

**2007-2008**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

OF THE

**VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD**

TO

**GOVERNOR TIMOTHY M. KAINE**

**XXXX, 2008**

**VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD**

Post Office Box 2454

Richmond, VA 23218-2454

Telephone: (804) 786-2441, ext. 111

Facsimile: (804) 371-0017

[www.vaab.virginia.gov](http://www.vaab.virginia.gov)

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is the third annual report of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB). The VAAB serves as a formal liaison between the government of Virginia and the Asian American communities in the Commonwealth.

The Board met 7 times during the past two years, leveraging the committee structure created in the past, to focus priority issues identified as important to the Asian American community in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The three committees established were the Civic and Cultural committee, Business and Trade committee and the Education and Learning committee.

Since the last report of 2004/2005, the Board has welcomed a few new members and leadership for both the Chair and Vice Chair positions of the VAAB.

The tragedy that struck Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007 will be touched on fairly extensively in this report. It underscores how important it is for the government to understand the unique cultural, health and linguistic challenges facing Asian Americans and to provide appropriate solutions.

In the previous report (2004/2005) in the area of Limited English Proficiency (LEP), we urged the Governor to fully implement HJR 71 recommendations and require related State agencies to work together to provide the needed service and support to the Asian American communities. The General Assembly, in 2004, adopted HJ 71, a resolution that identified problems facing people with LEP in Virginia. The VAAB thanks the Governor for his leadership and progress made since our initial recommendations were made in 2004. We urge the Governor to expand similar efforts to other executive branch agencies that administer program utilized by Limited English Proficiency Asian Americans.

In 2004/2005, The Business and Trade committee recommended that the Governor focus on strengthening programs to enhance the economic viability of minority-owned businesses and monitoring the economic impact of the State's procurement program. We appreciate the progress that has been made on those two fronts and urge the Governor to continue its support for the SWaM Dashboard program to better track and monitor spending.

The topic of Education and Learning continues to resonate strongly with the Asian American community in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The committee made several recommendations on this topic that spanned pre-K through adult education. In this report, the VAAB, will narrow the focus to Asian American faculty in higher learning. We recommend that the Commonwealth support the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to develop a comprehensive database on college and university faculty. Such data gathering and availability of a comprehensive data repository will enable appropriate courses of action to be undertaken in this arena.

## INTRODUCTION

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board (“VAAB” or “Board”) was established by statute in 2001 as a governmental entity of the Commonwealth of Virginia. VAAB serves as a formal liaison between the Commonwealth government and the diverse and fast growing Asian American communities in the Commonwealth.

Pursuant to Section 2.2-2450 of the Code of Virginia, the Board is pleased to submit to Governor Timothy M. Kaine this Annual Report as a summary of its activities up to June 2008. This is the first report of VAAB submitted to Governor Kaine, and the third report of its kind. While VAAB was created during Governor James S. Gilmore’s term, the first members of the Board were appointed during Governor Mark R. Warner’s term. The two earlier reports of VAAB were therefore submitted to Governor Warner in 2004 and 2005.

The current Board includes several new members who have replaced some of the original members. Thus, in preparing this report, VAAB carefully reviewed the contents of the earlier two reports. We found that many of the same issues and concerns detailed in earlier publications are still important to the Asian American communities and the Commonwealth today. And many of the more than twenty policy positions that the earlier two reports recommended are still timely and necessary today. Therefore, the contents of the two reports are incorporated herein by reference.

### Board Members

The following members currently serve on the Board:

Ranjana W. Chachra of Blacksburg is a real estate investor

Chandrashekar Challa of Richmond is an IT consultant in legal services

Wai-Ping Chan of Alexandria is an attorney in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Office of Civil Rights

Angela Chiang of Chesterfield is Program and Project Administrator, Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise

Robert O. Colorina of Chesapeake is a director with American Industrial Corporation

Conrado B. “Dick” Dabu of Norfolk is a U.S. Navy veteran and former chairman of the Filipino Culture Center

Surya Dhakar of Richmond is a dentist in private practice

Pearl Fu of Roanoke is the director of Local Colors nonprofit organization

Nalin Jain of Fairfax is the director of the Arlington Small Business Development Center, George Mason University

Jaideep Kathuria of Fairfax is \_\_\_\_\_

Mark L. Keam of Vienna is vice president and counsel for federal government relations with Verizon Communications

Victoria Mirandah of Richmond is Senior Director of Diversity with Capital One

Kim P. Nguyen of Falls Church is director of special programs and business development for Pragmatics, Inc.

Krittika Onsanit of Richmond is an international student and internship advisor at the University of Richmond

Silvia Y. Patton of Fairfax Station is president of Fairview Park Florist and chair of the Organization of Korean-American Women, Inc.

Dilip Sarkar of Norfolk is a retired vascular surgeon and associate professor of surgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School

Suwattana Sugg of Richmond is the Education Coordinator with the Refugee and Immigration Services

The current Board also includes designees of cabinet secretaries as ex officio members:

Deputy Secretary David N. Smith of the Department of Commerce and Trade  
Assistant Secretary Douglas M. Garcia of the Department of Education

Assistant Deputy Secretary Aryana Khalid of the Department of Health and Human Resources

The Board is assisted by Sindy Benavides, a staff member of the Office of the Governor.

### **Business Meetings**

During this past year, the Board met seven times as follows: July 21, 2007, September 21, 2007, November 16, 2007, January 24, 2008, April 11, 2008, June 13, and July 21, 2008

All the meetings were held in Richmond, and were hosted by the following private and public sector sponsors: Bank of America, Hunton & Williams LLP, Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise, and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

Some meetings included outside speakers, including current and former public officials such as Governor Kaine, Secretary of the Commonwealth Kate Hanley, former Transportation Secretary Whittington Clement, and representatives of Asian American community groups.

## **II. VIRGINIA TECH TRAGEDY**

It is not often that Asian Americans are featured in the mainstream media, especially in the Commonwealth of Virginia. But when an Asian American face appears on the cover of every major newspaper and on 24 hour cable coverage, such is indeed a rare occasion. Unfortunately, the level of attention brought to Asian Americans last year resulted from a set of circumstances that no ethnic group anywhere would have ever wished for.

Last year's Virginia Tech tragedy was unprecedented, resulting in a widespread magnitude of impact that continues to be felt by all Virginians. Because of the unique way that the incident affected Asian Americans in Virginia, members of the Board felt that it was timely and appropriate to devote substantial discussion about this tragic situation in this year's report.

### **Asian American Gunman**

On April 16, 2007, a tragedy of unimaginable horror struck the peaceful campus of Virginia Tech, resulting in the deaths of 32 innocent lives. The violent and senselessness of this school shooting shocked the nation, and the incredible sadness was expressed around the world. But the impact was most severely felt among Virginians who live in Blacksburg and its nearby towns, as they lost family members, friends and neighbors.

When the identity of the gunman was released on that fateful day, a particular group of Virginians felt the sickening impact of this tragedy in the most unique way. On that day and on those following, Asian Americans in the Commonwealth found themselves in an awkward and most unwelcoming spotlight as it was revealed that this criminal was a Korean American.

The preliminary press reports indicated absolutely no obvious ties between the ungodly actions of the shooter and his ethnicity. Indeed, four of the 32 victims were of Asian ancestry, and several others were of immigrant origins, thus making the group of victims perhaps a random sample of the rich diversity of students and faculty on this college campus unwittingly brought together that day.

Yet, while many Asian Americans tried to ignore the ethnic aspect of the tragedy altogether, others dug deep into the shooter's immigrant past as if there might be clues about this crime that originate from his ancestry.

Many Asian Americans even went so far as to feel some personal connection to the incident in ways that are difficult to rationalize or to articulate. One example of an irresponsible reaction felt by some Asians and Asian Americans is the unfortunate decision made by the Korean government – through its president and its ambassador to America – to issue a blanket apology for the gunman's action. Even though Korea is a modern nation today, its deep roots in Confucius traditions partially led the nation and most of its people to feel somehow personally

responsible for the criminal conduct of an individual they perceived to be one of their own, even if the action took place thousands of miles away.

The varied spectrum of reactions of Asian Americans to this incident reflects upon the diversity among Asian Americans that is often not understood in mainstream American society. The American public generally tends to paint a broad brush, monolithic and stereotypical view of ethnic groups as being fairly homogenous. Yet, Asian Americans are made up of people from dozens of different national and ethnic origins, several different generations of immigration histories, and differing philosophical, political and religious viewpoints.

As noted in the personal anecdotes relayed below, a large segment of the older immigrant generation felt a sense of shame and guilt that most Koreans in Korea felt, which is to assume that the guilt of this lone gunman somehow passes to his ethnic brethren throughout the world.

On the other hand, most of the younger generation focused their angst on the universality of the crime, and on the mental illness problems that most likely caused this particular incident. Many in the younger Asian American communities also wanted to focus their attention on the extent of mental health issues in the community, in an effort to identify and prevent similar problems escalating in the future.

### **VAAB's Response**

Within hours of the news of the tragedy, members of VAAB took part in numerous activities in response to this tragedy. Some board members spoke out and urged the media not to draw unnecessary attention to the killer's ethnicity lest it generate any backlash against the broader Asian American communities. Some board members participated in candlelight vigils and prayer events to pay respect to the fallen. Some board members helped organize community events and forums to raise the public awareness of mental health issues generally. And many contributed to funds set up to assist the victims and their families.

Two members of VAAB who reside closest to the incident immediately shared timely information from the ground to ensure that the Board was aware of the reaction from the Asian American communities on what was going on. Board member Ranjana Chachra and her family live in Blacksburg, and they lost a personal friend that day. Here is her story, told from her first hand experience:

It was the worst tragedy in the history of the United States on the grounds of a higher educational institution. The innocent victims were a diverse group of individuals, both students and faculty, of varied ages and different cultures. It was a moment that we will never forget.

The Commonwealth, along with the university and local community, has provided many ways for those who mourn to heal and cope. The outpouring of condolences, the support – both

emotional and financial – has been overwhelming, without which this community would not have been able to move forward.

As a member of VAAB, a resident of Blacksburg, and a member of the Virginia Tech community, I write this in hope and faith in all people that this tragedy will never be repeated. I hope that our Commonwealth will work diligently to provide funds for research and programs that focus on mental health issues and also embrace mental health problems that exist in the various cultural groups residing in our Commonwealth.

I also hope that our government can provide education and awareness programs of Asian cultures for counselors and psychologists in schools, colleges and universities to help students who are trying to assimilate into their new, adopted culture. This understanding of cultural differences will enable the school professionals to recognize cultural behaviors and cues to more effectively plan appropriate measures to rectify any problems.

The tragedy and the aftermath that took place in my home of Blacksburg, Virginia are poignant reminders of how important it is to address mental health, diversity and community healing in our Commonwealth.

Board member Pearl Fu of Roanoke was also deeply impacted personally, but she found strength by seeking ways to move the local Asian American community beyond this tragedy. Here is her story:

We Roanokers less than an hour away from Blacksburg offered assistance immediately. Scott Dreyer, the Chinese Church, Sister City Lijiang of China, and the Chinese Association provided counseling and hospitality to the Chinese students who were affected by the horrid occurrence.

One of the student victims was Henry Lee, a Chinese immigrant from Vietnam, who was from Roanoke. The Lees were a very close-knit family who were so proud that Henry excelled academically at Virginia Tech.

For months following his death, Henry's mother continued cooking for all nine of her children as if Henry had never left them. Eventually, she forced herself mentally to accept the reality of Henry's absence. Yet Henry's mother was unable to do so physically. She was so stricken with grief that her blood pressure rose to levels requiring repeated admissions to the emergency clinic. She became bedridden and frail, and the only source of



comfort for her came from a Buddhist monk whom I found in Richmond who was able to speak to her in her native Chinese dialect.

The tragedy also affected the Local Colors Festival, which I founded and organize annually in May to celebrate our diversity in Roanoke. That year, however, members of the local Korean American community decided not to participate in the event. They claimed it would be inappropriate to encourage jubilation just weeks after the incident. The real reason was a deep sense of shame that the elders in the community felt for the fact that the shooter was Korean.

I challenged this community to recognize that the crime had nothing to do with ethnicity, but instead, the young man's mental illness. My argument was bolstered by a group of younger Korean Americans who felt differently. They said by withdrawing from the annual event, Korean Americans would bring even more attention to the ethnicity issue, and would make everyone feel that in fact the Korean Americans were to blame.

This dialogue was refreshing and much needed to bring the community together at that very difficult time. A compromise was reached, to not participate at the May festival out of respect for the wishes of the older generation of Korean Americans and to let time heal some of the wound. At the same time, everyone agreed to work toward another public event in the summer where Korean Americans could celebrate our diversity with other members of the community. Our summer "Taste of Culture" event was a great success as a result of everyone's participation.

### **III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Over the past few years, VAAB has held several fact finding meetings and a public forum to learn about the communities' needs. We have identified several major issues of concern to the Asian American communities in the Commonwealth. The previous two reports include detailed descriptions and analysis of over twenty significant issues, with specific recommendations for the Governor and executive branch agencies to address as policy makers. Therefore, in this report, we have limited our recommendations to only three issues, one per each of the three VAAB Committees: Civic and Cultural, Business and Trade, and Education and Learning.

The Virginia Tech tragedy of April 2007 reminds us again how important it is for the government to focus on some of the needs of Asian American communities that are often left out or not addressed adequately in mainstream public policy debates. The core lesson from Virginia Tech incident that VAAB believes is most important to note is the need for our government to study and understand the unique cultural and linguistic challenges facing Asian Americans, and

to seek ways to reach out to these communities with proper services provided in the most appropriate manner.

### **1. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibits recipients of federal funds from discriminating against individuals on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The U.S. Department of Justice has interpreted this provision to require that any federal program or activity normally provided in English are also made accessible to people with limited English proficiency (LEP), so that these people are not discriminated against in the utilization of these services on the basis of their national origin.

In 2000, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," that requires federal agencies to examine services they provide to those with LEP, and to develop and implement a system to allow LEP persons to have meaningful access to these services.

In November 2003, Virginia's Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) issued a report entitled, "Acclimation of Virginia's Foreign-Born Population," which was prepared at the General Assembly's request. JLARC was asked to identify what state and local government services are needed by immigrant populations, examine the cost and benefits of immigrants to the state economy, review federal policies and programs that could have an impact on the state initiatives, examine state's options to facilitate acclimation of the immigrants, and to recommend changes in state laws and regulations.

In its report, JLARC identified three primary needs that are unique to the foreign-born population: (1) access to opportunities to improve English proficiencies; (2) access to services and information in their native languages; and (3) access to affordable health care. Specifically, JLARC found that 11 percent of Virginia's residents over the age of 5 speak a language other than English, 41 percent of this population speaks English "less than very well," and 21 percent live in "linguistically isolated households."

The study also found that 33 percent of foreign-born residents are not covered by either private or government health insurance, compared to 13 percent of native-born residents in the same situation. Of those living in poverty, 55 percent of foreign-born residents do not have health insurance, while 26 percent of native-born residents face the same challenge.

Following the JLARC report, the General Assembly, in 2004, adopted HJ 71, a resolution that identified problems facing people with LEP in Virginia. The resolution noted that as recipients of federal funds, many of the Commonwealth's programs need to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the LEP requirements.

HJ 71 also required Virginia government agencies to act on some of the findings of the 2003 JLARC report. Because many of the services impacting LEP populations are administered by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the resolution tasked the Secretary to

determine what federal resources may be available to assist service providers in their efforts to serve individuals with LEP, and to identify options for obtaining translation services.

One of the main agencies under the Secretariat is the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), which has taken the lead in implementing the “Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Health Care Services” program, including compliance with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Minority Health-issued National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health Care.

The Virginia CLAS Act Initiative strives to advance health equity for Virginia’s increasingly diverse population by providing and developing resources related to culturally and linguistically appropriate health services.

The CLAS Act Initiative has determined that, although language data is collected in the VDH, it did not prove to be effective in the clinic setting. This is due to a lack of coordination between data entry and the patient encounter. By collaborating with different offices within the agency, the Initiative has been able to add an “LEP” tag to all the files of patients determined to be limited English proficient in WebVision so providers can determine at any point in the encounter whether there is a need for an interpreter for the patient.

The Commonwealth’s leadership in this area was recognized in 2007 when the CLAS Act Initiative won a Vision Award from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, for outstanding and creative state public health department initiatives.

VDH has continued to lead in finding innovative ways to partner with communities of color. For example, it’s Office of Minority Health and Public Health Policy (OMHPHP) is working with the Northern Virginia Area Health Education Center to develop educational materials in both web-based and hard copy formats for the diverse communities in the region. OMHPHP also assessed how health data related to primary language data is collected within the agency. The findings from this assessment could serve to assist other agencies within the Commonwealth.

In the past five years, Commonwealth of Virginia’s Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS) has been working with a broad network of stakeholders to transform their system to enhance community-based care for individuals, make overdue infrastructure improvements to state facilities and change the way services are delivered. VAAB would like to recommend working more closely with DMHMRSAS to enhance community based care for the Asian community, addressing the specific issues and challenges of mental health and how they are addressed within the Asian community.

Similarly, the Department’s “Navigating the U.S. Healthcare System for Immigrants, Migrants and Refugees” project takes a culturally competent approach to teaching immigrants, migrants and refugees how to successfully navigate the American healthcare system. Based on focus group results indicating that a trusted source acting as an information center is the best way to disseminate information to culturally diverse individuals, the project is also developing a

curriculum for cultural brokers (individuals, agencies and organizations who work with refugees and immigrants) to act as a gateway to the health care system for immigrants, migrants and refugees. This teaching curriculum will be accompanied by culturally-appropriate translated, low-literacy materials in four languages (Hindi, Korean, Mandarin and Vietnamese). The content for the project was completed in late 2007.

We are aware that these and other healthcare programs targeting the LEP populations are on the list of personal priorities for Governor Kaine, as he signed Executive Order 31 in 2006 to create a Health Reform Commission, which looked into these and many other issues related to improving the healthcare system in the Commonwealth.

**RECOMMENDATION: VAAB thanks the Governor for his leadership in this area, and recognizes the many advances his Administration has made to include LEP populations in the healthcare area. VAAB urges the Governor to require similar strong efforts by other executive branch agencies that administer programs utilized by LEP Asian Americans. For example, LEP concerns are widespread and can be found in many facets of life that are overseen by state agencies dealing with education, criminal justice and the court system, public safety, housing, transportation, business and tax issues, and public utilities services. We recommend the Governor consider expanding LEP outreach to these other agencies' jurisdictions as well.**

We would like to move forward on working with DMHMRSAS to enhance community based care for the Asian community, specifically with regard to mental health care issues.

## **2. Small Business Contracting**

Numerous studies indicate that minority-owned firms continue to grow at a faster rate than those of all firms in the U.S. economy, both in terms of new firms and total sales. Asian American-owned firms appear to be leading this trend, with at least one study indicating that Asian American-owned businesses have grown at a rate of 10 percent per year, with sales growth of almost 24 percent per year.

Most minority- or women-owned businesses are small businesses, and thus, play an important role in our nation's economy. For many minorities and women, their involvement with small businesses can provide more leadership, entrepreneurial, and management opportunities, which, in turn, helps increase their stakes in our Commonwealth.

Yet, a 2004 study entitled, "A Procurement Disparity Study of the Commonwealth of Virginia," by MGT of America, found that only 1.7 percent of the Commonwealth's dollars went to minority- or women-owned businesses from July 1997 to June 2002. By contrast, spending on minority- or women-owned businesses by other states is much greater. For example, Maryland spends about 17 percent of its state funds on such businesses, and North Carolina spends about 7.4 percent.

In our effort to encourage the government to focus on this need, VAAB in its earlier Reports urge the Governor to take all steps necessary to increase the extremely low current levels

of procurement by the Commonwealth for minority- or women-owned businesses, and to establish appropriate procurement goals.

Specifically, VAAB recommended that the Governor strengthen and establish programs to enhance the economic viability of minority-owned businesses that include training on public as well as private procurement opportunities, a mentoring-protégé program, and look into ways to simplify the procurement process. VAAB also suggested that the procurement program needs to be monitored and evaluated to assess the real economic impact on Asian American businesses.

Partly in response to our recommendations, the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) has increased the number of direct management and technical assistance services provided to small, women- and minority-owned (SWaM) businesses.

For example, DMBE held over 560 events to date in Fiscal Year 2008, compared to 500 in the entirety of Fiscal Year 2007. These sessions are conducted on a personal/one-on-one basis or in larger workshop settings across the Commonwealth.

DMBE has hired six field representatives who conduct these counseling sessions on important business development topics such as becoming certified as a SWaM or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise vendor, becoming bond-worthy or bondable, preparing bids and proposals to solicitations, and becoming a supplier to the Commonwealth. DMBE also collaborates closely with the Division of Purchases and Supplies of the Department of General Services to revise the existing procurement rules and policy, and continues to conduct and participate in training sessions and workshops focused on procurement policy matters.

Similarly, the Department of Business Assistance has set up pilot Mentor-Protégé programs with over 20 vendors, and the current program is being evaluated to determine its effectiveness.

Beyond the increased outreach efforts, however, the most exciting development is the creation by the DMBE of the "SWaM Dashboard," a state spending data collecting system. The Dashboard, implemented by Governor Kaine in 2007, is an important tool that can track, monitor, and evaluate the government's spending with Asian American-owned businesses. The Dashboard provides a visual gauge of how the Commonwealth is performing in real time SWaM procurement expenditures. It can provide the overall performance or specific information broken down by the Commonwealth, secretariats, and agencies, and by ethnicity, industry and a variety of other data analysis sets.

Additionally, the data collected can be used to establish a baseline for future comparative analysis on state agency spending to improve supplier diversity program in the Commonwealth. The link to the Dashboard is: <https://www.bfountain.com/swam/dashboard>.

**RECOMMENDATION: VAAB appreciates the response to our earlier recommendations, and appreciates the Governor's efforts to improve the Commonwealth's efforts to include more Asian American small businesses in its procurement programs. VAAB urges the Governor to continue its support for the SWaM Dashboard program, and ensure that the**

**system is institutionalized with continuing enhancements to provide easily accessed, accurate and detailed data for better monitoring of agency spending.**

We acknowledge Executive Order 33 (2006) – Enhancing Opportunities for Small, Women and Minority Owned Businesses. One of the initiatives of this order is to advance the Commonwealth’s goal that 40% of its purchases be made from small businesses.

### **Faculty in Higher Education**

In previous reports, VAAB made several recommendations on the topics of education and learning that impact pre-K through adult education, addressing a wide spectrum of issues from increasing remedial and gifted programs to adding more foreign language electives and better textbooks to be offered in the Commonwealth’s public schools. Considering the limited jurisdiction that the state government holds in this area compared to that of the local school authorities, VAAB will limit our discussion on this topic in this year’s report to one particular concern involving Asian American faculty in higher education.

Most Asian Americans who have obtained doctoral degrees in the fields of science, engineering, and medicine have gone into academic and research institutions to teach and to do research. Asian Americans tend to have a much higher percentage of those holding advanced education, compared to other ethnic groups. Yet, our presence in management positions in academia does not appear to correlate with the high proportion of qualified candidates.

Specifically, the 2002 Census data indicates that among populations with doctorate, masters, and bachelors degrees per 1,000 people, Asian Americans were at 39.4 percent, compared to whites at 24.5 percent, African Americans at 14 percent, and Hispanic Americans at 8.3 percent. Yet, based on spotty data, it appears that the percentage of Asian American faculty and those holding executive level positions in academia fall far below this rate.

**RECOMMENDATION: VAAB recommends that the Commonwealth allot appropriate budget support to State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to develop a comprehensive database on college and university faculty to include salary and administrative appointments by rank, race and ethnicity, national origin, gender, productivity (including course assignments), and any other relevant factors within the Commonwealth’s public colleges and universities, similar to its existing student data system.**

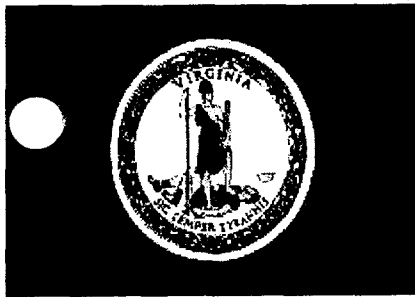
**VAAB recommends that JLARC update the foreign born acclimatization study which was last done in 2003. Updated statistics and findings will enable us to fine tune the recommendations being made.**

## **IV. CONCLUSION**

Since our last report of 2004/2005, the VAAB has continued to focus more deeply in the areas identified by the 3 subcommittees. These issues continue to remain as top priority areas for the Asian Americans in the Commonwealth, so it is appropriate for the VAAB to continue to advocate for progress in the said 3 areas.

In November 2003, Virginia's Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) issued a report entitled, "Acclimation of Virginia's Foreign-Born Population". The JLARC report identified primary needs unique to the foreign-born population. The report was noteworthy and well received. We request an update to the study to freshen the data and findings.

We appreciate the opportunity to have served the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Asian American community. We hope to continue the important work that was started with the founding members and which has continued till today.



# VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

1111 East Broad Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor • Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Phone: (804) 225-4836 • Email: [vaab@commonwealth.governor.gov](mailto:vaab@commonwealth.governor.gov)  
Web: [www.vaab.virginia.gov](http://www.vaab.virginia.gov)

September 16, 2008

## **Board Members:**

*Victoria Mirandah, Chair*

*Ranjana Chachra, Vice-Chair*

*Angela Chiang – Acting Chair  
2007-2008*

*Mark L. Keam*

*Dilip Sarkar*

*Suwattana Sugg*

*Conrado B. Dabu*

*Robert Colorina*

*Wai-Ping Chan*

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*Silvia Patton*

*Chandrashekar Challa*

*Jaideep (JD) Kathuria*

*Surya Dhakar*

*Nalin Jain*

*Pearl Fu*

*Marj Mohta*

The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine  
Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia  
The State Capital  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Kaine:

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board, pursuant to Section 2.2-2450 of the Code of Virginia, is pleased to submit this report for the period covering July 2006 through June 2008.

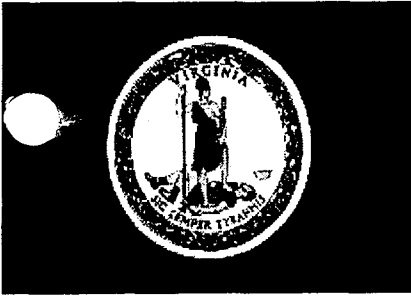
This document, covering the period of two years, represents the Board's primary purpose of provide relevant information to you as we highlight the issues that resonate strongly with the Asian communities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

This report includes findings and recommendations on specific areas of concern that the majority of the Board believes are most urgent for you to consider as you work to improve the quality of life for Asian Americans, and indeed, all Virginians.

VAAB thanks you for your leadership in the area of healthcare programs targeting the Limited English Proficiency populations as you signed Executive Order 31 which created the Healthcare Reform Commission to look into related issues in the healthcare system. VAAB also appreciates the response to earlier recommendations and your leadership in improving the Commonwealth's efforts to include more Asian American small businesses in procurement programs.

This report truly reflects the spirit and energy we all bring to serve the Commonwealth. We thank you for providing us the opportunity to work with you on behalf of the Asian American





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1111 East Broad Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor • Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Phone: (804) 225-4836 • Email: vaab@commonwealth.governor.gov  
Web: www.vaab.virginia.gov

## Summary of VAAB Meeting with Hon. Timothy Kaine Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia Sep 16, 2008

### **Board Members:**

*Victoria Mirandah, Chair*

*Ranjana Chachra, Vice-Chair*

*Angela Chiang – Acting Chair  
2007-2008*

*Mark L. Keam*

*Dilip Sarkar*

*Suwattana Sugg*

*Conrado B. Dabu*

*Robert Colorina*

*Wai-Ping Chan*

*Kim P. Nguyen*

*Krittika Onsanit*

*Silvia Patton*

*Chandrashekar Challa*

*Jaideep (JD) Kathuria*

*Surya Dhakar*

*Nalin Jain*

*Pearl Fu*

*Marj Mohta*

### VAAB members present:

Angela Chiang, Dilip Sarkar, Suwattana Sugg, Dick Dabu,  
Chandrashekar Challa, Vicki Mirandah

- The Governor met with assembled VAAB members at 10:40 a.m.
- Vicki Mirandah, highlighted the recommendations in the report and focused on the 3 areas embedded in the report.
- In the next annual report, Vicki Mirandah shared that VAAB would focus on matters of international business and the Governor agreed that it was an appropriate issue to focus on, for the 2009 report.
- The Governor highlighted that Women and Minority representation in business were 1.9% under the former administration and is now in the healthy 4-5% range.
- The Governor also shared that \$1.6 billion was allocated in construction for colleges to the issue of education brought up by VAAB in discussion.
- The Governor acknowledged the issues of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) brought up by the VAAB report and suggested that there might be standard that we would want agencies to meet.
- Vicki Mirandah brought up the issue of VAAB board member terms. VAAB recommends considering staggered terms of 2 and 4 years instead of the current standard of 4, in order to maintain continuity of experience as Board members cycle off their terms.
- Dilip Sarkar asked the Governor if the Office of Minority Healthcare has healthcare priorities established, particularly those that addressed the needs of Asians and Latinos.
- Angela Chiang asked the Governor to consider making mental health care issues more visible and supported in the Commonwealth.
- To the question raised if the Governor will be making another trip to Asia in the future, the Governor replied that he would very likely make a trip to the Middle East in April, perhaps Israel or Morocco and China in the fall.
- Vicki Mirandah asked the Governor if there were any requests that he'd like to make of the VAAB. The Governor listed the following:
  - to continue to let him know of any issues or concerns facing the Asian community in the Commonwealth