

Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs



Letter from Governor

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present to you the 2018 Annual Report of the Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs. This report highlights the dedicated work of the Commission over the past year.

I would like to thank the Commissioners for their review and recommendations throughout the process. You remain committed to honoring the legacy your community has made and celebrating the diversity in this great state. My administration will continue to share your rich heritage with other citizens and pass over your contributions to the next generations to come.



I would like to ask all of you to continue to participate in civic engagement and collaborate with the Commission. The 2020 census approaches, and the role of our communities is enormous. Your voice should be heard. You are the ones who can address the unique needs and strengths of your community. Our administration will do our best to share important information and opportunities for community improvement through the Commission.

I would like to congratulate the Commissioners on this accomplishment again and show appreciation for their leadership and commitment.

Thank you for empowering Marylanders and our communities. I look forward to working with you further in the future.

Larry Hogan

Governor of Maryland

Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The strength of Maryland comes from the diversity and vibrancy of our communities. Their distinctive culture and traditions make Maryland more embracing and inclusive. The Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs has taken an important role to engage, educate, and empower those communities. The Commission has assisted the Hogan Administration in focusing on how it can change Maryland for the better, especially for ethnic populations.

Through our cultural and ethnic commissions, we are educated about your community's beautiful culture, history, and heritage. More importantly, we have been able to address the issues your community faces and to stand



together to find solutions suitable for you. The 2018 activities, projects, and initiatives of the Commission improved our neighborhoods and strengthened their solidarity.

I would like to congratulate the Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs and each of the Commissioners who serve as representatives for Governor Larry Hogan and your respected communities. Congratulations to Chair Jesse Singh as his dedication is truly appreciated.

I also would like to applaud the Commission's Administrative Director Christina Poy for her continued support and hard work.

With your perseverance of participation and leadership, the Commission will continue to meet its goals and vision.

Thank you.

Steven McAdams

Executive Director

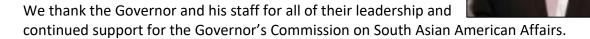
Governor's Office of Community Initiatives

Letter from Commission Chair

Dear Distinguished Officials, Community Leaders and Friends,

On behalf of the Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs, I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report.

This report also provides important community resources and demographic data regarding the South Asian American population in Maryland.





Jasdip "Jesse" Singh Chair Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs

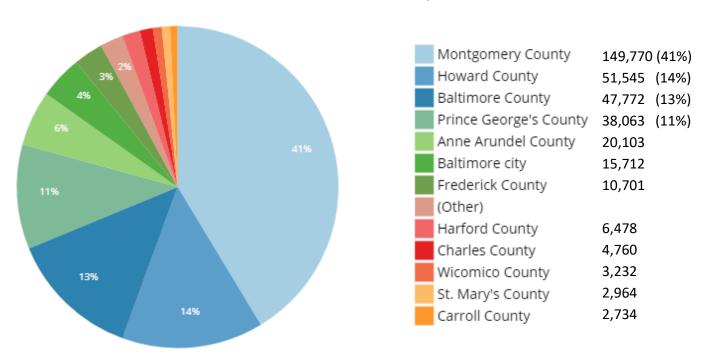
INTRODUCTION

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 population estimates of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), or also known as Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs), there are more than 400,000 Asian Americans and 10,000 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (single and multi-races) in Maryland. They count 5% of the state's total population. It is estimated that the APA community is one of the fastest growing populations in Maryland. Governor Hogan's vision of Changing Maryland for the Better is reflected by his firm support of all ethnic commissions and the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives. The Commission is truly proud of the work they have been able to do and looks forward to doing even more in 2019.





Asian Americans in Maryland



Source: American Fact Finder 2017 estimates & American Community Survey (single race only)

Maryland is home for more than 90,000 South Asian Americans, 25% of total Asian American Marylanders.

(*single race only)

41% of total Asian Americans in Maryland live in Montgomery County, which is 15% of the total Montgomery County residents.

The cities in Maryland with the largest Asian population include Rockville, Gaithersburg, College Park, Greenbelt, and Laurel.

45% of Maryland's Asian American population has a college degree – a well-educated workforce.

WHAT WE DO

ADVOCATE
SOUTH ASIAN
CULTURES

PROMOTE
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

SUPPORT
INTERFAITH
DIALOGUES &
RELIGIOUS
DIVERSITY

BRIDGE
DISPARITIES
IN ASIAN
COMMUNITIES

69th Republic Day of India

On January 28, 2018, with over 500 attendees, the Indian American community organizations of the Washington metropolitan region, in collaboration with the National Council of Asian Indian Associations, Inc. and Sikhs of America, Inc., came together to celebrate the 69th Republic Day of India with a banquet dinner and cultural program in Greenbelt, MD. Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford spoke and presented the Governor's Proclamation, and Secretary of State John Wobensmith made keynote remarks. Executive Director Steve McAdams and Administrative Director Christina Poy of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives also participated in the celebration. The Governor's Commission on South Asian American (SAA) Affairs Chair Jesse Singh, Commissioners Baljinder "Shammi" Singh, Mohan Grover, Pavan Bezwada, Anjana Bordoloi, Darshan Saluja, Mayur Mody, and Ram Konda organized this event.



Administrative Director Christina Poy, SAA Affairs Chair Jesse Singh, Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, SAA Affairs Commissioner Pavan Bezwada, and SAA Affairs Commissioner Shammi Singh on stage while SAA Commissioner Mohan Grover accepts an award from the National Council of Asian Indian Associations for his service in the community.



AA Affairs Chairman Jesse Singh speaking, pictured with SAA Affairs Vice Chair Sajid Tarar, Executive Director Steve McAdams, SAA Affairs Commissioner Mohan Grover, SAA Affairs Commissioner Shammi Singh and other Indian American community leaders.

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Jain Society of Metropolitan Washington's Mahavir Janma Kalyanak

On April 14, 2018, the Jain Society of Metropolitan Washington (JSMW) celebrated Mahavir Janma Kalyanak (the 2617th birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir) in Burtonsville, MD with a drama based on the life of Lord Mahavir and cultural performances by the JSMW Pathshala students (Sunday school). With over 300 attendees, Administrative Director Christina Poy presented the Governor's Citation during the program and enjoyed a Jain dinner, called as Swami Vatsalya Bhojan (pure vegetarian with vegan options) with SAA Commissioner Sharad Doshi, who was one of the event organizers, and other participants.



Small, Minority, Women & Veteran Business Outreach & Open House

The National Council of Asian Indian Association, Inc. and Sikhs of America, Inc. presented the "Small, Minority, Women & Veteran Business Outreach & Open House" on May 12, 2018 in Rockville, featuring speakers Lisa Sanford (MBE/SBR Compliance Manager, Maryland Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs) and Daniel Parra (Director of Small and Minority Business Development, Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation). The program started with Administrative Director Christina Poy making the opening remarks. SAA Commissioners Pavan Bezwada, Anjana Bordoloi, Arundohtee Goswami, Mohan Grover, Chair Jesse Singh, and Vice Chair Sajid Tarar were involved with organizing this event. Co-hosts included Bangladeshi Entrepreneurs Society of Talents (BEST), Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Montgomery County (hccmcBIZ.org), KoBE Government Contracting Alliance (KoBE), and U.S. International Development Center (USIDC).





Governor's Office of Community Initiatives Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

The State of Maryland recognized the economic contributions and cultural diversity the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities share with our society on May 14, 2018 in Annapolis, MD. Cultural performances including Tahitian/Polynesian dance and drumming, poetry recitation in native languages representative of the diverse Asian and Pacific Islander diasporas in Maryland, Chinese, Korean, Indonesian and Cambodian dances, Indian duet, and a variety of ethnic cuisines from East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia were among the many highlights of this program. First Lady Yumi Hogan made special remarks and presented the Governor's Proclamation declaring the observance of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month throughout the State of Maryland.



39. Annual Assam Convention 2018 Inauguration and Celebration Dinner

On June 30, 2018, Administrative Director Christina Poy participated in the lighting ceremony, made congratulatory remarks, and presented the Governor's Citation at the 39th Annual Assam Convention 2018 Inauguration and Celebration Dinner in Herndon, VA. Counsellor Mridu Pawan Das of the Embassy of India and Congresswoman Barbara Comstock of Virginia also made remarks. The Assam Association of North America (AANA) hosted this convention with over 500 attendees comprised of Indian leaders and members of community, business, and grassroots organizations with cultural performances. Commissioner Anjana Bordoloi was one of the organizers and Commissioner Arundhotee Goswami also attended.



ADG Health & Wellness Fair in Germantown

American Diversity Group organized the ADG Health and Wellness Fair held July 14, 2018 at the Germantown Park Community Center with over 100 people in attendance. The fair included workout sessions, nutritional advice and healthy eating demonstrations, as well as free health screenings for glucose and diabetes, eye exams, dental exams, blood pressure, and cholesterol. SAA Commissioner Mayur Mody and Asian Pacific American (APA) Affairs Commissioner Elizabeth Chung were the organizers.





Premier Health Express Clinic Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Open House

During Premier Health Express Urgent Care Center's grand opening ceremony in Columbia, MD on August 1, 2018, remarks were made by SAA Commissioner Mayur Mody, Asian Pacific American Commissioner Elizabeth Chung, Executive Director Steve McAdams of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, as well as federal, state, and Howard County representatives. Following the Center's ribbon cutting, an open house allowed guests to tour the facility, which includes a clinic, inhouse X-ray, treatment room, pharmacy, and labs. American Diversity Group, Warrior Centric Healthcare Foundation, Dr. Samuel Nokuri, and Dr. Ofundem Nokuri have partnered for Premier Health Express Clinic to provide better care for vulnerable populations, such as veterans and their families, the underserved, and those with no or minimal insurance with Urgent and Primary Care by accepting all insurances. Director Christina Poy, Director Kevin Craft, Director Lorena Rivera, Director Jennifer Gray, Director Bridgette Lundfelt, SAA Chair Jesse Singh, Asian Pacific American Commissioner Bob Zhang, SAA Commissioner Anjana Bordoloi and Middle Eastern American Commission Chair Neveen Kurtom attended.



National Night Out in Shady Side

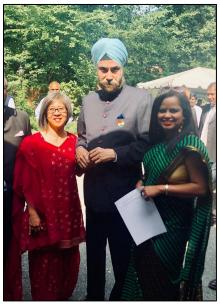
On August 7, 2018, state, county, and local officials came out to the National Night Out in Shady Side, MD for an annual community-building campaign that promotes strong police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live and work. Executive Director Steve McAdams presented the Governor's Citations to the chiefs of Anne Arundel's police, fire, and rescue first-responders for their efforts at the Capital Gazette shooting. Administrative Director Christina Poy, SAA Chair Jesse Singh, and SAA Vice Chair Sajid Tarar attended. Commissioner Mohan Grover was one of the organizers.



72nd Independence Day of India Celebration at the Embassy of India

On August 15, 2018, Administrative Director Christina Poy, Commissioner Anjana Bordoloi, and Commissioner Pavan Bezwada attended the celebration of India's 72⁻⁻⁻ Independence Day at the Embassy Residence hosted by Mr. Navtej Sarna, Ambassador of India to the United States of America.





ADG & BAPS Charities Health Fair

Chief Operating Officer Dennis Schrader of the Maryland Department of Health made remarks on August 19, 2018 at the BAPS Charities Health Fair, organized by SAA Commissioner Mayur Mody, Dr. Arun Bhandari (Chair Panel A of the Maryland Board of Physicians), and American Diversity Group (ADG). SAA Commissioner Anjana Bordoloi attended along with over 400 other participants in Beltsville, MD. BAPS Charities is committed to improving the health and well-being of society, particularly individuals and communities in need, by providing healthcare and raising health awareness through volunteer services. In addition to educational materials and exhibits about health related issues, free screenings for obesity, heart disease, diabetes, lipid profile, eye and dental issues, skin problems and osteoporosis were available to attendees.

BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir Celebration of Janmashtami

On August 26, 2018, Deputy Secretary of State Luis Borunda provided remarks, Executive Director Steve McAdams presented the Governor's Citation, and Director Kevin Craft attended the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir Celebration of Janmashtami at the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir in Beltsville, MD. Janmashtami is observed on Shravan Vad Ashtami of the Hindu calendar to celebrate with the festival for Lord Krishna's birthday. Over 500 devotees from all over Maryland attended this celebration.

ISKCON Sri Krishna Janmastami

With over 10,000 attendees, Commissioner Ishani Chowdhury represented the South Asian American Commission on September 3, 2018 at the ISKCON of Washington, DC in Potomac, MD during Janmastami, which commemorates the birth of Lord Krishna who many Hindus worship as God. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is a world-wide movement dedicated to the philosophy and practice of Krishna Consciousness also known as Bhakti Yoga. Sri Krishna Janmastami is the most sacred day of the year for the over 80,000 Hindu residents of Maryland. It is a joyful celebration of ancient cultural traditions and devout religious meaning.

17th Annual Festival of India

With over 200 attendees, Executive Director Steve McAdams made remarks at the Festival of India on September 22, 2018 in Frederick, MD. The Indian Association of Frederick-MD (IAF Inc.) is a non-profit organization with a mission to promote and enhance cultural, educational and social ties between Indian (South Asian) and the non-Indian people of origin residing in Frederick County and surrounding areas of Maryland. IAF is a prominent Indian association, with membership from over 370 families and is a fast growing organization, reaching out to over 5,000 Indians of Frederick County and beyond. Each year IAF organizes a cultural event called the "Festival of India" (FOI) showcasing Indian cultural enrichment. SAA Commissioner Sharad Doshi, SAA Commissioner Gurpreet Kaur, and APA Commissioner Elizabeth Chung are involved with the organization of this event.

Special Pooja and Vedic Havan Prayer Service

On October 14, 2018, SAA Chairman Jesse Singh, Vice Chair Sajid Tarar, Commissioner Baljinder Singh, and Commissioner Anjana Bordoloi attended a special pooja (worship) at The Hindu Temple of Metropolitan Washington in Adelphi, MD. A prayer service was conducted by The Hindu Temple Head

Priest Pitamber Dutt Sharma and Ram Bhadra Tripathi with a speech by Secretary of State John C. Wobensmith and followed by vedic havan (ritual buring of offerings). Over 300 people attended this service.

ADG Shri Mangal Mandir Health & Wellness Fair On November 17, 2018, the American Diversity Group (ADG) and Shri Mangal Mandir Health and Wellness Fair hosted the ADG Shri Mangal Mandir Health and Wellness Fair in Silver Spring, MD. This free, large health fair was open to all and is especially focused towards serving the uninsured and the under-insured. Medical specialists from several fields, county and state health agencies, and a diverse array of voluntary charitable organizations participated by providing free screenings, presentations, and care to over 200 participants.



35th Annual Indian Music & Dance Competition (SAA)

On November 25, 2018, SAA Commissioner Anjana Bordoloi presented the Governor's Citation to Ustad Hamid Hossain, founder of The Academy of Indian Music, at Slayton House Theater in Columbia, MD. The 35th Annual Indian Music & Dance Competition is the only event in the United States that brings together music and culture from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the United States. Over 200 participants from all over the country compete annually. This event celebrates the beautiful union of many cultures through music and dance during Thanksgiving weekend.

Joint Ethnic Commissions Legislative Night in Annapolis

On March 13, 2018, the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives with the Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs, and the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs hosted the 2018 Governor's Ethnic Commissions' Joint Legislative Night as a place where constituents were briefed on the Governor's legislative priorities, as well as a means to meet local and state elected officials in Annapolis. Attendees also enjoyed ethnic cuisines from diverse communities.

Commissioners Reception at Government House

On March 27, 2018, Governor Hogan and First Lady Yumi Hogan held a reception at Government House for the Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs along with all of the Commissioners from the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives ethnic commissions and the Governor's Office of Service and Volunteerism. Governor Hogan and Lt. Governor Rutherford spoke with the Commissioners and acknowledged them for their service.





American Diversity Group
Asian American Center of Frederick
Assam Association of North America
BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir
Hindu Temple of Metropolitan Washington
Indian Association of Frederick-MD (IAF Inc.)
International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)
Jain Society of Metropolitan Washington (JSMW)
National Council of Asian Indian Associations, Inc.
Sikhs of America, Inc.
Shri Mangal Mandir
The Academy of Indian Music
Indian Origin Network
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund



Mission of the Commission

The Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs advises government, advances solutions, and serves as a resource to ensure the economic, educational, health, and social well-being of South Asian American constituents.

Commission Members

Chair:

Chanhok Jasdip "Jesse" Singh (Indian, Anne Arundel)

Vice Chair:

Sajid "CJ" Tarar (Pakistani, Baltimore)

Members:

Arthur Pavan Bezwada (Indian, Montgomery)

Kawaljit "Keat" Bhutani (Indian, Montgomery)

Nipika Borah (Indian, Montgomery)

Anjana Bordoloi (Indian, Howard)

Ishani Chowdhury (Indian, Montgomery)

Sharad Doshi (Indian, Frederick)

Arundhotee Goswami (Indian, Montgomery)

Mohan L. Grover (Indian, Anne Arundel)

Upendra Gupta (Indian, Montgomery)

Shyam D. Karki (Nepali, Baltimore)

Gurpreet K. Kaur (Indian, Frederick)

Ram Mohan Konda (Indian, Montgomery)

Mayur Mody (Indian, Montgomery)

Shailesh "Sly" Patel (Indian, Baltimore)

Asoka Ranaweera (Sri Lankan, Montgomery)

Darshan Saluja, MD (Indian, Baltimore)

Rana Shaikh (Kashmiri/Pakistani, Montgomery)

Kanishk Sharma (Indian, Howard)

Baljinder "Shammi" Singh (Indian, Baltimore)



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