



National CAPACD Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Our nation is at a crossroads. We confront one of the most divisive and partisan political environments. This climate, in which racial, ethnic, gender, and economic inequities dominate our public discourse, is enabled by an administration that exacerbates systemic entrenched inequities. To effectively challenge policies informed by private interests rather than the voices of everyday Americans, we must assess our strategies and tactics to ensure that we are advancing the public good and recommit ourselves to advancing social justice for all communities in this country.

Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are among the fastest-growing and most diverse racial groups and poverty populations in the United States. Members of this community have an important stake in the direction of our country at this historic moment. They are often rendered invisible, resulting in a severe lack of access to resources, knowledge, and policies that meet the unique needs of its members. It is crucial that we include and amplify AAPI voices to advocate authentically for equity as part of the broader movement to create a more just society for all.

Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs)

The AAPI community is the fastest growing racial group in the country, growing over four times as rapidly as the total U.S. population; it is expected to double to over 47 million by 2060.¹ AAPIs are defined by great ethnic diversity, and their historic and present-day contributions and challenges are often misunderstood in the public narrative. Specifically, the community's economic conditions and its contributions to the struggles for racial and social justice are overlooked in our broader national discourse.

The AAPI community faces significant challenges—in particular, the rapidly increasing need for economic security. Between 2010 and 2016, from the end of the Great Recession to the time of the latest poverty data from the U.S. Census, the number of AAPIs living below the federal poverty line grew by nearly one-quarter million people, a 13 percent increase. The economic conditions that AAPIs face are vastly different than those of the general population for whom overall poverty levels decreased by 1.95 million people, or four percent during the same time.

Moreover, the majority of AAPIs living in poverty are concentrated in a limited number of metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). More than 50 percent of the total AAPI poverty population lives in the top 10 MSAs, compared to 25 percent of the nation's poverty population. AAPIs are also disproportionately concentrated in areas with the highest housing costs, and in neighborhoods that predominantly comprise communities of color. Residents and small businesses in AAPI neighborhoods across the country are at very high risk of displacement from gentrification.

Yet, the AAPI community has many assets, including strong networks of reciprocal support and creative multigenerational approaches to entrepreneurship. Local organizations provide essential leadership and support to low-income AAPIs through their social services, community development, and community

¹ White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, [Data on the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community](#), 2016.



organizing. These organizations play a critical role in leveraging the strengths of these communities to build vibrant neighborhoods and to advance the economic vitality of low-income AAPIs.

However, local groups working at the community level face additional challenges. These include generational divides; immigration history; ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and geographic diversity; and the relative isolation of many AAPI organizations. National CAPACD is uniquely positioned, as an intermediary working across the country, to serve as a crucial catalyst for progress on these fronts.

National CAPACD

National CAPACD was founded in 1999 by established community development practitioners who sought a unifying agent for systemic change at the national level. To implement this vision, we disseminated national resources locally, shared best practices, and provided peer-to-peer support for organizations serving the nation's growing AAPI populations. We advanced this vision with positive gains for AAPIs, including the following:

- In 2010, we became the first and only AAPI-focused liaison for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's housing counseling program.
- In 2012, we implemented one of the largest AAPI civic engagement initiatives. In 2013, we launched the first full-scale and multifaceted asset-building program targeting low-income AAPIs, which sought to build local economic power through culturally appropriate strategies.

By our 15th anniversary, we accomplished the following:

- Expanded our policy and advocacy capacity
- Re-granted more than \$2 million to local organizations annually
- Provided leadership training and development to more than 120 leaders in our network
- Diversified our membership to a base of nearly 100 organizations that implement a range of strategies to address economic and social justice issues, spanning 21 states and the Pacific Islands

With this growth, National CAPACD's member network now comprises organizations that have a more diverse set of approaches, leadership models, program strategies, and capacity building needs.

In addition, National CAPACD has internal resource and capacity building needs. As a staffed coalition and intermediary, we must address these needs in order to continue to be effective and responsive in this challenging political environment.

Over the past year, National CAPACD (pronounced "capacity") looked critically at our mission, vision, and organizational strategies. We affirmed that the initial goals of the organization hold true. However, we need to implement these strategies with greater intention to achieve deeper and sustainable impact. To this end, we will:

- Harness the collective power of our local communities
- Invest in the most resource-deficient areas



- Build across and within the AAPI community
- Strengthen our national voice

Prioritizing the needs of the AAPI community intentionally will advance equity for all underserved communities and create sustainable impact in the long term. Our work will thus advance the the broader movement for social and racial justice in the US.

A Time to Build

Because of the diversity of our network and the current political climate, now is an opportune time to strengthen the Coalition and expand its influence. We have reaffirmed our identity as an intermediary with a focus on building local organizations, while also holding a space as a national influencer. In the coming years, National CAPACD will:

- Expand our coalition
- Build the capacity of emerging and existing community-based organizations that work with lower-income AAPI populations
- Increase the reach of our organizing within the AAPI community
- Develop intentional strategies to build leadership in our communities
- Ensure that comprehensive systems are in place to support the implementation of our strategic plan, and alignment between our values and our work.

On the national level, National CAPACD must continue to strengthen our partnerships with ally organizations to defend the programs and policies that address structural inequities in our society. We will further align and deepen our work with organizations that share our values and advocate for social justice.

Mission Statement

We assert our progressive values and commit to a strategy of strengthening local organizations in our new mission statement:

National CAPACD is a progressive coalition of local organizations that advocate for and organize in low-income AAPI communities and neighborhoods. We strengthen and mobilize our members to build power nationally and further our vision of economic and social justice for all.

Our vision of economic and social justice in the U.S. emerges when all communities, including low-income Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, have the information, resources, and power necessary to engage, thrive, and have a voice in shaping their neighborhoods and communities.

Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change outlines the three major outcomes we are working to achieve:



- 1) Strong community-based organizations that provide services to, advocate for, and organize within AAPI neighborhoods and communities
- 2) A connected coalition that represents collective AAPI power at the national level
- 3) National policies and resources that support and invest in local organizations and communities

We believe that to achieve truly healthy and thriving neighborhoods and communities, our strategy must include responsiveness to issues such as safety, security, and community autonomy, as well as sustained partnership with other movements and leaders.

With the goal of strengthening local organizations and leaders as the core of our strategy, we will prioritize the following approaches over the next three years:

Capacity Building

- Expand our capacity building efforts to help stabilize emerging and existing community organizations.
- Deepen our leadership development strategies to build and strengthen local leaders.
- Build our capacity as an intermediary by improving systems, policies, and protocols for our sub-granting work.

Integrating and Documenting Impact of Economic Empowerment Programs

- Hone and expand our economic empowerment programs, assessing direction in working with AAPI small business and multigenerational approaches to financial empowerment.
- Document the impact of 10 years of housing counseling, and align the program with anti-displacement efforts and a stronger tenant focus.

Strengthening Our Advocacy and Organizing

- Support local organizing efforts in combating displacement of AAPI residents and businesses by sharing strategies, research, data, and tools.
- Integrate our leadership development, economic empowerment programs, and policy advocacy to better engage local organizations in this work.

Expanding and Building a More Connected Coalition

- Refine our member recruitment and engagement strategies.
- Share intersectional and values-based analysis of systemic barriers to the economic and social advancement of low-income AAPIs among coalition members through intentional conversations, training, and shared agreements.

This strategy will move us toward realizing our vision of social and economic justice in the U.S., in which low-income Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders have the information, resources, and power to strengthen community control over their neighborhoods.