



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations Response to Pew Research Center Study on Asian Americans**

**OAKLAND, June 20, 2012** – The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) is concerned about the Pew Research Center’s (PRC) report released yesterday, entitled *The Rise of Asian Americans*. While AAPCHO commends the PRC for conducting this research, we were disappointed that significant challenges facing Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders (AA&NHOPIs)—specifically gaps in access to health care and health disparities—were completely excluded from the report.

“While we should celebrate our accomplishments, it would be an injustice to ignore the many real challenges facing our highly diverse community,” said Jeffrey Caballero, executive director of AAPCHO. “Among these challenges, Asian Pacific Americans continue to experience stark health disparities not recognized in this report.”

AAPCHO is a national not-for-profit association of 29 community-based health organizations, 21 of which are community health centers (CHCs), and our members are located in states with the highest population of AA&NHOPIs. Our work with AA&NHOP communities across the country, show that these medically underserved populations face multiple barriers limiting their ability to access high quality, affordable, and culturally and linguistically appropriate health care services. Currently, more than 2.3 million Asian Americans and 162,000 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are uninsured. Various subgroups, including Cambodian, Korean, and Samoan communities, show even higher uninsured rates.

Moreover, CHCs and those primarily serving AA&NHOPIs, face unique challenges in providing care to their patient populations and subpopulations. Health disparity areas, such as hepatitis B, diabetes, and certain cancers, continue to disproportionately affect many AA&NHOP subpopulations. More than 50% of the estimated 2 million people infected with the hepatitis B virus (HBV) in the U.S. are Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Laotian Americans are the number one carriers of HBV nationwide. Asian Americans are nearly two times as likely to develop diabetes as the general U.S. population, with Native Hawaiians having prevalence rates of up to four times higher. Liver cancer is also the third leading cause of death among AA&NHOPIs. Within the U.S., Asian Americans are 6 to 13 times more likely to die from liver cancer than are Caucasians, with Vietnamese Americans 13 times higher, Korean Americans 8 times higher, and Chinese Americans 6 times higher.

“Additional research and analysis must be conducted to capture the full extent of issues affecting our growing community,” Caballero added. “We encourage organizations developing such analysis to work with us and other community-based partners to better understand our diverse experiences.”

### **About AAPCHO**

AAPCHO is a national association of 29 community health organizations dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration, and leadership that improves the health status and access of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islanders in the United States. For more information on AAPCHO and its Guiding Principles and Values, please visit [www.aapcho.org](http://www.aapcho.org). AAPCHO can also be found on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/aapcho](http://www.facebook.com/aapcho).

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