

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE *on*
ASIAN AMERICANS, NATIVE HAWAIIANS,
and PACIFIC ISLANDERS



NATIONAL STRATEGY *to*
ADVANCE EQUITY, JUSTICE,
and **OPPORTUNITY**
for **ASIAN AMERICAN,**
NATIVE HAWAIIAN,
and **PACIFIC ISLANDER**
COMMUNITIES

JANUARY 2023

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BACKGROUND

On his first day in office, President Biden signed Executive Order 13985, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*. The Executive Order committed to a whole-of-government equity agenda and recognized that although the ideal of equal opportunity is the bedrock of American democracy, entrenched disparities in our laws, public policies, and institutions too often deny equal opportunity to individuals and communities.

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) communities, some of the fastest growing groups in the Nation, represent a multitude of ethnicities, languages, and experiences that enrich America and strengthen our Union. Yet for far too long, systemic barriers to equity, justice, and opportunity have put the American Dream out of reach of many AA and NHPI communities.

Recognizing the urgency to address the community's needs, President Biden prioritized several key presidential actions, including:

- On January 26, 2021, the President issued a *Memorandum Condemning and Combating Racism, Xenophobia, and Intolerance Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States* to make it clear that acts of racism, xenophobia, and intolerance against AA and NHPI communities have no place in our country;
- In March 2021, following the horrific Atlanta shootings in which a gunman targeted three separate Asian-run businesses and killed eight people, including six women of Asian descent, the President and Vice President met with AA and NHPI leaders in Georgia to denounce anti-Asian violence and gender-based violence. The President also released new actions to respond to the increase in acts of anti-Asian violence, xenophobia and bias, and to advance safety, inclusion, and belonging for AA and NHPI communities;
- On May 20, 2021, the President signed the bipartisan *COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act* into law to address the rise in anti-Asian hate crimes and ensure that critical resources are more accessible to hate crime victims, including AA and NHPI communities;
- On May 28, 2021, the President signed Executive Order 14031, *Advancing Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders*, which established the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) and the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (Commission);



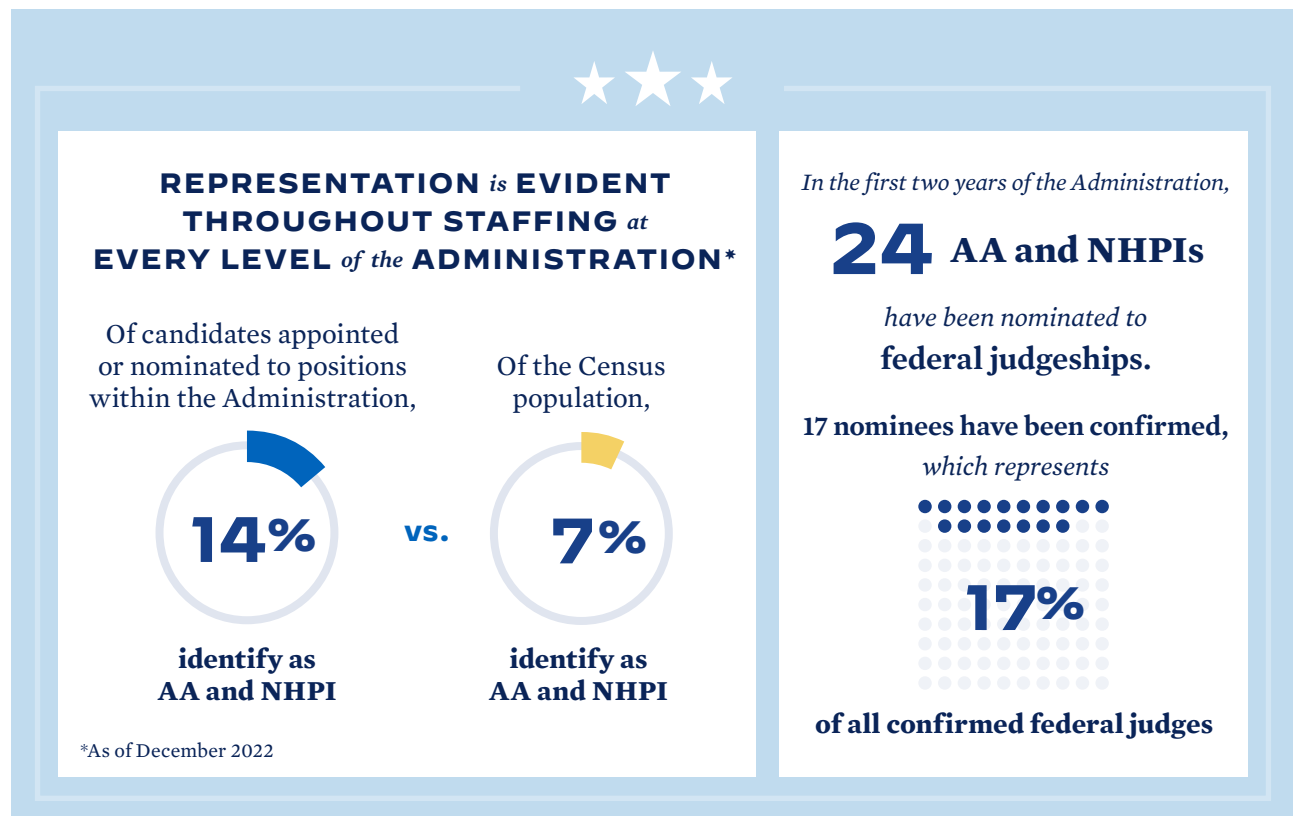
President Joe Biden, joined by Vice President Kamala Harris, signs the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act Thursday, May 20, 2021, in the East Room of the White House. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz)

- On June 25, 2021, the President issued Executive Order 14035, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) in the Federal Workforce to strengthen the federal workforce by promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility;
- On October 11, 2021, the President issued Executive Order 14049 to establish the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities, which includes efforts to advance equity for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students, families, and communities in the United States;
- On February 18, 2022, the President issued a proclamation marking the 80th anniversary of the Day of Remembrance of Japanese Incarceration During World War II to commemorate this injustice and to commit to eradicating systemic racism in our Nation;
- On May 6, 2022, following the passing of former Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, the President signed S.400, the William T. Coleman, Jr. and Norman Y. Mineta Department of Transportation Headquarters Act, which designates the headquarters building of the U.S. Department of Transportation as the William T. Coleman, Jr. and Norman Y. Mineta Federal Building;
- On June 13, 2022, the President signed H.R. 3525, Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture Act into law to explore the possibility of creating a national museum dedicated to teaching AA and NHPI history and telling the story of our country; and
- On September 15, 2022, the President hosted the United We Stand Summit at the White House to counter the corrosive effects of hate-fueled violence on our democracy and public safety.

The Biden-Harris Administration reflects the rich diversity of America, with a series of historic firsts. In addition to having groundbreaking Asian American representation with the election of Vice President Kamala Harris, the President’s Cabinet also includes U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai and White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Director Dr. Arati Prabhakar. AA and NHPI leaders also head major federal agencies, from the Federal Trade Commission to the Office of Personnel Management – and representation is evident throughout staffing at every level of the Administration. As of December 2022, 14 percent of candidates appointed or nominated to positions within the Biden-Harris Administration identify as AA and NHPI – far exceeding their seven percent share of the Census population. Furthermore, in the first two years of the Biden-Harris Administration, 24 AA and NHPI individuals have been nominated to federal judgeships and 17 have been confirmed, representing 17 percent of all confirmed federal judges.

The Biden-Harris Administration has also taken decisive action to combat hate crimes and hate incidents targeting AA and NHPI communities, including bolstering tracking and reporting of anti-Asian bias incidents and translating information about hate crimes reporting into several Asian languages, funding critical research to prevent and address bias and xenophobia against AA and NHPI communities, issuing a memoranda from the Attorney General on hate crimes and hate incidents, releasing COVID-19 hate crimes guidance, and implementing the bipartisan COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act.

The Administration also provided critical support to Americans throughout the pandemic, including through the American Rescue Plan (ARP), Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which have served as a lifeline for AA and NHPI communities. Through increases in the value of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, direct relief





President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris meet with the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Monday, March 7, 2022, in the Roosevelt Room of the White House. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz)

payments, a fully refundable Child Tax Credit, and an expanded Earned Income Tax Credit for workers without children, the ARP helped to reduce poverty in AA and NHPI communities by nearly 22 percent. These laws further increased access to low-cost health coverage for AA and NHPIs, including 197,000 uninsured AA and NHPIs who became newly eligible for premium savings through the ARP's expanded subsidies.

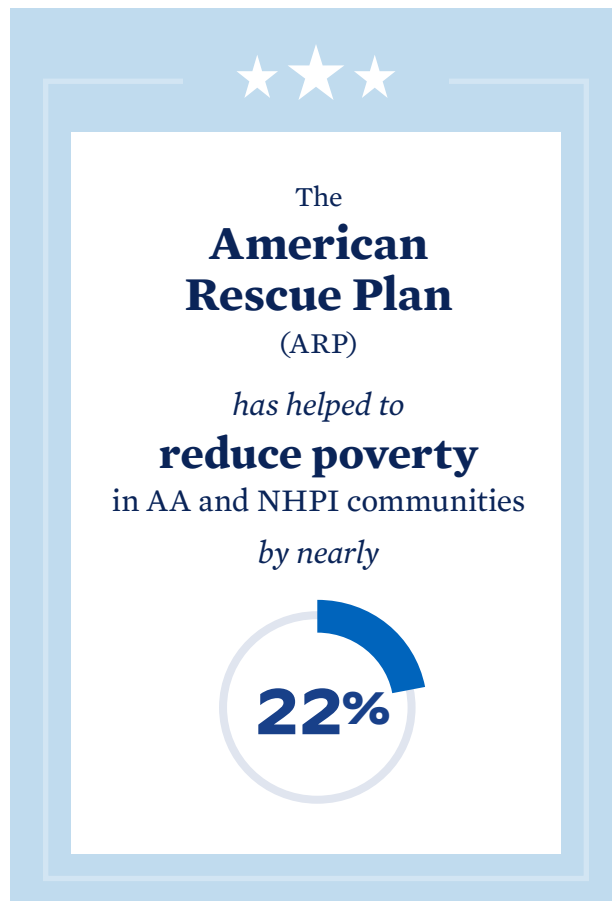
At the same time, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) administered lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines and boosters to millions of AA and NHPIs, and the federal government took aggressive steps to keep families in their homes, support small businesses,

and expand economic opportunity. More than \$5 billion from the ARP Higher Education Emergency

Relief Fund has already gone to Asian American, Native American and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs), providing immediate aid to AA and NHPI students while improving the capacities of these institutions.

The Administration has also made strides to address the unique needs of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities, including honoring relationships with Indigenous communities and upholding its trust responsibilities, prioritizing the preservation of Native languages and cultures,

elevating Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK), improving data disaggregation





President Joe Biden, First Lady Dr. Jill Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai attend the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Reception, Tuesday, May 17, 2022, in the Rose Garden of the White House. (Official White House Photo).

practices, and providing once-in-a-generation investments to improve health care and education, support small businesses, provide stable housing, increase broadband access, promote climate resilience, and more. Recognizing the deep history between the U.S. and Pacific Island nations, the President also hosted the first-ever United States-Pacific Island Country Summit to mark a new milestone in U.S.-Pacific cooperation.

Finally, the President's establishment and expansion of WHIAANHPI and the Commission during AA and NHPI Heritage Month in May 2021 provided vital infrastructure to elevate and address the needs of AA and NHPIs. Both entities are co-chaired by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra and U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai who work in close collaboration with WHIAANHPI Executive Director Krystal Ka'ai, as well as Deputy Assistant to the President and AA and NHPI Senior Liaison in the White House, Erika Moritsugu, to advance key priorities for AA and NHPI communities. Executive Order 14031 returned both the Initiative and the Commission to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where they first originated under the Clinton Administration in 1999. The move ensured that the Administration could address multiple crises facing AA and NHPI

communities that were exacerbated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including health and economic disparities, along with a surge in anti-Asian hate, discrimination, and violence.

The Executive Order expanded WHIAANHPI's scope and mandate to cover a breadth of issues, while also explicitly acknowledging and naming Native Hawaiians for the first time. Recognizing that systemic barriers have put the American dream out of reach for historically marginalized groups, the President directed WHIAANHPI to coordinate federal interagency policymaking, program development, and outreach efforts that build on the Administration's work to advance racial equity.

This inaugural WHIAANHPI report highlights the Biden-Harris Administration's leadership in driving a bold, national strategy that advances equity, justice, and opportunity for AA and NHPI communities. It is imperative that the federal government continues to provide the moral leadership, policies, and programs necessary to address and end anti-Asian violence and discrimination, ensure inclusion and belonging for AA and NHPI communities in all sectors of American life, and increase educational and economic equity and opportunity.



SECTION I



**WHIAANHPI
INFRASTRUCTURE**



WHIAANHPI INFRASTRUCTURE

INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP

In alignment with WHIAANHPI's whole-of-government approach to advancing equity, justice, and opportunity for AA and NHPI communities, WHIAANHPI launched a federal Interagency Working Group (IWG) that includes senior officials and subject matter experts from 45 federal departments, agencies, and offices. Thirty-four of these agencies were enumerated in EO 14031. Eleven additional agencies – many of whom were members of the Initiative's Interagency Working Group under the Obama-Biden Administration – opted to join the Interagency Working Group to support the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to better serve AA and NHPI communities. Interagency Working Group members include representatives from:

- i.** the Office of the Vice President;
- ii.** the Department of State;
- iii.** the Department of the Treasury;
- iv.** the Department of Defense;
- v.** the Department of Justice;
- vi.** the Department of the Interior;
- vii.** the Department of Agriculture;
- viii.** the Department of Commerce;
- ix.** the Department of Labor;
- x.** the Department of Health and Human Services;
- xi.** the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- xii.** the Department of Energy;
- xiii.** the Department of Education;
- xiv.** the Department of Veterans Affairs;
- xv.** the Department of Homeland Security;
- xvi.** the Environmental Protection Agency;
- xvii.** the Office of Management and Budget;
- xviii.** the Office of the United States Trade Representative;
- xix.** the Small Business Administration;
- xx.** the Office of Science and Technology Policy;
- xxi.** the National Security Council;
- xxii.** the National Economic Council;
- xxiii.** the Domestic Policy Council;
- xxiv.** the Gender Policy Council;
- xxv.** the Council on Environmental Quality;
- xxvi.** the White House Office of Cabinet Affairs;



Interagency Working Group

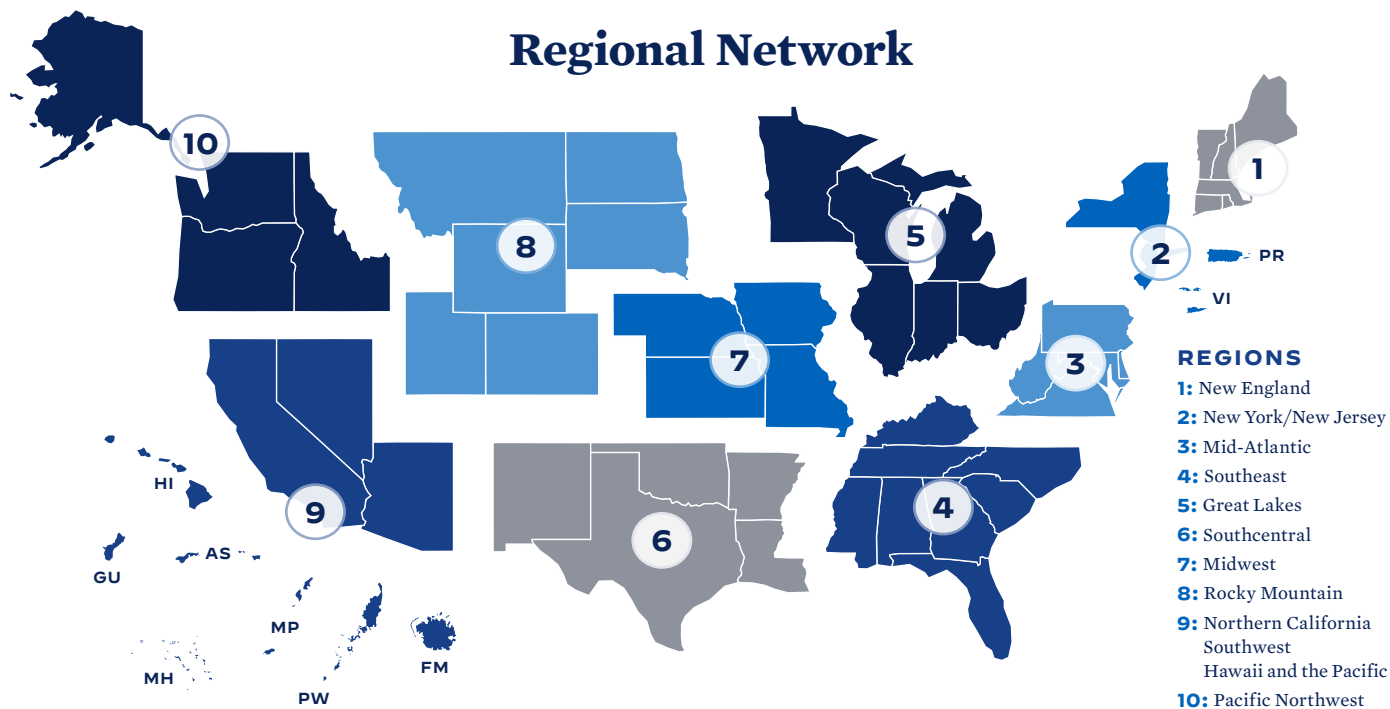
includes senior officials and subject matter experts from

45 *federal departments,
agencies, and offices*

- xxvii.** the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs;
- xxviii.** the White House Office of Public Engagement;
- xxix.** the White House Office of Presidential Personnel;
- xxx.** the Social Security Administration;
- xxxi.** the General Services Administration;
- xxxii.** the United States Agency for International Development;
- xxxiii.** the Office of Personnel Management;
- xxxiv.** the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission;
- xxxv.** the Department of Transportation;
- xxxvi.** the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau;
- xxxvii.** the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;
- xxxviii.** the National Science Foundation;
- xxxix.** the Federal Communications Commission;
- xl.** the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights;
- xli.** the Federal Housing Finance Agency;
- xlii.** the National Endowment for the Arts;
- xliii.** the National Endowment for the Humanities;
- xliv.** the Council of Economic Advisers; and
- xlv.** the Federal Trade Commission



Regional Network



REGIONAL NETWORK

WHIAANHPI's mandate includes coordinating and supporting an existing Regional Network (RN) of federal officials who facilitate improved communication, outreach, engagement, and coordination between the federal government and AA and NHPI communities. The Regional Network, first established in 2013 under the Obama-Biden Administration, was created to strengthen relationships between the federal government and AA and NHPI communities across the ten federal regions.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, WHIAANHPI has worked to rebuild the Regional Network's infrastructure, expand its federal membership to include over 400 federal officials based in ten federal regions, and fortify relationships with AA and NHPI community stakeholders. Because EO 14031 explicitly includes the Regional Network, which was not done under prior administrations, a key component

of reorganizing the Regional Network under the Biden-Harris Administration has been to formalize its structure and ensure alignment with the Administration's expanded priorities for AA and NHPI communities. This involved creating a Regional Network charter and standard operating procedures, developing internal resources to streamline communication and coordination between WHIAANHPI headquarters and Regional Network leads across the United States, and ensuring that regional offices receive support from their respective departments and agencies to prioritize meaningful outreach and sustained engagement with AA and NHPI communities.

To date, WHIAANHPI has held over two dozen Regional Network listening sessions and roundtables, with a combined reach of thousands of stakeholders over all ten federal regions. While most of the Regional Network engagements in 2021 and early 2022 were conducted virtually due



to the pandemic, WHIAANHPI staff began conducting an increasing number of in-person engagements, including in Atlanta, Georgia; Los Angeles, Long Beach, and San Francisco, California; New York City, New York; Boston and Lowell, Massachusetts; Detroit, Michigan; Seattle, Washington; Honolulu, Waianae, and Kaneohe, Hawaii; Las Vegas, Nevada; Phoenix and Scottsdale, Arizona; and Hartford, Connecticut. Additional in-person events are being organized to engage AA and NHPI communities throughout the country.

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMISSION

Executive Order 14031 also established the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Secretary Xavier Becerra and Ambassador Katherine Tai co-chair the 25-member Commission, which is a two-year, federal advisory committee charged with advising the President on ways the public, private and non-profit sectors can work together to advance equity, justice, and opportunity for AA and NHPI communities. In addition to the Co-Chairs, the Commissioners include: Sonal Shah (Chief Commissioner), Dr. Amy Agbayani, Teresita Batayola, Ajay Bhutoria, Luisa Blue, Dr. Kimberly Chang, Emily Chen, Kerry Doi, Grace Huang, Victoria Huynh, Mia Ives-Rublee, Dr. Kamal Kalsi, Michelle Ka'uhane, Daniel Dae Kim, Kevin Kim, Sarah Min, Simon Pang, Ai-jen Poo, Naheed Qureshi, Dr. Raynald Samoa, Smita N. Shah, Dr. Robert A. Underwood, and KaYing Yang.

On February 3, 2022, Vice President Kamala Harris swore in the Commissioners, who individually and collectively reflect the rich diversity of AA and NHPI communities throughout the United States. The Commission has held four, public-facing Commission meetings as of the writing of this report. During the Commission's inaugural meeting on February 3 and 4, 2022, the Commissioners formed the following six subcommittees to focus their efforts on both immediate and systemic challenges impacting AA and NHPI communities:

SUBCOMMITTEE 1: Belonging, Inclusion, Anti-Asian Hate, and Anti-Discrimination

SUBCOMMITTEE 2: Data Disaggregation

SUBCOMMITTEE 3: Language Access

SUBCOMMITTEE 4: Economic Equity

SUBCOMMITTEE 5: Health Equity

SUBCOMMITTEE 6: Immigration and Citizenship Status



Vice President Kamala Harris performs the virtual swearing-in of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, Thursday, February 3, 2022, in the South Court Auditorium of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building at the White House. (Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson)

Over the past ten months, these six subcommittees have met regularly to develop detailed recommendations to the President to advance this work.

The Commission's work directly corresponds with many of the objectives of WHIAANHPI's federal Interagency Working Group and Regional Network, and the Commissioners have engaged directly with those entities as they work to develop their rolling recommendations. The Commission also plans to work closely with the Interagency Working Group and Regional Network to implement any recommendations that are approved by the President.



SECTION II



POLICY GOALS
and
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



SECTION II

POLICY GOALS *and* STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The work of WHIAANHPI is guided by the following fourteen principles enumerated in EO 14031, including mandates to:

- i.** identify and eliminate any existing institutional policies or barriers within federal programs and services that may disadvantage or burden AA and NHPI communities;
- ii.** improve safety, access to justice, and violence prevention for AA and NHPI communities, including by preventing, reporting, addressing, and better tracking acts of hate and bias (acts of hate and bias at the intersection of gender-based violence);
- iii.** promote inclusion and belonging for AA and NHPI communities, including by expanding public education and knowledge of AA and NHPI people and their diverse cultures, languages, and histories;
- iv.** expand the collection and use of disaggregated data at the federal, state and local level on AA and NHPI communities, and facilitate improved research on policy and program outcomes for AA and NHPI communities, in coordination with the Interagency Working Group on Equitable Data established by Executive Order 13985;
- v.** increase language access and remove language barriers faced by AA and NHPI communities in accessing government benefits and services;
- vi.** improve health outcomes, eliminate health disparities, and expand access to quality, affordable, and culturally competent medical and mental healthcare services for AA and NHPI individuals and communities;
- vii.** end disparities in educational outcomes for AA and NHPI youth and students of all ages, and address barriers to learning, including bullying, harassment, and other forms of discrimination at school;
- viii.** address the concentration of poverty facing many AA and NHPI communities, including by identifying and addressing disparities in access to safe, affordable housing and homeownership;



President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris meet with Asian American community leaders at Emory University in Georgia following the Atlanta spa shootings, Friday, March 19, 2021. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz)

- ix.** expand economic opportunity for AA and NHPI families, including by advancing opportunities for AA and NHPI entrepreneurs and small businesses, supporting access to jobs and workforce training for AA and NHPI communities, promoting AA and NHPI participation and success in the private sector, ensuring workplaces are free from race and national origin harassment and other forms of employment discrimination, and ensuring AA and NHPI communities can access consumer and finance protections;
- x.** increase opportunities for civic engagement, such as electoral participation, within AA and NHPI communities;
- xi.** improve the equitable allocation of federal resources, including through federal funds, contracts, grants, and awards, to AA and NHPI communities and AA and NHPI-serving organizations;
- xii.** support AA and NHPI communities in responding to and recovering from national or regional crises and public health emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic crisis;
- xiii.** secure climate and environmental justice for AA and NHPI communities who are particularly impacted by the climate crisis and are overburdened by environmental degradation; and
- xiv.** identify ways to foster the recruitment, career and leadership development, retention, advancement, and participation of AA and NHPI public servants at all levels of the federal workforce.

In order to improve federal interagency policymaking, program development, and outreach efforts to address barriers impacting AA and NHPI communities, 32 Interagency Working Group members – including all 15 executive departments in the President’s Cabinet – submitted agency plans to the



WHIAANHPI Co-Chairs, Executive Director, and White House AA and NHPI Senior Liaison. These agency plans outline measurable actions each agency will take to advance equity, justice, and opportunity for AA and NHPI communities.

Considering the far-reaching scope and mandate of the Executive Order, WHIAANHPI focused on seven cross-cutting strategic priority areas of concern to AA and NHPI communities, several of which are longstanding challenges that this Initiative also prioritized under previous administrations. These strategic priorities include:

- PRIORITY 1:** promoting belonging, inclusion, and combatting anti-Asian hate and discrimination;
- PRIORITY 2:** data disaggregation for AA and NHPI communities;
- PRIORITY 3:** language access for AA and NHPI communities;
- PRIORITY 4:** promoting equitable and inclusive COVID-19 response and recovery efforts;
- PRIORITY 5:** capacity building for AA and NHPI communities;
- PRIORITY 6:** federal workforce diversity; and
- PRIORITY 7:** outreach and engagement to AA and NHPI communities.

In addition to these seven strategic priorities, WHIAANHPI's Interagency Working Group also launched three subgroups to lead specific workstreams in which robust, federal interagency coordination was needed because these subjects represent major domestic policy priorities for AA and NHPI communities. Specifically, the subgroups are focused on coordinating interagency efforts to:

- FOCUS 1:** combat anti-Asian hate and discrimination and promote greater inclusion and belonging of AA and NHPI communities;
- FOCUS 2:** promote greater language access for AA and NHPI communities; and
- FOCUS 3:** prioritize data disaggregation for AA and NHPI communities.

These three subgroups meet regularly and work in close coordination with the White House and the entire Biden-Harris Administration to advance key priorities for AA and NHPI communities.



SECTION III



NATIONAL STRATEGY *to*
ADVANCE EQUITY, JUSTICE,
and **OPPORTUNITY** *for*
AA and NHPI COMMUNITIES

NATIONAL STRATEGY *to* ADVANCE EQUITY, JUSTICE, *and* OPPORTUNITY *for* AA *and* NHPI COMMUNITIES

WHIAANHPI will advance equity, justice, and opportunity for AA and NHPI communities by focusing on the following priorities:

PRIORITY 1

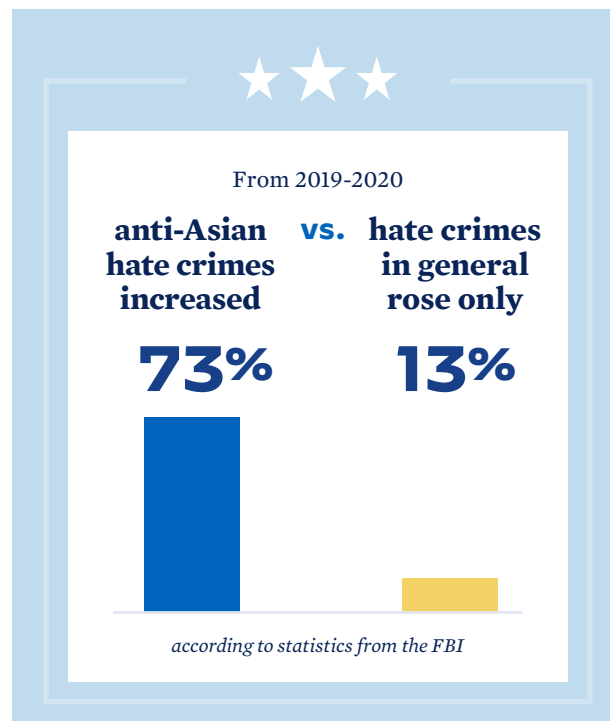
Promote Belonging and Inclusion of AA and NHPI Communities and Combat Anti-Asian Hate and Discrimination

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's 2020 FBI Hate Crime Statistics revealed that the number of reported hate crimes in the United States rose in 2020 to the highest level in 12 years. A disturbing trend during the COVID-19 pandemic was the significant surge in reported anti-Asian hate crimes. The FBI hate crime statistics documented that reports of anti-Asian hate crimes increased 73 percent from 2019 to 2020 — a disproportionate surge compared to hate crimes in general, which rose 13 percent. As stark as this data is, it is important to note that hate crimes are underreported and thus even these figures likely represent only a fraction of hate

crimes in the United States. In addition, according to a study by the Center for the Study of Hate and

Extremism, the number of reported anti-Asian hate crimes across a dozen of America's largest cities increased 339 percent from 2020 to 2021. In particular, AA and NHPI women were disproportionately targeted throughout the pandemic, with nearly three in four AA and NHPI women reporting that they experienced racism or discrimination from January 2021 to February 2022, according to a survey by the National Asian Pacific American Women's

Forum. The survey also highlighted the unique forms of violence at the intersection of race and





President Joe Biden signs H.R. 3525, the “Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture Act”, Monday, June 13, 2022, in the East Room of the White House. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz)

gender, finding that almost 40 percent of AA and NHPI women reported experiencing sexual harassment during that same time period. Though race-based and sex-based discrimination and harassment have been an issue for AA and NHPI individuals prior to 2020, concerns about personal safety and security amid rising anti-Asian violence continue to be at the forefront for AA and NHPI communities, workers, families, and businesses.

To improve safety, access to justice, and violence prevention for AA and NHPI communities — including measures to prevent, report, address, and better track acts of anti-Asian hate and bias — WHIAANHPI’s Interagency Working Group established a subgroup specifically focused on combatting anti-Asian violence and hate and promoting inclusion and belonging of AA and NHPI communities. Leveraging its Regional Network, WHIAANHPI hosted a series of virtual and in-person roundtables with AA and NHPI communities across the country to share resources on federal hate crimes, safety, bullying prevention, and mental health and hear directly from

communities impacted by violence and hate. Over the past year, WHIAANHPI also worked closely with the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on the implementation of the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act that President Biden signed into law on May 20, 2021. That collaboration included connecting AA and NHPI communities with federal hate crimes resources available in several Asian languages and assisting with the agencies’ drafting of joint hate crimes guidance that was released in May 2022. In addition, the Commission also established a subcommittee on “Belonging, Inclusion, Anti-Asian Hate, Anti-Discrimination” that will collaborate with the Initiative’s Interagency Working Group and Regional Network on hate crime prevention measures and other efforts to ensure that the rich diversity, history, and contributions of AA and NHPI communities continue to be uplifted throughout the Administration.

PRIORITY 2

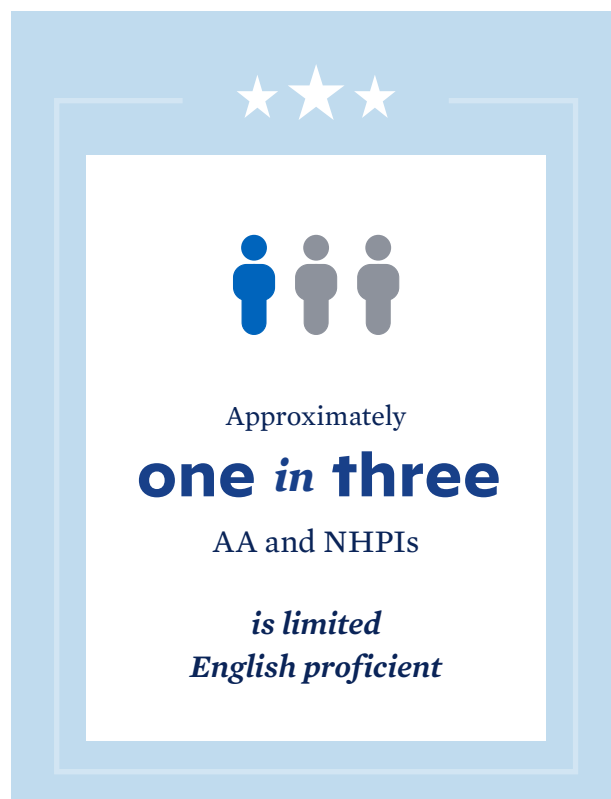
Make Disaggregated Data Collection and Reporting the Norm Across the Federal Government

Federal data collection and reporting practices often fail to measure, reflect, and disaggregate the diversity of AA and NHPI experiences. These practices contribute to painful and enduring stereotypes about Asian Americans as a “model minority” and erase the unique needs within AA and NHPI communities, which include dozens of distinct ethnic groups that speak over 100 different languages and dialects. Additionally, it is important that data collection practices help us understand the impact of intersecting identities of AA and NHPI populations based on sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and socioeconomic status. For example, while total cancer rates for AA and NHPIs are on average lower than in non-Hispanic whites, disaggregated data shows the rate of liver cancer for Laotian women is more than nine times higher than for non-Hispanic white women, and the rate of cervical cancer for Cambodian women is almost twice as high as for non-Hispanic white women.¹ This is just one of many examples that illustrates the need for more disaggregated data. To ensure that AA and NHPI populations are empowered by and benefit from federal programs, surveys, and equity assessments, federal data collection should include greater disaggregation of AA and NHPI data, either directly or through statistical estimates, while also taking measures to protect the privacy of members of underserved communities who may face the heightened risk of harm if their privacy is not protected.

WHIAANHPI is working closely with the White House Equitable Data Working Group (EDWG), Domestic Policy Council, Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of Science and

Technology Policy to coordinate efforts across the federal government to promote greater data disaggregation for AA and NHPI subgroups. Furthermore, in May 2022, WHIAANHPI hosted a data equity summit at the White House to highlight both the urgent need for greater AA and NHPI data disaggregation, as well as to share best practices and successful models of how federal agencies can better collect and report disaggregated AA and NHPI data in federal surveys, reports, and research. WHIAANHPI plans to host this summit annually to highlight federal progress on data disaggregation. Lastly, the Commission’s Data Disaggregation Subcommittee will work in close coordination with the Initiative’s Interagency Working Group Data Disaggregation Subgroup to ensure there is synergy in the Administration’s efforts to promote data equity for all communities.

¹ Torre, Lindsey A., et al. “Cancer Statistics for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, 2016: Converging Incidence in Males and Females.” *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*, vol. 66, no. 3, 2016, pp. 182–202., <https://doi.org/10.3322/caac.21335>.



Approximately
one in three
AA and NHPIs
is limited
English proficient



President Biden and Vice President Harris meet with Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander community leaders in the State Dining Room of the White House, Thursday, August 5, 2021. (Official White House Photo)

PRIORITY 3

Promote Greater Language Access for Limited English Proficient Communities

Members of AA and NHPI communities are incredibly diverse and speak more than 100 different languages and dialects. Approximately one-third of AA and NHPIs have limited English proficiency, and this rate is even higher for certain subsets of the populations, including recent immigrants and refugees, whose significant language barriers hinder their ability to access federal resources. As a result, many AA and NHPI communities require in-language materials and intentional, micro-targeted outreach through ethnic media or trusted community-based organizations, who have the cultural and linguistic competency these communities require to access key information and resources. This is especially critical during times of crisis, whether during public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic or public safety incidents and natural disasters – where limited English proficient AA and NHPI communities have struggled to access life-saving information, resources, and support in real-time.

To address this longstanding, systemic issues impacting AA and NHPI communities, WHIAANHPI's Language Access Subgroup works

in close coordination with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Justice, the General Services Administration, the White House Domestic Policy Council, the White House Office of Management and Budget, and other members of the Interagency Working Group. Lastly, the Commission's Language Access Subcommittee will work in close coordination with the Initiative's Interagency Working Group Language Access Subgroup to ensure there is synergy in the Administration's efforts to ensure limited English proficient communities have meaningful access to federal programs, resources, and initiatives. This includes working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to address barriers that limited English proficient individuals face in obtaining information, services, and/or benefits from HHS programs and working with the U.S. Department of Justice to urge federal agencies to review their language access practices and policies as requested in a November 21, 2022 memorandum issued by Attorney General Merrick B. Garland.



PRIORITY 4

Prioritize an Equitable and Inclusive COVID-19 Response and Recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated longstanding inequities in AA and NHPI communities. Those disparities include lack of access to health, economic, educational and other federal resources — all of which are hindered by unique cultural and linguistic barriers, exclusionary data collection practices, and the aggregation of AA and NHPI communities into a monolithic group. WHIAANHPI has played a critical role coordinating collaboration between the Interagency Working Group, Regional Network, and the White House Office of Public Engagement to highlight the Biden-Harris Administration’s investments in AA and NHPI communities, including critical programs and funding made available through the American Rescue Plan, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and

Inflation Reduction Act. Through various regional and national outreach efforts, WHIAANHPI also continues to connect AA and NHPI communities with federal programs and resources to address health, economic, and educational disparities and combat incidents of anti-Asian hate.

As our Nation continues to recover from the pandemic, WHIAANHPI’s Interagency Working Group, Regional Network, and Commission will continue to ensure the needs and concerns of AA and NHPI communities are fully incorporated into the Administration’s efforts to promote an equitable and inclusive pandemic response.

PRIORITY 5

Strengthen Capacity Building Measures for AA and NHPI Communities

Throughout numerous listening sessions and meetings held with AA and NHPI stakeholders over the past 18 months, community-based organizations, businesses, and leaders identified a common challenge: that AA and NHPIs have consistently been under-funded and under-resourced despite facing significant barriers to equity, justice, and opportunity. Therefore, a key priority for WHIAANHPI’s Interagency Working Group and Regional Network is to ensure that underserved AA and NHPI communities are not only aware of federal opportunities and resources, but also have the capacity necessary to compete for federal grants, contracts, and other opportunities. For example, although approximately 10 percent of small businesses in the United States are AA and NHPI-owned, only 2.8 percent of federal contracting dollars went to AA and NHPI small businesses in Fiscal Year

2020 according to a report by the [Small Business Administration](#).

To address this challenge, WHIAANHPI’s Interagency Working Group and Regional Network will provide technical assistance opportunities, trainings, outreach, and capacity building tools for AA and NHPI community groups, including nonprofit organizations and small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses. These entities often provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services and help serve harder-to-reach AA and NHPI communities across the country. Through better understanding of the challenges unique to AA and NHPIs, WHIAANHPI and the Commission aim to expand access to federal grants, contracts, programs, and resources, and to promote meaningful public-private partnerships.

PRIORITY 6

Promote AA and NHPI Representation at All Levels of the Federal Government

President Biden assembled the most diverse Administration in our Nation's history with an historic number of AA and NHPI appointees. Despite this progress, AA and NHPIs are still underrepresented in senior leadership roles within the federal workforce, accounting for only six percent of senior executives in the federal government according to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Furthermore, when workforce data is disaggregated, this lack of representation is even more stark for certain AA and NHPI subpopulations, especially in Southeast Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities.

WHIAANHPI is prioritizing the inclusion of AA and NHPIs throughout the federal government by working closely with the U.S. Office of

Personnel Management, the White House Office of Presidential Personnel, and our Interagency Working Group to implement Strategic Plans mandated under EO 14035, *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) in the Federal Workforce*. Through its outreach, engagement, and interagency work, WHIAANHPI will continue to promote opportunities and highlight resources on both pathways to public service and career advancement within the federal government. Moving forward, we will continue to focus on building a stronger pipeline for AA and NHPIs in the federal workforce so that federal agencies, boards, commissions, internships, fellowships, and the government's executive cadre reflect and harness the full diversity of our Nation.

Vice President Kamala Harris stands with White House AA and NHPI political appointees outside of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, May 2022. (Official White House Photo)





WHIAANHPI's Pacific Northwest Regional Network hosts an event with Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell in Seattle, Washington, Monday, June 27, 2022. (Photo Courtesy of WHIAANHPI)

PRIORITY 7

Leverage Outreach and Engagement to Connect AA and NHPI Communities to Federal Resources

Tailored, ongoing outreach and engagement are vital to ensuring that AA and NHPIs are aware of and have access to federal programs and resources, and that the federal government is responsive to their unique needs. Through both national stakeholder engagements done in partnership with the White House Office of Public Engagement and AA and NHPI Senior Liaison, as well as regional engagements through our Regional Network, WHIAANHPI has conducted more than 200 listening sessions, roundtables, briefings, and stakeholder meetings in all ten federal regions. A large part of this work is led by the Regional Network, and WHIAANHPI has focused on shoring up the Regional Network's capacity by reinvigorating its federal membership, strengthening connections to Federal Executive Boards, and re-engaging AA and NHPI

communities across the country through both virtual and in-person outreach.

WHIAANHPI also sends out a monthly newsletter on current events and Administration announcements to reach AA and NHPI stakeholders across the country. The Initiative also assists with translating key federal announcements and resources into AA and NHPI languages to reach limited English proficient communities. During AA and NHPI Heritage Month in May 2022, WHIAANHPI also led a virtual Equity Roundtable Series featuring several Cabinet officials and Members of Congress, as well as an in-person AA and NHPI Heritage Month Closing Ceremony to highlight the Administration's work.



SECTION IV



IMPLEMENTATION
and
NEXT STEPS



IMPLEMENTATION *and* NEXT STEPS

Since the signing of Executive Order 14031, WHIAANHPI has focused on building its foundation and infrastructure within its new Department home and across the federal government. The launch of WHIAANHPI's federal Interagency Working Group, Regional Network, and President's Advisory Commission comes at a time of heightened need within AA and NHPI communities, many of whom were hard hit over the course of the pandemic.

The submission of agency plans from our Interagency Working Group are the first step in what will be ongoing coordination and implementation to support the Biden-Harris Administration's whole-of-government strategy to advance equity, justice, and opportunity for underserved communities, including AA and NHPI communities. WHIAANHPI will work closely with its Interagency Working Group to track the progress and implementation of agency action plans and develop key deliverables through our Interagency Working Group subgroups. The transmission of subsequent recommendations from the Commission will also help to further refine WHIAANHPI's tangible deliverables in the months and years ahead. Through Regional Network and national outreach efforts, WHIAANHPI will continue to engage AA and NHPI communities to ensure that the federal government is truly accessible to all Americans.

The formation of this strategy would not have been possible without rigorous engagement from both the Interagency Working Group and a broad group of external stakeholders, and we will



Biden-Harris Administration officials with Asian American leaders in Detroit, Michigan, Sunday, June 19, 2022. (Photo Courtesy of WHIAANHPI)

continue our efforts to implement this work across the Administration. We look forward to continuing this collaboration in the years ahead to further our vision of a nation where all people have the opportunity to live up to their full potential.

