

## **The Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission Requires Additional Funding to Effectively Serve the Community**

By Trung Le, MSW

My name is Trung Le, MSW, I live in Bethlehem, Connecticut.

Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission is important to me because as a volunteer Commissioner, I have the privilege to meet other Asians in Connecticut. I also enjoy learning about other Asian cultures to help one another to reach the American Dream.

The Commission helped me/Asians to understand other communities and their struggles. It has helped new immigrants to adjust into their new home and new culture. I personally help under privilege Asians especially those who are newly immigrated to Connecticut,.

Personally, I was a minor refugee and migrated to the US 32 years ago. I was an adolescent and was in the foster care system. I experienced racism, stereotypical comments and unfair treatments. Therefore, I became one of the Commissioners in order to educate not only Asian but also other cultures in America to have a better understanding and to have an open mind about other cultures.

It is important for Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission to receive additional funding for its operations. Currently, we only have two staff on our commission who are very overworked. We are engaging and collaborating with all state agencies and other Commissions as well as our communities. Our communities depend on our Commission to advocate for their rights and be the voice for the under privileged, especially to those who do not speak English as their primary language. They will need time to learn English and time to learn the culture in order to fit in and contribute toward our state. If you ever travel to a country that speaks another language, then you would know how difficult it is to have a basic communication. Also, when you attend school or working for a living, it is much harder without the support system. Have you ever gone to the hospital or received medical attention in another country that you don't speak the language?

Culturally, Asians have been taught not to complain, but that doesn't mean we don't have needs. We are also willing to give up privacy by sharing apartments and housing with our extended families members in order for us to be financially stable. We also teach our children to study hard in school and be disciplined in order to survive and succeed in America.

Without APAAC , our communities will continue to be ignored. Our Asian American is afraid to access medical care and mental health care because of their language barrier.