

APEN

Voices

Asian Pacific Environmental Network
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VICTORY FOR TENANTS: MEASURE EE PASSES!

In an effort to impact Oakland politics, Power in Asians Organizing (PAO) organized and turned out a progressive Asian community voice supporting affordable housing and tenants rights in the November elections. PAO helped pass one of Oakland's most contentious ballot measures, Measure EE, that would require landlords to have a "Just Cause" before evicting tenants.

Working around the clock in the six weeks before Election Day, PAO organizers and leaders contacted hundreds of Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Laotian and Cambodian voters, organized an early voting drive which lined up volunteers willing to help with transportation to the polls, and pressured the county to have bilingual staff ready to translate and help immigrant voters with the nuts and bolts of voting. During the election drive, more than 80 people attended our community meetings. PAO members, like Ms. Ma, asked us, "I cannot read or write but I want to help because I want things to be better for my children. What can I do?" Some people came to us because they were in the process of being evicted and wanted to fight for basic tenant protection for themselves and others. Other members, like Mr. Chen who lives in stable housing near Lake Merritt, took

initiative and organized his entire apartment building to attend our meetings. People became involved because they saw the lack of a voice for Asian immigrants and the need to build community power.

It isn't easy to break through the many barriers that prevent our communities from exercising the right to vote. Translated material is a good first step but it's not enough. Many in our community are not literate, even in their own language. Fear of the government and intimidation of the mechanics of voting are some factors which prevent Asian immigrant communities from exercising the right to vote.



LOP Organizer Torm Nompraseurt helps at PAO's Early Voting Drive

On Election Day, PAO's Get-Out-the-Vote effort ensured close to 400 first-time immigrant votes in favor of tenant rights and affordable housing. In the fight to pass Measure EE – where the margin of victory was just 1,400 votes – PAO truly did help to make a difference.

Measure EE is now in effect. For more information about this new right protecting Oakland tenants, contact Just Cause Oakland at (510) 763-5877.



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Mission

All people have a right to a clean and healthy environment in which their communities can live, work, learn, play and thrive. Toward this vision, the Asian Pacific Environmental Network was founded to bring together a collective voice among the diverse API communities in the United States to develop an alternative agenda for environmental, social and economic justice. Through building an organized movement of grassroots people, we strive to bring fundamental changes to institutions that will prioritize public good over profit and to promote the right of every person to a decent, safe, affordable quality of life, in which we participate in collectively made decisions affecting our lives.

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LOP leader Thongsoun Puthama leads Unity Cultural Ceremony at Summit II

Summit II Marks the Growth of the EJ Movement

In October 2002, APEN's 24-person delegation joined over 1,300 environmental justice activists from across the United States and internationally to participate in the Second National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit (Summit II) in Washington, D.C. Summit II allowed the EJ movement to assess our accomplishments and challenges, and to strategize for the future.

Participants emerged from the week-long summit with a number of collective accomplishments including: 1) Reaffirming grassroots communities as leaders of the environmental justice movement; 2) Developing the *Principles of Working Together*, guidelines for partnerships among EJ organizations to strengthen the movement; and 3) Adopting a resolution against the war on Iraq and U.S. policies of militarism.

APEN played a critical role in Summit II planning and organized the API Caucus in which over 70 participants shared experiences about organizing in API immigrant and refugee communities. The youth voice was also strong, and our young women of AYA were active in the development of the Youth Principles for EJ and Youth Principles of Collaboration.

Months later, we still continue to draw new lessons and insights. Summit II moved us in a positive direction that affirmed multi-racial coalition building and represents a sign of hope against the rising tide of violence and aggression towards people and the earth. We are grateful to everyone for your support and commitment which allowed APEN to play a leadership role in the growing and vibrant environmental justice movement.

LOP's Statement of Solidarity with Farmworkers

At Summit II, LOP co-facilitated the "EJ Organizing in Immigrant & Refugee Communities" workshop with the Farmworker Network for Economic and Environmental Justice. Conducted in four languages, the workshop was a rich exchange and connected two very different communities. Since the new year, farmworkers have been protesting NAFTA along the U.S.-Mexico border, and LOP leaders were quick to stand in solidarity with them. This represents one real accomplishment from the Summit – the understanding that all our struggles are interconnected and we are all part of a larger movement.

Visit www.apen4ej.org for the full LOP statement.



Farmers protest on Cordova International Bridge

APEN Family Transitions

This past December, Audrey Chiang's life-ship sailed off from the APEN dock to start a new journey. After 7 years with APEN, we remember Audrey's many contributions to help APEN grow to the organization it is today. In the beginning years of LOP, Audrey worked to better protect the health of its members through information about seafood consumption and the toxins found in the SF Bay, which she compiled into a report government agencies and local groups still reference in creating better health and environmental policies. Later, Audrey demonstrated her multi-talents to become our first full-time Development Coordinator, raising thousands of dollars to fund APEN's work and coordinating past anniversary events. Through the years, Audrey has been generous and committed to the environmental justice as a woman, wife, mother and friend.

Thank you Audrey, for all that you have gifted to us. We wish you continued strength and courage wherever the waters steer you next.



WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF!

In October, **Ikuko Sato** joined the APEN family as AYA's Lead Youth Organizer. She comes to us with much experience in community organizing, youth development and photo and video work. She has led youth activities with the Youth of Oakland United, East Bay Media Center Summer Camp and the Park Day Summer Arts Camp. At the Center for Third World Organizing, Ikuko helped develop and launch the Institute for Urban Arts and Women's Action for Gender Equity. Her creative work includes a video exploring

Bay Area Asian American activism during the 1960's and 70's.

With Ikuko's leadership, AYA is expanding its program in 2003, increasing recruitment efforts and building up membership. With the launch of our Richmond housing campaign in the spring of 2003, AYA will play a key role in planning, outreach, and mobilization. AYA will also continue to work with other Bay Area environmental justice youth groups. It'll be an exciting year as AYA grows, so stay tuned for AYA's latest news and developments!

Thanks to our Outstanding Volunteers!

Suzanne Bourguignon
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Tin Chan
Chin-Yung Chang
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NEW APEN WEB SITE & LISTSERV

Our new and improved Web site features exciting information about our organizing projects, environmental justice and API issues, a photo slide show by our youth program, and much more. You can also check out ways to donate, volunteer, or just give us your feedback.

Subscribe to our list-serv and stay informed of APEN's latest news and events. Encourage your family &



friends to sign up or relay this information to your own circles of friends!

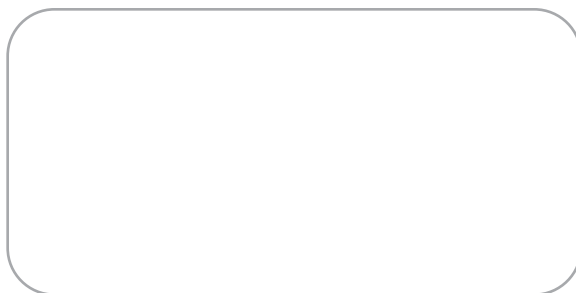
Visit us at <http://www.apen4ej.org>

Send us your BART Tiny Tickets!

BART riders, please donate the unused portion of your bart tickets to APEN. Whether there's 5 cents or 5 dollars left on your ticket, we'll take 'em! Mail to: 310 8th Street, #309, Oakland, CA 94607.

*Sponsored by
the East Bay Community Foundation*

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We apologize for any accidental omissions to this list.