



## At a Glance: Asian Americans in Illinois

- ✓ There are almost 600,000 Asian Americans in Illinois, comprising 5% of the state’s population.
- ✓ Illinois’ Asian American voting population grew at a rate of 12% from 2004 to 2008, from 204,000 to 228,000, now comprising almost 3% of Illinois’ voting population.
- ✓ In Chicago’s Cook County, there are 323,663 Asian Americans, making up 6% of the county’s population.
- ✓ AAPI voters can make a significant impact in local and national elections.

### A Growing Asian American Population

- ✓ Since 1990, there has been a 69% growth in the Chicago area’s AAPI population.
- ✓ From 2004 to 2008, Illinois’ Asian American population grew from 204,000 to 228,000, a 12% increase.
- ✓ In Cook County, the largest county in Illinois, over 6% of the population is Asian American.
- ✓ Historically, the four significant AAPI populations in Chicago are Chinatown, Southeast Asians in Uptown, Korean Americans in Albany Park, and Indian and Pakistanis in West Ridge. A large number of Asian Americans live in the suburbs.
- ✓ Approximately 36% of Asian Americans in Illinois are eligible to vote.

District	Cities	AAPI Eligible Voters	Margin of Victory in 2006
6	Wheaton, Elmhurst, Elk Grove Village	33,569	4,275
8	Northeastern portion of IL	23,450	12,397
10	Highland Park, Glenview, Northbrook, North Chicago	24,565	12,624

### Counties with Highest Asian American Population

	% of Asian Americans in County	Size of the Asian only voting eligible population
DuPage County	10%	46,293
Champaign County	9%	6,106
Lake County	6%	20,482
<b>Cook County</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>155,909</b>
Will County	4%	12,305

### Key Elections in Illinois

- ✓ AAPI voters had the potential to impact three Congressional district races in 2006.
- ✓ The number of AAPI eligible voters in Districts 6, 8, and 10 outnumbered the vote differences in these districts.
- ✓ Districts 6, 8, and 10 are largely suburban communities with large foreign-born Indian, Filipino, and Korean communities.

### Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

- ✓ In Illinois, approximately 32,000 out of 122,803, that is, 26% of households speaking Asian languages are linguistically isolated, meaning that all members of the family over 14 years old experience at least some difficulty speaking English.

### Voting Challenges Due to Limited English Proficiency

- ✓ In a 2008 exit poll in Cook County, AALDEF found that 53% of those polled were limited English proficient (LEP), and LEP voters generally had difficulty voting without help.
- ✓ Of those polled, only 14% are native English speakers, and 88% are foreign born.
- ✓ For 25% of those surveyed, it was their first time at the polls.
- ✓ Only 50% of Illinois’ voting eligible Asian population registered to vote in 2008.

<sup>1</sup>2006-2008 American Community Survey and 2004, 2008 Community Population Survey; all other data from A Community of Contrasts, Asian American Justice Center, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, 2006.