

APALRC Executive Director Honored with 2005 EXCEL Leadership Award

On November 1, the Center for Nonprofit Advancement (CNA) presented the 2005 EXCEL Leadership Award to APALRC's Executive Director Jayne Park. The mission of CNA, formerly known as the Washington Council of Agencies, is to strengthen, promote and represent nonprofit organizations in metropolitan Washington in order to help them better meet the diverse needs of their communities.

The EXCEL Leadership Award is given to an outstanding nonprofit leader in the Washington, D.C. region who shows excellence in the areas of innovation, motivation, community building, ethical integrity, and strategic leadership. CNA established this award in an effort to find new ways to recognize and reward outstanding Washington-area nonprofit leadership. The award was presented at CNA's annual



(l-r) Betsy Johnson, Executive Director of the Center for Nonprofit Advancement; Jayne Park; Bob Wittig Executive Director of the Jovid Foundation and Chair of the EXCEL Award Selection Committee.

meeting, which featured as its keynote speaker Julie L. Rogers, President of the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation.

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Advocacy Efforts Lead to Increased Language Access for D.C.'s Immigrant Residents

A year after successfully advocating for the passage of the D.C. Language Access Act of 2004, the APALRC has been working to ensure the D.C. government effectively implements the Act's requirements. For the estimated 39,000 residents of D.C. who are limited English proficient (LEP), this Act is essential for guaranteeing the ability of LEP residents to access such critical programs as health benefits, food stamps, and job training programs.

As a lead organizer for the multi-ethnic D.C. Language Access Coalition, the APALRC has reviewed the language access plans of fourteen D.C. agencies, drafted major portions of the language access regulations, advocated with specific agencies for the expansion of services to the immigrant community, and facilitated discussions between government agencies and

community-based organizations. The coalition is comprised of over 20 organizations representing Latino, African, and Asian American communities.

The project is staffed by George C. Wu, a third-year law student who received the J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Public Service Fellowship through the George Washington University Law School. Most recently in October, George testified at a Language Access Act oversight hearing in front of the D.C. City Council, where he offered the coalition's perspectives on the government's progress and setbacks in fulfilling its obligations under the Act.

In addition to addressing language barriers to government services, the APALRC has also been leading efforts to increase access to the District's legal system for LEP residents.

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2005-2006

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2005 Summary of Legal Services Activities

In 2005, the APALRC continued to expand and strengthen its legal services program, both in terms of the number of clients served, as well as the types of legal issues addressed by its staff and partner organizations. Our staff and volunteers provided services to the community through our multi-lingual hotline, legal interpreter project, community workshops, legal fairs, legal clinics, and the distribution of translated "Know Your Rights" materials.

During the course of 2005, the APALRC provided legal assistance, information, and interpreter support to nearly 800 individuals. The cases we handled involved a variety of legal issues including domestic violence, worker rights, immigration, consumer rights, public benefits, and housing. The following is a sampling of some of our clients' stories:

A welder at a metal company, Mr. N needed help understanding his workplace rights when he lost his finger while operating a metal cutting machine.

Mr. L was employed by a carry-out restaurant, and was mugged and beaten during one of his deliveries. The APALRC helped him to apply for workers' compensation benefits so that he could receive some form of compensation while he recovered from his injuries.

Mr. H is an elderly man who was recently laid off from his job. He suffered from heart problems for which he needed regular medical supervision, but when he applied for medical assistance from the government, his application was denied – he came to the APALRC seeking help on how he might appeal the government's decision.

Ms. S was the victim of identify theft when a car dealership used her social security number to take out over \$80,000 in loans. Through the advice and support she received from the APALRC, she has been working with the police and the prosecutor to bring criminal charges against the dealership.

Ms. P's abusive relationship with her husband culminated when her husband forced her to take dozens of sleeping pills. She was admitted to the emergency room, but before she was able to talk to the police, her husband took her to her home country. Once in her home country, Ms. P's husband burned her passport and did not allow her to return to the U.S., where her minor children were still living. Ms. P's husband then brought the children to their home country and also took their passports away. Ms. P returned to the United States after being reissued a passport. However, her children were not able to return with her. APALRC is representing Ms. P in her custody case, through which she hopes to be reunited with her children.

Ms. V, the mother of 2 small children, was able to separate from an abusive husband. Because she was not receiving any

QUICK FACTS:

- ◆ **In 2005, the APALRC assisted nearly 800 individuals from over 10 different Asian countries**, including China, Korea, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Phillipines, Nepal, Indonesia, and Thailand.
- ◆ The majority of the APALRC's clients in 2005 each had an **annual income of less than \$20,000**.
- ◆ In 2005, approximately **46%** of the APALRC's clients who received legal assistance lived in Maryland, **42%** in Virginia, and **10%** in the District of Columbia.
- ◆ In 2005, **40 bilingual law students** who spoke more than 10 different Asian languages volunteered **on a weekly basis** with the APALRC.
- ◆ **35 legal interpreters** – all trained by the APALRC – provided interpretation and translation services to nearly 100 clients.

financial support from her husband, she began to work part-time, but lost her job when her employment authorization expired. The APALRC helped her renew her work authorization so that she and her children could continue to live independently.

Ms. K came to the APALRC seeking help with her immigration case. Ms. K was a political activist in the democratic women's movement in her home country. In the months before coming to the U.S., her life was repeatedly threatened, and her home was bombed twice. The APALRC was able to refer her to an attorney who speaks her native language to assist with a political asylum case.

Mrs. B is a 65 year old woman who wanted to apply for naturalization, but did not speak any English. The APALRC advised her on the steps she needed to take to become a U.S. citizen, including the fact that she qualified to take the citizenship test in her native language.

Breakdown of Cases Handled by the APALRC in 2005

Family Law	25%
<i>(domestic violence, child custody, divorce)</i>	
Immigration Law	23%
<i>(adjustment of status, naturalization, political asylum, employment petitions, and removal proceedings)</i>	
Employment Law	16%
<i>(employment discrimination, unpaid wages, wrongful termination, unemployment benefits and workers compensation)</i>	
Consumer Rights / Public Benefits	13%
<i>(unfair sales practices, bankruptcy, Medicaid, Food Stamps and SSI)</i>	
Housing	10%
<i>(subsidized housing, landlord/tenant)</i>	
Other	14%
<i>(criminal, torts, wills, etc.)</i>	

“APALRC helped me to overcome my crisis by lending a kind hand. My lawyer was able to help me obtain a protective order against my husband so that he could no longer hurt me. She also helped me with my divorce and immigration matters. My lawyer guided me through the women’s shelter, the court, immigration, police and helped me to process complicated legal documents. Through my interactions with her, I learned to have trust and faith. Without the APALRC, I probably would not have been able to find the peace of mind that I have now. I greatly appreciate everything the APALRC has done for me.”

~ APALRC Client

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We would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support of our individual donors and event sponsors.

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Susan Sanow, CNA's Deputy Director for Programs noted, "Our hope for the EXCEL Award was to provide an opportunity for the nonprofit community to search, discover, spotlight and celebrate outstanding nonprofit leadership. We found such a strong example in Jayne Park. Her quiet leadership and power-sharing style impressed the award selection committee. Whether ensuring better services to the immigrant community or mentoring leadership for all communities, Jayne should serve as an inspiration to thousands of nonprofits in the Washington metropolitan area."

In addition to the EXCEL Award, Jayne was also honored this year with the Outstanding Community Service Award from the Korean American Coalition – D.C. Chapter, and the 2005 D.C. Mayor's Community Service Award.

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Earlier this year, APALRC Executive Director Jayne Park was appointed by the D.C. Court of Appeals to serve a three-year term on the D.C. Access to Justice Commission. The Commission is chaired by Peter Edelman, Professor at Georgetown University Law Center. In her capacity as a Commissioner, Jayne has helped to highlight the significant barriers that exist for LEP individuals at all points in the legal system, including lack of access to legal service programs, the courts, the criminal justice system, and at government administrative hearings. Under her leadership, the Commission is currently examining the creation of a shared legal interpreter bank that will enable various legal entities to retain trained and qualified legal interpreters.

A New Home for the APALRC!

The APALRC has moved to a new office space.

**1600 K St., NW, Mezzanine Level
Washington, DC 20006**

Only our address has changed; our phone and fax numbers remain the same.

Hotline: (202) 393-3572
[press "3" to reach the staff directory]

Fax: (202) 393-0995

E-mail: hotline@apalrc.org

Website: www.apalrc.org

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1600 K St., NW, Mezzanine Level
Washington, D.C. 20006**

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