

MIAMIANS WORKING TOGETHER ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

January – December, 2001

I. PURPOSE OF PROJECT: The purpose of this project is to foster unity and collaboration among the various Asian Pacific American organizations and to improve the relationship of a culturally diverse and fragmented Asian Pacific American community in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

II. ACCOMPLISHMENT

A. IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS AMONG DIVERSE GROUPS

Since the beginning of the funding period (January, 2001), officers of the community partnership, led by NANAY, Inc., and comprised of the Philippine American Federation of South Florida, the Organization of Chinese Americans-South Florida Chapter, the Korean-American Community Relations Council, the Thai-American Association of South Florida, the Chinese Cultural Foundation, and Japan American Society of Florida, met regularly to discuss the various projects that were designed to address the common issues facing the community. The areas that were addressed included youth programs, immigrant issues, cultural diversity, and prevention of hate crime.

- 1) January 14, 2001 – The first Asian Pacific American Community Partnership project consisted of an Informational Session and Technical Assistance Program for economically deprived Asian American high school students who wished to avail of the Gates Millennium Scholarship. This workshop was held in partnership with the Washington-based National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA). More than fifty youth, parents and community leaders participated in the workshop.



- 2) February 16, 2001 - The Asian Pacific American Community Partnership had a special meeting with Civic Rights Commissioner Yvonne Lee to discuss the community's concerns on issues affecting Asian Americans. The topics discussed included Citizenship,

Immigration, Education, Language, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Voting irregularities during the November 2000 election.

- 3) March 10, 2001 - the Asian Pacific Community Leadership Training was held, in partnership with the Washington-based National Asian Pacific American Labor Consortium (NAPALC) and the Los Angeles-based Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc. (LEAP). This attended by more than 40 community leaders who discussed the various issues on cultural values and leadership, and who participated in strategic media and communications workshop, with the main focus on promoting the Asian Pacific Heritage Festival which was scheduled for May.
- 4) April 11, 2001- NANAY Inc. coordinated the Debate Team from the North Miami Seniors High School, made up mostly of Asian American Youth, who discussed the issues on Anti-Tobacco Drive.



- 5) April 14, 2001 - A Hate Crime Workshop was sponsored by the Organization of Chinese Americans, one of the community partners, and hosted at NANAY's Asian Pacific American Community Center on April 14, 2001. More than 40 Asian American leaders were joined by the State Attorney's office, legal attorneys and law enforcement officers.
- 6) April 22-28, 2001 - A 30-minute TV series was aired as a special feature at the "Asian American Focus", a public television program of WLRN Cable TAP, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and discussed the existing relationships among diverse Asian Pacific Americans. The Asian-Caribbean Heritage Festival was also formally introduced to the public.
- 7) May 1, 2001 – The Asian Pacific American Community Partnership held a Press Cocktail at North Miami's Museum of Contemporary Arts in preparation for the Asian Caribbean Festival and showcased artistic fruit carvings in addition to a number of cultural dances
- 8) May 6, 2001 - The Asian Community Partnership extended its community networking into the Caribbean community, and held the Asian-Caribbean Heritage Festival at Griffing Park in North Miami, to promote Asian and Caribbean culture during the month

of May, which has been officially designated by the U.S. Congress as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Multi-ethnic stage presentations were held from 12 noon to 7pm. Colorfully decorated food booths served ethnic delicacies while the Arts and Crafts booths showcased merchandise and crafts from different Asian and Caribbean countries, including hands-on demonstrations of Ikebana, Origami, Calligraphy, Hand Painting, and Fruit Carvings. A lively Lion Dance added spice to the festivities which concluded with a multi-ethnic fashion show where young models showcased colorful traditional costumes and people from different ethnic backgrounds joined hands on stage to sing “We are the World”.



- 9) June 23, 2001 – The Partnership’s First Community Forum was held at the NANAY Center and was hosted by the Philippine American Federation of South Florida. Philippine history, culture and traditions were displayed through an arts exhibit for most of the day, and summarized by the President of the Philippine American Federation. More than 40 leaders from various Asian communities discussed youth, business, work place and community issues. A cultural and intergenerational program followed, and was attended by more than 100 guests from different ethnic communities.
- 10) July 28-29, 2001 – Forty-one leaders from Asian Pacific American Community partnership had a two-day retreat at Villas By The Sea in Lauderdale by the Sea, Florida, to discuss the needs of the community. The issues discussed during the brainstorming workshop and break-out sessions included: (a) the unmet needs of the community, i.e., (lack of transportation and access to services, elder-youth relationship and intergenerational barrier, language barrier, home and living assistance; (b) obstacles, i.e., lack of manpower, lack of funding, lack of commitment; (c) recruitment and retention of volunteers; (d) setting short-term and long-term goals
- 11) August 11, 2001 – The Second Community Forum was held at the NANAY Center, beginning with a whole-day exhibit of Thai history, arts and culture. The President of the Thai American Association of Florida headed the discussion on community issues affecting Thai-Americans. This was followed by a one-hour presentation of Thai cultural dances and songs. Seventy-four (74) leaders and members of Asian community attended the event.



- 12) August 31, 2001 - The First Intergenerational Forum and Workshop was held at the NANAY Center, attended by 51 community leaders, elders and youth. Youth participants from different cultures (Asian, Hispanic, African American, Haitian) presented a skit on racial profiling. This was followed by a workshop and panel discussion where elders and youth shared their views and sentiments about each other, bridged the intergenerational gap, planned their future activities, and taught each other how to dance.
- 13) September 1, 2001 - The Third Miami-Dade Community Partnership Forum was held at the NANAY Center and was hosted by the Ismaili Muslim Community. It was a very enlightening and educational forum, where the audience learned about the Ismaili Muslim history, culture, tradition, social-civic activities and local as well as global projects. The discussion was led by Gulshan Pirani, President of the Ismaili Muslim Community, and was followed by a number of colorful presentations including Muslim dances and fashion show of native costumes. Thirty nine leaders from other Asian communities participated in the discussion.
- 14) October 6, 2001 - a Breast Cancer Awareness Workshop was held at the NANAY Center, hosted by the Organizations of Chinese Americans – South Florida Chapter and the Chinese Women Club of Greater Miami, to promote the National Cancer Awareness Month
- 15) October 27, 2001 – The Organization of Chinese Americans- South Florida Chapter held its Cultural Exhibit, Cultural Presentation and Community Forum at the NANAY Center, with the theme: “Lessons from the Past, Building for the Future). This was attended by more than 75 guests. Presenters talked about the history of Chinese Americans

immigrants in Florida, and discussed community issues including racism, discrimination, economic concerns and social services.

- 16) November 13, 2001 – A Youth Leadership Development session consisted of a “Conversation With An Eagle”—where multi-ethnic youth and elders met with Manny Medina, President and Chairman of the Board, Terremark Worldwide, Inc.
- 17) December 8, 2001 – The Japan-America Society of South Florida hosted a Cultural Presentation and Community Forum at the NANAY Center. The impressive cultural exhibit showcased the ancient history of Japanese culture, with demonstrations of traditional gowns, vases, coins and others. The presenters talked about business practices and culture, with demonstration on ikebana, bonsai, candy-sculpture and Japanese cuisine. More than 120 guests attended the event.
- 18) December 15, 2001 – An Intergenerational Talent Show was held at the NANAY Center, and involved multi-ethnic youth and elders. This was attended by more than 80 guests.

B. ADDRESSING COMMUNITY ISSUE ON JOB EMPLOYMENT

Problem 1. Language Barrier: **Conversational English sessions** were held at the Asian Pacific American Community Center to facilitate the acculturation of non-English speaking immigrants (usually elders), allowing them to socialize with and understand the languages and cultures of immigrants from other countries. This program was also extended to at least three non-Asian immigrants. The partnership’s initiative has already enabled an 82 year old Haitian immigrant residing in North Miami who could not read or write, and spoke only in Creole, to learn how to read and write the alphabet, count and write numbers, spell and write her name, answer simple greetings in English, and participate in aerobics, dancing exercises and health sessions.

Problem 2. Lack of Access to Information: To facilitate access to job information, **NANAY’s website** (<http://www.nanay.com>) served as the Asian Pacific American community’s central Internet information station, and was linked to a number of local as well as national job employment resources. More than 50,000 visitors accessed the website last year. More than 1000 prospective jobs in Miami Dade County were made available at NANAY’s website through its links with a number of local as well as national job employment resources. More 280 visitors have accessed jobs at the NANAY Website. Employment Opportunities at the Postal Office, local companies and government agencies were also distributed to more than 500 individuals through our e-mail List Serve.

Problem 3. Lack of Technological Skills: More than 40 participants have registered in our Computer Training Program, and are now becoming more comfortable with the basic operation and use of the computer, working with the mouse and keyboard, typing simple letters, accessing programs, sending e-mails, and surfing websites. Many of these individuals now have their own e-mail addresses, and are able to communicate with their acquaintances and other relatives residing in their countries of origin.

IV. FUTURE PLANS: The Asian Pacific American community partnership will continue to work together in pursuing all the goals that we have previously stated in our grant proposal. Our community partners will continue to promote Asian culture to the general community during the month of May, which has been officially designated by the U.S. Congress as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. A “**Miami Asian Caravan**” has been organized and is scheduled to make a cultural presentation at South Cutler Ridge School on May 23, and at Michael Krop School on May 24. A whole-month Asian Cultural Exhibit will be presented in the downtown Library, in collaboration with the Miami-Dade Asian Pacific American Advisory Board.

The Asian Pacific American community partnership will continue to work together in pursuing all the goals that we have previously stated in our grant proposal. Our community partners will continue to promote Asian culture to the general community through the Community Forums which have been scheduled for October (to be hosted by the Korean and Chinese communities) and December (to be hosted by the Japanese Community). In addition, a Blood Drive has been scheduled for September 15, in partnership with the Community Blood Centers of South Florida. As part of our Health Series, An International ExpoFEST is now being planned for next year at the Miami Arena to further build community relationships by bringing together, under one roof, the major sectors (multicultural groups, health and service agencies, job employment and business establishments) that cater especially, but not exclusively, to elders and youth.

III. SUMMARY, IMPACT AND OUTCOME: To date, the Asian-American community partnership led by NANAY, through the Miamians Working Together Project, has been active and successful in fostering unity and improving the relationship within the culturally diverse and traditionally fragmented Asian Pacific American community in Miami-Dade. Specific measures stated in our original grant application have been met, if not exceeded, and will translate into greater community involvement, a more harmonious relationship and a unified image for the Asian Pacific American community.