

Diversity Digest Est. 2011

Insurance Diversity Initiative

Advancing Supplier and Governing Board Diversity

Connect with us Online



Email us at Diversity@insurance.ca.gov about any events or updates you'd like to share with the Initiative and our stakeholders!

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of every month.

May 2019 Newsletter Preview

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- Legislative Update

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WHAT'S NEW?

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH



Each year, the month of May is dedicated to honoring the contributions and accomplishments of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. In particular, this month was chosen to commemorate the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

We also wanted to extend a "Ramadan Kareem" to our Muslim community. Ramadan is the holy month in which Muslims all over the world fast from dawn to dusk. This is a time for Muslims to deepen their faith and spiritual relationships by fasting, reciting Quran, praying extensively, and generously giving to charities.

However you choose to celebrate this month, we hope you take this time to spend it with your family, friends, and loved ones.

HISTORY OF ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

1977: In June, Representatives Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution to proclaim the first ten days of May as Asian-Pacific American Heritage week.

1977: In July, Hawaii Senators Daniel K. Inouye and Spark Matsunaga introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

1978: Both bills passed, and on October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution designating the annual celebration.

1979: In March, President Jimmy Carter issued [Proclamation 4650](#), the first presidential proclamation, for Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week.

1990: President George H. W. Bush signed a bill passed by Congress to extend the week-long celebration to a month-long celebration.

1992: The official designation of May as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month was signed into law.


SB 534
FOLLOW THE PROGRESS OF
SB 534
<https://tinyurl.com/sb534insurancediversity>
 NEXT UP: May 13, 2019
Senate Appropriations
Committee

GET IN TOUCH!
EMAIL US: diversity@insurance.ca.gov
WWW.INSURANCE.CA.GOV/DIVERSITY

SB 534 Legislative Update

We are excited to announce that Senate Bill (SB) 534 (Bradford) that is sponsored by Commissioner Ricardo Lara has passed both the Senate Insurance and Senate Judiciary Committees, and is currently making its way to the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 13, 2019.

THANK YOU for your sending in your letters of support to demonstrate your commitment to our mission and to the success of SB 534. We are incredibly grateful to be surrounded by such a dedicated community of diverse stakeholders, including industry business leaders, organizations, chambers of commerce, and so many amazing individuals.

You may follow the progress of SB 534 by visiting: <https://tinyurl.com/sb534insurancediversity>. For information on SB 534, please refer to the [SB 534 Fact Sheet](#).

If you have any questions regarding SB 534, please contact us at diversity@insurance.ca.gov

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



IN THE COMMUNITY

State Compensation Insurance Fund's (SCIF) 5th Annual Diversity Summit



(Left to Right) Cecil Plummer, California Department of Insurance (CDI) Insurance Diversity Task Force Member; Nathan Fesler, Research Analyst – CDI Insurance Diversity Initiative; Rebecca Ball, Coordinator – CDI Insurance Diversity Initiative; Jay Greene, CDI Insurance Diversity Task Force Member, Chandara K. Phanachone, Director – CDI Insurance Diversity Initiative; Amanda Poe, Enterprise Procurement Vice President – State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF); Edna Zapata-Fuller, Supplier Diversity Manager – SCIF; and Dawn Marchand, CDI Insurance Diversity Task Force Member

The 5th Annual Supplier Diversity Summit was a networking opportunity that has been designed to facilitate connections with diverse suppliers and State Compensation Insurance Fund's (SCIF) procurement team, prime suppliers, procurement professional from other companies, and supplier diversity business advocate organizations.

The welcome plenary included an introduction by Eileen Gallagher, Senior Vice President and Deputy Chief Administration officer followed by heartfelt remarks from CEO Vernon Steiner extolling his commitment to supplier diversity at SCIF. The plenary also featured guest speaker, published author and supplier diversity expert Scott Vowels who underscored the business case for supplier diversity before attendees broke out into workshops. In addition to business matchmaking, this year's workshop topics included "The Power of Diversity Certification" and an overview of SCIF's procurement process.

Greenlining's 26th Annual Economic Summit "Reclaiming Our Time"



(Right) Orson Aguilar, President – The Greenlining Institute

Fierce, renewed determination to fight for justice – at times mixed with memories of past battles – dominated the mood at The Greenlining Institute's 26th annual Economic Summit, which took place April 26, 2019 in Oakland, California. Attendees grappled with new challenges and laid out bold ideas for building a more just America while recognizing the struggles of the past. "This is the place to continue the fight," said longtime Greenlining board member Olga Talamante, who served as the day's host. After a video greeting from Rep. Maxine Waters – whose viral "reclaiming my time" moment had inspired the day's theme – the day got off to an energetic start with a powerful spoken word performance by poet and playwright Chinaka Hodge, who had a message for daughters everywhere: "Tell her she was born just in time to lead."

The 2019 Economic Summit marked Greenlining's official farewell to longtime President Orson Aguilar as he finished up two decades with the organization. Aguilar recalled his childhood in East L.A. "My parents came to this country as undocumented immigrants from Guatemala and I am always grateful for their sacrifices," he told the audience. "Never forget where you come from is something I always tell myself."

At the Awards Luncheon, Rep. Barbara Lee presented outgoing president with a commendation she had entered into the Congressional Record outlining his achievements: "Mr. Aguilar has always worked toward one overarching goal – an America where communities of color thrive and race is not a barrier to economic opportunity," the statement read. "On behalf of the 13th Congressional District, I commend Orson L. Aguilar for his lifelong work advancing employment, education, and racial equity in the Bay Area and around the country."

"Throughout his 20 years of service," Lee added, "he has constantly led with kindness as well as with his intellect."

The Summit also featured in-depth discussions of banking and Community Reinvestment Act reform, equitable transportation planning, tech equity, the connections between health and community development, leadership development, and building clean energy communities. In what has become a recent tradition, the Summit wasn't just people standing on stage talking while the audience listened. The retooled [Equity Lab](#) gave participants a chance to do some hands-on practice at putting racial equity to work in the real world. The audience became participants in workshops on Operationalizing Equity, Development Without Displacement and Narrative Strategies for Justice – working with real policy and advocacy tools and exploring how to put them to work.

What would you like the power to do?®



(Left to Right) Betsy Berkhemer-Credaire, CEO – 2020 Women on Boards; Chandara K. Phanachone, Director - Insurance Diversity Initiative at CA Department of Insurance; Renee Fraser, Ph.D., CEO – Fraser Communications; and Hilda J. Kennedy, President – AmPaC Tri-State CDC

Founded in 1975, the [National Association of Women Business Owners \(NAWBO\)](#) is the unified voice of over 10.1 million women-owned businesses in the United States, representing the fastest growing segment of the economy with a mission to propel women entrepreneurs into economic, social and political spheres of power worldwide.

The annual Propel Conference brings women entrepreneurs together to share, drive and encourage women to truly OWN every choice they have made which has elevated them to be business owners, advocates, mentors, and change-makers. Through unique storytelling, education and business connections each attendee will truly CHOOSE to OWN their successes, failures, health, strengths, challenges, and their future.

The 2019 Propel Conference was hosted in Sacramento, CA and included a robust agenda filled with workshops that included an uplifting keynote by global entrepreneur Nikki Barua and an insightful strategies by Founder Renee Fraser of Fraser Communications on how to lead with impact in a [VUCA World](#). The Conference capped off with a march to the State Capitol to visit with key legislators.

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT



Bok Choi Isn't Exotic

A young generation of Asian-American farmers is reclaiming Asian vegetables — and in the process, their own culinary heritage

By: [Cathy Erway](#)

Photography: [Michelle Min](#)

(Originally Published April 8, 2019 in EATER)

Chang-Fleeman was in his second year of apprenticing at the farm and garden program at the

University of California Santa Cruz when he began a project growing Chinese vegetables. Having grown up in West Los Angeles as a biracial, third-generation Chinese American, he didn't know a lot about farming, nor did he have a strong connection to his Chinese culture. "Up until then, my farm education was centered around Eurocentric cuisine," he says.

Looking at the rows of choy sum he'd planted, his college mentors asked him what he'd like to do with his crops. Chang-Fleeman joked about selling them to Brandon Jew, chef-owner of [Mister Jiu's](#), a Michelin-starred Chinese restaurant in San Francisco. One of his mentors, who had sold produce to Jew before, picked up the phone and called him. One year later, Chang-Fleeman, 24, is now planting the first seeds of choy sum, Chinese broccoli, Shanghai bok choy, chrysanthemum greens, celtuce, Japanese scarlet turnips, and Northern Chinese shunkyo radishes on his new commercial farm, [Shao Shan Farm](#), in Marin County, California. He sees the farm as a manifestation of his reconnection to his Chinese-American heritage, and he's been collaborating with Jew, who plans to source produce for Mister Jiu's from the farm.

But Chang-Fleeman doesn't want to stop there. He wants his 1.5-acre farm to provide ethically grown heritage Asian crops for local Asian-American chefs, as well as a physical space for Asian Americans to connect their cultural identity to ideas around food sovereignty and land stewardship — topics which today have scant representation among Asian Americans.

"I've been in the sustainable ag community for a while and it's a lot of the same story that gets told," says Chang-Fleeman, who laments that Asian produce varieties are still often described as "exotic." "When you go to conferences and look around, it's a lot of the same people."

"I think being able to start a farm that's so vocal about growing Asian produce by Asian workers with the intention to sell it to Asian folks is important," he says. "I'm not growing them for people to think that's cool, but for Asian-American people who think it's a link to their history."

While tatsoi and expensive "Asian" salad mixes might be seen as trendy menu fodder today, the truth is, Asian Americans and their foodways have been essential to shaping America's vegetable basket. Asian-American cultures tend to place a priority on fresh produce, and their immigrant communities in the U.S. have helped ensure they are accessible: from New York City's Korean greengrocers to Hmong farmers in the Midwest to those growing the produce that would make up "California cuisine" as we know it. When Alice Waters founded [Chez Panisse](#) in 1971, often thought of as the pioneer in locally grown, ingredient-focused American cuisine, she enlisted the help of Bill Fujimoto, a third-generation Japanese American produce buyer.

Asian Americans have been "integral to the development of American farming since the beginning of our time in the U.S.," says Nina F. Ichikawa, interim executive director of the Berkeley Food Institute. She is currently working on a book on the topic, and has contributed a chapter to [Eating Asian America: A Food Studies Reader](#). But Asian Americans' contributions to locally grown, sustainable produce have been too long taken for granted.

Prior to the turn of the 20th century, [Chinese immigrants transformed](#) California's Sacramento River Delta into one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country. Many of the early Chinese immigrants were from the Pearl River Delta region of China, near the city of Taishan, and brought a deep agricultural knowledge and advanced irrigation techniques to the West Coast. They also had a lasting impact on the cuisine. "A lot of green vegetables were part of their cuisine," says Ichikawa. "Things would have been different if it were a different group."

Despite an often hostile environment toward their race, Asian-American groups continued to farm in a way that was outside for their populations, helping to establish many vegetable-growing and fruit orchard regions. The Bing cherry, quaint as it may sound, was named after a Chinese orchard worker in Oregon who [was likely deported](#) by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. After new Chinese immigrants were excluded from the country, Japanese, Filipino, Sikh, Punjabi, and Korean immigrants — many of them previously farmers — helped replace the labor shortage and expand America's agriculture industry along the West Coast and in Hawaii. Before they were incarcerated in 1942 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, Japanese Americans were producing a majority of California's strawberries and a significant share of its popular vegetables such as lettuce, tomatoes, peppers and celery..

Read more at [EATER](#)

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About EATER

Eater is a food and dining network of sites and brand of Vox Media. For more information, visit [EATER](#).



PINNACLE



The Pan-Asian Corporate Board Initiative

Ascend Pinnacle Hosts Third Corporate Directors Summit with a Focus on the Pipeline of Future Asian Board Members

(Originally Published April 2, 2019)

On March 22–24, [Ascend Pinnacle](#) hosted its third Asian Corporate Directors Summit at The Ritz-Carlton New York, Westchester. This year's Summit featured key topics for corporate boards and placed an additional focus and effort on the pipeline of Asian board member candidates. Ascend Pinnacle Aspiring Directors Academy, held adjacent to the Summit with EY as the lead sponsor, had an over 40% increase in the number of attendees from last year. The Academy is part of the Aspiring Directors Institute, a cohort based program providing touch points including networking events and mentoring sessions during the year.

Deloitte, founding sponsor of the Ascend Pinnacle Asian Corporate Directors Summit, along with other sponsors, Archegos Capital Management, Equilar, Southwest Airlines, and TPG, support Ascend Pinnacle's goal to increase the number of Asian Americans on public company boards. The Summit panels covered a broad range of topics from corporate governance, diversity, emerging markets to current issues. Highlights included a Fireside chat with Farooq Kathwari, Chairman, and CEO of Ethan Allen Interiors Inc., around Corporate Social Responsibility and the role of corporate boards, with other key topics including maximizing value of the boardroom through diversity; governance in an era of disruptive risks; international corporate boards; and AI in the boardroom. "

"The discussions and action items at this year's Summit focused on boards elevating diverse voices and being open to accept and integrate directors that come from different backgrounds, both professionally and socially. In 2018, women held 22.5% of board seats in Fortune 500 companies; people of color held 16.1%, so there's a lot of work that still needs to be done. But more encouragingly, over the past two years, women and minorities totaled a solid 50% of new S&P 500 directors. These numbers show that the shift towards board diversity can be achieved and through programs like Ascend Pinnacle we can help to accelerate that shift," said Anna W. Mok, Co-Founder, Ascend Pinnacle; President Elect, Ascend and Partner, Deloitte & Touche LLP.

"Board directors play a key role in advancing Corporate Social Responsibility. Throughout my career I've been focused on integrating a values-driven business with employee wellbeing as well as promoting good governance both nationally and internationally. I'm thrilled to have been part of the Ascend Pinnacle Summit and excited about the future of Asian Corporate Board members," said Farooq Kathwari, Chairman, and CEO of Ethan Allen Interiors Inc.

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About Ascend

Ascend is the largest, non-profit Pan-Asian membership organization for business professionals and executives in North America. Established in 2005, Ascend, a career lifecycle organization, reaches 60,000+ corporate board directors, senior executives, professionals, and MBA/undergraduate students involved in its 50+ chapters in the United States and Canada.

Ascend launched Pinnacle five years ago with a focus on Asian American directors on U.S. public company and large private company boards. The four Ascend Pinnacle focus areas are the Asian Corporate Directors Summit, the regional roundtables, professional development and thought leadership.

Learn more about [Ascend](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2nd Quarterly Insurance Diversity Task Force Meeting*

*Quarterly Task Force meetings are open to the public

DATE: Wednesday, June 05, 2019

TIME: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PST)

LOCATION:

California Department of Insurance
300 Capitol Mall, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

NOTE: Check-in on 17th Floor

Video conferencing is available from the CDI offices located in San Francisco and Los Angeles. You may also join us via teleconference.

To [RSVP](#), please email us at diversity@insurance.ca.gov with the subject line: RSVP for 2nd Quarterly TF Meeting.



SAVE THE DATE: 8th Annual Insurance Diversity Summit

Mission Bay Conference Center
San Francisco, CA

~

November 15, 2019

Registration Opens Summer 2019

[Download the 2019 Diversity Summit Flyer](#)



What's your story?

Do You Have an Insurance Supplier Diversity Success Story? We Want to Hear from You!

Do you have NEW or RENEWED Business Relationship/Networking opportunity that has created opportunities for your business within the Insurance Industry?

Do you have NEW or RENEWED Procurement or Contract Opportunity(ies) within the Insurance Industry?

If you said, "Yes," to any of these questions - We Want to Hear from You!

Take 1-2 minutes to share your success story with us. Each step you take towards securing any insurer business for your company is a measure of your success, and we would love to hear about it! Visit [Diversity Success Story Survey](#) or contact us directly at diversity@insurance.ca.gov.

DIVERSITY EVENTS CALENDAR: May/June 2019

MAY

[Networking Luncheon](#)

Hosted by: Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (LAGLCC)
May 15, 2019
Los Angeles, CA

[Finance Capabilities Development Summit](#)

Hosted by: Women's Business Enterprise Council (WBEC) - Pacific
May 16, 2019
Fremont, CA

JUNE

[CalPERS - 2019 Diversity Forum](#)

Hosted by: California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)
June 10-11, 2019
Sacramento, CA

[WBENC National Conference & Business Fair](#)

Hosted by: Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)
June 25 – June 27, 2019
Baltimore, MD

To submit a request to add your Supplier Diversity or Governing Board Diversity-related event, please contact us at: diversity@insurance.ca.gov.



8TH ANNUAL
**INSURANCE
DIVERSITY
SUMMIT**

HOSTED BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

[UPLIFTING OUR COMMUNITIES]

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WWW.INSURANCE.CA.GOV/DIVERSITY

WBENC

National Conference
& Business Fair

ECOSYSTEMS

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

June 25 – 27, 2019

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The Insurance Diversity Initiative was established in 2011 to address diversity issues within California's \$310 billion insurance industry. Specifically, these efforts are meant to increase procurement from California's diverse suppliers, as well as to increase diversity amongst insurer governing boards. To accomplish these goals, the Department conducts outreach, creates partnerships, hosts events, and most importantly, administers surveys to collect and publicly disseminate information about the state of diversity in the insurance industry.

INSURANCE DIVERSITY INITIATIVE

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California Department of Insurance
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www.insurance.ca.gov/Diversity

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