

# SNAP OUTREACH TO IMMIGRANT SENIORS

May 19, 2020



National Council on Aging

*Improving the lives of 40 million older adults by 2030*

# Our Speakers

1. Erin Kee McGovern, NCOA
2. Heidi Lum, Asian Services in Action, Inc.
3. Mayra Gutierrez, Mexican American Opportunity Foundation
4. Jasmine Chau, Chinese Information and Service Center

Slides & recording will be available to download at [www.ncoa.org/ncboewebinars](http://www.ncoa.org/ncboewebinars)

# NCOA's Senior SNAP Enrollment Initiative

## 4 Key Strategies:

1. Provide sub-grants to community-based organizations who submit new SNAP applications on behalf of eligible older adults
2. Connect older adults with BenefitsCheckUp® so they can screen for SNAP eligibility and download their state specific SNAP application
3. Maintain the Senior SNAP Resource Center, which provides technical assistance, training, promotional resources, and information about best practices, cost-effective strategies, and scalable models
4. Policy and advocacy work to improve SNAP for eligible seniors and protect the program from cuts

# Senior SNAP Enrollment Initiative Key Outcomes



- **185,953 SNAP applications submitted on behalf of eligible older adults by community based organizations**



- **3,417,166 SNAP applications downloaded from BenefitsCheckUp®**



- **NCOA estimates these applications have resulted in 1.15 million enrollments, with an average \$121 monthly benefit amount**

# NCOA's SNAP Resources

NCOA Senior Hunger homepage

[www.NCOA.org/SeniorHunger](http://www.NCOA.org/SeniorHunger)

BenefitsCheckUp® SNAP Homepage

[www.benefitscheckup.org/GetSNAP](http://www.benefitscheckup.org/GetSNAP)

State senior participation rates

[www.NCOA.org/SNAPvisualization](http://www.NCOA.org/SNAPvisualization)



# SNAP Outreach to Immigrant/Refugee Seniors

Heidi Lum  
Manager, Sustainability Services Department  
Asian Services In Action, Inc.



# MISSION

At Asian Services In Action, Inc., we strive to

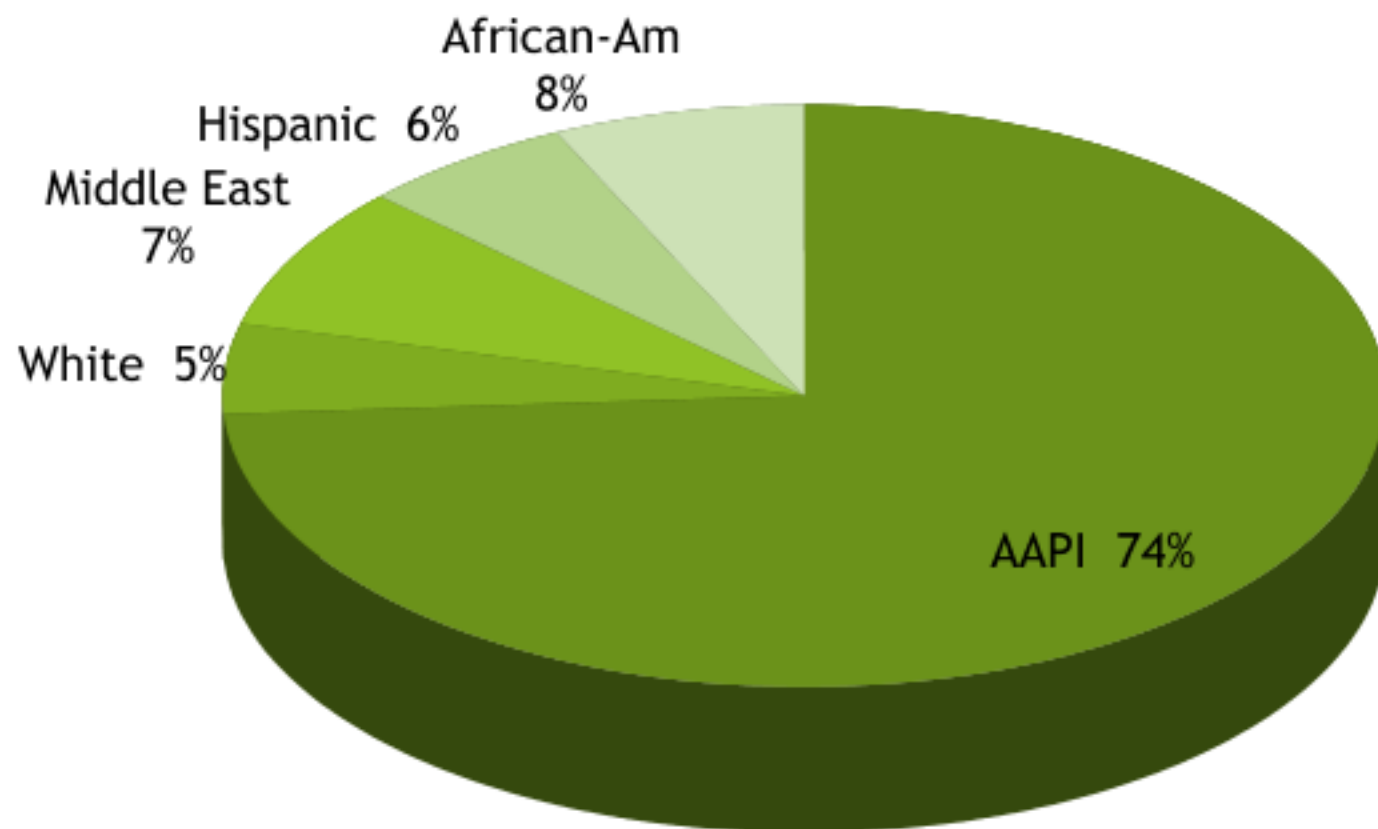
- empower and advocate for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs)
- provide AAPIs and other communities access to quality culturally and linguistically appropriate information, health, and social services

# ASIA, Inc.

- 501(c)3 nonprofit organization
- Cleveland and Akron
- Over 40 languages and dialects

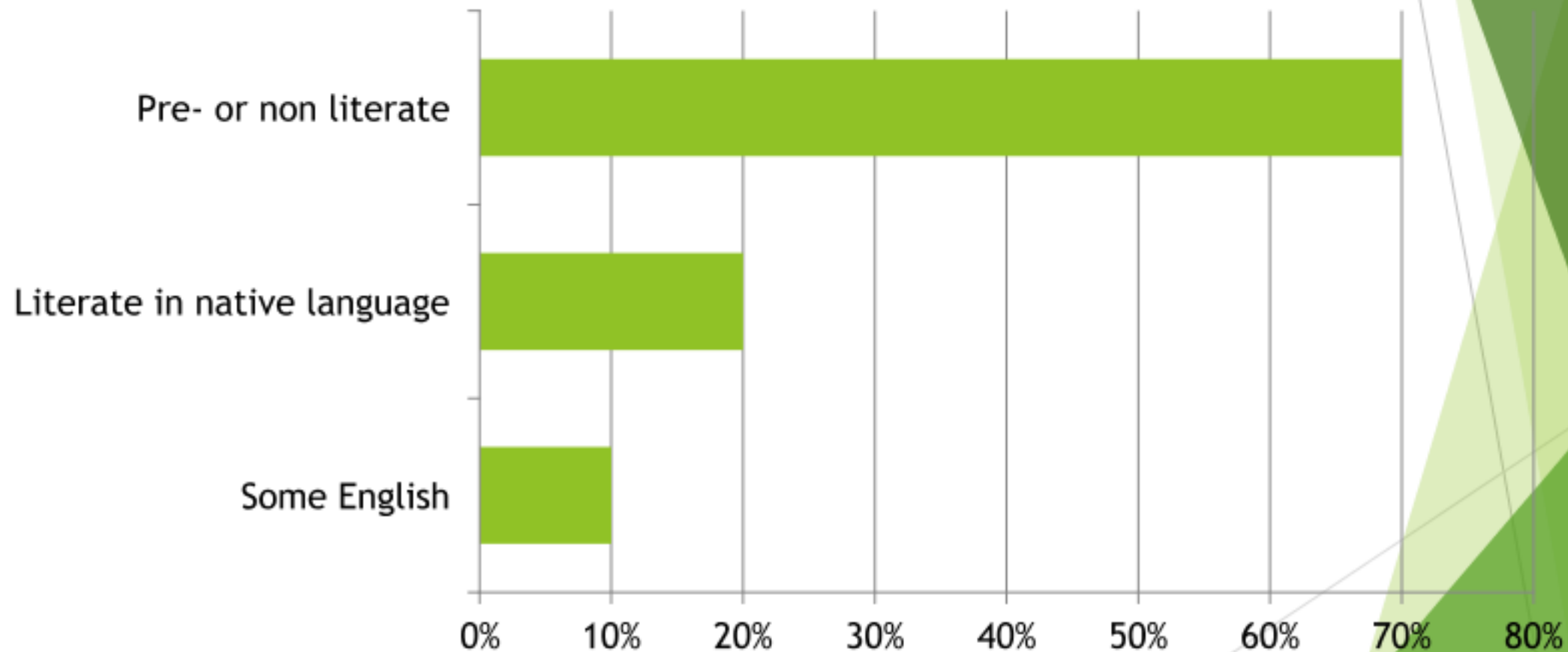


## Breakdown of population ASIA, Inc. served



ASIA Inc. serves over 55,000 clients and patients annually

## ***Client Language Capacity***



# Outreach & Enrollment

- Immigrant and refugee populations through community events and activities
- SNAP benefits
  - paper application
  - online application
  - over the phone to Job and Family Services.
- Culturally sensitive educational workshops
  - public benefits qualification
  - dialogue between older adults and staff at government agencies

# CHALLENGES

Why don't seniors want to apply for SNAP benefits?

- ❑ Complicated process
- ❑ Interview required
- ❑ Income-based—minimal amount
- ❑ Public Charge Rule

# How Do We Overcome Challenges?

- Provide assistance in applying for benefits
- Mock interview
- Transportation
- Interpreting
- Support during the interview
- Communicate LEP population challenges with JFS
- Communicate--annual redetermination
- Verify benefits amount on approval notice with amount on EBT card



# MAOF

MEXICAN AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY FOUNDATION

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## Best Practices

WHEN WORKING WITH LATINO OLDER ADULTS

**ncoa**  
National Council on Aging

# Gaining Trust

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- Ø A best practice when working with Latino older adults is gaining their trust.
- Ø Gaining the trust of seniors is paramount to get them to listen and open up to you.
- Ø Part of gaining their trust requires speaking their language, and building a safe space for them; a safe space must consist of cultural understanding.
- Ø Once trust is built seniors will spread the word about your agency.



# Go where they gather

Ø You cannot wait for seniors to come to you.

Ø You must go where they gather, i.e. senior centers, senior buildings, churches, social security offices, and hospitals.





# Be Prepared

- Ø Educate yourself about a benefit program before you attempt to educate senior clients.
- Ø Have materials in the language your clients speak.
- Ø Materials should be concise to avoid overwhelming clients.
- Ø Be prepared to answer questions and speak to family members.



# Tailor Your Message

- Ø Another best practice is tailoring your outreach message to the senior community
- Ø You must continuously address any myths and or concerns seniors have about CalFresh
- Ø Some myths and concerns include:
  - They will have to pay the state back for participating in the program.
  - They will reduce their social security benefit if they participate in the program.
  - Confusion regarding public charge.
  - If they participate in the program they will take the benefit away from families with children.
  - They will only receive \$15 in benefits.
  - They have to speak English to qualify.



# Build Partnership S

- Ø Building partnerships is vital to outreach. Ideal partners are those who also target seniors and share your values.
- Ø Partners' help in spreading your outreach message, and are important in building trust.
- Ø Partners' also help with referrals.
- Ø Partnerships allow you to be more visible in the community
- Ø In building partnerships having a key contact person is important.
- Ø Examples of ideal partnerships are: hospitals, Social Security Offices, Area Agencies on Aging, AARP, Departments of Social Services, and Consulates.




# IMMIGRANT OUTREACH STRATEGIES



**CISC**

BRIDGING CULTURES  
COMMUNITIES & GENERATIONS



# Population we serve


- Our primary focus is on Chinese immigrants and their families, but we also serve many immigrants from Eastern Europe, Latin America, and throughout Asia. Our Chinese clients come from all over Asia, from different countries, with different cultures, speaking many different dialects and languages.
- LEP
- Isolated
- Low health literacy
- Low technology level



# Challenges

- ❑ Language barrier
- ❑ Cultural barrier
- ❑ Public Charge and Sponsor Deeming Concerns
- ❑ Limited access to technology





# Outreach Strategies and success

- Bilingual staffs (Mandarin, Cantonese, Toisanese, Taiwanese, Hakka, Chiu Chow, Fukienese, and Fuzhounese dialects of Chinese; Vietnamese, Malay, Indonesian, Spanish, Russian, Somali, Tagalog, and English.)
- Rapid response team for translation during COVID-19
- Invite legal representatives for Public Charge forum
- Social Media Tutorials



# Outreach Strategies

- Healthy Eating Presentation
- Food Bank tabling (reached over 60 Chinese speaking immigrants per tabling)
- SNAP related articles to be posted on Chinese Elderly newsletter (reached over 1000 Chinese seniors per volume)



# For More Information

Slides and a recording (with transcript) of this webinar will be posted at [www.ncoa.org/ncboewebinars](http://www.ncoa.org/ncboewebinars)



Read reports of these and other SNAP outreach best practices at <https://www.ncoa.org/news/ncoa-news/center-for-benefits-news/lessons-learned-in-snap-outreach-to-immigrant-and-rural-seniors/>