



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

Description: These notes highlight the most important takeaways from the Massachusetts AAPI Commission's Western Mass Listening Session, which was held Saturday, May, 13, 2023 in Springfield, MA.

Contact: If you have any questions about these notes, the AAPI Commission, or want to work with us, please contact Hannah Ku, our Regional Coordinator, at regional.coordinator@aapicommission.org

Goals of the Meeting: We asked community members to provide the commission with updates on what their organization has accomplished in the past few months since our last meeting in March. Additionally, we allocated time for community members to ask the Commission or fellow community members for assistance.

Main Takeaways:

1. Continue regular meetings - Community members enjoy having these quarterly meetings to remain in touch with each other along with forming a stronger network in Western Massachusetts
2. Wanting to institute a calendar to boost events hosted around the Commonwealth. Additionally, a calendar is a way to further build the AAPI community
3. Concern over no AAPI curriculum even though there is a significant AAPI community in the Commonwealth
 - a. There is some momentum on the CARE bill, but it is currently in the House
4. Wanting to create an issues survey in the Western Massachusetts area
 - a. Figuring out what the main issues are in the area and ways to address them
 - b. Translation barriers
5. Wanting to plan for a bigger multi-cultural event

Community Report Backs:

- Youth Council and AAPI Club (Sea Kay Leung)
 - On May 18th, there will be an AAPI event called "AAPI Youth Day," which is open to all youth
 - Plan to take a tour of the State House and meet with the AAPI Caucus to discuss what policies they should implement and support
 - No AAPI curriculum even though there is a significant AAPI community in Amherst. AAPI youth do not have access to role models in their education
- Bayanihan (Olive Melaya)
 - Forthcoming trip to NY to celebrate Philippine Independence Day



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- Bayanihan Picnic Event on **June 24, 2023 12pm-4pm @ Heritage Park in East Longmeadow**
- Planning different fundraising events
- WNE APALSA (Monique Hoppe)
 - Received a grant to begin activity planning
 - Will be going to D.C. to receive training on lobbying efforts
 - Met with different Asian mentors over boba tea to network with Asian law students
 - Wanting to create a survey to figure out issues that community members are facing in the area
- Chinese Association of Western Massachusetts (Linda Hill & Huiming Huang)
 - Created a history wall exhibit in five local libraries [Agawam Public Library, Chicopee Public Library, East Longmeadow Public Library, Forbes Library in Northampton, and the Jones Library in Amherst] for AAPI heritage month
 - Conducting culture workshops
 - Most recently, CAWM partnered with Amherst Regional Schools to teach calligraphy, Chinese fan dance, paper cutting, and other activities
 - Partnered with Amherst Human Rights Commission for an event on May 7th in the Amherst Town Common
 - Springfield Dragon Boat Festival on **July 29, 2023, 8am-4pm @ North Riverfront Park, 121 West Street, Springfield, MA**
- AI Academi (Steven Li)
 - AI Academi is a nonprofit organization established in May 2022 to provide low-cost and free educational services to promote STEM education
 - Expanded their services beyond computer science to include fields such as physics, math, biology, and other engineering and science fields
 - Received a grant from the commission and planning to implement a 1-week workshop for youth groups
- UMass AASA (Diana Li)
 - Hosted the 39th Asian Night, *Memories in Motion*, which had a record-breaking attendance of 2,500 students
 - Struggling with funding opportunities
- Bhutanese Community (Hari Khanal)
 - Previously, the Bhutanese society had applied for a grant to conduct oral histories of Bhutanese/Nepalese speaking members of the community to record their life experiences in Bhutan and in refugee centers
 - Conducted 6 interviews so far



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- Hit a snag in the process due to bureaucratic and funding issues -
 - Attempting to find another organization or non-profit so the community can continue to receive money and disburse funds
- Festival that will occur in September