



VOICES

Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander

FIGHTING TO BE SEEN:

A call from Colorado's AANHPI communities
for equitable and just local news

Presented by The Voices Initiative: AANHPI Working Group

Cover photo of Mary Lee Chin by Marc Piscotty / © 2022

COLAB
COLORADO NEWS
COLLABORATIVE

**COLORADO
MEDIA
PROJECT**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Voices Initiative began in January of 2021 as a community organizing project of the nonprofit Free Press, Colorado Media Project (CMP) and the Colorado News Collaborative (COLab). It was then called News Voices: Colorado. While the name and some of the players have changed, the larger goal remains the same: reshaping a relationship among local newsrooms and communities of color in which predominantly white newsrooms wield near unilateral power over whose stories they tell, when they tell them and how. The result has been news coverage that, at best, has sidelined and silenced communities of color, shaping how they see themselves and how they are seen. At worst, irresponsible and inaccurate coverage has perpetrated harmful stereotypes with real-world consequences for these communities' health, safety and overall well-being.

The first Voices working group brought together Black community members and Black journalists. The second series of conversations, with Latino residents and Latino journalists, took place over the spring and summer of 2021. Each Voices group developed recommendations to improve coverage of and build newsroom relationships with their communities. These recommendations — including staff diversity audits, training for young people interested in journalism, diversity and inclusion workshops, and public acknowledgment of harmful past coverage — are in various stages of moving from paper to reality.

March of 2022 brought the start of the Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Voices Initiative. As with the earlier Voices discussions, this working group connected community members and journalists to chart a path toward trustworthy local news coverage that provides AANHPI Coloradans with critical information while reflecting their experiences as residents of our state.

As with the previous working groups, this one met within larger social and political contexts. For Black Voices, the touchstone was the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent protests demanding justice and equity. For Latinx Voices, it was the revelation that the state's largest commercial television station, a white-dominated newsroom, had in a single year chosen not to renew the contracts of three Latina journalists.

For the Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Voices Initiative, a group of 30 people of different ethnicities and backgrounds, the undercurrents were as complex as the communities themselves. Inescapable was the rise of anti-Asian rhetoric as the COVID-19 pandemic spread. Former President Trump's repeated references to the "China virus;" the use by media of images of Asian people in stories about the coronavirus; the random, brutal attacks upon Asian Americans, including the murders of Asian women in Atlanta, were prominent features of news coverage. Each represented an ongoing and traumatizing assault upon a community's psyche.



Removal of the historically inaccurate "Chinese riot" plaque in Denver
Photo courtesy of City of Denver

Closer to home, as the group began meeting, Denver's mayor issued an apology for an act of 19th-Century violence perpetrated by a white mob against the city's Chinese residents. That grievous chapter of history was compounded by an historical marker that mischaracterized the mayhem and murder as the "Chinese riot of 1880." Asian American groups had long lobbied for the removal of the placard and the city removed it as part of its apology. Local news coverage was plentiful and serves as an example of what newsrooms can do with enough intention and attention, said Joie Ha, vice-chair of Colorado Asian Pacific United and a community liaison for the AANHPI Voices Initiative.

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As each of these working groups met, these undercurrents surfaced in expressions of frustration with the status quo and vows that the work of the Voices Initiative must not be extinguished by the passing of time or fancy.

No community is a monolith and Colorado's Asian communities are so diverse that even choosing the umbrella term for the group — Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander — was an evolving process. Census Bureau data tells us that the five largest communities within the AANHPI community in Colorado have Chinese, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean and Filipino ancestries. But at least 30 AANHPI ethnicities, speaking many dozens of languages or dialects, are represented in this state.

Members of the Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Voices working group



1. Amanda "Bo" Parrish, content creator, AMANDA, Inc.
 2. Ankita Arora, postdoctoral fellow, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
 3. Cheryl Hwang, journalist, TV producer, podcast host, KDVR/KWGN
 4. Daranee Teng, managing director of programs, Moonshot edVentures
 5. Emma Schwarz, board chair, Mongolian School of Colorado; controller, Rose Community Foundation
 6. Fion Surges, technical program manager, Nordstrom
 7. Harry Budisidharta, executive director, Asian Pacific Development Center
 8. Jenny Chu, public programs manager, History Colorado
 9. June Homdayjanakul, public health scholar/activist, Colorado School of Public Health
 10. Kanchan Singh, southern Colorado liaison, Colorado Sikhs
 11. Kimberly Ming, co-founder, Sister Circle Wellness, LLC, storyteller
 12. Lena Chhay, consultant, Community Organizing for Radical Empathy (CORE)
 13. Mary Lee Chin, food and nutrition communications consultant, Nutrition Edge Communications
 14. Meta Sarmiento, poet, rapper, educator
 15. Riyaz Gayasaddin, vice-president of programs and talent, Camelback Ventures
 16. Sridevi Bangaru, musician, performer, analyst
 17. Stacey Shigaya, executive director, Sakura Foundation and Sakura Square LLC
 18. Susanna Park, consultant, public health scientist, CORE (Community Organizing for Radical Empathy) Consulting
 19. Tamara Chuang, reporter and co-founder, *The Colorado Sun*
 20. Thy Anh Vo, freelance journalist
 21. Vignesh Ramachandran, co-founder and editor, Red, White and Brown Media
- Not Pictured: Harleen Schenk, behavioral analyst

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In addition to these working group members, eight community liaisons and co-facilitators worked in partnership with COLab and Colorado Media Project.

1. Annie Guo VanDan, executive director, Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network; President of Asian Avenue magazine
2. Frances A. Campbell, president/CEO, Asian Chamber of Commerce
3. Gil Asakawa, journalist, author, blogger and public speaker
4. Joie Ha, founder, Community Organizing for Radical Empathy (CORE); vice-chair, Colorado Asian Pacific United; and chair, Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission
5. Kristi Keolakai, owner, Ku Consulting
6. Naureen Singh, community organizer, Asian Pacific Development Center
7. Sara Moore, executive director, Colorado Dragon Boat
8. Shauna Medeiros-Tuilaepa, owner, No Ke Aloha



The 30 Coloradans who chose to participate in the Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Voices Initiative illustrate a range of ancestries, cultures, histories, experiences and perspectives. They are immigrants or refugees who grew up here and they are American-born children of immigrants. They have lived here for generations and they are first- or second-generation citizens. They identify as Americans, as Coloradans, as members of their respective, sometimes multiple, ethnic communities: Indian and Punjabi, Korean and South Korean, Thai and Thai Chinese Mon, Chinese, Taiwanese, Indonesian, Native Hawaiian, Japanese, Mongolian, Filipino, Vietnamese.

Where East Asians expressed concern over news coverage that reduced them to public health threats and model minorities, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders lamented their near total invisibility as a distinct community in Colorado. South Asian group participants grappled with the challenge of community members who won't speak with journalists because they do not see themselves reflected accurately in coverage and the need to overcome that reluctance to combat stereotypes and misrepresentation.

"It's a little bit of a chicken-or-the-egg issue," said Voices member Vignesh Ramachandran, co-founder and editor of Red, White and Brown Media. "Not speaking up, but also not wanting to speak up because I don't see myself or hear myself [in news coverage]."

Echoing that was Voices member, musician and performer Sridevi Bangaru, who, like Ramachandran, is an American of Indian descent: "It's not just representation, it's accurate representation."

The consensus reflected in the following recommendations for newsrooms, philanthropy and community members is not surprising from any community of color in a majority-white state whose mainstream news outlets are predominantly white. But coming from a group that is dwarfed in numbers by white and Latino residents, a population that is also among the state's fastest growing, the critique is especially sharp and poignant: to be a fraction of the population is to be unseen. To be both few in number and complex in nature is to be subject to generalization rooted in ignorance of distinct histories and cultures. It is to perpetually be cast in the role of the outsider.

"It's a little bit of a chicken-or-the-egg issue... Not speaking up, but also not wanting to speak up because I don't see myself or hear myself [in news coverage]."

– VIGNESH RAMACHANDRAN, CO-FOUNDER AND EDITOR OF RED, WHITE AND BROWN MEDIA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Members of the AANHPI Voices Initiative talk about their findings at the Advancing Equity in Local News conference in Aurora in September 2022.
Photo by Endale Getahun, KETO-FM

“Newsrooms cannot continue to do the same thing over and over.”

— META SARMIENTO, A FILIPINO POET, RAPPER AND EDUCATOR

“To have one’s sense of belonging constantly challenged is very isolating and I’m sick of questions like ‘Where are you really from?’” Bangaru said. “People never see you as one of them. They benefit from the things we bring to the table, but they never treat you as one of them. No matter what.”

In three words: Underrepresented. Overlooked. Oversimplified.

Said Voices liaison Gil Askawa, a Japanese American journalist, blogger and public speaker: “APIs have historically been invisible in the mainstream media, unless it’s an explosion of hate crimes or a bunch of 12-year-old geniuses going to Harvard who are all Asian American. Even then, it took a year after the hate crimes sparked by the pandemic before mainstream media paid attention.”

For AANHPI journalists, who are scattered few and far among the state’s newsrooms, the expectation by newsrooms and among some community members that they are solely responsible for accurate, consistent coverage is both an overwhelming responsibility and an unrealistic expectation. It is, working group members said, incumbent upon those newsrooms to hire more journalists of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander descent. It is equally critical that all reporters — no matter their race or ethnicity — educate themselves on that which connects AANHPI communities and that which distinguishes them. And newsrooms must find ways to reach younger audiences, who “never watch the news and are never going to see themselves in something they don’t watch,” said Voices member Meta Sarmiento, a Filipino poet, rapper and educator.

Expressing a sentiment that applied to all the recommendations, Sarmiento added: “Newsrooms cannot continue to do the same thing over and over.”

Working group members also called upon philanthropy to continue to help newsrooms build pipelines of talent in communities of color through journalism training, to help provide resources for staff and story audits as well as online directories that will allow newsrooms and community members to more easily find and speak to one another.

Not least in all these efforts is the role of the community itself, working group members said. If the goal of the Voices Initiative is that communities of color share power over who tells their stories and how, and if the demand is to see themselves reflected accurately and fairly in coverage then they, too, must reach out to newsrooms to build relationships. They must find ways and receive the support needed to tell their own stories. They must challenge inaccurate or biased reporting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In each of the following recommendations, a role exists for newsrooms, community members and funders and other institutions, but the work ahead calls for collaboration among all, a sharing of responsibility and accountability.

Recommendation 1:

Establish ongoing connections with Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Coloradans.

Recommendation 2:

Increase Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander representation in newsrooms and in coverage.

Recommendation 3:

Represent culture and history intentionally and accurately.

Recommendation 4:

Invest in translation and adapt media formats to reach younger and older generations.

Undergirding each of these recommendations are new structures that allow for ongoing communication between community members and newsrooms. Without these structures, there can be no consistency, liaison Asakawa said. Without consistency, he continued, there can be no trust. Without trust, there will be no change.

We at COLab and Colorado Media Project are grateful to the people who took the time and devoted their energy to these conversations and the crafting of the recommendations. As with the other Voices cohorts, these working group members make no claim to represent all points of view among Colorado's AANHPI community. The group's work, this report and the recommendations are instead a starting point, an invitation to more conversation, more ideas for change and how to achieve it.

Participation in the Voices Initiative is part of a trajectory of advocacy and activism that has always been present in the stories of Colorado's ethnic and racial minority communities fighting for accurate representation. The call for trustworthy relationships between community and newsrooms — that foundation of deeper, more nuanced and meaningful local news coverage — has been persistent. **These Coloradans of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander descent have raised their voices to join that call. They ask you to do the same.**

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, Free Press' News Voices project launched what has become The Voices Initiative, a Colorado News Collaborative and Colorado Media Project partnership bringing together community members and journalists to ask: What will it take to ensure that local news coverage informs and illuminates the lives of our state's communities of color? What actions must newsrooms, community members and funders take to create a future in which Latino, Black, Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander and Indigenous Coloradans share and shape the power of local news media to tell stories about their communities?

In March 2022, Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island community leaders and COLab's director of community engagement, Silvia Solis, guided a series of conversations with a power shift in mind. For the community leaders, the discussions could not be held without acknowledging the implicit and explicit bias that newsrooms displayed by repeatedly making Asians the face of COVID-19. Or acknowledging the psychological harm caused by the coverage of anti-Asian hate incidents in a barrage of still and video images showing brutalized Asian elders and women — stories and images without nuance that fueled false and divisive narratives and singled out the main perpetrators as other individuals of color. These community leaders, too, expressed shock at the failure of some newsrooms to cover the fatal shootings of six women of Asian descent in Georgia as a hate crime. All this influenced how Asian, and particularly East Asian community members, viewed the trustworthiness of national and local news coverage. Simply put: it could not be trusted.

Thirty participants joined at least one of four virtual conversations representing AANHPI communities in Colorado. Community members, leaders and journalists identifying as part of these communities together discussed the following:



What are the information gaps in various AANHPI communities?

How would you define past and present relationships and experiences with local news media?

Where are community members getting their news and information?

What are your solutions for better representation of and access to information for the AANHPI community?

While Colorado's AANHPI community is small, making up about 4% of the population, it cannot be said enough that the word "Asian" itself holds — and hides — tremendous diversity within the group. This report and its recommendations are based upon the perspectives of representatives from several Asian-led groups and organizations and experiences of individuals of, among others, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Mongolian, Thai, Taiwanese, Malaysian, Singaporean, Filipino, Indian, Native Hawaiian and Korean origin or ancestry.

Ancestry, nativity, and languages spoken all make the AANHPI community one of the most complex in Colorado. It is also one of the fastest-growing populations. More than 60% of Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Islander Coloradans were born outside of the United States and 65% speak a language other than English at home. About 30% speak English less than "well" according to 2020 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

INTRODUCTION

It is both because of this great diversity and because the Voices Initiative is an evolving project — each iteration is a learning experience — that for the first time the discussions among community members and journalists consisted not only of two larger group discussions, but also broke into two smaller and more specific sessions: one for those who identify as South Asian and one for Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders.

Over the course of these discussions, community members said they wanted their stories and perspectives to become part of local newsrooms' declared efforts to diversify their staffs and their coverage — efforts, group members said, that seem to be largely focused on and for the benefit of Black and Latino communities.

Two key themes emerged from the four working group conversations that may help newsrooms and funders better understand the communities' perspectives:



Voices members from l to r: Gil Asakawa, Stacey Shigaya, Sara Moore, Thy Anh Vo, Fion Surges, Joie Ha.

Photo by Justin Oshita, lineclock photography

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE: THEME 1

News coverage renders much of community life and its nuances invisible.

The lament of invisibility was a repeated one. So, too, was the critique common among other communities of color: coverage veers to the extremes, the success stories and the tragedies with little reflection or understanding of what constitutes the AANHPI experience in Colorado. Such caricature denies people humanity, complexity and dignity. The challenge of finding nuance is greater because the various ethnic AANHPI populations are a fraction of a fraction, so small that finding accurate statewide or more localized data to brush in the lines, the key details, is difficult. Absence from critical statewide public data sets often means absence from news coverage.

East Asian working group members criticized stories and imagery that reduced Asian people to the “exotic” and they specifically condemned “model minority” coverage. Such coverage dismisses the real struggles of different ethnic groups under the Asian American umbrella, depriving them of needed resources. It also singles out Asian American achievement in ways that suggest, sometimes explicitly, that other communities of color are less deserving or hardworking.

The tendency to blur the distinctions among AANHPI communities is made easier because Colorado's newsrooms are predominately white and generally uninformed about the unique histories of each ethnicity. Among those Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander journalists in Colorado who participated in the working groups, the general sentiment was that they have almost always been the only ones in the room.

And presence does not equal power. Representation without the ability to make changes in newsroom culture or coverage contributes to both personal and professional exhaustion.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE: THEME 2

Language and format are key aspects of access to news and information.

A group as diverse as Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Coloradans relies upon many different sources for news and information.

Younger generations turn to online platforms and social media sources as well as mobile applications. Older generations prefer word-of-mouth and newspapers, television news and flyers, but also use social media and online platforms that tend to be ethnicity-specific (WhatsApp, WeChat among Chinese, KakaoTalk among Korean, and Line among Taiwanese and Japanese).

New immigrants and older generations often bypass English-language national and local news entirely. Across generations, according to participants, a preference exists for word-of-mouth information that includes members of the family, social groups and friends.

Overall, working group members said people in their communities are generally dissatisfied with the lack of daily news and information they need in English-language local news sources.

“Local media should be aware that they are not providing the news we want to see and hear,” one Voices group member said.

Community members are especially vulnerable to mis- and disinformation because of the over-reliance on word-of-mouth and social media networks for information, group members said. The volume of misleading and wrong information that circulated throughout the pandemic only underscores the need to find ways to shore up this vulnerability.



Voices and community members gathered to brainstorm ways to improve local news coverage on Aug. 10, 2022 at the Filipino-American Community Center in Edgewater, Colorado.

Photo by Vivian Norman

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are meant for newsrooms, community organizations, funders and others working together toward deepening understanding and coverage of the state's Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities.

1

Establish ongoing connections with Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Coloradans.

"Reporters should be part of the community, or at least a familiar sight at events or within the community — though they don't have to be Asian."

"The community is calling out for authentic engagement and not just when it is convenient for (the media)."

WHAT NEWSROOMS CAN DO

Make it easy for community members to pitch stories and connect with the media.

AANHPI Voices members, like those in the Black and Latinx Voices groups, emphasized the need for consistent and broad community engagement. Journalists, they said, need to tap into the vast expertise, insight and experience of communities of color rather than simply turning to the same voices repeatedly. That outreach must happen beyond deadline needs. Working group members called for more intentional work building trust and fewer last-minute "can you find someone for me?" calls, which reduce community experiences to convenient anecdotes.

Part of that engagement is making it easier for community members to reach reporters, to understand what does and does not make a story, how stories come together and where community members can play a role in story creation and development. AANHPI group members pointed to the fairly constant churn of staff in newsrooms as a barrier to building needed trust. Too often when an established contact leaves a newsroom, they said, communication stops.

- ✓ **Establish effective communication loops to hear back from members of the community.** Following up after stories for feedback and critique helps build trust with the communities. Let community members know how they can pitch stories and connect with reporters and editors.

Example: The Oaklandside last year sat its first cohort of seven community advisers, who will review published articles and share feedback "using an online form that asks, which, if any, of our core values the story lives up to and how."

- ✓ **Correct mistakes and apologize** when stories misrepresent or include inaccurate information about AANHPI communities.
- ✓ **Show up.** Attend and support local community events and organizations to learn about community life, culture and history.
- ✓ **Build in budgets and timelines at the level of leadership and management** to ensure reporters are allowed the time and provided the resources to build relationships.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Establish ongoing connections with Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Coloradans.

WHAT FUNDERS CAN DO

"We need a lot of education in our own communities. Not many know how to 'work the media' to send those press releases, to comment, to correct misinformation. White folks do this constantly. Our community doesn't know how and, if we do, we tend to feel shame about speaking out. We need to educate our own folk."

- ✓ **Support newsroom connections to community and community access to newsrooms through an online source/newsroom guide.** A constantly updated directory of professionals, business owners and specialists of color accompanied by a newsroom-specific list of reporters, their beats and contact information would overcome the most basic barrier to establishing trusted relationships between local media and community members: How to find one another.

Example: New Jersey Advance Media & the Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University have created an [online database of diverse sources](#) to "ensure that New Jersey local and statewide news coverage is more equitable and better reflects the communities we serve." Spotlight PA has a similar "[Diverse Source Database](#)." Neither, however, includes newsroom directories.

- ✓ **Support media literacy workshops or toolkits** to help empower communities through training that covers basics such as how stories are selected and reported, what the internal processes are, and what community members can do to influence news gathering and better inform reporting.



Voices and community members l to r: Joie Ha, Tamara Chuang, Sara Moore, Nga Vương-Sandoval and Fran Campbell at the Filipino-American Community Center on Aug. 10, 2022. Photo by Gill Asakawa

RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Establish ongoing connections with Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Coloradans.

WHAT COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN DO

- ✓ **Help build a digital community directory** by contributing your name, contact, areas of expertise and encouraging others to do the same.
- ✓ **Host media literacy training for your organizations or social groups.** Journalists are always eager to talk about how they do their jobs. Consider inviting reporters for Q&A sessions.

2

Increase the representation of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in newsrooms and in coverage.

“Don’t just cover stories that align with model-minority myth ideas, but also stories that have historically and presently been seen as shameful and not discussed (like) addiction, mental health, evictions.”

Many stories go untold. Both by sourcing mainstream stories to include AANHPI residents and their perspectives and by increasing the number of stories specifically focused on their communities, local news could broaden and deepen its coverage. These goals go hand-in-hand with the hiring, retention and promotion of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander journalists.

The dream is not having to look solely to AANHPI outlets for news about AANHPI Coloradans, but for those stories to be everywhere, several working group members said. That coverage should celebrate successes and contributions without shying away from more difficult topics.

“Don’t just cover stories that align with model-minority myth ideas, but also stories that have historically and presently been seen as shameful and not discussed (like) addiction, mental health, evictions.”

AANHPI Coloradans are Coloradans and should be included and covered as such, group members said. At the same time, better understanding the experiences of each ethnic group means better understanding that some news stories are of greater relevance than others. For example, a significant share of the population is made up of immigrants or refugees and/or U.S.-born children of immigrants or refugees, and many have families stuck in what, for countries such as the Philippines, has been a decades-long visa backlog. Immigration-related news and information is critical for these communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2

Increase the representation of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in newsrooms and in coverage.

WHAT NEWSROOMS CAN DO

"We need people to see that we belong and exist here, and that everything isn't about white people. We need stereotypes and biases to end and to be seen as humans."

- ✓ **Include the perspectives and experiences of Coloradans of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island descent into all coverage, not just ethnic coverage.** Integrating AANHPI voices into everyday coverage accurately reflects the many roles and the range of expertise of these communities in ways that transcend ethnicity and emphasize common experiences as Coloradans.

"We need people to see that we belong and exist here, and that everything isn't about white people. We need stereotypes and biases to end and to be seen as humans."

- ✓ **Make the hiring of AANHPI journalists — and the support of existing staff — a priority on equal footing with Black and Latino journalists.** Be transparent about hiring, retention and promotion with regular public disclosures.

Example: COLab and the national nonprofit News Leaders Association, with the financial support of Colorado Media Project, this year launched a survey of nearly 170 Colorado newsrooms in an attempt to establish the state's first publicly available report of newsroom demographics.

- ✓ **Perform source and coverage audits regularly, including examinations of past coverage.** Set measurable goals to determine whether representation in stories is changing over time.

Example: In October, *The Oregonian* published an in-depth examination of and apology for its history of racist coverage and its present-day consequences. The project, called Publishing Prejudice, also took on the paper's support of the mass incarceration of Japanese residents during World War II. Its [analysis of that coverage](#) declared: "From its first days publishing as a daily in 1861 until well into the 20th century, *The Oregonian* existed as a newspaper by white men, for white men. The consequences were profound. Its white supremacist worldviews — excusing lynching, supporting segregation, stigmatizing people of color — helped shape the state today."

Example: *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in 2021 published the findings of an extensive audit of its coverage. Researchers reviewed 3,000 articles, photos and video and conducted nearly 50 interviews with staff. Among their [broad findings](#), the study determined that despite the region's diversity, "a significant majority of people who appear in *The Inquirer* as news subjects or sources are white and male. When *Inquirer* news teams are themselves diverse, they tend to include more people of color in their stories."

RECOMMENDATIONS

2

Increase the representation of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in newsrooms and in coverage.

WHAT FUNDERS CAN DO

- ✓ **Support periodic third-party source and content audits** of local news coverage of AANHPI communities and/or of newsrooms that wish to implement regular tracking protocols.
- ✓ **Support paid, structured internships or fellowships for student journalists of color.** Offering young journalists the opportunity to work alongside more experienced reporters and ensuring that that training builds in consistent feedback or dedicated mentorship is irreplaceable as a means of growing the ranks of AANHPI, Black, Latino and Indigenous reporters.

WHAT COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN DO

“Media coverage by its nature holds people accountable, if it’s serious and fair and balanced and accurate. The community can hold the media accountable by simply speaking out.”

- ✓ **Hold newsrooms accountable for poor coverage and the lack of representation in newsroom hiring, retention and promotion.** Community members can seize power over their own stories by demanding errors be immediately corrected, lobbying newsrooms to hire more AANHPI staffers, speaking up on behalf of working journalists of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island descent.

“Media coverage by its nature holds people accountable, if it’s serious and fair and balanced and accurate. The community can hold the media accountable by simply speaking out.”

Example: In June of this year, [Asian Americans rallied](#) on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., protesting, among other things, the lack of Asian American representation in media. In 2021, a group of Colorado AAPI leaders reached out to local newsrooms using photos of Asians for COVID-19 stories and the photos were quickly changed.

Example: In the aftermath of news that Denver’s 9News had not renewed the contracts of three Latinas in 2021, a group of local Latina lawmakers and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists rallied to confront the station’s management, demanding change. Since then, the station has created an editorial department focused on race and culture, promoted or hired journalists of color to management positions and hired a Latino to take on a newly created executive-level job responsible for “social responsibility and community affairs.”

- ✓ **Create a journalism internship scholarship fund.** Community organizations and business leaders in partnership with local newsrooms, journalism schools or funders could create a pool of funding dedicated to supporting up-and-coming AANHPI journalists.

Example: While not a direct comparison, the Community Foundation, which serves southwest Colorado, has created a [paid internship fund](#) in collaboration with local high schools. It awards grants to local nonprofits in La Plata County.

RECOMMENDATIONS



3

Represent culture and history intentionally and accurately.

“The larger (majority) population doesn’t know us. They don’t know about our history. Write about our history, start there.”

“We want to learn from each other. I know what it is like to be Japanese American but don’t know anything about being another ethnicity. I’d like to be able to see each other and support each other.”

Increasing the number of AANHPI voices in stories is one step. Understanding what makes each community unique within the larger Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander umbrella is another.

“The larger (majority) population doesn’t know us. They don’t know about our history. Write about our history, start there.”

Nuanced stories filled with cultural context do justice to the history of these communities and also help bridge needed connections between and across them, working group members said.

“We want to learn from each other. I know what it is like to be Japanese American but don’t know anything about being another ethnicity. I’d like to be able to see each other and support each other.”

Beware, too, of the “white savior complex,” group members cautioned. Examine coverage and framing of stories that suggest Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities need to be saved. Instead, approach coverage with humility and a willingness to learn.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3

Represent culture and history intentionally and accurately.

WHAT NEWSROOMS CAN DO

✓ **Take the time to research** detailed community and historical data and facts about individual countries, ethnicities and communities when producing stories that fall under the larger Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander umbrella.

✓ **Bring nuance, depth and humanity to stories about Asian communities.**

Show communities' cultural norms, traditions, music, contributions, struggles and resiliency. Also report on the collaborations that have existed among the different communities under the larger Asian American umbrella.

Example: Multiple Colorado news outlets, including *The Denver Post*, *Denverite*, RMPBS, CPR, *The Colorado Sun*, and 9News, covered the city of Denver's apology to its Asian American community for its history of anti-Asian bigotry and violence. Stories delved into that history and included perspectives of AANHPI community members. Followup coverage included the successful campaign by a coalition of AANHPI community groups to remove an historical plaque that referred to a 1880 anti-Chinese riot by white residents as a "Chinese riot."

✓ **Narrow the scope of stories** to specific ethnicities, identities and countries of origin. Reporting with a narrower focus offers newsrooms opportunities to avoid generalization, allowing smaller communities, in particular, to tell their stories and to educate Coloradans on just how diverse the AANHPI community is.

✓ **Use appropriate terminology** when referring to specific communities — e.g., Desi, a word used to describe the people, cultures, and products of the Indian subcontinent, can be an exclusionary term. Use West, East and South Asia to break down to more specific regions within Asia.

Example: The Asian American Journalists Association regularly updates its [guidance page](#) for journalists covering issues affecting AANHPI communities.

Example: North Carolina Asian Americans Together also offers coverage guidance and a [backgrounder](#) on the definition of "Asian American."

WHAT FUNDERS CAN DO

✓ **Support the development of an Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities digital "Bluebook"** that offers data, links and resources with information about the history, culture and language of these communities globally and in Colorado.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3

Represent culture and history intentionally and accurately.

WHAT COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN DO

- ✓ **Take the time to research.** Submit op-ed and first-person commentary to news outlets so that AANHPI perspectives are regularly included.
- ✓ **Invite reporters** not only to larger community events or festivals, but also to smaller occasions that tell more personal stories.
- ✓ **Share AANHPI-centric stories** with local media and coordinate local media's presence on-site for events.



AANHPI Voices members joining hands.
Photo by Justin Oshita, lineclock photography

4

Invest in translation and adapt media formats to reach younger and older generations as well as newer immigrants.

"...meet people where they are at."

Language differences are a real barrier to information access for a large percentage of AANHPI Coloradans, especially older individuals and newer immigrants. Working group members emphasized the need to dedicate resources to translating stories if news outlets are serious about effectively reaching and engaging these communities.

After Spanish, Chinese — including Mandarin and Cantonese — is the second most common non-English language spoken as the primary language in households in Colorado. Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Hindi, Nepali, Marathi and Japanese are also among the AANHPI languages in Colorado's top 15 most common spoken languages, the combination of which represents 11% of the state's households.

Chat and social media applications (e.g., LINE, WhatsApp and Telegram) are popular sources of information. If newsrooms seek to "meet people where they are at," using these platforms can provide communities with greater access to local news and information and can become a force against the influence of mis- and disinformation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4

Invest in translation and adapt media formats to reach younger and older generations as well as newer immigrants.

WHAT NEWSROOMS CAN DO

- ✓ **Translate stories** that feature AANHPI sources who speak languages other than English. While newsrooms don't have the resources to translate every story featuring AANHPI voices, editors should constantly be thinking about translation, giving priority to stories providing critical information.

Example: AANHPI Voices member Vignesh Ramachandran earlier this year shared examples of four newsrooms translating stories to better reach their audiences. During the height of the pandemic, *Honolulu Civil Beat* "published service journalism pieces and resources about the virus in Marshallese, Chuukese, Kosraean, and Tagalog so more communities could get vital information."

- ✓ **Employ trusted professional interpreters and translators** to conduct interviews with and translate stories about non-English speaking community members.
- ✓ **Use commonly used social media and communication apps to share news and information**, including WhatsApp, WeChat, Kakao Talk, LINE, Viber, Facebook groups, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter and Tik Tok.

Example: The Institute for Nonprofit News has a regular series of Q&As with nonprofit newsrooms trying different ways to reach communities of color. One of the more recent Q&As featured the Dallas Free Press' use of text messaging and community events.

- ✓ **Partner with ethnic media news outlets on jointly reported stories or through story sharing.** Both allow smaller, ethnic outlets to benefit from the resources and reach of the mainstream newsrooms and mainstream newsrooms to introduce themselves to new audiences.

Example: When COLab partner media collaborated on an investigation into Colorado's broken mental health safety net system, mainstream media including Colorado Public Radio, *The Colorado Sun* and the *Colorado Springs Gazette* shared deeply reported stories with other partners, including ethnic media. And the Spanish language Radio TriColor in Aspen translated content into Spanish for its community and shared the translated stories back to the larger network.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4

Invest in translation and adapt media formats to reach younger and older generations as well as newer immigrants.

WHAT FUNDERS CAN DO

- ✓ **Support ethnic and mainstream media efforts to translate stories into more languages.**

Example: Colorado Media Project and its coalition of funders in 2022 awarded a grant to Mile High Asian Media for, among other things, more translation of "information from *Asian Avenue Magazine*, *Rocky Mountain Chinese Weekly*, and other sources into other Asian languages."

- ✓ **Support partnerships between ethnic media and community members and mainstream newsrooms** seeking to provide critical information to larger and more targeted audiences.

Example: Colorado Media Project and its coalition of funders awarded Afrik Digest "\$15,000 to support networking events and dialogues between Colorado's mainstream newsroom media and African immigrants with expertise in diverse subject matters, in partnership with the Pan-African Business Association and the Urban Tikkun Centre."

- ✓ **Create or support the creation of a directory of ethnic media or addition to the Colorado Mapping Project** to offer Coloradans a sense of the diversity within the AANHPI and other communities of color as well as to spotlight ethnic press and inform mainstream newsrooms of the work ethnic media is doing.

Example: The City University of New York's Craig Newmark School of Journalism created a digital guide to community media called "[Many Voices, One City](#)." Users can search by type of outlet, publication frequency, neighborhood, community and language.

WHAT COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN DO

- ✓ **Meet with local editors** to discuss local AANHPI community needs for translation and alternate means of accessing information. Newsrooms don't know what they don't know.
- ✓ **Let newsrooms know interpretation needs** before community events so that all who wish to participate can.

MOVING FORWARD

The recommendations above offer a foundation for newsrooms and AANHPI communities, with the support of foundations and other institutions, to open two-way lines of communication, the seeds of trust. Finding other tools remains an imperative and the work ahead requires a clear-eyed acknowledgment that it won't be easy. Newsrooms are stretched thin and in constant churn. Community members have learned to bypass mainstream outlets altogether, not trusting them to represent or inform them well and doubtful that the more recent calls for change will actually result in any that last.

The question of who represents “community” and who decides also requires further scrutiny. Future outreach must include AANHPI-identifying lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) Coloradans, older individuals, and those residing in rural spaces across the state. Including voices and differentiating perspectives from AANHPI communities absent from these discussions also will be important.

CALL TO ACTION

Above all, we, the working group members and communities represented through this process, want to see action. We want to see the status quo upended. We want the power to tell, shape, inform and correct stories about our communities. We want to be seen and heard. We want to read, watch and listen to news stories that grant us the dignity of our humanity in all its complexity. We also encourage members of the community to remain connected to this work and to organize and advocate for change.

COLab and CMP will continue to support newsrooms using this report as a starting point for that change, searching for — and finding — new ways to better serve all Coloradans.

APPENDIX A: PEOPLE

Community Liaisons and Co-facilitators

Eight AANHPI community liaisons and co-facilitators worked in partnership with COLab and CMP to inform the design of the project, outline an outreach strategy, and help connect with Asian leaders, community members, and organizations, groups and coalitions serving Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders across the state to engage in conversation.

The core community liaisons included:

Annie Guo VanDan (she/her/hers) is the executive director of Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network, where she works to create equitable spaces and opportunities for Asian American Pacific Islanders. She previously worked at Change Matrix and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, where she provided training and consultation on health equity and community engagement. Born in Taipei, Taiwan, her family immigrated to Denver in 1988. In 2006, she co-founded Asian Avenue magazine, a monthly Denver publication that lifts up the stories of the Asian community. She received her bachelor of journalism degree from the University of Missouri Columbia and is a Maynard 200 Fellow, a fellowship program for journalists of color. She also obtained her MBA in Health Administration from the University of Colorado Denver and is a Colorado Family Leadership Training Institute graduate and facilitator, which is a training that promotes civic engagement and community leadership.

Frances A. Campbell (she/her/hers) was born and raised in Denver, a daughter of Filipino immigrants. She started her career as a Pediatric LPN and, before moving to the position of president/CEO of the Asian Chamber of Commerce, she was senior clinical support at Jefferson Center for Mental Health and a certified Mental Health First Aid Instructor. Fran served 14 years as a Denver Commissioner for both the Asian American Pacific Islander Commission and the Immigrant & Refugee Commission. She was an elected Officer of the Filipino-American Community of Colorado, and she served on the Governors Asian Advisory Council. Fran is currently on the Cultural Advisory Board of Heritage Camps for Adoptive Families. In 2020-2021, Fran participated as a committee co-chair on the Denver Economic Relief and Recovery Council, ensuring equitable outreach on all recommendations. Additionally, Fran was appointed by Governor Polis as the AAPI representative on the Colorado Minority Business Advisory Board.

Gil Asakawa (he/him/his) is a journalist, author, blogger and public speaker who focuses on diversity issues in the media, especially on Asian and Asian American identity and issues. His latest book, "Tabemasho! Let's Eat! The Tasty History of Japanese Food in America," was published in August 2022 by Stone Bridge Press.

Joie Ha (she/her/hers) has been an activist and organizer for minority communities in Colorado for over 10 years. As the daughter of refugees, she has always endeavored to do more good for more people. She has a B.A. in Anthropology and an M.A. in Development Practice with a focus on holistic methods of treating mental health for the Vietnamese refugee community in Denver. She has completed development work in Malaysia as a Community Development Officer in Kampung Sungai Suloh, and in Cambodia as a researcher regarding how hip-hop can create fictive kin for youth enticed by the familial aspects of gangs. Joie often engages in community projects with a focus on anti-racist work and civic engagement through her Diversity, Equity and Inclusion firm, Community Organizing for Radical Empathy (CORE). In her community, she currently sits as chair for the Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission, and vice chair for Colorado Asian Pacific United.

Sara Moore (she/her/hers) is the executive director for Colorado Dragon Boat. She brings over five years of non-profit executive management experience. Sara has managed large scale events and significant fundraising efforts as district director for the Longs Peak Council Boy Scouts of America in Boulder. Sara earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Allied Health Sciences with a Minor in Biology at Grand Valley State University in Michigan.

APPENDIX A: PEOPLE

An additional three community leaders helped support ethnically-focused outreach to ensure the inclusion of South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander voices in the process, including:

Kristi Keolakai (she/her/hers) is the owner and principal of Ku Consulting. She is of Native Hawaiian, Chinese, Filipina, Portuguese, and Irish descent. Kristi works as a consultant. She previously held positions at The Denver Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, and Community Shares of Colorado. Kristi is also chair of the Colorado AAPI Circle. She holds Master's degrees in social work and public administration.

Naureen Singh (she/her/hers) is the Youth Support and Development Specialist at the Asian Pacific Development Center, the Policy Director of Colorado Sikhs, and currently serves in the United States Air Force. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology from the University of Colorado-Boulder and went on to earn her Master of Criminal Justice degree from the University of Colorado-Denver. Most recently, she researched the impact of COVID-19 on Colorado's Asian American population with hate violence and hate crimes. In addition to her academic work, Naureen has extensive professional experience with grassroots organizing, interfaith coalition building, and community building. She currently serves on Colorado's Asian American and Pacific Islander Statewide Steering Committee, CU Denver's School of Public Affairs GOLD Board, and continues to volunteer and provide consulting for education and civil rights organizations. In her free time, Naureen enjoys listening to K-POP music, dancing, and spending quality time with her chihuahua.

Working Group Members

Amanda "Bo" Parrish (she/he/e's) is a Korean adoptee raised by a West Virginian family. Parrish grew up in Northern Virginia, moved to Denver, Colorado in 2017, and got married in 2018. An avid supporter of Asian adoptee organizations and the movers and shakers who lead them, Parrish volunteers e's time and skills to benefit e's Asian adoptee community. Parrish writes poetry, screenplays, and other creative writing and will be part of the upcoming open mic organized by Boston Korean Adoptees.

Ankita Arora (she/her/hers) is a postdoctoral scholar at the University of Colorado - Anschutz Medical Campus. As an international researcher on work visa, she has been faced with multiple challenges during her training — from lack of funding sources, professional development opportunities, maintaining visa status to fighting with increasing xenophobia. While forging her own path through these bottlenecks, she has grown to appreciate the importance of advocating and role of policy for science towards developing a better workforce. She is an active member of early-career researchers science policy group, National Science Policy Network (NSPN) and wishes to become a better advocate for the needs of the underrepresented in STEM. She did her graduate studies at Heidelberg University in Germany.

Shauna Medeiros-Tuilaepa (she/her/hers) is the owner of No Ke Aloha Inc., a restaurant and caterer specializing in Polynesian cuisine. Established in 2015, No Ke Aloha Inc. thrives to connect Pacific Islander communities and those close to them while advocating for healthier changes in food options as well as incorporating sustainable and environmentally friendly choices within company operations. Shauna received her undergraduate degree from the University of Denver, earning a Bachelor's in Fine Arts and a minor in marketing. She began her performing arts career in 2001 with one of the first Polynesian dance revues in Colorado where she learned more about the languages, cultures, and dances from many different islands in the South Pacific. In 2008, she co-founded one of the most reputable Polynesian dance companies in Colorado where she gained further cultural knowledge, as well as experience in choreography, theater production, and communications. Shauna was born and raised in California and has spent more than half her life in the beautiful state of Colorado. She is a proud mom of a beautiful blended family of six children and identifies as a multi-racial individual being "blended" with Native Hawaiian, Portuguese, Chinese, and Irish.

Cheryl Hwang (she/her/hers) is a multi-talented journalist and TV producer in Denver. She was born in Chicago and lived half of her childhood in South Korea. She started her career as broadcast journalism in Chicago, then through Nebraska, and Colorado. Cheryl believes in the power of storytelling and creating change with vulnerability. Her primary focus is content creation of local stories that often get buried, and stories that push the boundaries of society. She's excited to get her feet wet in advocacy. Some other interests are entrepreneurship, science, and the arts. She has also been nominated for two Crystal Pillar awards from the Upper Midwest Chapter of the Emmys.

Darane Teng (she/her/hers) is an educator, researcher-practitioner, and daughter of Thai-Chinese-Indonesian immigrants. As Managing Director of Programs at Moonshot edVentures, she leads the strategy, design, implementation, and evaluation of Moonshot's innovative programming for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ education leaders. She is a Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP) Nonprofit Impact Fellowship Graduate, a board member of Colorado Dragon Boat, and serves on the City & County of Denver's Asian American Pacific Islander Commission. Daranee earned an MA in Educational Policy & Practice from the University of Colorado Boulder. She is currently a doctoral candidate in the Leadership for Educational Equity in Urban and Diverse Communities program at the University of Colorado Denver.

APPENDIX A: PEOPLE

Working Group Members *(continued)*

Emma Schwarz (she/her/hers) is the controller for Rose Community Foundation and board chair for the Mongolian School of Colorado. Her passion is to help her community and Asian Americans have representation and equitable access to resources.

Fion Surges (she/her/hers) is a Technical Program Manager with a background in software engineering. She is a first-generation child of Chinese/Vietnamese/Taiwanese immigrant parents and is passionate about advocating and making voices heard in the community. She enjoys volunteering for causes and events serving the AAPI community in hopes of bringing cultural awareness to the outside communities. Fion aspires to bring her experiences of growing up cross-culturally and managing her identity in the corporate environment to help and guide others facing similar challenges.

Harleen Schenk, behavioral analyst

Harry Budisidharta (he/him/his) received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from California State University of Los Angeles, and his Juris Doctor from University of Colorado Law School. As the Executive Director of the Asian Pacific Development Center, Harry works with government officials and community partners to address health disparities in the refugee and immigrant communities.

Jenny Chu (she/her/hers) is the daughter of immigrant parents from Saigon and Hong Kong. She is also an older sister to her brother. She received her MFA in Writing from the University of San Francisco and is currently the Public Programs Manager at History Colorado.

June Homdayjanakul (she/her/hers) is a public health scholar-activist with a focus on the intersection between community and behavioral health and emerging infectious diseases. June has extensive work experience in pandemic preparedness and response in global, national, and local contexts. Her doctoral research on trust and trustworthiness in public health is community-rooted and guided by a cultural-historical lens. A daughter of and sister to Thai-Chinese-Mon immigrants, June grew up as an active member of the local Asian community. Through Thai traditional dance, she has remained connected to her cultural roots and applies this other way of knowing to her academic research. June currently serves on the Steering Committee for the Aurora Asian Pacific Community Partnership.

Kanchan Singh (she/her/hers) is the southern Colorado Liaison for Colorado Sikhs. During her time at Colorado Sikhs, she has actively pushed to build interfaith relationships for the Sikh community through education and engagement. Previously, Kanchan has organized around issues like Census 2020 and Post-9/11 violence.

Kimberly Ming (she/her/hers) is a multiethnic, multifaceted, multimedia storyteller. She uses the medium of spoken word to tell powerful and heartfelt stories. In 2018 Kimberly was nominated for a Regional Emmy Award for her work as a writer and performer on the #celebrate humanity campaign with 9News. Her ability to relate to a multilayered human experience is one of her unique gifts as she helps others bring their stories to life. In 2021 she co-founded Sister Circle Wellness LLC inspired by her desire to hold space and heal with other women of color.

Lena Chhay (she/they) brings 10-plus years of community organizing and organization consulting experience to Community Organizing for Radical Empathy (CORE). She is a certified Project Management Professional and Change Management Practitioner. Their core competencies include strategic planning, process improvement, change management, people mobilization, workshop facilitation, and project management. She has served as a leader for DEI strategy within corporate environments, consultant for national retailers, professional services firms and non-profits, and organizer for a state-wide political campaign. She graduated from the University of Denver with a B.A. in Political Science and an M.B.A. in Management from the Daniels College of Business.

Mary Lee Chin, MS, RDN, (she/her/hers) works with commodity food groups, NGOs and food industry on nutrition education initiatives. She speaks on some of the most provocative and topical food issues of today, including genetically modified foods, food insecurity, and food production sustainability issues. Aware that divisive and emotional food issues ignite a firestorm of debate she advocates moving from polarizing rhetoric to open and professional courteous discourse. Her goal is to provide science-based information, countering myths and misinformation, and help people create realistic and broad-based food outlooks which lead to their positive health outcomes and the health of the environment.

Meta Sarmiento (he/him/his) is a son of Filipino immigrants, a creative whose work as a poet, educator and rapper has been featured on Rocky Mountain PBS, CNN Philippines, NBC, and Westword, and often explores themes of culture, identity, and love. Recipient of the 2020 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award from Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission; Finalist for the 2019 North Street Book Prize; and a Winner of 2015 Spoken Word for the World, where he was flown to Paris, France to perform at COP21 during the United Nations Climate Negotiations. Elevating and representing his peoples are part of his overall mission.

APPENDIX A: PEOPLE

Working Group Members *(continued)*

Riyaz Gayasaddin (he/him/his) was born and raised in the Midwest, and cherishes his Asian-American identity and his journey to continuously better understand and live into that hyphen between Asian and American. His journey has taken him to his parents' home country of India, classrooms in Baltimore, the chilly winters of Minnesota, and currently the snow-capped peaks of Colorado. He is passionate about developing individuals and teams, building culture, and shaking up the status quo by nurturing developing leaders who work through an equity lens to become the change agents of tomorrow. Outside of work as vice-president of Programs and Talent for Camelback Ventures, Riyaz is a foodie. He approaches food as he does life — seeking diversity, opportunities to connect with others, and a chance to have a good time over a shared meal.

Sridevi Bangaru (she/her/hers) is a Boulder-based musician and performer. She has extensive private and university training in American classical music, musical theater, and contemporary pop/rock. Sridevi has won numerous talent shows, including National Vasavite's Got Talent Competition, been a featured artist with DJ Prashant, and sang the National Anthem solo at university basketball games. Music and community are everything to her — through performing, she hopes to show AANHPI children that they are both American and Asian; and they don't have to pick one or the other. Sridevi's dream is to be in an AAPI/BIPOC cover band that performs to empower, uplift, and support our communities.

Stacey Shigaya (she/her/hers) is a third generation Japanese American and the Executive Director for both Sakura Foundation and Sakura Square LLC, which is wholly owned by the Foundation. Sakura Foundation is a nonprofit which supports and celebrates Japanese and Japanese American heritage, culture, and community through community grants, scholarships, the Mirai Generations Leadership Program, Chibi no Gakko (K-8 cultural school), and many other events and programming. The Annual Cherry Blossom Festival at Sakura Square is co-presented by the Foundation and Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temple. Stacey was born and raised in Denver and serves as a commissioner on the Denver Women's Commission and is a facilitator for PFLAG National's AAPI Connects LGBTQ+ ally support groups. She holds a BA in Human Development and Learning and an MS in Counseling and Personnel Services.

Susanna Park (she/her/hers) is a public health scientist and consultant for CORE (Community Organizing for Radical Empathy). She has a PhD in public health and works widely in the spaces of health equity, policy, and community-based research. She has led multiple mental health efforts for the AANHPI community and collaborated in trans-national projects related to public health. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, dog, and plants.

Tamara Chuang (she/her/hers) reports on the Colorado economy, technology and whatever business news comes her way for *The Colorado Sun*. She previously covered technology news for The Denver Post and The Orange County Register. In 2018, she joined nine other journalists to launch *The Colorado Sun* with the goal of creating a sustainable local news operation. That's a work in progress, which she enjoys, along with gardening, eating and sculpting anime characters out of clay.

Thy Anh Vo (she/her/hers) is a freelance journalist who has reported on local and state government in California and Colorado. She is the daughter of Vietnamese and Chinese refugees. She has reported for *The Colorado Sun*, ProPublica, The Mercury News in San Jose and nonprofit Voice of OC.

Vignesh Ramachandran (he/him/his) is a Denver-based journalist reporting on race, culture and politics currently working as a multiplatform editor at The Washington Post. He is also co-founder of Red, White and Brown Media, an online platform chronicling South Asian American stories.

Other Contributors

This report was written by Tina Griego with review and editing by Joie Ha, Winnie Pham, Silvia Solis, Laura Frank and Alison Cooper. It was designed by Erin Autrey, owner of 3 Story Design & Causeworthy.

APPENDIX B: PROCESS

Design and Outreach

In late 2021, COLab reached out to several AANHPI community leaders asking for advice and support on ways to ensure the process of engaging with members of these communities could be effective and responsive.

Five leaders contracted with COLab for a period of six months to support as community liaisons and oversee the design of the outreach and recruitment process, review and edit communication and facilitation materials, and serve as co-facilitators throughout the process.

These core liaisons went above and beyond the expectations and commitments of the original agreement and remained engaged and active in the development and implementation of the process throughout 2022.

The liaisons and COLab compiled an extensive outreach list with close to 100 names and contact information of a diverse group of AANHPI community leaders and members including representatives from community-based, nonprofit and social justice organizations, AANHPI-serving associations, commissions and social organizations, higher education and health institutions, government agencies, AANHPI-owned businesses, arts organizations, faith-based organizations, individual experts and professionals and journalists. The outreach list was used throughout the process to send out communications, invitations and reminders.

As the conversations took place, the liaisons identified gaps in outreach and communication and advocated for more intentional efforts to reach out and engage Native Hawaiian and South Asian Coloradans. As a result, COLab entered contracts with three additional liaisons for a short-term period to support with community connections and co-facilitation of additional conversations to ensure these voices were heard and represented in the process and ultimate recommendations.

Virtual Open House

On March 16, 2022, COLab hosted the AANHPI Open House, a panel discussion meant as an introduction to the working group process and an invitation for members of Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities to join the subsequent conversations.

The virtual event took place on the anniversary of the 2021 Atlanta shootings and served as a space to discuss the importance of engaging with local news media on how it portrays AANHPI communities and community members in the news.

Asian Avenue Magazine's Annie Guo VanDan, Asian Pacific Development Center's Harry Budisidharta, freelance journalist Thy Vo and Colorado Dragon Boat Festival's Sara Moore came together to share examples of good, bad and ugly media coverage of the shooting. They discussed ways in which coverage impacted the community and other challenges in connecting with and engaging with the news media.

The panelists talked about the myths that exist in the historical narrative around Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities and what is needed for better representation in the news media moving forward.

The virtual open house kicked off the virtual conversations with community members that followed.

APPENDIX B: PROCESS

Working Group Sessions

COLab invited community members to participate in preliminary conversations over Zoom. COLab's Silvia Solis and liaisons Joie Ha and Annie Guo VanDan co-facilitated 90-minute sessions on April 1 and April 4, 2022. Gil Asakawa facilitated a 60-minute one-on-one session with community member and storyteller, Kimberly Ming. The liaisons attended at least one session as participants and/or observers.

Naureen Singh facilitated the South Asian-focused session on April 26, 2022. Kristi Keolakai and Shauna Medeiros-Tuilaepa co-facilitated and participated in the July 11, 2022 Native Hawaiian- and Pacific Islander-focused session. Solis co-facilitated both 90-minute sessions.

A conversation guide, prepared by COLab and reviewed by the eight liaisons, outlined the following:

- **Participant introductions**, including name, organization role or title, identities and communities, reasons each decided to participate and suggestions for terms to be used throughout the conversation
- **Information needs**, most-used sources of information to learn about important issues, ways to make information more accessible, and needed information about these issue
- **Experiences and relationships with news media**, what an ideal relationship between local news and community could look like, the kind of communication the community has with local news media and vice versa, the role of news media in community, ways to build trust in this relationship, representation in news media, ways to hold news media accountable, and information to which the news media should pay attention
- **News, information, and community resources**, including sources used on a day-to-day or weekly basis to get news and information or sources of information participants rely on for critical and non-critical news
- **Areas of improvement and ideas for solutions**, including recommendations for addressing needs, gaps and concerns
- **Ongoing engagement suggestions**, including ideas to get more Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Coloradans into similar spaces and conversations, and suggestions for making similar and ongoing conversations and engagement processes more effective

In-person Community Event

On Aug. 10, 2022, the Filipino-American Community of Colorado hosted a 90-minute in-person event that gathered working group members; Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community members who had not participated in previous conversations; and members of Colorado's local news media.

The event sought to bring the parties together to connect; review and gather feedback on the preliminary recommendations; share information about efforts to help elevate AANHPI voices; help prioritize action steps; increase community participation and involvement in future efforts; and build relationships between the community and news media.

Close to 30 people joined the 90-minute event, facilitated by Joie Ha with support from COLab Executive Director, Laura Frank.

APPENDIX C: NEWS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

Working group members helped compile a list of the sources they access regularly for news and information and/or believe others in their communities use frequently:

Local ethnic news media:

Asian Avenue Magazine
Colorado Chinese News
Rocky Mountain Chinese Weekly
Tre Magazine
Weekly Focus Korean Newspaper
Colorado Times Korean Newspaper

National Asian and Pacific Islander news media:

NBC News- Asian America
 HuffPost- Asian Voices

Social media:

WhatsApp
 WeChat
 Kakao Talk
 Line
 Viber
 Facebook groups
 Instagram
 Telegram
 Twitter
 Tik Tok

Local mainstream news media:

The Denver Post
 Colorado Public Radio
The Colorado Sun
 Rocky Mountain PBS

Internet/online sources:

Cold Tea Collective
 Jackfruit News
 NextShark
 AsAmNews
 Angry Asian Man
 Podcasts

National mainstream news media:

CNN
 NPR
Wall Street Journal
New York Times
 The Daily Show

Community organizations:

Faith-based organizations
 Health clinics and foundations
 Schools
 Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission (DAAPIC)

International news:

BBC
 Chinese news

Get Involved

To receive more information about the Voices Initiative, please send us an email at info@colabnews.co

Colorado News Collaborative (COLab) is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit that supports journalists and communities statewide to bring "Better News for All Coloradans." We do so in three ways: Better news. More trust. Faster evolution. We help the 175+ outlets who've signed up as COLab partners to produce better news — that is, higher-quality journalism that makes an impact in their communities — through collaboration, coaching and training. We help partners build more trust through community engagement. And we help partners achieve faster evolution through innovating new business models, products and practices. Together, we increase the quantity and quality of civic news — holding power to account and helping Coloradans participate in healthy communities and a responsive democracy. To learn more about our work and how you can get involved, please visit our [website](https://www.colabnews.co) or reach out to us directly at info@colabnews.co.

Colorado Media Project (CMP) is a community-driven, multi-funder initiative housed at the Rose Community Foundation. We support people, projects and organizations working to build a healthier civic news and information ecosystem for all Coloradans. We envision a future where all Coloradans can make well-informed decisions about important issues facing their families, local communities, and the state, with access to high-quality local news and information that they trust and inclusive opportunities to participate in a healthy, robust public square. [Learn more](#) about how you can support a healthy news ecosystem in Colorado.