The Asian American Civic Association provides limited English speaking and economically disadvantaged people with education, occupational training and social services enabling them to realize lasting economic self-sufficiency.
Dear Friends,

As AACA prepares to commemorate its 50th anniversary in 2017, I am proud and humbled to reflect on our many accomplishments.

AACA started off in a small Chinatown basement in 1967. Over our 50 years, we have served economically disadvantaged Americans and immigrants from 125 countries by providing unparalleled skills training, career counseling and job placement, ESOL, and immigration services. Boston Mayor Marty Walsh recently said, “AACA has impacted so many families over the years.” Ron Walker, Massachusetts Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development, said, “AACA is one of the best [organizations] in the state at making sure skills are taught so people get a job in the community.”

For the fourth year in a row, AACA is ranked number one among all Department of Elementary and Secondary Education funded community-based programs for sending adult learners to college. In Fiscal Year 2016, we served nearly 4,000 economically disadvantaged and immigrant clients from around the world. There have been many other important milestones. AACA launched the Mulan Society for immigrant women, a program specifically designed to educate and empower AACA’s many female clients by offering women centered comprehensive support services including naturalization and computer classes. Additionally, AACA was awarded a multi-year grant to launch a program to address the public health smoking crisis in Chinatown. AACA also completed another successful cycle of the pilot New Roots to Employment program which helps highly educated immigrants reclaim their careers in the U.S. AACA’s outstanding reputation as a provider of high quality innovative services brings thousands of clients and over one hundred employer partners.

With all of these accomplishments, AACA is looking forward to creating new opportunities for all those we serve in the next 50 years. To remain valuable, we must challenge ourselves to respond to the current employment needs of Massachusetts businesses and the changing characteristics of our target service population. Together with your help, we will secure our future and the future success of all immigrants and economically disadvantaged families in the Commonwealth. This annual report highlights our programming, finances, and success stories for fiscal year 2016.

Sincerely,

Chau-ming Lee
Asian American Civic Association

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PROGRAMS & RESULTS

**Adult Education Center:** Basic and Advanced English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), College Preparation, English and Job Readiness for highly educated immigrants, Workplace Education, College Retention Program.

**Workforce Development Center:** Building Maintenance Training, Banking and Finance Training, Employment Center for job readiness and job placement, Job Retention Program.

**Multi-Service Center:** Public Entitlement Access (e.g. food stamps, fuel assistance, housing), College Application and Financial Aid Counseling, Immigration and Naturalization Counseling, Income Tax Preparation, Translation and Interpretation, Mulan Society for Immigrant Women, Smoking Cessation Program.

**SAMPAN Newspaper:** Distribution: 6,000/issue, Online: 9,100 readers/month. Only bilingual English/Chinese community newspaper in New England since 1972.

**Youth Center:** Youth Employment Center, Youth Theater Program, mentoring isolated/disabled kids, improving Chinatown Environment.

**Buds & Blossoms Early Education & Care Center:** Only Mandarin immersion, Reggio Emilia inspired childcare center in New England. Serves infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers.

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**RESULTS**

- Completion rate for job training programs: **84%**
- Job placement rate for job training programs: **81%**
- Average starting wage at placement: **$14.96**
- 2-year job retention rate for job training graduates: **70%**
- Number of employer partners: **110**
- Number of adult education graduates enrolled in college: **25**
- College/retention graduation rate: **79%**
- Dollars returned to low-income clients via tax returns: **$578,813**
**Individuals Served In Fiscal Year 2016**

**AACA Served 3,714**

- Adult Education Center: 404
- Workforce Development Center: 638
- Youth Center: 29
- Buds & Blossoms: 56
- Multi-Service Center: 2,587

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**FY16 REVENUE**

- Earned Income: $1,116,815
- Government: $900,945
- Foundations/Corporate Foundations: $895,826
- Individual Contributions: $83,778
- United Way: $108,777

**TOTAL REVENUE**: $3,106,140

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**FY16 EXPENSES**

- Buds & Blossoms: $677,692
- Workforce Development: $742,447
- Adult Education: $653,574
- Administration: $400,789
- Fundraising & Development: $196,959
- Youth Center: $429
- Multi-Service Center: $164,708
- Sampan: $164,137

**TOTAL EXPENSES**: $3,000,735
EMPLOYER PARTNERS

Employment Center

Bank of America
BNY Mellon
Cathay Bank
Citizens Bank
Commerce Bank
East Boston Savings Bank
Eastern Bank
EastWest Bank
Leader Bank
People’s United Bank
Rockland Trust
Santander
State Street Corporation
TD Bank
Webster Bank

Adcotron EMS, Inc.
Aerotek
Allied Barton
Amphenol PCD
Amphenol Backplane Systems
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CVS Health
Document Technologies Inc
Education Development Center
Expressway Motors
FedEx Ground
Feti Travel
Gategourmet
G2SecureStaff
Granite Telecommunications
Hallmark Health
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
Harvard University
Home Depot
Hostelling International USA
Hot Pot Buffet
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Kam Man Food
Keolis Commuter Services
Macy’s
MBTA
Mystic Valley Elder Services
Neiman Marcus
Neighborhood Health Plan
Piantedosi Baking Company
PRIMARK
Prudential Financial Services
Realty Direct
Revere Hotel
Richard Soo Hoo Insurance Agency
Roche Bros
Seasons Hospice
Securitas Security Services USA
SNAP Chef
Starbucks
Sweetgreen
Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department
Suffolk University
TJX Companies
Total Clerical Services
Tufts Health Plan
Tufts Medical Center
Uniqlo
U.S. Postal Services
Village Automotive Group
Walgreen’s
Watermark Donut Co.
Whole Foods
Vitra Health
International Shoppes
VPNE Parking Solutions

Careers in Banking and Finance

Building Energy Efficient Maintenance Skills

Building Energy Efficient Maintenance Skills

Executive Directors

Massachusetts College of Art & Design
University of Massachusetts at Lowell
University of Southern California
American Student Assistance
Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology
Bunker Hill Community College
Bentley University
Boston University Metropolitan College
Cambridge College
Center for Educational Documentation
De Anza College (Cupertino, CA)
Holyoke Community College
Longy School of Music
Roxbury Community College
Asian American Student Success Program at UMass Boston
Mass Bay Community College
Massasoit Community College
Northeastern University
North Shore Community College
Quincy College
Suffolk University
Tufts University
University of California Berkeley
Extension
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Massachusetts Boston
Urban College of Boston
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Named for the Chinese heroine Mulan Hua who fought in her father’s place, the Mulan Society Center for Women Empowerment empowers female immigrants at AACA where the majority of clients are women. The Center for Women Empowerment offers free 3 hour classes on Saturdays to accommodate the women’s schedules. Classes feature citizenship test preparation, computer skills and other topics, such as social services and women’s health. The center aims to address needs most relevant to immigrant women, along with providing emotional support.

AACA Board President Yongmei Chen said, “I hope our program will be the support system for immigrant women who come through and want to better themselves. They can be empowered to pursue their own dreams, such as becoming a citizen, gain computer skills, or become a well-informed and empowered parent.”

Adapted from Sampan
NEW ROOTS TO EMPLOYMENT:
Fighting Immigrant Brain Waste

New Roots is an effort to combat highly-educated immigrant "brain waste." The program is designed to meet the educational and employment needs of immigrant adults with a bachelor's degree or higher from their native countries.

In FY2016, New Roots had a 70% job placement rate.

Jingbo Zhang earned her degree in Physics in 1986 in China where she worked as a lab technician for a university's physics department. She later opened an English training center in Beijing and managed marketing and hiring there for 5 years.

When she came to the United States in 2013, she wondered what she should do to restart her career. She was unsure of her professional skills and if the physics degree she earned decades ago was "stale."

Within the first few weeks of the New Roots program, Jingbo revised her resume and explored her personal goals. Through some careful reflection of her transferrable skills Jingbo identified that she wanted to work in an office, helping people and found a job as the Volunteer Coordinator at ABCD.

Jingbo is very happy in her position working with the retired volunteers. She is also thrilled to be using English to work with her American colleagues. She says that the New Roots course has helped her to improve her confidence and has given her life a new direction.
SPOTLIGHT: Youth Employment Center

Roger Moraldo, 24, Hyde Park

Roger Moraldo graduated from high school in Hyde Park in 2012 but soon became homeless and unemployed. “My life was unstable and I was facing uncertainties. In just a few months, [AACA’s] Employment Center empowered me to take my first step to independence.” The Employment Center at AACA helped Roger to secure shelter and get a full-time job at Walgreens to develop his customer service skillset. Now he’s graduating from Resilient Coders boot camp, an accelerated program where he learned coding and web development languages. He’s launched his freelance services and is now on track to start an internship with a start-up technology company.

In FY2016, AACA enrolled 137 youth participants. 100% of them received some form of career exploration and skills development. 96 were placed in jobs with 80% retention at 6 month after placement. The Employment Center served 326 clients altogether including adults.
AACA’s Building Energy Efficient Maintenance training program (BEEMS) trains participants for a career as a maintenance technician. It teaches the fundamentals of carpentry, plumbing, electricity, appliance repair, and maintenance and energy efficiency, as well as math and basic computers.

The BEEMS program had an average starting salary of $15.56/hour in FY2016.

“I know that AACA gave me lots of learning opportunities and all I have to do is use them to the maximum. I am thankful to all the staff, all teachers, and people that helped me to get a career, and make my dream a reality,” said Rigoberto Duarte, a 2016 graduate of the BEEMS program.

Rigoberto emigrated from Mexico with his family in 2013. He worked as a cook and cashier at Quincy Market before finding an opportunity as a contractors assistant for a small home improvement company. Rigoberto quickly realized that maintenance was the right field for him. Upon completing the BEEMS program, Rigoberto was offered a job immediately with a small property maintenance company in Allston. While this position gave Rigoberto an opportunity to apply his skills, he was interested in receiving the benefits provided by larger property maintenance companies. Rigoberto began searching for a new role with AACA’s support and successfully landed a new position with Winn Properties. He is now making $4.50 more per hour and has full benefits. Rigoberto is well on his way towards a successful career in building maintenance.
AACA’s Careers in Banking & Finance Program is an intensive job training program designed to prepare graduates to obtain a variety of entry level positions in retail bank branches as an entry point to a lasting career within the industry. The program curriculum was designed with input from over 10 retail banks which partner with the program.

The banking program had an 81.3% job placement rate in FY2016 with an average starting salary of $14.47 per hour.

Estelle Ouadja came to the United States from Cameroon in 2014 looking for a better career and life. She enrolled at Bunker Hill Community College to improve her communication skills and vocabulary and took some business classes to improve her business knowledge.

Estelle got a job at Victoria’s Secret as a Sales Associate in 2014 and began working a second job at Macy’s in 2016. Estelle had always wanted to work in the world of banking and finance and discovered AACA’s banking program through at a career center.

In 2016, Estelle joined the Careers in Banking and Finance Program and quickly excelled. She was one of the highest scoring students in class and was always willing to push herself. Estelle learned how to give professional Power Point presentations and developed public speaking skills. She is now a Personal Universal Banker with Santander Bank in Dorchester.

“Banking was something I always wanted. The program was very helpful. It helped me to feel more confident about what I wanted to do and gave me confidence to follow my dreams,” she said.
AACA’s Next STEPS Transitional English teaches students the language skills necessary to enter college or job training which will prepare them for a better job. For the fourth year in a row, Next STEP has sent the most graduates to college among all 82 state funded community based adult education programs funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Johaira Suazo immigrated to the United States from the Dominican Republic in 1994. As a single mother of three children, she was unemployed and on public assistance when she enrolled in AACA’s Next Step Program in mid 2015. Johaira finished the two highest levels of AACA’s ten-level continuum of English classes, graduating from Next STEP at the end of 2015. In February of 2016, she continued her education at YMCA Training Inc.’s office skills training program. Later that year, she began working as a patient services coordinator at East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, using her bilingual ability in English and Spanish. In September of 2016, she began taking classes at Bunker Hill Community College. “I want to be a role model for my children,” Johaira said.
AACA’s Multi-Service Center is staffed by trained and experienced counselors who speak Cantonese, Mandarin and English. The objective of the Multi-Service Center is to assist Asians, other immigrants, and economically disadvantaged residents to achieve self-sufficiency.

AACA’s Multi-Service Center served over 2,500 clients in FY2016. Services included Immigration & Citizenship, Tax Services, Food Stamps, Interpretation and Translation, and Fuel Assistance.

Multi-Service Center Counselor Melody Tsang said she enjoys seeing her clients react joyfully when they become citizens. “Clients at the Multi-Service Center are very happy when they get citizenship.” “AACA has waiting lists for months for citizenship processing. We are grateful to Project Citizenship. Other agencies do not offer the same level of services as AACA,” she said.
Piantedosi Baking Company in Malden employs workers from 38 countries. The 100-year-old bread factory sought a workplace education partner to teach its staff English and baker’s math in early 2016. AACA has provided English language learning for employees of Tufts Medical Center and South Cove Community Health Center, and worked with Piantedosi to develop a curriculum for its workers.

The program is funded until 2018 by a generous grant from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Piantedosi pays workers for 100 percent of their time in class.

Language barriers at Piantedosi meant staff could not complete documentation when bread was produced or understand essential paperwork.

Piantedosi employee Sokna Tak has been at the company since 2007, when she arrived from Cambodia. “I couldn’t speak English and would hide from managers if I didn’t have a translator,” she said. “I was scared they ask me something.”

Tak first worked in packaging, her English so broken that her attempts to say “water” and “thank you” were misunderstood. Today she is a machine operator, capable of completing documentation and speaking directly to management.

“Now I know how to talk in English and I am very proud and thankful to the company for this opportunity,” Tak said. “I got a promotion to machine operator and want to grow even more.”
Thank you for your generous support that helps Asian American Civic Association’s clients realize economic self-sufficiency.

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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
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United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley

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Double Tree Hotel
Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation
English for New Bostonians
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Synopsys
Buds & Blossoms daycare students speak Mandarin Chinese all day in a Reggio Emilia environment. Enroll your child today!

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