

OC AAPI TASKFORCE

asian.pacific.islander

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 16, 2020

Orange County Asian American and Pacific Islander Nonprofits Team Up with Orange County Health Care Agency to Expand Free COVID-19 Testing to Diverse Communities

Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander COVID-19 Taskforce partners with Orange County Health Care Agency to launch the API Strike Team expanding access to COVID-19 testing for the County's Asian American and Pacific Islander population.

GARDEN GROVE – Orange County is home to the nation's third largest Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities (AAPI) who are facing barriers to getting COVID-19 information and accessing testing. The AAPI population makes up more than 20% of the County's population and OC Health Care Agency's data-driven approach utilizing test positivity and death rates has led to a partnership with the OC AAPI COVID-19 Taskforce to ensure that outreach, education, referral, and testing efforts reach the best health outcomes.

Orange County Health Care Agency has contracted with the OC AAPI COVID-19 Taskforce to decrease the barriers to testing. Together, they are launching the API Testing Strike Team with testing locations county-wide offering testing three times a week through December 31, 2020. A calendar is available on the Taskforce's website: www.apitaskforce.org. This partnership offers increased in-language education and support, resource referral and linkages, testing navigation, testing follow-up and support, and support for necessary resources. The OC AAPI COVID-19 Taskforce includes: Korean Community Services, Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center, Hope Community Services, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, Pacific Islander Health Partnership, South Asian Network, Southland Integrated Services, The Cambodian Family, and Vietnamese American Cancer Foundation.

"The data is showing that the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in Orange County are greatly affected by COVID-19, yet not testing as much due to language and access barriers. By organizing testing in Asian and Pacific Islander languages and at convenient sites, we'll be able to help remove some of the barriers," states Ellen Ahn, Executive Director of Korean Community Services, who is leading the Testing and Navigation efforts of the OC AAPI COVID-19 Taskforce.

Pacific Islanders have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. "It has been crucial to make sure that the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community is included in these efforts. Although our community is smaller in number, our case and death rates per 100K are highest in the County. Having a testing site specifically designated to our community assigns ownership and responsibility to get tested to the community themselves. We are doing our part to make it easier for them to come and get tested," states Audrey Kawaiopua Alo, president of Pacific Islander Health Partnership.

The OC AAPI COVID-19 Taskforce is urging our communities to get tested and obtain needed information about staying safe, accessing care, and linking to resources. It is vital to ensuring that our economy opens back up safely and our families go back to work and school.

For more information on the OC API COVID-19 Taskforce, visit www.apitaskforce.org and @APITaskforce on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Please contact atulua@ocapica.org for further inquiries.

###

OC API TASKFORCE

asian.pacific.islander

Members of the OC API Taskforce



Contacts for Media:

Language	Contact Name	Email	Phone Number
Cambodian	Amina Sen-Matthews, The Cambodian Family	aminasm@cambodianfamily.org	714-571-1966 ext. 117
Chinese	Jennifer Wang, Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center	jennifer.s.wang@aascsc.org	714-560-8877
Korean	Sammy Sohn, Korean Community Services (Test Site)	ssohn@kcshealthcenter.org	714-527-6561
Pacific Islander Languages	Ualani Ho'opai, Pacific Islander Health Partnership	info@pacifichhealthpartners.org	949-354-3381
	'Alisi Tulua, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance	atulua@ocapica.org	714-636-9095
South Asian Languages	Shikha Bhatnagar South Asian Network	shikha@sansocal.org	562-403-0488
Tagalog	Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance	atulua@ocapica.org	714-636-9095
Vietnamese	Tricia Nguyen Southland Integrated Services	tnguyen@southlandintegrated.org	714-673-5823
Vietnamese	Katie Tran, Hope Community Center	ktran@giveushope.org	714-383-7299
Vietnamese	Becky Nguyen, Vietnamese American Cancer Foundation	becky.nguyen@vacf.org	714-751-5805

Photos of testing available here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1A9BylVikJONAOkj9ECDourbAQ5luNcj0?usp=sharing>

Photo credit: API COVID-19 Task Force