



Asian American LEAD

Leadership, Empowerment, and
Development for Youth and Families

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Welcome to Asian American LEAD!

Thank you for your interest in helping our youth. All too often, low-income, underserved Asian American youth remain invisible. Their needs and struggles are hidden by the myth that Asian Americans do not need help, which all too often results in policies and practices leading to benign neglect.

This is why we are passionate about linking our youth with opportunities that promote their academic and social well-being, and develop their leadership skills. This is also why we need volunteers and supporters like you. The work we do is possible because of a dedicated network of individuals who support our efforts with their time, talents, and resources.

Together, we can instill confidence in our students. In addition to emphasizing the importance of academic attainment, we guide them along the journey of becoming mature, young adults by engaging them in workshops that promote positive self-identity, developing leadership through



community service projects, and introducing them to career opportunities through guest speakers. Ultimately, we hope that through our programs, our youth receive a foundation that equips them to become successful, self-sufficient young adults who will give back to their communities.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about our work. We look forward to involving you in making a difference in the lives of our youth!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosetta Lai".

Rosetta Lai
Executive Director

陳海倫





Mission

Asian American LEAD works to promote the well-being of underserved and low-income Asian American youth and families through education, leadership development, and community building.



the community need

Asian Americans represent 4.5 percent of the population and are one of the fastest growing and most diverse minority groups in the United States.¹ Asian American students make up 14 percent of the student population in

our Montgomery County schools and 7 percent of the student population in our District of Columbia schools.^{2,3} Montgomery County has seen a 20 percent increase in Asian American students in the last five years.⁴

In contrast to the “model minority” stereotype of the uniformly successful Asian immigrant, many of these students face barriers to success. A significant percentage of these students come from low-income households. Of the approximately 18,066 Asian American residents in the District of Columbia in 2007, more than 2,000 lived below the poverty line.⁵ In Montgomery County, 29 percent of the Asian American students in the schools we serve qualify for free or reduced priced lunches.⁶ Often, the parents of these students lack formal education, have limited English language proficiency, are unfamiliar with American culture, or have few marketable job skills. These factors often mean students struggle to become self-sufficient and are vulnerable to at-risk behavior.

Despite this clear need in the Asian American community, the common perception that Asian Americans are uniformly successful has resulted in a lack of programs and services for students who do not fit into the “model minority” mold. Asian American LEAD (AALEAD) works to fill this gap through culturally appropriate programs and services.

Historically, AALEAD has focused on the Vietnamese, Amerasian, and Chinese immigrant and refugee populations. However, to meet the changing needs and demographics of our community, we have hired a diverse staff and expanded our programs to serve the Pan-Asian community.

As of the 2009-2010 academic year, AALEAD programs served over 300 students in Maryland and the District of Columbia in grades pre-K to 12. These students represented more than eleven different Asian ethnicities, including Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Indonesian, Korean, Cambodian, Asian Indian, Nepalese, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Sri Lankan.

References

1. “Growing Opportunities: Will Funding Follow the Rise in Foundation Assets and Growth of AAPI Populations?": Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, June 2007.
2. MCPS 2008-2009 School Year Data
3. DCPS 2009-2010 School Year School Profiles
4. Report on Disproportionality in Montgomery County Public Schools, June 2009.
5. “An Ever Transforming Population: A Glimpse Into Asians in the District of Columbia” Asian Data Profile Series, DC OAPIA
6. MCPS 2008-2009 School Year Data

our history

2004

AALEAD is selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as a FAMILIES COUNT — National Honors Program Honoree.

For excellence in youth development, AALEAD is selected for support from a limited pool of multi-service youth agencies in the nation by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

2002

Venture Philanthropy Partners (VPP) selects AALEAD to be an investment Partner for their first portfolio. AALEAD was able to build capacity through strategic planning, recruitment of executive talent, and professional organization development.

AALEAD purchases the property at 1323 Girard Street in Columbia Heights to turn into a community center for youth.

1998

Sandy Dang establishes AALEAD to serve the needs of Chinese, Amerasian and Vietnamese immigrants in the DC area.



2006

AALEAD opens its doors to its new Wheaton, MD office to address the growing immigrant and low-income Asian population in Montgomery County.

AALEAD's Secondary School Program is featured in the Community Foundation's Spirit of Giving Guide for its success in improving the academic achievement and social development of middle school youth in the DC region.

2008

AALEAD is listed in *Washingtonian* magazine as one of the top nonprofits in the DC area.

2010

AALEAD is named a finalist for the Washington Post Award for Excellence in Nonprofit Management.





Programs

Our diverse staff and team of volunteers deliver after-school programs, one-on-one mentoring, academic support, and life-skills development for our students. We also assist parents with school-related issues affecting their children. Our programs have helped hundreds of low-income Asian American children and their families stabilize their lives, succeed academically, and gain a voice in their community.

after-school programs

Our **Elementary After-School Programs** foster academic growth and life skills development through age-appropriate enrichment opportunities that encourage social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth in our students. Our program staff and volunteers provide homework support and tutoring, enrichment activities focusing on reading, writing, math, arts and crafts, and service learning opportunities.



These programs intervene at an early stage to critically impact our youths' academic and social development.

Our **Secondary School Programs** provide a safe after-school environment for middle and high school students. Through academic counseling and support, life skills and enrichment activities, field trips, community service opportunities, college preparatory classes, and student youth councils, students are encouraged to explore their cultural identity, develop leaderships skills, pursue academic achievement, and give back to their community.

In the District of Columbia, AALEAD's after-school programs serve students from:

- Cardozo High School
- Bancroft Elementary School
- Bell Multicultural High School
- Thomson Elementary School
- Wilson High School



In Montgomery County, Maryland,
AALEAD programs operate onsite at:

- A. Mario Loiederman Middle School
- Albert Einstein High School
- Argyle Middle School
- Eastern Middle School
- Montgomery Blair High School
- Newport Mill Middle School
- Parkland Middle School

“I learned a lot about jobs
and the opportunities you
have when you are successful
in school and take your
education to another level.”

Student,
Secondary School
After-School Program

mentoring program

AALEAD's Mentoring Program matches Asian American youth between the ages of 10 and 18 with caring adults who support them in developing the academic and life skills necessary to succeed. Mentors meet one-on-one with their mentees, engaging in activities in their local community. Our pairs choose activities based on their own interests. Outings have included museum visits, community service events, homework time, trying new food, playing video games, and just spending time together.

AALEAD provides training for each mentor and supports each mentor-mentee pair through regular field trips and community service activities that bring pairs together for fun and encouragement.

The mentoring relationship provides youth with a safe avenue to express their feelings and frustrations, improves youths' self-esteem, fosters positive self-identity, gives students opportunities to

explore new interests, and motivates students to pursue higher education.

In April 2008, our Mentoring Program won the award for "Excellence in Community Based Mentoring" through the Maryland Mentoring Partnership.



key success factors

AALEAD has identified these four “key success factors” as critical to a student’s success and development. All AALEAD programming is designed with the goal of encouraging students to develop or demonstrate at least one of these characteristics. These factors also serve as the basis for monitoring the efficacy of our programs.

- 🌟 **Academic Attainment**
To understand the importance of education, successfully graduate from high school, and move on to post-secondary education.
- 🌟 **Positive Self-Identity**
To increase students’ self-esteem, expose them to new opportunities that expand their horizons, and provide a safe space that allows students to be proud of their culture and own unique abilities.



- 🌟 **Responsible Behavior**
To have the ability and knowledge to make informed, responsible decisions and healthy life choices.
- 🌟 **Civic Engagement**
To understand and become more aware of issues in the community, and to learn how to develop, plan, and execute projects that benefit society.



Scotts

Golden Soil

INSTRUCTIONS / INSTRUCCIONES

Improving Flowers, Vegetables, and



Get involved!

The work we do is possible because of the dedicated efforts of each and every member of our team. Whether it is interns leading workshops, volunteers taking time to tutor, or donors contributing their financial resources, we are all committed to being advocates for our youth and to seeing them succeed. We always welcome new team members who share these values.



participate

If you are a student or you know a student at one of the schools we serve who would benefit from AALEAD programs, please contact:

Surjeet Ahluwalia
Director of Operations
202.884.0322 extension 109
sahluwalia@aalead.org

volunteer

Our highly dedicated volunteers contribute their time, talent, and skills to support and enhance our programs. Here are some ways you can make a difference in the underserved Asian American community:

Tutors help students excel academically by working with elementary, middle or high school students at one of our after-school programs.

Mentors build a friendship with a young person in need of a positive role model and pass along the academic and life skills they have learned. This requires a commitment of six hours a month for at least one year.

Other volunteers teach workshops, share their life histories, invite our youth for a job shadowing day, and more. These one-time and short-term opportunities can be tailored to fit a busy schedule.



For more information about volunteering, contact:

Volunteer Coordinator
202.884.0322 extension 105
volunteer@aalead.org

donate

Your donation ensures that our youth will continue to receive opportunities that will pave the way to brighter futures. Opportunities such as mentoring, tutoring, and life-skills development help our youth discover their potential and motivate them to reach their goals. Join our family of supporters as we guide our youth to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Asian American LEAD is a registered 501(c)3 organization and your donation is fully tax-deductable. Please visit www.aalead.org/donate.html to make a secure donation or make checks payable to Asian American LEAD and send to:

Asian American LEAD
2100 New Hampshire Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20009

We are also a member of the Combined Federal Campaign for the National Capital Area (CFCNCA) and the United Way Campaign for the National Capital Area (UWCNCA). If you would like to donate to us through these campaigns, our CFCNCA campaign number is **88412** and our United Way Campaign number is **9613**.

Special thanks to our volunteer, Catherine Ly, for her service to AALEAD and the many hours spent on this project.

Design Team: **Catherine Ly** and **Micah Shearer**

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