



*Founded in 1983, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles (Advancing Justice - LA), formerly known as the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, is the nation's largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) with over 80 staff and three offices (Los Angeles, Orange County, and Sacramento). Through direct services, impact litigation, policy advocacy, leadership development, and capacity building, Advancing Justice - LA focuses on the most vulnerable members of our communities while also building a strong voice for civil rights and social justice. Since our founding, Advancing Justice - LA has served more than 250,000 individuals and organizations.*

## **DIRECT SERVICES**

Advancing Justice - LA provides free legal assistance, representation, and referrals to low-income, limited-English-speaking individuals. Our main programs include:

- **Asian Language Legal Intake Project (ALLIP):** Every year, ALLIP receives more than 5,000 calls in nine languages – Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese, and English – and provides assistance on a range of issues including housing, domestic violence, family law, immigration, citizenship, consumer fraud, employment, and discrimination.
- **Domestic violence & family law:** Advancing Justice - LA has helped more than 17,000 women and children break the cycle of abuse, by providing family law and immigration assistance, over the course of more than 30 years.
- **Immigration & citizenship:** In partnership with local community organizations, Advancing Justice - LA provides citizenship assistance across California and the nation, including Charlotte, Detroit, Houston, and New York City. Over the years, Advancing Justice-LA has aided more than 15,000 citizenship applicants and distributed thousands more of our multilingual “Citizenship 101” video and workbook. We also provide immigration assistance, including aid to more than 1,100 youth eligible for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).
- **Housing:** Advancing Justice - LA helps those facing foreclosures or evictions, with a focus on those who are limited-English speaking.

## **IMPACT LITIGATION**

Advancing Justice - LA brings lawsuits to protect, enforce and expand the rights of low-income and immigrant communities. Among our most impactful cases are:

- **Low-wage immigrant workers:** Advancing Justice - LA has litigated many cases on behalf of garment workers, including *Bureerong v. Uvawas*, the sweatshop case that led to systemic changes in the garment industry, particularly increased corporate accountability and enforcement of wage and hour laws. We also represent low-wage

workers in other industries who suffer various forms of exploitation, including labor trafficking and misclassification of independent contractors.

- **Race and national origin discrimination:** Advancing Justice - LA has successfully litigated a number of major discrimination cases, including a race discrimination case against Abercrombie & Fitch and several English-only cases at hospitals. In 2012, Advancing Justice - LA reached the largest settlement (nearly \$1 million) in an English-only case against a U.S. healthcare provider. Our current cases include representing a Muslim American student bullied based on race and religion.
- **National security and civil liberties:** Advancing Justice-LA is outreaching to and advocating on behalf of Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian American communities that have been unfairly impacted by post-9/11 national security policies, such as the denial of passports to many Yemeni Americans. We are also currently litigating a FOIA case in the Ninth Circuit, seeking the disclosure of information on the “proxy detention” of a Muslim American who is a U.S. citizen.
- **Consumer fraud:** Advancing Justice - LA frequently has represented many limited English speaking immigrants who are exploited and defrauded because of their poor English skills, including cases against auto dealerships, cemeteries, and schools.
- **Education rights:** Advancing Justice - LA seeks to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for Asian Americans and other communities of color. We are currently litigating a case regarding the failure of school districts to provide language services to over 20,000 English language learners.
- **Civil rights:** Advancing Justice - LA has co-counseled major lawsuits including challenges to Propositions 187 (undocumented immigrants) and 209 (affirmative action) in California and SB 1070 (undocumented immigrants) in Arizona.

## **POLICY ADVOCACY & RESEARCH**

Advancing Justice - LA engages in policy advocacy and research to promote democratic participation and advance civil and immigrant rights at local, state, and national levels. Key areas of focus are:

- **Demographic research:** Advancing Justice - LA produces demographic reports on Asian Americans and NHPs, including national, regional, and local reports, and other critical studies (e.g., voter and political participation). We also provide relevant data analysis on other projects, such as for redistricting.
- **Voting rights:** Advancing Justice - LA protects the rights of limited-English-speaking voters through election monitoring and other advocacy that seeks to increase voter participation (e.g., increasing access to bilingual poll workers).
- **Redistricting:** For the past three decades, Advancing Justice-LA has advocated for AANHPI communities during decennial redistricting, resulting in increased political power for AANHPI voter. In 2011, we created influential statewide maps for AANHPIs, trained community organizations across the state, and developed critical unity maps with Latinos and African Americans.
- **Community engagement:** Advancing Justice - LA works with a statewide network of community organizations to build their capacity for advocating on issues, as well as targets AANHPI voters for nonpartisan voter education and mobilization. In 2012, Advancing Justice - LA volunteers called more than 40,000 voters in 13 languages

and in 2014, Advancing Justice – LA is gearing up for more voter education and mobilization.

- **Immigrant rights:** Advancing Justice - LA helps lead local efforts to mobilize and lift up Asian American and NHPI voices on immigration. Advancing Justice - LA also monitors and advocates on local and state level immigrant rights issues and works closely with undocumented Asian American youth.
- **Health access:** Through our statewide Health Justice Network, Advancing Justice - LA leads the state's most comprehensive effort to educate AANHPI communities on health care access and to advocate for inclusive health care reform implementation.

## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Beyond systemic change, Advancing Justice - LA also seeks to develop individual community members to be able to lead in a multiracial, global society. Our key programs, below, have trained more than 16,000 youth, parents, and community leaders over the years and continue to reach hundreds more every year:

- **Leadership Development in Interethnic Relations (LDIR):** LDIR trains socially conscious leaders on key skills such as facilitation, conflict management, and coalition building. LDIR's approach is committed to diversity, inclusion, and social justice, and the belief that people equipped to foster positive intergroup relations are essential to today's workplaces, schools, governments, and communities.
- **Youth & Parent Leadership Development:** Advancing Justice - LA develops the leadership skills of immigrant families by working with racially diverse youth in Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley schools and by providing multilingual training programs for Asian and Latino immigrant parents to help them advocate for their children and communities.
- **Parent Organization Network (PON):** Originally co-convened with the Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund and the Los Angeles Urban League, PON brings together more than 18 independent parent organizations that provide support, training and leadership development to over 2,000 parents in Los Angeles County. PON seeks to build a sustainable movement of parent organizations that are connecting, empowering and mobilizing parents to transform schools, to provide high quality and equitable education for all children.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING**

Advancing Justice - LA frequently partners with Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander community organizations, located in Southern California and throughout the state. Many are small, with limited staff and budgets. To increase the sustainability of small partner groups, as well as to expand their ability to work with us, Advancing Justice - LA provides funding, technical assistance and training to dozens of organizations every year. In 2013, Advancing Justice-LA regranting more than \$2 million to 73 organizations in California and around the nation. We have also opened a non-profit center in Los Angeles, to provide office, meeting and storage space for emerging organizations. These groups also receive other support, including in some cases, fiscal sponsorship and administrative support.