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**ASIAN HEALTH COALITION RELEASES CARDIO PROGRAM TOOLKIT TO BENEFIT
AANHPI COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

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CHICAGO, IL – The Asian Health Coalition (AHC) will release important findings from its Cardiovascular Awareness Recognizing Diet and Integration of exercise Options (CARDIO) program. The program, funded by the AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation’s *Connections for Cardiovascular HealthSM Next Generation* program, was launched to elevate awareness and risk-reduction of cardiovascular disease and diabetes, specifically among South Asian and Chinese communities in Chicago.

In conjunction with World Heart Day (September 29, 2021), AHC will publish its CARDIO Toolkit designed as a resource bank consisting of evidence-based, culturally, and linguistically tailored intervention content for cardiovascular disease and diabetes awareness and risk-reduction. The toolkit will be available to community-based organizations, local health departments, and end-users within South Asian and Chinese communities across the country.

“Asian Americans are disproportionately affected by cardiovascular disease and diabetes, however many risk factors for these diseases are modifiable”, says Fornessa T. Randal, Executive Director at the Asian Health Coalition. Under the management of Naomi Louie, MPH, RDN, LDN, Manager of Chronic and Infectious Diseases, the CARDIO program has shown much success in supporting heart healthy lifestyles among our South Asian and Chinese participants. “Through this important program we have reached 395 community members, empowering them with knowledge and techniques to lower their risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes,” says Louie. “We have had great results within CARDIO, with over 1,100 pounds lost among participants and many incorporating heart healthy habits, such as increased physical activity, and fruit and vegetable consumption,” Louie adds.

In recognition of the collaborative impact of the CARDIO program, the Asian Health Coalition acknowledges the vital efforts of its program partners: [Muslim Women Resource Center](#); [Indo American Center](#); [Indian American Medical Association Charitable Foundation](#); [Hamdard Health Alliance](#); New Chinatown Elderly Apartments; [Pui Tak Center](#); and [Xilin Association](#). These Asian serving community-based organizations served to link program initiatives and interventions with the important target communities. The following CARDIO program participant testimonies underscore the needed impact achieved:

“After attending this class, I shared the things I learned about smoking with my husband and how it can harm his health. I also started to incorporate what I learned in the class. My son is 11 years old who doesn’t exercise and just likes to eat, so I encouraged him to start exercising with me and eating healthy food to have good health since he is still growing!” – Minlan [Pui Tak Center participant]

“As I continued to teach the class, I started to talk about the CARDIO program with my family and friends and how I thought it would benefit if they join to learn and improve their heart health. Because I had family members in my class there was a sense of emotional or mental benefit for me, as a family we are encouraging

and motivating each other towards a healthier lifestyle.” – Lina [CARDIO instructor at Muslim Women Resource Center]

To learn more, visit [Current Work - Diabetes & CVD — Asian Health Coalition](#)

Organization Profiles

The AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation works to address health disparities in the US through strategic grant-giving and capacity building support for nonprofit organizations. The Foundation also provides financial support for AstraZeneca employees affected by federally declared disasters in the US. Established in 1993 as a nonprofit charitable organization, the Foundation is a separate legal entity from AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals with distinct legal restrictions. Its current signature program, *Connections for Cardiovascular HealthSM Next Generation*, aims to improve heart health in the US, particularly among historically disregarded and underserved populations, through tailored approaches that best meet the needs of local communities. For more information and the latest updates, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) and visit www.astrazeneca-us.com/sustainability/healthcare-foundation.html.

The [Asian Health Coalition](#) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) with a mission to improve the health and wellness of the Asian American and other ethnic minority communities through advocacy, technical assistance, community-based education and research. To further address the health disparities experienced by communities of color, including Asian American, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders (AANHPI), and African immigrants, AHC and the University of Chicago Medicine formed the Center for Asian Health Equity in 2015.