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# Know What Your Asian Pacific Islander Caucus Can Do For You

written by [Betty Yu](#) | January 16, 2018



*API Caucus annual meeting this past November at ASHA's 2017 National Convention in Los Angeles.*

A young mother and new immigrant to the United States was alarmed. Her 2-year-old son was not yet speaking. Luckily, her pediatrician referred her to early intervention services, which connected her with a bilingual

Mandarin/English-speaking speech-language pathologist.



This SLP also belonged to [ASHA's Asian Pacific Islander Speech-Language-Hearing Caucus \(API Caucus\)](#). The SLP worked with this child for a year, taking care to integrate and adapt treatment activities to the routines and language practices of the family. As the child made gains, the SLP also interpreted, translated and facilitated communication on behalf of the client's family and educational team during the boy's transition to preschool. Later, our colleague volunteered to advocate for this family during a housing crisis.

Volunteering to serve clients above and beyond professional duties is often the norm for members of the API Caucus.

### **What exactly is the API Caucus?**

The term Asian and Pacific Islanders includes all people of Asian (East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian), American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander heritage.

The field of speech-language pathology was once unknown to most people in the API communities. In 1985, Li-Rong Cheng led a small group of ASHA-certified API professionals to hold the first meeting of the API caucus at the ASHA National Office, and we have been meeting ever since.

#### **Message from API Caucus Founder Dr. Lilly Li-Rong Cheng**



We are just one of [six multicultural constituency groups](#), which you can learn more about in this series:

[Helping You Serve Spanish-Speaking Children and Adults—Your ASHA Hispanic Caucus](#)

[Get to Know Your Asian Indian Caucus](#)

Our mission is to make connections, share common concerns, educate, mentor and advocate for quality speech language and hearing services for API communities.

### How can you get involved with the API Caucus?

We offer *free membership to all students and professionals* with an interest in promoting speech, language and hearing health in API communities, regardless of background.

- Visit the API Caucus website at [apislhc.com](http://apislhc.com).
- Join our vibrant [API Caucus Facebook Group](#).
- View the [API Caucus Youtube channel](#).
- Email us at [api.caucus@gmail.com](mailto:api.caucus@gmail.com).

The API Caucus aims to address the disparity between the number of speech-language-hearing professionals relevant cultural/linguistic knowledge and those in the API communities who need their services. For example people of API descent represent 22 million of our country's population, but only 5,575 of ASHA members—a 1 4,000 ratio.

The API Caucus is collaborating with the Asian Indian Caucus to conduct an [online survey of API students and professionals in the speech-language-hearing sciences](#). We hope to use results of this survey to better inform recruitment and retention of API professionals.

Help us spread the word by [taking the short survey](#) today!

Our other ongoing efforts include:

- Providing referrals for audiologists and SLPs with particular cultural/linguistic expertise.
- Gathering relevant resources, information, research and materials for members to easily access.
- Creating connections among colleagues with shared interests in serving the API community.
- Fundraising to generate scholarships and grants for API Caucus members to enhance their skills.

The API Caucus continually strives to better serve you and our diverse communities. Join us and let us know how we can help!



*Editor's note: This is the second installment in a series [covering all six of ASHA's Multicultural Constituency Groups](#)*

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## 2 COMMENTS



**BARBARA HODSON**

🕒 January 16, 2018 - 10:23 pm

Excellent blog!!! Please continue reporting on these multicultural activities!  
Barbara Hodson



**LINDA I. ROSA-LUGO**

🕒 January 17, 2018 - 2:36 pm

I am excited about the collaborations that are taking place to address some important issues (e.g service delivery; recruitment/retention of API professionals). The Hispanic Caucus supports your effort. Really informative blog.

Comments are closed.

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