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### 2026 Plans and Review from OCA National



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on January 6, 2026, **Sharon Wong**, National Chair, and **Thu Nguyen**, Executive Director, OCA National Center provided a detailed update on OCA's recent work and ongoing priorities, emphasizing the organization's long-standing role as a national social justice and civil rights advocate. Sharon began by thanking APA Justice for the opportunity to present and noted OCA's more than 50 years of collaboration with partner organizations. She highlighted OCA's chapter-based structure as a key strength, allowing the organization to mobilize quickly and effectively on civil rights issues, youth development, and advocacy campaigns. Sharon emphasized that OCA operates through partnerships with other organizations, ensuring that its initiatives are both broad-reaching and community-driven.

Thu reviewed OCA's major activities in 2025. She highlighted the organization's involvement in three key lawsuits addressing birthright citizenship, voting rights, and other federal policy challenges, in collaboration with Asian Americans Advancing Justice, the Washington Lawyers Committee, APIAVote, Campaign Legal Center, and Japanese American Citizens League. Thu also discussed OCA's national convention in Seattle and the summer internship program, which placed students in congressional offices and nonprofits to gain practical advocacy experience. She reaffirmed OCA's continued support for affirmative action and emphasized the importance of educational programs, including panels on citizenship and legal history that explored the historical roots of discriminatory laws affecting Asian Americans.

Looking ahead to 2026, Thu outlined OCA's priorities for the midterm elections, focusing on Get Out the Vote initiatives conducted through its chapters nationwide. These efforts include voter registration, candidate forums for the local API community, and the development of district-level voter guides to help educate voters. She also discussed OCA's annual exit polling collaboration with the Asian American Legal Education Defense Fund (AALDEF) and the need for multilingual volunteers to staff the Asian American Advancing Justice AAPI Voter Hotline. These initiatives are designed to ensure that AAPI voices are heard and accurately represented in the electoral process.

Thu also highlighted a new partnership with the APA Medical Student Association (APAMSA) to support Medical Students National Lobby Day in Washington, D.C., as well as regional advocacy initiatives through state chapters. Sharon closed the remarks by reiterating OCA's mission as a civil rights and social justice organization, stressing the importance of youth and advocacy development, and emphasizing that the organization's effectiveness depends on collaboration with partners and community members.

A summary of the APA Justice monthly meeting is being prepared at this time.

#### **NOTES:**

[OCA - ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN ADVOCATES v. RUBIO \(1:25-cv-00287\)](#). The case in the District Court for the District of Columbia involves a challenge to Executive Order 14160 on Birthright Citizenship, with plaintiffs including OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates and others proceeding pseudonymously.

[LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS v. EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT \(1:25-cv-00946\)](#). The case filed in the District Court for the District of Columbia on March 31, 2025, involves multiple plaintiffs, including OCA, to challenge federal actions related to voting rights under Executive Order 14248.

[JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE v. MUSK \(1:25-cv-00643\)](#). The case was filed on March 5, 2025, in the District Court for the District of Columbia by the Japanese American Citizens League, OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, Sierra Club, and Union of Concerned Scientists against multiple defendants, including **Elon Musk** and various U.S. government entities.

## **2026 Plans and Review from Asian American Scholar Forum**



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on January 6, 2026, **Gisela Perez Kusakawa**, Executive Director of Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF), reflected on AASF's progress over the past year and thanked the APA Justice team for their early support. She reaffirmed AASF's founding mission to establish a permanent nonprofit that ensures Asian American scholars, researchers, and scientists have a seat at the table, noting that this goal has now been realized. Gisela highlighted AASF's growing national impact in 2025, including reaching more than one billion people through media, research and reports, earning 168 citations in major U.S. media outlets such as *NBC News* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and hosting a widely attended annual symposium and ceremony at Stanford University with over 2,300 registrants and senior leaders from science, technology, and public service.

She also emphasized AASF's policy and community engagement efforts, particularly its collaboration with more than 80 nonprofit organizations to block harmful legislation, including provisions in the NDAA's Safe Research Act, and to prevent the return of the China Initiative through the appropriations process. Gisela underscored the importance of faculty leadership in educating policymakers, citing support from almost 700 professors who signed an advocacy letter. Looking ahead, she noted investments in the next generation through the AASF Youth Council, work with the Congressional Commission on a National Museum of Asian Pacific American on history and culture, and continued partnerships to advance a more welcoming America, closing with a preview of an upcoming faculty letter honoring Dr. **Jane Wu** 吴瑛.

## Revival of “China Initiative” Stopped

According to the *South China Morning Post* on January 9, 2026, U.S. House lawmakers removed report language from the FY2026 appropriations bill that would have effectively revived the controversial “China Initiative.” First launched in 2018 under President **Donald Trump**, the

initiative was widely criticized for encouraging racial profiling and disproportionately targeting Chinese American scientists and researchers.

Advocacy organizations, including the Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF) and Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC), welcomed the decision, warning that such measures undermine trust, damage U.S. research competitiveness, and deter global talent from contributing to American innovation. The report also noted the growing departure of leading scientists from the U.S. to China, including prominent AI researcher **Ling Haibin** 凌海滨—a creator of the LeafSnap app—who has joined Westlake University in Hangzhou to lead its Intelligent Computing and Application Lab, highlighting shifting dynamics in the global research landscape. Read the *South China Morning Post* report: <https://bit.ly/4qPnHen>.

On the same day, Stop AAPI Hate, Advancing Justice—AAJC, AASF, Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA), and the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) issued a [joint statement](#) commending Congress for removing the problematic language from the House FY2026 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill. In September 2025, 82 civil rights and Asian American advocacy organizations—including APA Justice—had signed [a letter](#) opposing the provision. The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) also led a [bicameral letter](#), endorsed by the same 82 organizations, urging House leadership to abandon the effort to resurrect the discredited program.

Separately, *AsAmNews* published a January 9, 2026 report drawing historical parallels between contemporary racial profiling and immigration enforcement practices targeting Latino communities and the treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Under Donald Trump's second presidency, the Department of Homeland Security reported the deportation of approximately 2 million undocumented immigrants, facilitated in part through the use of the Alien Enemies Act of 1798. This rarely used law enabled the administration to bypass immigration courts and due process, allowing arrests in courthouses, workplaces, schools, hospitals, and places of worship. The Supreme Court's decision in *Noem v. Vasquez Perdomo* further authorized ICE agents to rely on race, ethnicity, language, and occupation as factors for stops and questioning, disproportionately affecting Latino communities.

The article underscores how these modern practices echo earlier exclusionary policies, including the forced relocation and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II—most of whom were U.S. citizens—and earlier immigration laws such as the Page Act of 1875 and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. While later reforms like the War Brides Act of 1945 and the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 formally ended explicit racial exclusions, the article argues that structural inequities persist. Although the United States has become more multiracial, its immigration and national security frameworks continue to reflect historical patterns of exclusion, reinforcing the urgency of vigilance against policies that revive or normalize racial profiling. Read the *AsAmNews* report: <https://bit.ly/4jC1Ape>.

## 2026 Plans and Review from the Committee of 100



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on January 6, 2026, **Paul Cheung** 鄭文耀, President of the Committee of 100 (C100), outlined C100's priorities for 2026, organized around three strategic pillars: building power and presence, shaping policy and public perception, and strengthening measurable community impact.

Under the first pillar, he emphasized developing the next generation of Chinese American leaders and activating C100 members as a national brain trust. He noted strong interest in the Next Generation Leaders program, with more than 66 applicants across public service, media, technology, academia, and the nonprofit sector. From this pool, 12 fellows will be selected for intensive mentorship, leadership readiness, and direct engagement with C100 members. He also highlighted C100's expanding national presence, including a planned panel at South by Southwest 2026 focused on how U.S. immigration, research, and technology policy decisions shape the global AI race and access to influence.

Paul then described C100's advocacy agenda, centered on producing credible research that counters misinformation, informs policy, and defends civil rights. He announced the release of the third annual State of Chinese Americans national survey, conducted in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago, with a public webinar briefing scheduled for January 2026. He further noted plans to publish multiple research briefs and host public webinars addressing discrimination trends, including land ownership restrictions, mental health impacts, and national security–driven policies affecting Chinese American communities.

He concluded by highlighting efforts to strengthen member engagement and community impact through off-the-record member briefings and expanded regional forums. These initiatives are designed to translate research into local action, strengthen cross-sector relationships, and foster constructive dialogue around U.S.–China relations.

### NOTE:

On January 1, 2026, the *South China Morning Post* reported on how Paul Cheung, the new president of the Committee of 100, aims to foster mutual understanding between Chinese Americans and China while addressing anti-Asian hate and promoting US-China dialogue

through research, advocacy, and leadership development. Read the interview: <https://bit.ly/3Yun7GI>

## 2026: The Year of The Fire Horse



The screenshot shows a news article from the South China Morning Post. The header includes the newspaper's logo and the title 'Why the Year of the Horse 2026 could bring chaos but also great progress'. Below the title, a subtext states: 'With 12 animals and 5 elements, the Year of the Fire Horse comes around every 60 years and tends to bring both good fortune and bad'. The reading time is listed as '3 minutes'. To the right of the text is a large, vibrant image of a horse rearing up, its body and mane engulfed in bright orange and yellow flames against a dark background.

According to the *South China Morning Post*, the year beginning February 17, 2026 marks the Year of the Fire Horse in the Chinese zodiac, a combination that occurs only once every 60 years. This comes from pairing one of the 12 zodiac animals with one of the five elements—a system that traces back centuries and reflects deeply rooted cultural beliefs about energy cycles and cosmic balance. The Horse is the seventh sign in the cycle, and when paired with the Fire element—especially in a yang configuration—it creates a “double fire” year believed to bring exceptionally intense, dynamic energy.

In Chinese astrological tradition, Fire Horse years are known for bold action, transformation, and rapid change. The Horse symbolizes freedom, speed, and unrestrained movement, while fire represents passion and outward energy. Combined, these forces suggest a year of ambition, momentum, and unpredictability—a period in which social, technological, and cultural dynamics may shift quickly and dramatically.

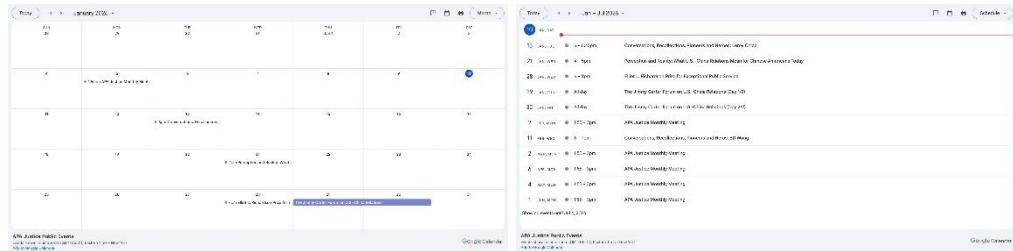
Historically, Fire Horse years have coincided with both significant upheaval and notable achievements. For example, the last Fire Horse year in 1966 saw the onset of China’s Cultural Revolution—a period of widespread disruption and conflict—but also important advances in space exploration. These examples underscore the dual nature of the year’s energy: it can catalyze chaos and challenge existing structures, but also create conditions for breakthroughs and innovation.

Looking ahead to 2026, many astrologers and cultural commentators expect the year to be marked by rapid development and shifting priorities, with opportunities for bold initiatives and transformative progress, especially in areas like technology and medicine. At the same time, the year’s intense energy may bring volatility that requires adaptability and resilience. Overall, the Year of the Fire Horse is viewed as a time of dynamic contrast—where disruption and progress can coexist and shape both personal and collective experiences.

Read the *South China Morning Post* report: <https://bit.ly/4pt7hac>

# News and Activities for the Communities

## 1. APA Justice Community Calendar



### Upcoming Events:

2026/01/13 Conversations, Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes: Leroy Chiao

2026/01/21 Perception and Reality: What U.S.–China Relations Mean for Chinese Americans Today

2026/01/28 Elliot L. Richardson Prize for Exceptional Public Service

2026/01/29-30 The Jimmy Carter Forum on U.S.-China Relations

2026/02/02 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

2026/02/11 Conversations, Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes: BD Wong

Visit <https://bit.ly/3XD61qV> for event details.

## 2. APIAVote 2026 Paid Summer Internships



## 2026 APIAVote SUMMER Internship Application

APIAVote is now accepting PAID interns for the Summer 2026 term!

Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote) is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that encourages and promotes civic participation of Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in the electoral and public policy processes at the national, state and local levels. APIAVote envisions a society in which all AAPIs fully participate in and have access to the democratic process.

Interns will be provided a \$3,500 stipend for 10 weeks from June 1st to August 7th (with some flexibility on dates based off of need) of in-person work with APIAVote at our national office in Washington, DC.

Learn more and apply at: <https://bit.ly/4qJr8TF>. Priority deadline is March 1, 2026.

# # #

APA Justice Task Force is a non-partisan platform to build a sustainable ecosystem that addresses racial profiling concerns and to facilitate, inform, and advocate on selected issues related to justice and fairness for the Asian Pacific American community. For more information, please refer to the new APA Justice website under development at [www.apajusticetaskforce.org](http://www.apajusticetaskforce.org). We value your feedback. Please send your comments to [contact@apajustice.org](mailto:contact@apajustice.org).

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