

CUPERTINO, CA – On Friday, March 16, Congressman Mike Honda (CA-15) provided the keynote address at the first-ever Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) Western Regional Summit. The daylong convening was hosted by the Asian American and Pacific Islander Association of Colleges and Universities (APIACU) at De Anza College in Cupertino, CA, and featured nearly 60 AANAPISI staff and faculty, government representatives, community leaders, and students.

“Since being established in 2007, the AANAPISI program has made a monumental difference in the lives of AAPI students by providing critical resources for college access and success,” said Rep. Honda. “The Summit reminds us of the serious need to address the Model Minority Myth, and to educate the broader community on the significant educational and cultural barriers facing AAPI youth nationwide. As Appropriations Taskforce Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I will continue to advocate for funding of equitable education for AAPI students, and ensure the AANAPISI program is a chief priority in Congress.

The AANAPISI program awards grants to colleges and universities designated by the U.S. Department of Education for having an enrollment of at least 10% AAPI students and a significant number of low-income students. As a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Honda plays a critical role in ensuring that the program receives millions annually in discretionary federal funding.

For the past two years, Rep. Honda and his staff have worked with three local AANAPISI colleges in the San Jose area to strengthen their competitiveness in the grant process and to address challenges around program implementation. During the Summit, Rep. Honda reminded participants that without the coordinated efforts of Congressional offices, community advocates, and educators, AAPI students would be left without critical resources, mentorship, and leadership opportunities tailored to their AAPI heritage and experiences.

The Summit featured plenaries where students shared moving testimonies on how the AANAPISI program has contributed to their educational achievement, community leaders discussed advocacy strategies, and government representatives presented on best practices for compliance and other federal resources. Additionally, representatives from nine AANAPISIs

highlighted student programmatic efforts and any initial challenges they have faced. Finally, individuals from each stakeholder group discussed assessment strategies and developed an action timeline for continued support of the AANAPISI program in the future.

Four key speakers also addressed the Summit, including Georgia Yuan, U.S. Department of Education Deputy Under Secretary; Christina Espinosa-Pieb, Vice President of Instruction at De Anza College; Mark Mitsui, APIACU Chairman and President of North Seattle Community College; and Ruby G. Moy, APIACU President and CEO.