

Agenda Item 4e: Provide feedback to the CAN regarding Barriers & Challenges facing Asian Americans and recommend Systems Improvements

Background: On January 27, 2014 the Community Action Network (CAN) Community Council invited representatives from the three Quality of Life Initiatives to provide an overview of each Commission and the challenges faced by their constituents. Although the Asian American Quality of Life Commission had not convened at the time, Vince Cobalis was invited as an appointed member. The CAN Community Council is wrapping up their work for the year and asked for any additional feedback before they complete their work. Below is the draft summary from the January meeting with the three minority Q of L Commission members:

	Presenters	Barriers and challenges	Systems improvements
Quality of Life Initiatives Jan 27 2014	Nelson Linder, African American Quality of Life Teresa Perez-Wiseley, Hispanic Quality of Life Vince Cobalis, Asian American Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism and discrimination • Gentrification has erased history, culture and relevance of living in Austin for many people. • Cultural and linguistic barriers • Health disparities • Educational inequities • Disproportionate representation in criminal justice system • Safe, affordable housing • Transportation • Small business support • Opportunities for youth • Low wages and declining income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undo racism – train systems leaders, business leaders and others to understand and appreciate the role they play. • Address disproportionality in the criminal justice system and in the educational system. • Increase cultural proficiency in health and mental health systems. • Improve education. • Create family-friendly, affordable housing that is accessible to transportation and jobs. • Make public transportation easier and more convenient for families with young children. • Increase the availability of ESL training and classes.

The following additional feedback was provided by Vince Cobalis in June 2014.

1. Citizen classes: For refugees, improve access to citizenship classes and work more aggressively to link refugees to primary care and other services.
2. Linkage to Services: Refugees have a time limit for government subsidies and more needs to be done to make sure they get linked into mainstream safety net services.
3. Patient Navigators: I'm not sure how extensive the use of Promotores is in the healthcare system for Hispanics, but a similar system is needed for the Asian American cultures. The healthcare system should provide enough time to assure patients understand their diagnosis and treatment plan when language barriers exist.
4. Cultural/Linguistic barriers: In addition to healthcare, a similar system is needed to bridge cultural and linguistic barriers to access other safety net services and transportation services.
5. Social Interactions: Asian cultures are often socially oriented and more opportunities are needed for culturally oriented social gatherings (perhaps at AARC). Such gatherings would also be an opportunity to provide information on safety net services and give folks an opportunity to discuss issues with each other.
6. Assisted Living Centers: Culturally sensitive assisted living centers are also needed.

The Commission is requested to endorse the above feedback, expand upon the narrative, and/or provide additional feedback. A representative from the Community Action Network will be available to answer questions.