



## June/July 2007 eNewsletter

---

### In This Issue:

- [Thank you NAPAWF interns!](#)
- [NAPAWF in the News](#)
- [From Capitol Hill](#)
- [NAPAWF at the United States Social Forum](#)
- [Chapter highlight: Bay Area Chapter](#)
- [News and Announcements from the Progressive API Community](#)

### Thank you NAPAWF interns!

We are eternally grateful to our rock star summer interns: **Candice Shikai** (UCLA), **Sara Wei** (UC Irvine), **Helen (Xiaojia) Hua** (Smith College), and **Chandana Kolavala** (American University, Washington College of Law). These women devoted their summers to updating NAPAWF's fact sheets and issue briefs, creating materials for the California Policy Committee, conducting member outreach through NAPAWF's new and improved [Facebook](#) and [MySpace](#) pages, and representing NAPAWF at various community events. THANK YOU!

[go back to top](#)

### NAPAWF in the News

NAPAWF board member, **Friendly Vang**, wrote a [guest column](#) for the Seattle-based newspaper, the International Examiner about her grandmother's immigration experience.

A TIME magazine article recently described the [worst jobs in America](#) and named nail salon workers as among the top contenders. Read the [article](#) to learn some of the challenges to this

occupation, and check out TIME's reference to NAPAWF! For more info, read NAPAWF's [issue brief](#) on the nail salon industry and its impact on API women's reproductive health.

As the presidential race heats up, be sure to check out this Women's eNews article on [women voters](#) and the barriers they face at the polls. The article features quotes from NAPAWF's Policy and Programs Director, *Priscilla Huang*!

Last week marked the one year anniversary of the FDA's approval of Plan B, a type of emergency contraception, for over-the-counter sale to 18 year olds and older. Unfortunately, API women and girls still face a number of obstacles to accessing Plan B. Read *Priscilla's* [guest post](#) on the blog [Bush v. Choice](#) to find out why. And be sure to check out our updated [issue brief](#) on emergency contraception and API women.

[go back to top](#)

## From Capitol Hill

- **Secure Borders, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Reform Act of 2007 (S. 1348/S. 1639) fails**

On June 26, 2007, the Senate revived debate on its "[grand bargain](#)" comprehensive immigration reform legislation. Renamed and renumbered as [S. 1639](#), the bill included all of the provisions of [S. 1348](#) (including a discriminatory merit-based point system and an onerous path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants) and added \$4.4 billion for border security and enforcement.

NAPAWF did not support the bill because of the adverse impact its proposed changes would have had on immigrant women and girls. In addition, the legislation failed to embody NAPAWF's [principles for comprehensive immigration reform](#). On June 18, the bill was permanently pulled from the floor after it failed a key procedural motion. It is unlikely the Senate will return to immigration reform again in the 110th Congress.

- **DREAM Act fails**

After the Senate's failed attempt to pass immigration reform, Senate Democrats made other efforts to pass the [Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors \(DREAM\) Act](#). The DREAM Act would provide a path to citizenship for undocumented students who go to college or serve in the U.S. military. It was introduced as an amendment to the [Department of Defense authorization bill](#) in mid-July, but the amendment never made it to the floor. DREAM was introduced again as a second degree amendment to an enforcement-only amendment to the [Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill](#) in late July. The enforcement-only amendment, along with the attached DREAM Act, also failed.

- **House Votes to Restore Protections Against Wage Discrimination**

Just two months after the U.S. Supreme Court delivered a crushing set-back to workers' ability to remedy wage discrimination in the case [Ledbetter v. Goodyear](#)

[Tire and Rubber Co.](#), the House introduced and passed the [Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2007](#). Named after the lead plaintiff in the case, the bill amends several anti-discrimination laws to confirm that each reduced paycheck represents an act of discrimination. The Senate is expected to vote on its version of the bill later this session.

- **House Passes Provision Creating an AAPI Serving Institution for College Students**

In mid-July, the House passed the [College Cost Reduction Act of 2007](#), which would increase the Pell Grant maximum award, provide additional scholarships for the lowest-income Pell recipients, and fund debt forgiveness for public sector employees. The House bill included a [provision](#) creating an Asian American and Pacific Islander Higher Education Serving Institution designation to assist low-income API families with the high cost of a college education. APIs are the only racial group that does not have such a designation.

The Senate passed its version of the bill without the API designation. The bill is in conference committee, where conferees hope to work out differences in the two versions of the bill. Click [here](#) to learn more about AAPI Serving Institutions from the Southeast Asia Resource Center.

- **Senate Introduces Minority Health Improvement and Health Disparity Elimination Act**

Senator Kennedy introduced a [bill](#) authorizing roughly \$500 million to improve the health and health care of racial and ethnic minorities. The legislation aims to help create a diverse healthcare workforce, improve training of health professionals, strengthen federal minority health and health disparity programs, and expand community-based health promotion and disease prevention efforts to address health care disparities. The bill also codifies requirements for uniform data collection standards for federal health programs. This is an important bill for APIs because Asian and Pacific Islanders represent the only racial group that is underrepresented in healthy studies.

- **House Approves "Comfort Women" Resolution**

On July 30, the House approved Rep. Honda's [resolution](#) urging the Japanese government to formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility for its Imperial Armed Force's sexual enslavement of young women and girls, known as "comfort women," during its occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II. For more information and to read the stories of "comfort women," click [here](#).

- **House and Senate Approve Children's Health Bills**

In early August, the House and Senate approved bills to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). SCHIP provides health insurance

to low-income children who are ineligible for Medicaid but unable to obtain private health insurance coverage. The program is set to expire on September 30, 2007.

The House bill, called the [Children's Health and Medicare Protect \(CHAMP\) Act](#), would increase funding for the program by \$47 billion and allow states to extend coverage to immigrant children and pregnant women who have been in the U.S. less than five years. This provision is also known as the Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act (ICHIA) and eliminates the current five year bar for services. CHAMP also contains provisions for culturally and linguistically appropriate services and requires data collection on race, ethnicity, and primary language.

The Senate bill, called the [CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2007](#), proposes to increase funding by \$35 billion. The Senate bill does not include ICHIA, funding for language assistance, or data collection requirements. For a great summary and comparison of the two bills, check out this [chart](#) by Families USA. A House-Senate conference committee will meet after the August recess to reconcile the differences in the two measures, however, President Bush has threatened to veto both versions of the bill.

More than 9 million children in the U.S., including 350,000 Asian American children, are uninsured and do not have regular checkups or access to comprehensive health care. Thousands of low-income API women also rely on SCHIP for prenatal care. To learn more about Medicaid utilization by API women, check out our recently updated [fact sheet](#).

[go back to top](#)

## **NAPAWF at the United States Social Forum**

From June 27-July 2, 2007, over 12,000 activists from all over the country gathered in Atlanta, Georgia for the first-ever [United States Social Forum \(USSF\)](#). The USSF was not a conference, an event, or a meeting. Rather, the USSF provided space for progressive activists to share ideas, discuss challenges and insights, and come together to strengthen the progressive movement in the country against neoliberalist policies.

At the USSF, there were activists fighting for tenant rights, immigrant rights, women's rights, workers rights and against the privatization of water, land, and housing and more. NAPAWF staff and members presented at and participated in many [workshops](#) throughout the week, and met amazing and inspiring people from around the country. However, the USSF did not end on July 2nd; the energy and connections that were made during the USSF are echoing throughout the country and at NAPAWF to help us move forward to build a better U.S. and a better world. To read more about the USSF,

including a guest blog from Anti-Trafficking Director **Liezl Rebugio**, click [here](#). To watch the much talked about plenary on "Liberating Gender and Sexuality," click [here](#).

Reflection on the USSF from **Preeti Sharma** (LA Chapter):

*I attended the USSF to learn about the varied progressive organizing work taking place throughout the country, to gain a refreshed and macro perspective of such work, and to bring back information and inspiration for myself and those around me. From the first workshop and plenary to the outside caucuses and meetings, the whole Social Forum experience has been one to validate the efforts of community-based and grassroots organizing as a tool for change.*

*One of the more powerful moments for me during the USSF was at the plenary discussing Hurricane Katrina and Disaster Relief in the Gulf Coast areas. As a person from South Florida, a hurricane prone area, who grew up watching the remnants of and the growth of oppression along race, class, gender lines in the U.S. South, to hear people, survivors, organizers talking about the damage, and the intentional lack of U.S. governmental aid in affected areas was shocking.*

*Overall, the USSF allowed me to see the larger landscape of work taking place across the country, to see the similar struggles of displacement, ICE/ detention raids, racism, classism, sexism, and getting women of colors' voices out there, and to understand how different organizations formed to combat such work or are still thinking through or working on methods to organize such change.*

### **Chapter Highlight: Bay Area Chapter**

The Bay Area Chapter has been coordinating a hate crimes campaign in response to various incidents in California in which API women were targeted on the basis of their race for sex offenses. The campaign's efforts include raising public awareness about these types of hate crimes, advocacy with law enforcement, and assisting with litigation which challenges these types of offenses as civil rights violations. The Chapter conducted a training earlier this year for its members and in September, will conduct a workshop which will be followed by a self-defense class taught by a martial arts instructor. The Bay Area Chapter is also assisting with a class action lawsuit against a former Oakland police officer who targeted hundreds of API women for traffic stops, during which he groped and sexually assaulted these women. **Nice work Bay Area!**

[go back to top](#)

### **News and Announcements from the Progressive API Community**

- **Second edition of *Asian American Women*, by Lora Jo Foo, released!**

Civil rights activist and NAPAWF founding sister **Lora Jo Foo** recently published the second edition to her groundbreaking book, [Asian America Women: Issues, Concerns, and Responsive Human and Civil Rights Advocacy](#). Several NAPAWF members and allies contributed to the research and writing of the second edition, which will soon be available at a \$5 discount to NAPAWF members on a first come, first served basis!

- **SAALT Releases New Report/Resource on South Asian Community and Community-based Organizations**

South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow (SAALT) is pleased to announce the release of a new report about the South Asian community and community-based organizations. Preliminary information about the report, [Building Community Strength](#), is below; a complete electronic version is available on [SAALT's website](#).

The 30-page report provides information gleaned from 31 South Asian organizations, including social service providers, women's rights, worker and youth-focused collectives, and advocacy groups. The report also includes [demographic information](#) about the growing numbers of South Asians who face linguistic, cultural, immigration status, and socioeconomic barriers.

Combining the results of surveys and interviews of 31 community-based organizations, [Building Community Strength](#) presents valuable information about issues addressed, constituencies served, and modes of outreach used by groups.

SAALT will be conducting report briefings around the country to increase awareness about the observations and recommendations in the report. Please contact us at [saalt@saalt.org](mailto:saalt@saalt.org) if you would like to sponsor or participate in a briefing. Access *Building Community Strength* [here](#).

- **SAMAR Celebrates Fifteen Years!**

Check out the latest in [SAMAR Magazine](#). SAMAR Magazine accepts articles, essays, reviews, artwork, photoessays, fiction, and poetry. For more information on submissions, click [here](#). For questions, contact [collective@samarmagazine.org](mailto:collective@samarmagazine.org). The latest issue features:

- Anthropologist Kausalya explores the way freedom of speech is being subverted by the right wing in India when an art student is arrested for paintings considered anti-Hindu
- Hamad Sindhi questions how judicial enforcement is practiced in Pakistan by looking at the case of Shumail and Shahzina
- Brendan LaRoque critiques Christopher Hitchen's recent article in Vanity Fair for failing to recognize the impact of colonial legacies and contemporary racism on immigrant communities in England
- A boy thinks of his mother waiting with delicious biryani in the fictional piece by Raiya Masroor Hashm
- Plus, a new poem by elsrizee on AIDS in Tanzania
- And, the latest political cartoon by Khalil Bendib

[go back to top](#)