



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John C. Liu

AAPI Coalition Celebrates \$20M in New State Funding

JOHN C. LIU April 29, 2022

| ISSUE: **AAPI**, **#STOPAAPIHATE**, **ANDREW J. LANZA**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, April 28, 2022

Contact:

Liu: Scott Sieber: 917-789-8758 | press@johnliusenate.com

Niou: Max Burns: 317-522-7060 | max@yuhlineniou.org

CACF: Lakshmi Gandhi: 212-809-4675 x110 | lgandhi@cacf.org

AAF: Meera Venugopal: 212-344-5878 x224 meera.venugopal@aafederation.org

AAPI COALITION CELEBRATES \$20M IN NEW STATE FUNDING

After years of anti-Asian hate, coalition kicks off AAPI Heritage Month with action plan for future

New York, NY – After years of nonstop anti-Asian hate, the AAPI Equity Budget Coalition, a coalition of over 50 AAPI community leaders and organizations, kicked off AAPI Heritage Month by celebrating the historic \$20 million investment in AAPI communities in the Fiscal Year 2022-23 state budget. This allocation represents a significant improvement over last year's first-ever allocation by doubling the state's investment in AAPI communities. Today, the coalition gathered to celebrate this marked progress, and to renew its call for a sustained fair and equitable funding stream for AAPI communities throughout the state.

Earlier this year, a coalition of over 50 AAPI groups formed the [AAPI Equity Budget Coalition](#), and issued a statement of needs for an AAPI Equity Budget to address the horrific surge in AAPI hate crimes, the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19, and the historic underfunding of AAPI communities. The coalition envisioned funding for programs and services ranging from operational support for AAPI community organizations to AAPI curriculum designed for students in Pre-K through 12th grade. Funds would also go toward the creation of an AAPI State Commission, which would serve to advise the governor's office on the needs of the AAPI community and examine critical issues like language access among state agencies, departments, and commissions.

In May 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a law designating the month of May as AAPI Heritage Month to recognize the historical and cultural contributions of Asian American and Pacific Islanders. Today, the coalition commemorated the start of AAPI Heritage Month by celebrating this year's \$20 million budget allocation, and recommitted to pushing for even greater budget parity in coming years in order to achieve true equity within AAPI communities.

State Senator John Liu said, "May is AAPI Heritage Month, and after two years of being the targets of racist incidents and violent assaults, we are choosing to take the pain of our collective past and turn it into action and healing for the near future. This historic funding will provide the community groups who work directly with our state's diverse AAPI communities the tools they need to get the job done. To truly combat the hatred that has relentlessly pervaded our community for the last two years, we will bolster education, community outreach, language services, programs and services. On this AAPI Heritage Month, we ask all New Yorkers of every race, color and creed to join us in this effort to forge a brighter, safer and more harmonious future for all New Yorkers."

State Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou said, “I am immensely proud that due to the incredible efforts of advocates, organizers and legislative allies we were able to get \$20 million in state funding for our community. The dual pandemics of COVID and racist violence have hurt AAPI New Yorkers deeply, but we know that they are just the latest chapter in a history of violence towards and disinvestment from our communities. We are long overdue for a more equitable New York and this budget allocation is a step towards changing how our community has been consistently underserved and overlooked by our government.”

State Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani said, “Too often, Asian communities are only recognized in death. Today, New York State takes a first step towards rectifying that. With this \$20 million in state funding, our budget is finally moving towards a full recognition of the needs of our community as we still live and breathe, and the needs of the community organizations that safeguard, support, and strengthen us along the way.”

State Senator Zellnor Myrie said, “I’m proud to represent one of New York’s largest and oldest Chinese communities in Sunset Park, and equally proud this year’s budget included \$20 million in resources to support Asian American communities across New York. I’m happy to kick off AAPI Heritage Month by recognizing and supporting organizations that work with our communities on the ground, everyday.”

State Senator Brad Hoylman said: “New York needs to do better for our AAPI community. Anti-Asian hate crimes have skyrocketed in our city, and many live in fear of being verbally or physically assaulted. I am immensely proud that we are dedicating a historic \$20 million in funding for our AAPI communities, who deserve, like anyone else, to move around our city freely. I celebrate the AAPI Equity Budget Coalition for dedicating an immense amount of time and effort championing AAPI issues. Announcing this funding is a terrific way to kickstart AAPI Heritage Month.”

State Senator Sean M. Ryan said, “Asian Americans have faced senseless bigotry in recent years, and we must stand united with the AAPI community against this violence and discrimination. Doubling our state’s commitment to AAPI-focused organizations in this year’s budget is an important step toward combating the issues that New York’s Asian-American communities face every day.”

State Senator Jessica Ramos said, “The \$20 million secured in this budget is deeply meaningful to my neighbors in the 13th Senate District, which is the most racially and ethnically diverse constituency in the country. This money recognizes the unique challenges borne by AAPI New Yorkers, while simultaneously understanding that all the communities that fall under that identity are not a monolith. This funding will bolster adult literacy initiatives, arts and cultural projects, as well as targeted support for pandemic recovery. Thank you to my colleagues for championing this funding in our budget.”

State Senator Jamal Bailey said, “Our Asian communities have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. From the rise in anti-Asian violence to the unprecedented need for social services and culturally appropriate and accessible programming, the pandemic has only exacerbated disparities caused by years of systemic underinvestment in AAPI communities. While \$20 million in funding for AAPI communities in the State budget is a step in the right direction, we must do more to invest in a just recovery for AAPI New Yorkers and support the community groups working on the ground to bridge these gaps. I want to thank my colleagues in the legislature, the AAPI Equity Budget Coalition and all of the organizations that fought for this important funding in the budget.”

State Senator Andrew Gounardes said, “The \$20 million that the AAPI Equity Budget Coalition won in this year’s state budget will mean real, positive differences for our Asian American community members here in southern Brooklyn. The AAPI Equity Budget is a crucial step towards ensuring that New York’s Asian American communities are not overlooked or underfunded. I’m proud to have supported its inclusion in our unified budget, and glad to see community-based organizations in southern Brooklyn, which has a large AAPI population, receive the funding they deserve. I look forward to seeing the resources this budget will bring to New Yorkers across the state.”

Assembly Member Gina L. Sillitti said, “I am proud that we secured \$20 million for our AAPI Equity Budget coalition in this year’s budget. From mental health services, to language access, to combating hate and implementing AAPI school curricula, our AAPI community needs our support. This budget is a great start and we will continue to do our best to help our AAPI communities in NYC, in Long Island and throughout New York.”

Assembly Member Nily Rozic said, “Tireless advocacy from the AAPI-led organizations has led to this vital win securing \$20 million in this year’s state budget to invest in the ongoing work on the ground in support of AAPI New Yorkers. From combatting rising anti-Asian hate to strengthening language access services, these funds are a step in the right direction to problem-solving harmful inequities that have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Asian American Federation Associate Director Ravi Reddi said, “The State Budget this year has taken important steps to help our community in this crisis - and for this we are grateful. The \$20 million allocated to Asian-led and Asian-serving organizations that provide essential services and are critical lifelines for our community is another step in the right direction. We will rely on our state leaders to ensure that the Asian community has access to these funds and that there are further allocations made that will consider that 1 in 4 Asian Americans in New York State live in poverty and that the COVID pandemic combined with anti-Asian hate proved catastrophic for Asian Americans. The work has only just begun, but we’re grateful to have electeds fighting for our community in Albany.”

CACF's Co-Executive Directors Anita Gundanna and Vanessa Leung said, "The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF) is grateful for our AAPI communities' champions in the NY State Legislature. The historic \$20 million AAPI Equity Budget is only made possible by a unified and strong collaborative effort across over 70 CACF organizational members and partners Statewide to spread awareness about our diverse communities. This investment in our diverse communities will help holistically address the rise in anti-Asian violence and the traumatic impacts of COVID-19 on the AAPI community, and will also support the implementation of a Statewide AAPI curriculum in K-12 public schools. In the face of our communities' growing challenges impacting the AAPI community, New York State's commitment to AAPI New Yorkers is a crucial step towards ensuring that our diverse communities are no longer overlooked and under-resourced. Our community organizations know best what our communities need to recover and heal. We are confident that this investment, as shaped by our AAPI coalition, will prove critical in promoting the health, wellness, and safety of our communities. We look forward to continued commitment from New York State to support our diverse AAPI community."

Garden of Hope Executive Director Yuanfen Kristen Chi said, "The pandemic and rise of anti-Asian hate crimes have highlighted the devastating effect that a lack of approachable and accessible crime victim services and community mental health support have on the Chinese immigrant communities we serve at Garden of Hope. The AAPI Equity Budget provides vital resources to support linguistically and culturally responsive social services that ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are not left behind in these challenging times."

Arab-American Family Support Center President and CEO Rawaa Nancy Albilal said, "The Arab-American Family Support Center (AAFSC) is proud to partner with the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families and our champions in the state to bring culturally-responsive and linguistically competent initiatives to vulnerable AAPI New Yorkers. Together, we are investing in communities disproportionately impacted by poverty, discrimination, and hate crimes and creating an equitable path towards healing."

International Institute of Buffalo Executive Director Jenny Rizzo-Choi said, "Over the past several years, IIB has seen a nearly 30% increase in the number of referrals to our domestic violence services program and unfortunately, has also seen a significant increase in the level of abuse experienced by survivors seeking support. With the AAPI community making up 50% of all survivors served, we are grateful to our state officials for recognizing the need to name the specific and growing needs of this community. We are also grateful for our partnership with the Karen Society of Buffalo, who has provided leadership within the community and an imperative partnership with IIB in serving survivors within this population."

Karen Society of Buffalo Director Faustina Palmatier said, “We applaud our state officials for their recognition of our community's growing safety needs with the increase in dedicated funds for community-based organizations serving the AAPI community. This funding will allow organizations like ours to expand our internal capacity and outside partnerships, like the one we rely on with the International Institute of Buffalo, so that we may experience safety in our families and neighborhoods.”

CMP Executive Director Hong Shing Lee said, “CMP is grateful to NYS for the support of the AAPI community. This historic commitment marks the beginning of healing from the pandemic. As our communities emerge, CMP will continue to assist those in need of workforce and entrepreneurial development by enhancing their employability, learning new job skills, and helping small businesses to recover.”

Adhikaar Executive Director Pabitra Khati Benjamin said, “We are grateful that the state has decided to fund the AAPI Equity Budget for \$20 million, signaling to our AAPI communities in New York that we are being seen and heard. With the allocation from this initiative, Adhikaar will be better equipped to protect and serve immigrant workers, like domestic workers, nail salon workers and TPS members of our community. Now more than ever, providing equitable funding to Asian American New Yorkers is necessary in the recourse and revitalization of our communities. We are confident that with the Governor, Assembly and Senate's continued support, our Asian American-led and -serving organizations can serve our most vulnerable community members as they recover and heal from tragic events of this past year. Special gratitude to our legislative champions for pushing this across the finish line.”

Mekong NYC Executive Director Chhaya Chhoum said, “We celebrate the commitment from the state for the AAPI community. We hope the acknowledgement of our different communities' needs and resources are also reflected in all communities of colors.”

United Sikhs Senior Manager Jagjit Kaur said, “We are very grateful to all the legislative members who supported the \$20 million AAPI Equity Funding. This will help provide critical services to the most vulnerable AAPI community members.”

Emira Habiby Browne Founder & CEO of the Center for the Integration & Advancement of New Americans said, “As we move into the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must continue to address the systemic inequities and the dire effects of the pandemic on the lives of the AAPI communities in NYC. As a small CBO, with limited financial resources, the Center for the Integration and Advancement of New Americans (CIANA), applauds the \$20 million investment that the New York State has made in addressing the needs of our marginalized and underserved AAPI communities. It will uplift CIANA and other community-based organizations that are working tirelessly to increase language and

culturally competent direct social services and address critical needs – community safety; food, legal, and economic insecurity; housing and rental evictions; loss of employment; healthcare; and comprehensive family support. We are very grateful for this historic effort that will help meet the many challenges impacting the diverse AAPI community in New York.”

Sapna NYC, Inc. Executive Director Diya Basu-Sen said, “We are excited to see that New York is recognizing the specific needs of AAPI communities across the state in this historic investment in the community-based organizations that provide critical services to AAPI immigrant New Yorkers. We look forward to continuing to work alongside our champions in the legislature to continue to narrow the gap between our AAPI community needs and the services and resources they receive. AAPI community-based organizations like Sapna NYC have been filling the gap between government services and the needs of the community for years, but particularly during this pandemic. Services have ranged from food pantries to vaccine navigation to domestic violence support to mental health counseling. Through this AAPI Equity Budget, Sapna NYC will be able to invest in increased outreach and case management so that the most vulnerable New Yorkers who never make it through our doors also receive the help they need. This will connect New Yorkers with much needed mental health services, workforce development programs, benefits assistance, health education, and more.”

Chinese-American Planning Council President and CEO Wayne Ho said, “We are thankful to our state legislators for championing the Asian American and Pacific Islander community in the State budget. The \$20 million AAPI Equity Budget is an important investment to address the dual pandemics of COVID and anti-Asian hate across New York. Community based organizations are on the front lines of promoting public health, economic recovery, and public safety for the diverse AAPI community. CPC looks forward to receiving the funding soon so that we can continue to provide essential services to over 125,000 community members throughout the five boroughs of New York City and beyond.”

Korean American Family Service Center Executive Director Jeehae Fishcer said, “KAFSC is grateful for our champions in the legislature for fighting for the \$20M AAPI Equity Budget. With this support, KAFSC along with other AAPI-led CBOs are able to sustain and expand the critical programs and services that we are providing to our AAPI communities. KAFSC knows how best to support our AAPI immigrant survivors of gender-based violence and this investment will meet the immediate needs and further support the recovery and healing of our survivors during this critical time.”

Academy of Medical and Public Health Services Executive Vice President Mok Yuck Yu said, “New York State’s \$20 million commitment to the AAPI Equity Budget means that our community can access the services that they urgently need. Despite being one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in New York City with one of the highest poverty rates, the AAPI is often overlooked and underfunded, leading to the

perpetuation of socioeconomic and food insecurity and growing fear and anxiety. Spikes in anti-Asian hate crimes over the past two years have exacerbated these issues. The Academy of Medical & Public Health Services is proud to have stood in the fight for this funding, and would like to thank the legislative partners who have made this possible. This funding will enable us to expand our language-appropriate social services, launch community safety initiatives, and offer expanded multilingual mental health services -- connecting the most vulnerable and invisibilized populations to help.”

University Settlement CEO Melissa Aase said, “Many thanks and congratulations to the amazing coalition of providers, led by CACF and AAF, for securing these funds from New York State, and to our legislative champions, whose leadership was steadfast and crucial. This victory will allow us to immediately and meaningfully expand bilingual mental health offerings for children, adults, older adults, and families; more meaningfully engage AAPI people in our arts programming; and continue activating and reclaiming community space in partnership with our AAPI neighbors in Chinatown and the Lower East Side through our summer festival ROAR.”

The AAPI Equity Budget Coalition consists of a diverse array of over 50 AAPI organizations from across the state that are providing community-informed, culturally relevant, and language accessible services and community programs, and is jointly led by the Asian American Federation (AAF) and the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF). Programming and services address issues such as gender-based violence, healthcare, senior and youth programs, research, advocacy and legal assistance, as well as multi-service programming such as housing assistance, benefits navigation, small business support, workforce development/job training, food services, legal service, mental health support, violence intervention and prevention, aid to homeowners and tenants, safety-related services, and more.

Supporting organizations include, but are not limited to:

A Place for Kids

Academy of Medical & Public Health Services

Adhikaar

Apex for Youth

Apicha Community Health Center

Arab-American Family Support Center

Asian Americans for Equality

Brooklyn Chinese-American Association

Caribbean Equality Project

Center for the Integration & Advancement of New Americans, Inc.

Charles B. Wang Community Health Center

Chhaya CDC
Chinatown YMCA
Chinese-American Family Alliance for Mental Health
Chinese-American Planning Council
CMP
Council of Peoples Organization Inc.
DRUM NYC
Educational Alliance
Garden of Hope
Grand Street Settlement
Hamilton-Madison House
Henry Street Settlement
Homecrest Community Services, Inc.
India Home Inc.
Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc.
Korean American Family Service Center
Laal
Mekong NYC
MinKwon Center for Community Action
Sakhi for South Asian Women
Sapna NYC
South Asian Council for Social Services
South Asian Youth Action
Turning Point for Women and Families
United Chinese Association of Brooklyn
University Settlement
Womankind
Women For Afghan Women
YWCA Queens

###