

RECOGNIZING ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH: ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES IN AAPI COMMUNITIES

May 2023



In honor of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, IMPACT Community Capital recognizes both the challenges as well as the contributions of this diverse and growing population of Americans. Embedded in our 25-year history and commitment to building opportunity in minority communities, our work also underscores the gaps and inequalities in home ownership and its effect as a crucial building block in driving social change.

In the case of the AAPI community, 26 percent of Asian renters and 27 percent of Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islander (NHOPI) renters are severely cost-burdened, paying almost half of their income towards their housing costs. This is because almost 55 percent of AA & NHOPIs in poverty live in high housing cost regions, more so than any other racial or ethnic group and over double the proportion of the general poverty population.¹

At IMPACT, we remain squarely focused on the mission of driving capital to deliver affordable housing to under-invested communities in America, including those in the AAPI community. And at the same time, we are future-focused and believe that meaningful change and true leadership starts locally.

AAPI's 2023 theme, "Advancing Opportunity through Leadership," offers a lens into the representation, diverse leadership, and strong mentorship that has driven the advancement of professionals in the AAPI community. In this Q&A with three IMPACT employees, they share insights and perspective guided not only by their AAPI heritage, but also by a shared desire to advance opportunities professionally, socially, and economically for all minorities. Their collective work at IMPACT Community Capital aims to do just that, alongside the firm's long standing commitment to diversity and equity.

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MELISSA MAQUILAN RADIC is the *Managing Director of Investor Relations and Capital Markets* at IMPACT Community Capital. Melissa received her undergraduate degree in Operations Research and Financial Engineering from Princeton University and Executive MBA from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. She also serves as Immediate Past President of the Board for the Financial Women of San Francisco, a nonprofit dedicated to the advancement of women in finance in the Bay Area.



LIZ KANG, IMPACT's *General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer*, oversees all legal affairs related to IMPACT's investment funds, loan originations and securitizations and maintains regulatory compliance of IMPACT affiliates and subsidiaries. Liz received her J.D. from Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law and LL.B from Seoul National University. Liz lived in four countries growing up, loves to travel, cook, work out and consciously strives to live a minimalist lifestyle. Liz has served on the board of the Korean-American Bar Association of Northern California since 2017.



PAUL HWANG is a *Portfolio Manager at IMPACT Community Capital*, focusing on IMPACT's investment programs and growth strategy. Paul is responsible for investment research and financial modeling and brings expertise in financial markets, specializing in fixed income securities. Paul received his bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park.

¹ A joint publication of the National Coalition of Asian Pacific American Community Development and the University of California, Los Angeles

Q&A

What are some of the issues the AAPI community faces as it relates to home ownership?

Liz

I think affordable housing is crucial for the AAPI community because homeownership rates for the various AAPI ethnic groups vary widely depending on the group's economic status, history in the US, citizenship status and culture. So while the average AAPI home ownership percentage may be high among other minority groups, there are pockets of the AAPI community that are extremely low income that can benefit from affordable housing.

Source: Urban Institute and Public Policy Institute of California

Paul

The AAPI demographic in the US is diverse when it comes to not only ethnicity, but also economically. The "model minority" stereotype depicts Asians in the United States as educated and/or in higher economic brackets, but the reality is families of all different racial and ethnic backgrounds struggle to afford housing in the United States. Poverty levels in the AAPI community are not far from national averages.

In what ways has your culture influenced you personally and professionally?

Paul

It's almost impossible to describe the influence since it affects nearly every aspect of who I am. I'm quite proud of my heritage and love that my ethnic background is Korean. But what I love most is being Korean-American and having the opportunity to contribute to American culture, a little bit of Korean culture.

Melissa

Growing up in New Jersey in the 80's, my siblings and I were encouraged to "assimilate" to American culture. We spoke English at home and barely identified with our Filipino heritage. When I moved to the Bay Area in 2014, I was so thrilled about the proliferation of Filipino food and culture here. I can embrace my Filipino heritage with my sons and it's rewarding to see their pride when I bring chicken adobo or suman to school potlucks. From a professional perspective, the network of AAPI professionals from ISFFA to AAAIM are making great strides to support AAPI's in finance and I recommend young AAPI professionals check them out.

Learn more about AAPI heritage month here:
<https://www.asianpacificheritage.gov/>

What opportunities do you believe have contributed to your professional development and growth?

Melissa

It is so important to have strong mentors and sponsors in your court. I had several incredible women who helped guide me into leadership roles and promote my skills to senior leadership. Their support helped me get where I am today. I recommend to all young professionals to build their personal "Board of Directors" both at work and outside of work, to provide you that guidance and advice.

Paul

Having a mentor gave me an opportunity to take on roles that were positioned to succeed. There's a difference between being given opportunities and being given good opportunities. Find a mentor who sees your potential and puts you in places to succeed.

What advice you have for AAPI professionals who are looking for opportunities to grow as a leader in their career?

Liz

I would encourage young AAPI professionals to build strong relationships with their managers and colleagues by communicating frequently and sharing interests outside of work. By bringing your genuine whole self to work, you can create connections that in the long-term build trust and open opportunities for advancement.

Paul

Be persistent, confident, and knowledgeable. Most important thing, in my opinion, is to be an expert in your field. Secondly, have the confidence and persistence to push for what will put you and your team in the best position to succeed.

What advice would you offer to young AAPI professionals who are interested in impact investing?

Paul

Representation matters in every industry. Being able to drive social and environmental change through the investment profession can be a powerful tool and having AAPI representation in the industry can lead to positive change in issues that directly affect the AAPI community.

Melissa

Within investment management, it is so important to have diversity and a recent study found that there is 50% career attrition among AAPI's in Senior Level asset management positions. Organizations need to support young professionals across their career path to ensure we are maintaining that diversity of thought across all asset classes. For those young AAPI professionals looking to grow their careers in impact investing, I recommend learning from organizations such as the UN PRI or GIIN and looking at investment firms that have dedicated impact strategies (one place to look are the Signatories of OPIM).

Source: Association of Asian American Investment Managers