

# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT




ASIAN AMERICANS  
**ADVANCING  
JUSTICE**

LOS ANGELES

Building upon the legacy of the  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center





**OUR MISSION** is to advocate for civil rights, provide legal services and education, and build coalitions to positively influence and impact Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and to create a more equitable and harmonious society.

**FOR THE PAST 31 YEARS**, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles (Advancing Justice - LA) has proudly served and advocated for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities. As the nation's largest legal organization focused on AANHPIs, we advance justice for all marginalized communities through direct services, impact litigation, policy advocacy and research, leadership development, and capacity-building of partner organizations.

In 2014, we helped thousands of immigrants navigate legal issues such as family law, domestic violence, housing, citizenship, and immigration, including the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). More than 460 volunteers – including pro bono attorneys, law students, and youth – provided over 17,500 hours of assistance, greatly expanding the ability of our staff to reach more individuals, groups, and communities in need.

But our impact is best told through the stories of our clients, which we share in the next few pages. The elderly, low-income tenants in Anaheim, nearly forced into homelessness after their rents skyrocketed. The hundreds of aspiring U.S. citizens enrolled in our new civics and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes, including a Bangladeshi family and their 11-year old daughter. The brave undocumented youth following their dreams and coming out of the shadows together. Even the often unseen, unheard Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) whose stories were uplifted in a first-ever demographic report focused exclusively on 20 distinct NHPI cultural groups living in the United States.

We take great pride in the many lives and communities that Advancing Justice - LA is able to touch every day. Thank you for your generous support that has allowed us to be so impactful. We look forward to your ongoing partnership as we continue to fight for justice and a voice for our communities.



*Stewart Kwoh*

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*President & Executive Director*



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## A Holiday “Miracle” for Elderly, Low-Income Tenants in Anaheim

After receiving a notice that his rent would increase by more than 50 percent, Yong Woom Wang contacted Advancing Justice - LA's legal intake line. He was desperate for help when a government program that kept his rent low ended and the building where he lived went through a change of ownership. “The rent increases were devastating to me,” he explained. “I could not afford necessary medicine for my chronic diseases, I had to cut back on my food intake because I could not afford my normal groceries, and I could not see my friends or family because I did not have money for transportation. I felt very depressed.”

Mr. Wang, a 74-year old monolingual Korean-speaking tenant, had lived at Miracle Terrace, a senior housing complex in Anaheim, California, for eight years. He subsisted on less than \$800 per month and the rent increase would have forced him to spend more than three-fourths of his income on rent alone. When Advancing Justice - LA senior staff attorney Nicole Ochi met with Mr. Wang, she could not help but get involved. In addition to Mr. Wang, there were nearly 200 low-income, limited English proficient, elderly tenants like him on the brink of homelessness due to the rent increases.

The affordable housing protections for the tenants at Miracle Terrace ended because of a phenomenon known as federal mortgage maturity. The only hope for the tenants was a little known “low-vacancy rate



Nicole Ochi from Advancing Justice - LA (fourth from left) and Lili Vo Graham from Public Law Center (third from left) with Miracle Terrace tenants and supporters.

vouchers” program, which provides rental assistance to low-income tenants living in buildings that have lost their affordability restrictions. Administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the vouchers were limited and required building owners to apply for the protections.

Although convinced to apply for the vouchers, the new owner of Miracle Terrace did not agree to freeze the rent increases as the voucher applications were being processed. In response, the joint legal team from Advancing Justice - LA and Public Law Center secured emergency food assistance for the tenants and began engaging in direct advocacy efforts with HUD and local housing authorities. With assistance from the office of Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-46th District), the vouchers for 124 housing units were approved just in time for the Thanksgiving holiday.

“Wang was one of scores of residents — mostly monolingual Koreans living on fixed incomes — whose lives were turned upside down last summer when Miracle Terrace converted from government-assisted affordable housing to a privately owned apartment complex intent on charging market rates.”

—Los Angeles Times, December 8, 2014

## New ESL & Civics Classes Help Asian Immigrants Succeed at Citizenship

Of the 8.8 million legal permanent residents in the country, only 10 to 15 percent naturalize each year. To become a U.S. citizen, applicants must pass the naturalization interview and test, which requires demonstrating an ability to speak, read and write in basic English. The interview, which also includes questions on U.S. government and history, is widely considered the most difficult part of the naturalization process. For many immigrants, learning a second language can be a daunting challenge.

In response to the lack of English as a Second Language (ESL) and civics programs targeting Asian immigrants, Advancing Justice - LA created Asian language instructional programs covering information about the naturalization process, examination, and application form. Led by bilingual teachers who speak Asian languages, students are able to build their English language ability in a safe learning environment. For many Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese immigrants, the classes turn something previously intimidating into a source of pride and accomplishment.



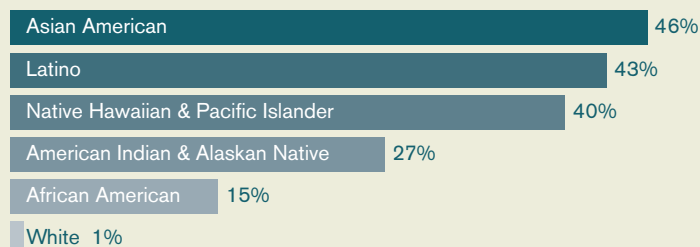
In addition to ESL and civics classes, Advancing Justice - LA helps thousands of legal permanent residents apply for U.S. citizenship. With the help of our citizenship clinics, each member of the Sarwar Family became a U.S. citizen on August 27, 2014. Through U.S. citizenship "derivation" laws, the Sarwar's 11-year daughter automatically became a U.S. citizen following her parents' naturalization ceremony.

"Citizenship is a comprehensive process," says Nasim Khansari, director of Advancing Justice - LA's citizenship project. "We wanted to help our community members from start to finish – from the time they come to us for help with their English to the time they show us their naturalization certificate and ask us how to register to vote. This is the full spectrum of services we strive to offer to our community." In 2014, Advancing Justice - LA's ESL/Civics classes helped 278 students in Echo Park, Koreatown and Chinatown.

## NATIVE HAWAIIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES: New report highlights increasing poverty, educational and health challenges

Advancing Justice - LA believes in the power of data to provide greater access and promote more opportunities for underserved communities. Despite being incredibly diverse and one of the fastest growing groups in the country, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) are often lumped in with Asian Americans, rendering their unique needs invisible.

### U.S. Population Growth, by Race 2000-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

*Between 2000-2010, the NHPI community grew 40 percent. There are now more than 1.2 million NHPIs living in the U.S. By 2030, the NHPI population will reach nearly 2 million.*

In 2014, in collaboration with Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC), Asian Americans Advancing Justice released *A Community of Contrasts: Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States*, a groundbreaking national report that reveals a host of social and economic disparities facing this growing community:

- **Unemployment rates** for NHPIs increased 123 percent during the recession and the number living in poverty increased 56 percent, higher than any other racial group.
- One in seven NHPIs do not have **health insurance**. NHPIs also face high rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. In addition, cancer is the fastest-growing cause of death among Native Hawaiians, Samoan Americans, and Guamanian (or Chamorro) Americans.
- NHPI youth face lower than average four-year college **admission and enrollment rates**. In 2011, only 38 percent of NHPI college-aged youth were in college.

"When you see the figures, you can see that we're veterans, small business owners and voters. But you can also see that many of our families live in poverty and many of our youth face educational challenges," said Tana Lepule, EPIC Executive Director. "This report can help paint a fuller picture of our community."

# Undocumented & Unafraid: Coming Out of the Shadows Together

In 2014, many of the initial applications for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program needed to be renewed, and Advancing Justice - LA responded by expanding services for both new and renewal DACA applications. DACA protects undocumented youth from

deportation and allows them to apply for legal work permits for a period of two years. Recipients of the program are granted the opportunity to apply for social security numbers, California I.D. cards, driver's licenses, and, most importantly, the financial ability to proceed with their education and career goals.

"It allowed me to come out of the shadows, have access to resources, and to be empowered to fight for myself, my family, and my community," says Anthony Ng, a DACA recipient and immigrant rights policy advocate at Advancing Justice - LA. Born in the Philippines, he encourages other undocumented youth to apply for DACA and to get involved with the fight for



Advancing Justice - LA has assisted over 2,700 undocumented youth from many countries including South Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Mongolia, Thailand, and Indonesia with their DACA application.

comprehensive immigration reform.

Nationally, more than 642,000 applications have been submitted, and 96 percent have been approved. While South Korea and the Philippines are among the top ten countries of origin for DACA applications, many other

Asian American and Pacific Islander DACA-eligible youth have not applied. "I know that it is a painful process to acknowledge your immigration status due to the stigma that comes along with it," says Ng. "But our parents and family sacrificed so much for a better life for us - it is our duty to ourselves and our families to ensure that their sacrifices are not in vain."

Advancing Justice - LA offers linguistically and culturally appropriate clinics and workshops to interested applicants throughout Los Angeles, Orange County, and the Inland Empire. Since DACA was first implemented on August 15, 2012, Advancing Justice - LA has assisted over 2,300 DACA-eligible applicants and represented clients in 388 DACA cases.

## ADVANCING JUSTICE - LA'S NONPROFIT CENTER: Capacity Building at Every Level

The goal of Advancing Justice - LA's Nonprofit Center is to help organizations pursue long-term transformation, at every level, from board members to volunteers. The Center connects individuals and organizations to resources that strengthen their foundations and provide the roots needed to successfully move through challenges.

In 2014, Advancing Justice - LA's Nonprofit Center provided trainings to 60 organizations and over 200 participants on topics related to employment law, strategic communications, fund development, collaboration, budgeting and finance. In addition, intensive mentoring and coaching programs were provided to twenty organizational



Non-profit leaders engaged in a capacity building workshop hosted by Advancing Justice - LA's Nonprofit Center.

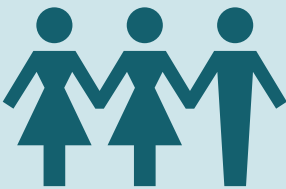
leaders, on topics such as board development, grant writing, leadership development and human resources.

# OUR REACH & IMPACT 2014



**3,500+** CALLS  
made to LEGAL HELPLINES

**45,000** CALLS   
made to registered voters in  
**17** Asian & Pacific Islander languages

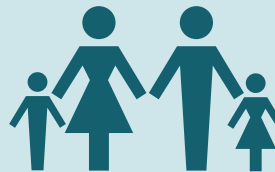


**670** domestic  
violence  
SURVIVORS SERVED

**278** INDIVIDUALS enrolled in  
ESL/CIVICS COURSES



**315** Deferred Action  
for Childhood Arrivals  
(DACA) APPLICANTS assisted



**480**  
INDIVIDUALS  
assisted with  
HOUSING  
ISSUES

**HEALTH  
JUSTICE  
NETWORK**

A PROJECT OF ASIAN AMERICANS  
ADVANCING JUSTICE - LOS ANGELES

**130,000** INDIVIDUALS  
educated on the PATIENT PROTECTION  
AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT through the  
Advancing Justice-led Health Justice Network

**1,670**  
U.S. CITIZENSHIP  
applicants assisted



**465** VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS  
& PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

contributed over



**17,500** HOURS

to helping  
Advancing Justice - LA

**1,100** YOUTH, ADULTS &

**1,200** COMMUNITY  
LEADERS

participated in leadership  
trainings, community  
service events &  
large-scale convenings



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\*Does not include individual ticket purchases, silent auction or opportunity drawing for the Anniversary Dinner.

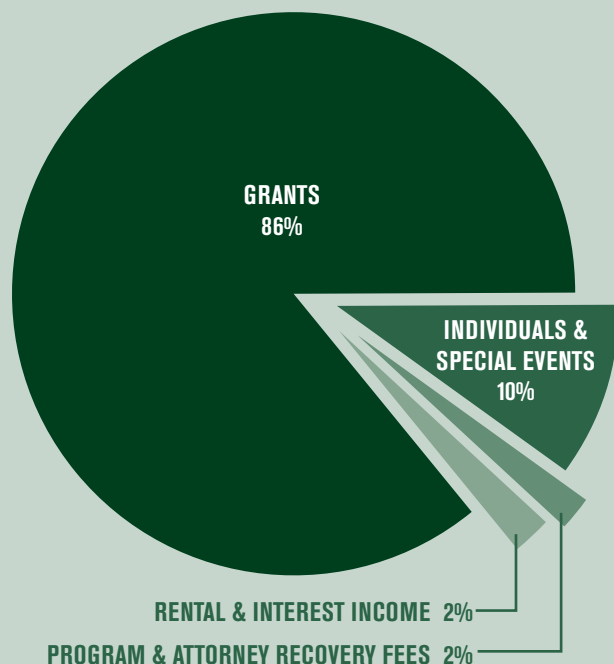
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# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION **2014**

## Support & Revenue



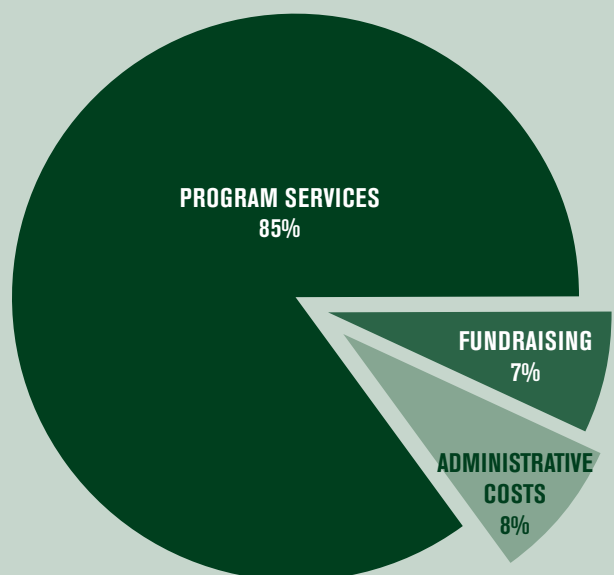
## Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$2,298,947
Long-term Investments	\$7,285,049
Grants and Pledges Receivables	\$3,325,132
Property and Equipment, Net	\$2,358,719
Deposits	\$28,139
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$15,295,986</b>

## Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$159,519
Accrued Employee Benefits	\$246,482
Grants Payable	\$1,133,748
Custodial Funds	\$820
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$1,540,569</b>

## Expenses



## Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$9,750,890
Temporarily Restricted	\$3,004,527
Permanently Restricted	\$1,000,000
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$13,755,417</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$15,295,986</b>

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