



Annual Report  
COVID Edition





# WHAT WE CAN CONTROL

Elaine Tso, Chief Executive Officer

Hello Friends,

I hope that all of you are staying safe and healthy. In ASIA's last Annual Report, we were looking forward to what 2020 would bring. None of us could have ever predicted the pandemic and the extent of its effect. Someone once told me that in times of uncertainty we must focus most on what we can control. For me, that was how I treated others. I quickly learned that kind and encouraging words were

my most powerful tools to address the challenges and frustrations that so many faced during this difficult time. A smile, coupled with plenty of patience, and a smattering of uplifting words went a long way as we pivoted and adjusted to a new normal. During the pandemic, I also learned to take stock in the things I was most grateful for and share my appreciation with all those that I am so fortunate to have in my life. From friends and family to our Board of Directors and community partners, each gave from their hearts to rally support for me, the work of the organization, and the community we serve.

I am especially grateful for ASIA's team members who continued to deliver essential services to the community despite all of the challenges presented during the pandemic. Our doors never closed, even as the staff navigated personal obstacles with child care, home schooling, and virtual technology. As we saw a greater demand for services, our staff eagerly developed new programs and resources to meet the ever-growing needs of our community. From the very beginning, the ASIA staff was on hand helping those experiencing food insecurity, lack of reliable internet access, and issues with unemployment benefits and business loans. Our reach continued throughout the pandemic as our health clinics provided thousands of people with COVID testing, vaccinations, and access to personal protective equipment.

Undeterred by the pandemic, ASIA staff worked tirelessly to ensure that EVERYONE was counted in the 2020 Census and that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in Northeast Ohio were prepared and registered to vote. ASIA also responded to the mass shooting that took the lives of six Asian women in Atlanta, GA, by hosting healing circles for grieving and voicing concerns about the rising anti-Asian hostility throughout the country.

Yes, delivery of this Annual Report is a bit delayed; however, we've been focusing on what we could control. I invite you to take a closer look at all that has kept us busy during the trials and turmoil of these unprecedented times. The following pages capture the true spirit of our staff, community partners, and supporters. We couldn't control COVID . . . but we could control how to help others through it!

Best Regards

*Elaine Tso*







Students in our Community Adult Mentoring program keep a social distance while receiving academic and peer support.

## WHEN LEARNING BECOMES VIRTUAL

### children, youth & family services

As ASIA's longest-running department, our Children, Youth and Family (CYF) Services department provides a multitude of resources for both parents and school-aged children. Language-specific support groups, enrichment activities, and academic programs offer families opportunities for socializing, peer experiences, and leadership development.

As local school districts shifted to meet health and safety precautions during the COVID pandemic, classrooms were closed, extracurricular activities were limited, and students were forced to adapt to virtual learning environments. To help compensate for these disruptive changes, the CYF team offered alternative small group activities and outings to provide emotional support as students

struggled to connect with teachers and friends. Academic assistance for our school-aged children continued as staff and volunteers from Case Western Reserve University, Baldwin Wallace and Northeast Ohio Medical University's Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association mastered online platforms to provide over **800** hours of one-on-one tutoring opportunities. Additionally, funding from the state's K-12 Prevention Education Initiative, enabled us to further reach students in Cuyahoga County and provide much needed academic support to English-learning-students at Cleveland's Lincoln-West School of Global Studies. Within the two-year period of time, CYF supported **351** students, enrolled **29** families in parenting programs, and fed hundreds as part of a joint food delivery venture with The Salvation





# FINDING A VOICE

## community & civic engagement

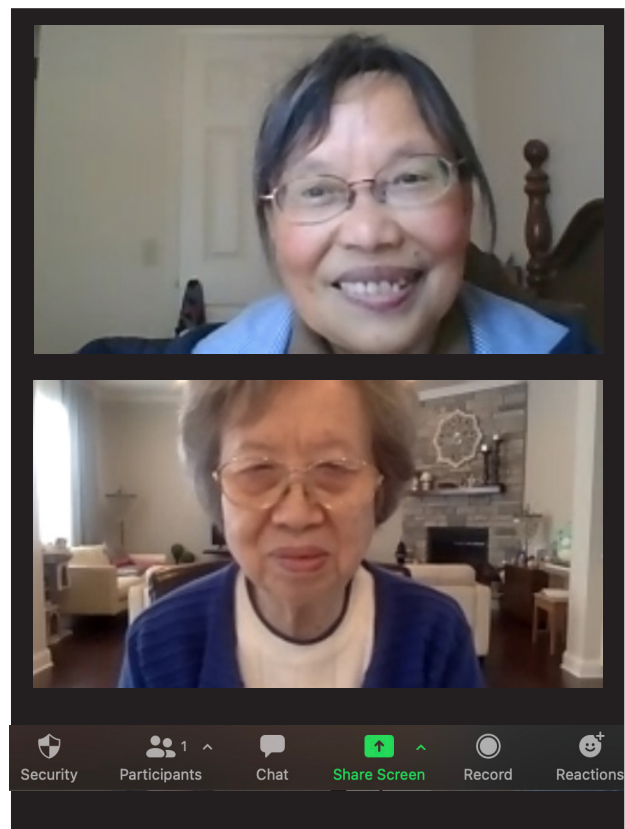


Joining forces with OCA Greater Cleveland in July 2020 to promote 2020 Census participation.



Hundreds of Northeast Ohioans of all backgrounds participating in the #StopAAPIHate rally held on March 28, 2021.

With the chaos and confusion created by the pandemic, ASIA's Community & Civic Engagement team was even more diligent ensuring the voices of our constituents were heard by local and national legislators. Heroic measures were taken so that members of the Asian American/Pacific Islander community were counted in the 2020 Census while equal efforts focused on voter education and registration for the 2020 Election. Our connection with the community never faltered during this time, and in fact, increased as we continuously provided critical information by trusted voices and in preferred languages.



Chinese Lucky Seniors learning to stay connected virtually while remaining safe and healthy during the pandemic.



# MIND, BODY & SOUL

## international community health center

With locations in Akron and Cleveland, both of ASIA's International Community Health Centers (IHC) are Federally Qualified Health Centers that offer comprehensive, culturally and linguistically appropriate primary care services.

Beginning in early 2020, like most health care providers across the globe, IHC kept a close watch on local and national COVID case reports. As numbers elevated to pandemic status, our team of health care professionals assembled a COVID Strategy Committee to establish safety guidelines for staff and patients in accordance with CDC guidelines. Partnering with the local and state health departments, IHC was able to procure personal protective equipment as availability through our usual supply chain became disrupted.

During the time period when COVID testing was not yet available to either of our sites, we partnered with the local health departments to receive guidance on how to offer assistance to patients presenting signs of the virus.

Technology took on a new role at the clinics. As the pandemic progressed and medical concerns were on the rise, health care providers quickly learned to use electronic information and telecommunications platforms to diagnose and treat the medical needs of patients.

Amid learning to work remotely with limited resources, and the anxiety created by the pandemic, IHC was also charged with the task of hiring a new Chief Medical Officer and two healthcare providers. Despite these challenges, ASIA's IHC:

- served a combined total of **2458** unduplicated patients.
- conducted a drive-thru COVID testing clinic at the Akron location.
- held a pop-up COVID vaccine clinic in partnership with Cleveland Department of Public Health.
- implemented Rapid COVID Antigen testing at the Akron and Cleveland centers.
- developed a system for distributing **200** COVID vaccines per week at the Akron site during the peak of the pandemic.
- included COVID vaccinations as part of scheduled patient appointments.



Administering free drive-thru COVID testing during the summer and fall of 2020



# BRIDGING BARRIERS

## interpreting & translation services

Finding a job, safe housing, healthcare, and social connections are all difficult tasks by anyone's standards. Imagine the added stress and frustration when these challenges are coupled with the difficulty to speak, read or understand the language of employers, educators, healthcare providers, and most others around you. ASIA has been bridging communication between English and non-English speakers for 25 years. . . even in the most difficult times.

Despite the recent two-year COVID pandemic, ASIA continued to provide interpretation and translation services to **250** immigrants from across the globe. By embracing virtual technology and a streamlined workflow, **25** professionally trained interpreters and an expanded team of **110** others were able to safely and remotely support those in need with little or no interruption. While many took advantage of services provided virtually or over the phone, it was no surprise that the majority of our clients chose face-to-face sessions.



By completing coursework in the fall of 2020, participants of our Breaking B program come one step closer to becoming certified medical interpreters

## languages

Bengali  
Burmese  
Cambodian  
Cantonese  
Croatian  
Dari  
Farsi  
French  
German  
Gujarati  
Haitian Creole  
Hindi  
Hmong  
Hungarian  
Indonesian  
Japanese  
Karen  
Kibembe  
Ki'Che

Korean  
Mandarin Chinese  
Mon  
Nepali  
Pashto  
Persian  
Portuguese  
Punjabi  
Romanian  
Russian  
Spanish  
Serbian  
Swahili  
Tamil  
Turkish  
Ukrainian  
Urdu  
Vietnamese



g Boundaries in Health

# MORE THAN CITIZENSHIP

## legal services

The Legal Services department historically has focused on the immigration needs for our clients throughout Northeast Ohio. In January of 2021, after recognizing a shift in the requested legal needs, the Legal Services department expanded and reorganized their support areas to encompass:

**Immigration Services** adjustment of status, replacing a green card, applying for citizenship, consular processing, humanitarian parole, asylum, U-visa, T-visa, Violence Against Women Act applications

**Family Legal Services** divorce

**Victim Legal Services** Marsy's law representation, protection orders, immigration assistance (U-visa, T-visa, VAWA, asylum), divorce, child custody



In addition to operational challenges posed by the COVID pandemic, the Legal Services department stepped up to respond to the humanitarian crisis occurring in Afghanistan. Coordinating a team of volunteer attorneys, law students and other professionals, ASIA provided critical assistance to community members as they applied to bring their displaced loved ones safely to the United States. The crisis created an influx of clients in late summer of 2021 at both our Cleveland and Akron offices. To meet the new and growing need for support, the Legal Services department doubled in staff size, while creating and implementing new office procedures to ensure exceptional service delivery in all areas. Since the expansion, we have seen more than a **150%** increase in cases.

Ahimsa promotes self expression and self care through the creation of art.





Ahimsa, the only provider of its kind in the area, offers culturally-specific services to immigrant and refugee survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. In addition to providing holistic programming to our clients, Ahimsa has also been identified as a technical assistance resource to other service agencies planning to deliver culturally-specific, trauma-informed programs to survivors. We are most proud to note that Ahimsa was recognized on the national level as a recipient of the Purple Medallion Award presented by DomesticShelter.org and was named as a Program/Shelter of the Year.

## PEACE, GROWTH & HEALING

### ahimsa

Despite the various challenges COVID presented to service providers across Northeast Ohio, the Ahimsa department thrived. Because of the increase in victimization related to the pandemic, we experienced a drastic increase in client referrals. Our team worked corroboratively to develop a strategic plan outlining how to accept new cases and deliver the most trauma-informed services in COVID-safe environments. This past year tested our ability to handle some of the most difficult cases with far less resources than we were accustomed to. However, Ahimsa persevered for the betterment of the department, but most importantly, for the sake of our clients.



Making home deliveries. Over 10 tons of fresh produce and non-perishable h  
200 families throughout Akron and Cleveland in July of 2021.







le home goods were distributed to



# A PATH TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY

## sustainability services

Through ASIA's Sustainability Services, refugees and immigrants are connected to the resources they need to become self-sufficient and contributing members of their communities. A team of bilingual caseworkers offer culturally appropriate assistance with financial planning, access to benefits, and vocational training.

In 2020 the COVID pandemic created unprecedented challenges for millions across the nation. No one was left unaffected by the "stay at home" order that closed businesses, kept children home from school, and isolated us all from friends and family. Despite personal hardships and reductions in federal funding, ASIA's Sustainability Services team worked remotely to tirelessly support the ever growing needs of our Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients during this very difficult time. Additional assistance with unemployment insurance, emergency housing placement, and food distribution increased the workloads of our caseworkers, yet they prevailed with a sense of hope and determination to best serve those most in need.

## MAKING AN IMPACT

Workforce Development	424 individuals served
Assistance with Unemployment Insurance	902 new applications
Family and Senior Benefit Access	5,150 new applications
Non-Emergency Housing Assistance	1,235 applications
Emergency Housing Assistance	125 applications
HAPI Fresh Farmers Market	4,655 attended
Emergency Food Pantry	1,277 individuals assisted
PPE Distribution	12,770 pieces of PPE
Senior Hot Meals	7,330 meals served

Building assets and increasing financial independence during a one-one-one coaching session in August of 2020.

# THANK YOU

As the world experienced unprecedented challenges and disruption, kindness and generosity prevailed. The support of our many partners and organizations enabled ASIA to continue our mission to empower and advocate for Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. We are grateful for the linguistically appropriate information, health, and social services to the communities of Northeast Ohio.

## FUNDERS

### ADAMHSB

The Abington Foundation  
The Akron Community Foundation  
Akron General Medical Center  
Anti-Racism Response Network  
Ariel International Center  
Area Agency on Aging 10b Inc.  
The Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
The Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote, Inc -APIAVote  
The Asian and Pacific Island Wellness Center  
The Asian American Justice Center  
The Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy, and Leadership - APPEAL  
The Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services Board of Summit County  
The Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County  
American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin at NEOMED  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organization  
The CareSource Foundation  
Cargill Incorporated  
Charles Lee Family Memorial  
Catholic Charities Health Human Services  
Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS)  
Cleveland Asian Festival  
City of Cleveland Department of Community Development  
Cleveland Catholic Charities-MRS  
The Cleveland Foundation  
Department of Justice-Office on Violence Against Women  
Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities DHS  
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Hep B United  
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Dr. James K.C. Juan Family Fund  
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Healthy Lakewood Foundation  
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MetroHealth System  
The McGregor Fund  
Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation  
The National Coalition of Asian Pacific American Community Development  
National Council on Aging (NCOA)  
NEOMED Foundation  
NEO Philanthropy (Public Interest Project)  
OCHIN  
OCJS VAWA-CS  
Office of Criminal Justice Services  
Office of Violence Against Women  
Ohio Access to Justice Foundation  
Ohio Attorney General (VOCA)  
Ohio Criminal Justice Services  
Ohio Community Development Corporation (Ohio CDC)  
Ohio Dept. of Health - SASP  
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)  
Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)  
Ohio State Bar Foundation (OSBF)  
Ohio Supreme Court  
Ohio Valley Wrestling  
Prevention & Promotion-REACH

Project Learn - Summit County  
Recovery Resources  
Relmaging Cleveland  
Shah Capital Management, Inc.  
Sisters of Charity Foundation  
State of Ohio-Job & Family Services (Refugee Screening)  
St. Clair Superior Community Development Corporation  
St. Luke's Foundation of Cleveland, Ohio  
Summit County  
United Way of Summit County  
United Way of Greater Cleveland  
USCIS  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Department of Treasury  
U.S. Health and Human Services/Health Resources and Services Administration  
U.S. Health and Human Services/Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)  
Verizon Foundation  
Wallace H. Coulter Foundation  
Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging

## PARTNERS

Access to Care  
Akron Public Schools  
Akron Canton Regional Food Bank  
Akron Cooperative Farms  
Akron Municipal Court  
Akron Summit Community Action  
Akron Summit County Public Library  
ALTA  
American Immigration Lawyers Association  
Art Therapy Studios  
Asian American Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian American Community Services  
Asian American Council of Dayton  
Asian-American Community Service Council  
Asian Community Alliance - ACA  
Asian Evergreen Senior Housing  
Asian Festival Corporation





available. The support and contributions of the following individuals and  
ans and Pacific Islanders; and to provide access to quality culturally and  
st Ohio. We are forever grateful.

Asian Health Coalition of Illinois  
Asian Pacific American Medical  
Students Association – APAMSA  
Asian Pacific Islander Women and  
Family Safety Center  
Asian Pacific Partners  
for Empowerment, Advocacy, and  
Leadership – APPEAL  
Aspire  
Association of Asian Indian  
Women in Ohio – AAIWO  
Battered Women’s Shelter of Summit  
County  
Better Business Bureau (BBB)  
Boy Scouts of America  
BRAVO  
Building Hope in the City  
Care Source  
Case Western Reserve University  
Catholic Charities Migration &  
Refugees Services (MRS)  
Center for Reducing Health Disparities  
Case MetroHealth  
Catholic Charities Corporation,  
Diocese of Cleveland  
Children and Books (CAB)  
Chinese Association of Greater Toledo  
The City of Akron  
The City of Lakewood  
Cleveland Chinese Women’s  
Association  
Cleveland Clinic Foundation  
Cleveland Contemporary Chinese  
Culture Association  
The Cleveland Food Bank  
Cleveland Housing Network (CHN)  
Cleveland Metroparks  
Cleveland Metropolitan School District  
Cleveland Rape Crisis Center  
The Cleveland Public Library  
Cleveland State University  
Coats for Kids  
Community Legal Aid  
Community Support Services  
ConexusNEO  
Cosmic Bobbins  
Council on American Islamic Relations  
Council for Economic Opportunities in  
Greater Cleveland (CEOGC)  
Crosspoint Missionary Alliance Church  
CSBDD  
Culture Foundation

Cuyahoga County Domestic Relations  
Court  
The Cuyahoga County Earned Income  
Tax Credit Coalition  
The Cuyahoga County Board of Health  
Cuyahoga Falls School District  
Domestic Violence Project, Inc.  
Environmental Health Watch  
Equitas Health  
The Exchange House  
Federal Reserve Bank  
GAR Foundation  
Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio  
Global Cleveland  
Gracehaven  
The Greater Cleveland Collaborative  
to End Human Trafficking  
Guru Gobind Sikh Society  
of Greater Cleveland  
H2O  
Harvest Home Shelter  
Health Resources and  
Services Administration – HRSA  
International Institute of Akron (IIA)  
The Islamic Society of Akron and Kent  
Jewish Family Services Association  
The Journey Center  
Kent State University/GURI  
Key Bank  
Korean American Association of  
Greater Cleveland  
Lakewood City School District  
Lakewood Public Library  
Laotian Association of Cleveland  
Legal Aid Society of Cleveland  
Linking Systems of Care for  
Ohio’s Youth  
Maggie’s Place  
Magner-Kramer Law Clinic at  
Case Western University  
The MetroHealth System  
Minority Business Center  
MotivAsians  
Mission Assets Fund – MAF  
My Community Healthcare  
The National Caucus and Center on  
Black Aged  
Native American Community of  
Cleveland  
NEOMED Foundation  
Neighborhood Network of Middlebury  
The Ohio Asian American

Health Coalition  
Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
Ohio Association of Food Banks  
Ohio Attorney General - Human  
Trafficking Initiative  
Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center  
Ohio Domestic Violence Network  
Ohio Senior Health  
Information Program (OHSHIP)  
Organization of Chinese Americans of  
Greater Cleveland  
OSU Extension  
Peace for Pets  
Philippine American Society of Ohio  
Rape Crisis Center of Summit and  
Medina Counties  
Recovery Resources  
Refugee Response  
Refugee Services Collaborative  
of Cleveland  
RAHAB Ministries  
Royal Buffet and Grill  
Safer Futures  
Salaam Cleveland  
The Salvation Army  
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Summit County Coalition Against  
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The Summit County Human Trafficking  
Task Force  
Summit County Public Health  
Summit Metro Parks  
Tiffany Breast Health  
The University of Akron  
The U.S. Committee for Refugees  
and Immigrants  
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