunite with her son. She arrived in the U.S. on May 7, 2010, and started job searching immediately. “I thought it would be very easy to find a job in the U.S.,” Mrs. Elefante recalled. After many months of unsuccessful job searching, she heard about NAPCA’s Senior Community Service Employment Pro-

gram (SCSEP) through a friend and decided to contact the office.

Mrs. Elefante expressed interest in pursuing a career in the food service industry. She was assigned to Bayview Manor, a local retirement community in the Queen Anne District of Seattle, as a kitchen assistant. She thrived at her host agency and received much praise from her supervisor as a dedicated and committed individual who

possessed excellent work ethics. Mrs. Elefante constantly communicated her gratitude toward the SCSEP office because she felt her training assignment was very effective and she enjoyed interacting with Bayview Manor’s staff.

Six months into her training, she was offered an unsubsidized part-time position as a kitchen assistant by Bayview Manor. Her hard work and enthusiasm at her assignment convinced the host agency that she would be an invaluable asset to their staff.

Mrs. Elefante recalled the first message she received from the SCSEP office that said to work hard and actively job search. Mrs. Elefante believes her employment resulted from the NAPCA SCSEP office giving her a chance to learn new skills and display her great work ethic. She says, “I was so happy when I got that job, without NAPCA, I felt like I couldn’t get any job”.

NAPCA Board Members Visit SCSEP Orange County Sub-contractor AASCSC

NAPCA operates the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in nine project sites, including Orange County, California. On June 3, 2011, NAPCA board members visited a SCSEP subcontractor in Orange County to meet and observe the participants and staff. For the past 20 years, the Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center (AASCSC) has contracted with NAPCA to provide SCSEP employment and training to low-income seniors who are 55 years and older. AASCSC’s board members, Mr.

Frank Sun, Ms. Angela Wang, and Ms. Fannie Ma, welcomed NAPCA’s board members. The visit was hosted by Donna Lin, Executive Director, who introduced the Orange County NAPCA SCSEP job club and the AASCSC cancer program. Mr. Norman Lee, SCSEP project director, explained the purpose of the job club and its activities. Among job club members, Mr. Sun Chao Yang, a current SCSEP participant, presented his experiences in SCSEP and in the job club to the NAPCA board members. Mrs. Lin explained how AASC-

SC’s cancer program is operated for AAPI seniors, especially for those who do not have health insurance and who have limited English proficiency. All board members were impressed by this NAPCA subcontractor’s program and its effort to serve AAPI seniors.

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NAPCA is the leading national advocacy organization committed to the dignity, well-being and quality of life of Asian and Pacific Islanders (API) in their senior years.

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