

Press Release
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For Immediate Release

Comcast/NBCU Reach Historic Agreement with Asian American Media and Civil Rights Groups

WASHINGTON-Today, five of the nation's leading Asian American media and civil rights organizations executed a landmark agreement with Comcast Corporation (Comcast) and NBC Universal (NBCU).

The memorandum of understanding with the Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), East West Players (EWP), Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), OCA and Media Action Network for Asian Americans (MANAA) spells out commitments on diversity triggered by Comcast's merger with NBCU. AAJC spearheaded negotiations.

"This memo includes very substantial provisions to increase the inclusion of Asian Americans that set a high standard for the media and the communications industry," said Karen K. Narasaki, AAJC's president and executive director. "We want to thank Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus Chairman Mike Honda and Rep. Judy Chu, chairwoman of the caucus's economic development taskforce, for their leadership in raising the issue of Asian Americans in the debate over this merger which helped to pave the way for this agreement."

The 16-page agreement addresses many aspects of media diversity and focuses on five main areas: corporate governance; employment/workforce recruitment and retention; procurement; programming; and philanthropy and community investments.

"Until now the door of access to media participation has been virtually closed to Asian Americans," said Floyd Mori, JACL's national executive director/CEO. "This agreement is a great beginning of cracking open opportunities for the general public to see Asian American talent and our role in the community at large."

A key component is Comcast's commitment to expanding its distribution of Asian American owned, operated and targeted programming either through expanding the distribution of an existing channel or initiating a new channel. The channel will have 24/7 programming in English and will be rolled out in major Asian American media markets.

"EWP is especially excited about Comcast/ NBCU's commitment to seek out programming, talent and spokespeople originating out of the Asian American community," said Tim Dang, EWP producing artistic director.

"And we look forward to assisting Comcast/NBCU to meet its goals in this area."

Comcast has also agreed to launch a new video-on-demand offering called Cinema Asian America as part of its standard digital package, ultimately becoming available to 18 million subscribers, which it will back up with marketing and communications plan. Additionally, Comcast will dedicate at least \$1 million investment over three years to build a bigger pipeline for Asian American-themed programming. NBCU will build on its work with the Asian American Media Coalition on its efforts to feature Asian Americans in front of and behind the cameras for both television and film. And both companies will increase the news and information choices for Asian American viewers.

"For over a decade, MANAA has enjoyed a constructive relationship with NBCU working with the network to improve the inclusion of Asian Americans in its programming," said Guy Aoki,

MANAA's founding president. "We look forward to working with Comcast on an even greater scale and are encouraged by the steps it has already taken to provide Video on Demand through its Cinema Asian America channel."

As for its governance, Comcast will make its "best efforts to fill a future board opening with an Asian American candidate" and designate a "senior-level" member of its external affairs and public policy staff as a community liaison. And it will appoint nine members to its new Asian American Advisory Council, four of whom will come from the ranks of the organizations that signed on to this memo of understanding.

"OCA is pleased to extend our partnership with Comcast and other Asian American organizations to ensure our communities have equitable access to the media," said George Wu, OCA's executive director. "With this agreement, OCA believes many more Asian Americans will get the content they want, be able to develop and distribute their original content and be part of the leadership pipeline in the industry."

Finally, Comcast and NBCU are committed to boosting diversity among the companies and businesses from which they procure goods and services. They will increase how much is spent on diverse business partners, including Asian American-owned enterprises. This agreement is similar to ones Comcast has negotiated with other communities.

To read the full memo, visit <http://tinyurl.com/32olle6>. To see AAJC's letter to the Federal Communications Commission regarding the merger visit <http://tinyurl.com/39ynl2x>. For more information on AAJC's media diversity and broadband work, visit www.advancingequality.org/tvdiversitypubs/.

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*The mission of the **Asian American Justice Center** is to advance civil and human rights for Asian Americans and to build and promote a fair and equitable society for all. For more information, please visit our website at www.advancingequality.org. The Asian American Justice Center is a proud member of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice.*



*Headquartered in Washington, DC since 1973, **OCA** is a national social justice organization with 50 chapters across the country dedicated to advancing the social, political, and economic well being of Asian Pacific Americans.*

*Founded in 1929, the **JACL** is the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States. The JACL monitors and responds to issues that enhance or threaten the civil and human rights of all Americans and implements strategies to effect positive social change, particularly to the Asian Pacific American community.*

*The **Media Action Network for Asian Americans** is the first organization solely dedicated to monitoring all facets of the media - television, motion pictures, print, advertising, radio, etc. - and advocating balanced, sensitive and positive portrayals of Asian Americans.*

***East West Players** is the nation's largest producing organization of Asian American artistic work, and presents plays and educational programs out of its theater in the Little Tokyo district of downtown Los Angeles.*