



asian american  
resource center  
nonprofit

June 12, 2017

Stephanie Hayden  
Director Austin Public Health  
City of Austin  
7201 Levander Loop  
Austin, TX

Dear Stephanie,

The Asian American Resource Center, Inc (AARC Nonprofit) would like to re-initiate the Grant agreement between the City of Austin and the AARC Nonprofit for the position Community Services Program Manager/Asian American Resource Center (113816).

Over the last 5 years, the Asian American Resource Center Nonprofit has played a key role for the community by advocating for the needs of Asian Americans, the fastest growing segment of Austin's population. Since 2012, the nonprofit has supported the AARC City Facility by securing the initial funding for the senior meal program, \$650K for the commercial kitchen, and establishing a partnership with Austin Community College to offer free English as a Second Language classes. Since 2015, the AARC Nonprofit Executive Director and Board Members have worked closely with AARC facility staff to support marketing, cultural protocols and programming at the center. Over this time, and as facility-initiated programming has advanced, providing social services and associated programs has been a major focus of AARC Nonprofit. As evidenced in the Asian American Quality of Life survey, the lack of English language skills puts many in the Austin Asian community at a disadvantage when trying to access city services. The AARC Nonprofit has led the effort to research the health and social service needs of the community. As a result, the AARC Nonprofit, in conjunction with Austin Public Health, launched the Community Health Navigator program during the summer of 2016. This program is the first of its kind program in the city to make health-related services accessible for the most linguistically isolated members of the Asian American community through the use of bilingual navigators.

The Community Health Navigator program is just one example of the AARC Nonprofit working to fill the gap in much-needed services for the Asian community in Austin; it is the first city funded direct social service program focused specifically on linguistically isolated Asian communities. The impact has been significant, serving more than twice the anticipated number of clients-- people who might otherwise never be able to access services without the Navigator program. Other efforts are needed, and the AARC Nonprofit is in a unique position to help the city devise equally successful programs focused on aiding the community to improve life skills, quality of life and access to health care. The AAQoL Commission and the AARC Nonprofit have identified other areas of need, including: continued language support, additional education and life skills, support for more health-related areas of mental health, oral health, and advanced directives.

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To better assist Asian Americans in Austin, the AARC Nonprofit would like to partner with the City to fund the Community Services Program Manager/Asian American Resource Center (113816). Compared to the amount of investment the City makes in other communities, the number of programs directly focused on meeting the needs of the Asian community is minimal; this lack of support is a major barrier to improving the lives of those in need. With a successful history of creating and executing new programs, the AARC Nonprofit is in a unique position to work with Austin's growing Asian American population. For that reason we request incubation funding for the AARC Nonprofit in the amount of \$65,000 for this position.

The Program Manager's time would be split between creating new programs for the community including seeking additional sources of funding; supporting existing multi-generational programming, cultural protocols, strategic planning and marketing with the AARC Facility; and managing the current health navigator program and future health-related programs.

The AARC Nonprofit is grateful for the partnership with the City of Austin and the services we've been able to provide to the community over the years. We look forward to continuing that relationship and creating the best possible environment for the Asian American community to thrive.

Best Regards,

Bobbi Kommineni  
Chairperson, Asian American Resource Center, Inc.



June 16, 2017

Mr. Richard Jung  
Mr. Kirk Yoshida  
Asian American Quality of Life Commission

Sent via email to: [rjung@dwmrlaw.com](mailto:rjung@dwmrlaw.com); [kirkyo@icloud.com](mailto:kirkyo@icloud.com)

Dear Kirk & Richard:

We write to ask the Asian American Quality of Life Commission to consider making immigrant legal services a priority issue for the Commission. We at American Gateways see the need that our immigrant community faces in accessing immigrant legal services every day in the work we do.

American Gateways provides access to justice for impoverished immigrants in Central Texas. We strive daily to fulfill our mission, which is to champion the dignity and human rights of refugees and immigrant survivors of persecution, torture, conflict, and human trafficking through exceptional immigration legal services at no or low cost, education, and advocacy.

Over the past 30 years, American Gateways has become an indispensable legal services provider for low-income immigrants in Central Texas, and is considered one of the most effective and efficient providers of immigration legal services in the nation. Each of our clients is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines and without the help of American Gateways, would not be able to afford legal representation.

We are also the only non-profit in Texas to serve 4 major detention centers, providing legal orientations, Know-Your-Rights presentations, pro se assistance, and legal representation on a regular basis at the detention centers in Karnes, Pearsall, Taylor (Hutto) and Dilley Texas. We also run the Immigration Court Help Desk in San Antonio to provide assistance to pro se non-detained low income immigrants in removal proceedings.

Our staff also identifies and takes on as many cases as we can for full representation, either through our in-house attorneys or our strong pro bono partnership with the private bar. We are committed to providing our legal services to those families who may be too poor to access private legal help.

With our vast pool of volunteers, we are able to help a number of individuals very efficiently. We have more than 120 volunteers who provide translation and interpretation services for us, including several Asian languages. And we have more than 100 lawyers who donated nearly 1600 hours in pro bono legal services representing our clients. As the Asian immigrant population in Austin has grown, we have seen an increase in demand for our services. We recognize that the Asian immigrant population in Austin is diverse, has a variety of needs, including free immigration legal services.

We provide our services to a number of Asians each month. For example:

- At the women's detention center in Hutto, we provide basic legal information and assistance to approximately 40 Asian women a month.

- At any given time, we have approximately 10 cases of Asian immigrants, to whom we are providing full legal representation. This is approximately 15% of our current client base.

We also have a partnership with AFSSA to assure that their clients receive the immigration services they need and we are continuing to expand our outreach efforts to various communities in the Austin area.

With the current climate on immigration at the state and federal level, the need for our services is more important than ever. Unfortunately, we must often turn away between 75 to 100 individuals a month who seek our services. We are also seeing an increase in the number of individuals who need deportation defense or consultations to avoid deportation.

The immigrant Asian population in Austin will be impacted by the new federal immigration policies and anti-immigrant state laws. We recognize that it is a population that has specific language access needs, and is diverse. Without additional funding, low income individuals and families will not be able to access the protection and services that they need.

Additional funding for an organization like American Gateways could allow more clients to be served. For example, \$100,000 would allow an organization with deep immigration experience to:

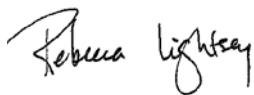
- Provide 25 one-on-one consultations a month to an Austin immigrant, and
- Take on full representation of 4 – 6 new immigration cases, including cases for those in removal proceedings. Representation in these cases may include travel to the Pearsall Detention Center, more than 2 hours outside of Austin, where Austin residents who are detained are frequently sent and where we would need to go to meet with our client.

Because of this need, we ask the Asian American Quality of Life Commission to consider including a request for immigration legal services in its budget request to the City of Austin. Funding for free legal services to low income immigrants in Austin could allow an agency, like ours, to provide outreach, consultations, and much needed legal services.

We recognize and appreciate all that the City of Austin is doing to stand up for immigrants in Austin. However, specific City of Austin funding is vitally needed in order to provide more desperately needed immigration services, especially during the current hostile climate for immigrants.

Please feel free to contact me at [rebeccal@americangateways.org](mailto:rebeccal@americangateways.org). Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Lightsey  
Executive Director



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# **Community Health Navigator Program Update**

June 20, 2017

# Community Health Navigator (CHN) Program Overview

- Purpose: to establish the infrastructure for health system navigation services to linguistically isolated Asian American immigrant groups
  - Initial focus on Burmese, Vietnamese and Korean
- Goal: to enhance self-management support through culturally and contextually relevant care
- Timeline:
  - July-Dec 2016: program initiated, outreach, health fair
  - Jan-Sept 2017: pilot cont'd, certifications, partnerships

# **CHN 2016 Statistics (July-December 2016)**

Number of Clients Served	56
Number of Individuals Engaged in Outreach Events	188
Social Service Agencies Engaged	6



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# CHN 2016

## Client Health Care Navigation Skills & Knowledge Before & After

Knowledge/Skill	Pre	Post
Ability to use healthcare coverage/insurance	15.4%	23.1%
Awareness of low-cost healthcare services	3.8%	21.2%
Awareness of low-cost healthy living resources	3.8%	9.6%
Awareness of access to interpreter services, Title VI	23.1%	40.4%
Ability to independently access community resources	7.7%	15.4%



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# CHN 2017 Statistics (January-June 2017)

Number of Clients Served	92
Number of Individuals Engaged in Outreach Events	210
Social Service Agencies Engaged	26



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# CHN 2017

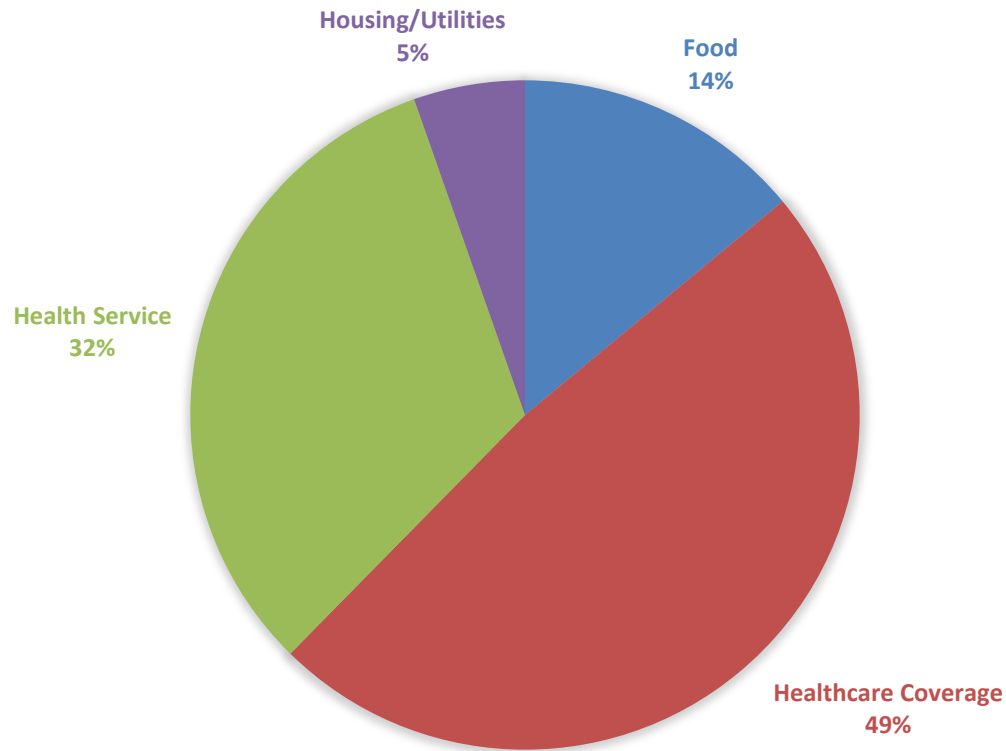
## Client Health Care Navigation Skills & Knowledge Before & After

Knowledge/Skill	Pre	Post
Awareness of low-cost healthcare services	27.5%	58.8%
Awareness of low-cost healthy living resources	3.9%	49.0%
Awareness of access to interpreter services, Title VI	9.8%	51.0%
Ability to ask for interpreter services	17.6%	31.4%
Comfort accessing community services	43.1%	94.1%



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# CHN 2017 Services Provided



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# Program Goals

- 2017 CHN Focus: Healthcare Coverage
  - Available healthcare coverage
  - How to sign up & use coverage
- CHN Future Initiatives:
  - Preventive Care
  - Mental Health
  - Lifestyle (diet & exercise)



# FY2018 CHN Funding Request

- Increase program staff hours including providing benefits for employees
  - 1FT Program Manager, 1FT Navigator, 2 30hour/week Navigator, 1 PT Navigator
  - **\$274,945**
- Operating Expenses
  - Technology, Training, Classes, Translation Services
  - **\$39,583**
- Direct Assistance for Clients
  - **\$1,800**
- **Total FY2018 CHN Budget Request: \$316,328**



Economic Empowerment Program  
City of Austin Quality of Life Commission  
June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017





**Asian Family Support Services of Austin** (AFSSA, formerly SAHELI) transforms the lives of Asian and Pacific Islander families dealing with domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking to ensure they are happy, thriving and productive members of our communities.

**AFSSA does what no other domestic or sexual assault organization in Central Texas can.** AFSSA provides a complete continuum of support in over 30 languages, with **special care for the unique social, cultural and familial circumstances** of immigrant and refugee communities.

Whether you've been here five generations or five weeks, AFSSA understands and values the strong family and community ties which define our ethnic heritages.

**Respect and honor** are part of asking for help. AFSSA ensures the integrity of these values every step of the way. We help families and individuals understand the honor and courage of standing up for feeling safe and respected at home. Everyone is welcome.

**AFSSA works strategically** to be an integrated part of our communities and provides unique individual and community solutions to address domestic and sexual violence. And all our services are always **completely free of charge.**



## **PROGRAMS and SERVICES**

**The Survivor Assistance Program (SAP)**

**Asian Sexual Assault Program (ASAP)**

**24 hour Hotline**

**Transitional Housing**

**The Economic Empowerment Program (EE)**

**The Community Education and Outreach Program (CEO)**

**Systems Advocacy and Training Program**

**Language Access Program (LAP)**

## Our Impact - 2016



Served 153 families

- Women with young children

- Women without children

- Men

- Newborns

Provided outreach, information and education sessions to over 4200 individuals

- Work with youth on prevention

- Collaboration with Public, International and Cultural Schools

- Working with parents on how to address sexual assault

- Specialized outreach to refugee communities

- Campus Outreach

- Film Screenings and panels

- Faith Outreach

Provided services to Asian Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, African, South American and Eastern European communities

## Economic Empowerment Program Post Crisis Services



Housing	Permanent and Transitional Housing
Job Procurement	Resume writing, job searches, and assistance on acclimating to the American work force, access to small/micro business resources
Public Benefits	Assistance with TANF, SNAP, and other public benefits
Health	Access to health exchange and/or CHIP
Education	Assistance with access to English classes, citizenship, community colleges and/or vocational programs
Childcare	Assistance with childcare enrollment & public assistance programs
Life-Skills	Problem solving, stress reduction, household management, transportation
Financial Planning	Setting up bank accounts, tax filings, and prevention of credit fraud

## City of Austin Funding 2017



- Supports 1 FTE to provide support to clients and provide case management
- Total Budget request for 2017 is \$75,000 for 18 month program
- Term: January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 – June 30, 2018
  
- Output: 46 clients for program term
- Outcomes: 77% indicated progress - number will capture the number of unduplicated clients who fill out a pre and post survey.
- Pre and post survey measures the following indicators: 1) comfort level of finding employment 2) confidence in searching and applying for jobs and 3) comfort in navigating resources for housing, basic needs and education.
- Cost per client \$1630.43



June 7, 2017

Honorable Mayor and Council Members  
City of Austin  
301 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Austin, TX 78701

**Subject: Asian American Resource Center – One Time Funding in 2017-18 Budget**

Mayor Adler and City Council Members:

We would like to take this time to express our deep appreciation for your commitment to the Asian American Resource Center (AARC Facility) and Austin's Asian American community, expressed during several of your campaigns, and during meetings since. You will each have an opportunity to demonstrate that commitment in both the upcoming budget cycle and the 2018 Bond process, and we write to ask for your support.

The Network of Asian American Organizations (NAAO) has worked with the City of Austin since the early 1990's to coordinate the needs and activities of the Asian American Community in Austin. NAAO developed the concept of a community resource center and worked closely with the City of Austin, for over a decade, to make the AARC a reality. This vision has proven to be very successful in that the AARC is appreciated by many, and is currently one of the most utilized City cultural arts facilities. Those of you have visited the facility can attest to its popularity. On any given Saturday, or during the popular senior lunch program, the facility is packed to capacity or beyond. The facility, and its parking lot, strain to contain a community that has more than doubled in size since the facility's conception.

As the City deliberates its next budget, we request that the base budget expand to equitably include the Asian American community, commensurate with its growth and needs. Community needs include health and human services for seniors and others, economic development, language access, promotion and retention of Asian American employees at the City of Austin, as well as cultural arts and recreation. The AARC facility has been an important space for several of these needs, and as the community grows, so must the facility.

We therefore request that the FY2018 Budget include one-time only \$200,000 for a master planning process for AARC future expansion, and that any land acquisition or construction indicated by the resulting master plan be included in the City's 2018 bond package.

## Member Organizations

*Austin Bangladesh Association*

*Austin Chapter of Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce*

*Asian Contractor Association*

*Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs*

*Austin Filipino-American Association*

*Bangladesh Association of Greater Austin*

*Cambodian Foundation*

*Chinese Society of Austin*

*City of Austin Asian American Employee Network*

*Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce*

*Indian American Coalition of Texas*

*Indonesian Diaspora Network*

*Korean American Association of Greater Austin*

*Vietnamese American Community of Austin Texas*

## Associate Member Organizations

*Asian Family Support Services of Austin*

*ACE Foundation*

**Mayor Adler and City Council Members**

**Asian American Resource Center**

**June 7, 2017**

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Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to discussing our request further. Please let us know if you have questions, or if we can provide additional information. I can be reached by phone at 512-825-9265 or by email at guthikondag@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Gopal Guthikonda  
President

Cc: Elaine Hart, Acting City Manager  
Sara Hensley, Acting Assistant City Manager  
Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager  
Kimberly McNeeley  
Bobbie Kommineni, Chair AARC Non-profit  
Vince Cobalis, Chair Asian American Quality of Life Commission  
AAQOL Commission Members  
NAAO Board of Directors  
NAAO Executive Officers