



IN TOUCH

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VOICES OF ASIAN COMMUNITIES IN CENTRAL OHIO

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WELCOME!



Click [here](#) to provide feedback



Click [here](#) for more information about the Asian Festival



ABOUT ASIAN FESTIVAL

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Asian Festival Origins

The Asian Festival dream began in 1994 when Dr. Yung-Chen Lu formally proposed the idea of a free, family-oriented festival at Franklin Park in Columbus, Ohio to the Asian-American Community Service Council (ACSC). Since the inaugural event attended by 12,000 people in 1995, the festival's size has increased exponentially to 160,000 attendees in 2019. The Asian Festival has become a much awaited event in the city that showcases the rich cultural heritage of Asians through a display of cultural performances, music, art, cuisine, sports, career fair, children's area, marketplace, and community square.

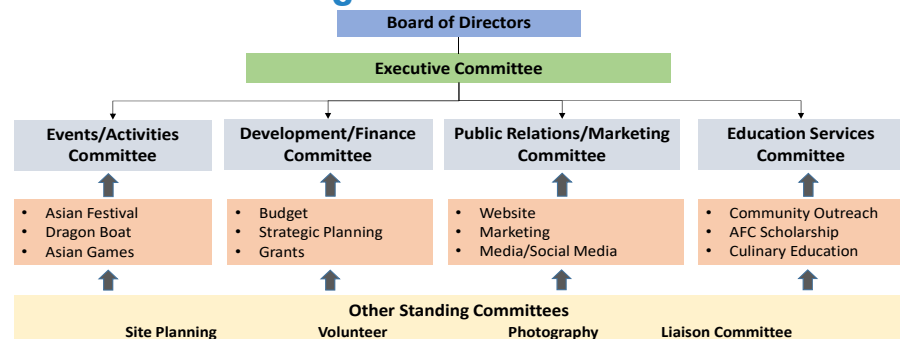
In 2009, the Asian Festival added the Dragon Boat Race which has become one of the highlights of the Asian Festival. Additionally, free health screenings and education are provided to Asians and the general public.

All of the activities and events are only possible because of the many volunteers and corporations supporting our mission and goals.

In January 2003, the Asian Festival became a 501c(3) corporation. Governed by a 13-member Board of Directors, the Asian Festival Corporation is responsible for leadership in strategic planning and long term sustainability. In 2020, this body has led an extensive plan to assist Asian communities in Central Ohio during this COVID 19 pandemic and collaborated with local television stations to celebrate the 2020 Asian Festival virtually. As we move forward, we are hopeful, optimistic but realistic that 2021 will be a good year to continue events and activities in a "new normal" and safe way for everybody.

The mission "to promote the importance of cultural diversity in building a vibrant, prosperous and healthy community" is our beacon for the future.

AFC Organizational Structure



Click [here](#) to view the full chart

RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

Asian Festival Corporation Statement

Dear members of the Asian Festival family, Board of Directors and all volunteers:

As we continue to support the many people who are fighting for social justice and racial inequality, let us not forget the many lives lost including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and many others whose struggles resonate with us as a driving force to dismantle racism that has existed for so long victimizing people of color.

What we have seen in the recent incidents of violence, anger and rage is indeed very tragic. Though it is understandable, the destructive behaviors of looting and vandalism destroy our sense of collective humanity. We need to maintain peace and justice in the midst of long term oppression. When voices are suppressed and rights violated, the outburst of cries dominates until justice is served. We need to be supportive, to listen and to care. Let our hearts be open and our minds resolute to fight for justice and justice for all.

Systemic racism and social injustices have been rampant in this society for decades and have resulted in keen anger, frustration, outrage and sadness. We all hear the cries of the people and the pain that has been caused by trauma and deep divide in this country. People are grieving for their loss, many grapple with intense fear and anxiety- am I going to be next? Unfortunately such is the national scene that seems hopeless and causes national despair.

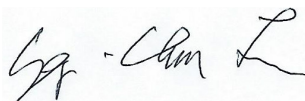
We stand in solidarity with those who are peacefully protesting and join hands to commit to be united in the fight for justice. Only when we come together can we eradicate the negative efforts that prevail in this society and destroy the sense of dignity and respect for life.

Let us advocate for each other and respect the dignity and worth of every human being.

May Peace and Justice prevail!!!



Cora Munoz PhD, R.N
President- Asian Festival
Corporation



Dr. Yung-Chen Lu
Founder - Asian Festival

How Racism Affects the Health of Ohio's Asian Americans

A testimony from Dr. Lu

On June 24th, the Ohio Senate Health and Human Services Committee held a hearing on SB311. Asian Festival founder Dr. Lu testified about the experiences of Asian Americans in the U.S.:

“Asians have reported being stopped while driving without explainable cause. In addition, denial of service by retail establishments or incidences of physical assault have been reported to authorities without resolution to victims’ satisfaction. Compiling information on such incidences is difficult due to uneven compliance with Federal guidelines regarding reporting of hate crimes.”

“Finally, countless Asians have been told, “Go back to where you came from!” This, almost inevitably, is a shocking affront to the victim’s dignity and a source of anxiety, especially among 2nd, 3rd or 4th generational Asian Americans who have always subscribed to U.S. ideals.”

COVID-19

COVID-19 Community Outreach Efforts

After the cancellation of the festival for 2020, the **Asian Festival Board** approved funding to Asian grassroots community organizations to fight COVID-19 through various efforts, including:

- Translating COVID-19 related material to spread awareness of progress and resources in fighting this dangerous virus.
- Purchasing sanitizer for the Vietnamese community.
- Purchasing masks, gloves, wipes, and sanitizers for the Bhutanese/Nepali community.
- Supporting student organizations in the Pakistani, Bangladesh, and Indian communities.
- Collaborating with a Filipino caterer to cook and deliver meals to the elderly in the Filipino Community.
- Continuing the LifeCare Alliance meal program for the Chinese and Vietnamese community by delivering meals to the elderly and groceries and medicine to underserved groups.
- Buying CDs and notebooks for the Home Comfort project so monks could tape lectures and deliver them to families in the Laotian, Thai and Cambodian communities, helping resolve the spiritual engagement issues that arose when temples were forced to close.

In addition to AFC efforts, over ten organizations in the Central Ohio Asian-American community collaborated to support the community by:

- Leveraging connections to acquire quality PPE to donate to health-care providers, first responders, essential workers and vulnerable populations.
- Organizing the “Food of Love” initiative, providing meals to Ohioans in need as part of a national campaign to show solidarity with communities impacted by the pandemic and to honor the over 15,000 Chinese workers who helped build the first Transcontinental Railroad 151 years ago.



Meals prepared by a Filipino caterer are ready for delivery to seniors in the Filipino community.



Monks at Wat Buddha Samakidham (Buddhist temple) prepare to distribute CD's for the Home Comfort Project.



Volunteers deliver meals for the “Food of Love” food drive. The Asian Community in Central Ohio has provided 12,400 meals to homeless shelters, food pantries, and Mid-Ohio Food Bank.



Members of the Vietnamese community stand after receiving masks and sanitizer.



Food and sanitation supplies are delivered to the Bhutanese community center.

COVID-19

(continued)

RESOURCES

Public Health Recommendations for COVID-19:

[English](#) (below) [Tagalog](#)
Check asian-festival.org

List of COVID-19 Testing Sites in Central Ohio:

PDF Flyer: [English](#)

Online Search: coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/testing-ch-centers/

Columbus Public Health COVID-19 Portal: <https://www.columbus.gov/public-health/Coronavirus-Portal/>

<https://www.columbus.gov/public-health/Coronavirus-Portal/>

Ohio COVID-19 Dashboard:

<http://coronavirus.ohio.gov/>

Ohio Gov. DeWine Appoints Asian Leader to the COVID-19 Minority Health Strikeforce

Dr. Cora Munoz, President of the Ohio Asian American Health Coalition and the Asian Festival Corporation was the only representative of the Asian community selected for this team. The purpose of this body is to evaluate the impact and stop the progression of COVID-19, particularly in minority communities. Health disparities and racism are long-existing problems, but the pandemic has amplified them, compounding with factors related to the social determinants of health to create a disproportionate incidence of cases and deaths. The Strikeforce has completed its final report with recommendations to the Governor. Dr. Munoz has advocated for collection of disaggregated data and oversampling, language access through interpretation & translation, funds to support Community Health Workers, allocation of resources and funding for Community organizations, address economic issues for small businesses, and legislative support to create a Commission for AAPI affairs among others.

Visit <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/MHSF/COVID-19-SFR.pdf> to see the interim report.

Public Health Recommendations for COVID-19



What is COVID-19/coronavirus?

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, is a type of virus that is spreading from person to person. It is currently in the United States and many other countries.

How does it spread?

Public health experts are still studying how it spreads. At present, experts believe it is spread by:

- Breathing the air where an infected person is coughing or sneezing
- People interacting within 6 feet of each other
- Holding objects or surfaces that have the virus and then touching the mouth, nose or eyes

What are the symptoms?

People with coronavirus may present with the following symptoms 2-14 days after being exposed to the virus:



Or at least two of the following symptoms:

- chills shaking with chills muscle pain headache sore throat loss of taste or smell

Symptoms can range from mild to severe. Some people with COVID-19 don't display any symptoms.

Advice for people who are at higher risk for a severe infection of COVID-19

Public health officials recommend that people at risk for a severe COVID-19 infection should stay at home and as far away from big groups of people as possible. People who are at higher risk are:

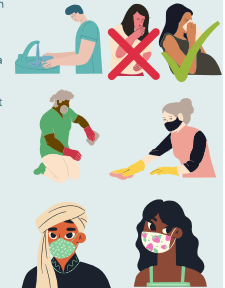
- Those aged 60 years old and over
- Those with underlying conditions like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes
- Those with weakened immune systems
- Those who are pregnant

People who have questions about their risk for COVID-19 should consult their doctor or a medical professional.

Guidance for all

You can lessen the risk to yourself and to loved ones who are vulnerable to COVID-19 by doing the following:

- **Stay at home** and don't go out in the public if you are sick.
- **Avoid going to medical facilities** like the doctor, hospital or clinic unless it is highly necessary. If you are the one who is sick, call your doctor's office first before you go.
- **Even if you are not sick, avoid visiting hospitals, care facilities and nursing homes as much as possible.** If you need to visit any one of these facilities, limit the number of hours that you are there and ensure that you are keeping a six foot distance from the patients.
- **Don't go to the emergency room unless it is absolutely necessary.** The emergency room services are needed to serve those with the most critical illnesses. If you have a cough, fever, or other symptoms, first call your regular or primary doctor.
- **Practice excellent personal hygiene habits.** Wash your hands with soap and water, cover your cough with a tissue or elbow, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- **Stay away from people who are sick,** especially if you are part of a population vulnerable to coronavirus.
- **Clean frequently held or used items,** such as door knobs, and light switches. Cleaning your house regularly is an effective preventative measure.
- **Get lots of rest, drink plenty of fluids, eat healthy foods and ensure you don't over exert yourself to maintain good health.**
- **Wear protective face coverings.** They should:
 - Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
 - Include multiple layers of fabric.
 - Be able to be washed without damage.
 - Be worn by children over age 2.



If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have any other questions, you can call:

Ohio Department of Health at 1-833-427-5634
It is staffed from 9 AM to 8 PM each day, including weekends (7 days a week)
www.coronavirus.ohio.gov

The operators will be able to connect you to a third-party interpreter. You have to tell them in English what language you need interpreted. You may experience long hours of waiting.

Let us be ready to help each other.
A strong community spirit will be able to help us during difficult times.



Adapted with permission from
Public Health
Seattle & King County

MENTAL HEALTH



Stay Mentally Well in Coping with COVID-19

- 1 Be informed about COVID-19 through **official sources**
- 2 **Minimize** overload with news about COVID-19
- 3 Maintain **connections** with friends and family regularly
- 4 Spend time with your family for **recreational activities**, such as games, videos and readings
- 5 Do simple daily **workouts** at home
- 6 Engage in **outdoor activities** maintaining social distancing and wear face protective masks
- 7 **Contact your health care provider** for symptoms of COVID-19, serious anxiety and depression that are affecting work, family and relationships

What to do if we face discrimination?

- Speak up
- Avoid direct conflicts
- Be supportive of each other

Translated Mental Wellness Resources

Below are links to the flyer in various languages:

[English](#) (pictured above)

[Tagalog](#)

Check asian-festival.org for more translations as they become available.

Mental Health and COVID-19

Mental wellness is an important part of overall health. It affects how we think, feel, act, handle stress, and relate to others.

The stay at home order related to the COVID-19 pandemic has a negative impact on some people, increasing stress and feelings of isolation. Many struggle with fear and anxiety associated with the uncertainties and reality of losing employment or closure of businesses such as restaurants, nail and hair salons, and retail. Essential workers are in constant fear of exposure to the virus but must keep their jobs for needed income. These factors can dramatically heighten stress levels already created by the COVID-19 situation.

- People with pre-existing mental health conditions or substance use disorders such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia may be particularly vulnerable. Continue medications as directed, and contact your primary care provider when symptoms increase.
- Maintaining social connections with others can be helpful. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and feelings. Connect with your community, church, temples, mosques, or other faith-based organizations. Even with social distancing measures are in place, consider connecting online, through social media, or by phone or messaging.
- Take care of your mind and body. Maintain good nutrition, exercise regularly, drink fluids, and get a good night’s sleep. Other mindful activities may include deep breathing exercises, Tai Chi, meditation, and prayer.

Mental Health Webinar

ADAMH funded the Asian Festival to host a Webinar on COVID- 19 Mental Wellness, Coping Strategies and Self-Care, cosponsored by the Ohio Asian American Health Coalition, and the Asian-American Community Service Council. This is scheduled for July 9, 7-8 pm and repeated on July 11, 4-5 pm.

Please email msankarappa@yahoo.com to register (required)



COVID 19: Mental Wellness, Coping Strategies & Self Care

July 9, 2020 7-8 pm **OR** July 11, 2020 4-5 pm

Facilitators:
 Cora Munoz PhD R.N
 Manju Sankarappa
 Patch Wetzel

FREE WEBINAR



Registration at:
msankarappa@yahoo.com
 (614) 402 3381

Funded by:








UPDATES FROM THE AFC

Looking Forward: 2021 Prospectus



Please contact Dr. Lu (drlyuc@gmail.com) to receive a copy of the 2021 prospectus.

AFC OSU Scholarship Recipients

This year, the Office of International Affairs' grant committee selected 5 recipients for the International Leadership Scholarship for the 2020 Asian Festival. With over 50 applications, this year's recipients were chosen for their high academic progress and leadership capacity at Ohio State and in the Columbus Asian community:

- **Yunzi Yu (Undergraduate: Social Work - China)**
- **Chungeun Cho (Undergraduate: Information Systems - South Korea)**
- **Gowtham Venkatraman (PhD Student: Mechanical Engineering - India)**
- **Samragni Banerjee (PhD Student: Chemistry - India)**
- **Soohwan Hwang (PhD Student: Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering - South Korea)**

Virtual Festival Recap

For the first time in its 26-year history, the Asian Festival events could not be held. Not to be defeated by the virus, the board planned alternative activities to celebrate Asian culture and heritage through virtual platforms. In collaboration with local TV stations, Asian performance, arts, and interviews with Asian Festival leaders were highlighted throughout the month of May.

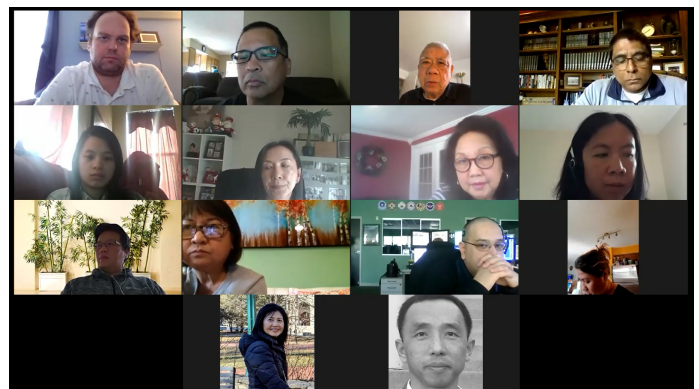
These TV segments brought a bit of the Asian Festival home to Ohioans who were staying home and combing social distancing with education and entertainment.

Links to TV segments:

[Channel 4](#)

[Channel 6](#)

[Channel 10](#)



Asian Festival leaders and volunteers had a productive meeting discussing sustainability and future plans for the Asian Festival!

In Progress: AFC Strategic Planning

Through several meetings with the board of directors, committee leaders, community partners, volunteers students, a strategy has been developed, specifically:

- **2020 - Adjust and Transition:** Coping with the pandemic situation, continued execution of virtual festival themes, community outreach, refreshed marketing, and expanded education & sponsorships.
- **2021 - Refresh and Reinvent:** Learn from the past and evaluate hallmark Asian Festival events. Brainstorm new ideas to step up the 2021 Asian Festival, including marketing, expanded services (health, meal), growing scholarships, and developing new partnerships.
- **Beyond 2021 - Transform:** Launch new strategy plan which includes reappraising events/services, AFC succession plan and talent management, operation excellence, etc.