

ASIAN
TEXANS
FOR
JUSTICE

2023

Annual
Report

MISSION

We connect Asian and Pacific Islander Texans to civic action to build personal and political power.

VISION

We envision a future where all people feel bold in their belonging.

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Message from the Executive Director

As I reflect on 2023, a clear theme emerged in Texas' AAPI community: determination. Amidst an environment riddled with setbacks, our communities declared that **we are here and we belong**. For the pivotal year of 2024, I'm filled with optimism and steadfast dedication to our vision at Asian Texans for Justice: a Texas where all people feel bold in their belonging.

Entering 2023, our team was eager to **advocate for policy changes** that would positively impact the AAPI community, such as expanding language access, investing in mental health resources, and making voting more accessible in Texas. Instead, we were faced with **racist and xenophobic** legislature targeting Chinese, Iranian, North Korean, and Russian communities. In response, we mobilized hundreds of Asian Texans who called and emailed their elected officials, and delivered compelling testimonies at the Texas Capitol. Through our collective power, we halted Senate Bill 147's passage.

While we **championed our rights** at the Capitol, the AAPI community also grappled with the heart-wrenching tragedy in Allen, TX, where innocent lives, predominantly of Asian descent, were lost. ATJ hosted a community vigil with local North Texas partners. We remain firm in our appeals to state and local authorities for accountability to AAPI communities in the face of persisting racially motivated crimes against Asian Texans.

Despite these challenges, **AAPIs turned out to vote** in local, municipal, and statewide elections. We have shown the potential to be the deciding margin on constitutional amendments, mayoral races, city council elections, and school board seats. We are building an electorate who is informed, motivated, and ready to vote in the upcoming 2024 elections.

One of the most uplifting achievements in 2023 for me was our engagement with AAPI youth. ATJ and UT Austin's Center for Asian American Studies launched the first **Asian American Studies elective pilot course** in a central Texas high school. Witnessing the transformation of nearly 30 students who were able to explore their identities through this inclusive curriculum was a remarkable privilege.

Furthermore, our Civic Engagement Fellows program's second cohort grew by over 66% since the previous year. It fills me with hope to behold the **unwavering commitment of our rising generation**, as they aspire to be advocates for our community.

Finally, this year our ATJ family evolved from a scrappy team of contractors and volunteers into a dedicated team of four full-time and three part-time staff members, supported by a board of leaders from all over Texas. We are privileged with the honor of doing this work.




Thank you for your **support, partnership, and trust** in us.



Lily Trieu

Lily Trieu
Executive Director

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Civic Engagement Elections

ATJ is committed to serving the **1.9 million+ AAPIs in Texas** by connecting our community to civic action. We invest in statewide efforts for civic engagement through voter education, engagement, and mobilization. That means building voter enthusiasm in every election, regardless of what is on the ballot.

In March, ATJ ran a **statewide multi-layered digital ad and mailer program** which reached out to AAPI households and followed up with calls, texts, and targeted ads. Building upon 2022 programs, mailers were sent in English and Asian languages to ensure that the AAPI community receives the information they need most. Similar to the 2022 midterm elections, ATJ **subgranted funds** to four Texas organizations to make direct voter contact with AAPI voters in their areas.



During the November elections, in addition to sending volunteers to our partners, **OCA- Greater Houston** for the Houston city-wide election, ATJ participated in digital message testing through targeted ads. In preparation for future elections, ATJ partnered with national organizations like **We Make the Future** to test messaging and narratives to best understand what resonates most with our community. Our tests confirmed that AAPIs in Texas respond positively to messages on race, equality, and opportunity. **We know our worth and are increasingly motivated to engage in the civic process.**

Civic Engagement

National Voter Registration Day

2023 marked the first year of ATJ's National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) Subgranting Program. National Voter Registration Day is celebrated every year on a Tuesday in September. First organized in 2012, it is the nation's largest nonpartisan civic holiday dedicated to celebrating our democracy by registering as many eligible Americans to vote as possible.

NVRD BY THE NUMBERS



At Asian Texans for Justice, our mission is to connect Asian and Pacific Islander Texans to civic action to build personal and political power. In our first year, eight organizations were awarded a subgrant of \$500 to carry out their own voter registration effort to increase Texas AAPI voter engagement. We initiated our **subgrant program** with the aim of engaging our diverse AAPI community through organizations that may not have previously incorporated civic engagement into their initiatives.

In addition to funding voter registration events, **ATJ developed a comprehensive toolkit** to streamline their NVRD events. This toolkit included posters translated in five different languages*, pushcards featuring essential voting dates, bespoke 'I Registered to Vote' stickers for NVRD, a resource guide going over the basics of NVRD's mechanics, conversational cues, and supplemental editable digital resources to promote their own events.



Left-to-Right: CAIR Austin/Dallas Ft. Worth; Kappa Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc.



*Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Hindi, and Urdu

Policy & Advocacy

Texas Lege



March 9 Texas AAPI Advocacy Collective Day of Action Press Conference



January 2023 was the start of the 88th Texas Legislature. With an anticipated budget surplus of **\$32.7 billion** and the **highest number of AAPI legislative lawmakers in Texas history**, ATJ took to the Texas Capitol and advocated for policy in three key areas: education, healthcare, and voting rights. ATJ and its Texas AAPI coalition partners created the **Texas AAPI Advocacy Coalition (TAAC)**. Texans from all corners of the state joined together to organize the first ever AAPI Day of Action at the Capitol in March.

This session saw the re-introduction of **anti-alien land laws**, harkening back their long and dark history in Texas. Our legislators introduced discriminatory bills, targeting those from China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia. Demonstrating our community's opposition to the bill, ATJ organized a letter signed on by **46 state and national organizations** and presented this letter to the bill's authors and the state's leadership. ATJ spearheaded extensive community training and mobilization efforts, conducting multiple in-language testimony sessions to catalyze AAPIs across Texas to make their voices heard at the Capitol.

On March 2, 2023 SB 147 made its way to the Senate floor and ATJ met it with an impressive force of **120+ AAPI Texans** taking the stand to oppose this discriminatory legislation. Though the bill passed in the Senate, our united endeavors blocked it from reaching the House floor, ultimately **preventing it from becoming law**. Faced with a relentless slog of **four special sessions**, we witnessed a slew of prejudicial proposals including: **school voucher programs**, sweeping **punitive immigration laws**, and the briefly attempted return of anti-alien land laws. Steadfast in our commitment to fully represent all AAPI Texans, ATJ and our coalition partners continued to lead community education training and mobilized our community to testify against this harmful legislation.



Left-to-Right: Witnesses registering to testify in the Senate State Affairs Committee on SB147 during the regular Session; Sabrina testifying on SB1 in the Senate Education Committee during Special Session 3

Policy & Advocacy

Asian American Studies

2023 was a critical year for Asian American Studies and our advocacy for inclusive curriculum in Texas schools. In partnership with **The University of Texas at Austin's Center for Asian American Studies (CAAS)** and **Round Rock ISD**, ATJ sourced a partner school campus, identified an AAPI educator, and supported the development of curriculum for a high school-level Asian American Studies elective course. **Nearly 30 students** have enrolled and are able to learn inclusive and accurate Asian American history!



Ms. Ann Nguyen, Round Rock High School

LEARN *our* STORIES



Our Asian American Studies and education work also allowed us to support the **Asian American Youth Voices Rising** program for the second time. In partnership with the **City of Austin's Asian American Resource Center**, this program provides middle-school aged students in Central Texas the opportunity to learn about Asian American history through award-winning graphic texts. During the summer, we also kicked off a partnership with **The Smithsonian's Asian Pacific American Center** to support a project that would bring localized Asian American history to life.



Left-To-Right: Smithsonian x APAC Convening



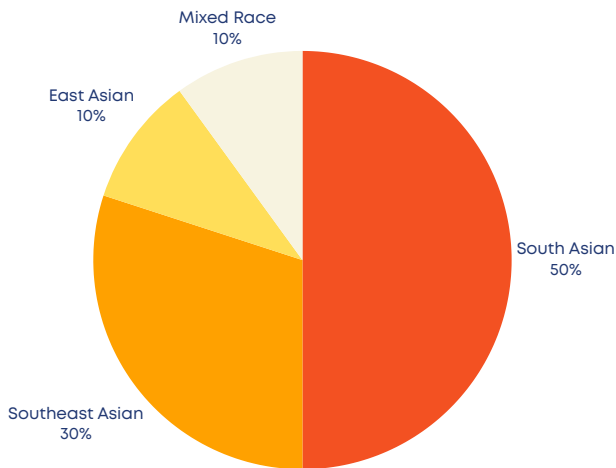
Youth Leadership Development

Civic Engagement Fellowship & ATJ Advocates

ATJ successfully launched our second cohort of our flagship youth leadership development program, our **Civic Engagement Fellowship**. ATJ recruited and selected ten fellows from across Texas to participate in this year's program.

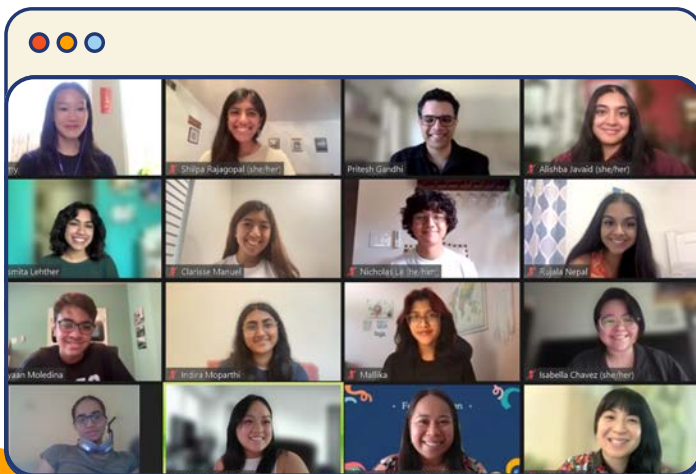
Our 2023 cohort's career interests comprised of healthcare, law, policy and visual arts; and geographically represented the North Texas and Dallas-Ft. Worth area, Austin, College Station, and Greater Houston areas. During the course of the **10-week fellowship program**, the fellows developed civic-minded organizing skills and executed their own **community-centered capstone projects** such as the "Little Free AAPI Library", "Know Your Rights Training & Workshop", an in-language resource for increased access to healthcare, and a guerilla marketing sticker campaign highlighting AAPI contributions during COVID-19.

2023 COHORT IDENTITIES



At the end of the 10 weeks, we hosted a graduation event where the 2022 Fellows and 2023 Fellows were brought together to celebrate the accomplishments of the graduating class and build connections with previous cohorts of our program.

With the completion of our second cohort, we launched the **ATJ Advocates program**, an alumni program that will continue to invest in all our Advocates through opportunities for professional and skills development, civic leadership, and networking and building relationships with other young civic leaders across the state.



Left-To-Right: 2023 Fellowbration with Keynote Speaker, Dr. Pritesh Gandhi; 2023 Fellow Isabelle DeLa Cruz and the AAPI Little Free Library



Coalition Building

Our coalition and community building work remains a strategic focus for ATJ. Throughout 2023, we showed up to support other organizations in the community for various events.

May is an important time for our community, marking both Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in celebration of our history and community, as well as Mental Health Awareness Month in awareness of mental health nationwide. As mentioned in our Executive Director's letter, this past May was marred by tragedy due to a White supremacist's violence in a heavily AAPI area of Allen, Texas. Partnering with the local North Texas AAPI community, **ATJ worked with regional and national groups to highlight ways to support the victims, distributed community resources and co-hosted a North Texas Community Vigil for healing.**



We know the power of hope in the face of despair. **ATJ hosted two events: Have You Eaten Yet? Intergenerational Communication in AAPI Families** in partnership with many Central Texas organizations, **and Tea Talk: Being Asian Out Loud**, featuring Miss Texas Averie Bishop. We facilitated a multigenerational conversation in the AAPI community about how to effectively communicate and support one another. The events featured panels, workshops by mental health professionals, an AAPI community education and resource fair, and a virtual discussion space for our AAPI youth.

Finally, ATJ conducted a statewide qualitative research project to better understand the growing issues, needs, and concerns of the AAPI Texan community. **We surveyed 22 organizations across the five different geographical regions.** This project aims to understand the experiences and priorities of AAPIs in every corner of Texas, not just in major metropolitan areas.

Top-Down: We Know Our Worth Rally; Allen, TX Vigil; May Asian Pacific American Heritage Month: "Have You Eaten Yet?"



Convening & Learning

Collaboration was our mantra for in 2023. We learned, built community, and worked together with partners within and outside of our state to create a Texas in which everyone belongs. To do this work, we must continually innovate and find ways to bring together the AAPI community and our allies.

ATJ rallied and marched in **Houston, Austin, and San Antonio**. Our team attended conferences in **Chicago, Washington DC, Charlotte, Montgomery, and Atlanta**. We learned about voting rights, immigrant rights, civil rights, organizing skills, and building power in southern states. We garnered best practices from our partners nationally and brought them to Texas.

We've been recognized and awarded by **The University of Texas at Austin, Notley**, and the **Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce**. We are honored and privileged to be in community with and learn from those fighting for AAPIs across the country.



Lily at Leadership Austin's Civic Activation Conference



Nicolette at San Antonio College for "Rising Against Asian Hate" Documentary



Lily at APIAVote Convening



Lily at APAICS Legislative Leadership Summit

Media & Communications

From headlines to headlining, Asian Texans for Justice was at the forefront of media responses and representation on issues that affect the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in Texas in 2023. During the legislative session, we educated and mobilized the AAPI community on various bills; including the **anti-alien land laws, public education funding, immigration**, and many others.

Alongside our legislative work, we advocated and informed on issues including: a data breach of the Department of Public Safety impacting AAPI Texans, the Supreme Court's decision on affirmative action, the impact of guns on AAPIs in response to the Allen shooting, ethnic studies expansion, and mental health access. Our work was covered by **The Associated Press, NBC News, The Texas Tribune, Dallas Morning News**, and many more.

TOP HEADLINES OF 2024



03/31/2023

[Victim lost \\$50k after Texas DPS unknowingly sent 4,800 Asians' drivers license to crime group](#)



05/16/2023

[Groups demand officials share information on Texas mall gunman's motives](#)



05/25/2023

[Bill that set out to restrict Chinese property ownership dies in Texas House](#)



07/06/2023

[Asian Americans feel particularly targeted by new laws criminalizing those who assist voters](#)



10/29/2023

[Texas schools are addressing antisemitism. Why not Islamophobia?](#)



10/30/2023

[Building power in the midst of a crisis in Texas: Asian American communities and beyond](#)

Thank You to Our Funders

We extend our deepest appreciation to our remarkable partners and donors. We are profoundly thankful for the support of all those who have embraced ATJ's mission, helping us bring to life a future where all people feel bold in their belonging.

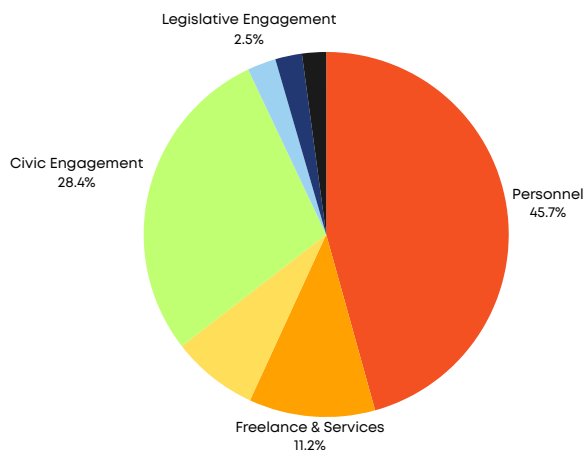


Operational & Financial Summary

Through the amplification of the AAPI community, Asian Texans for Justice was able to benefit from funds from foundations, national organizations, businesses, and individual donors. Due to your show of public support, ATJ was able to **expand our operational capacity and staff in 2023**. We grew from a small team of contractors and volunteers to a team of four full-time and three part-time staff members. Our board also grew from a team of three to a more diverse and robust board with six individuals. With dedicated team members and strong governance to execute our programs, our 2023 priority was to scale our programming; focusing on civic engagement during the local and municipal elections and advocacy during the Texas Legislative Session.

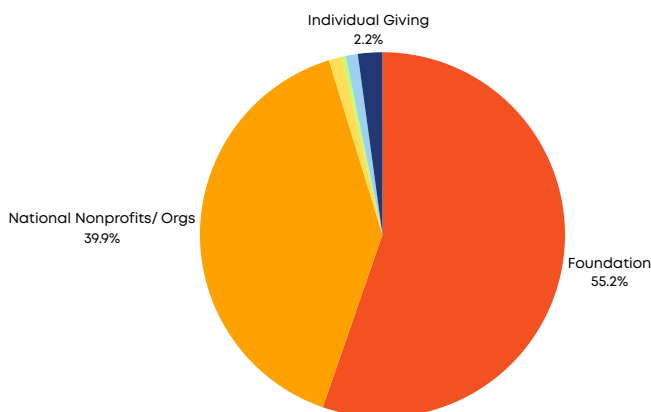
Growing our team allowed us to scale and invest in our programs, enabling us to **engage more meaningfully with AAPI Texans across the state**. ATJ staff executed more in-person events, invested more funds in our youth leaders, and built their own skills through training and conferences. Our entire team is deeply grateful for the ongoing support and confidence from our community of AAPIs and allies in Texas and beyond.

2023 EXPENSES



●	Personnel	45.7%
●	Freelance & Services	11.2%
●	Administrative	7.7%
●	Civic Engagement	28.4%
●	Legislative Engagement	2.5%
●	Youth Programming	2.4%
●	Misc. Program Costs	2.1%

2023 REVENUE



●	Foundation	55.2%
●	National Nonprofits / Orgs	39.9%
●	Other Nonprofits / Orgs	1.15%
●	Government	0.36%
●	Corporate Giving	1.06%
●	Individual Giving	2.2%
●	Misc.	0.10%
○	Earned Revenue	0.13%



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