

ASIAN  
LAW CAUCUS



MEMBER OF  
ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER  
FOR ADVANCING JUSTICE

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.

Asian Law Caucus  
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## Board of Directors

The dedicated members of the Asian Law Caucus's board of directors volunteer countless hours to guide our programs with their expertise and vision. We honor their staunch commitment and invaluable leadership.



Photo by Elaine Joe

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### **Quyen Ta**

Partner, Kecker & Van Nest LLP

### **Cecillia D. Wang**

Managing Attorney, California  
Office, ACLU Immigrants' Rights  
Project

\* not pictured

## Staff

The Asian Law Caucus deeply acknowledges the skills and hard work of our talented staff members. We also are grateful for the important contributions of staff who recently left the Caucus: Dionne Jirachaikitti, Niki Moore, and Dennis Wu.



Photo by Elaine Joe

**Hyeon-Ju Rho,\*** *Executive Director*

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**Lisa Chen,** *Community Advocate,  
Immigrants' Rights*

**Christina Dang,** *Community  
Advocate, Housing Rights*

**Carlo De La Cruz,** *Special Projects  
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Rights*

**Veena Dubal,** *former Staff Attorney,  
National Security and Civil Rights*

**Pauline Guillermo-Togawa,**  
*Director of Development*

**Summer Hararah,\*** *Program  
Coordinator, National Security and  
Civil Rights*

**Caitlin Kelly Henry,\*** *Bridge Fellow*

**Mariam Hosseini,** *Director of  
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**Winifred Kao,** *Staff Attorney,  
Employment and Labor*

**Audee Kochiyama-Holman,**  
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**Fay Li,** *Operations and Finance  
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**Sin Yen Ling,** *Senior Staff Attorney,  
Immigrants' Rights*

**Ling Woo Liu,** *Director, Fred T.  
Korematsu Institute for Civil Rights  
and Education*

**Mina Titi Liu,** *former Executive  
Director*

**Karen Ng,\*** *Community Advocate,  
Immigrants' Rights*

**Kimpo Ngoi,** *Bridge Fellow*

**Anoop Prasad,** *Staff Attorney,  
Immigrants' Rights*

**Christina Sinha,** *Iranian American  
Bar Association Policy and Education  
Fellow*

**Lenine Umali,** *Community Advocate,  
Criminal Justice Reform*

**Philip Van,** *Intake Coordinator*

\* not pictured

## Financial Summary

As Of and For the Year  
Ended June 30, 2011

### Statement of Financial Position

#### *Assets*

Current Assets	\$ 2,856,156
Long Term Assets	<u>1,757,633</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 4,613,789</u></b>

#### *Liabilities and Net Assets*

Liabilities	\$ 1,374,698
Unrestricted Assets	1,041,628
Temporarily Restricted Assets	<u>2,197,463</u>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 4,613,789</u></b>

### Statement of Activities

#### *Revenues and Support*

Public Support	\$ 4,216,805
Program Income and Other Revenue	28,158
In-kind Contributions	21,804
Investment Income	<u>8,177</u>
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b><u>\$ 4,274,944</u></b>

#### *Expenses*

Program Services	\$ 1,493,051
Management and General	333,035
Fundraising	<u>126,514</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$ 1,952,600</u></b>

**Change in Net Assets** **\$ 2,322,344**

**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.

Asian Law Caucus  
*affiliation*

## Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

**V**ision Statement: We envision a fair and equitable society for all that ensures civil and human rights for Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other communities. To achieve this, we will work together—as equal and independent partners under one name, speaking with one unified and powerful voice—to promote justice, empower our communities, bring local and national constituents together, and strengthen our multi-racial democracy.



*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.*

**At this important** moment in the Asian American civil and human rights movement, four leading organizations—the Asian American Institute in Chicago, Asian American Justice Center in Washington, D.C., Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco, and Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles—are strengthening our alliance by coming together under one name: Asian American Center for Advancing Justice.

Together we will advance the goals we already work toward as individual organizations—promoting a fair and equitable society for all, strengthening civil and human rights, and empowering Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other vulnerable communities. By affiliating under the same name, we will streamline and coordinate our efforts to promote our common goals while remaining equal and independent partners.

Each group boasts staff with valuable expertise and deep experience. The Asian American Institute (AAI) is the Midwest's leading pan-Asian organization dedicated to empowering the Asian American community through advocacy, research, education, and coalition building. The Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) is one of the foremost national organizations advancing civil and human rights for Asian Americans and building a fair and equitable society for all through education, public policy, community organizing, and litigation. The Asian Law Caucus (ALC) is the oldest legal organization in the country defending the civil rights of Asian and Pacific Islander communities, focusing on the needs of low income, immigrant, and underserved communities. The Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) is the nation's largest legal organization addressing the needs of Asians and Pacific Islanders by advocating for civil rights, providing legal services and education, and building coalitions.

As Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, we will expand the Asian American community's reach and effectiveness by speaking in one unified and powerful voice.

## Immigrants' Rights

Creating a realistic path to legalization that strengthens our country and keeps families together is one of the Asian Law Caucus's major commitments. The Immigrants' Rights Program provides direct legal services to those in greatest need in the Asian Pacific Islander community. We also engage in the public debate to support proposals that champion a more humane and just immigration policy for all people.



*We provide direct legal services in a wide variety of languages through our partnerships with community organizations from San Francisco to Sacramento.*

### Direct Legal Services

The Asian Law Caucus's activism on behalf of immigrants' 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, providing services in a wide variety of languages through our partnerships with community organizations from San Francisco to Sacramento. 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.

### DREAM Act and Prosecutorial Discretion

In April 2011, the Asian Law Caucus lobbied members of Congress, the White House, and the White House Initiative on Asian Pacific Islanders. We called for the temporary moratorium on the removal of DREAM Act students from the U.S. until Congress fixes the immigration system. In June 2011, in collaboration with Educators for Fair Consideration, DREAMActivist.org, and National Immigrant Youth Alliance, the Caucus released "Education Not Deportation: A Guide for Undocumented Youth in Removal Proceedings." The best practices manual provides legal and organizing strategies for undocumented students facing deportation.

Photos, left to right:  
Caucus attorney Sin Yen Ling talking with members of the Sikh community at a Gurdwara in El Sobrante, California.

At a rally for immigrant rights, attorney Sin Yen Ling fielding questions from the press.

In 2010, the Caucus represented 20-year-old Shing Ma "Steve" Li, a DREAM Act student enrolled at City College of San Francisco. His case garnered national attention when the Board of Immigration Appeals ordered his deporta-



tion to Peru. The community mobilized to grant him deferred status and to urge Congress to pass the DREAM Act for all undocumented youth. California Senator Dianne Feinstein ultimately intervened on Mr. Li's behalf with a private immigration bill that deferred action on his case until 2013.

### SB1070 Copycat Litigation

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signed SB1070 into law in April 2010 permitting local police to stop individuals perceived to be "undocumented" and demand to see their immigration documents. Since then, several states have passed similar laws, furthering racial profiling and creating different versions of the immigration system. Along with the American Civil Liberties Union, National Immigration Law Center, Southern Poverty Law Center, and other civil rights groups, the Caucus filed lawsuits challenging these laws in Georgia and Alabama. Alabama's HB56 is the most heinous, requiring all public schools to verify the immigration status of children and their parents and punishing anyone who interacts with undocumented immigrants. These laws are unconstitutional and have no place in our communities.

### Illegal Detention of U.S. Citizens

The Caucus represents U.S. citizens who are illegally detained and facing wrongful removal from the country. The cases often involve individuals who immigrated to the U.S. as children and turned 18 years of age before their parents became naturalized citizens, thereby bestowing automatic citizenship upon the children. In 2009, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported extensively on a Caucus client who was illegally detained for four months. As a result of the media attention, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) changed its local policy and now releases U.S. citizens after they submit proper evidence. In 2010, Caucus staff met with Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, former chair of the House Immigration Subcommittee, to seek national expansion of ICE's San Francisco policy. ICE later released a policy memo recommending early release if there is *prima facie* evidence of citizenship. Through litigation, we are monitoring the impact of ICE's memorandum.

### ASPIRE

Asian Students Promoting Immigrant Rights through Education (ASPIRE) is in its third year as the first and only API undocumented youth group. Currently made up of 45 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 also facilitates workshops at high schools and colleges 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.

## National Security and Civil Rights

Through the National Security and Civil Rights Program, the Asian Law Caucus is committed to protecting the civil rights of individuals and communities unjustly impacted by overbroad national security policies. Utilizing a broad range of strategies—including direct legal services, litigation, policy advocacy, community organizing, and education—we strive to impact the larger social and institutional dynamics that prevent the realization of equal rights.



The National Security and Civil Rights Program confronts the day-to-day breaches of civil rights in concert with a broad range of strategies—including direct legal services, litigation, policy advocacy, community organizing, and education. In this way, we strive to impact the larger social and institutional dynamics that prevent the realization of equal rights.

*The Caucus is committed to protecting the civil rights of individuals and communities unjustly impacted by overbroad national security policies.*

## Fighting for Rights at the Border

Following the Asian Law Caucus's March 2009 report on the problem of racial, religious, and national origin profiling at our nation's borders, we strive to make our recommendations a reality through policy



advocacy to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In 2010, we conducted dozens of "Know Your Rights When Traveling" trainings at mosques and community centers all over Northern and Central California, and we continue

to represent individuals who face discrimination when traveling.

Photos above, left to right:

Karen Korematsu at the San Francisco Human Rights Commission hearing on the experiences of South Asian, Arab, Middle Eastern, and Muslim Americans with racial, religious, and ethnic profiling (photo by Ramsey El-Qare).

NSCR project coordinator Summer Hararah translating for a client testifying at a May 2011 Joint Human Rights and Police Commission Hearing on the Role of the SFPD in the Joint Terrorism Task Force (photo by Ramsey El-Qare).

"Know Your Rights" training flyer.





## Ending the Surveillance of Innocent Americans

In 2010, the Asian Law Caucus, along with the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California and the law firm of Morrison and Foerster, LLP, sued the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to obtain information on racial and religious profiling practices in Northern California. The lawsuit resulted in the release of previously withheld documents demonstrating bias in law enforcement training and techniques. We also launched a project to survey the experiences of American Muslims in Northern California who have been approached by the FBI or Joint Terrorism Task Force. In our outreach efforts, we are able to inform hundreds of low income immigrants on their rights in relationship to law enforcement and what to do when the FBI comes knocking at the door. The Caucus has also represented a number of people wrongfully placed on the No-Fly List and individuals who have been approached for questioning unrelated to criminal activity.

## Coalition for a Safe San Francisco

The Asian Law Caucus was instrumental in founding and leading the Coalition for a Safe San Francisco (CSSF), a growing alliance of South Asian, Arab, Middle Eastern, and Muslim American individuals and organizations dedicated to protecting the civil rights and civil liberties challenged by overly broad



Staff attorney Veena Dubal testifying before the Police Commission on the impact of FBI profiling on San Francisco communities.

national security policies. CSSF began after statements made in March 2010 by George Gascon, then chief of the San Francisco Police Department, about how San Francisco's Hall of Justice "is susceptible not just to an earthquake but also to members of the city's Middle Eastern community parking a van in front of it and blowing it up." CSSF initially sought and secured a public apology from Chief Gascon and later launched a public campaign on the history of SFPD intelligence gathering and privacy violations. In September 2010, the Asian Law Caucus and CSSF organized a public hearing before the San Francisco Human Rights Commission on the impact of biased policing on San Francisco's South Asian, Arab, and Muslim communities. The hearing was the first of its kind in the country, culminating in an official report and recommendations for the City and County of San Francisco. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors fully endorsed the report and its recommendations.

## Employment and Labor

In April 2011, the Asian Law Caucus formally re-launched our Employment and Labor Program, which had been on hiatus since 2007. The program continues the Caucus' long history and commitment to fighting on behalf of low-wage immigrant workers.



### Workers' Rights Clinic and Direct Services

A key component of the Asian Law Caucus's Employment and Labor Program is our semi-monthly workers' rights clinic. Caucus staff and volunteers provide free legal counseling and referrals to low income and other workers on a full range of employment issues, including wrongful termination, employment discrimination, workplace safety, workers' compensation, wage and hour issues, and retaliation. Asian immigrants comprise the vast majority of the workers who come to the clinic seeking advice. Most are monolingual or have limited English proficiency. Few are aware of their legal rights. Most work in the restaurant, hospitality, retail, caregiving, maintenance, or construction industries.

The clinic also provides legal representation to workers with administrative wage and hour claims and limited unemployment insurance appeals. Within the first six months of providing these services, the Caucus helped workers recover more than a quarter million dollars in back wages and settlements, not including unemployment benefits won.

Our direct services focus reflects the community's most pressing needs. A recent study led by the Chinese Progressive Association found that one out of two workers in San Francisco's Chinatown receives

*Our direct services focus reflects the community's most pressing needs.*

less than the minimum wage, one out of five works more than 60 hours a week, and 95% do not receive a living wage. National census data also show that 52% of unemployed Asian Americans have been unemployed for more than six months, while 39% have been unemployed for more than a year—rates which exceed those for any other racial group.

Photos, left to right:

Nail salon employee (photo by Carlo De La Cruz).

Caucus attorney Winnie Kao at a 2011 press conference for the nail salon wage and hour class action lawsuit (photo by Mariam Hosseini).

2010 regional meeting for nail salon workers to learn, and teach about workplace issues.



### Impact Litigation

The Caucus has had a long-standing interest and concern for nail salon workers. The number of nail salons in this country has tripled in the past decade as the service has evolved from a luxury to a relatively inexpensive popular indulgence. The California Senate Office of Research reported in 2008 that there are approximately 96,000 licensed nail technicians in California. Advocates in the industry estimate that 59% to 80% of the workers are Vietnamese. Almost all are women and most are recent immigrants with limited English language proficiency and limited access to legal services.

In September 2011, the Caucus and the law firm of Davis Cowell & Bowe filed a wage and hour class action lawsuit on behalf of current and former nail salon employees against a popular nail salon chain based in San Mateo County, California. The suit charges the chain and its owner/operators with a wide range of state wage and hour violations, including failure to pay employees for overtime and work-related expenses, confiscating portions of employees' credit card tips, and unlawfully deducting amounts from employee wages for such minor "infractions" as dropping nail polish. The action represents an important step in reforming unlawful practices in an under-regulated and often overlooked industry.

The Caucus recently joined as co-counsel for the plaintiffs in *Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, et al. v. Regents of the University of Michigan* a challenge to Michigan's Proposal 2, an anti-affirmative action ballot amendment to the state's constitution. A successful ruling could open avenues to challenge analogous anti-affirmative action bans in other states, including California. These bans have had a negative impact on underrepresented minority numbers in both employment and higher education. The challenge is expected to be heard *en banc* by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit early next year.

### Legislative Efforts and Community Education

The Caucus continues to provide education, training, and outreach to community members and advocates about basic workplace rights and protections.

Earlier this year, we provided legislative testimony as part of a broad community coalition advocating for the passage of the San Francisco Wage-Theft Prevention Ordinance. The law gives important teeth to the San Francisco Office of Labor Standards Enforcement's ability to enforce the city's model labor laws by doubling penalties against employers for retaliating against workers, penalizing employers who fail to post a workplace minimum-wage notice, requiring employers to notify employees when they are under investigation, and setting a one-year case resolution timeline.

The Caucus has also lobbied for and supported AB 889, the California Domestic Worker Bill of Rights, which was introduced this year by state assembly members Tom Ammiano and Manuel Pérez. The bill seeks to extend basic workplace protections, including the right to overtime, meal and rest breaks, and workers compensation to domestic workers. The bill also provides domestic workers with the right to uninterrupted sleep on a 24-hour shift and the right to use kitchen facilities in the home. Backers hope to get the bill to the governor's desk next year.

## Criminal Justice Reform

One of the Asian Law Caucus's major developments in 2011 was the transition of the Juvenile Justice and Education Project to the Criminal Justice Reform Program. The renamed program continues the charge begun in 2006 to bring legal resources to Asian immigrant families with youth in the juvenile justice system. The Criminal Justice Reform Program broadens our goal to address criminal justice concerns in the Asian Pacific Islander community while building coalitions with other communities of color.



### Broadening Our Scope in Criminal Justice Advocacy

The Asian Law Caucus's Criminal Justice Reform Program focuses on the specific needs of limited English-speaking families and individuals caught up in the justice system. In redefining the work begun with the Juvenile Justice and Education Project, we realized that pursuing our goal to keep families together necessitated the broadening of our scope to include issues related to the whole family and not only youth.

The Criminal Justice Program encompasses the core ideas of the former

*The transition to the Criminal Justice Reform Program represents a positive change in responding to the evolving needs of the API community.*

project, which sought to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by providing direct legal services, community education, and policy advocacy to assist limited English-speaking parents and youth in navigating the juvenile justice system. We are carrying on the Juvenile Justice Project's victories, such as ending the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department's 2008 policy of reporting youth suspected of being undocumented to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the point of arrest. We are now faced with the challenge of ensuring full implementation of a 2009 amendment to San Francisco's Sanctuary Ordinance we helped pass that restores due process for all youth.

Photos, left to right:

In a case of racial profiling, the Caucus represented Southeast Asian youth in Alameda falsely charged with committing serious crimes.

Angela Chan, Caucus attorney, testifying in support of due process rights for immigrant youth.



Our experience with the Juvenile Justice Project revealed the unfortunate lack of family services available to the API community. Addressing this deficiency, the Caucus is emphasizing restorative solutions, rather than punitive approaches, to rehabilitate youth and repair the harm caused for victims and their communities. Our program continues to organize “Know Your Rights” trainings as a form of community education to prevent and reduce youth violence. We also added a new component to combat the increased criminalization of immigrants, particularly by ICE and local law enforcement collaborations such as the controversial Secure Communities Program (known as S-Comm). In particular, S-Comm deportation activities cast a dangerously wide dragnet that ensnares innocent domestic violence survivors and other victims of crime, instilling fear in immigrants to come forward to report crimes to the police.

The transition to the Criminal Justice Reform Program signifies a positive change in responding to the evolving needs of the API community and presenting resources, services, and advocacy that were not previously available.



### Coalition Building Among Communities of Color

Since the Asian Law Caucus’s inception, we have focused on reaching out to Asian immigrant communities as our main constituent. However, we have always recognized and strived for unity with all communities of color. We have stood by the African American community on fair housing

issues, the Latino community on immigration rights, and the Muslim and Arab communities on civil liberties. The Criminal Justice Reform Program is an extension of our tradition of coalition building as we venture into the new field of criminal justice reform.

Photo at left:  
The Caucus plays a leading role in coalitions that challenge the increasing cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities.

Photo at top:  
“Know Your Rights” flyer about police rights and the three strikes law.

## Housing Rights

The Asian Law Caucus advocates on behalf of low income residents, workers, and small businesses in the areas of housing and community development. We focus primarily on gateway communities for new immigrants, such as San Francisco Chinatown, where large numbers of tenants and seniors are in danger of displacement due to gentrification and other economic pressures.



The Asian Law Caucus battles the lack of affordable housing in the Bay Area by providing legal assistance to low income residents, including those facing homelessness. We assist low income, limited English-speaking immigrants on matters ranging from eviction defense to discrimination. In directly serving clients to stop illegal evictions and

*The Caucus supports residents in their determination to remain, stabilize, and participate in the future of their communities.*

rent increases, we strive to stem the displacement of working families and seniors from their communities.

### Housing Needs Research Project

In 2011, the Caucus launched a project to learn more about the housing stock in San Francisco's District 11, which includes Mission Terrace, Outer Mission, Excelsior, Ingleside, Oceanview, Merced Heights, Cayuga, and Crocker Amazon. According to the 2010 Census, Asian Americans make up the majority in District 11 at 51% of the population. Residents include blue-collar families, immigrants who speak limited English, and seniors. Our preliminary research indicates that this area has a high rate of in-law units, evictions, and foreclosures. When the research is published, we

Photos, left to right:

Mr. Kay is one of the tenants who fought for affordable housing in San Francisco Chinatown (photo by Carlo De La Cruz).

2010 rally against the eviction of low income Chinese senior tenants from Jasper Alley in North Beach (photo by Alvina Wong).

San Francisco Chinatown, gateway community for immigrant residents (photo by Elaine Joe).



intend the survey results to be of use to the community and to city policy makers in addressing issues related to the preservation of affordable housing.

### Community Development and Education

The Asian Law Caucus champions policies that preserve low income affordable housing and neighborhood diversity, supporting residents in their determination to remain, stabilize, and participate in the future of their communities. Our community development efforts center on direct legal assistance to defend seniors, families, and workers faced with displacement. Another vital aspect of our program is the promotion of policies that support and strengthen diverse communities. We collaborate closely with partner agencies to monitor trends in development and empower community members, including the elderly, with an awareness of their rights.

### Free Legal Clinics and Workshops

Our free legal clinics connect with key community partners, such as the Manilatown Heritage Foundation. We schedule our clinics as often as four times a month in different neighborhoods throughout San Francisco to reach as many low income, limited English-speaking tenants and seniors as possible. Our workshops cover such topics as Supplemental Security Income, debtor rights, housing issues, and assistance for seniors. By advising our constituents, we are empowering them with knowledge of their rights and resources when it comes to preserving their homes and their communities.



### Senior Rights

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, we distribute 10,000 multilingual bulletins as an education and resource tool to senior centers, community organizations, libraries, and individuals throughout the city. The bulletin covers important local, state, and federal issues such as consumer rights, immigration, fraud prevention, housing, health, and public benefits.

## Voting Rights

The Voting Rights Program highlights public policy and laws that 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, including increased voting and direct advocacy. We believe that meaningful change can occur through civic participation.



Photos, left to right:

Members of the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Fair Redistricting, San Francisco and Alameda, testify before the Citizen's Redistricting Commission in Oakland, Calif., to advocate for the preservation of API communities during the 2011 redistricting process.

[Voting Rights Act Poll Monitoring Report 2010.](#)

**Voting is the cornerstone** of our American democracy. It is one of the central ways in which average citizens can exercise their voice and power. However, many Asian American immigrants still face unnecessary barriers to accessing the ballot. Discrimination rarely manifests itself overtly today, unlike the rampant voting problems in the United States up through the 1960s. However, there are numerous ways that discrimination plays an unseen hand in preventing Asians and Pacific Islanders from receiving full and equal access to the democratic process. The Asian Law Caucus's Voting Rights Program focuses on strengthening voting systems for the benefit of all Americans.

### Voting Rights Act Poll Monitoring

In November 2010 during the mid-term elections, the Asian Law Caucus launched a regional effort to monitor local counties' compliance with Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act. Section 203 requires that emerging immigrant communities receive language assistance, both written and oral, in the voting process. Through a partnership with the Asian Law Alliance in San Jose, we monitored hundreds of poll sites in Santa Clara, San Francisco, Alameda, and San Mateo counties. We released our findings in a report that detailed several problems

*The Asian Law Caucus's Voting Rights Program focuses on strengthening voting systems for the benefit of all Americans.*



voters encountered on election day and highlighted a number of ways that election officials can improve access to the ballot for English language learners. In 2011, the Census Bureau released new information detailing how new jurisdictions in the U.S. will receive these legal protections, providing us with a timely opportunity to continue this important advocacy.



### California Redistricting

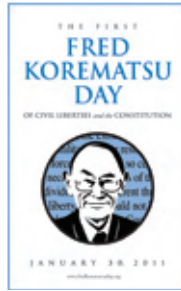
Throughout 2011, the Caucus participated in a statewide effort with the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Fair Redistricting to ensure that API communities have the ability to elect candidates of their choice. Every ten years, political boundaries are redrawn to adjust for population changes. Districts must be redrawn so that each elected official is representing the same number of people. It is a complex process and many Californians do not or cannot weigh in on the proceedings to say how the boundaries should be drawn in order to avoid splitting communities of interest. To complicate matters, 2011 was the first year redistricting happened on a statewide level through a new citizens commission. The Caucus brought together diverse communities in the region to testify before the new commission and explain why ethnic neighborhoods should be kept together. We successfully advocated that the city of Daly City not be broken into two legislative districts, as was the case in 2001. We also ensured that the Excelsior and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods of San Francisco were united with Bayview, SOMA, and Chinatown in the same assembly district.

### California Voting Rights Act

The Asian Law Caucus joined as co-counsel with the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and the firm Arnold & Porter in a lawsuit against San Mateo County. San Mateo is the only county remaining in the state of California that retains an at-large voting system for county supervisor seats. Over the last two decades, voting-age citizens from API and Latino communities have grown tremendously and yet API and Latinos have regularly been unable to win supervisor seats. This lawsuit brings claims under the California Voting Rights Act to challenge the at-large voting system in San Mateo County, which, if dismantled, would allow greater opportunity for communities of color to elect candidates of their choosing.

**Fred T.  
Korematsu  
Institute**  
for Civil Rights  
and Education

The Fred T. Korematsu Institute for Civil Rights and Education is a program of the Asian Law Caucus. The mission of the Korematsu Institute is to advance pan-ethnic civil rights and human rights through education, activism, and leadership development. For more information, visit [www.korematsuinstitute.org](http://www.korematsuinstitute.org) or call (415) 848-7727.



**The Fred T. Korematsu Institute** was founded in the name of the late Fred Korematsu, an American civil rights hero. In 1942, Mr. Korematsu was just 23 years old when he refused to report to the

*Fred Korematsu's life-long struggle for social justice serves as a reminder of the need to protect the civil liberties of all people.*

government's WWII incarceration camps for Japanese Americans. He was arrested and quickly convicted of defying the government's unjust order. Not willing to accept the conviction, Mr. Korematsu took his case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The nation's highest court denied his freedom, instead validating the wholesale imprisonment of Japanese American citizens on the basis of "military necessity." The Asian Law Caucus was a key member of the legal team that re-opened the case in 1983-1984 and convinced a federal court to overturn his conviction. Mr. Korematsu continued to fight for Japanese American redress during the last decades of his life. After 9/11, he also championed the protection of civil rights for Muslim and Arab Americans. He remained an activist until his death in 2005. His life-long struggle for social justice serves as a reminder of the need to protect the civil liberties of all people.

In 2009, the Asian Law Caucus and Karen Korematsu, Fred Korematsu's daughter, co-founded the Korematsu Institute for Civil Rights and Education to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the reversal of Mr. Korematsu's conviction.

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Photos, left to right:

Fred Korematsu wearing his Presidential Medal of Freedom, 1998 (photo by Shirley Nakao, courtesy of KI).

Inaugural Fred Korematsu Day 2011 poster (logo by Jay Park, poster by Ken Korematsu).

Rev. Jesse Jackson and other speakers at KI's inaugural Fred Korematsu Day celebration in Berkeley, Calif., on January 30, 2011 (photo by Bob Hsiang).

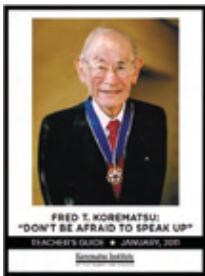


## Fred Korematsu Day

The Korematsu Institute played a major role in passing a bill recognizing “Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution,” the first day in U.S. history named after an Asian American. Signed into California law in 2010 to be commemorated every January 30 (Mr. Korematsu’s birthday), the day encourages schools across California to remember Mr. Korematsu’s legacy and the importance of protecting all people’s civil rights.

The first Fred Korematsu Day was celebrated on January 30, 2011, with the Korematsu Institute hosting a grand celebration in Berkeley, California. More than 700 people attended the event to hear keynote speaker Rev. Jesse Jackson, community leaders, and students share their perspectives on the significance of the occasion.

The Korematsu Institute is currently leading efforts to pass similar bills and related resolutions in other states and cities around the country.



## K-12 Curriculum

The Korematsu Institute developed a set of courses for kindergarten to 12th grade related to Mr. Korematsu’s legacy and distributes the K-12 curriculum free of charge to classrooms across the country. The teaching kits include a teacher’s guide, complete with lesson plans and suggested activities, as well as videos and posters related to Mr. Korematsu’s story, the Japanese American incarceration during WWII, Asian American history, and post-9/11 civil rights issues.

## RightsFest Film Festival

RightsFest is a civil rights film festival that brings to audiences a diverse range of social justice films as well as panels to discuss history, activism, filmmaking, and community-bridging solutions. The first RightsFest took place in 2010 in Detroit, Michigan, at Wayne State Law School’s Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights. The 2011 RightsFest was held in October in collaboration with the Advancing Justice Conference in San Francisco, California.

## Museum Exhibits

The telling of Fred Korematsu’s life of activism is featured in the permanent exhibits of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, California; the Japanese American Museum of San Jose, California; and the Manzanar Interpretive Center at the Manzanar National Historic Site in California. We are working with additional museums across the country to include Mr. Korematsu’s inspiring story.

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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 900 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 provided 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 alumni and operate on modest budgets as well as in-kind donations.

We have continued to receive donations for our Brick and Building Campaigns from alumni and friends. These donations (made in 2010) are included in the list below.

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