



Asian
Immigrant
Women
Advocates

2012

PROGRAM REPORT

Asian Immigrant Women
Advocates [AIWA] is a
community-based organization
dedicated to developing the
collective leadership of low-income
immigrant women and youth
to bring about positive changes
in their living and working
conditions.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Looking back on AIWA's 29th year of empowering low-income immigrant women and youth, I was especially proud to recall so many collaborative efforts with organizations around the Bay Area, which were possible through AIWA's long-term priority on developing grassroots leadership.

Our leadership programs are designed to transform low-income immigrants who initially come to AIWA to develop individual survival skills such as learning English or easing workplace injuries, into empowered agents of social change who can lift their voices and organize to bring about collective justice. Individually, women and youth developed organizing, administrative, public relations, planning, fundraising and advocacy skills. Collectively, AIWA's programs and activities helped connect low-income immigrant women and youth to larger social issues such as voting rights and civic representation, immigration reform and workers rights.

Women who initially had never dreamt of speaking about their workplace experiences as guest presenters at major universities, changed from shy immigrant women into confident public speakers. Most importantly, immigrant women, having been informed about and trained to recognize important historical struggles to protect and advocate for immigrants, workers and women's rights, found themselves continuing that unfinished work and demanding their rights.

In 2012, Chinese and Korean immigrant women who completed AIWA's leadership programs were able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge and participate confidently and meaningfully in regional coalitions. These collaborations are why we want to share our grassroots leadership successes more broadly. I thank our allies such as the Alameda Labor Council, Bay Area Equal Voice Caucus and UC Berkeley Asian American and Asian Diaspora Studies, for working with AIWA and for providing multilingual support to facilitate the meaningful participation of our women and youth leaders.

In the past year, AIWA took another incremental step toward building a society free from exploitation and oppression by encouraging low wage immigrant women and youth to stand up for their rights individually and collectively and to encourage others to do the same. In the years to come, as we continue our efforts to build a just and inclusive society, I thank you for your support and ask you to walk this journey with us together.

With much appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Young Shin'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large initial 'Y' and 'S'.

Young Shin

Executive Director

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01 OVERVIEW OF 2012 AT AIWA

As AIWA's grassroots leadership development efforts for low-income, limited English-speaking, Asian immigrant women and youth continue to thrive and grow, we focus on sharing our three decades of experience with peer organizations and the wider community.



AIWA is pleased to report another productive year of bringing grassroots

I've done a lot of work with NDLON and day laborers in L.A. I am also on the president of the board of ROC. AIWA's leadership model... is the most intense focus I've seen of worker democracy and development. Training a cadre of folks to stand up to employers and speak to the public. These are huge "microvictories."

-Abel Valenzuela Jr., Professor and Chair of UCLA's Cesar E. Chavez Dept of Chicana/o Studies

- ▶ the sharing of AIWA's signature grassroots leadership framework with our local allies and UC researchers,
- ▶ a successful venture into the world of online fundraising and social media through participation in the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Online Giving Challenge,
- ▶ the youth program's leadership graduation event with over 75 immigrant youth attending, and
- ▶ a pilot project with home care workers to explore issues of concern.

AIWA women also demonstrated their leadership in the broader community by participating in the Bay Area Equal Voice Caucus's Leader Convening, and giving presentations to students at UC Berkeley and to a working group of academic scholars at UC Santa Barbara.

1 > Korean women leaders conduct voter outreach to support the 2012 Equal Voice Week of Action

leadership development and educational opportunities to Asian immigrant women. Highlights for 2012 include:

02 LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

At AIWA, leadership and education development for low-income immigrant women and youth means building knowledge, confidence and skills to advocate for change in their workplaces, their schools and the broader community.



Women's Leadership

In addition to their responsibilities in organizing and conducting AIWA's programs, this year three teams of AIWA Peer Leaders had the opportunity to make presentations to three different Asian American Studies classes at UC Berkeley about the work-

...students were surprised to learn that women were still earning \$12/hour even after 15 years on the job.

ing conditions of Asian immigrant women workers. The presentations included testimonies on low wages, no promotions, mandatory overtime, sudden layoffs and the ergonomic issues involved in repetitive work. The students were surprised to learn that women were still earning \$12/hour even after 15 years on the job. These presentations are an opportunity for AIWA's

women leaders to gain confidence and public speaking experience as well as recognition of the value of their experience and knowledge, while deepening the understanding of workplace realities among university students.

Youth Leadership

Youth Build Immigrant Power is a program for low-income immigrant youth that follows the same core structure as the adult programs with education, leadership and collective action components. One thing that makes the youth program special is that the program is conducted in Chinese. Another thing that sets YBIP apart is that it is entirely planned and carried out by immigrant youth leaders with support from AIWA staff.

Seven core leaders and 4 training interns conducted leadership training workshops for 18 youth from 4 local High Schools. Participants in the training

1 > A Korean leader reviews outreach strategies learned during a training



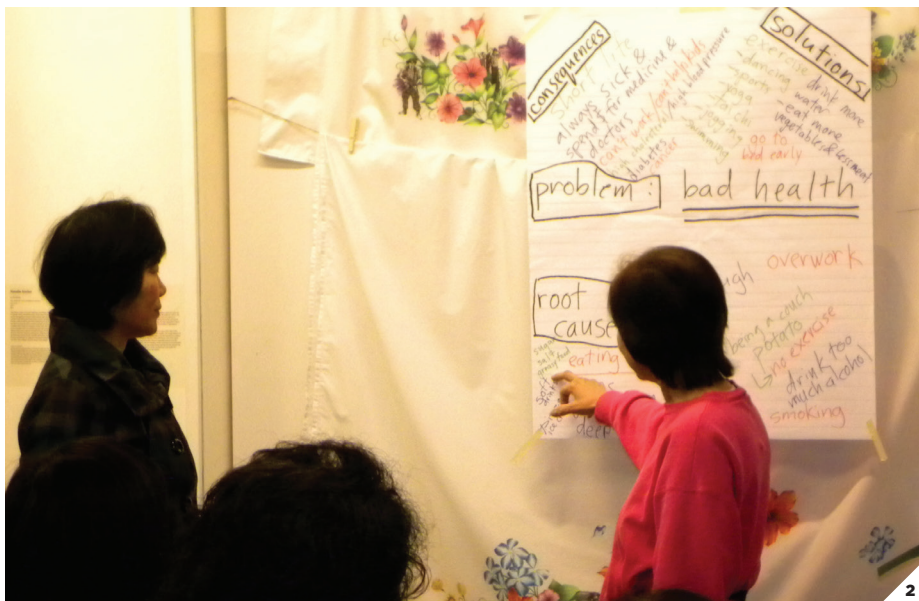
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program learned about socio-political issues affecting low income immigrant youth. They also discussed learned how to organize themselves and other students so immigrant youth can receive quality public education and participate meaningfully in their schools, their community and the society at large. The highlight of the training program was the Leadership Training Retreat which was held at Pigeon Point Lighthouse. The youth appreciated the extended opportunity to learn and discuss critical issues affecting low income immigrant youth.

As part of the leadership trainings, youth participated in two Community Actions which provided leadership experience to enhance their knowledge of training subjects and materials. Through the community action projects, youth practiced phonebanking skills and public speaking to support the restoration of funding to a Berkeley summer program for low-income, first generation college bound high school students. Youth leaders organized community events such as neighborhood fundraising drives, a BBQ picnic and graduation celebration.

Workplace Literacy Courses

Our popular Workplace Literacy classes continue to thrive with long waiting lists each semester. As funding cuts to adult basic education programs deepen, AIWA continues to fill this gap to the limit of our classroom capacity. Through these classes in 2012, AIWA provided free workplace English courses to over 300 low-income, Asian immigrant women. These classes also serve as the entry point for many women into AIWA's grassroots leadership development work.



2

1 > Youth leaders welcome a new group of program participants and introduce AIWA's work

2 > "I was very shy when I first came to AIWA. I felt scared all the time, and thought that with my limited knowledge, I couldn't do anything. AIWA encourages us to fight for everything ourselves. Now I feel bold enough to do something with the knowledge I gained at AIWA. And I teach other women to have that confidence also."

-Lan Fong Lau, AIWA Senior Trainer

03 SHARING OUR EXPERIENCE

Reaching out to peer organizations to share our leadership development process increases the impact of our work throughout the broader social justice movement.



Over the past three decades, AIWA has developed the Community Transformational Organizing Strategy or CTOS model—AIWA’s approach to developing the leadership abilities of limited English-speaking, low-income, immigrant women through gradually increasing levels of responsibility for program planning, coordination, instruction and campaign implementation.

As women move through the process to become Peer Trainers, Peer Coordinators and Peer Leaders within AIWA and then on to becoming leaders in the broader community, they gain confidence and skills which empower them to improve their lives, their workplaces, their communities and the broader society.

2012 was rich in opportunities for sharing CTOS with a wider audience both in academia and with peer social justice organizations.

George Lipsitz, Professor of Black Studies and Sociology at UC Santa Barbara and long-time supporter of AIWA, organized and convened a one-day seminar of scholars with expertise in social movements to explore the potential impact CTOS could have on a wide spectrum of social movements. AIWA Senior Trainers Lan Fong and Hai Yan attended, in addition to eleven academic scholars from UC Irvine, UCLA, UC San Diego, UC Santa Cruz, and UC Santa Barbara.

The substance of the day included critical thinking and conversation on the role of grassroots leadership development in social movement theory, and on building collaborative relationships between academia and grassroots communities. Abel Valenzuela Jr., Professor and Chair of César E. Chávez Department of Chicana/o Studies and Professor of Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles,

1 > Allies from four local organizations work on assessment activity to compare leadership development and organizing strategies



1 > Young (AIWA), Alex (CPA) and Angela (CCDC) enjoy an animated discussion at the CTOS sharing meeting around how to enhance the value and recognition of important grassroots leadership work.

said, *"I've done a lot of work with NDLO and day laborers in LA. I am also on the president of the board of ROC. And this is the most intense focus I've seen of worker democracy and development. Training a cadre of folks to stand up to employers and speak to public. These are huge 'microvictories.'"*

A follow-up meeting of scholars was held at AIWA's offices in Oakland in November and resulted in the formation of a committee dedicated to bringing CTOS to the attention of social science researchers, to conducting and publishing original research on the CTOS model and its significance, and to assisting AIWA in disseminating information about CTOS to civic and scholarly audiences.

AIWA convened a CTOS sharing meeting in November 2012 to share and receive feedback about our grassroots leadership development approach

from community-based groups local to the Bay Area. This meeting was the second event in a process begun with national peer organizations in October 2011. The Chinese Progressive Association (SF), Asian Pacific

AIWA convened a CTOS sharing meeting in November 2012 to share and receive feedback about our grassroots leadership development approach from community-based groups local to Bay Area.

Environmental Network (Oakland), Chinatown Community Development Center (SF), and Black Organizing Project (Oakland) attended and discussed the need to increase the capacity of their leadership development work.

04 WORKING TOGETHER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

As increasing numbers of Asian immigrant women find employment as home care workers, AIWA is exploring the most effective ways to advocate for improving their working conditions.



In response to changes in the employment profile of a growing number of women participants in AIWA's programs, AIWA's Membership Board coordinated and conducted a preliminary survey among sixty seven Asian immigrant women home care workers in early 2012 to identify their issues of concern. After tallying

- 3 > pressure to work extra hours,
- 4 > irregular hours (go to work whenever client asks to work), and
- 5 > workplace injuries.

In July, a follow-up focus group of home care workers reviewed and clarified the most urgent issues for home care workers. They spoke of the extreme isolation of their work, the challenge of working at the discretionary whim of elderly or ill clients who can be volatile, the constant fear of losing their jobs and the lack of support for workers due to fragmented working conditions. When asked, most couldn't identify who their actual employer of record was .



the results, the Membership Board facilitated a meeting with a smaller group of home care workers to discuss how to improve their working conditions. After reviewing the survey results, they identified:

- 1 > inadequate amount of work to support family,
- 2 > workplace stress,

Based on these initial findings, in the coming year AIWA plans to conduct more comprehensive research, develop training materials, organize a home care worker committee, and participate in broader coalitions to find a way to improve their working conditions.

1 > Immigrant leader contributes valuable experience to support and guide organizing efforts

2 > A Homecare Worker answers questions about her working conditions from students of a UC Berkeley class

3 (next page) > Five AIWA women leaders were trained by and joined local organizations' speakers bureau for the No on 32 campaign



Coalition Building: Bay Area Equal Voice Caucus & Voter Education

In August 2012, four Korean immigrant women leaders participated in the Bay Area Equal Voice Caucus' Leader Convening. Bringing together the grassroots leadership of thirteen organizations from around the Bay Area, the multi-lingual and multi-cultural convening sought to promote a regional approach to guide local advocacy and policy efforts. Interpreters supported the event. The AIWA women leaders who attended were energized and inspired to sign up for joint outreach activities this fall with ally organizations to create local awareness about regional transportation, water management, housing and air quality policy matters.

In September and October, AIWA worked with the Asian Pacific Environmental Network and the

Alameda Labor Council to provide opportunities for five Chinese women leaders to become speakers with the "Yes on 30, No on 32" campaign.

In addition, five Korean women volunteered with a Bay Area Equal Voice Caucus (BAEVC) South Bay ally, Working Partnerships USA, to conduct

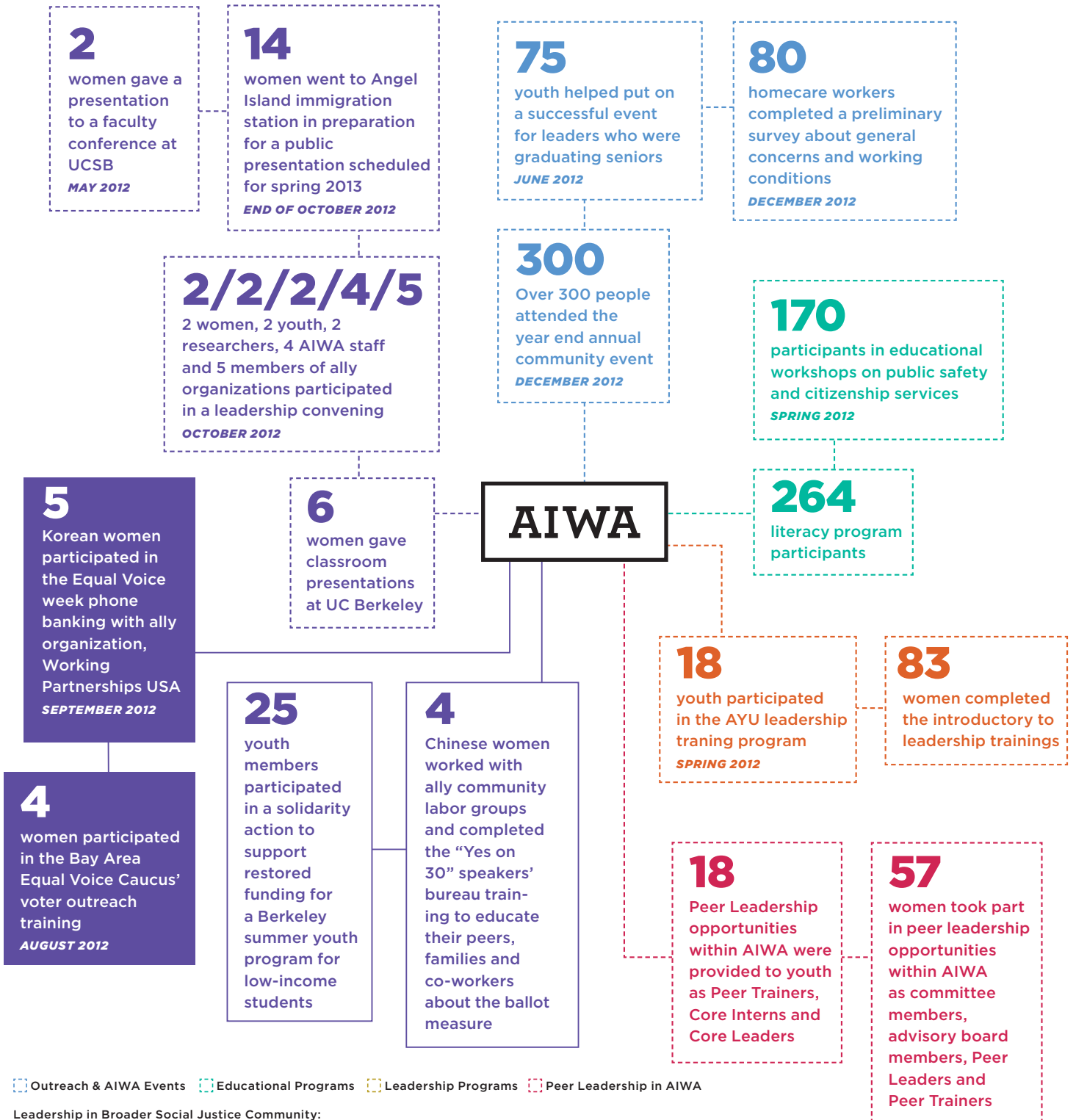
Bringing together the grassroots leadership of thirteen organizations from around the Bay Area, the multi-lingual and multi-cultural convening sought to promote a regional approach to guide local advocacy and policy efforts.

phone banking and voter education on the same issues. According to Working Partnerships USA, the Korean leaders spoke with over 100 contacts and were

able to get 93 pledges to vote for the "Equal Voice" platform (Yes on 30, No on 32).

AIWA's Chinese women and youth also conducted outreach and spoke with neighbors, co-workers and families to educate the community about these policy initiatives. AIWA's women leaders were very moved by the trainings and perspectives of the other participants and appreciated being part of a larger regional movement. Thankfully, California Proposition 30 passed and will provide much-needed funding for public schools. Proposition 32 was defeated in a victory for families, unions, and organizations seeking to have grassroots voices included in policy debates and decisions.

05 NUMBERS AT A GLANCE



06 EXPANDING OUR CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

A special challenge to donate to AIWA online this year brought many new supporters.



1 > AIWA leaders record their donor outreach efforts

In spring 2012, AIWA was selected by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to participate in the Online Donor Challenge, a pilot program to showcase the changing demographics of nonprofit fundraising. That foundation's research has found a significant rise in "identity philanthropy" or increased rates of giving among communities of color to organizations serving those communities. The Challenge was an effort to boost identity giving online by small donors. During the Challenge period, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation offered to match up to \$20,000 in online donations to each organization in the Challenge.

The women's Event Committee held a special session to plan and conduct the fundraising drive which took place from April 17-26, 2012. We are extremely pleased to report that we were able to secure almost \$18,000 in small individual donations from over 125 donors, many of whom had never

given to AIWA before. Additionally, AIWA won the second place fundraising prize in the small organization category, which earned us an additional prize. Along with the matching grant, AIWA's total for the 9 day challenge was to

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win almost \$60,000. Quite an accomplishment for AIWA's grassroots fundraising efforts!

The W.K. Kellogg Fund's Online Giving challenge provided AIWA with an opportunity to learn about new technologies and ways to conduct grassroots fundraising while reaching out to new donors.



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