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creating change in the community

feature

Creating a Shared Vision: Addressing AAPI Tobacco Cessation

by **Karen Rezai**



specific tobacco cessation needs of AAPIs. In terms of how to best support AAPI tobacco users to quit, many questions remain unanswered.

Do mainstream approaches work for AAPIs? What about nicotine-replacement therapy or other pharmacological methods? What types of cessation approaches are preferred? In what ways do they need to be culturally tailored? Can cessation helplines, like the one in California, help reach AAPIs in other states as well?

This summer, APPEAL initiated an exchange of ideas on these questions and more. On August 2-3, 2002, sixteen national and community experts experienced in tobacco cessation gathered in Seattle, WA, to review cessation work within AAPI communities. They shared their expertise on cessation research, policy, community programs, and patient care and debated challenging issues, such as whether mainstream tobacco cessation approaches work for AAPIs, how they should be tailored, and how to increase access to tobacco cessation approaches.

Nationally, 70% of smokers have made at least one quit attempt, and 46% try to quit in any given year. Quitting or reducing tobacco use is difficult; many people know the hazards of smoking, but need support breaking habits and addictions, either through individual approaches or policy change.

Although much has been done to determine what is effective in terms of tobacco cessation policy, programs, and pharmacological therapy in the general population, very little has been done to investigate



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policy update

Beginning the Dialogue on Tobacco Industry Sponsorship

by **Karen Lee and Kelly Koh**

The AAPI community has been targeted by the tobacco industry as a significant opportunity for market development. The industry routinely sponsors AAPI events and community programs in an attempt to gain legitimacy, improve their image, and strategically advertise their harmful products within these communities.

To engage in dialogue on the impact of tobacco on AAPI communities, tobacco industry targeting, funding alternatives, and possibilities for greater collaboration, APPEAL brought together more than 27 representatives from diverse national and local AAPI organizations. Held on September 23, 2002, in Washington, DC, “Beginning the Dialogue: Finding Alternatives to Tobacco Funding for AAPI Communities” was the first national meeting on tobacco industry sponsorship within AAPI communities.

Tobacco companies target organizations and individuals in leadership positions, many of which have historically had difficulty in securing or maintaining funding streams. The tobacco companies offer them unrestricted financial support or sponsorship for their activities. Though APPEAL’s policy is to oppose all forms of tobacco industry advertisement, promotion, and sponsorship

and to discourage AAPI organizations from receiving such support, APPEAL has been providing technical assistance to AAPI organizations that wish to seek alternative sponsorship. Most of the AAPI representatives at this meeting were from organizations that have not accepted tobacco industry funds, although they were under increasing pressure to do so.

Speakers included Joe Lucero, former executive director of Asian Law Caucus, who described his organization’s difficult process of eliminating funding from Philip Morris. Lee Christian Parker, from the National Community Foundation of the National Capitol Region, presented recommendations on building relationships with foundations and discussed her foundation’s grant-making programs. APPEAL discussed funding available through its Robert Wood Johnson grant for improving capacity building and tobacco control programs in the AAPI community.

Meeting participants also developed suggestions for possible collaboration on tobacco control and capacity building activities. In terms of next steps, APPEAL will seek to further develop and operationalize the projects or activities suggested that address mutually important, high priority needs. ■



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MISSION

To prevent tobacco use among the AAPI
community through five priority areas:
network development, capacity-building,
education, advocacy and leadership development.

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director's note

Dear Friends,

We have reached another important crossroad in our AAPI tobacco control work. Our movement is growing rapidly, and new opportunities for expanding our tobacco control efforts have been increasing. Yet, the current political and social environment threatens our ability to respond to tobacco, as our country redirects its health focus to addressing bio-terrorism and funding for tobacco control in many states gets drastically cut or redirected.

Despite these challenges, APPEAL has grown to a team of eight staff, opened an office in Washington, DC, and expanded our network to more than 300 organizational and individual members, including many new members that have not previously addressed tobacco. APPEAL has been increasingly called upon not only to represent the AAPI community perspective on tobacco, but also to provide expertise on leadership development, community capacity, policy, and parity.

During the past year, APPEAL has been extremely active in promoting and implementing our national AAPI tobacco control agenda. We have launched several landmark meetings with success due in large part to the tremendous contributions of APPEAL staff, advisory committee, planning committee members, and fellows. These meetings have included the 1st National APPEAL Youth Leadership Summit; a national meeting on AAPI tobacco cessation; and a national dialogue on finding alternatives to tobacco industry sponsorship. The APPEAL policy framework has been disseminated and presented to several national tobacco control organizations in an effort to implement policy changes related to AAPI tobacco control. In partnership with UC Irvine, APPEAL has recently been awarded a grant from California's Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program to explore tobacco use among AAPI youth.

In an effort to address the tobacco and health inequities faced by AAPIs and communities of color, APPEAL has promoted advancing parity as a high priority in the tobacco control movement along with the Task Force on Advancing Leadership and Parity in Tobacco Control for Priority Populations. A major part of this year's annual National Conference on Tobacco or Health, held in San Francisco, focused on parity issues for the first time — including the opening plenary session and the distribution of a parity educational toolkit developed by the Task Force.

We extend a debt of gratitude to the continued dedication of our APPEAL partners and supporting advocates. In the coming year, we hope to continue our support and technical assistance to the APPEAL network and expand our efforts on outreaching to new AAPI communities and organizations that have not traditionally been seen as tobacco control or health-focused. We will continue our efforts to promote the advancement of parity in tobacco control through institutional and policy changes. We look forward to another successful year in AAPI tobacco control as we work collaboratively to develop partnerships and respond to the impact of tobacco on the health of our communities.

— Rod Lew, M.P.H. —

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youth program

Helping Young People Empower

1st National APPEAL Youth Leadership Summit

by Duong-Chi Do

When 42 youth from across the United States and Pacific Islands came together for the first ever National APPEAL Youth Leadership Summit on October 12-14, 2002, their energy could hardly be contained. For many, it was the first time away from home, not to mention the first time in an exciting locale like Honolulu, HI. But what it really came down to was not the backdrop of beaches and blue skies, but the unique opportunity for youth to come together and begin developing individual action plans for how they can change tobacco's toll on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in their communities back home.

The National APPEAL Youth Leadership Summit was the kick-off event for the year-long APPEAL Youth Leadership Program. The selection process was highly competitive; a committee of youth leaders and youth advocates reviewed over 100 applicants from youth around the country and Pacific Island jurisdictions. Upon acceptance, each leadership fellow committed to participate in the three-



day training and conduct one to two tobacco control projects in their community over the course of the year.

The National APPEAL Youth Leadership Program seeks to build the capacity of youth to lead their communities in tobacco control efforts that will have a positive impact on AAPI youth. The program focuses on five competency areas: basic tobacco control knowledge, advocacy, collaboration, cultural competence, and a special focus on personal leadership. Throughout the summit, youth fellows explored each of the competency areas through hands-on workshops that emphasized group processes and relationship building.

The summit was a chance for the youth to feel a sense of unity in a

burgeoning movement. One fellow commented that the group was "so diverse, yet so united." This diversity and unity of the youth fellows will form a solid foundation for the emerging AAPI youth tobacco control movement.

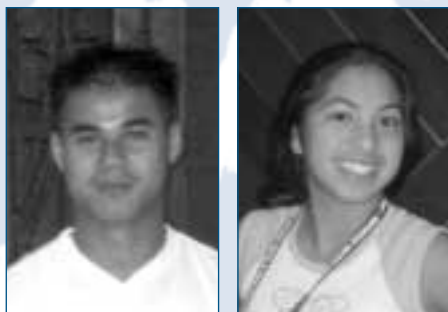
The summit also provided an opportunity for the group to collaborate and share experiences from different U.S. and Pacific

Island regions. As one fellow stated, "I had fun meeting students from all over and talking to them, sharing resources when I can, learning how to collaborate and work with others, [and the] importance of keeping [an] open mind."

Upon returning to their communities, many of the youth have already started on their projects, including educational presentations, peer trainings, and advocacy efforts to persuade stores to stop selling tobacco. We are excited for what the coming year of the leadership program holds for these amazing youth as their action plans are fully realized. ■



Longtime Youth Tobacco Advocates Honored



Ky Ban (left) and Sarah Mesa (right), recipients of the Global APPEAL Youth Scholarship Award.

APPEAL has had the privilege to work with two youth who have not only served as APPEAL Advisory Committee Members for the past three years, but also demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities and strong commitment as tobacco control advocates in the AAPI community. At this year's 1st National APPEAL Youth Leadership Summit, Ky Ban of the Vietnamese Youth Organization in San Jose, CA, and Sarah Mesa of Guam Communications Network, Inc. in Long Beach, CA, were honored as the first recipients of the Global APPEAL Youth Scholarship award.

Through this scholarship award, Ky and Sarah will have the unique opportunity to be paired with tobacco control advocates in Asia and the Pacific to work jointly on a project to address the impact of Asians and Pacific Islanders transnationally.

The Global APPEAL Youth Scholarship is awarded in memory of APPEAL Advisory Committee member and lifetime tobacco control advocate Chris Jenkins. His daughter, Melinh Jenkins, was there to present the award.

Ky and Sarah will be carrying on Chris's legacy as a passionate, committed, and tireless advocate against tobacco industry presence in Asia and the Pacific. ■

global concern

Marshall Islands: Battling the Impact of Tobacco and Nuclear Testing Radiation

In the scope of American politics, the Marshall Islands has been primarily known as the home to the U.S. Army Base Kwajalein and the site where the U.S. conducted nuclear testing from 1947-1962. However, when the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) became the first country outside the U.S to sue the tobacco industry for damages incurred by the impact of tobacco, Congress opened its eyes.

Senior U.S. Senator Jesse Helms went so far as to threaten to withdraw the RMI compact agreement — the economic “lifeblood” of the Marshalls. Eventually, the tobacco suit was thrown out before it reached trial, but the growing problem of tobacco use still remains.

This past June, Rod Lew, director of APPEAL, traveled to the RMI to meet with tobacco control and community groups and to film about the impact of tobacco on the Marshallese.

During this time, he worked closely with Dr. Neal Palafox, a family medicine doctor from the University of Hawaii who has received funding to provide medical support to those still impacted by the radiation from the nuclear testing. Cigarette smoking has a negative impact on those who are irradiated because of the synergistic relationship between radiation and polonium found in cigarette smoke. He also interviewed several key players involved with the tobacco suit including the judge and several legislators.

Despite the challenges RMI has faced, some initial efforts to learn about and address tobacco are underway. For example, APPEAL has committed resources to analyze the tobacco survey data collected in the RMI and will provide support for capacity building and leadership development on tobacco control in the Marshall Islands. ■

global highlight

ASH Thailand and APPEAL: Global Partnerships to Strengthen Tobacco Control Efforts

by **Karen Rezai and Kobkul Srivongcharoen**

As the tobacco industry loses ground in the U.S., it seeks new business through aggressive marketing in the global arena. Tobacco has not been contained within set borders; it is a global epidemic. While we fight to reduce tobacco use within AAPI communities in the U.S., the tobacco industry is investing extensive resources to forge new markets throughout Asia and the Pacific.

“Global Partnerships for Tobacco Control,” a project organized by Essential Action, is helping to strengthen international tobacco control activities at the grass roots level by pairing up tobacco groups in the United States and Canada with those in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe, and the former Soviet Union.

As international partners through “Global Partnerships,” APPEAL and Action on Smoking and Health Foundation of Thailand (ASH Thailand) support each other’s efforts through the exchange of information, strategies, and experiences. ASH Thailand is a non-governmental organization that began in 1986 to promote positive non-smoking values and effective tobacco control legislation. Their strategies

include public education and health promotion, public advocacy, and coalition building.

There is a tremendous need for ASH Thailand’s tobacco control work; approximately 20% of Thailand’s

in restaurants (restaurants were 70% smoke-free areas), public buses, taxis, theaters, bus terminals, department stores, and places of worship.

The promotion of strong smoke-free policies has been a successful strategy for ASH Thailand. One example is their “Tobacco Free Sports Campaign” which encourages sports organizations to remove tobacco industry sponsorship from their activities. Since the campaign began a year and a half ago, at least six sporting events have declared themselves smoke-free, including University Games and Kings Cup Football.

On the international level, ASH Thailand hosts the Southeast Asian (SEA) Tobacco Control Alliance that works to promote the implementation of effective evidence-based tobacco control measures in the region. The Alliance is comprised of professionals from government and non-government organizations in Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, who communicate with representatives in other Southeast Asian countries including Laos PDR, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

For more information on ASH Thailand, go to www.ashthailand.or.th. For more on Global Partnerships through Essential Action, view www.essentialaction.org. ■



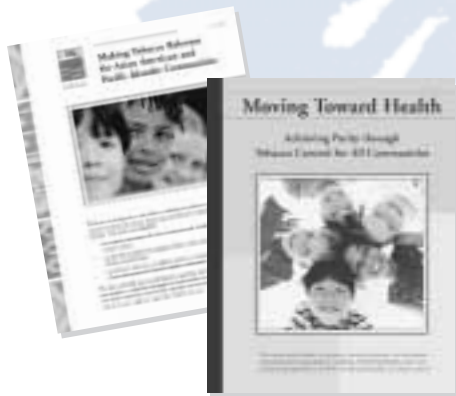
ASH Thailand's campaign to remove tobacco industry sponsorship from sporting events.

population smokes, with higher rates being reported in males (40%), rural areas, and among those with little education. Furthermore, the number of smokers is rising. Cigarettes are both imported and domestically manufactured.

Starting November 2002, Thailand broadened its ban on smoking in public places, including a total ban

project updates

APPEAL Publishes Tools for Tobacco Control Advocates



Expanding Cultural Competence for Tobacco Control in Asian American & Pacific Islander Communities

is the newest addition to our series of educational kits developed for tobacco control advocates and policy makers. This particular kit is designed for individuals and organizations working in the mainstream tobacco control movement who wish to work with Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in their communities; it emphasizes the importance of institutionalizing cultural competency activities in policies, programs, staff, and coalitions.

The kit includes an introduction to cultural competency in AAPI communities and tobacco control, cultural competency resources, and case studies, as well as how to assess institutional cultural competency, identify areas for improvement, develop a cultural competency

plan, and sustain momentum. The kit will be completed by late winter, 2002.

Making Tobacco Relevant for Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities, APPEAL's first educational kit, has been updated to include many new subject areas, some of which are: environmental tobacco smoke, betelnut, updated information on youth and Pacific Island communities, and information that link tobacco to other health issues and community/social justice issues.

The goals of this kit are to increase awareness of AAPI tobacco issues; to provide methods for making tobacco issues relevant to diverse communities; and to motivate AAPIs to become more involved with tobacco control.

Moving Toward Health: Achieving Parity through Tobacco Control for All Communities

is an educational toolkit developed by the Task Force on Advancing Leadership and Parity in Tobacco Control for Priority Populations. This toolkit addresses the tobacco and health inequities faced by communities of color and other priority populations. APPEAL and the Task Force have promoted advancing parity as a high priority in the tobacco control movement.

APPEAL Summer Intern



In June, APPEAL welcomed Karen Lee as its summer intern. Karen provided invaluable assistance in planning APPEAL's "Beginning the Dialogue: Finding Alternatives to Tobacco Funding for AAPI Communities" meeting on September 23, 2002. Karen also performed outreach to various organizations on the importance of addressing tobacco use among the AAPI LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) community.

We will miss Karen as she continues her MPH studies at the UCLA School of Public Health, with a concentration in Community Health Services. Her passion to increase access to health and education for minorities has led her to work in AAPI HIV/AIDS organizations in New York City and San Francisco, a mobile clinic for the homeless, and mentoring and tutoring programs for low-income immigrant youths and adults.

To request a publication, please contact Kristy Chin at (510) 272-9536 or kchin@aapcho.org. APPEAL network members will automatically receive copies of our newest publications. To become a network member, please complete the membership form found at: www.appealforcommunities.org. ■

Creating a Shared Vision ... *continued from page 1*

Policy recommendations developed from the meeting include:

- Increasing capacity to do tobacco education and cessation within AAPI communities by funding and supporting leadership and career development opportunities for AAPI tobacco control advocates.
- Supporting efforts to educate funders, government agencies, research institutions, policy makers, and tobacco control organizations on diversity and parity issues related to tobacco cessation for AAPIs.
- Increasing access to free or low-cost evidence-based treatment services for nicotine dependency among

uninsured, low SES, and geographically isolated AAPI communities through policy change.

- Expanding insurance coverage of evidence-based treatment for nicotine dependency. Developing reimbursement models for state, federal managed care, and indigent care programs.
- Funding programs that replicate effective AAPI cessation strategies and innovative demonstrations projects that incorporate community involvement. New research areas should include alternative uses of tobacco, e.g., bidis and use of tobacco with betelnut.

- Funding a clearinghouse to disseminate evaluated AAPI tobacco information and educational materials, including cessation, to communities across the U.S. and the Pacific.

Recommendations generated at the meeting will be shared with others around the country that weren't present to spark additional discussion and ideas. Once finalized, the recommendations on cessation will be incorporated into APPEAL's tobacco control policy framework and shared with national, state, and local policy makers and organizations. ■



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calendar of events

Kick Butts Day

April 2, 2003

<http://kickbuttsday.org>

World No Tobacco Day

May 31, 2003

<http://www.wntd.com>