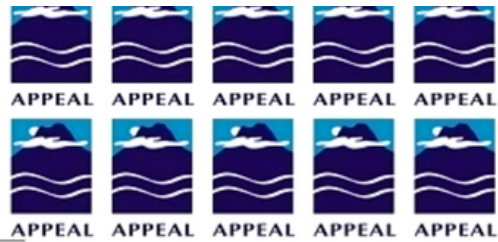
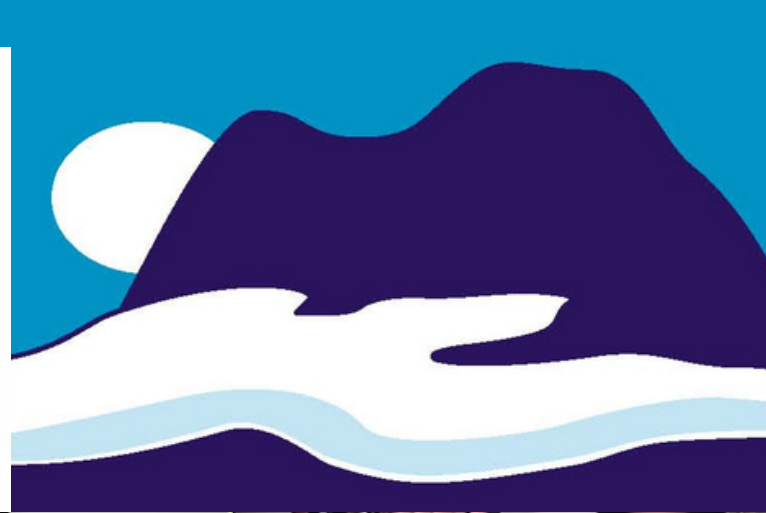


MAY 2021 | ISSUE NO.5

APPEAL

Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment,
Advocacy and Leadership

A bimonthly newsletter



#StopAsianHate:
Racism is a Critical
Public Health Issue



APPEAL staff showing solidarity with the #StopAsianHate campaign against continued hate violence and racism against Asian Americans.

ALSO IN THIS EMAIL DIGEST:

- I & E Day
- Partner Highlights: FIGH, CBCAC, LVHCC
- Sugar Sweetened Beverages
- CEA Award Recipients
- Staff Highlights: Hurjessica Virk
- Recent and Future Events

#STOPASIAN HATE

We want to thank our network partners from across diverse communities for speaking out against all forms of violence against Asian Americans and for uplifting our voices. We continue to stand as an advocate for public health and health equity; ultimately, safety from racially-motivated violence cannot be separated from community healing and wellbeing. We must also come together as a united front across different sectors, including media, business, justice, government, and community to respond appropriately and with compassion to this growing crisis.

Continued on following page

During the past year, #StopAAPIHate has reported 3,795 incidents against Asian Americans. We understand that our Asian American community is going through pain and fear, and we stand in solidarity with you during these troubling times. We ask that anyone experiencing or witnessing incidents report them to stopaapihate.org.

In Solidarity,
Rod Lew, MPH
Executive Director

Click [here](#) to read more

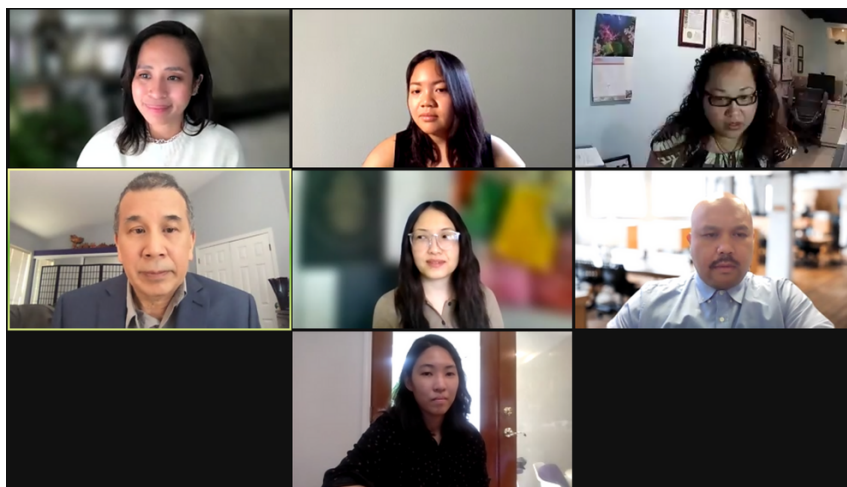
I & E DAY

APPEAL's SPARC Project played an active role in organizing the 2021 Information and Education Day (I & E Day) Virtual Day of Action entitled "Raising Our Voices for Health Justice: California Communities Against Commercial Tobacco" on April 12-14th, including a SPARC Network meeting with the API Legislative Caucus.

"We dreamt of making this I & E Day more community-centered," said Dr. Marielle Reataza, Senior Program Manager at APPEAL.

"Focusing on why the fight against Big Tobacco is one that challenges social and health injustice and how community engagement and building people power truly answers the initial call to action."

The SPARC Network, including the API Regional Partners (Ladine Chan, Teresa Tran, Bao Xiong, and Moana Cabiles), met with Elissa K. Ouchida, consultant for the API Caucus on April 14.



Continued on following page

SPARC LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

A 9-month program focused on building a vibrant movement in tobacco control and health advocacy in Asian American (AA) and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities. Fellows will develop the knowledge, skills, and capacity needed to advocate and implement policy change. You do not need to identify as AA & NHPI to participate.

**Applications due Wed
May 26th at 5:00 PM**

[Apply Here](#)

During this meeting, SPARC partners spoke passionately about their lived experiences and projects, highlighting how commercial tobacco has impacted AA and NHPI communities across California. They also spoke about how COVID-19 and the startlingly growing number of hate crimes directed against AAs affect mental health and ultimately have led to increased tobacco use in our communities. Additionally, SPARC made the link between flavored tobacco products and the increased prevalence of vaping, which has tremendously impacted our youth.

The I&E Day of Action was coordinated by the American Heart Association's Endgame Project. The event kicked off with a Community Townhall, one of the speakers including SPARC Advisory Committee member Dr. Elisa Tong. Panelists discussed their community involvement, the necessity of organizing, and why commercial tobacco is a social justice issue.

SPARC PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: FAMILIES IN GOOD HEALTH [FIGH]

On March 27, 2021, Families in Good Health (FIGH) partnered with the Gardena Collaborative group, the Asian American Drug Abuse (AADAP), and the African Coalition to host a Spoken Word workshop event called "From the Page to the Stage." This event aimed to have youth connect the importance of spoken word related to tobacco policy work. Youth from Long Beach and Gardena participated in a workshop co-facilitated by Kelly Curry and Kymbali Craig. The youth had a chance to craft their own written poetry and shared it in a recording session. The youth had a wonderful time sharing their own written piece.

"It was truly an engaging experience to be able to listen to other people's backgrounds and perspectives on the topic of tobacco abuse," said Ivan Amir (aged 18). Alyssa Khem (aged 17) said, "It was very refreshing to see how many youth cared about what's going in the world especially around tobacco." This event was a successful collaborative effort between all the organizations and youth. The video premiered the following week on March 31st for National Kick Butt's Day, a day for the nation's youth to speak out and raise awareness in their communities about the problems associated with tobacco use. Click [here](#) to view the video!

MISSED OUR PRESS CONFERENCE?

**Unsung Champions:
Celebrating Our
Immigrant
Communities
May 17th, 2021**

AMPLIFY, APPEAL & HLCC joined forces to celebrate the launch of their campaign, Unsung Champions: Celebrating Our Immigrant Communities. The campaign is about uplifting the experiences of immigrants who support our families & communities as our country works to rebuild during the greatest public health crisis in our nation's history.

Check the [APPEAL](#) page for more info coming soon!

#Alliance4ImmigrantChampions

UPCOMING CONFERENCE

APPEAL- ADEPT: Virtual Conference on Cancer & Health Equity

SEPTEMBER
22 & 23, 2021

Visit
[appealfor
health.org](http://appealforhealth.org)
for more
updates
coming
soon!

SUGAR SWEETENED BEVERAGES

APPEAL has joined efforts to combat the diabetes epidemic in the Asian American (AA) and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities by supporting policies on sugary drinks. APPEAL's Executive Director, Rod Lew, was featured on a **podcast** in collaboration with the Praxis Project, where he shared his thoughts on the benefit of sugar-sweetened beverage (or soda) tax initiatives on the impacts of on AA & NHPI communities.

The Praxis Project summarized the podcast as:

"Rod Lew...discusses how the negative health impacts of sugary beverages can be best understood in the context of a long history of racism and structural oppression as well as toxic relationship building between industry and marginalized communities. Building on this, Rod makes the case for systems change and calls for equity-based policy processes in SSB taxes and building community power through reinvestment to challenge the negative health outcomes caused by sugary beverages."

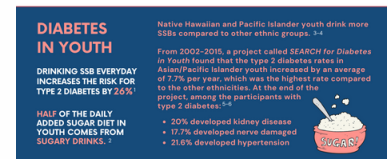
From APPEAL's work on tobacco, Rod also draws parallels between the tobacco industry and the beverage industry in their tactics regarding claims of regressivity in opposition to taxes on their products and threats to their profits".

SEARCH for Diabetes in Youth reports that "between 2002 and 2015, the type 2 diabetes rates in Asian and Pacific Islander youth increased by an average of 7.7% per year, which was the highest rate [when] compared to the other ethnicities." This finding may be due to NHPI youth drinking more sweetened beverages in comparison to other ethnic groups.



THE HEALTH CONCERN

Drinking too many beverages that has high amounts of sugar (Sugar-Sweetened Beverages or SSB) is connected to developing type 2 diabetes, a disease that can be prevented. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) are among the people who are largely affected by type 2 diabetes. In the last few years, there have been major cities in the United States that passed SSB taxes in order to help prevent the people from drinking too many SSBs as well as to help prevent type 2 diabetes.



ASPIRE PARTNERS SPOTLIGHT- CBCAC & LVHCC

The ASPIRE family is excited to announce that we added new partners to our family, the Coalition for Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC) based in Chicago, Illinois, and Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Center (LVHCC) based in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC) unites the resources of member organizations and individual members to empower Chinese American communities in Greater Chicago. As a coalition of member organizations and individuals, CBCAC carries out its mission through civic education, issue advocacy, communication with policy makers, and community mobilization.

The Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club's (LVHCC) mission is to practice and perpetuate the traditions, beliefs, language and arts of the indigenous people of Hawai'i. They also want to focus on health awareness through their events, that discusses Native Hawaiians' and Pacific Islanders' various struggles with health issues.

To learn more about our ASPIRE partners, click [here](#).

SPARC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR 2021

Congratulations to the following organizations for receiving SPARC CEAs for the 2021 cycle: Herald Christian Health Center, International Youth Tobacco Control, Merced Lao Family Community, Special Services for Groups-Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement, Paul Hom Asian Clinic, Saahas for Cause, Search to Involve Pilipino Americans, Vietnamese American Cancer Foundation. Click [here](#) to learn more about their projects!

APPEAL STAFF HIGHLIGHT: Hurjessica Virk, MPH

Hurjessica Virk is the Program Associate for the ASPIRE Network, which is funded through the CDC Office of Smoking and Health in smoking cessation and cancer prevention.



Hurjessica identifies as a Punjabi-Indian and is the ASPIRE Program Associate (since August 2020). As a first-generation student, she received her Bachelors in Science in Family and Consumer Sciences in Food and Nutrition in 2019 and eventually her Masters in Public Health in 2020 from Touro University: California. Hurjessica has also submitted and presented an APHA abstract in 2020 on food and nutrition and how it affects adolescent youth. Hurjessica's passion for public health arose during her work on mental health advocacy during her undergraduate experience as a peer health educator and then as President of the Active Minds club where she learned what is involved in public health and its wide scope. Then, she found interest in tobacco control and cancer with SPARC's Leadership Summit in 2019 and since then has strived to bring awareness about tobacco-related disease, wellness, and mental health to the Punjabi-Indian community. In her free time, Hurjessica enjoys walks and cuddles with her new puppy Rubble, watching Ted Talks or documentaries, and relaxing days at Bodega Bay Beach. Hurjessica strives to be a better version of herself and someday would like to pursue a Doctorate in Public Health with a concentration in Interdisciplinary Studies. In the meantime, she works to be the voice for those that are underserved and underrepresented within her Sikh community.



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Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL) is a national health justice organization working to achieve health equity for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and other underserved communities.