



Saturday July 4, 2009

What: An Invitation to you to take active part at Virginia's First Ever Asian Legislative Summit

Where and When – MARK THE DATE: Wednesday, August 5, 2009 from 5:30 pm until 8:00 pm, at Ukrops Headquarters Office located at 2001 Maywill Str., Suite 100, Richmond, VA 23230. www.mapquest.com

Dear Friend:

In the occasion of celebrating America's Independence Day, it is my honor to invite you to participate in a unique forum being organized within the context of *Asian American Empowerment objective*:

State of Virginia's first ever Annual Asian American Legislative Summit 2009

Who and What – You have been personally selected for invitation to this important forum because of your interest in Asian American *Pacific Islanders as a dynamic and diverse people. Collectively we represent a precious gift to America, helping transforming this great nation.*

Purpose: To foster a sharing of ideas among Asian Americans, professionals, and entrepreneurs that will lead to concrete and creative initiatives that address community, civic, and business challenges related to better quality of life for Asian Americans. The purpose here is to 1. Identify and 2. Prioritize legislative issues that are most pressing to Asian Americans so collectively we can create an action plan to influence future executive and legislative government's decisions that are favorable to our communities.

Why Do We Do This?

This year's Asian Legislative Summit will be very timely. As Virginia will have a new governor, and the number of Asian American s continue to increase in the Commonwealth, we **will be meeting with the two gubernatorial candidates and lawmakers from the General Assembly** as we update them about our issues in the Fall, using the list of top priorities obtained from this Summit.

How Do We Do This?

This is three-prong project:

1. To do this, we will first start with having a *Legislative Summit* on August 5th which basically a focus group with the goal to conduct an in-depth assessment of the Asian American community issues facilitated by an Asian Attorney, Attorney Tony Pham, an Attorney with the City of Richmond and President Elect of the Asian American Pacific Bar Association of Virginia.
2. Then, in October, all Summit participants will be invited to return and gather for a program featuring a *Forum Discussion of our issues made to the two gubernatorial candidates* and Asian communities making briefings of our issues to law makers at the General Assembly.
3. This day long program concludes with a *State Legislators Recognition Reception*.

Project Goal

Our goal for this forum is to be catalytic. This Summit is meant to foster the development of our most pressing concerns, and we hope to work with you to help bring these issues out to the legislators and the future executive branch.

Make Your Voice Heard

Participation is essential for the outcome of this meeting to be successful, and your participation in these creative, interactive, results-oriented, and productive meeting is needed!

Agenda/Program Details

An agenda for the working Summit is outlined below. The symposium focuses on concrete deliverables - a plan for follow-on actions. There is no cost involved. We also offer a light dinner / beverage for everyone.

1. *Registration- Meet and Greet* – 15 minutes

2. *Overview of how our ancestors' history began in America* (starting with the Chinese American in late-19th-century California- Restriction of immigration by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 - Civil Rights Act of 1967). 15 minutes

2. *Identifying Asian American Issues: Facts – Issues – What Do You Think.* 30 minutes

3. *Prioritizing Asian Americans' Issues: Dialogue and Discussion.* 1 hour 30 minutes

With offices in Central Virginia, Charlottesville, Fairfax, and Virginia Beach, Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce is Virginia's leading authority on Asian business, economic development, and workforce development. Asian-owned firms in Virginia provide more than 72,000 jobs for the state's economy, laying a foundation for rapidly-growing ties with international Asian markets such as *India, China, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, Japan, and Vietnam*. Many concentrate in scientific and technical fields, business; professional services, scientific, and technical services. We advance learning, knowledge exchange and domestic and international Asian economic development activities to help Asian entrepreneurs and professionals better themselves and to create better Asian communities worldwide

Let us collectively recreate OUR future in a meeting forum that will involve all the stakeholders in our Asian business community and Asian community at large. Without your presence, our voices will not be heard and we shall remain a silent minority, which we are mostly known of. Each of us will play a crucial part in this process of discovering, dreaming, designing and implementing a commonly agreed list of issues that are our top priorities, would it be education, family, "model minority," immigration, language, and others.

Although being the smallest of all minority groups, Asian Americans have made vast contributions and job creations to the national economy, and have positively influenced the course of history of the United States more directly than any other minority groups. However, we are rather known as the **silent model minority**. This will change on August 5th.

Only collectively we can better positioning our needs to lawmakers and government. Your presence is crucial to how our voice will be heard by the legislative decision makers when they meet in the Fall to make laws and implement programs that directly impact you the Asian small businesses and Asian American citizens, immigrants, newcomers, and prospective residents and citizens.

So, friend, please join us as together we will raise the profile of our issues in this most critical Summit.

Sincerely,

Tinh Duc Phan

Chairman

Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce