

## Asian Cultural Engagement Center

## **Annual Report**

Academic Year 2021 - 2022



### Mission

The ACEC's mission is to advocate for the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) communities, including Virginia Tech faculty, staff, students, and alumni. We also aim to educate the campus community on issues centered around or related to our communities.

Photo: Fall 2022 Welcome Back Event

## **ACEC's Story**

The Asian Cultural Engagement Center (ACEC) is the most recent addition to Cultural and Community Centers (CCCs) through the advocacy and activism of the Asian American Student Union (AASU), in collaboration with the faculty. While the development of the ACEC is ongoing, it can currently accommodate a maximum of 40 people for coalition building, meetings, programs, and gatherings, while also serving as a study space. In addition, the ACEC features an HDTV for presentations and entertainment, a community microwave and hot water kettle for tea, and a lending library containing resources such as printed books and journals as well as media specific to Asian Pacific Islander Desi American history, literature, culture, and representation.



Photo: VSA Talent Show (top left); APIDAHM – Owens Hall (top right); Learning Lunch (bottom)



## **ACEC Leadership**









Dr. Nina Ha

Director, ACEC

**Dr. Theo Lim** ACEC Faculty Fellow (2022-2023) and APIDA Caucus Co-Chair

#### **Dr. Vincent Wang**

ACEC Faculty Fellow (2020- 2021) APIDA Caucus Co-Chair

#### Dr. Carola Haas

ACEC Faculty Fellow (2021-2022)



Exodus (K-Pop Dance Group) performing at VT basketball game in Fall 2021 (above) Mixed Race APIDA Panel (below)

# Ol. APIDA Students



#### APIDA Demographic Data

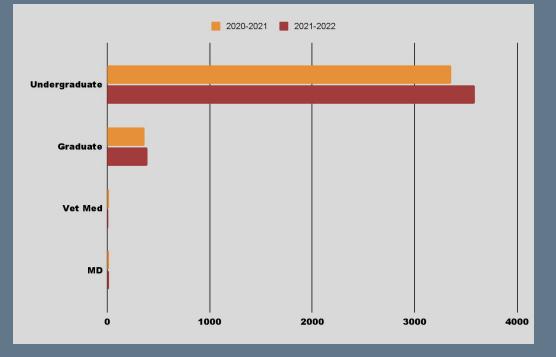
#### **Enrollment Data**

#### AY 20-21

Undergraduate: 3325 Graduate: 366 Vet Med: 18 MD: 18

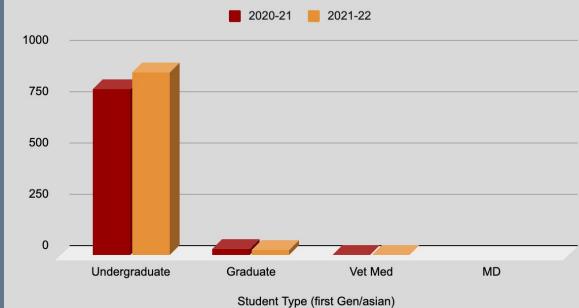
#### AY 21-22

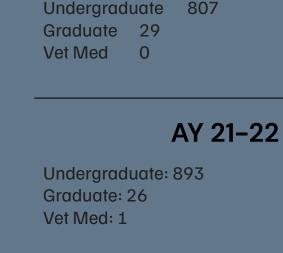
Undergraduate: 3551 Graduate: 391 Vet Med: 12 MD: 16



#### **First Generation Students**

#### First Generation Students





ACEC at VT

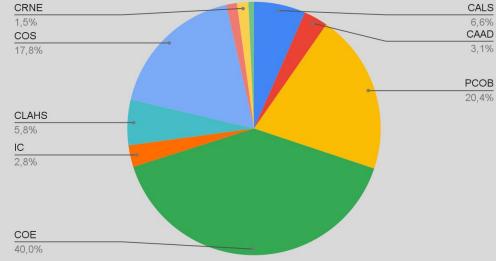
AY 20-21

## **AANAPISI Enrollment by College**

#### AY 22-23

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS): 276 College of Architecture, Arts, and Design (CAAD):129 Pamplin College of Business (PCOB): 856 College of Engineering (COE): 1673 InterCollege (IC): 116 College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences (CLAHS): 243 College of Science (COS): 746 College of Veterinary Medicine (VetMed): 56 College of Natural Resources and Environment (CNRE): 61 VT Carilion School of Medicine (VTCSOM): 30

#### Enrollment by College



## Virginia Tech is one of three federally designated Asian **American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions** (AANAPISIs) in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Reference: https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/idues/eligibility.html#el-inst

# 02.

## Programming

**Educational and Cultural Programs** 



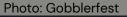
Photo: VT is for Lovers Event

## **Overview**

The ACEC provides educational programing to the Virginia Tech community and beyond. Its work engages APIDA students across the university to learn more about their heritage, highlight accomplishments by VT APIDAs, and address holistic student development. Intersectional programming with other campus partners including the other Cultural and Community Centers, academic colleges, and student groups, provide opportunities for meaning making and identity formation of the VT APIDA student community.



Photo: Mixed Race APIDAs Roundtable





### **ACEC Programming**



Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 8 PM EST

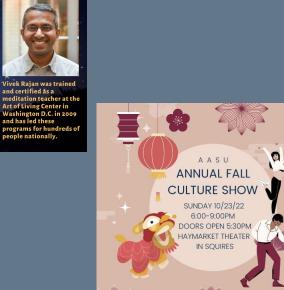




Zoom Link: https://bit.ly/3zq4zLY

Art of Living Center in Washington D.C. in 2009 and has led these programs for hundreds of people nationally.

Questions? Contact Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.edu.







Dr. Kevin Cheng Collegiate Assistant Professor in personal finance and consumer studies Department of Apparel, Housing, and **Resource Management** 

a PhD in personal financial planning from the University of Missouri. His research presented his research at a number of national and international conferences. His industry experience is within the areas of employee retirement planning, financial counseling, and insurance.





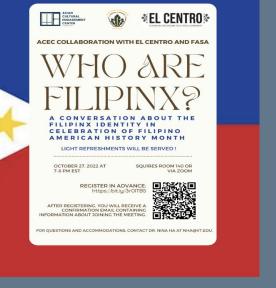
## Collaborative/Intersectional Programming



Neema Avashia is the daughter of Indian Immigrants, and was born and rokes in southerm West Virgina's the has been an aducator and activist in the Bosta Public Schools since 2003, and was named a City of Boston Educator of the Year in 2013, Her First book, Another Appalachia Coming Up Queer and India in a Mountan Roce, was published by West Virania (University Press in March



For questions or accomodations, contact Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.edu.



#### A Conversation with Dr. Felix Wang: Exploring LatinX & APIDA Identities Through Race, Ethnicities, and Cultures

CELEBRATING LATINX HERITAGE MONTH

EL CENTRO

Dr. Felix Wang will be sharing his personal and professional journey into higher education. He will also describe his experiences of growing up APIDA in the Dominican

Republic.

DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 TIME: 5 PM EST LOCATION: EL CENTRO (SQUIRES

ROOM 309) AND VIRTUAL

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED!



Dr. Felix Wang Assistant Dean, Honors College, James Madison University

Registration: https://bit.ly/3Tuf3lp

#### Collaborations





#### Cultural and Community Centers

ACEC partners with other CCCs to produce events that highlight intersectional interests and identities.



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### Collaborations

ASIAN CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT CENTER

#### *College of Science* Community Night

Join other APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American) science students in the ACEC to eat and be in community!

March 15th at 6 pm 140 Sauires Student

**RSVP HERE:** shorturl.at/mG367

Center



#### Colleges

ACEC partners with Academic Affairs to build community and also educate on pressing issues, like Critical Race Theory.

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tions about this event, please contact either Dr. Rebecca Hester at rjhester@vt.edu or Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.e If you are an individual with a disability and desire an on, please contact Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.edu between 9 AM - 5 PM EST at least 10 business days prior to the event.

#### Collaborations

#### MINI-DOCUMENTARY MOVIE NIGHT

7 P.M. ON 10/7 AT ACEC IN ROOM 140, SQUIRES STUDENT CENTER

Join us for a movie and guided discussion on a film by Cheuk Kwan about a Chinese restaurant in Israel! (There will be popcorn and snacks!)

FOR QUESTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS, PLEASE CONTACT DR. NINA HA AT NHA@VT.EDU



#### **Campus Partners**

The ACEC works with other campus constituents like the Jewish Student Union (JSU) and Hillel in their intersectional programming. "If you want to do it, do it! Trying new things can be very scary but sometimes taking that chance can possibly lead you to the best thing that ever happened to you! By taking these chances, you are able to learn more about yourself."

#### -Samantha Shim



### **Signature Programs**



Photo: Fall 21 Ramen for Reading Day

Signature programming at the ACEC speaks to the unique ways that it aims to address the needs of APIDA students at Virginia Tech. The ACEC adds to students' sense of belonging and community through signature events such as: Learning Lunch, InspirASIAN Series, Mental Health Support Group, and Nighttime Guided Meditation.

### **InspirASIAN Series**

APIDA faculty, staff, and students present on topics to broaden the understanding of the racial identity and culture within the APIDA community. These program seek to inspire the community and showcase the contributions and knowledge from these amazing panelists.



Dr. S. Moon Cassinelli is an Assistant Professor in the English Department and for the Women's and Gender Studies Program. He will present a brief description of recent transnational adoption narratives, and discuss how these newer works approach themes of belonging and Asian American identity.

Dr. Theodore C. Lim is an Assistant Professor of Urban Affairs and Planning in the School of Public and International Affairs. He will talk about balancing citizen engagement with state-of-the-art data and modeling resources to support environmental decision-



Dr. Vincent Wang is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics (BEAM), Within Virginia Tech, he serves as co-chair of the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Caucus as well as faculty advisor of the Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers (SASE). He will present an overview of his lab's approaches to detect and treat orthopedic soft tissue injuries.

**Register in advance** 



If you are an individual with a disability and desire an accommodation or have any questions, please contact Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.edu between 9 AM-5 PM EST at least 10 business days prior to the event.

https://rb.gy/ngtyuy

## Learning Lunch

**APIDA faculty members** share their personal and professional journeys into higher education with the Virginia Tech community over lunch. These events highlight the amazing contributions of the VT APIDA faculty and hope to spark interest in students.

#### THE LEARNING LUNCH SERIES WITH DR. JIM TOKUHISA

SEPT. 13, 2021 @ 12 PM - 1 PM EST (HYBRID) SQUIRES RM 140 | LIGHT REFRESHMENTS REGISTER FOR FOOD: RB.GY/PREELY

Dr. Jim Tokuhisa is a faculty member in Biological Sciences at Virginia Tech. He teaches a three-credit intermediate-level course in cell biology and co-ordinates a six-credit laboratory course in biochemistry. He was born in Chicago. Illinois and grew up in the suburbs. He started a Bachelor's of Science degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and finished it at the University of Illinois. Urbana in Botany. He did an undergraduate research project during his senior year. The experience inspired him to pursue a Ph.D. with a professor who worked at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. After getting the Ph.D. he did postdoctoral research in Japan. Australia, Washington state, and Germany before getting a position at Virginia Tech. The goal of this postdoctoral research was to get a strong background in all aspects of hw plants adapt to stresses of the physical and biological environment such as those created by global climate change.

THE ACEC PRESENTS

If you are an individual with a disability and desire an accommodation, please contact Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.edu between 9 am - 5 pm EST at least 10 business days prior to the event. For questions, contact Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.edu

## **Nighttime Guided Meditation**

#### Nighttime Guided Meditation with Vivek Rajan

Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 8 PM EST



Please scan to register:



Zoom Link: https://bit.ly/3zq4zLY

Questions? Contact Dr. Nina Ha at nha@vt.edu.

Vivek Rajan was trained and certified as a meditation teacher at the Art of Living Center in Washington D.C. in 2009 and has led these programs for hundreds of people nationally. Students and other community members care for their mental health through this ACEC signature event. Vivek leads participants on a journey of relaxation and meditation culminating in a restful night and enhancing mental health.

## **Ramen for Reading Day**



A popular event at the ACEC, Ramen for Reading Day offers students a way to fuel up for upcoming final exams. Students from across the university flock to the ACEC to enjoy ramen, community, and learn more about the Center.

#### **APIDA Heritage Month**

Intersection of Passions: An **Evening with Cellist & Songwriter** Megan Carlier Tavani

o kick off APIDAHM at Virginia Tec







#### <u>nd Alad</u>din and Miss Saigon ploring the Possibilities of Asian American Theater

影 REGISTER NOW: HTTPS://RB.GY/PWDWNZ



**VIRGINIA TECH'S** 

A conversation with





April marks the celebrASIAN of **APIDAs. APIDA Heritage Month** serves as a time to highlight the accomplishments and contributions of APIDAs. Programs include inviting alumni for panel discussions, artists/scholars in residence, and other forms of celebration including **APIDA student organizations'** Culture Shows and AASU Featured Guest Speaker(s).

#### **APIDA Heritage Month**



Photos: AASU Cultural Show











Photo: Purvi Shah, Artist in Residence

Photos from various events during APIDA Heritage Month including the Spring Cultural Shows and Artist in Residence – Purvi Shah.

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# 03.

## Education



Photo: BCC/ACEC Collaboration

### **Student Development**

The ACEC's primary mission is the education and developmental support of APIDA undergraduate and graduate students at Virginia Tech. As part of this mission, the ACEC promotes APIDA-related courses taught across the university. The Center also hosts programming including the Learning Lunch and InspirASIAN series to highlight the work of APIDA faculty, students, and staff across the university and beyond. Other opportunities involve the Mentorship Program between APIDA graduate students and APIDA faculty. This programming provides APIDA students with the opportunity to increase their racial salience and offers inspiration to persist in their work and reach their goals.



Photo: Graduate APIDA Student Organization Social

"Befriending many like-minded individuals with diverse backgrounds who were extremely accepting of myself in the organization made me feel at home and comfortable in my own skin."

-Sadaf Sizdahkhani





## Asian American Student Union

The mission of the Asian American Student Union is to serve the APIDA communities within Virginia Tech. It acts as the umbrella organization over the branching undergraduate APIDA organizations. It strives to enhance and further the individual, cultural, and ethnic diversities that exist in the APIDA communities. It makes efforts to address the problems, issues and concerns of the APIDA communities to the administration and other fellow student organizations.

## Graduate Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi American Student Organization at Virginia Tech



Photo: APIDA Graduate Student Panel

GAPIDA is committed to addressing the needs and interests of APIDA graduate and professional students by fostering a space to support inclusion and collaboration while our members are learning, teaching, and researching at Virginia Tech. GAPIDA strives to provide critical resources to ensure the academic, professional, and personal success of our members by developing a powerful network of APIDA scholars who can diversify and enrich the larger community in the spirit of Ut Prosim. "Having that shared sense of community and culture can be really reassuring and supportive, especially when a lot of us graduate students are away from home. It also means you can share certain experiences or struggles and have people understand them on a much deeper level."

-Emily Kim



# 04.

## Alumni Engagement



Photo: APIDA Alumni Society Tailgate

## **APIDA Alumni Engagement**

#### Tailgates

Engagement during the Hokie Football season



#### Alumni Panel Presentations

Sharing knowledge and experiences during APIDAHM



#### Achievement Ceremony

Acknowledgement of amazing APIDA accomplishments



#### APID Alumni Society

Established in 2021 to engage with APIDA Hokie alumni





Photo: APIDA Alumni Society Tailgate

## **APID Alumni Society**

The Asian Pacific Islander Desi Alumni Society (APIDAS) of Virginia Tech is an organization dedicated to fostering community for all Asian/Asian American and Pacific Islander alumni. In addition to building a community of alums, we strive to foster mentorships with current undergraduate and graduate students, provide networking opportunities, and give back to our alma mater from wherever they are.

# 05.

## Community Engagement



Photo: Virginia Asian Advisory Board



Photo: Virginia Asian Advisory Board

## Community Engagement

The ACEC actively engages with various advocacy groups aimed at advancing solutions to address critical social and economic issues the APIDA population face in the Commonwealth.

## **Community Engagement**

#### VA Asian Advisory Board

The VAAB advises the Governor on ways to improve economic and cultural links between the Commonwealth and Asian nations, with a focus on the areas of commerce and trade, art and education, and general government; as well as issues affecting the Asian community in the Commonwealth.

#### VA New American Advisory Board

This Advisory Board advises the Governor's Office on economic, social, and cultural issues related to immigrant integration within the Commonwealth.

#### VA AAPI Caucus

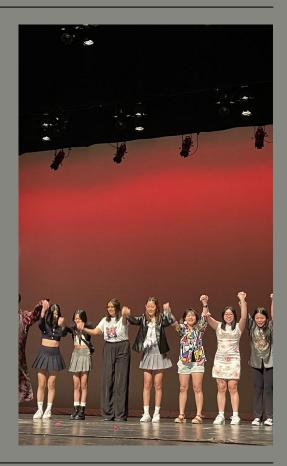
Consisting of members of the House of Delegates and the State Senate that identify as Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), the purpose of VAAPIC is to promote the equity and well-being of fellow AAPI Virginians who share similar backgrounds and interests.

#### Hamake Center

Hamkae Center works to organize Asian Americans in Virginia for social, racial, and economic justice.

# 06.

## Future Initiatives



### **Future Plans**

- APIDA Living Learning Community
- ACEC Advisory Board
- Scholar/Artist in Residence
- Hosting an ECASU Conference
- APIDA Men's Support Group
- APIDA Women's Support Group
- APIDA Queer & Questioning Support Group

## Thank you

Connect with us through

Website: https://ccc.vt.edu/index/acec.html

Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/VTACEC/">https://www.facebook.com/VTACEC/</a>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/vtacec/

YouTube: https://tinyurl.com/yeyt7ey7

Twitter: https://twitter.com/acec\_vt



