



ASIAN  
LAW CAUCUS



MEMBER OF  
ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER  
FOR ADVANCING JUSTICE

## 2009 Annual Report

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## Asian Law Caucus **Mission and Programs**

- ▶ The **mission** of the Asian Law Caucus is to promote, advance, and represent the legal and civil rights of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities. The Asian Law Caucus is committed to the pursuit of equality and justice for all sectors of our society, with a specific focus directed toward addressing the needs of low income, immigrant, and underserved APIs.



▲ **San Francisco Pride March, June 2009.**

### **Programs**

The practice of law at the Asian Law Caucus is not simply about representing our clients in court. Since 1972, our model of individual and community empowerment has been a multi-faceted one, combining legal representation, community education, organizing, media, and policy advocacy. Each of these strategies works in tandem to serve our broader goal of empowering Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

Both community needs and the Caucus's strategies define our efforts in the areas of immigrant rights; housing, elder law, and community development; employment rights; national security and civil rights; juvenile justice and education; and civic participation. Some of our programs cut across class and ethnic lines, while others focus on defending the rights of vulnerable populations. All our programs are committed to the pursuit of equality and justice for all sectors of our society.

## Message from the Executive Director and Board Chair

Dear Supporters and Friends,

We are proud to share with you our accomplishments in 2009. Thank you for your generous support this past year. Because of you, we were able to reach our goals in three successful campaigns: finishing the Community Room in our permanent home at 55 Columbus Avenue, the launching of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute for Civil Rights and Education, and establishing the Ronald Takaki Scholar-Activist Fellowship.



With this year's annual report, we are unveiling a new way of working with our affiliates. We hope you will join us in welcoming this change in our organizational structure and visibility.

Over the past several years, we have worked closely with three other leading Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) legal and civil rights organizations. Now we are at a new and exciting crossroads in our relationship. In June 2010, the Asian American Institute (AAI), Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), Asian Law Caucus (ALC), and Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) took the first official step towards working together under one name—Asian American Center for Advancing Justice—in order to effectively advance civil and human rights for all AAPI communities across the nation. Given our longstanding mutual cooperation, enhancing our partnership in this way is a natural progression.

Under our new name, AAI, AAJC, ALC, and APALC will collaborate to further our social justice agendas while preserving each organization's independence. We will work closely to develop a common vision and platform for action while continuing to use our wide-reaching expertise and capacity to affect change in areas of interest to our constituents, including redistricting, voter mobilization, criminal justice, housing, and education. Because we are strategically located around the country, together we have an even greater ability to elevate community issues to a national level.

We will continue to maintain our current programs and mission and look forward to partnering with our affiliates to build a stronger voice and achieve more impact on the issues that mean so much to all of us. Over a transitional period, the new name will serve as a tagline but eventually we will retire our existing names in order to build a more powerful and unified affiliation: Asian American Center for Advancing Justice.

We look forward to keeping you posted on these developments and welcome your input on how to ensure the success of this effort.

Sincerely,

Titi Liu  
Executive Director

Larry Lowe  
Chair, Board of Directors



► The **mission** of the **Asian American Center for Advancing Justice** is to promote a fair and equitable society for all by working for civil and human rights and empowering Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other underserved communities.

## [ 2009 ] Program Highlights **Immigrant Rights**

**C**reating a realistic path to permanent residency that strengthens our country and keeps families together is one of the Asian Law Caucus's major commitments. We provide legal services to those in greatest need while also engaging in the public debate to support proposals that champion a more humane and just immigration policy.

▶ We provide legal services to those in greatest need.



◀ Caucus staff reached out to the Southeast Asian community at an immigration town hall in Fresno.



### **Direct Services**

The Asian Law Caucus's advocacy for immigrant rights extends from basic family immigration petitions to naturalization assistance for disabled seniors to the defense of detained immigrants facing deportation. We serve hundreds of clients each year, and by partnering with community organizations from San Francisco to Sacramento, we provide services in a wide variety of languages. Our broad reach and the large number of people we assist enable Caucus staff to quickly identify emerging problem areas, allowing us to have a more effective focus on community education and policy advocacy.

### **Immigration and Customs Enforcement Raids**

The Caucus is challenging the legality of a number of recent raids on homes and workplaces in which Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents failed to consistently comply with constitutional requirements of due process and protections against unreasonable searches and seizures. In 2008, ICE conducted a large raid in the Oakland and Berkeley school districts, entering homes without proper warrants, and seizing and interrogating immigrants in excess of its legal authority. A court order barring the use of evidence obtained in violation of the Fourth and Fifth amendments is the main protection against such acts, and we have filed numerous motions to suppress this evidence.

### **Illegal Detention of United States Citizens**

Caucus staff has assisted more than ten U.S. citizens illegally detained by ICE in the agency's attempts to deport them. These cases generally involve individuals who immigrated to the United States as children and whose parents became naturalized U.S. citizens before the children turned 18 years of age, thereby bestowing citizenship upon the children. In 2009, after the *San Francisco Chronicle* highlighted a Caucus case involving a U.S. citizen illegally detained



◀ Working closely with the East Bay's Sikh community, Caucus attorney Sin Yen Ling (left) talks with women at a gurdwara in El Sobrante.

- ▶ Our broad reach and the large number of people we assist enable Caucus staff to quickly identify emerging problem areas, allowing us to have a more effective focus on community education and policy advocacy.

for over four months, ICE changed its local policy and now releases U.S. citizens immediately after they submit evidence that they derived citizenship from their naturalized parents. In early 2010, we met with Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, chair of the House Immigration Subcommittee, to ask that ICE's local policy be expanded nationwide.

### **Curbing Abuse and Misuse of Anti-Terrorist Laws Against Asylees and Refugees**

We continue to advocate on behalf of asylees and refugees who face Kafkaesque claims that they pose a national security risk because they were robbed and threatened by violent extremists before fleeing their home country. U.S. immigration authorities deem them to be as undeserving of relief as their persecutors by claiming that handing over one's property at gunpoint is providing "material support to a terrorist organization." The Caucus has challenged numerous delays and denials of applications for legal resident status stemming from such strained interpretations of the material support bar. In addition to direct representation of clients, we provide technical assistance to numerous practitioners litigating a wide range of material support cases. In several cases, the Caucus has filed amicus briefs with appellate courts considering the proper application of the national security bars.

### **ASPIRE**

Asian Students Promoting Immigrant Rights through Education (ASPIRE) is in its second year as the first and only Asian and Pacific Islander (API) undocumented youth group. Currently made up of a diverse group of immigrant students between the ages of 15 to 24, the youth share their testimonies at legislative visits and speak at rallies and town halls to build awareness about API undocumented students and the need for immigration reform. ASPIRE students also facilitate workshops at high schools and college campuses to bring resources to other immigrant students. By engaging youth in the broader immigrant rights movement and working with community partners, ASPIRE is participating in the fight for a just and humane immigration reform bill.

## [ 2009 ] Program Highlights Housing, Elder Law, and Community Development

**f**or decades, the Asian Law Caucus has provided direct legal services to low income, limited English-speaking immigrants on matters ranging from eviction defense to discrimination. We focus primarily on gateway communities for new immigrants, such as San Francisco Chinatown where large numbers of tenants are in danger of displacement due to gentrification. We also work closely with partner agencies to monitor trends in development and empower community members, particularly seniors, with awareness of their rights.



▲ Mr. Kay is one of the tenants who fought for affordable housing at 53 Columbus in San Francisco Chinatown. (Carlo de la Cruz)



▲ Monks offer Sunday brunch at the Wat Mongkolratanaram Thai Temple in Berkeley. (Raymond Virata)

### Community Development

The Asian Law Caucus is proud to have joined forces with organizers mobilizing the Thai community to protect the First Amendment freedoms of the Wat Mongkolratanaram Berkeley Thai Temple. In 2008, the temple came under fire when some neighbors raised concerns to the Berkeley Zoning Adjustment Board about traffic, noise, and odors stemming from the temple's popular Sunday food-offering tradition. These neighbors sought to severely reduce the hours of operation of the Buddhist practice that came to be affectionately known as "Sunday brunch." The imminent danger was that the restrictions would lead to the temple's failure to earn enough revenue to keep its doors open.

In response, Thai community organizers from across the region came together to form the Save the Thai Temple (STTT) collective, championing the temple's right as a religious institution to practice its Buddhist traditions. Caucus staff joined STTT activists to raise awareness of the federal rights created by the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act that protects religious institutions such as the Thai Temple from unfair use of zoning laws inhibiting the religious activities that they practice.

- ▶ We work closely with partner agencies to monitor trends in development and empower community members with awareness of their rights.



▲ The Caucus addresses community development issues and provides legal assistance for immigrant residents in such gateway communities as San Francisco Chinatown. (Elaine Joe)

Over the course of 17 months, STTT participated in six mediation sessions, four zoning hearings, and several compromises by the temple, including cutting its Sunday hours by half. In September 2009, the Wat Mongkolratanaram Berkeley Thai Temple won a unanimous vote by Berkeley’s Mayor and City Council to continue its Sunday food offerings. This was a great victory for all our communities.

### Senior Rights Education

With funding from the San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services and in collaboration with our partners—API Legal Outreach, La Raza Centro Legal, and Legal Assistance to the Elderly—the Caucus serves San Francisco’s elderly residents with the publication of the *San Francisco Senior Rights Bulletin*. Every quarter in 2009, we distributed 10,000 multilingual bulletins to senior centers, community organizations, and libraries throughout the city. The bulletin covers important local, state, and federal issues such as consumer rights, immigration, fraud prevention, housing, health, and public benefits.



### Pro Bono Fellow Joins Asian Law Caucus Team

A new member joined our housing and elder law team this year. Alvina Wong is a deferred associate from the Chicago-based law firm Winston & Strawn LLP. She provides essential case support, research, and Cantonese language skills that are helping us reach out even more to the Chinese-speaking community. A 2009 graduate of Berkeley Law School, Ms. Wong is also a Bay Area native. We are very grateful to Winston & Strawn for generously supporting her year as a pro bono fellow with the Caucus.

**I**n recognition of a significant concentration of Asian and Pacific Islanders in low wage, service industry jobs, the Asian Law Caucus advocates for safe and fair working conditions. Two major areas of concentration are the nail salon industry—striving to make nail salons safer places to work—and the taxi industry—often described as a sweatshop on wheels. With both projects, we support increased regulatory oversight and worker involvement for improving conditions.

- ▶ We work closely with drivers and driver organizations across the country to shift an industry with some of the most low-paying, dangerous, and economically unstable jobs in the nation.



▲ **Organizing to protect Prop K and stop the sale of taxi medallions.**  
(Rob Yanagida)

### **Taxi Worker Project**

The Asian Law Caucus’s Taxi Worker Project supports the Bay Area’s thousands of mostly immigrant drivers through individual representation, organizing, and policy advocacy. We work closely with drivers and driver organizations across the country to shift an industry with some of the most low-paying, dangerous, and economically unstable jobs in the nation.

In January 2009, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom announced a plan to fix the city’s budget crisis on the backs of taxi workers. Along with the United Taxicab Workers, the Caucus launched a legal, policy, and organizing campaign to prevent the plan from moving forward. We led a legislative effort that resulted in a unanimous resolution at the Board of Supervisors. We also built a coalition of industry stakeholders who, for the first time, marched together outside of City Hall, asking the mayor and the Municipal Transportation Agency to protest the plan. While the plan is being ushered through, we are continuing to join the taxi community in making sure drivers’ rights are protected.

Also at the start of 2009, the East Bay Taxi Worker Alliance went on strike, demanding fair treatment from a large Oakland taxicab company. When the company fired many of the striking drivers, the Caucus assisted the taxi workers by building broad scale community and organizational support around the rights violations they faced.

To share the successes and lessons of this year, we held a national taxi worker organizing conference in San Francisco in September 2009. Bringing together drivers and driver organizers from across the country, including from New York and Los Angeles, the Caucus spearheaded this effort to build a national workers’ movement.



▲ Caucus organizer Lenh Tran (right) hosts a disinfection workshop by the Bureau of Barbering and Cosmetology at a community forum in Marin County, July 2009. (Darren Yee)



▲ Workers, owners, scientists, researchers, and advocates (including the Caucus's Tina Ling, 2nd from left) discuss issues in the nail salon industry and the chemicals used in formulating beauty products at a research convening in Oakland, April 2009. (Darren Yee)

► We are still years away from protecting nail salon workers who are putting their health at risk to earn a living.



▲ Caucus staff Lenh Tran (left) gives health and safety training in a nail salon.

### Nail Salon Project

The Asian Law Caucus continues to engage the nail salon community to establish policies creating healthier, safer workplace practices and products. Our goal is to empower the community with the knowledge, tools, and skills to make their own workplaces safer.

While California is in the midst of developing a comprehensive Green Chemistry Initiative, we are still years away from protecting workers who are putting their health at risk to earn a living. Nail salon and cosmetology workers on a daily basis handle solvents, chemical solutions, and cosmetic products that contain chemicals known to be carcinogenic and suspected of causing reproductive harm. Recent studies suggest an elevated prevalence of work related health problems among nail salon workers compared to the general population, such as finding in the body much higher levels of phthalates, toxic chemicals used as solvents in many cosmetics.

To address the concerns of toxics exposure, we are teaming up with the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative and Environment California (formerly CALPIRG) to spearhead a citywide worker and consumer education and awareness campaign to ban products containing toluene, formaldehyde, and dibutyl phthalate from use in nail salons as well as for purchase from retail stores all over San Francisco. These chemicals are known collectively as the "Toxic Trio" and are carcinogenic, neurological, and developmental toxicants. The campaign will not only serve as a catalyst to compel the cosmetics industry to manufacture safer products but will also ensure the rights of workers to healthier workplace conditions. We hope other counties throughout California and in different states will adopt policies banning similar toxic chemicals.

We also look forward to the publication of the Department of Toxic Substances Control's green standards checklist for nail salons, the California Environmental Protection Agency Air Resources Board's health risk assessment of emissions for nail salons, the Bureau of Barbering and Cosmetology's fully translated rules and regulations booklet along with dubbed disinfection training videos, and California OSHA's healthy nail salon guidebook, for which Caucus staff provided substantial support and technical assistance throughout 2009.

## [ 2009 ] Program Highlights **National Security and Civil Rights**

**t**he Asian Law Caucus is committed to U.S. national security policies that protect the civil rights of individuals and communities, including Asian and Pacific Islander American and immigrant communities in Northern California and the broader United States. We provide legal services to confront the day-to-day breaches of civil rights in concert with a broad range of strategies—including litigation, policy advocacy, and community organizing. In this way, we strive to impact the larger social and institutional dynamics that prevent the realization of equal rights.



▲ Caucus attorney Veena Dubal speaks at a fundraiser in February 2009, “Belonging: Celebrating the Diversity of San Francisco’s South Asian, Arab, and Muslim Communities.” Sitting next to the Obama/Lincoln image in the backdrop is Caucus executive director Titi Liu. (Amal Mongia)

### **Challenging Racial and Religious Profiling**



#### **Fighting for Rights at the Border**

In March 2009, the Asian Law Caucus released a ground-breaking report on the problem of racial, religious, and national origin profiling at our nation’s borders. Through individual representation and community outreach, we documented the experiences of dozens of Americans who were profiled and subjected to intrusive questioning and searches on their way home from traveling overseas. This report, *Returning Home: How U.S. Government Practices Undermine Civil Rights at Our Nation’s Border*, was featured in the *Washington Post* and invoked during a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing in which Senator Russ Feingold pushed the

Department of Homeland Security to investigate border profiling. After releasing *Returning Home*, the Caucus held a Congressional briefing in Washington, D.C. to inform policymakers on our recommendations for change. We also began a traveling series of Know Your Rights trainings in Muslim communities across the country.

### **Ending the Surveillance of Innocent Americans**

In collaboration with the ACLU of Northern California and the Council on American Islamic Relations-California, the Caucus built a community education project around federal law enforcement surveillance. Through individual client stories, we learned about the increased

- ▶ We trained hundreds of low income immigrants on what to do if approached by the FBI and prompted many to share their horrifying stories with the larger community.



▲ We conducted Know Your Rights trainings throughout 2009: (left) Caucus attorney Veena Dubal at a Santa Clara workshop and legal clinic for Bay Area Somalis; (above) flyer for a workshop at the Lodi Japanese Community Hall for the Muslim/Arab/South Asian community that is experiencing repeated FBI harassment. (Summer Hararah)

presence of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in Muslim community organizations and mosques. In response, we expanded our Know Your Rights sessions throughout Northern California to include information on the rights of individuals in relationship to law enforcement. We trained hundreds of low income immigrants on what to do if approached by the FBI and prompted many to share their horrifying stories with the larger community to reveal the intense reality of this unbridled surveillance. Subsequently, the Caucus represented many of the individuals who were approached by the FBI and filed Freedom of Information Act requests to empower community members with the details the government was collecting about them.

### Civil Rights Outreach Project

The Caucus's Civil Rights Outreach Project (CROP) brings together a coalition of minority bar associations, law firms, and law student groups to address the civil rights of underserved South Asian, Arab, and Muslim communities. Through CROP, the Caucus and our partners set up several new legal clinics throughout Northern California—including the underserved cities of Stockton and Lodi. Our clinics now serve immigrant men and women on a variety of legal issues and help convey important civil rights information. The clinics are also venues for mentoring law students of color who are interested in pursuing public interest careers.

## [ 2009 ] Program Highlights **Juvenile Justice and Education Project**

**t**he Juvenile Justice and Education Project addresses the specific needs of limited English-speaking parents who have youth in the juvenile system. The project seeks to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by providing direct legal services, community education, and policy advocacy. Since its launch in 2003, we have worked closely with youth and immigrant rights advocates from diverse communities to advance the rights of immigrant youth and to combat bias-related harassment in schools.

- ▶ The Juvenile Justice and Education Project seeks to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline.



▲ Angela Chan, Caucus attorney, testifies in support of due process for immigrant youth.

### **Challenging the Criminalization of Immigrant Youth and Families**

#### **Restoring Due Process to Undocumented Youth**

In July 2008, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom instituted a policy that mandated reporting of youth suspected of being undocumented to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the point of arrest, before they receive due process. Thus far, the Mayor's policy has resulted in reporting more than 160 youth to ICE prior to adjudication of the juvenile court case. In response, the Caucus partnered with over 35 organizations to reform this policy. In November 2009, we led an effort, supported by dozens of organizations and hundreds of community members, to pass a city ordinance that only allows reporting after a youth receives due process and is found to have committed a felony. The Board of Supervisors passed the new policy into law by a vote of 8 to 3, surviving a veto from the Mayor.

#### **Reforming Car Impoundment Policies**

In October 2009, the Caucus collaborated with dozens of community organizations to successfully advocate for the adoption of a new vehicle impoundment policy by the San Francisco Police Department. The reform significantly reduces unnecessary car impoundments for



- ▶ We led an effort to pass a city ordinance that only allows reporting after a youth receives due process and is found to have committed a felony.

residents who are unable to obtain valid California driver's licenses because of their immigration status. The new policy replaces the overly aggressive 30-day mandatory impoundment that had a devastating impact on working class families who are dependent on their cars to get to work and unable to afford the hefty fees.

### **Redressing Racial Profiling and Police Misconduct**

Following the tragic murder of a 15-year-old Mongolian teenager in 2007, the Alameda Police Department targeted Oakland's Southeast Asian community, particularly the Lu Mien community, in its investigation—breaking down doors, pointing guns at youth and their family members, and detaining over half a dozen young people. Two Mien youth, who were later released due to lack of evidence, were falsely prosecuted, with their names published by several newspapers in connection to the murder. The Caucus represented the youth and their families in filing administrative complaints against the Alameda Police Department. After several years of negotiations, the parties reached a satisfactory settlement, and the youth, many of whom are now in college, were able to gain closure.

### **Educational Equity: Addressing Bias-related Harassment and Violence in Public Schools**

#### **Demanding Safer Schools**

In collaboration with the ACLU of Northern California and Covington & Burling LLP, the Caucus addressed harassment and violence at Burney High School in Shasta County. We represented two Japanese American youth who experienced repeated race-based harassment and threats from staff and other students. After months of negotiations, our advocacy successfully brought about the school district's adoption of a new anti-bullying policy.

#### **Expanding Know Your Rights Trainings**

First introduced in San Francisco, the Caucus expanded the reach of our Know Your Rights trainings to the East Bay and the Peninsula with sessions on youth rights with the police, in the juvenile system, and school environments. In 2009, we trained hundreds of youth, parents, and community members throughout the Bay Area in middle schools, high schools, parenting groups, and after school programs.

## [ 2009 ] Program Highlights **Fred T. Korematsu** **Institute for Civil Rights and Education**



▲ **Fred Korematsu with the Medal of Freedom.** (Shirley Nakao, courtesy of Korematsu Institute)

In April 2009, the Asian Law Caucus launched the Fred T. Korematsu Institute for Civil Rights and Education. The Institute advances the cause of pan-ethnic civil rights and human rights, in a post-9/11 context, through alliances and programs that focus on education, activism, and leadership. For more information, visit [www.korematsuinstitute.org](http://www.korematsuinstitute.org).

### Education

**Fred Korematsu Day and Curriculum** The Institute is garnering community support to pass a landmark bill marking Fred Korematsu Day in the state of California. If successful, the first Fred Korematsu Day would be celebrated on January 30, 2011 to commemorate Korematsu's birthday. The Institute plans to organize multiple events that weekend, and will roll out curriculum to teach students about Fred Korematsu, Japanese American internment, and current civil rights issues related to national security policies. On May 20, 2010, the Assembly Floor passed the bill with a 69-0 vote. The Senate hearing will take place in the summer of 2010.

**Museum Exhibits** We are researching and preparing materials to include Fred Korematsu's story, along with the story of other internment resisters, in the museum collections of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose as well as in other collections across the country.

### Events

We sponsor a range of lectures, film screenings, museum exhibits, and cultural events to educate a broad audience about Fred Korematsu's legacy, Japanese American internment, and current pan-ethnic civil rights issues.

### Multimedia

**Web Site** Our online site is being transformed into a resource center for information on Fred Korematsu's case, racial equality, civil rights, and human rights. It will host multimedia content, including videos, educational materials, and advocate messaging toolkits. The site will thus serve as an important link among diverse ethnic communities.

***Of Civil Wrongs and Rights: the Fred Korematsu Story*** The Institute is now the sponsor of the Oscar-shortlisted documentary film *Of Civil Wrongs and Rights*, directed by Eric Fournier. In 2001, the film made its national broadcast premiere on PBS. We will organize screenings and work toward scheduling more broadcasts or Web streams tied to the film's 10-year anniversary. Over the course of the next year, we will research archival materials (e.g., newspaper clippings,



▲ Coram Nobis legal team at the Caucus's 37th Anniversary Dinner and launch of the Korematsu Institute, April 2009 (l-r): Marjie Barrows, Hon. Ed Chen, Lorraine Bannai, Robert Rusky, Karen Kai, Donald Tamaki, Dale Minami, Peter Irons, and Leigh-Ann Miyasato. (Bob Hsiang) (Not pictured: Dennis Hayashi, Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga, Donna Komure, Russell Matsumoto, Akira Togasaki, Mike Wong, and Eric Yamamoto)

- ▶ Our online site is being transformed into a resource center for information on Fred Korematsu's case, racial equality, civil rights, and human rights.

etc.) and footage (i.e., extended interviews) that will be useful for our Web site and educational programs. We will also seek out archival footage from the community, digitizing such footage for the public to view on our web site's video channel.

**Original Documentary Productions** We worked closely with the Caucus to produce the documentary film *This is Our Country*, about civil liberties infringements under current national security policies. The film premiered at the Caucus's annual dinner on April 9, 2010, before an audience of more than 700 people.

### Human Rights Frameworks

The Korematsu Institute seeks to understand how human rights tools can be effective resources for emerging leaders in the United States, especially in immigrant communities. The Institute has convened panels focused on human rights organizing strategies in Asian American advocacy groups at the Advancing Justice conferences in 2009 and 2010. In June 2010, the Institute published *Domestic Dignity*, a report that explores the key challenges and opportunities for Asian American advocates to deploy a human rights framework in their fight for social justice.

### Activist of the Year

The Korematsu Activist of the Year award honors an emerging leader with a deep commitment to racial equality and a track record of transforming this commitment to effective action. The award carries a cash prize of \$2,000 and an opportunity to be a resident (with a living stipend) at the Korematsu Institute for up to a year.

## [ 2009 ] Program Highlights **Civic Participation**

**W**hile progress has been made in recent decades, public policy and laws continue to overlook or ignore the needs of many Asian and Pacific Islander communities. In all our program areas, the Asian Law Caucus empowers community members to participate in the struggle to change unfair or inadequate government policies and laws. We believe that meaningful change can occur through full and active civic participation, including voting and direct advocacy.

► **The Asian American Bar Association and Filipino Bar Association of Northern California hosted a civil rights panel in June 2009 with panelists (l-r) Bill Lann Lee of Lewis Feinberg Lee Renaker & Jackson P.C.; Chris Ho, Legal Aid Society; Cecillia Wang, ACLU; and facilitator Chris Punongbayan, Asian Law Caucus.**  
(George Kawamoto)



### **Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality**

Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality (AACRE) is a unique partnership among the Asian Law Caucus, Chinese for Affirmative Action in San Francisco, and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles. Together, we provide a strong voice advocating for justice in the California State Capitol. AACRE focuses on state legislative, administrative, and budget advocacy with a special focus on the concerns of Asians and Pacific Islanders. AACRE also empowers API communities to be active in advancing civil rights for all, especially through the annual API Policy Summit that regularly attracts more than 300 people to its annual spring convening in Sacramento.

In 2009, AACRE sponsored three pieces of legislation that earned majority votes in both chambers of the Legislature, only to be vetoed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. AB 611 (Fong) required the state's Office of Emergency Services to account for the needs of limited English-speaking Californians in emergency preparedness planning. AB 1510 (Eng) would have allowed parents to bring interpreters to school-related parent meetings, such as student disciplinary proceedings. Finally, SB 549 (Correa) authorized the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology to collect language and ethnicity data for nail technicians, a group that we know to be made up largely of women who are Vietnamese immigrants.

Given the crisis with the California budget, AACRE is revisiting our approach to our advocacy work in 2010 in order that our efforts may yield more fruitful results.

## [ 2009 ] Partners

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

ACLU of Northern California	Asian Pacific American Legal Center	City College of San Francisco, Chinatown/ North Beach Campus	Manilatown Heritage Foundation
ACLU Immigrants Rights Project	Asian Pacific Environmental Network	Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice	Mary Queen of Vietnam Church
Afghan Advisory Board	Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum	Coalition for Civil Liberties	Midnight Special
Afghan American Bar Association	Asian Pacific Islander Equality Northern California	Community Youth Center	Mujeres Unidas y Activas
Afghan Cultural Center	Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach	Council of American-Islamic Relations, National	Muslim Advocates
Afghan Elderly Association of the Bay Area	Asian Pacific Islander Youth Promoting Advocacy & Leadership	Council of American Islamic Relations, California	National Alliance of Vietnamese American Service Agencies
Afghan Professional Network	Asian Women's Shelter	Culture & Conflict Forum	National Association of Yemeni Immigrants
African Advocacy Network	Asian Youth Advocacy Network	Defending Dissent Foundation	National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
African Immigrant & Refugee Resource Center	Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations	Dolores Street Community Services	National Lawyers Guild
Alliance of South Asians Taking Action	AYADI	Dominican University	Office of Citizen Complaints
American Muslims for Palestine	Bay Area Association of Muslim Lawyers	East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy	OMID Advocates for Human Rights
Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee	Bay Area Immigrant Rights Coalition	East Bay Asian Consortium	Pacific Asian American Women Bay Area Coalition
Arab American Chamber of Commerce	Bay Area Somali Community Group	East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation	Richmond Area Multi-Services, Inc.
Arab American Cultural Center Silicon Valley	Berkeley Copwatch	Education Not Incarceration, San Francisco Chapter	Rights Working Group
Arab American Grocers Association	Bill of Rights Defense Committee	Ella Baker Center	Samoan Community Development Center
Arab Cultural & Community Center	California Coalition for Civil Rights	Environment California	San Francisco Community Land Trust
Arab Film Festival	California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative	Filipino Bar Association of Northern California	San Francisco Human Rights Commission
Arab Resource and Organizing Center	California Immigrant Policy Center	Filipino Community Center	San Francisco Immigrant Legal Education Network
Asian American Institute of Chicago	California Rural Legal Assistance	Filipino Advocates for Justice	San Francisco Immigrant Rights Defense Committee
Asian American Justice Center	Cambodian Community Development, Inc.	Geriatric Services West, Family Services Agency of San Francisco	San Francisco Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund	Central American Resource Center	Immigrant Legal Resource Center	San Francisco Peer Court
Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality	Center for Young Women's Development	Instituto Familiar de la Raza	San Francisco Pride at Work
Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy	Centro Legal de la Raza	Iranian American Bar Association	San Francisco Public Defender's Office, Juvenile Division
Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice	Chinatown Childhood Development Services	Japanese Community Youth Council	San Francisco State University, Arab & Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Initiative (AMED)
Asian Community Mental Health Services	Chinatown Community Development Center	KHMU National Federation (City of Richmond)	San Francisco State University: Project Connect, Project Rebound, The Women's Center
Asian Health Services	Chinatown-North Beach Mental Health Services	Korean Community Center of the East Bay	
Asian Law Alliance	Chinese for Affirmative Action	La Raza Centro Legal	
Asian Neighborhood Design	Chinese Progressive Association	Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights	
		Legal Aid Society, Employment Law Center	
		Legal Assistance to the Elderly	
		Legal Services for Children	

Save the Thai Temple	Vietnamese Elderly Mutual Assistance Association of San Francisco	Equal Justice Society: Claudia Pena	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP: Alice Hayashi, Kevin Fong, James Young
Self-Help for the Elderly		Gen Fujioka	
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Established in 1993, the Circle of 100 is the Asian Law Caucus’s alumni and major donor campaign. By raising unrestricted funds from those who know us best—our alumni, comprised of over 800 former board members, law clerks, volunteers, staff and special friends—the Caucus is able to build a continuous source of unrestricted funding.

The goal of the Circle of 100 is simple. We are looking for 100 alumni and friends to serve as our advocates by making an annual commitment to raise or donate \$1,000 or more.

The economic downturn and resulting changes in the funding environment have made it critical for the Caucus to be more independent from the uncertainties of shifting corporate and institutional funding priorities. Increased self-reliance will provide stronger assurance that the service and advocacy we provide to the community will not be interrupted or reduced in times of greatest need.

Each year Caucus alumni and friends have generously contributed and called upon their personal network to support the Circle of 100 Campaign. “Circle” events—such as the Caucus Classic and the Trivia Competition—are coordinated by Caucus alumni and operate on modest budgets as well as in-kind donations. These activities not only generate new funds but also broaden our outreach into different communities.

In 2009, we reached out to our alumni and friends to support our “Brick Fund” to complete construction of our Community Room and Korematsu Institute. Over 100 alumni donated \$500 or more to have their names inscribed on bricks to be displayed in our Reception area and Community Room.

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Thuy Thi Nguyen

Ed Oshika

Steve Owyang & Onilda Cheung

Lisa Oyama & Gary Lee

Aiko Pandorf & Scott B. Peterson

Edwin Prather

Perfecto & Erlinda

Punongbayan

Ashok Ramani

Archana Saghal

Joanne Sakai & Dallas Foster

Sujal Shah

Audrey Shoji

Sandeep Solanki

Mona Soo Hoo & Sonia Soo Hoo

Moo T. Soo Hoo

South Asian Bar Association of Northern California (SABA)

Misasha Suzuki

Yokum Taku

Donald Tamaki & Suzanne Ah-Tye

Bill Tamayo & Debbie Lee

Theresa Tan

John C. Tang

Darren Teshima

Phil Ting & Susan Sun

David Tsai

Michelle Tong Choyce & Dionne Choyce

Manuel & Anna Tumaneng, Jr.

Bijal Vakil

Philip Van

Vietnamese American Bar Association of Northern California (VABANC)

Lloyd & Marion Wake

Karin Wang

George W. Wolff

Darryl Woo

Brian Morris Wong & Scott Hofmeister

David Wong

Jon Wu

Dianne Yamashiro-Omi & Michael Omi

Sam Yee & Camille Chun-Hoon

Malcolm Yeung & Suosdey Penn

Douglas R. Young

Stanley Young

Hong-Sze Yu & Doris Y. Ng

Amy & Oai Yun

### \$100 TO \$499

Rita Hao

Karen Kai & Bob Rusky

Sanny Lau

Bill Lann Lee

Barbara Lubinski

Peggy Nagae

Hina Shah & Paul Phojanakong

Chinin Tana

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**Quyen Ta**, Associate, Kecker & Van Nest LLP

**Cecillia D. Wang**, Managing Attorney, California Office, ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project

\* not pictured

We acknowledge the important contributions of 2009 board members who are no longer with us: Monty Agarwal and Bill Ong Hing.



**Mina Titi Liu**, Executive Director

**Irma Aronce**, Administrative Assistant\*

**Omar Calimbas**, Staff Attorney\*

**Charlene Cervantes**, Development Associate

**Angela Chan**, Staff Attorney

**Lisa Chen**, Community Advocate

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**Ted Roethke**, Equal Justice Works Fellow\*

**Lenh Tsan**, Project Manager

**Philip Van**, Receptionist

**Alvina Wong**, Winston & Strawn Public Interest Fellow

**Dennis Wu**, Community Advocate

\* not pictured

We acknowledge the important contributions of 2009 staff who are no longer with us: Kwanyee Eva Auyeung, Victor Wai Ho Lim, Tina Ling, Kristina Peralta, Debbie Sheen, and Peter Swing.

## Financial Summary

[ As of and for the Year Ended June 30, 2009 ]

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

#### ASSETS

Current Assets	\$ 390,008
Long Term Assets	<u>1,756,352</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u><u>2,146,360</u></u>

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities	1,403,495
Unrestricted Assets	437,114
Temporarily Restricted Assets	<u>305,751</u>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<u><u>\$ 2,146,360</u></u>

### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

#### REVENUES AND SUPPORT

Public Support	\$ 1,330,025
Program Income and Other Revenue	94,433
In-kind Contributions	23,261
Investment Income	<u>-15,804</u>
<b>Total Revenues and Support</b>	1,431,915

#### EXPENSES

Program Services	1,370,199
Management and General	277,766
Fundraising	<u>37,474</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	1,685,439

<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<u><u>\$ (253,524)</u></u>
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**Note:** The selected financial data were derived from the Asian Law Caucus's financial records. The Caucus's financial statements are audited annually and are available upon request.

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