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Orange County Symposium Brings Together Diverse Panel to Discuss the State of Asian American Businesses

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. Asia Center (USAC), in partnership with U.S. Asian Business Council (USABC), sponsored the third symposium in a multi-city tour to address the state of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) businesses in the United States. The symposium was held on Sunday, January 13 at California State University, Fullerton.

The symposium incorporated a panel presentation on business trends within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, expanding on a report to the President entitled, "Enhancing the Economic Potential of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders." The diverse panel included Joe Melookaran, former commissioner on the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and lead author of the report, William Kil, former commissioner, Dr. Co Pham, President and Chairman of the Orange County Vietnamese- American Chamber of Commerce, and Kim-Yen Huynh, Founder and President of Asian American Business Women Association. Derrick Nguyen, former Commissioner, moderated the event.

The report to the President was created by the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, whose mandate was to review the current economic participation of AAPI-owned businesses in the United States and recommend ways and means to enhance the economic potential of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders resulting in the improvement of their quality of life.

Melookaran stated, "The interaction prior to the meeting and during the symposium reinforced the Commission's finding that many of the services offered by federal agencies are not reaching the entrepreneurs in the community. I found that there is a gap between the pent up demand for necessary tools and resources for entrepreneurs and the resources made available by the federal agencies."

Nguyen continued by stating, "This symposium was an ideal way to showcase business trends in the Asian American community and how it relates to local business practices. The key to building wealth in the community for the benefit of all is by fostering economic development of its members."

The symposium tour will finish on February 5, 2008 in Kansas City, Missouri.

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