Strategic Plan

January, 2014 to December, 2017

Building Power for Good in the South

Approved by Board of Directors, December 2013
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I. Introduction

Need for a Strategic Plan
After completing its first three year strategic plan, AAAJ-A’s Board of Directors determined that it was the right time for the organization to reassess its priorities and develop a new three year strategic plan. Having accomplished a great deal in the community over its first three years, AAAJ-A wanted to develop a plan that helped to strengthen the organization’s infrastructure and to chart out a more focused and impactful agenda of work.

How the Plan was Developed
The Board formed a Strategic Planning Committee to lead its strategic planning efforts. The committee engaged Advantage Consulting, LLC to help it launch AAAJ-A’s strategic planning process. The following were the key milestones in the planning process.

- Form Strategic Planning Committee (SPC)
- Hire consultant to help launch planning process
- Interview Board members to gain input on the planning process
- Interview peer organizations to understand their experience and learn about effective strategies
- Hold Board retreat to test and approve draft goals, objectives, strategies
- Test draft goals, objectives, strategies with stakeholders
- Develop an operational plan for the first year of the plan
- Implement and monitor the plan
II. The Environmental Scan

The External Environment

Local and National Situation and Trends

Challenges
Nationally, Georgia and the rest of the Deep Southern states continue are perceived as anti-social justice states that struggle against some of the worst racist, anti-immigrant and anti-poverty policies. For this reason many national, regional and even locally-based donors often hesitate to invest in the South because of the belief that “nothing will change.”

Locally, there are possibly two funders that give at a meaningful level to immigrants’ rights work making sustainability difficult -- the larger foundations in Georgia historically give to direct service organizations and shy away from policy groups that focus on systemic change.

From an issues perspective – because of the small overall number of Asian and Pacific Islanders in Georgia (~340,000 total according to Census, which makes approximately 3.4% of the total population), the needs and interests of Asian Americans are often underrepresented and underserved. Together with Latinos, Caribbean, and African Americans, minority groups collectively struggle to have their voices heard. Also, meaningful collaborations across racial/ethnic lines are relatively new.

Positive Trends
The growing immigrant population, faster rates of immigrant voter registration, and a close presidential race have revived donor interest in Georgia. In addition and in no small part due to the work of AALAC, immigrants in Georgia have also experienced tangible wins with policies and at the polls which have received recognition at the national level. Lastly, the shift of immigration policy work from the federal to state level has re-prioritized more funding for immigrant rights work to local organizations. There also seems to be a renewed interest in funding grassroots civic engagement/voter engagement work.

Peer Organization Interviews
Four Executive Directors of peer organizations where interviewed: Stewart Kwoh, Asian Americans Advancing Justice Los Angeles; Hyeon-Ju Rho, Asian Americans Advancing Justice ALC San Francisco; Mee Moua, Asian Americans Advancing Justice DC; and Cindy Zeldin, Georgians for a Healthy Future Atlanta.

Different questions and topics were discussed. From the perspective of policy work and how issues are selected, all but Cindy (whose group is focused exclusively on health policy at the state level) talked about working on multiple policy issues. Both on policy work and other programs, getting feedback from their base was critical – informal (vs. formal) focus groups and informational gathering sessions seemed to work best to ensure issues and work are responsive to core constituents. Also groups had a multiplicity of issues that they worked on – Mee said some issues depending on year would come to the foreground, and other years they would
DC tries to work with a 5 year plan in mind with primary and second tier issues (they have about 18 issues total). Being responsive to base while being more focused/narrow was also a challenge echoed by peers. Many noted responsive work was not funded, and talked about different ways to manage balance of funded work to work that was being requested by community (Stewart doing direct legal services because that’s what would be funded and not advocacy work; Hyeon Ju same with state funding for legal services).

With regards to fundraising, building and maintaining relationships with key funders are key to success. With exception of Stewart, none of the group leaders expressed top-performing fundraising boards but a move toward building a stronger fundraising board. In terms of staffing, Cindy’s group is closest to ours in size (2 full time staff) and noted 75% of funding was from foundations (mostly national), with the rest coming from individual donors and events.

Summary of Opportunities and Threats
Based on the above analysis, what are some external Opportunities and Threats?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths – Internal</th>
<th>Weaknesses – Internal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you do well?</td>
<td>What could you improve?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What unique resources can you draw on?</td>
<td>Where do you have fewer resources than others?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do others see as your strengths</td>
<td>What are others likely to see as weaknesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Mission statement</td>
<td>-Lack of written fundraising plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Helen’s passion</td>
<td>-Branding and PR / Org communications</td>
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<td>-Reputation</td>
<td>-Mission statement unclear to some</td>
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<td>-Signature event “community champions”</td>
<td>-AAAJ-A confused with other Asian groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Focused events, activity. Not just popping up everywhere</td>
<td>-Streamlining our work – being clear what we do vs. don’t do</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Depth of reach into AAPI local community; trust/goodwill.</td>
<td>-Organization is mostly on Helen’s back / lack of experienced staff</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities – External</th>
<th>Threats – External</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What opportunities are open to you?</td>
<td>What threats could harm you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What trends could you take advantage of?</td>
<td>What is your competition doing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How can you turn your strengths into opportunities</td>
<td>What threats do your weaknesses expose you To?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-We are already on the ground so ahead of any other organizations trying to get funding for similar work.</td>
<td>-Multiple organizations could see AAPI civic engagement as an area to compete with AAAJA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Funders expressing interest: Coulter, Ford</td>
<td>-Confusion in our market about what we are doing compared to similar groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Determine what ‘civil rights’ means and make sure to use it effectively (similar challenges with saying ‘immigration rights’). Bridge gaps in understanding.</td>
<td>-Civic engagement not popular with certain funders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Try to make race/identity issues popular</td>
<td>-Some funders don’t fund ‘local’ or ‘Asian’ specific work</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Research why young Asians not involved
-Most donations from 1st generation Asians
-Least donations from professionals, young

-Conservative Georgians and young Asians do not see civic issues as a priority
-Perception of ‘civil rights’ in community

The Organization

What We Do
We use the law as a tool to engage, educate and empower individuals to greater civic participation.

- AAAJ is a central information source on Asian American social justice issues in our region. We publish trusted, non-partisan, legal education and policy work that is focused on promoting the rights of Asian Americans and other immigrants.
- We mobilize Asian Americans around real-life stories we hear about on the ground, with a focus on representing our broader community interests.
- We address the unique needs and concerns of our community, and translate a significant portion of our work in multiple Asian languages.
- We host public events throughout the year on a host of legal topics, and provide capacity building through innovative trainings and partnerships.
- We serve as a voice for Asian American community groups to policy makers, press and the general public in order to raise the importance and relevance of the Asian American perspective to broader policy debates.
- We provide invaluable internship and volunteer opportunities for students and lawyers interested in public interest work.

Who We Serve
- AAAJ principally serves the growing Asian American population in Georgia regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender, class, disability or language ability. While much of our outreach is geared towards Asian Americans, we promote equity and fairness for all individuals.
- Our work has reached approximately 10,000 directly and many more through extensive media coverage. Our work is also broadly disseminated and shared outside our community and region.

Why Our Work Matters
- The Southern region experienced the fastest Asian American population growth according to the 2010 Census. Georgia’s Asian and Pacific Islander populations nearly doubled and now make up 330,000 or 3.3% of the state’s total population. In Gwinnett County alone, more than 10% of the county’s population is Asian American.
- Despite the population growth and counter to the ‘model minority’ myth, Asian Americans in Georgia remain underrepresented and underserved.
• While we experienced a 71% increase of Asian American voters in Georgia from 2004 to 2008, Asian Americans have the lowest percentage voter turn-out of any group in Georgia. This is also true at the national level.
• 42% of Asian Americans in Georgia are Limited English Proficient, which creates a huge barrier in accessing information and engaging meaningfully in political life.
• Cultural diversity also stymies civic and social integration, and presents unique challenges with education and mobilization efforts. The Asian American community in Georgia is comprised of more than 15 major ethnic groups, each of whom typically has their own cultural, linguistic and religious background.
• The huge influx of Asian and other immigrants has heightened anti-immigrant sentiment in our state at levels not seen in recent decades and led to the introduction of discriminatory policies that have negatively impacted our community members.

Management
The Executive Director is AAAJ-A’s Chief Executive Officer. The ED designs, leads and executes the organization’s programs to further its stated mission; recruits, hires, supervises and terminates staff; supervises AAAJ-A’s volunteer program; and is currently the lead fundraising officer / grant writer for the group. The Executive Director reports to AAAJ-A’s Board of Directors who is responsible for providing moral support, hiring and firing the Executive Director; and for providing broad oversight on programs.

The Executive Director currently supervises one additional full-time staff member, the Director of Civic Engagement. The ED also supervises (as of December 2013) one Americorps Vista Volunteer who works full-time, and a group of 2-3 volunteer interns and/or fellows that train with AAAJ-A each quarter. Lastly, the ED has retained the help of consultants and independent contractors on an as-needed basis.

Governance
AAAJ-A is led by a board of directors that provides leadership and oversight, helps with strategic planning, and ensures the fiscal and corporate integrity of AAAJ-A. The Board meets once a month and has an annual board retreat in July each year. Their duties and activities include the following, though not exclusive:

1. Actively involved in reviewing, approving, and monitoring the budget and raising funds to meet it.

2. Is legally responsible for the organization, and oversees the implementation of policies and programs.

3. Provides overall governance and strategic vision, and assumes responsibility for the health and well-being of the organization.
4. Provides a substantial and personal financial donation.

5. Actively engages in fundraising for this organization.

6. Promotes AAAJ-A, encourages and supports the Executive Director and work in concert with the Advisory Council (if any) and our Board.

7. Attends most board meetings, be available for phone consultation, and serve on at least one committee if and when the Board decides to create any.

8. Stays informed of AAAJ-A’s policies, and programs, and attend at least one community event and all special events when invited, if possible.

9. Assists the Executive Director in identifying opportunities for AAAJ-A, including but not limited to: potential sponsors and donors; potential new collaborators and organizations that are in line with our mission; and potential AAAJ-A interns and staff.

Board Interviews
Members Interviewed: Kimberly, Hemanth, Sara, Sonjui, Masae (5/6)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Profile Questions</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tr>
<td>Length on Board</td>
<td>Mid ’11; Mid ’12 (1); Late ’12 (2); Early ’13 (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>How learned about AAAJ-A</td>
<td>Helen-Korean Bar Assoc (2); Friend (2); Community meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Previous Board Experience</td>
<td>On Bar Assoc (3)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Planning Questions</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tr>
<td>What motivates you to serve on the board?</td>
<td>Helen’s leadership (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Opportunity to give back (3)</td>
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<td>What do you believe are the basic responsibilities of an AAAJ-A board member?</td>
<td>Don’t know (1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Overall policies (3); Fiscal (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hands on volunteering help (1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No formal orientation (1); New to board/hesitating to act (1); Roles unclear (1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support financially (2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fundraising (1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Networking (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you think could make AAAJ-A stronger?</td>
<td>Stronger board governance; Reduce turnover (2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Better fundraising/grant writing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recruit and manage separate volunteers to help with program tasks (1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Get clear direction and follow through (2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop a fundraising plan with realistic expectations; Can’t</td>
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<td>Keep asking same people over and over; A lot stress about it (3)</td>
<td>Work on branding, use Helen effectively in public (1)</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>See AAAJ-A emerge as a thought leader of Asian orgs (1)</td>
<td>Provide some direct legal services (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How could you be more effective in fundraising?</strong></td>
<td><strong>See AAAJ-A emerge as a thought leader of Asian orgs (1)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Solicit personal network (but limited) [3]</td>
<td>- Provide some direct legal services (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Networking (3)</td>
<td>- See AAAJ-A emerge as a thought leader of Asian orgs (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What would be the 2-3 things you would like from the retreat?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How could you be more effective in fundraising?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Leave with a clear sense of direction (4)</td>
<td>- Work on branding, use Helen effectively in public (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Have a timeline</td>
<td>- See AAAJ-A emerge as a thought leader of Asian orgs (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Effective brochure to help tell AAAJ-A story (2)</td>
<td>- Provide some direct legal services (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Get to know personalities/motivations of members</td>
<td>- See AAAJ-A emerge as a thought leader of Asian orgs (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All members commit to a minimum annual donation or to raise that amount</td>
<td>- Provide some direct legal services (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses**

**Strengths:** Depth of reach and trust of AAPI population in Georgia and South; first nonprofit to focus on AAPI social justice issues in South; strong media coverage and growing presence/name recognition among civic leaders; breadth of reach within nonprofit and philanthropic circles locally; our founding Executive Director.

**Weaknesses:** Challenges of doing social justice work in anti-social justice state like Georgia; fewer donors who like to invest in either the South, or public policy advocacy, or immigrants in South; limited local foundation giving; confusion with other AAPI individuals and groups from non-AAPI groups and individuals; lack of written fundraising plan.
III. Organizational Values, Vision, and Mission

Values *(Core values generally demonstrate the worthy ideals the nonprofit strives to achieve)*

- Our community members matter the most.
- We believe in collaboration and sharing.
- Our community members are not our clients but our partners.
- Human rights is the core of our work.

Vision Statement

Our vision is a social movement in the Southeast where individuals are fully empowered, active in civic life, and working together to promote equity and fair treatment for all.

Mission Statement, History and Purpose

AAAJ-A’s mission is to protect and promote the civil, social and economic rights of Asian Americans in Georgia and the Southeast through public policy, legal education, community organizing and leadership development.

AAAJ-A was formed in the spring of 2010 by and for Asian Americans who wanted a stronger voice in Georgia’s civic, social and political power structures.

We believe building power for the common good requires input and representation from all segments of society. There is currently an acute need for more inclusive policies and diversified political dialogue in the Deep South where immigrants and refugees are an emerging and high-growth demographic. Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented immigrants and refugees to greater civic participation.
IV. Goals, Objectives, Strategies

Goals: Breaks down broad mission into individual elements
Objectives: Even more specific than goals, more concrete and measurable with deadlines
Strategies: Types of activities that will help to achieve the objective and ultimately the goal

1. Goal: Build the capacity of AAAJ-A and strengthen its programs
   a. Objective: Ensure that the infrastructure of the agency is adequate to implement its mission
      i. Strategy: Keep and sustain baseline infrastructure (including office space, equipment, utilities)
      ii. Maintain funding for 3 full-time paid staff members (Executive Director, Program Director, Development Coordinator)
      iii. Create a Board Development Committee to strengthen and improve Board effectiveness
         1. Develop a formal board recruitment, orientation, and development process
         2. Develop and Executive Advisory council
      iv. Begin to develop a succession plan for leadership
   b. Objective: Focus and strengthen AAAJ-A programs so that they are supported by the community and effective in achieving their objectives
      i. Strategy: Analyze and assess coalition and partnership work to determine promotion of AAAJ-A mission and fit with fundraising strategies
      ii. Strategy: Re-assess and evaluate AAAJ-A policy campaigns, possibly shrink focus areas and add new area(s) depending on national and local scan
      iii. Strategy: Further develop CLE and potentially other programs that engage bar associations and pro-bono lawyers (leverage board talent)

2. Goal: Expand and better execute resource development capacity to ensure AAAJ-A can sustain its work
   a. Objective: Assist the board in creating and implementing an annual fundraising plan
      i. All Board members donate or raise a minimum amount to AAAJ-A on an annual basis
      ii. Develop an achievable individual donations target and assign volunteers/staff to achieve it
         1. Engage existing donors (surveys, interviews, focus groups) to better understand why they give and what can help AAAJ-A to retain them as long term donors
         2. Engage potential donors (surveys, interviews, focus groups) to better understand what would motivate them to become donors
      iii. Develop a corporate donations/sponsorship target and assign volunteers/staff to achieve it
iv. Evaluate results of first year of fundraising plan
   1. Capture lessons learned and make adjustments for the second year
   2. Celebrate efforts made by staff and volunteers and recognize individuals who made exceptional achievements in fundraising
b. Objective: Develop an annual grants priority list and create a timeline to implement to complete all relevant proposals
   i. Develop and implement a foundations grants target list
   ii. Develop and implement a government grants target list

3. Goal: Assess the perception of AAAJ-A in the communities that it serves and prepare a responsive communication strategy
   a. Objective: Develop a marketing strategy for the AAAJ-A brand
   b. Objective: Develop user friendly ways to describe AAAJ-A programs (online and in print)
   c. Objective: Assess effectiveness of current website and update its content and functionality to meet the needs of AAAJ-A’s program activities
      i. Strategy: Recruit volunteer expertise to lead website assessment process
      ii. Strategy: Utilize volunteer expertise to propose a redesign of the website
      iii. Strategy: Approve and implement changes to website
V. Annual Plan

For each strategy, provide the following items:
- Details (with dates) – a list of the key tasks or steps for implementing the strategy
- Responsibility – the person or group responsible for achievement of the strategy
- Resources – include people, funds, equipment, and physical space
- Target Start and End Dates – the month/year a strategy is planned to begin and end
- Measure – the method by which achievement of the strategy will be determined
Attachments

- 2013 Voter Survey findings (stakeholder interviews re: policies)
- Peer Interviews