



The Fierce Advocate

August, September and October 2008 Edition

www.napawf.org

In this edition:

- [NAPAWF Congratulates the New Administration](#)
- [Yes, we can!](#)
- [Save the date: April 11-12 in Las Vegas](#)
- [In the News](#)
- [From Capitol Hill](#)
- [Staff Sightings](#)
- [Other News from the Progressive API Community](#)
- [National Office Updates](#)

NAPAWF Congratulates the New Administration

NAPAWF [extends its congratulations](#) to President-elect Barack Obama and the incoming members of Congress on their election victories. We applaud his historic achievement and celebrate the record number of API voters and other voters of color who cast their votes on Election Day. Special thanks go out to the many NAPAWF members who braved long hours and the winter weather to defend against voter discrimination and intimidation at the polls.

[Back to top](#)

YES, WE CAN!

This year's election season taught us many things, including that community organizing works. Change happens one person at a time, and cumulatively, we become a movement. Thank you for being a part of NAPAWF's movement of Asian and Pacific Islander women and girls fighting for social justice and human rights.

In the months of November and December, NAPAWF is looking to double its membership. Can we do it? [YES, WE CAN!](#) With your help, that is. If you have yet to register as a paid NAPAWF member, or have not renewed your membership, this is your time to act. If you are already a paid member, then this is a time to introduce a friend to the cause.

Memberships received between November 4 through December 31, 2008 will be entered into our drawing to win TWO iPod shuffles... one for you and one for your friend! That means if you become a [new member, renew or extend your membership](#) you will automatically be entered to win. By the way, if you recruit more than one friend, it means your chances of winning an iPod Shuffle increase even more!

Can Asian and Pacific Islander women and girls make change? YES WE CAN!

[Back to top](#)

Save the date!

NAPAWF's next National Conference will be **April 11 - 12, 2009 in Las Vegas, NV**. Stay tuned for venue details. In the meantime, if you're as excited as we are and want to get involved in any of our conference planning committees (host, logistics, fundraising, programming, outreach/publicity), contact [Bonnie](#).

[Back to top](#)

In the News

- NAPAWF's Policy and Programs Director, **Priscilla Huang**, published an article in the [Harvard Law and Public Policy Review](#). Her piece is entitled "Anchor Babies, Over-Breeders, and the Population Bomb: The Reemergence of Population Control in Anti-Immigration Policies."
- **Priscilla Huang** was recently quoted in several newspaper outlets regarding the decision by the Department of Homeland Security to add the HPV vaccine to the list of mandatory vaccinations for immigrant girls and young women applying for immigrant visas or adjustment of status. Learn more about the issue and read NAPAWF's views about the policy on the [Wall Street Journal](#), [Dallas Morning News](#) and [Al Dia](#) (Spanish).
- On September 10, 2008, Anti-Trafficking Project Director, **Liezl Tomas Rebugio**, was featured on the KBCS radio show, [Voices of Diversity](#), an hour-long public affairs show. She joined Seattle attorney, **Diana Muller** from the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, and Seattle advocate and National Governing Board member, **Emma Catague** of the Asian & Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center for an hour discussion on human trafficking in Washington State. Click [here](#) to listen! You can also hear Liezl on a recent episode of [Worldview](#) with host Jerome McDonnell on Chicago Public Radio. The show is a global-affairs program that features activist organizations and movements from across the country to inspire and educate Chicago's international community. Click [here](#) to listen!
- If you missed **Miriam Yeung**'s keynote speech about health care reform from the Raising Women's Voices Conference, you can read it in this month's edition of [Medical Care](#), October 2008, Volume 46, Issue 10.

- **Priscilla Huang** wrote a feature article for RH Reality Check's [pre-election series on American Values](#). The article is entitled, "Beyond Privacy, Towards Equality."

[Back to top](#)

From Capitol Hill

House Tackles Family Immigration Reform

On September 19, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Rep. Mike Honda (D-CA) introduced the [Reuniting Families Act](#) in the Senate and House of Representatives to address the immigration backlog and ensure that family reunification remains a cornerstone of our immigration system. The bill is endorsed by the [Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus](#), which Rep. Honda chairs, and would help the four million potential immigrants currently stuck in the entry backlog, many of whom are family members of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents. Among other provisions, the legislation would direct thousands of unused visas from previous years to close family members of U.S. citizens and legal residents, reclassify spouses and children of legal residents as immediate family and would raise the per-country cap for visas from seven percent to ten percent.

On August 1, the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law voted in favor of [HR 5882](#), a bipartisan bill sponsored by Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) and Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), that would reclaim unused employment-based and family-based visas, and prevent future waste of visas through a rollover mechanism. Because of bureaucratic delays and the loss of unused immigrant visas in years past, many families have to wait years, and sometimes decades, to reunite with their loved ones. Reducing the [family immigration backlog](#) is particularly important for APIs because they rely heavily on family-sponsored immigration. Almost half of the applicants waiting in the backlog are spouses, children and siblings of Asian Americans.

It is unlikely that either piece of legislation will pass Congress this year.

HPV Vaccination Now Mandated for Immigrant Girls and Young Women Seeking Citizenship

In July 2008, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) added [five new vaccinations](#) to the list of required immunizations for immigrants seeking legal permanent residency in the U.S. or applying for immigrant visas. The list included a vaccination against the human papillomavirus (HPV), a viral infection that is transmitted by direct skin-to-skin contact and is the leading cause of cervical cancer. Following a recommendation by the CDC's Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices to administer the vaccine for girls and young women ages 11-26, the recommendation became an automatic requirement for prospective immigrants and naturalized citizens when the government updated its list of vaccines in July.

The National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights (NCIWR), which NAPAWF co-chairs, issued a [statement](#) opposing the mandate. It is NAPAWF's and NCIWR's position that the new requirement violates a woman's basic right to self-determination, creates additional barriers for immigrant women and families seeking entry or adjustment of status, and unfairly forces immigrant women to subject their bodies to a new medical technology with unknown efficacy rates.

DHS Creates Pamphlet for Immigrant Fiancés and Spouses

As part of the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act (IMBRA), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is required to create an informational pamphlet that informs foreign fiancés and spouses about U.S. domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse laws and the resources available to them if they became caught in an abusive situation. In July 2008, DHS released a draft of the pamphlet, which NAPAWF found to be inadequate, culturally incompetent, and ineffective. NAPAWF worked closely with the Asian American Justice Center www.advancingequality.org and submitted a [letter to DHS](#) which was co-signed by other advocates across the country expressing our concerns with the draft pamphlet and suggestions on how to make it a more useful and stronger document.

In collaboration with the Tahirih Justice Center, www.tahirih.org NAPAWF also hosted a telebriefing on September 8, 2008 for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking service providers to educate them about IMBRA, the pamphlet, and mobilize them to sign or submit their own letter to DHS. Nearly 40 advocates from across the country participated on the call!

NAPAWF Submits Joint Comment on HHS Proposed "Provider Conscience" Regulations

In September, HHS asked for public comments in response to their "Provider Conscience" regulation, which would give health care providers, workers and institutions the right to refuse to perform a medical treatment if the treatment is contrary to the providers' religious or moral beliefs. The proposed regulations would have a disproportionate impact on women of color and low-income women who use federally funded health centers and institutions as their primary source of sexual and reproductive health care. Many groups also believe it will also adversely affect HIV/AIDS programs, LGBT health care access and immigrant women's access to care. NAPAWF submitted [joint comments](#) along with the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health and the Center for Reproductive Rights in opposition to the proposed regulations.

House Introduces Anti-Abortion Bill Purporting to Fight Sexism and Racism

On September 26th, NAPAWF, along with twenty-nine other API, women's, reproductive rights and reproductive justice organizations sent a letter to Congress opposing HR 7016. Introduced three days earlier by Rep. Trent Franks (R-AZ), the so-called "[Susan B. Anthony Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act of 2008](#)" would criminalize doctors for providing abortions for the purposes of sex selection or race selection. Purporting to combat sexism and racism, the real intent of the bill is to limit the decision-making authority of women and wedge the immigrant and the API, Latina and African American communities from the feminist and pro-choice communities. No one fell for it. NAPAWF, with SisterSong and Generations Ahead, took the lead in organizing the [initial response](#) and will work with our allies to further the movement for true racial and gender equality.

DHS Issues Final "No-match" Rule

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a [supplemental final rule](#) regarding procedures employers should follow when they receive a letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) stating the information submitted for an employee does not match SSA records. These letters are known as SSA "no-match" letters and are sent to workers and employers in an attempt to correct discrepancies in SSA's records that prevent workers from receiving Social Security credit for their earnings. In recent years however, DHS started to use highly flawed system as an immigration enforcement mechanism. The rule is still subject to an October 2007 injunction after a [lawsuit](#) charged that the rule's enforcement would put workers at risk of losing their jobs because the SSA database is rife with errors and would cause discrimination against workers who look or sound "foreign." The court recognized that discrepancies between workers' social security numbers and SSA

records can result from a number of innocent factors including clerical errors, name changes due to marriage or divorce, or the common use of multiple surnames. This is particularly true for API women, who are often foreign-born and/or change their name due to marriage or divorce.

[Back to top](#)

Staff Sightings

- **Priscilla Huang** conducted a workshop on coalition-building at the [Law Students for Reproductive Justice Leadership Institute](#) at Georgia State University Law School.
- **Dawn Philip** facilitated a caucus at the [National Queer Asian Pacific Islander American Leadership Convening](#) in Denver, Colorado.
- **Priscilla** was a co-presenter at the [2008 Association of Reproductive Health Professionals Conference](#). She spoke about the impact of coercive immigration policies on the ability for immigrant women to access reproductive health services.

[Back to top](#)

Other News from the Progressive API Community

Attend the International Women's Conference, Nov. 9, Washington DC

I wanted to invite NAPAWF to a Women's Conference event this going to be held on November 9, 2008 in Washington D.C. This event is hosted by The Art of Living Foundation and The International Association for Human Values. The objective of the event is to bring dynamic women leaders from the greater Washington DC area together that are working on community development and positive social change. The event will align with the International Women's Conference that takes place every two years in India. This conference is well attended by women from almost 100 countries and in addition to celebrating the feminine aspect of nature we also work on many critical projects including illiteracy, poverty, female infanticide to name a few. The theme of the International Women's Conference is, "The Light of Leadership". We are aligning our one day event with this theme. It would be wonderful if you could attend this event and let more inspiring women within your network know.

Call for Workshops at the 14th Annual Hmong National Conference: "Building Partnerships for Success: Embracing Emerging Opportunities"

The 14th HNC will address the challenges and opportunities associated with forming, entering and participating in community partnerships. The widespread pursuit of partnerships and collaborative relationships is one of the most significant trends in community organizing and development. Whether it is collaboration among local institutions or efforts to bring together diverse groups of neighborhood residents, community organizations throughout the United States are recognizing the importance of partnerships for leveraging resources, building power, strengthening the democratic process, and achieving meaningful neighborhood change.

HND has extended the deadline to submit Conference Presentation Proposals for the 14th Hmong National Conference to Friday, October 31, 2008. Note that sessions should be hands-on and interactive in nature and take the form of workshops, panel presentations, or roundtable discussions.

For more information and/or to download the presentation proposal guideline, visit

www.hndinc.org. Locate the "Hmong National Conference" tab and click on "14th Hmong National Conference". You may also contact Nou Vang at (202) 797-9105 or via email at nvang@hndinc.org.

[Back to top](#)

National Office Updates

Staff Comings and Goings

NAPAWF is lucky to have built this organization and movement with incredible, talented and passionate staff. We are pleased to announce the addition of two new sisters to the family.

Wen-Hua Yang, based in NYC, is our new Finance and Operations Director. She comes to us with years of experience in the reproductive justice field and academic work in Asian American studies. Wen-Hua is a skilled financial manager and brings a steady get-it-done spirit that will help NAPAWF grow enormously. Formerly with Choice USA and National Advocates for Pregnant Women, Wen-Hua joined the team on September 10th and can be reached directly at wyang@napawf.org.

Nancy Chung, based in our metro Washington DC office, is our new Reproductive Justice Fellow funded by the Women's Law and Public Policy Fellowship at Georgetown University. Nancy is a graduate of the Baltimore University School of Law and worked on issues of domestic violence, family mediation and youth. She is also currently an officer of the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Maryland. Nancy is supporting our reproductive justice work and has already provided insightful policy analyses and contributed to the representation of API women and girls on Capitol Hill. Nancy can be reached at nchung@napawf.org.

We also sadly announce the departure of three fierce staff members and a fabulous summer intern.

Callista Bevans, an undergraduate student at the University of Washington, was NAPAWF's summer intern based in the Seattle office where developed resources for our Anti-Trafficking Program. Callista provided valuable human rights research and developed a movie guide for chapters interested in AT issues. Thank you, Callista, for being a fierce ally and for all your hard work.

Hired in July 2006, **Lisa Fu** oversaw the tremendous expansion of our presence in California and the development of our chapters throughout the country. Lisa was critical in the creation of the California Policy Committee and the California Young Women's Collaborative project and was one of the main forces behind the NAPAWF 20th Anniversary Conference. She will be most missed for the way she brought inspiration to countless NAPAWF members and chapters. Lisa is currently teaching, consulting and caring for her family in Los Angeles. Thank you Lisa, for your generosity and leadership at NAPAWF.

Many of us have had the pleasure of working with **Tracy Ng** our former Membership and Operations Director who had been with NAPAWF since July 2005. Tracy was pivotal in developing our membership program, East Coast chapter work, and much of the operational infrastructure of NAPAWF. Tracy is currently towards her Masters in Education Policy at Teacher's College of Columbia University in NYC. Thank you, Tracy, for all of the dedication and behind-the-scenes support you gave to NAPAWF.

Following in the line of our other illustrious Women's Law and Public Policy Program Fellows, **Dawn Philip** leaves us with huge accomplishments. Dawn carried forward our work and led NAPAWF in the development of our reproductive justice work including the National Healthy Nail Salon Alliance. She was a prolific spokesperson for NAPAWF and also represented us at LGBTQI tables. Dawn is currently in NYC plotting to bring even more social justice to the world. Thank you, Dawn, for all of your vision and passion.

Thank all you for making NAPAWF what it is. Your contributions are enormous.

New National Office in NYC

We're pleased to announce the opening of our new executive office in New York City! Please contact [Miriam](#) and [Wen-Hua](#) at the following phone number and address with any administrative or membership-related inquiries:

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
16 West 32nd Street, Suite 10E
New York, NY 10001
(phone) 212-564-9600
(fax) 212-564-9665

Thanks for Making Our National Voter Registration Day A Success!

On October 4, NAPAWF members in 7 cities hit the streets as part of our [Be Seen. Be Heard. Vote! Campaign](#). API women are the least likely group of eligible voters to vote. In 2004, almost half of all API citizen women failed to register or vote in the election. However, once registered, API women are among the highest group of voters to show up at their poll sites and vote on election day. Your efforts to register new voters on October 4 helped API women nation-wide increase our voting power! Thank you for your energy and commitment, and don't forget to vote on November 4!

Fierce Sisters on Warrior Prose

NAPAWF had the honor of interviewing some of the greatest women activists in the API community. These women have rocked the boat, made their voices heard, and paved the way for the younger generations to follow. The interviews provide some insight into their lives and document their revolutionary contributions to the political movement. Read the interview series of Warrior Prose featuring [Helen Zia](#), [Grace Lee Boggs](#), [Lora Jo Foo](#), [Mallika Dutt](#) and [Cindy Domingo](#). Also, check out a guest blog by [Tuyet Duong](#), senior staff attorney at the Asian American Justice Center, about our broken family immigration system.

Have something to say? Post it on Warrior Prose! Contact [Priscilla](#) for more details.

Anti-Trafficking Briefing Tour Continues

Last month, NAPAWF's Anti-Trafficking Project Director **Liezl Tomas Rebugio** traveled to the Bay Area and Las Vegas to conduct Trafficking 101 workshops for interested chapter members. The workshops provided participants with a unique opportunity to explore NAPAWF's approach to anti-trafficking activism and understand why we use a human rights framework. Each chapter also had an opportunity to delve into [NAPAWF's Position on Human Trafficking and Sex Work](#) and engage in a robust discussion about the position.

The Chicago Chapter hosted a community briefing on October 8 to promote NAPAWF's Anti-Trafficking Agenda, [Rights to Survival & Mobility](#). The panel featured Liezl and **Katherine Kaufka** from the [International Organization of Adolescents](#). Nearly 30 community members

came to the event. We thank Loyola University of Chicago and the State of Illinois Department of Children & Family Services for co-sponsoring, and chapter superstars **Rose Olea** and **Diana Lin** for organizing!

On October 14, the New York City Chapter hosted a community briefing to highlight the intersection between human trafficking and reproductive justice issues. The panelists included Liezl, **Sapna Patel** of the [Sex Workers Project](#) at the Urban Justice Center and **Veronica Bayetti Flores** of the [National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health](#).

Liezl rounded out her tour with a guest lecture at the [University of South Florida](#) in Tampa on October 23, where she spoke about NAPAWF's work on human trafficking with 45 students in a History of Feminism in the U.S. course. This class focuses on the feminist activism of women of color in the United States.

[Back to top](#)