This report represents Asian American Civic Association, Inc.'s responses to Charting Impact, a joint project of BBB Wise Giving Alliance, GuideStar USA Inc, and Independent Sector. Charting Impact uses five simple yet powerful questions to encourage strategic thinking and help organizations share concise information about their plans and progress toward impact.

Asian American Civic Association, Inc.
87 Tyler Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02111
http://www.aaca-boston.org

Mission:
AACA's mission is to provide education, occupational training, and social services to all immigrants and economically disadvantaged individuals enabling them to attain lasting economic self-sufficiency.

The content of this Charting Impact Report is the sole product and responsibility of Asian American Civic Association, Inc.. This report does not in any way represent an endorsement from Independent Sector, BBB Wise Giving Alliance, or GuideStar, nor does it represent fulfillment of the BBB Wise Giving Alliance's Standards for Charity Accountability. For more information on Charting Impact, visit www.guidestar.org/chartingimpact
1. What are we aiming to accomplish?

AACA’s ultimate goal is to assist immigrants, linguistic minorities and economically disadvantaged individuals to achieve economic and social self-sufficiency. Economic and social self-sufficiency is measured by acquisition of career-oriented employment, generation of family sustainable income, and building of assets such as home ownership. AACA’s clients often face obstacles that seem insurmountable, from language barriers and lack of transferrable job skills, to unstable and substandard housing, past criminal records, and multi-generational poverty. AACA’s tasks are to give them opportunities that will allow them to fully integrate into mainstream - a point at which they have a steady income at a sustaining wage, they are able to take active part in their communities, and they have a secure living situation for themselves and their families. As an organization, AACA envisions itself as a beacon of hope for its clients. In particular, AACA wants to be seen as the one-stop center providing seamless social and educational services for new immigrants arriving in Massachusetts; a key advocacy group in terms of workforce development; and an innovator promoting a path to better futures for all disadvantaged residents of Massachusetts. Over the last thirty years, the immigrant influx has significantly contributed to the labor force growth in Massachusetts. AACA has a vital mission to educate and empower Massachusetts' new workforce. AACA's programs and services are crucial in building and supporting a productive workforce that benefits the local economy, businesses and numerous immigrant and indigent families.

2. What are our strategies for making this happen?

AACA takes a holistic approach to clients and their families, providing not only English language education and job training and placement services, but also providing critical case management and social services. AACA is an outcome-driven organization that focuses on services for ‘the whole client’ - this means that we not only provide our clients with training, but also with the essential wrap-around social services they and their families require, and with job retention services for a minimum of two years after they are placed in a job. Depending on their individual needs, a client will receive help, teaching, and advice from a number of different specialized members of the AACA team throughout their contact with us. This integrated team strategy is focused on achieving benchmarks such as completion of programs, successful college entry, securing housing or retaining a job, while valuing and promoting the individual’s ambition to succeed. AACA’s job training programs are particularly effective because they embrace economic realities: each program is developed after extensive labor market research. Each job training program has strong relationships with employer partners who are actively involved in all aspects of the program design from setting standards for program admittance, advising on curriculum and providing workshops, to hosting interns, hiring graduates and supporting them so they thrive and advance (we now work with over 90 employer partners). Through AACA’s unique formula of holistic client services combined with strong employer relationships, the workforce development programs prepare strong candidates for hire. AACA already has an excellent reputation for immigration and social services as well as workforce development. We have several medium- to long-term strategies that will allow AACA to continue to deliver its programs and to adapt those programs to changes in the economy and in workforce demands. In terms of program development, we plan to increase capacity in our highly successful Building Energy Efficient Maintenance Skills (BEEMS) and Careers in Banking and Finance programs. Other areas that we are looking to develop include an entrepreneurial training program aimed at immigrant women, and our youth employment center.

3. What are our organization's capabilities for doing this?

An innovator in our community, AACA has taken a leadership role in workforce development, developing high quality training as a means to promising career attainment. All of AACA’s workforce development programs combine English language education contextualized to the industry with technical skills, computer literacy, and job readiness training. AACA provides its students with the needed skills for employment, provides career coaching, and works closely to help its graduates find jobs and build assets. AACA’s core asset is its ability to adapt to changes in its programming and services based on the ever-changing demographic characteristics of its clients, as well as shifts in local labor market needs. The internal resources
that currently play into AACA's work and help strengthen it for the future are: A committed Board of Directors with membership comprising human service, legal, education, and business professions. A dedicated staff that is committed to the cause of the organization. Qualified staff with professional training in the fields of education and human services. One-stop center that provides a wide range of appropriate services and programs to immigrants, linguistic minorities and economic disadvantaged residents. Practical programs: we cater to clients' needs by providing concise vocational training and a high job placement rate (over 80%). Unique features in program designs such as the Individual Service Plan, case management, business English, customer services, contextualized English, and two-year retention service for program graduates. Financially sustainable: AACA is not heavily reliant on public funding. It diversifies its revenue from earned income, government grants, foundations/corporations, and fundraising. In FY 2014, the largest portion of AACA income was earned (30%), with government grants and foundation/corporation support at 23% and 25% respectively. The external strength of AACA includes: AACA has a solid reputation and track record among its clients and funders. Industry partnerships: AACA's relationships with its employer partners are key to its success. It is their involvement that keeps AACA's programs relevant, ensures that students are exposed to real world situations, and given a great start in a growing industry. AACA's willingness and readiness in collaboration and partnership with other education institutes and community-based organizations is vital to its resource development and program success.

4. How will we know if we're making progress?

AACA is an outcome-based organization focused on achieving positive results for our clients. AACA is committed to not just placing graduates into good jobs but also ensuring they keep the job and advance in their careers, and so we measure not only program registration and attendance, but also the rates of job retention for a minimum of two years after clients are placed in a job. For Fiscal Year 2014, AACA achieved these results for clients enrolled in our job training programs: Completion rate for job training programs: 97% Job placement rate for job training programs: 77% One-year retention rate for graduates placed in a job: 76% AACA will strive for equally compelling outcomes for the Workforce Development Center in FY15, including: Completion rate for job training programs: 97% Job placement rate for job training programs: 77% 2-year job retention rate for job training graduates: 76% Number of employer partners: 105 For our Multi-Service Center, we measure our successes in terms of numbers served, and in terms of what we are able to do for our clients. In FY14, the Multi-Service Center served 2,698 clients, and among its many services, we were able to help with filing of income tax returns, returning $622,836 to low-income clients. Our goal is to maintain these numbers. For our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs, a key indicator of success is the number of graduates who go to college after graduating the program, or who find a job based on their English skills. In calendar year 2014, 40 of our graduates entered college, compared to five in 2010. We see college as an important step towards self-sufficiency for many of our students, and so we aim to maintain these numbers also.

5. What have and haven't we accomplished so far?

AACA has come a long way since its beginnings. Founded in 1967, the Asian American Civic Association has evolved from a Chinese social club to a leading workforce development and college preparation center in Massachusetts for all immigrants and economically disadvantaged individuals. Eight years ago, we concentrated our fundraising efforts on a $2.8 million campaign that allowed us to create a new facility at the Chinatown Community Education Center, 87 Tyler Street, Boston, which incorporated much-needed space for teaching, counseling, meeting and organizing, including a multi-purpose community room, multi-functional conference room, two computer labs, confidential counseling spaces, and multiple classrooms. Since moving into the new premises in 2007, we have significantly expanded vital programs and met many of the strategic goals established by our Board of Directors in 2001: we have added nine major new programs; the City of Boston and the City of Cambridge each awarded AACA the only grants for "green" job training; and in 2010, AACA opened the Buds and Blossoms Early Education and Care Center. In 2013, AACA is awarded five years of funding from the George and Alice Rich Charitable Foundation to create a scholarship fund for AACA students. Among the new programs we created after the move were: the Employment Center, the Careers in Banking and Finance program, and Workplace Education at
South Cove Community Health Center, Tufts Medical Center and China Pearl Restaurant. We created a new youth initiative focusing on leadership development and civic engagement. In response to client needs, we also expanded our Next Steps Transitional English Program to include a college track for adult immigrants interested in pursuing a college education. This has been very successful, with 40 Next STEP students placed in college in 2014. In November, 2014, finalized purchase of headquarters at the Chinatown Community Education Center. In July, 2014, Engligh for New Bostonians awarded grant to AACA to start New Roots to Employment Project. New Roots is designed to help advanced ESOL students with college degrees in STEM from their own countries to prepare for careers in their fields in the U.S. In April 2015, the Boston Private Industry Council awarded a three-year subcontract grant through the Social Innovation Fund to provide the much needed employment services to Boston Youth.