

# **Candidates Forum on Asian Pacific American Issues to be held in South Florida**

**MIAMI** – September 10, 2008

The NANAY, Inc. and OCA - South Florida Chapter will conduct the first-ever voter education / candidates forum on Asian Pacific American Issues with Presidential candidates and U.S. House of Representatives for Miami-Dade and Broward.

The Candidates Forum on Asian Pacific American Issues will be held on Sunday, September 14 from 2pm to 5pm at the NANAY Community Center 659 NE 125 Street, North Miami.

Historically, Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) have not participated actively in the democratic process. Voter turnout in the APA community lags behind that of whites, African-Americans and Latinos. The percentage of the Asian American population registered to vote remains among the lowest of all ethnic groups.

As the fastest growing minority group in the United States, and as a group with an increasing number of community-specific social and political challenges, it is increasingly important that APAs play an active role in American politics and government.

APAs are 2.2% of the total population of Florida (18 millions). APAs have increased to nearly 400,000 in Florida – five folds since Census 2000 -- but too few APAs vote.

## **Presidential Candidates:**

Senator John McCain, Republican Party  
Senator Barack Obama, Democratic Party

## **US House of Representatives 21st District Candidates:**

Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Incumbent, Republican Party  
Raul Martinez, Candidate, Democratic Party

## **US House of Representatives 25th District Candidates:**

Mario Diaz-Balart, Incumbent, Republican Party  
Joe Garcia Raul Martinez, Candidate, Democratic Party

This non-partisan forum is sponsored by NANAY (National Alliance to Nurture the Aged

and the Youth) and OCA-South Florida Chapter and is supported by 20 co-sponsoring community organizations. Each candidate has been invited to make a short introductory statement to be followed by a question and answer session on a range of issues that impact Asian Pacific American community.

The purpose of this Forum is to give candidates for President and House Representatives an opportunity to address a wide range of issues that affect community sustainability and livability in our community and country. At the Forum, APAs will hear Candidate's positions and make informed decisions before voting.



As part of APA Get-Out-The-Vote initiative, new voters' registration will be available.

"As advocates for APA, we want to know who is truly committed to making a positive difference for Asian Pacific American community," said Winnie Tang, President of OCA-South Florida Chapter. "Information gained from this forum will help members of our community cast their votes come November."

"We need to know about issues that will be put on ballot in November and how candidates feel about Asian Pacific American issues so that we can make informed decisions " said Dr. Joy Bruce, President of NANAY, Inc. "I am glad that Asian Pacific Americans are finally speaking up and getting heard."