

Dear Community Leader:

The Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to advance and defend the civil and human rights of Asian Americans. In 2000, AAJC led a nationwide community education campaign to educate Asian Americans about the last national census.

AAJC has developed the attached toolkit about the American Community Survey, a new survey developed by the U.S. Census Bureau to provide information on what a community looks like, replacing the old survey (the decennial census long-form questionnaire) that collected the information every ten years. This toolkit has been produced through the generous support of the Verizon Foundation.

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**Your Community Needs to Participate in the American Community Survey:** The American Community Survey will be the *only* comprehensive effort on the national and local levels to collect and present information on issues such as educational attainment, poverty, family size and many others for all communities in the United States. We all need accurate information about Asians in the U.S. in order to serve the community appropriately and encourage decision-makers to pay attention to Asians.

*It is extremely important that all Asians in the United States – whether they are U.S. citizens or not – participate in the American Community Survey. If they do not, Asian communities will become more invisible to people who make important decisions -- including funding decisions.*

**The American Community Survey Is Conducted Continuously:** Unlike the census that is conducted every ten years, the American Community Survey is conducted continuously with different households, every month of every year. Each month’s “sample” of people who receive the survey will be selected randomly. We need to help all Asians understand that they could receive the American Community Survey at any time, and that it is extremely important for them to complete and return the survey.

**This Toolkit is Directed To Asian Community Leaders:** AAJC developed this toolkit so that Asian community leaders can help all Asians in the United States understand the importance of participating in the American Community Survey.

**Use This Toolkit to Educate Your Community and Raise Funds for Projects Related to the Census:** Please use these materials to educate your community (for example, in your newsletter) and in any grant proposals where they would be helpful. When you do so, please mention that the materials were developed by AAJC, and let us know you have used them.

Thank you encouraging your community to participate in the American Community Survey. Because of your leadership, your community members will be more likely to participate in this survey, and people who make policy and funding decisions will have more of the information they need in order to serve all Asians in the United States.

Sincerely,

Terry M. Ao  
Director of Census & Voting Programs  
Asian American Justice Center



ADVANCING EQUALITY

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**TOOLKIT:**

**THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY**

**AND**

**THE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY**

Educational and Resource Materials  
for Asian American Community Leaders

Produced by the Asian American Justice Center  
with the Support of the Verizon Foundation

## **AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) FACT SHEET:**

### **WHAT IS THE ACS AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND?**

#### **What is the American Community Survey (ACS)?**

The ACS is a new survey developed by the U.S. Census Bureau to provide information on what a community looks like, replacing the old survey that collected the information every ten years. The ACS questionnaire asks questions such as name, sex, age, ethnic origin, race, language ability, educational attainment and household income. The ACS provides communities with critical economic, social, demographic, and housing information for all states, cities, counties, metropolitan areas and population groups of 65,000 people or more. The ACS will identify changes in an area's population and give an up-to-date statistical picture when people need it, every year and not just once in ten years.

#### **How are people selected to receive the ACS?**

One out of 480 households throughout the United States will receive the ACS each month. Surveys are sent out to selected addresses (not to individuals), which are selected *at random*.

#### **How will I know if I have received an ACS questionnaire? And when can I expect it?**

The U.S. Census Bureau will send you a pre-notice letter alerting you to the fact that you will be receiving an ACS questionnaire in the near future (see attached). The U.S. Census Bureau will then send you an ACS questionnaire (see attached for a copy of the first page of the ACS questionnaire). *You could receive an ACS questionnaire at any time.*

#### **Do I have to completely fill out the ACS questionnaire if I receive it?**

Yes. U.S. citizens and non-citizens in the U.S. need to completely fill out the ACS questionnaire.

#### **Why is it important for me to fill out the ACS questionnaire if I receive it?**

Your response is necessary to ensure an accurate count and description of Asian American communities. Communities can use this information – to track the well-being of children, families and the elderly; to determine where to locate new highways, schools, and hospitals; to show a large corporation that a town has the workforce the company needs; to evaluate programs such as welfare and workforce diversification; monitor and to publicize the results of their programs; and so forth. Without an accurate understanding of Asian communities in the U.S., Asian Americans become increasingly “invisible” to people who make important policy and funding decisions. By completing the ACS you are supporting your community.

#### **Why should I fill out the ACS questionnaire?**

First, your response is mandated by law. Second, people who make policy and funding decisions rely on information from the ACS in making their decisions. For example, if Asian Americans do not complete the ACS, your community could miss out on possible funding, or poor decisions could be made about schools or hospitals. With your help, people who make these kinds of decisions will be able to serve Asian Americans better.



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Economics and Statistics Administration**  
**U.S. Census Bureau**  
Washington, DC 20233-0001  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear Resident:

In a few days your household will receive a questionnaire in the mail for a very important national survey, the American Community Survey. When the questionnaire arrives, please fill it out and mail it back promptly. The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting this survey and chose your address, not you personally, as part of a randomly selected sample.

The American Community Survey collects information about various topics like education, housing, and jobs. Information from this survey is used by federal, state, local, and tribal governments to meet the needs of communities across America. For example, community leaders use this information to decide where schools, highways, hospitals, and other services are needed. The survey also is used to develop programs to reduce traffic congestion, provide job training, and plan for the healthcare needs of the elderly.

If you have access to the Internet and want to learn more about the American Community Survey, please visit the Census Bureau's Web site:  
[www.census.gov/acs/www](http://www.census.gov/acs/www).

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Charles Louis Kincannon  
Director, U.S. Census Bureau



# THE American Community Survey

This booklet shows the content of the American Community Survey questionnaire.

People are our most important resource. This Census Bureau survey collects information about education, employment, income, and housing—information your community uses to plan and fund programs. Your response is important, and we keep your answers confidential.



If you need help or have questions about completing this form, please call **1-800-354-7271**. The telephone call is free.

**Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD):**  
Call 1-800-582-8330. The telephone call is free.

**¿NECESITA AYUDA?** Si usted habla español y necesita ayuda para completar su cuestionario, llame sin cargo alguno al **1-877-833-5625**.

For more information about the American Community Survey, visit our web site at: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

## Start Here

### This form asks for three types of information:

- basic information about the people who are living or staying at the address on the mailing label above
- specific information about this house, apartment, or mobile home
- more detailed information about each person living or staying here

➔ **What is your name?** Please PRINT the name of the person who is filling out this form. Include the telephone number so we can contact you if there is a question, and today's date.

Last Name

First Name

MI

Area Code + Number

Date (Month/Day/Year)

➔ **How many people are living or staying at this address?**

Number of people

➔ **Please turn to the next page to continue.**

## AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) FACT SHEET:

### **WHY ARE THESE QUESTIONS ASKED AND ARE MY ANSWERS PRIVATE?**

#### **Why does the American Community Survey (ACS) ask such personal questions?**

Every ACS question is needed to manage or evaluate governmental programs and give people who make policy and funding decisions information they need to support communities. Information from ACS is also used by researchers who are trying to understand Asian American communities better, and by business leaders who are considering such issues as where they should open new factories or stores.

#### **What are some examples of how my responses to the ACS questionnaire are used?**

Information *about age, Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, and race* are used for various purposes, including by the U.S. Dept. of Justice to combat discrimination; by the Dept. of Health and Human Services to support research on service delivery for children, minorities, and the elderly; and by the Dept. of Education to conduct studies, evaluations and assessments of children of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Information about *age, race, Hispanic origin, and language spoken at home* is used to determine election language assistance requirements under the Voting Rights Act.

*Income and housing* responses are used by the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development to assess the need for housing assistance for elderly, handicapped and low-income homeowners.

*Citizenship* information is used to help the government ensure that voters are able to vote properly, as well as by community-based organizations to assess the needs of their constituents.

*Employment* information is used by communities to develop training programs, and by business and local governments to determine the need for new employment opportunities accordingly.

*Income* data helps determine the needs families and others may have and makes it possible to compare the economic levels of different areas, in addition to the ways in which economic levels for a community change over time. Many federal and state programs use such data to distribute funds for community development.

*Education* information is used to determine the number of public schools, education programs, and daycare services required in a community.

Information on *disability* provides the means to allocate government funding for health care services and new hospitals in many communities.

*Military service* information is used by the Dept. of Veterans Affairs to measure the needs of veterans and to evaluate veterans' programs dealing with education, employment, and health care.

#### **Can the police, local government, or other agencies see my answers to the survey?**

The information provided to the U.S. Census Bureau is *confidential*. The Census Bureau can use the information provided by individuals only to understand and describe communities, and cannot publish or release information that identifies any individual. Law enforcement, the Dept. of Homeland Security, courts of law, and other government agencies do not have access to the data provided. Any Census Bureau employee who violates these provisions is subject to imprisonment and/or fines.

**AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) FACT SHEET:****PROTECTING MY INFORMATION****How do I know the information I give the U.S. Census Bureau will be kept confidential?**

The law requires that the U.S. Census Bureau carefully protect the information you provide and hold it in complete confidence. The U.S. Census Bureau will use the information you provide in order to understand and describe communities (rather than individuals) and cannot publish or release information that would identify you and your family. All U.S. Census Bureau interviewers take an oath of confidentiality. If an interviewer breaks this oath and discloses *any* information that could identify you or your household, that person can be fined up to \$250,000 and/or sent to prison.

**Will the Census Bureau sell my address to a commercial mailing list or give information about me to other federal agencies?**

No. The law prohibits the U.S. Census Bureau from giving or selling your address to anyone, including other federal agencies or from sharing information about an individual, household, or place of residence with any agency, public or private.

**Will the U.S. Census Bureau ask me to fill out the ACS questionnaire over the Internet?**

No. Any attempt to solicit your information and responses to an ACS questionnaire over the Internet is not an official communication from the Census Bureau. You should *not* respond to an ACS questionnaire over the Internet.

**How can I confirm the enumerator (field representative) is really from the Census Bureau?**

Survey respondents should call 1-800-354-7271 for any questionnaire assistance and to determine whether or not you are in the survey should you be contacted by a Census Bureau field representative. If you are not in the survey, then the person is not a Census Bureau enumerator and you should not provide any information to that person. However, if you are in the survey, please work with the enumerator to fill out your ACS questionnaire.

**If I am contacted by telephone, how can I verify that the phone interviewer is a legitimate Census Bureau employee?**

You can contact the nearest Census Bureau telephone call center:

Hagerstown, MD: 1-800-392-6975  
Jeffersonville, IN: 1-800-523-3205  
Tucson, AZ: 1-800-642-0469

When you call one of the call centers, you will hear a menu of options. You can avoid listening to all the menu options by pressing zero ("0") on your touch tone phone upon hearing the start of the menu option message. This will connect you immediately to a supervisor who can verify whether or not the telephone interviewer does work for the Census Bureau.

**AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) HOW-TO:****ACCESS ACS INFORMATION FROM THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU'S WEB SITE**

On the Census Bureau's website – [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) – click on the *American FactFinder* link in the left column. This will take you to the American FactFinder main page.

**To find information on your geographic community:**

Using the *Fast Access to Information* feature, enter your city/town, county, state in the geography search box and click GO

*Or*

Click the *Fact Sheet* link in the left column, which will take you to the 2005 U.S. Fact Sheet. To change geography, enter your city/town, county, state in the geography search box (in the top right) and click GO.

**To find information on your race, ethnic or ancestry community:**

Click the *Fact Sheet* link in the left column of the American FactFinder main page. Under the *Fact Sheet* link, click the *Fact Sheet for a Race, Ethnicity, or Ancestry Group* link.

You may find a race, ethnicity, or ancestry group by entering all or part of the population group name *or* selecting a race, ethnicity, or ancestry group from their list and clicking GO.

**More information available**

More information can be found under the *People* link, the *Housing* link, and the *Business and Government* link in the left column, under the *Fact Sheet* link. The *People* and *Housing* links bring you to "Ranking Tables" and "Thematic Maps," where available.

**Information not available**

If 2005 ACS information is not available for a selected geography, you will see a message "2005 data *not available* for this geography" in place of the 2005 tab.

**For more advanced census data users**

Under the *Data Set* link in the left column, you will find a link to the ACS data sets, including the 2005 ACS, the 2004 ACS, the 2003 ACS, the 2002 ACS, the 2001 ACS and the 2000 ACS and Supplementary Survey. Remember, full implementation of the ACS began January 2005; all previous American Community Surveys were carried out on a smaller scale.

*For more details on how to use the 2005 ACS products, please visit:*

[http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff\\_acs2005\\_quickguide.pdf](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/aff_acs2005_quickguide.pdf).

## **AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) HOW-TO:**

### **UTILIZE ACS INFORMATION FOR ADVOCACY PURPOSES**

ACS information can be very important to the many functions of community-based organizations and their advocacy purposes. The following are some ways that ACS information can be used.

#### **Internal Functions**

**Informing policy decisions** – ACS information can expose various difficulties experienced by your community, such as low levels of educational attainment, large numbers of people living in poverty, large numbers of people with limited English proficiency; large numbers of people who have not become U.S. citizens; and many others. Understanding these problems can help leaders determine which issues their organizations should focus their work on.

**Fundraising efforts** – When ACS information can be used in a number of ways to strengthen fundraising proposals. ACS information can be used to support your statements that particular issues are important areas of focus. Even if you think “everyone already knows” that an issue is important in your community, you can make your proposal all the more stronger by utilizing information from the American Community Survey to support the view you are describing in your proposal.

#### **Communications**

**Media** – Providing media outlets with relevant ACS information helps to increase interest in an issue or group. Also, providing facts to journalists who can use them in their stories will help you to build good relationships with them.

**Public speaking** – When speaking to the public about issues or your community, you can often make your arguments by using information from the American Community Survey.

#### **Advocacy**

**Working with local officials** – ACS information is important in working with local officials on behalf of the community you represent. By providing local officials with information from the American Community Survey, you are helping them to better understand your community so they can make more appropriate decisions.

**Organizational reports, brochures, statements made at hearings, testimonies, and other public documents** – Many kinds of reports can be made more persuasive through the use of information from the American Community Survey. When presented with a point of view, many people will ask: “how does this person know that what she or he is saying is actually true?” By using relevant information from the American Community Survey you can assure them that your arguments are based in accurate understandings of your community.

**AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) FACT SHEET:****SOME FACTS ABOUT ASIAN AMERICANS IN 2005<sup>1</sup>*****Overall Population Numbers***

The 2005 ACS shows that there was a total of **12,471,815** Asian Americans<sup>2</sup> in the United States in 2005, compared with 10,242,998 Asian Americans who were counted in the 2000 census. In 2005, the following Asian American groups included the following numbers of people, who accounted for the percentages of all Asian Americans listed in the parentheses. (For example, 18.6 percent of all Asian Americans were identified as “Asian Indian.”):

- Asian Indian = 2,319,222 (18.6%)
- Cambodian = 217,438 (1.7%)
- Chinese = 2,889,280 (23.2%)
- Filipino = 2,282,872 (18.3%)
- Hmong = 183,265 (1.5%)
- Japanese = 833,761 (6.7%)
- Korean = 1,246,240 (10.0%)
- Laotian = 193,247 (1.6%)
- Pakistani = 192,431 (1.5%)
- Thai = 143,169 (1.1%)
- Vietnamese = 1,418,332 (11.4%)

***Income & Poverty***

Information from the 2005 ACS showed that Asian American communities are very diverse with respect to income and poverty. Some ethnic groups demonstrated high poverty rates when compared to the overall U.S. population, and others were recorded to have relatively high incomes on average.

Cambodian, Hmong and Thai Americans were recorded to have lower median household incomes, when compared to Americans overall. Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian and Vietnamese Americans were found to have lower median family incomes than Americans considered overall and Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Pakistani, Thai and Vietnamese Americans were found to have lower individual per capita (or per person) incomes than Americans considered overall. Hmong Americans were found to have a median individual per capita income that was 60 percent lower than the per-person income of Americans considered overall, while Cambodians and Laotians were found to have approximately one-third less income on a per-person basis than were Americans considered overall. Similarly, Cambodian, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Pakistani, Thai and Vietnamese Americans were found to be more likely to live in poverty when compared with Americans overall. The Hmong American poverty rate was found to be approximately three times that of Americans considered overall and the Cambodian American poverty rate was found to be almost double that of Americans considered overall.

Interestingly, while the median household income for Asian Americans was found to be approximately 30 percent higher than that of the total population, the median individual income for Asian Americans was less than 10 percent higher than that for the total population. Another interesting fact is that three sub-groups (Pakistani, Thai and Vietnamese) were found to have lower median individual income levels than Americans considered overall, but the median incomes of their households were found to be higher than those of Americans considered overall.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 American Community Survey Data

<sup>2</sup> The Census Bureau provides data on any particular population as either “alone or in combination,” whereby respondents are counted in each racial category that they mark, or “race alone, whereby only respondents who marked only a single response are counted. For this fact sheet, only “alone” data are used. In addition, for the purposes of this document, “Asian Americans” are considered to be Asians who make the United States their home, regardless of whether they are U.S. citizens or not.

### ***Citizenship & Place of Birth***

In 2005 the ACS found that 33 percent of Asian Americans were born in the U.S., and a little over 67 percent were born in other countries. Over 55 percent of Asian Americans born in other countries had become American citizens. Almost 21 percent of foreign-born Asian Americans entered the U.S. between 2000 and 2005, 32 percent arrived between 1990 and 1999, and 47 percent arrived before 1990.

Only the Hmong (50.8%) and Japanese (60.6%) in the U.S. were found to include more people who were born in other countries than in the U.S. One-third or fewer Asian Indians (25.8%), Chinese (30.5%), Filipino (33.8%), Korean (22.9%), Pakistani (29.3%), Thai (25.1%) and Vietnamese (33.2%) were native born. Over one-third of Cambodians (38.6%) and Laotians (37.6%) were found to be native born. Of the foreign born, most of the people in the following communities had become U.S. citizens: Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Korean, Laotian and Pakistani. Almost half of foreign-born Asian Indians and Thais were found to have become American citizens. Almost three-quarters of Vietnamese born outside the U.S. were found to have become American citizens (70.6%). Just over one-quarter of Japanese foreign-born people were found to have become American citizens (27.0%).

While almost half of the foreign-born Asian American population entered before 1990, migration patterns were different for the Asian American subgroups. Over three-fifths of Laotians and Cambodians were foreign born, with over three-quarters of Laotians (84.8%) and Cambodians (77.0%) foreign-born entering the U.S. prior to 1990. Over 88 percent of Vietnamese who were foreign-born arrived in the U.S. prior to 2000. Around half of foreign-born Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Korean and Thai entered before 1990. Asian Indians, Japanese and Pakistanis have seen a more even dispersal of foreign-born entries between those who entered prior to 1990, between 1990 and 1999, and in 2000 or later.

### ***Language Abilities***

Over three-fourths of Asian Americans were found to speak a language other than English at home. Thirty-six percent of Asian Americans spoke English “less than very well” and were therefore considered “Limited English proficient” or LEP. LEP rates varied significantly between Asian American ethnic groups. The following are the LEP percentages of the specific Asian ethnic groups:

- Asian Indian = 22.6%
- Cambodian = 45.6%
- Chinese = 46.0%
- Filipino = 23.1%
- Hmong = 48.2%
- Japanese = 25.4%
- Korean = 47.9%
- Laotian = 46.7%
- Pakistani = 27.6%
- Thai = 44.8%
- Vietnamese = 53.2%

### ***Education***

Asian American ethnic groups were found to have varied significantly with respect to education attainment, as the following table demonstrates:

<b>Population</b>	<b>Less than High School Diploma</b>	<b>High School Graduate or Higher</b>	<b>Bachelor’s Degree or Higher</b>
Total Population	15.8%	84.2%	27.2%
Asian American	14.4%	85.6%	49.1%
Asian Indian	9.6%	90.4%	68.2%
Cambodian	40.5%	59.5%	13.9%
Chinese	17.3%	82.7%	52.4%
Filipino	9.1%	90.9%	46.8%
Hmong	49.8%	50.2%	9.7%
Japanese	6.8%	93.2%	44.0%
Korean	9.3%	90.7%	53.4%
Laotian	36.0%	64.0%	12.5%
Pakistani	15.2%	84.8%	54.6%
Thai	15.5%	84.5%	39.9%
Vietnamese	27.7%	72.3%	25.5%

**American  
Community  
Survey  
Sample  
Flyers  
&  
Article**



# PARTICIPATE IN THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

## YOUR RESPONSE IS IMPORTANT!

### What is the American Community Survey (ACS)?

The U.S. Census Bureau collects detailed information about the people in the United States on an ongoing basis through the ACS. The government, businesses and organizations need a complete picture of the population to provide services. Completing the ACS questionnaire will help **your neighborhood receive benefits and services.**

### Why is the American Community Survey important to you?

- ☒ It is used to decide how much money your community will get for **schools**
- ☒ It is used to decide where **hospitals, child care centers, and roads** will be built
- ☒ It is used to provide money for **job training programs, English-as-a-Second-Language classes, and student loans**
- ☒ It is used to prevent **discrimination** against minorities, the disabled and the elderly in the workforce.

### How is the American Community Survey carried out?

Each month, the Census Bureau sends a pre-notice letter followed by the ACS questionnaire to randomly selected households/addresses. The ACS questionnaire will ask questions about name, sex, age, ethnic origin, race, language ability, educational attainment, household income, and other issues. **You could receive an ACS questionnaire at any time.**

### Fill out the form!

It is required by law that you fill out your ACS questionnaire – and it is the right thing to do for your community.

### Your information is **confidential!**

By law, all of the answers you give in the Census are **confidential**. Your responses and information **cannot** be shared with any person or any government agency such as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or the Internal Revenue Services (IRS).

### Filling out the form **supports your family, your neighborhood, and your community.**



# Want to have a MAJOR IMPACT on Your Life, Your Children, and Your Neighborhood?



## Fill Out and Return



## Your AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

The U.S. Census Bureau collects detailed information about the people in the United States through the American Community Survey. The government, businesses and organizations need a complete picture of the population to provide services.

### Information from the American Community Survey is used to

- ☒ Decide how much money your community will get for **schools**
- ☒ Decide where **hospitals, child care centers, and roads** will be built
- ☒ Provide money for **job training programs, English-as-a-Second-Language classes, and student loans**
- ☒ Prevent **discrimination** against minorities, the disabled and the elderly in the workforce.

Each month, the Census Bureau sends a pre-notice letter followed by the ACS questionnaire to randomly selected addresses. The ACS questionnaire will ask about your name, sex, age, ethnic origin, race, language ability, educational attainment, household income, and other issues. **You could receive an ACS questionnaire at any time.**

**Fill out the form!** It is required by law that you fill out your ACS questionnaire, and by filling it out you let people know what is really going on in your community.

**Your information is confidential!** By law, all of the answers you give in the Census are **confidential**. Your responses and information **cannot** be shared with any person or any government agency such as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or the Internal Revenue Services (IRS).

**Filling out the form supports your family, your neighborhood, and your community.**



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# AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) & ASIAN AMERICANS STUDENTS

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## Top 8 Reasons Why Asian Americans Students Should Care about the ACS

Your responses to the ACS questionnaire will help to:

- ❶ Develop and influence policy on topics such as immigration, affirmative action, language access and voting rights.
- ❷ Allocate federal funds for schools, student scholarships and grants.
- ❸ Fund training programs that give new graduates increased access to jobs.
- ❹ Fairly and accurately allocate funds for public education and social services.
- ❺ Implement language assistance programs such as ESL classes.
- ❻ Provide statistical data to researchers and community-based groups on the health, education and socioeconomic status of Asian Americans.
- ❼ Enforce civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination against minorities at school and in the workplace.
- ❽ Target social service programs to communities with senior citizens, immigrants and the poor.

## Top 8 ways for Asian American students to participate in the ACS

Here are some ways you can participate to make sure that we have a complete picture of the Asian American community:

- ❶ At community events, discuss how the census impacts policies affecting our community.
- ❷ Use e-mail listservs to spread the word about the ACS.
- ❸ Work with community groups off-campus on the ACS to reach immigrants and non-English speakers.
- ❹ Post ACS flyers on bulletin boards in student centers, student lounges and cafeterias.
- ❺ Sponsor joint ACS events with other campus minority groups.
- ❻ Write about the ACS in organization newsletters and campus newspapers.
- ❼ Bring speakers to talk about the ACS at student conferences.
- ❽ Distribute census flyers (such as this one) to Asian American students around campus.

*Asian American Justice Center*  
*Sample Article about the American Community Survey*

**CHARTING YOUR COMMUNITY'S CHANGES:**

***The Importance of Filling out Your American Community Survey Questionnaire***

Have you ever thought much about how or why new roads, schools, after-school programs, or hospitals are placed in your community? How long it takes fellow commuters to get to work? Why it took so long for your favorite restaurant to get to your neighborhood? Where you would go if disaster struck nearby? How your community has changed over the years? What evidence exists to prove it? What makes your community attractive to new businesses? Why there isn't a grocery or video store on your corner?

The answers have a lot to do with numbers – numbers that reflect what our communities look like, how our communities have changed, how those changes impact our daily lives and the scope and character of unaddressed community needs

The main source of numbers like these is the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). ACS is the cornerstone of the government's effort to keep pace with the nation's changing population and ever-increasing demands for timely and relevant data about population characteristics. As it continues to collect more data, the new survey will provide current demographic, socio-economic and housing information about America's communities every year – information that until now was only available once a decade. Although the Census Bureau will continue to carry out the full U.S. Census once every ten years – the next being in 2010 – this “decennial census” will no longer seek to collect detailed data about communities. The collection of detailed local and national data will depend on the success of ACS.

In order for data collected by ACS to be accurate and helpful, everyone needs to complete the ACS forms they receive by mail. ACS questionnaires are sent to randomly selected addresses across the nation every month. Prior to sending of an ACS questionnaire to a household, the U.S. Census Bureau sends a pre-notice letter alerting the household's occupants that they will receive an ACS questionnaire in the near future. You can receive an ACS questionnaire at any time. Once you receive the ACS questionnaire, it is important that you fill it out completely and send it back to the Census Bureau promptly. Not only is responding mandatory, but government, social service organizations, grantmaking organizations, businesses and others need your information to serve your community appropriately.

For more information about the American Community Survey, visit [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/).