



## PRESS RELEASE

March 24th, 2010

**CONTACT:** Phyllis Hu, 310-289-5527, [phu@iwgroupinc.com](mailto:phu@iwgroupinc.com)

Mark Masaoka, A3PCON, (323) 356-6352, [mark.a3pcon.live.com](http://mark.a3pcon.live.com)

Christen Marquez, APALC, (213) 241-0233, [cmarquez@apalc.org](mailto:cmarquez@apalc.org)

---

### **Statewide API Count Network Launches Online Resource Center for Census 2010** *Resource Center Addresses Ethnic-Specific Issues Affecting Asian & Pacific Islander Census Participation*

**Los Angeles** — Census 2010 is being touted as a snapshot of what America looks like on April 1, 2010, but large historic undercounts in Asian American, Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian communities threaten to make this snapshot out-of-focus.

Leading the California effort to ensure that Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians are accurately counted in the upcoming census, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center's API Count 2010 Census Network and its partners held briefing for reporters and local Los Angeles Asian and Pacific Islander (API) community members. The session focused raising awareness of the historic undercount of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) populations while encouraging API individuals to write in their ethnic and mixed racial heritage.

The event presented ethnic-specific community solutions being deployed this year to combat the historic undercount of APIs. Such efforts include the Thai community's "What is your #9?" campaign, referencing the ethnic identity question on the Census form that enables communities to write in their ethnic identification. Many API ethnicities have a box they can simply check. However, smaller or more recent ethnic groups such as the Thai, Cambodian, Laotian, Tongan, and Pakistani must write in their ethnicity in order for their identification to be reflected.

"Having more detailed information about the ethnic breakdown of populations can help identify specific needs within a community: Census data is used to determine what language assistance may be needed in a certain community, as well as what types of culturally targeted social and health services are required," said Chancee Martorell, Executive Director of Thai Community Development Center. "But issues of limited English proficiency in immigrant communities, in addition to lack of awareness of the importance of having ethnic data broken down, have prevented immigrant populations from taking that added step of writing in their ethnic group."

In addition to the importance of collecting ethnic-specific Census data, another important undercount issue is the accurate capture of data on mixed race individuals. Because the 2010 Census is the second time that individuals can mark more than one ethnicity, mixed-race community members must also be educated about the importance of having accurate racial and ethnic Census data.

Another factor contributing to the historically high API undercount are the multitude of dialects in some Asian languages. For example, API Count expects that the Los Angeles Chinese community will experience another significant undercount because of the presence of Chinese immigrants who speak Chinese dialects other than the two largest dialects of Cantonese and Mandarin.

"During the first week since Census Bureau staff have been placed in the community to assist people in filling out their Census forms, Chinatown Service Center has had to assist people who do not speak Cantonese or Mandarin," said Larry Lue, Chief Executive Officer of Chinatown Service Center. "They were predominantly

monolingual Chinese-speaking, mostly seniors, with little or no education and unable to read English or Traditional or Simplified Chinese. We need a way to ensure that these people don't fall through the cracks and receive the assistance they need to fill out their forms."

Materials have been produced across the country to address some of these challenges and to educate the community on what to do if they have trouble completing their Census forms. Those materials can be found at the 2010 Census Online Resource Center at [www.fillinourfuture.org](http://www.fillinourfuture.org). The resource center was developed by the API Count's national partnership organization, the Asian American Justice Center, as Part of the Fill in Our Future campaign. The site brings crucial in-language census information to a central location so communities across the country can readily access, download and use the information for census outreach without duplicating efforts, thereby reaching even more AAPIs before Census Day, April 1. The API Count Network has also developed a companion site [www.apicount.com](http://www.apicount.com), which highlights events, news coverage, and Census experiences throughout the State of California. This site features seven regional calendars listing census outreach events.

"There are many challenges that the Asian and Pacific Islander communities face in filling out the Census forms," said Dan Ichinose, Director of Demographics Research at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC). "We know the Asian undercount was two percent and the Pacific Islander undercount was the highest in the nation at nearly five percent," said Dan Ichinose. "It is important for community organizations to have the resources they need to educate community members with helpful in-language information about the 2010 Census in one, easy location. The 2010 Census Online Resource Center can fill that role, in addition to helping to create a dialogue among community groups and leaders across the country."

At [www.fillinourfuture.org](http://www.fillinourfuture.org), visitors will find: questions asked on the census form, frequently asked questions; the impact on your family and your community; confidentiality of responses; details about questions regarding race, ethnicity and faith; where to get help; a census timeline; and organizing around census. Languages available on the site are: Bengali, Chamorro, Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Chuukese, Gujarati, Hawaiian, Hindi, Hmong, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Marshallese, Nepali, Punjabi, Samoan, Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tongan, Urdu and Vietnamese.

"The 2010 Census is not just important in helping to ensure that our communities receive its fair share of federal funding and government representation," said Karen Narasaki, president and executive director of Asian American Justice Center. "It's also an opportunity for us to make our voices heard."

###

*The Fill in Our Future campaign is the first from AAPI Action, [www.appiaction.org](http://www.appiaction.org), which is a resource center for up-to-date information about the needs, concerns and successes of the Asian American, Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian communities. Last year AAJC, the Asian American Federation, the Asian American Institute, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center and the Asian Pacific Fund, created a national network of community-based organizations focused on achieving an accurate census, particularly in regards to counting AAPIs.*

*APALC is administering grants to seven anchor groups throughout California and a growing coalition of over 60 local groups in the API Count 2010 Census Network. For information on the California actions please visit [www.apicount.com](http://www.apicount.com). For AAPI materials and downloads from partners across the United States please visit [www.fillinourfuture.org](http://www.fillinourfuture.org).*

*The Asian American Justice Center ([www.advancingequality.org](http://www.advancingequality.org)) is a national organization dedicated to defending and advancing the civil and human rights of Asian Americans. It works closely with three affiliates – the Asian American Institute of Chicago ([www.aaichicago.org](http://www.aaichicago.org)), the Asian Law Caucus ([www.asianlawcaucus.org](http://www.asianlawcaucus.org)) in San Francisco, and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center ([www.apalc.org](http://www.apalc.org)) in Los Angeles – and 102 community partners in 47 cities and 25 states in the country.*