Title

Exploring Beyond the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) Designation: The Perceived Impacts of a Federal Grant on Understanding and Serving Students at a Two-Year AANAPISI

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Publication Date

2021

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Victoria Kim

2021

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Exploring Beyond the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) Designation: The Perceived Impacts of a Federal Grant on Understanding and Serving Students at a Two-Year AANAPISI

by

Victoria Kim

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2021

Professor Robert T. Teranishi, Chair

In higher education, with the change in demographics and the growing diversity of the minority student population, one of the key concerns is the inequitable educational outcomes for historically underserved and underrepresented minority students (Bensimon, 2005). Over the next few decades, minority students will make up a large and significant portion of the U.S. workforce and considering the weak conditions of our nation's economy, increasing the educational attainment and thus, ensuring the educational success of racial/ethnic minority students should be our nation's priority (Nguyen et al., 2017; Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, and Suárez-Orozco, 2011).

Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) are important sites for understanding the kinds of institutional context that help build institutional capacity to better serve diverse racial/ethnic

minority student groups; MSIs enroll over 3.5 million racial/ethnic minority students (Cunningham, Park, & Engle, 2014). The Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) designation and funding not only recognize a critical mass of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) enrolled at an institution, but also allow student initiatives that focus on serving AAPI and low-income individuals to develop. In addition, AANAPISIs (also known as AAPI-serving institutions) can highlight racial/ethnic heterogeneity and disparities in educational outcomes that exist across AAPI ethnic sub-groups. (Nguyen et al., 2017; Teranishi, 2010).

Espinoza (2012) discussed the difficulties that low-income and racial/ethnic minority students face in addition to the challenges compounded by the intersections of their multiple backgrounds. However, despite students' diverse backgrounds and their challenges, the concepts of reimagining transformation such as developing pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012) help to examine and reimagine change with the aim to better understand and serve students. Centering around the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation which evolved from concepts including transformational change (Kezar, 2013; Bensimon, 2005) and educational pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012), this study aimed to answer the broader question: *In what ways, if any, does the federal AANAPISI funding drive new, broader, and deeper insights into understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution?*

To answer this question, the study examined changes that the AANAPISI federal grant brought regarding the following areas: 1) the unique educational needs and challenge of AAPI students, 2) serving students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds at an AAPI-serving institution, and 3) serving students after the grant ends (e.g., sustaining and expanding the current

and future AANAPISI or AANAPISI-like student initiatives on campus).

All in all, the federal AANAPISI funding beyond the designation alone supported an institution to build capacity and demonstrate its commitment to better understanding and serving students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, the federal AANAPISI funding served as a catalyst to help reimagine change at an institution and develop pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012) to be more "minority-serving." The findings provide implications for new areas of research, institutions that either are a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) or are pursuing a federal MSI designation and funding, and public policy to improve the educational experiences of students, particularly racial/ethnic minorities, in higher education.

A decade has passed since AANAPISI became the newest addition to the federal MSI program in 2007. While little is still known about AAPI-serving institutions (CARE, 2014), this study contributes to the understandings of the federal MSI initiatives with particular attention to AAPI students and what that means for serving beyond AAPI students. Ultimately, these understandings add to the knowledge of institutions that serve students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.

As higher education continues to strive toward achieving educational equity, we must constantly ask, "what does it mean to be a 'minority-serving' institution?" I believe this study has taken a step closer to answering this question.

The dissertation of Victoria Kim is approved.

Daniel G. Solórzano

Mitchell J. Chang

Phitsamay S. Uy

Robert T. Teranishi, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2021

Dedication

For my parents, So-Yang Cho and Dr. Jae-Sung Kim.

For my grandparents, Young-Joo Lee & Yong-Rok Kim and Ok-Yeo Cho & Woong-Lae Cho.

For my siblings, Ann Sun-Ah Kim and Dr. David Sun-Min Kim.

And for my God.

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank my Lord for giving me the strength to live each day.

There are so many great people in my life that supported my educational journey. I thank my parents for giving me tremendous love and support. I couldn't have done this without you. Thank you for your prayers.

I am so grateful to my brother, David, and sister, Ann. You two have provided significant help in my educational journey. Thank you for believing in me. And thank you to my brother-in-law, David Lee, for your prayers. I know both you and Ann have been praying for me.

To my loving family, thank you for your love and support: Joanne Mi-Yang Cho, Victoria Ae-Yang Cho, Hun-Jung Cho, Seung-Ho Choi, Cathi, Rebecca, John, Jeff, Brooklyn, Albert, and Henrik. Special thanks to Dr. Joanne Cho and Dr. Victoria Choi for supporting me in multiple ways.

To my dissertation chair and faculty advisor, Dr. Robert Teranishi. Thank you so much for supporting my PhD journey at UCLA. During the last six years, I have learned so much from you and I am grateful for all the opportunities you have provided me so I can grow and mature as a researcher and scholar. Thank you for your guidance and support.

To my dissertation committee members, Dr. Daniel G. Solórzano, Dr. Mitchell J. Chang, and Dr. Phitsamay S. Uy. Dr. Solórzano, I am so grateful that I took several of your classes at UCLA. I have learned so much from your classes. Thank you for your guidance and kind words. Dr. Chang, I have really enjoyed being a part of your RACs and engaging in critical and in-depth conversations. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this space and learn more about the field of higher education. And thank you for your guidance. Dr. Uy, I am grateful that AERA REAPA has provided me the opportunity to get to know you and your work. Thank you for all the detailed suggestions you have shared with me so I can refine my research and thank you for

your encouraging words.

To my mentors, Dr. Maria Villar, Dr. Jung-Sun Park, and Brian Henry who have significantly impacted my professional journey as an educator and advisor. Dr. Villar, thank you so much for giving me the chance to teach my very first college class in 2013. Your support means a lot to me. Dr. Park, thank you so much for guiding me. I am so grateful that I have met you through CSUDH and I am excited to continue working with you. Brian, you have completely shifted the way I view academic counseling. Thank you so much for helping me grow as an academic advisor and thank you for your encouraging words.

I am grateful for all my professors whom I met through various educational programs at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA, Bilingual/Bicultural Education program and International Educational Development program at Teachers College, Columbia University, School of Education at UC Davis, and Department of Psychology at UC Davis. I am also thankful for all my colleagues at College Academic Counseling at UCLA. Thank you for creating such a friendly and supportive environment.

To Cyndi Alcantar. Cyndi, you have been a great friend, colleague, and mentor, but most importantly, you are just a wonderful and caring person and I have been learning so much from you. I am truly blessed. To Dolly Nguyen. Dolly, I am so grateful that I have met you. As a great friend, colleague, and mentor, you have helped me grow and mature in so many ways. Thank you so much for your encouragement and advise. To ’Inoke Hafoka. ‘Inoke, from day one of my PhD journey, I am so glad you were there with me as my “PhD buddy.” All those late night emails and projects are now great memories. Thank you for being a part of these great memories and I am so excited that we are graduating! To Rachel Freeman. Rachel, I am so grateful for you. Thank you so much for being a great friend and colleague. And thank you for always

encouraging me. To Catherine Choe. Cat, thank you for being a great listener and thank you for your kind and caring words.

I also want to thank my peers and colleagues who were a part of my PhD journey during my time at UCLA: Edwin Hernandez, Jenny Lee, Connie Chang, Lavi Uluave, Mike Nguyen, Ed Curammeng, Brenda Lopez, Billy Giebel, Tonia Guida, Katherine Cho, Audrey Paredes, Annie Le, Rose Ann Gutierrez, Yuen Hsieh, Jung-Won Kim, Deborah Shin and many more.

To my two close friends, So-Yeon Kim and Hannah Hyun-Kyung Lee. So-Yeon, thank you so much for always encouraging me. And thank you for being a great listener. Hyun-Kyung, thank you so much for being a part of my life. And thank you for your love and support. I am truly blessed to have you two in my life.

Thanks to my mentor, Mrs. Amy Hwang and her family. Also, thanks to all my pastors and mentors I've met through my church. Special thanks to my friends for walking through life with me: In-Young Lee, Min-Ah Back, Ji-Eun Kang, Sung-Eun Kim, Hannah Hyun-Ah Yoon, Jung-Min Moon, Pastor Esther Yang, Albert Sohn, and many more. Thank you all for your prayers and support. If I've forgotten to mention you. I am very sorry and I will make sure to thank you in-person with extra love!

Finally, I want to thank all students, staff, faculty, and administrators at my study site for welcoming me and sharing your lived experiences. I could not have completed this study without your willingness to share your stories. This dissertation is dedicated to you all. Special thanks to the AANAPISI program director for being so supportive of this study. Words cannot express how thankful I am for your support. Also, special thanks to the AANAPISI staff members and students for inviting me into your space. I really enjoyed all of our conversations.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In higher education, with the change in demography and the growing diversity of racial/ethnic minority students on campus, a key concern is the inequitable educational outcomes or educational disparities found particularly among racial/ethnic minority students from historically underserved and underrepresented backgrounds (Bensimon, 2005). Over the next few decades, racial/ethnic minority students (also referred to as minority students or minority student population throughout this study) will make up a large proportion of the U.S. workforce. Considering our nation's economy and the workforce, increasing the educational attainment and ensuring the success of minority students should be our nation's priority (Nguyen et al., 2017; Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, & Suárez-Orozco, 2011).

The growing number and racial/ethnic diversity among the minority population are apparent both in our nation and higher education. According to the U.S. Census, between 1980 and 2010, the minority population increased by nearly 40 percent in our nation. Similarly, between 1980 and 2011, while the total undergraduate fall enrollment increased by 73 percent, the minority undergraduate enrollment grew by 300 percent (Conrad & Gasman, 2015).

For this growing and racially/ethnically diverse minority student population, their educational experiences vary due to multiple factors including linguistic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds (Conrad & Gasman, 2015). Furthermore, Espinoza (2011) discussed the difficulties faced by racial/ethnic minority students from the least advantaged backgrounds (e.g., low-income, first-generation college students, etc.) and the challenges compounded by the intersections of these backgrounds. Recognizing the educational disparities found across the growing and racially/ethnically diverse minority student population with unique educational needs and challenges, Kezar (2005) suggested "higher education needs to create organizational learning…to best serve students" (Kezar, 2005, p.57). Therefore, in this study, an organizational

learning is created at a Minority-Serving Institution.

This federal policy, the federal Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) program, has potential to reach the growing and racially/ethnically diverse minority student population that is historically underserved and marginalized at postsecondary institutions. Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) enroll over 5 million undergraduate students where 3.5 million of them are racial/ethnic minorities; one in five undergraduates enroll at MSIs and two in five minority undergraduates enroll at MSIs, making MSIs important sites for serving the growing and racially/ethnically diverse minority student population in higher education (Cunningham et al., 2014).

MSIs include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs). If HBCUs and TCUs recognize the historically marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved Black and Native American students, respectively, in their mission statements, HSIs and AANAPISIs have been created based on the growth of low-income Latina/o and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students, respectively, in higher education.

Authorized by the federal government through the College Cost Reduction and Access Act in 2007 and later the Higher Education Opportunity Act in 2008, the federal Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) program "provides grants and related assistance to AANAPISIs to enable such institutions to improve and expand their capacity to serve Asian Americans and Native American Pacific Islanders and low-income individuals" (AANAPISI, 2016). An AANAPISI (otherwise known as AAPI-serving institution) must meet the minimum student enrollment of 10% or more Asian American and Pacific Islander

(AAPI) students, 50% of which are low-income students that receive need-based aids such as the Pell Grant (Alcantar, Kim, Hafoka, & Teranishi, 2020; Teranishi, 2012). Then, after undergoing a competitive grant application process, a selected number of AAPI-serving institutions receive the federal AANAPISI funding; these institutions are known as federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institutions. In 2016, among 105 federally designated AAPI-serving institutions, 26 institutions (new or continuing recipients) received the federal AANAPISI funding (Teranishi & Kim, 2017).

AAPI-serving institutions have potential to reach high concentrations of underserved AAPI college students. In 2010, 41.2 percent of all AAPI undergraduates enrolled at AAPI-serving institutions. Put another way, two in five AAPI undergraduates attended institutions that are federally designated as AAPI-serving institutions (CARE, 2014). In a more recent study, researchers found that AAPI-serving institutions continue to enroll over 40% of all AAPI undergraduates and in 2016, "AANAPISIs conferred 43.5% of all associate degrees and 28.8% of all bachelor's degrees to AAPI students" (Teranishi, Alcantar, & Underwood, 2018, p. 189).

Furthermore, AAPI-serving institutions have potential to reach a large proportion of low-income AAPI students where "…institutions that met the criteria for AANAPISI funding enrolled 75% of the low-income AAPI students in U.S. higher education" (Teranishi et al., 2018, p. 189). According to CARE (2014),

> The AANAPISI program is important for the AAPI community because it encourages campuses that serve disproportionately high numbers of low-income AAPI students to pursue innovative and targeted strategies that respond to those students' unique needs. The AANAPISI program also signals a national commitment to the AAPI community, rightfully acknowledging low-income AAPI students as a population that faces barriers similar to those of other minority groups. Finally, AANAPISIs are sites of opportunity for experimenting with and evaluating retention efforts specific to AAPI students, a large and growing population in higher education (p.8).

In other words, the federal AANAPISI program acknowledges how campuses with a large

proportion of AAPI and low-income individuals are unique sites for understanding and responding to the distinctive educational needs and challenges of students with particular attention to AAPI students.

In sum, one of the most pressing issues in higher education is inequitable educational outcomes or educational disparities found among racial/ethnic minority student population . Framed by an explicit focus on the designation and funding as a federal policy, the federal AANAPISI program helps an institution to create opportunities to build capacity and respond to the unique educational needs and challenges of students, particularly AAPI and low-income individuals (CARE, 2014). Therefore, organizational learning at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution can help better understand what it means to be a "minority-serving" institution.

Problem Statement

In an effort to produce equitable educational outcomes for racial/ethnic minority students, it is important to better understand and serve the unique and diverse educational needs and challenges of this student population. For AAPI students, this is especially crucial as "the monolithic view of AAPIs and the lack of disaggregated ethnic data has maintained harmful stereotypes of AAPIs as being universally successful and overrepresented in postsecondary education, wrongfully dismissing the distinct needs of underrepresented AAPI ethnic groups in education policy and practices" (Nguyen, Alcantar, Curammeng, Hernandez, Kim, Parades, Freeman, Nguyen, & Teranishi, 2017, p.21). In other words, the higher education experiences of AAPIs are often overlooked in research, policy, and practices that either dismiss them as underserved students with unique educational needs or present their college experiences as comparable to that of White students.

The aggregation of AAPI student data in particular overlooks the unique educational needs and challenges that exist within each AAPI ethnic sub-group. This is problematic for all AAPIs consisted of over 45 ethnic sub-groups including Southeast Asians (e.g., Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Vietnamese, etc.) and Pacific Islanders because "it…hinder[s] their ability to gain access to necessary resources to overcome their circumstances" (Nguyen et al., 2017, p. 20).While in aggregate, although AAPI students may seem to do well academically, when disaggregated by ethnicity, educational disparities are found among AAPI ethnic sub-groups. For example, 72.1% of Indians have completed a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 1.6% Marshallese and 12.6% Laotians (Teranishi & Kim, 2017). Thus, it is evident that there needs to be a deeper understanding of the varying educational experiences of AAPI students from diverse ethnic sub-groups.

A greater attention is needed for AAPI community college students. Nearly half of all AAPI undergraduates enroll in community colleges; they are more likely to come from low-income families; be the first in their family to attend a college; face diverse challenges at home and on campus compared to their counterparts in four-year institutions (Teranishi, 2010). Furthermore, examining a large-scale data on AAPI students in community colleges, researchers found that "…it is clear that AAPI community college students are, in some ways, quite similar to their non-AAPI peers at community colleges" (CARE, 2010, p.18), highlighting how the educational needs and challenges found among many community college students can also be found within AAPI community college students . Similarly, AAPIs attending AAPI-serving institutions are more likely to be low-income, first-generation college students, and have competing family and financial responsibilities, among many other challenges they face while navigating the higher education system (Teranishi, Alcantar, & Nguyen, 2015). In addition,

CARE (2014) found that while in aggregate, AAPI students at AAPI-serving community colleges were transferring at a relatively high transfer rate, when disaggregated by ethnic sub-groups, the data revealed that many Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander students were not transferring and a disproportionate number of them were being placed in developmental English, which impacted their low transfer rate to a four-year institution.

In 2016, while "62% of the funded AANAPISIs have been community colleges," there is a dearth of knowledge on the role and function of the AANAPISI program and its federal funding related to understanding and serving students' needs (Teranishi, Alcantar, & Underwood, 2018, p.189). In a similar vein, CARE (2014) discussed that there is gap in the knowledge related to MSIs, let alone AAPI-serving institutions:

> …[there is a] need for research that can demonstrate the role and function of MSIs, the effectiveness of MSI-funded programs and how MSIs can improve their capacity to serve a large and growing concentration of low-income minority students in higher education… (p.8-9).

Therefore, as AANAPISIs share similar compositions to other MSIs (Teranishi et al., 2018) and " …AANAPISIs are relevant to the broader interest in understanding the role and function of MSIs relative to national higher education policy priorities (CARE, 2014, p.8), this study aimed to add knowledge to MSIs and AANAPISIs, particularly two-year AANAPISIs or AAPI-serving community colleges. Furthermore, the study helps to address the limited attention in research, policy, and practice regarding the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students and ways of serving them through higher education research, policy, and practice.

As one of the most pressing issues in higher education is inequitable educational outcomes for underserved racial/ethnic minority students (Bensimon, 2005), there is a dire need to better understand the educational experiences of minority students and institutions that serve them. Therefore, the study focused on the perceived impacts of the AANAPISI grant on

understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving community college.

Purpose and Research Questions

According to Bensimon (2005), "[equity-minded] organizational learning can help researchers and practitioners understand and address the structural and cultural obstacles that prevent colleges and universities from producing equitable educational outcomes" (p.99). Put another way, through equity-minded organizational learning, researchers and practitioners can understand and address a unique institutional context—an implementation of the federal AANAPISI funding—that can help to better understand and serve students.

Focusing on better serving the racial/ethnic minority and low-income students, Stanton-Salazar (1997, 2001) stated that institutional agents take on a significant role transmitting knowledge and resources that are related to the characteristics of social ties (social networks) of the middle and upper classes. Furthermore, "for those of us who are primarily concerned with the agenda of access and equity in higher education, attention to practitioners is imperative" (Bensimon, 2007, p.445). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore institutional agents' discourse around the unique educational needs and challenges of students and the extent to which their understandings have evolved as a result of the grant.

A direct measure of change as a result of the AANAPISI grant is, for example, to examine changes in students' learning outcomes such as their GPAs. However, by employing the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation, which is evolved from the concepts of transformational change (Bensimon, 2005; Kezar, 2013) and educational pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012), I examine institutional agents' (i.e., faculty, staff, administrators) changes in understandings of serving students as a result of the grant, which can provide deeper insights into

understanding and serving the unique educational needs and challenges of students and AAPIs in particular. Therefore, centering around the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation, this study focused on examining how the AANAPISI grant beyond the designation alone drives new, broader, and deeper insights into understanding and serving students at an AAPI-serving institution.

As the federal AANAPISI funding helps an institution build capacity and target support toward racial/ethnic minority students, particularly AAPIs, the guiding question for this study is: *In what ways, if any, does the federal AANAPISI funding drive new, broader, and deeper insights into understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution?*

The following research questions help to answer the above guiding question:

1. How do institutional agents understand and describe the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students? How have their understandings evolved as a result of the AANAPISI grant?
2. In what ways, if at all, does a grant that focuses on serving AAPI students enhance the campus' ability to understand and serve all students?
3. To what extent does the grant drive new, broader, and deeper understandings of serving students after the grant ends?
    a. What are the institutional agents' understandings around sustaining and expanding the current and future student initiatives on campus as a result of the grant?

The first research question examines the perceived impacts of the AANAPISI grant on understanding and serving the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students (target racial group). The key is to explore institutional agents' changes in perception of understanding

and serving AAPI students' needs as a result of the implementation of the AANAPISI grant.

The second research question explores the institutional agents' changes in understandings of serving both AAPI and non-AAPI students or students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds as a result of the grant. This highlights how a grant that focuses on serving AAPI students enhance the campus' ability to understand and serve all students.

The third and final research question focuses on the extent to which the AANAPISI grant has shaped the change in understanding of institutional agents related to serving students after the grant ends. This particular question explores the on-going campus-wide conversations around sustaining and expanding the current and future AANAPISI and AANAPISI-like (e.g., Umoja program) student initiatives on campus as a result of the grant.

With a growing number of students from diverse racial/ethnic minority backgrounds, MSIs are important sites for serving underserved racial/ethnic minority students with unique educational needs and challenges. Given high concentrations of low-income AAPI students at these institutions, AAPI-serving institutions are important sites for understanding and serving students' needs, particularly the unique needs of AAPI students. Framed by an explicit focus on the designation and funding as a federal policy and an institution's commitment to becoming more "minority-serving," this study aimed to reimagine transformation at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution by examining the perceived impacts of the AANAPISI grant on understanding and serving students.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in examining the current landscape of higher education policy and practices for students, particularly the underserved minority students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Thus, this study provides deeper insights into understanding and

serving the unique needs of underserved students at postsecondary institutions.

Next, this study adds to the scholarship on exploring the processes of organizational learning. "Although the organizational learning literature is rich in concepts about how learning happens and what serves as evidence of an organization's having learned, there is a dearth of empirical studies of how organizational learning happens" (Kezar, 2005, p.25). In this empirical research, organizational learning happens by capturing institutional agents' changes in understandings related to understanding and serving students as a result of the AANAPISI grant.

This study also fills the literature gap on AANAPISIs and AAPI students in higher education. A little over a decade has passed since AANAPISIs became the newest addition to the federal MSI program in 2007. However, little is still known about AANAPISIs and not much literature exists on conducting an in-depth study regarding the roles and functions of the federal AANAPISI program (CARE, 2014). In addition, a deeper understanding of AAPI students is much more needed. While AAPIs consist of over 50 ethnic sub-groups that speak more than 500 difference languages, due to the model minority stereotype, which assumes the universal success of all AAPIs, AAPIs are often viewed as an monolithic group (Lee, 2006; Teranishi, 2010). In higher education, this often leads to AAPI students being invisible in research, policy, and practices. This is detrimental to AAPI students because they are often overlooked in being recognized as an underserved group with unique educational needs and challenges.

Furthermore, this study contributes to the understandings of the racial/ethnic heterogeneity AAPI students and the importance of data disaggregation initiatives for AAPI student population in higher education (Bensimon, 2005; Nguyen et al., 2017). With over 50 AAPI ethnic sub-groups, it is important for institutions to implement institutional practices that disaggregate data for AAPI students from various ethnic, cultural, historical, and linguistic

backgrounds (CARE, 2013). Additionally, although institutions such as the University of California system do disaggregate data by AAPI students' racial/ethnic sub-groups, it is still unknown how the disaggregated data is being used and applied to specific practices at these institutions. Therefore, this study is significant in terms of providing the groundwork for having on-going conversations about the data disaggregation movement for AAPI students in particular and what institutional practices would like based on the disaggregated data (CARE, 2013).

This study also contributes to the limited research that exists on AAPI students in community colleges. Community colleges are important more than ever as nearly half of all AAPI undergraduates attend community colleges and this number continues to grow (Teranishi, Alcantar & Nguyen, 2015). In addition, while AAPI students are selecting community colleges for various reasons including lower cost and close proximity from home to school, those enrolled in community colleges are more likely to come from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds compared to their counterparts in four-year institutions (CARE, 2014; Teranishi, 2010; Teranishi, 2012). Thus, by examining institutional agents' perceived impacts of the grant on understanding serving AAPI students, this study contributes to the scholarship on understanding the unique educational experiences of AAPI community college students and institutions that serve them. Moreover, by examining how the grant has shaped the change in understanding of serving beyond AAPI students and serving students after the grant ends, this study enhances the knowledge on the roles and functions of the federal AANAPISI program.

More broadly-speaking, this study expands the understandings of MSIs in closing the educational achievement gap and supporting the assessment performance of students from the least advantaged communities (e.g., low-income students, first-generation college students, etc.). In addition, the study contributes to the broader field of higher education and its on-going efforts

to achieve educational equity and racial justice by offering deeper insights into understanding and serving racial/ethnic minority students and what it means to be a "minority-serving" institution.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

The federal Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) program is an important step toward supporting minority and low-income students. Among the federal MSI programs (e.g., HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, etc.), the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving-Institution (AANAPISI) program demonstrates the federal government's commitment to educational attainment of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) and low-income students and acknowledges opportunities for postsecondary institutions to respond to the unique educational needs and challenges of the AAPI student population (Teranishi, 2012). However, there is limited research on AANAPISIs (otherwise known as AAPI-serving institutions) and AAPI students in higher education. It is problematic that while nearly half of all AAPI undergraduates attend a community college and AAPIs attending community college are more likely to come from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds and face more challenges compared to their counterparts at four-year institutions, there is a dearth of knowledge on the educational experiences of AAPI students at community colleges. Furthermore, while in aggregate, although AAPIs seem to be doing well in postsecondary institutions, when disaggregated by their ethnic sub-groups, educational disparities are found among AAPI ethnic sub-groups. Thus, this literature review serves to better understand the existing literature and gaps for AAPI students and institutions that serve them.

In this literature review, first, I review existing studies on AAPIs and AAPIs in community colleges to better understand this student group in higher education. Here, I also discuss the growth and heterogeneity of AAPI ethnic sub-groups. Second, I review literature on MSIs, focusing mainly on AAPI-serving institutions. Furthermore, I discuss gaps in studies of AAPI-serving institutions where this dissertation study can provide a deeper understanding of to what extent the perceived impacts of the federal AANAPISI funding beyond the designation

alone drives new, broader, and deeper understanding related to understanding and serving students (and AAPIs in particular) at an AAPI-serving community college. Third, I discuss the processes of organizational learning with an equity-minded lens and its connection to understanding institutional agents as holders of knowledge related to student success (Bensimon, 2005; Bensimon, 2007). As institutional agents' perceptions of changes related to serving students (and AAPIs in particular) are considered to be developed and reflected by their co-constructed knowledge in addition to their individual understanding of the educational needs and challenges of students, a deeper discussion on institutional agents as holders of knowledge or their funds of knowledge and its connection to serving students will be further discussed.

AAPI Student Population

AAPIs are one of the fastest growing racial groups in the nation that represents over five percent of the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Broken down by race/ethnicity, between 1980 and 2011, Hispanic students' enrollment in higher education increased by 500 percent, Asian and Pacific Islander students by 336 percent, Black students by 165 percent, and American Indians/Alaska Natives by 118 percent. Over this period, White student population declined by more than 26 percent at postsecondary institutions and minority undergraduates are entering college at a similar rate with White students (Conrad & Gasman, 2015). There are over 50 ethnic subgroups that make up AAPIs (See Figure 1) and more than 300 languages are spoken within this racial/ethnic group, making AAPIs the most heterogeneous group in the U.S. (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education [CARE], 2011; Teranishi, 2010). Viewing AAPIs as one group is particularly problematic in higher education because this masks the educational disparities that exist among various AAPI ethnic subgroups and overlooks the unique educational needs found among these diverse ethnic sub-

groups.

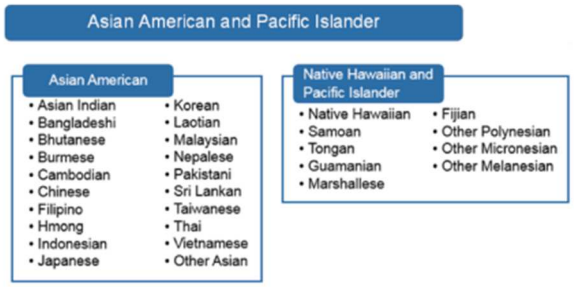

Figure 1. Racial/Ethnic Categorization of AAPIs by the U.S. Census, 2010
Note. ACS, 2011-2013 from *Nguyen et al.* (2017)

In higher education, it is projected that between 2009 and 2019, there will be a 30 percent proportional increase of AAPI students (Teranishi, 2012). In addition, although AAPIs are perceived to be enrolled more at four-year institutions, nearly half of AAPI undergraduates are enrolled at community colleges and this number continues to grow (Park & Teranishi, 2008; Teranishi, 2010). Furthermore, between 1990 and 2000, there was a 73.3 percent increase of AAPI students at community colleges compared to 42.2 percent increase at public four-year institutions (Teranishi, 2012). Lower cost of tuition, open admissions, and closer distance to home are factors, among other reasons, for AAPIs deciding to attend a community college; yet, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers have only focused on studying AAPI students in highly selective four-year institutions and those in other sectors such as a community college, receive little attention (Teranishi, 2012). Hence, there is a large gap of literature that exists on AAPIs in community colleges.

It is problematic that AAPIs are often overlooked in higher education or grouped with whites because of the model minority stereotype, which assumes that all AAPIs are successful (Teranishi, 2012; Yeh, 2002). “On one hand, the aggregate AAPI population mirrors and even exceeds the academic success of Whites…Unfortunately, the mainstream American discourse

has responded all too often by omitting in-depth discourse on AAPIs altogether, grouping them with Whites, and ignoring cultural-specific issues" (Park & Teranishi, 2008, p. 118).

Even after more than two decades have passed, Asian Americans are still being viewed as high-achieving model minorities (Lee, 2006). This stereotype is particularly damaging for the AAPI student population in higher education because students are viewed as not needing educational support and services. In other words, this stereotype can influence the ways institutions understand and serve the needs of the AAPI student population. Thus, a more accurate representation of AAPI students and their unique educational needs and challenges are imperative in higher education.

Yeh (2002)'s study on at-risk Asian American students in higher education demonstrated some of the unique needs of this student population. English proficiency is a "reliable predictor of educational success" (p.63) where many Asian American students who are English language learners are at a disadvantage. Limited English proficiency can also hinder students' willingness to seek out for help (i.e. visit support services, talk to a friend, etc.). Another important characteristic to consider is their immigration status; students who are born in foreign countries are more likely to be at risk than the native-born peers (Yeh, 2002). Also, unlike other minority/ethnic groups, "an unusual wide socioeconomic gap exists" among Asian Americans who have different immigration histories (Yeh, 2002, p.66). These different socioeconomic statuses can impact Asian American community students in developmental education; as students delay in placing out of developmental courses, they are at a higher risk of dropping out of schools due to their financial circumstances (Mejia et al., 2016). Yeh (2002) talked about Asian American at-risk students and discussed how Asian Americans' lack of academic preparation during high school affect their placement in developmental (also known as remedial)

courses at community colleges. For instance, in a Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) report that examined California community college students in developmental education, Mejia et al. (2016) found that minority students are overrepresented in developmental education courses.

Yeh (2002) shared, in fall of 1999, among incoming Asian American freshmen in the California university system, 47 and 58 percent were required to take developmental math and English, respectively. However, students placed into developmental education often do not receive course credit for taking a developmental class; only once they place out of these developmental classes, they can start taking college-level credit courses and earn college course credits. Therefore, students placed in developmental classes take longer time to complete a degree or transfer to a four-year institution, which also results in a significant delay regarding their academic and career trajectories. This can also lead to student attrition due to the extended time toward completion and lack of financial resources due to the extended stay in school. Yeh (2002) also argued race and social class can be significant factors in student attrition as students from minority and low-income backgrounds have more difficulty accessing services and social support compared to White students.

One way to understand heterogeneity and the unique educational needs and challenges that exist within AAPIs is through the degree attainment rates broken down by AAPI ethnic sub-groups (See Figure 2). For example, only 1.5% Marshallese and 13.2 percent of Bhutanese that are ages 25 and older attained a bachelor's degree or higher while 72.1 percent Asian Indians that are ages 25 and older attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Through the data disaggregation of AAPI students' educational attainment rates by ethnic sub-groups, it is evident that disparities exist and therefore, there needs to be a deeper understanding of the educational

needs and challenges of this diverse student population (Nguyen et al., 2017).

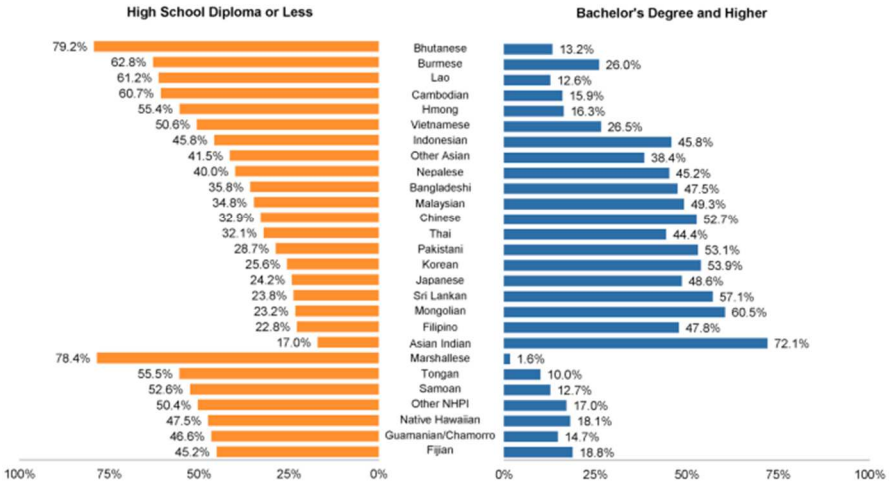

Figure 2. Educational attainment rate of AAPIs, Ages 25 and older, 2011-2013
Note. 2010 U.S. Census data from *Nguyen et al.* (2017)

In discussing AAPI students in higher education, it is also important to discuss AAPIs in community colleges in particular, as their number continues to rise in community colleges in addition to the need for these institutions to better understand the unique educational needs and challenges of this student population at community colleges. The following section focuses on reviewing the unique characteristics of AAPI students in community colleges.

Unique Characteristics of AAPI Community College Students

There are nearly half of AAPI undergraduates enrolled at community colleges than four-year institutions (CARE, 2011). Despite high enrollment of AAPIs in community colleges, the misconception of Asians as model minorities is an issue because it situates AAPIs as not needing help when studies show that Asian Americans (AA) and Pacific Islanders (PI) students from diverse ethnic sub-groups face unique challenges in higher education and need various

educational support (Teranishi, 2010; Lee & Zhou, 2015). This stereotype is particularly damaging for AAPI students in higher education as it hinders institutions from accurately assessing the needs and challenges of these students and providing various resources and support. However, there is a dearth of knowledge on AAPI students (Teranishi, Alcantar, Nguyen, 2015) and especially their experiences in community colleges (Teranishi, 2012) and thus, it is important to examine through literature who these AAPI students are that are enrolling in community colleges.

In a study that examined the profile of AAPI students who attend community colleges, researchers found that although more AAPIs are enrolled in community colleges, which is a path for social mobility for many low-income AAPI students who are also first in their families to attend college, there is lack of studies that understand AAPI student experiences at community colleges (Teranishi, Alcantar, Nguyen, 2015). Thus, this study focuses on a community college that serves a critical mass of low-income AAPI students, which sheds light on the experiences of AAPI students and the institution that serves them.

Contrary to the model minority stereotype that assumes universal success of AAPIs, AAPI students at community colleges are more likely to fit the characteristics of nontraditional students compared to their counterparts at four-year institutions (CARE, 2010). They are, for example, more likely to enroll as part-time students, delay time to completion by two or more years, and enter with lower levels of academic preparation in math and English (Teranishi & Nguyen, 2012). However, Asian American students are often not viewed as minorities with various unique needs (Park & Chang, 2010), which becomes a challenge particularly for AAPI students enrolled in community colleges to receive student support.

In a recent study by the National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (otherwise known as CARE; 2010), AAPIs face many challenges such as low academic preparation and with an average age of 27.3 years, they are more likely to be placed in developmental education, which delays their time to complete a degree or transfer. Similarly, in another study by CARE (2015), researchers found that AAPI community college students struggle financially and often work long hours. Beyond the financial struggles, many of these students also have family responsibilities "almost every day"; Students discuss "additional responsibilities as cultural brokers and interpreters between their immigrant parents or grandparents and English-speaking institutions and society" (P.15). They also come from immigrant-origin backgrounds (foreign-born or having at least one foreign-born parent), more likely to be placed in a developmental or ESL course, which impact their time to earn a degree or transfer, have difficulty requesting support services, speaking to a professor or socializing with classmates, and have limited knowledge in navigating the U.S. higher education system (CARE, 2015).

Therefore, racial/ethnic, cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, family and immigration backgrounds all have an impact on the educational experiences of AAPI students in higher education (Yeh, 2002) and it is critical to continuously examine the unique needs and challenges of AAPIs in community colleges.

Southeast Asian American Students

In discussing the unique needs and challenges of AAPI students in higher education, literature discusses that there is particularly a lack of understanding of the Southeast Asian Americans and a need to better understand their educational needs and challenges; this is similar for Pacific Islander students as well (CARE, 2014; Maramba, 2011; Teranishi, R., Le, A.,

Gutierrez, R. A., Venturanza, R., Hafoka, 'I., Gogue, D. T.-L., & Uluave, L., 2019). In College Board's 1999 report, *Reaching the Top*, they only talked about the high achievements of East Asian American students and completely ignored the educational issues faced by other Asian American ethnic subgroups (Park & Chang, 2010). This is problematic as it masks the unique educational needs and challenges found among various AAPI ethnic sub-groups.

In a National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (CARE) report (2011), researchers found that up to two-thirds of Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders in the U.S. do not have any form of postsecondary education and if they enter college, half drop out. Among Southeast Asians, 33.7 percent of Vietnamese, 42.9 percent of Cambodians, 46.5 percent of Laotians, and 47.5 percent of Hmong adults (25 years or older) reported having attended college, but not earning a degree (CARE, 2011). For Southeast Asians, the high rate of attrition during college is also reflected in a recent data on the low educational attainment rate of attaining a bachelor's degree or higher (Nguyen et al., 2017). Among Southeast Asians, 15.9 percent of Cambodians, 12.6 percent of Laotians, 16.3 percent of Hmong adults, and 26.5 percent of Vietnamese Americans (25 years or older) reported attaining a bachelor's degree or higher; for Vietnamese Americans, the educational attainment rate of high school diploma or less is much higher (50.6%) compared to the rate of Vietnamese attaining a bachelor's degree or higher (26.5%), which is a similar case for other Southeast Asian groups as well. In addition, Southeast Asians have a higher proportion of college attendees who earned an associate degree as their highest level of education compared to East Asians and South Asians that are more likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher (CARE, 2011).

In response to the current state of higher education particularly for Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders, who are marginalized and underserved, there is a lot of gap in understanding

the student experiences or outcomes (Maramba, 2011; Teranishi et al., 2019). What complicates the issue is that "the yellow peril foreigner and model minority dialectic emerged as Asian Americans became too successful in education—they were linked to taking over the campus and became victims of their own success" where Asian Americans are viewed as being overrepresented in higher education and no longer needing support services (Lee, 2006, p.7). Thus, as literature discusses about the varying educational experiences among Asian American ethnic subgroups, there needs to be a better understanding of these subgroups that are being overlooked and underserved due to aggregate data that masks the needs of the most marginalized subgroups.

MSIs and AANAPISIs

Although there is limited scholarship on AANAPISIs, studies on AANAPISIs (CARE, 2014; Park & Chang, 2010) help to better understand the significance of to what extent AANAPISI grant-funded programs can support the various needs and challenges of the AAPI students. Considering the unique challenges AAPI students in higher education, AANAPISI federal program can be viewed as a call and an increased attention toward better understanding the educational experiences of AAPI students (Park & Teranishi, 2008). Thus, as AANAPISIs continue to enroll and confer significant number of AAPI students (Teranishi, 2012), where AANAPISIs are responsible for enrolling and educating about 40 percent of the nation's minority student population (Gasman, Smayoa, Boland, Esmieu, 2018, p.1), it is imperative to have a deeper understanding of how AANAPISI designation and funding help an institution build capacity and undergo institutional changes that improve and develop institutional practices.

AANAPISI is part of the Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) federal program. The goal of MSIs is "…to educate and graduate students from underrepresented groups, [provide]

culturally sensitive programs…[for] students, and [offer]…public service… [to]… their racial and ethnic communities" (Baez, Gasman, and Turner, 2008, p.3). There are several books that focus in on Minority-Serving Institutions. Among them, there are three major books that talk cover both overall and specificities of MSIs: Understanding Minority Serving Institutions (SUNY Press, 2008), Educating a Diverse Nation: Lessons from Minority-Serving Institutions (Harvard University Press, 2015), and Educational Challenges at Minority Serving Institutions (Routledge, 2018). Understanding Minority Serving Institutions, however, was published over ten years ago when some of the legislations affecting HSIs and AANAPISIs have changed (Gasman, Samayoa, Boland, Esmieu, 2018).

MSIs include Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), and others, and the newest addition to MSIs are Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving-Institutions (AANAPISIs) (Baez et al., 2008; Park & Chang, 2010). If HBCUs and TCUs recognize the historically marginalized Black and Native student populations in their mission's statements, HSIs and AANAPISIs are created with the demographic growth in the Latina/o and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students, respectively, in higher education.

Within the federal MSI programs, both HSIs and AANAPISIs are driven by low-income minority student enrollment of Latinas/os and AAPIs, respectively. There are two types of AANAPISI projects—Part A: Strengthening Institutions Program (authorized by the Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008, Title III) and Part F: AANAPISI (originally authorized by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, 2007 and now under the Higher Education Act, Title III, 2008). In Part A, an institution has to choose between pursuing a grant that targets Latina/o or AAPI population, which can lead to potential tensions within an institution as they recognize

needs for both groups. For example, an institution cannot have a Title V, Part A, HSI grant and Title III, Part A, AANAPISI grant. However, for Part F, an institution can apply for both HSI and AANAPISI grants. For example, an institution can have a Title V, Part A, HSI grant and Title III, Part F, AANAPISI grant; an institution can have any Title III, Part F grants simultaneously (U.S. Department of Education, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Thus, if an institution is funded by either Part A or Part F or both, it is considered a federally funded institution.

In the case of HSIs, a study found that many HSIs have a *manufactured identity* that is just based on the high enrollment of Latina/o students and were "closeting" their identity (e.g., no mention of their MSI status on their institutional mission statement) (Contreras, Malcom, and Bensimon, 2008). Furthermore, being HSI did not seem to play a significant role in the institution's core strategy plan (Malcom-Piqueux and Bensimon, 2015). In a study, Somers and Leichter (2015) found that many HSI and AANAPISI presidents in California were not mentioning the MSI status or recognizing the large Latina/o and/or AAPI population on their President's welcome message; "[From] at least 84 of the institutions websites…our review found that only two make explicit reference to the institution's HSI status; none referenced an AANAPISI designation…the fact that almost no HSIs and AANAPISIs were founded with a specific mission of serving Latino and /or AAPI students has led to questions as to whether and how HSIs and AANAPISIs should publicly acknowledge their MSI status" (Somers & Leichter, 2015, p.26). In other words, MSI status is not a part of the central focus of what Presidents communicate to the public about their institution. In going beyond just increased enrollment of minority students, making efforts to publicly embrace the MSI status can be a political act that is critical for MSIs in further developing their identity (Somers & Leichter, 2015).

Although an institution is federally recognized as an AANAPISI by enrolling a critical mass of low-income AAPI students, its designation and funding go far beyond merely representing student enrollment. Therefore, in an in-depth case study of understanding the organizational identity of a HSI, Garcia (2013) argued for HSIs to effectively serve and graduate Latina/o students, they must first examine their institutional practices, whether these practices are helping or hindering students' educational success. Thus, studying the institutional practices that are helping or hindering AAPI students from succeeding will help to address effective institutional practices and institutionalizing these practices to better serve the students. Furthermore, examining how AANAPISI designation and funding can help build capacity to improve and expand institutional practices allow the broader understanding of the institutional changes in practices, organizational structure and culture and its identity as an AANAPISI.

Among many educational policies, AANAPISI federal designation and grant specifically target in supporting the needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students enrolled in postsecondary institutions. Under the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, the federal government recognizes higher education institutions that serve a critical mass of AAPI students through federal designation. In addition, through a competitive grant process, a federal grant is provided to limited but number of institutions to create or expand existing student support programs and services on campus.

In order to be federally designated as an AANAPISI, an institution must enroll at least 10% full-time equivalent AAPI students and 50% of this student population must receive financial aid, meeting a minimum threshold of low-income students (CARE, 2008; Santiago, 2006). In 2016, there were a total of 105 AANAPISIs and among these federally designated institutions, 26 were receiving federal funding through the AANAPISI grant (Teranishi & Kim,

2017).

A report released in 2001 by the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI) recommended a policy to increase participation of AAPIs in federal programs and recognize AAPI presence on campus through the AANAPISI federal designation in hopes to create and develop partnerships between the federal government, communities, and schools (Park & Teranishi, 2008). Thus, the stakeholders are not just the institutions that serve AAPI students but includes community organizations and federal agencies that collaborate with MSIs including AANAPISIs. "Thus, in the policy realm, the fight for AAPI Serving Institutions largely came out of a desire to increase the capacity of AAPI organizations and institutions, as well as a frustration that AAPI needs in education were ignored or unknown" (Park & Teranishi, 2008, p.115). One thing to note here is that as an AANAPISI, one of the main goals is to target the unique needs of AAPI students and to provide better support services and programs for this student population, but this federal program also functions to serve other marginalized and underserved student population and just as AANAPISI is part of the MSI federal programs, AANAPISI funding are utilized to improve institutional practices for serving all students with a focus on low-income AAPI students.

Several studies (Chang, 1999; Kim, 1999) contend the Black/White binary that marginalizes the unique characteristics of Asian Americans and their communities and furthermore, rejects the model minority status of Asian Americans, providing insights to framing AAPI Serving Institutions (Park & Teranishi, 2008). Thus, AANAPISI federal program can be viewed as a space for repositioning AAPIs in the higher education sector as well as the larger racial landscape in the U.S. (Park & Teranishi, 2008). This racial project through repositioning of AAPIs can expand to recognizing the heterogeneity that exists among AAPI ethnic subgroups

and therefore, the educational disparities that exist within AAPI ethnic subgroups call for a need of institutions including AAPI-serving institutions to implement practices in disaggregating student outcomes data to better understand the unique needs and challenges that exist in AAPI ethnic subgroups.

The Impact of AANAPISI Grant-Funded Programs

To better support the challenges faced by low-income minority students including AAPIs, on effective policy effort is the MSI federal program (Teranishi, 2012, p. 20). A study found that students who participated in the AANAPISI-funded program attempted more credits per academic term, enrolled in more rigorous coursework, and had a higher transfer rate to four-year institutions in fewer terms (CARE, 2014, p. 22-23).

As part of the National Commission on Asian American & Pacific Islander Research in Education (CARE)'s study on three community colleges that are designated and funded as AANAPISIs, Teranishi et al. (2014) explained the need to support AAPIs in developmental courses by identifying both short-term (developmental course performance and completion) and long-term (degree attainment and transfer to four-year institutions) goals. Authors found that AANAPISI grant-funded learning communities were beneficial in helping AAPIs placed in developmental education to transition to college-level courses where these learning communities "featured developmental coursework linked to a college success course, as well as access to tutoring and mentoring from peer navigators" (Teranishi et al., 2014, p.4). Counselors also taught classes on time management and study skills and worked with faculty to improve developmental education curriculum. When learning communities at De Anza College were brought to scale, Teranishi et al. (2014) projected about 863 students passing development English, which is about

59 percent improvement. Thus, learning communities can provide specific support for AAPIs particularly in developmental education programs.

In another study that discussed support services for AAPI students in higher education, Teranishi (2012) found that "development of student learning communities, first-year experience programs, academic and personal counselors and advisors, and tutoring programs… are improving the quality of students' experiences during college, increasing persistence" and degree completion (p.20). Thus, both studies discuss how specific educational support services such as learning communities can help Asian Americans in developmental education ultimately assist with students' developmental course sequence completion, degree attainment or transfer. A study found that AAPI community college students who participated in AANAPISI- funded programs (i.e. STEM, Leadership, Learning Communities, Tutoring, Mentoring, etc.) enrolled in more credits per term and more academically rigorous classes, and had a higher rate of transfer to a four-year institution in fewer terms (CARE, 2014). Thus, as MSIs emphasize educational success of minority students, I focus on exploring an AANAPISI and whether federal designation and funding are helping an intuition to build capacity to improve and expand practices when serving their AAPI students.

Thus, through existing literature, it is apparent that AAPI students not only come from various racial/ethnic backgrounds but also have unique educational needs and challenges in navigating higher education and as AANAPISI designation and funding (federal program) allow an institution to focus on serving their AAPI student population, this study can provide a deeper insight into how AANAPISI designation and funding help build institutional capacity to shape the way an institution serves the students, filling the gap for understanding the influence of the

federal program when considering ways to produce equitable educational outcomes for minority students, particularly the heterogeneous AAPI student group with diverse needs.

In her study, Garcia (2013) examined the organizational identity of a HSI in serving students, particularly low-income Latina/o students. She suggested that sensemaking and sense-giving are important aspects to better understand HSIs and challenge the notion that HSIs are strictly driven by enrollment. This study asks a similar question for AANAPISIs that in what ways, if at all, AANAPISI designation and funding help build capacity to better understand the educational needs and challenges of minority students, particularly the largely enrolled AAPI students and to what extent these understanding drive campus-wide conversations of institutionalizing grant-funded student support programs and services and/or expanding to create new programs for other racial/ethnic minority groups on campus. Furthermore, the study discusses effective changes in practices or student support programs/services for institutions that serve a critical mass AAPI students. Thus, instead of viewing the enrollment-based federal AANAPISI designation as merely "small bandages to address problems that require major surgery" and worrying what will happen after the bandages or the funding falls out (Garcia, 2013, p.19), this study intends to deeply understand the perceived changes an institution undergoes through the federal AANAPISI designation and funding and what this means for a critical mass of low-income and AAPI students they serve. Thus, this study focuses on the impact of AANAPISI grant-funded programs at a community college and whether it is helping an intuition to build capacity to better serve their students.

Conceptual Framework of Reimagining Transformation

The federal AANAPISI (also referred to as AAPI-serving) program is a federally funded racial project that aims to dismantle institutional racism and centers around critical discussions of

race, ethnicity, and equity (Park & Teranishi, 2008). Furthermore, the federal AANAPISI funding helps institutions to build capacity and respond to the educational needs of students, particularly AAPI and low-income individuals (CARE, 2014). Thus, with the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, changes or transformation can occur in institutional practices (e.g., AANAPISI grant-funded program) and in people's understandings of the grant. In this study, I focus on how institutional agents perceive changes related to understanding and serving students as a result of the AANAPISI grant. However, it is important to note that this study is not a program evaluation of the grant-funded program. The following concepts help to understand change and also look beyond the conventional measures of change.

Organizational learning in higher education "encompasse[s] nearly all aspects of organizational change" where changes occur at two-levels: the system/structure-level that focuses on the dissemination of information and the interpretive-level that centers around the interpretation of the information (Bauman, 2005, p.25). Whether changes occur at the structural-level or the interpretive-level (e.g., individual's cognitive frames), changes become more significant when they are sustainable and can help improve and transform an organization, ultimately helping an organization better serve students (Kezar, 2005). Focusing on changes at the interpretive-level, the study aims to explore the changes in understandings related to understanding and serving students as a result of the AANAPISI grant.

Institutional agents play a critical role in organizational learning. Organizational learning in higher education focuses on how institutional agents "interpret, evaluate, and incorporate new experiences and interaction…[and it is] concerned with managing, transferring, and maximizing the knowledge held in [institutional agents'] minds for improvement of the organization as a whole…" (Bauman, 2005, p.31). The knowledge or understanding of serving students is held in

the institutional agents' minds and thus, rich information is gained by examining the extent to which this understanding has evolved as a result of the grant.

Furthermore, "Taking a learning rather than a task orientation to the problem, decision, or change that defines their change, [an institution and its institutional members] could create the time and space for discussion and learning from one another in order to create knowledge on which they can act." (Bauman, 2005, p.33). This highlights how understanding institutional agents' perceived impacts of the grant can provide implications for making long-lasting changes at an institution.

Through the work of Espinoza (2012), the change in understanding of serving students as a result of the grant is related to developing "educational pivotal moments," or implementing "intentional academic interventions," which can help both an individual and more broadly speaking, an organization to better understand and serve the educational needs of students. (p.53). Understanding more deeply about fostering pivotal moments can help to reimagine transformation and look beyond the conventional measures of change.

Thus, through the concepts of change and reimagining change, this study aims to address the extent to which the grant drives new, broader, and deeper insights into understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution. The conceptual framework of reimagining transformation evolves from understanding the concepts of: 1) transformational change at an organization, 2) the role of institutional agents, 3) developing educational pivotal moments, 4) an equity-based organizational learning, and 5) sensemaking. In the next few sections, I elaborate on discussing these concepts.

Toward a Transformational Change

Colleges and universities have their own distinctive ways of operating as an organization.

The wide-spread understanding of the institutional goals among institutional agents and various decision-making that happen across campuses can bring changes to organizations, resulting in organizational and cultural shifts (Boyce, 2003).

Past literature on change in higher education had seen change as implementing strategies and providing incentives for institutional agents that serve various students (Cowan 1993; Curry 1992; Kaiser and Kaiser 1994). However, according to Kezar & Eckel (2002), transformational change "alters the culture of the institution by changing select underlying assumptions of institutional behaviors, processes and products; is deep and pervasive and affects the whole institution; is intentional; and occurs over time'' (pp. 295–296). Similarly, transformational change is a deep change that 1) occurs over time and 2) happens from bottom up—engagement from leaders on the ground such as faculty, staff, students, or low-level administrators who are typically not the significant authority (Kezar, 2013). Thus, as the study ultimately hopes to add to the knowledge of addressing one of the urgent issues is higher education, inequitable educational outcomes found particularly among underserved racial/ethnic minority student population, the concepts of transformational change offer a larger guideline for next steps such as make long-lasting and deep changes.

According to Kezar (2013), organizations will think about making deep changes for the vitality and the health of their organizations. Transformational change processes are also important as they can bring both structural and cultural changes to an institution (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). In addition, deep transformational changes are critical in higher education as institutions continue to serve an increasing number of underserved minority student population from diverse racial/ethnic and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Put another way, institutional change is critical for an organization in providing the most effective support that ensures equitable

educational outcomes for minority students (Bensimon, 2005). Therefore, as postsecondary institutions consider ways to better understand and serve the unique educational needs of minority students, it is imperative to have discussions around sustaining changes and making transformative changes at institutions including MSIs that serve a large proportion of racial/ethnic minority students.

An institution "can increase their capacity for ongoing learning and self-study for the purposes of institutional improvement…[and] the potential for institutional learning exists, but institutional improvement depends on the effectiveness of [institutional agents] in putting this learning into action" (Bauman, 2005, p.34). Thus, focusing on the significance of the role of institutional agents, the next section focuses on the role of institutional agents.

The Role of Institutional Agents

Institutional agents play a critical role related to the educational success of undeserved racial/ethnic minority students. For instance, according to Espinoza (2012), "Importantly, the educator-student relationship allows a transmission of academic knowledge that is transformative for students who have not been exposed to that type of information before because no one in their families or communities knows it." (p.53). Thus, when working with students from the least-advantaged backgrounds (e.g., racial/ethnic; socio-economic, etc.), institutional agents play a significant role and thus, in this study, employing the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation, I focus on how institutional agents develop pivotal moments and what that looks like at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution.

By definition, institutional agents (i.e., faculty, staff, administrators) or individuals within an organizational learning are those who have "institutional roles [that] can influence whether students are successful or not" (Bensimon, 2005, p.100). In addition, these "equity-minded

individuals are far more likely to understand that the beliefs, expectations, and actions of individuals influence…minority [students]" (Bensimon, 2005, p.102).

The role of individuals in organizational learning is that 1) learning happens through members of an organization, 2) individuals address problems as a collective entity, and 3) specific organizational structure and culture can either foster or hinder individual learning (Bensimon, 2005). In this study, individuals, who are institutional agents at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution, are recognized as holders of knowledge in sharing their perceptions of the grant related to understanding of serving students. Also, the implementation of the grant is considered as an intended practice (Espinoza, 2012) which helps build intuitional capacity and foster institutional agents' knowledge of understanding and serving the educational needs of students and AAPIs in particular.

"Institutional practices develop from and reflect the shared cognitive frames of institutional [agents]" and individuals who are placed in situations where they can learn more about their minority students can become more equity-minded by developing deeper insights on understanding and serving the unique educational needs of minority students (Bensimon, 2005, p.100). Therefore, a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution provides a unique learning opportunity to understand how a particular institutional practice—implementation of the grant—can shape institutional agents' changes in understanding of serving students and AAPIs in particular at an AAPI-serving institution.

In addition, utilizing Bauman (2005)'s notion of the transfer of knowledge among individuals, "the opportunity for institutional change lies in the possibility that individual participants will transfer their learning to other contexts within the institution and thereby enable others to learn and change" (p.33). For this study, this has led to examining both groups—first,

individuals that are directly impacted by/involved with the AANAPISI grant and second, people beyond the individuals directly impacted by/involved with the AANAPISI grant—of institutional agents and their perceived impacts of the grant. The main focus of this study is to examine how each institutional agent perceives the impact of the AANAPISI grant related to understanding and serving students. In addition, this study expands to exploring changes in understanding that the grant has brought on campus-wide conversations of sustaining and expanding the current and future student initiatives on campus. These on-going campus conversations include the process of institutionalizing the current AANAPISI grant-funded program and developing another student initiative on campus based on the core principles and lessons learned from the current AANAPISI grant-funded program. Examining these on-going campus-wide conversations can lead to gaining a deeper understanding of the notion of sustaining changes and making transformative changes, which can promote institutions to take part in producing equitable educational outcomes in higher education.

Other scholarships (Bensimon, 2007; Museus & Naville, 2012, Stanton-Salazar, 1997) discuss the correlation between institutional agents and student success, emphasizing the significant role institutional agents play in relation to students' educational experiences and achievement; institutional agents are individual who are able and committed in disseminating institutional opportunities and resources (Bensimon, 2007; Museus & Naville, 2012, Rendón et al., 2000; Stanton-Salazar, 1997) to students.

Stanton-Salazar (1997, 2001) discussed that pertaining to minority and low-income students, institutional agents take on a significant role transmitting knowledge and resources that are related to the characteristics of social networks and social ties of the middle and upper classes. Museus & Naville (2012), for example, explained how institutional agents can facilitate

students' success by providing them with access to social capital in college. Bensimon (2007) stated, "I do not think it is possible to achieve the ideals of access and equity without examining the funds of knowledge that practitioners have internalized about teaching minority students…Thus, I conclude by suggesting that practitioners [or institutional agents] can develop the funds of knowledge for equity-minded practices by working collaboratively…" As holders of knowledge, institutional agents play an integral part in organizational learning and in this study, their changes in understandings of serving students as a result of the grant are closely examined.

Hurtado, Gonzalez, and Galdeano (2015) argued that raising awareness of the needs of students at a HSI is an important stage in organizational learning. However, raising awareness through data is just one way and there should be a more in-depth knowledge and approach in learning the unique educational needs and challenges of students that may hinder them acquiring educational success. Furthermore, they identified the gap in literature on organizational learning at a HSI where little is known about organizational learning that takes a collective approach in learning the understanding of institutional agents at an institution and across other institutions (Hurtado et al., 2015). Furthermore, studies discuss (Bensimon, 2007; Museus & Naville, 2012) that the one critical limitation of higher education research is the lack of attention paid in the role of institutional agents in contributing to the educational success of their students, particularly their underserved minority students. This study addresses this gap in the literature and focuses on examining institutional agents' changes in understanding of serving students at an AAPI-serving institution as a result of the grant.

Developing Pivotal Moments

Illuminating the significance of the role of institutional agents, the concepts of educational pivotal moments can help to look beyond the conventional measures of change or

reimagine transformation. Espinoza (2011; 2012) discussed the difficulties that minority students from low-income families face in addition to the challenges compounded by the intersections of these multiple identities. However, despite students' backgrounds and their challenges,

> when a relationship between an educator and a student becomes genuinely supportive, it can transform the student's path to postsecondary education. Thus, intentional academic interventions, or what I call educational "pivotal moments" are necessary for low-income and minority students to overcome the numerous disadvantages they face in society and in the educational system (Espinoza, 2012, p.53).

In this study, pivotal moments are understood to develop through the AANAPISI grant and grant-related activities when working with both AAPI students, particularly low-income AAPIs (target racial group), and those beyond AAPI students. The federal AANAPISI funding can serve as a catalyst in developing pivotal moments and understanding how institutions can be more minority-serving by developing pivotal moments to achieve educational equity in higher education.

Furthermore, the role of the institutional agents is emphasized in developing pivotal moments to help students achieve educational success. Institutional agents can develop pivotal moments by "passing on information about navigating the school system, social networking, utilizing academic resources, and making informed educational decisions that facilitate educational advancement." (Espinoza, 2012, p.53). Thus, changes are reimagined in this study by examining institutional agents' perceived impacts of the grant related to developing pivotal moments. The conceptual framework of reimagining transformation is bolstered through additional concepts of understanding change, which are further discussed in the following sections.

Equity-Minded Organizational Learning

This section discusses the concepts of organizational learning with particular attention to

the equity cognitive frame. Cognitive frames are related to how each individual or institutional agent interprets or makes sense of a situation. Many institutional agents discuss racial/ethnic minority students with a diversity or deficit cognitive frame when every institutional agent needs to become equity-minded (Bensimon, 2005). On the one hand, individuals with a diversity cognitive frame focuses on celebrating a diverse representation of their student body/characteristics and individuals with a deficit cognitive frame addresses the stereotypes based on students' educationally disadvantaged and/or racial and ethnic minority backgrounds. For instance, an individual with a deficit cognitive frame will complain that students from racial/ethnic minority and/or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds lack in utilizing campus resources and student support programs/services.

On the other hand, individuals with an equity cognitive frame focuses on an institution's responsibility for implementing practices and "changing individuals' cognitive frames" to address inequity in student outcomes (Bensimon, 2005, p.103). The equity-minded frame also recognizes the importance of both the individual and collective commitment toward better serving and producing equitable educational outcomes for students. Furthermore, an equity-minded organizational learning emphasizes on how changes in understanding can lead to sustaining and expanding equity-based practices on campus (Bensimon, 2005). Therefore, an equity-minded organizational learning provides a broader guideline to reimagine transformation with the aim of implementing long-lasting and equity-minded changes at an organization (Bensimon, 2005; Kezar & Eckel, 2002).

Sensemaking

The sensemaking process can be understood through Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991)'s work, which was one of the first studies to connect sensemaking and change through empirical

research; sensemaking is about creating an understanding of change. Sensemaking is a "social process that involves seeking information from others, collectively assigning meaning to the information, and then taking actions based on shared understanding" (Bess and Dee, 2012, p.155). This is relevant to this study since the study examines institutional agent's changes in understanding of serving students as a result of the grant.

Garcia (2013) mentioned, "through sensemaking processes, [institutional agents draw] on deeply held assumptions and embedded practices, constructing their HSI identity based on organizational structures and processes that reflect a Latina/o-serving mission" (p.iii). Similar to Garcia's study but focusing on a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution, this study examines how institutional agents make sense of the implementation of the AANAPISI grant and to what extent the grant has shaped changes in understanding of serving students, particularly AAPIs, at an AAPI-serving community college.

The "actions of noticing" and making sense or reflecting on the circumstances and events are the initial steps in the sensemaking process; it is a process that changes people's perceptions and promotes on-going opportunities for institutional members to gain new, broader, and deeper understandings (Mokher, Park-Gaghan, Spencer, Hu, and Hu, 2020, p.84). In addition, sensemaking leads to on-going campus-wide conversations where new ideas and initiatives are discussed (Kezar, 2018).

As this study examines how the AANAPISI grant drives new, broader, and deeper insights on understanding and serving students at an AAPI-serving institution, sensemaking bolsters the concept of reimagining transformation by helping to understand educational pivotal moments and institutional agents' understandings of the grant in a deeper way.

All in all, the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation evolves from understanding the concepts of: 1) transformational change at an organization, 2) the role of institutional agents, 3) educational pivotal moments, 4) an equity-based organizational learning, and 5) sensemaking, which provide a guideline to examine and reimagine change. This conceptual framework helps to understand how an intended practice (Espinoza, 2012)—the implementation of the AANAPISI grant—brings changes related to understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

Introduction

For institutions, providing their students, particularly the underserved racial/ethnic minority students, with access to high-quality educational programs and producing equitable educational outcomes are important for economic and social mobility in the U.S. (Teranishi et al., 2015). The federal AANAPISI grant focuses on building and improving institutional capacity to better serve students with particular attention to AAPIs and low-income individuals. Thus, this study centered around the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation or how to better understand and serve students as a result of the grant. Methods used to collect and analyze data were developed from a constructivist perspective to examine the changes that the AANAPISI grant brought about on understanding and serving students. Furthermore, the overall changes in understandings as a result of the AANAPISI grant were examined to learn how they shaped the ongoing campus-wide conversations on sustaining and expanding the current and future student initiatives on campus.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine the changes that the AANAPISI grant has brought about on understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution. The guiding question is: *In what ways, if any, does the federal AANAPISI funding drive new, broader, and deeper insights into understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution?*

Focusing on institutional agents' changes in understanding and serving students as a result of the AANAPISI grant, this study aims to answer the following research questions.

1. How do institutional agents understand and describe the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students? How have their understandings evolved as a result of the AANAPISI grant?
2. In what ways, if at all, does a grant that focuses on serving AAPI students enhance the campus' ability to understand and serve all students?
3. To what extent does the grant drive new, broader, and deeper understandings of serving students after the grant ends?
    a. What are the institutional agents' understandings around sustaining and expanding the current and future student initiatives on campus as a result of the grant?

Research Design and Method

The research questions stated above were answered by using the case study approach as a research method. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident (Yin, 2014). In other words, a case study provides deeper insights to a real-world phenomenon. In this study, a case study was used as a methodology to investigate the perceived impacts of the grant on understanding and serving students (phenomenon) at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution (real-world context). Not all federally designated AAPI-serving institutions are federally funded; eligible AAPI-serving institutions that meet the federal criteria go through a competitive grant application process to be selected as a federally funded AAPI-serving institution. Therefore, the proposed phenomenon and real-world context in this study were both unique in bringing new, broader, and deeper understandings of the impact of a grant beyond the federal designation alone.

Furthermore, in *Case study research: Design and methods*, Yin (2014) described the entire process of conducting a case study as a "linear but iterative process" (p.xxii; see figure 3 below). This study also took a linear but iterative process while collecting and analyzing the data. For instance, while analyzing the data, member checking (Candela, 2019) occurred with the Director of the AANAPISI program, who is a key institutional agent directly involved with and impacted by the AANAPISI grant. This process helped to more deeply and accurately understand the data or the phenomenon within its real-world context.

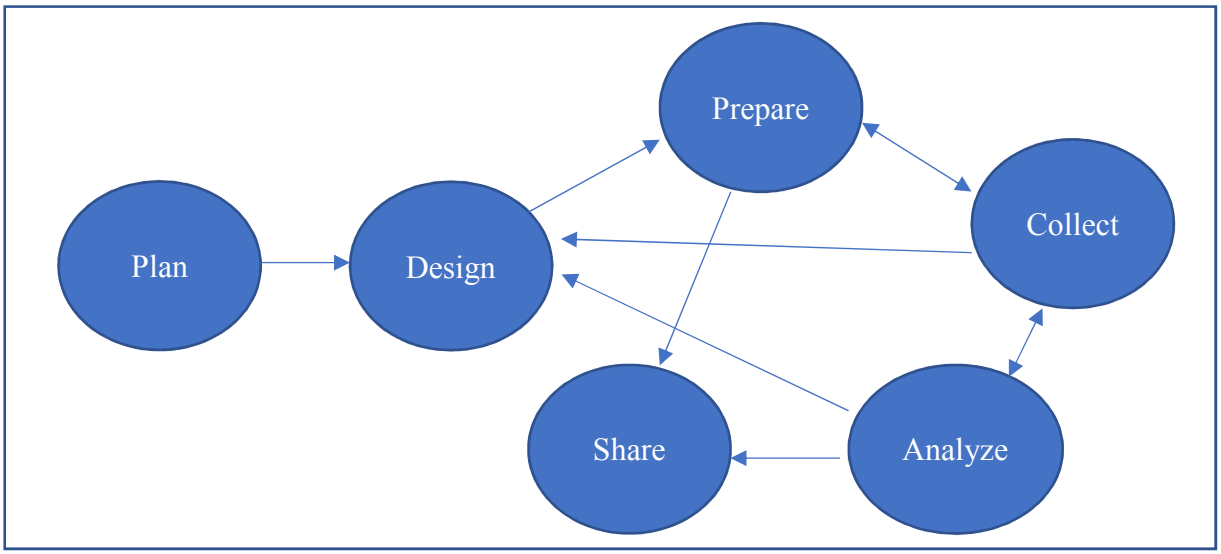

Figure 3. Process of doing a case study research
Note. Adapted from *Yin* (2014)

In this study, the focus of this study was to examine the perceived impacts of the AANAPISI funding on understanding and serving students at an AAPI-serving institution. The implementation of the AANAPISI grant led to developing various AANAPISI-funded student support 1) programs (i.e., mentoring, leadership, etc.), 2) services (i.e., workshops, conferences, field trips, social events, etc.), and 3) center (otherwise discussed as the AANAPISI center). Therefore, by concentrating on the lived experiences of institutional agents including staff, faculty, and administrators and students they serve, particularly AAPI students, the study used an

in-depth case study approach to investigate how institutional agents at this AAPI-serving community college addressed the impact of the funding beyond the designation alone. In the following sections, the research site, which Yin (2014) described as the real-world context, and the data collection and analysis processes are discussed.

Research Setting

Located in the Western region, West Coast Community College (WCCC) serves nearly 25,000 undergraduates where the minority student enrollment is around 70% of the student body—majority being Latina/o (around 20%) and Asian American (around 21%) students. Having nearly one-fourth of the student population comprised of AAPI students, the largest AAPI ethnic sub-group enrolled at WCCC is Vietnamese-Americans. This institution has a large proportion of part-time students (80%) compared to full-time students (10%); the other 10% take courses for non-credit. In 2019, the ages of the youngest and the oldest graduates were 19 and 74. Besides fulfilling its mission as a community college and serving local communities by providing various educational opportunities, a part of WCCC's initial design was to develop an online or distance learning program. As a result, about 70%-80% of the student population takes either one or more online classes and WCCC became well-known in the region for its online learning program; currently, their distance learning program offers more than 200 online courses and confers degrees and certificates through nearly 70 fully-online degree and certificate programs. Thus, in addition to the focus on understanding and serving racial/ethnic minorities, this study examined how institutional agents describe and understand their student population beyond their onsite students as a result of the grant.

In the span of ten years (2010-2015 and 2015-2020 grant cycles), WCCC was awarded with a total of two AANAPISI grants. Each AANAPISI funding focused on a specific area in

terms of building institutional capacity to target support toward low-income AAPI students. If the first grant was particularly significant in implementing the mentoring service at WCCC, the second grant focused on developing students' leadership skills as well as creating a physical AANAPISI center at one of the four satellite campuses, providing diverse student support programs, services, activities, workshops, and events in one place; later on, an institutional agent (study participant) described this center as the "hub," for students. While WCCC is eligible to be federally designated and funded as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), an internal decision was made to pursue a third AANAPISI funding, which its decision-making process is elaborated in the findings.

The Four Campuses

WCCC has four campuses that are located at each of the four neighboring cities; distance-wise, the closest campuses are 5 miles apart while the furthest campuses are 18 miles from one campus to another. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's (2020) projected population data, all four cities where the campus are located have a large minority population, particularly Asian Americans ranging from 10 to 50%, followed by Latinas/os ranging from 10 to 22%. Therefore, the student demographic of WCCC reflects the racial/ethnic groups living in the nearby communities. In addition, one of the largest Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities in the U.S. is found in a nearby city (I intentionally did not reveal the specific NHPI ethnic sub-group as this information may disclose the actual study site). Among Asian Americans, the largest racial group living in the area, Vietnamese Americans make up the largest AAPI ethnic sub-group (U.S. Census, 2010), which is also the largest AAPI ethnic sub-group enrolled at WCCC. Thus, there is a strong correlation between who the institution serves and

who lives in the surrounding communities/cities where WCCC's four satellite campuses are located. Below is a description of the four satellite campuses at WCCC.

Fairview Campus

This campus is the home of the AANAPISI grant-funded center, named the Culture, Community, and Resource Center (CCRC[1]). However, in this study, I discuss it as the AANAPISI center to emphasize that all if not the majority of student programs and services offered at this location are funded through the AANAPISI grant; given that this study examined the perceived impacts of the AANAPISI grant, I emphasized the word "AANAPISI" to quickly point out grant-related student initiatives. Initially, the AANAPISI center was located at the Wayland campus alongside the administrative offices. Not too long after the implementation of the second AANAPISI grant, AANAPISI center was relocated to a more permanent space at the Fairview campus; this Fairview campus is one of the two sites that are found to have high concentrations of AAPI students onsite (the other campus is the Ky-Pham campus). Additionally, the Enrichment Program (a state grant-funded program developed by WCCC that offers tuition assistance for incoming freshmen and requires students to be placed on a track to take a set number of classes each semester to promote degree completion/transfer) was developed in conjunction with the first 2010-2015 AANAPISI grant and many of the Enrichment Program's courses are offered at the Fairview campus. As a result, many freshmen in the Enrichment program are often found in the AANAPISI center hanging out in between classes or studying.

[1] For the purpose of this study, I refer to WCCC's AANAPISI grant-funded center as the AANAPISI center. However, at WCCC, the AANAPISI center is called by its full name or the acronym (CCRC), which doesn't include the word "AAPI"; this institutional decision was made to be inclusive of non-AAPIs accessing the center.

When the AANAPISI center moved to the Fairview campus, it was initially located at one part of the building. But, in the final year of the 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant cycle, while the institution was undergoing the process of institutionalizing the AANAPISI grant-funded program, WCCC decided to move the AANAPISI program under new management; the AANAPISI program went from being supervised by the Office of Institutional Research & Grants to the Office of Student Services. In light of this change, the AANAPISI center moved to a different part of the building at the Fairview campus, which placed the AANAPISI center right next to other student support centers/programs that were also under the supervision of the Office of Student Services such as the Veterans center, Transfer center, Tutoring center, Academic counseling center and the Mental health services. In addition, as a result of the AANAPISI program collaborating with the College academic advising office, a designated college academic advisor was given an office space at the AANAPISI center. This advisor served as a liaison between the academic counselors and the students at the AANAPISI center and ultimately, increased the number of students accessing both the AANAPISI and academic advising services. The additional changes made as a result of the institutionalization of the AANAPISI program will be further discussed in the findings section.

Ky-Pham campus

As mentioned above, Ky-Pham campus is another campus with a large proportion of AAPI students. The biggest difference between Ky-Pham and Fairview is that a large proportion of AAPI students at Ky-Pham campus identify as older-generation AAPIs (or non-traditional students) and English language learners (or non-native English speakers). Most classes at Ky-Pham campus are non-college-level (no college credit is given for taking these courses) English Language Learning (ELL) courses that are offered mostly in the evening; only a handful of them

are college-level/college credit courses. Because students have to travel to the Wayland campus to see an academic counselor (unless they prefer to meet a counselor online), a college academic advisor, who serves as a liaison between students and academic counselors, is available at the Ky-Pham campus. Given the student demographic and their needs, a college academic advisor at the Ky-Pham campus is bilingual in English and Vietnamese and offers support in students' native language for the large proportion of Vietnamese students at this campus.

Pacific Coast campus

If the above two campuses, Fairview and Ky-Pham, have a large proportion of AAPI students on campus, at Pacific Coast, the largest racial/ethnic group is Latina/o students. Among the ongoing campus-wide conversations of sustaining and expanding AANAPISI grant-funded student support programs and services, Pacific Coast is the most discussed campus. Although it serves a large number of racial/ethnic minority students, particularly Latinas/os, AANAPISI-like (or equity-based) student support programs and services are not offered at this location. If the Fairview campus has become the hub for the AANAPISI grant-funded student support programs and services, the Pacific Coast campus is at the center of attention in terms of discussing next steps for expanding other student initiatives on campus as a result of the grant. These plans for next steps are discussed in the findings section.

Wayland campus

All administrative offices (e.g., Office of the President, Office of Institutional Research & Grants, Office of Student Programs and Services, Office of Student Affairs, etc.) and several student services including the Financial aid office, EOPS (Extended Opportunity Programs and Services) office, Transfer center, Career center, Academic counseling center, Mental health counseling center, and Veterans Center are located at this campus. However, no classes are

offered at this location. This is where the first AANAPISI center was placed, which has eventually relocated to the Fairview campus. WCCC designed their student support services so that most of the student support programs and services available at the Wayland campus are also available at the other three campuses; in other words, students should be able to access similar support services at all four campuses without having to travel to another campus. For example, if career advising is provided at the Wayland campus, the same (or similar) student service is offered at the other three campuses as well. In general, having multiple staff members at multiple sites allow these services to be offered simultaneously at all four campuses, but in the case of career advising, the career services specialist travels from one campus to another to meet with students for individual appointments and career advising workshops. Offering similar student support services across all four campuses have been a part of WCCC's original plan, and this is a key context to understand when making sense of the on-going campus-wide conversations on developing AANAPISI-like student support programs and services at other campuses beyond the Fairview campus.

Implementation of the AANAPISI Grants at WCCC

As stated in the previous section, WCCC received two AANAPISI grants—one from 2010-2015 and from 2015-2020. The key values of the AANAPISI program are community involvement and inclusion, advocacy, empowerment, diversity and identity exploration, and they are the backbones of developing various AANAPISI student initiatives.

The first grant was implemented alongside a state grant-funded Enrichment Program, a need-based academic program that provides tuition coverage and places students in a track system to take a set number of classes each semester to promote degree completion or transfer. A signature AANAPISI grant-funded program, *the mentorship program*, was developed from the

first AANAPISI funding and this mentorship program is perceived as a signature AANAPISI-funded student support program at WCCC; several institutional agents discussed how the mentorship program helped increase the number of degree completion among AAPI students. In the mentorship program, students are matched with either an AANAPISI staff mentor or a peer mentor. Based on the successful student outcomes, the AANAPISI director plans to expand their mentoring program and even provide group mentoring sessions as well.

The phenomenon at study was centered around the understandings of the implementation of the second AANAPISI grant (2015-2020) for the following reasons: first, this grant resulted in creating an one-stop AANAPISI center that offers various student support programs and services and developed a signature AANAPISI-funded student support program—the leadership program; second, two key institutional agents (e.g., AANAPISI program director and Dean of institutional research and grants/Grant writer) that were identified for this study came to WCCC toward the end of the first AANAPISI grant cycle; third, this was the current grant that was implemented on campus at the time of the data collection.

As mentioned above, a signature AANAPISI-funded student support program, *the leadership program*, was developed from the second AANAPISI funding. Illuminating the key values of WCCC's AANAPISI program, the leadership program aims to: increase student involvement both on campus and in their own communities, develop students' deeper understandings of their cultural and historical backgrounds, guide students to develop advocacy skills, foster relationships (e.g., network building), and emphasize the importance of self-care.

In addition to implementing this signature program, another significant change as a result of the second AANAPISI grant was the creation of a physical AANAPISI center, also known as the Culture, Community, and Resource Center (CCRC; pseudonym). In this study, CCRC is

referred to as the AANAPISI center because it helps to distinguish this AANAPISI grant-funded center from other centers and programs. At WCCC, institutional agents refer to the AANAPISI center by its name, CCRC, which according to Ron Reyes, the AANAPISI program director, was done intentionally to emphasize that this center and its programs and services were available to all students beyond the AAPI student population (the grant's targeted student group). However, given that a large proportion of students accessing the CCRC or the AANAPISI center were AAPI students, many institutional agents recognized the AANAPISI center as a place that served a large proportion of WCCC's AAPI student population.

Recently, the college had applied for another AANAPISI funding for the 2020-2025 grant cycle and if selected, this would be their third AANAPISI grant. The third grant aims to support minority students (and AAPIs in particular) in Science, Technology, Mathematics, Engineering (STEM) majors and increase persistence, degree completion or transfer. More discussions on the institutional plan for pursuing a third AANAPISI grant are provided in the findings section.

Various student support programs and services were developed through both the first and second AANAPISI grants and continue to serve diverse needs of students accessing the AANAPISI center in-person or remotely: mentorship program, leadership program, workshops (e.g., community organizing workshop, transfer workshop, etc.), conferences (e.g., attending/organizing the AANAPISI-funded student leadership conference on campus, participating in national conferences such as APAHE—Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education, etc.), field trips (e.g., visiting a nearby four-year UC campus and its Southeast Asian history museum, visiting communities outside of their county, etc.), and social events (e.g., AANAPISI-funded student graduation celebration, end-of-the-year Christmas party, etc.). Field

trips and social events require students to come to campus and participate in person. However, recognizing a large number of distance or online learners at WCCC, several virtual AANAPISI student services are available online (e.g., live-streaming of workshops, mentoring sessions via phone/zoom, etc.). According to the AANAPISI program director, one of their plans after the grant ends is to expand and make more AANAPISI-funded student services available online; for instance, they plan on archiving the recordings of the workshops and other relevant events on their website so students can access resources anywhere and anytime.

A Profile of Study Participants

In this study, study participants (institutional agents) were divided into two groups—those that were directly impacted by or involved with the AANAPISI grant and individuals beyond the people directly impacted by or involved with the grant. The former group consisted of individuals that either wrote the AANAPISI grant proposal or were hired through the AANAPISI funding to work directly with students that were accessing the diverse AANAPISI-funded student initiatives (e.g., programs; services; events; workshops). Thus, it is important to note that institutional agents' understandings around the AANAPISI grant varied.

This study did not intend to evaluate institutional agents' knowledge of the role and function of a federal grant. It was inevitable that those that were directly impacted by or involved with the grant could share more specific experiences regarding the grant and students accessing the grant-funded student support programs and services. By examining people's varying levels of understandings of the grant related to serving students, this study aimed to focus on individual's perspectives and also present a wider range of understandings of the grant from an organizational learning perspective (Bauman, 2005).

Out of a total of 25 study participants, there are 4 faculty, 3 staff/faculty (dual-appointment), 13 staff, and 5 administrators (see figure below).

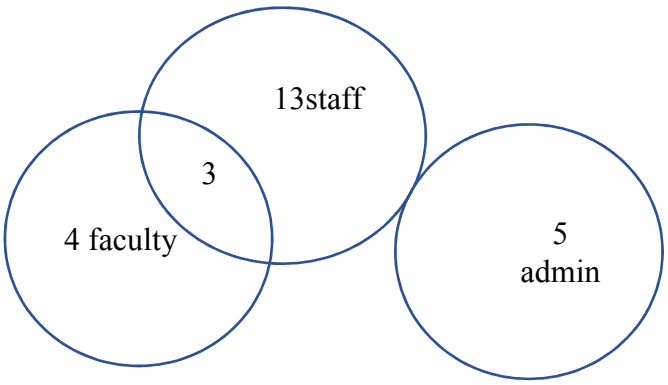

Figure 4. Study Participants

Study participants' own racial/ethnic backgrounds can also influence how they perceive the impact of the AANAPISI grant and/or the unique educational needs and challenges of students, particularly minority students, at WCCC. To ensure confidentiality, participants' ethnic sub-groups are not included below; for example, AAPI institutional agents' ethnic sub-group information is not discussed. However, in the findings, a few institutional agents' ethnic sub-groups are specified for the purpose of adding depth to the institutional agents' changes in understandings of serving students as a result of the grant. The following section includes descriptions of each participant's backgrounds in addition to their current position and connection to the AANAPISI grant.

Individuals directly impacted by or involved with the grant

A year-long pilot study/campus visit at this institution allowed me to identify institutional agents that were either involved with writing the 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant application or individuals that were hired through the AANAPISI grant.

Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants): Dean Smith oversees all research and grant activities at WCCC. He was one of the grant writers for the 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant and the AANAPISI program director reported directly to Dean Smith for the majority of the 2015-2020 grant cycle.

Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director): Reyes oversees various AANAPISI-funded student support programs and services. In addition, he is a part of multiple campus committees (e.g., Umoja program's advisory board; Diversity workgroup) and he serves as the coordinator for the AAPI scholarship program at WCCC, which is funded by an AAPI-focused scholarship foundation in the U.S. Reyes recently became the Director of the Office of Student Affairs.

Pauline Zhang (Asian American), Patricia Lim (Asian American), Reyna Villar (Asian American), Lana Latu (Pacific Islander), Amanda Basa (Asian American), Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff):

At the time of the pilot study (2017-2019), there were a total of five part-time staff members working in the AANAPISI program. Out of those five, one continued to work at the AANAPISI program. Thus, among the four former AANAPISI program staff, I interviewed a total of three former AANAPISI program staff members for this study.

For this study, during the data collection (final year of the 2015-2020 grant cycle), there were a total of three staff members working in the AANAPISI program (two full-time and one part-time). These AANAPISI program staff members are responsible of leading various grant-funded programs such as leadership and mentorship programs, advertising the AANAPISI center to the campus-wide community, helping students organize and put together a student-led

conference on campus, taking students to culturally-relevant fieldtrips and conferences, and presenting academic workshops and social events among others.

Among the six study participants who are AANAPISI program staff, three were former and three were current AANAPISI program staff. Furthermore, one identified as a Pacific Islander (PI); others identified as Asian Americans (AA). To ensure confidentiality, I do not specify the PI staff's ethnicity.

Daniel Johnson (White, Grant Specialist): As a grant specialist and staff at this institution for nearly twenty years, Johnson was involved with writing both the 2010-2015 and 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant applications. At the time of the data collection, he had just submitted the 2020-2025 AANAPISI grant application which focuses on AAPI students in STEM majors.

Individuals beyond the people directly involved with the grant

If nine study participants described above are individuals that are directly impacted by or involved with the grant, the following sixteen participants are individuals beyond those that are directly impacted by or involved with the grant but has a connection to the AANAPISI program in various ways (e.g., collaboration with the AANAPISI program, works closely with the AANAPISI program director through various campus committees, etc.).

Staff

Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor): As a liaison for the Academic Counseling program, Ocampo has an office space inside the AANAPISI center at the Fairview campus. This decision was made as a result of the AANAPISI program collaborating with the Academic Counseling program. As a bilingual speaker in English and Vietnamese, she often helps out with translating documents and other resources for the AANAPISI program.

Samantha Cheng (Asian American, College Academic Advisor): As a bilingual speaker in English and Vietnamese, Cheng primarily works at the Ky-Pham campus, which serves a large number of older-generation AAPI students, particularly the English language learning Vietnamese-Americans.

Hope Reynolds (Asian European, Transfer Center Specialist): As the transfer center specialist, Reynolds assists students regarding their plans to transfer to four-year institutions. She also works closely with the AANAPISI center staff where they share ideas on how to work with both AAPI and non-AAPI students and collaborate on facilitating workshops at the AANAPISI center.

Ted Jacobs (White, Veterans Center Specialist): Jacobs works closely with the AANAPISI program staff. The Veterans center is connected to the AANAPISI center in several ways. For instance, the Veterans program and AANAPSI program co-facilitated an end of the year Christmas party. Furthermore, Jacobs brings snacks to the AANAPISI center knowing that many students visit this place to hang out, study or access student support services.

The Veterans center is located at three satellite campuses (Fairview, Wayland, and Pacific Coast). But, according to Jacobs, Veterans center at the Fairview campus which is right next to the AANAPISI center has the most foot traffic and some of his Veterans center students hang out or study at the AANAPISI center.

Carrie Lopez (Latina)/Natalie Diaz (Latina, Mental Health Therapist): Out of several mental health therapists at WCCC, two staff members spend majority of their time at the Fairview campus. At the Fairview campus, their office is located right across the AANAPISI center and many AANAPISI program students, primarily AAPIs, access the Mental Health services; most of their caseloads are regarding AAPI students. Mental Health services

collaborated with the AANAPISI program and facilitated students workshops regarding mental health issues. Sometimes, these workshops were focused specifically on mental health issues found among AAPI communities. Furthermore, a group of AANAPISI program students asked Diaz to serve as an advisor for a newly created student wellness club at WCCC.

Staff/Faculty

Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty): There were several student workshops at the AANAPISI center that were co-facilitated by Santos and the AANAPISI program staff. These workshops were also live-streamed for online students.

Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty): Williams is an academic counselor at WCCC who also teaches career planning courses. In one of Williams' classes, Amy Ocampo (college academic advisor) served as a teaching assistant and shared many opportunities students can explore through the AANAPISI program.

Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty): Garcia teaches career planning courses and works primarily with the low-income student population, whom are largely AAPIs, through the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS). Many of her EOP students participate in the AANAPISI program and Garcia also works closely with the AANAPISI program director.

Faculty

Olivia Parker (White, Professor of Humanities): Parker sits on the guided pathways committee with Ron Reyes, the AANAPISI program director where Parker learns about the AANAPISI grant-funded opportunities at WCCC. Parker's participation in this committee had provided opportunities to be in campus-wide conversations about sustaining and developing the current and future AANAPISI student initiatives after the AANAPISI grant ends.

Susan Garcia (Latina, Professor of Social Sciences): Garcia sits on a campus committee which organizes various professional development events including Flex Day at WCCC. Initiated by Lee Jones, Director of Student Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Garcia and Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program, co-facilitated a workshop on culturally-responsive teaching during Flex Day. Also, both Garcia and Reyes serve on the advisory board for the Umoja program.

Emily Miles (African American, Professor and Chair of Social Sciences): Emily Miles sits on two campus committees, Umoja program's advisory board and Diversity workgroup, with Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program; Miles and Reyes co-lead the Diversity workgroup. Furthermore, Miles utilizes the AANAPISI center quite often. For instance, Miles co-facilitated a workshop with one of her online students at the AANAPISI center. In addition, Miles have been meeting her students, particularly her online students who prefer to meet Miles in-person or those that live near the Fairview campus, at the AANAPISI center which is at the Fairview campus. Miles' office is at the Pacific Coast campus, which is about 30 minutes away from the Fairview campus by car, but it may take over an hour with public transportation.

Maria Jackson (White, Professor of Humanities): Working over thirteen years at WCCC, Maria Jackson sits on various campus committees. She serves in the Academic Senate and she is a part of the diversity workgroup and advisory board for the Umoja program with Reyes, the AANAPISI program director. She is also the editor of a student journal for the Umoja program. Thus, Jackson plans to collaborate with the AANAPISI program and publish students' works from both programs online by utilizing the AANAPISI program's virtual website.

Administrators

Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President): As a seasoned and veteran college president, her advocacy work for racial/ethnic minorities such as AAPI students not only happens within WCCC, but also at various district-wide meetings and national conferences.

Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI); Co-Director of Umoja program): Jones works closely with Reyes, the AANAPISI program director in various capacities. For instance, Umoja program is a state-funded program that focuses on serving African American students at WCCC. Having a similar aim in serving racial/ethnic minorities, Reyes and Jones work closely to discuss how the Umoja program can sustain and expand the current and future AANAPISI-like student initiatives to support both African Americans and students beyond African Americans at WCCC.

Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students): As WCCC is in its last year of the 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant cycle, plans to sustain and expand the current AANAPISI-funded student initiatives are being discussed. Along with these discussions, a significant change has been made to the AANAPISI program director's position. As the first step of institutionalizing the AANAPISI program, Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program, recently became the Director of Student Affairs, which is a part of the Office of Student Programs and Services. Therefore, the AANAPISI program also came under the Office of Student Programs and Services, which is supervised by Davis, the Dean of Students. In other words, Reyes now works closely with Davis and the Office of Student Programs and Services to discuss next steps of implementing the AANAPISI-funded programs and services on campus after the grant ends.

Data Collection Procedures

To answer the research questions, a case study was conducted at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving community college. "…most people associate the doing of a case

study with the collection of the case study data...[or]…the data collection activity" (Yin, 2014, p.71) and in this study, a case study was conducted where data was collected through this case study.

Site Selection

As the study uses a single-site case study (Yin, 2014), a careful site selection process was done to make sure the phenomenon (implementation of the AANAPISI grant) was happening at the study site. Also, because this study focuses on the institutional agents' changes in understanding or equity-based cognitive frames (Bensimon, 2005), it was important to select a site where there were opportunities to talk with both groups— institutional agents directly impacted by or involved with the grant and those beyond the people directly impacted by or involved with the grant—to gain a deeper understanding of the perceived impacts of the grant on serving students at an AAPI-serving institution.

According to the AANAPISI program director and the Dean of Institutional Research & Grants (Grant writer for the AANAPISI funding), after the implementation of the 2015-2020 grant, WCCC found that students who were participating in the AANAPISI program, particularly their mentoring program, showed 10-15% higher success rate in courses. Thus, WCCC was selected to understand the changes in understanding that the AANAPISI grant has brought on serving students at an AAPI-serving community college. Recognizing that AANAPISI grant-funded programs and services have been successfully supporting various needs and challenges of AANAPISI students, this study focuses on the extent to which the AANAPISI funding shapes institutional agents' changes in the understanding of serving students at an AAPI-serving institution.

Access to Site

With the support from my faculty advisor, I was introduced to the college president at WCCC, who referred me to the Dean of Institutional Research & Grants. This later led to a phone meeting with the Dean of Institutional Research & Grants and the AANAPISI program director to discuss the pilot study in examining the impact of a signature AANAPISI-funded student support program on students, the AANAPISI leadership program, at WCCC. After the phone meeting, I submitted a study proposal and upon approval of the proposal, I gained access to the study site. A follow-up proposal regarding this study was also submitted, which extended my access to this study site. In addition, the AANAPISI program director allowed me to take a participant-observer approach, which allowed me to engage with the program's staff members and students in various ways such as participating in the AANAPSI-funded student workshops, the AANAPSI-funded leadership program classes and its student leadership conference, and the AANAPISI-funded field trip to a four-year institution.

Pilot Study

A pilot case study was conducted from 2017-2018 to better understand the impact of the AANAPISI grant-funded program, particularly a signature AANAPISI-funded leadership program, at WCCC. During the pilot study, one-on-one semi-structured interviews took place with three AANAPISI grant-funded program's staff members (program director, staff member, and student staff member) and the Dean of Institutional Research & Grants (grant writer; See Appendix C). Two student focus groups were conducted (one at the beginning and the other toward the end of the academic year) with the same group of students who participated in the AANAPISI-funded leadership program. In addition, taking a participant-observer approach, I attended the AANAPISI-funded leadership program's classes, held once a week for the entire academic year. At the end of the academic year, I was invited to join the AANAPISI program's

professional development staff retreat. Joining the staff retreat and listening to the AANAPISI program staff perceptions, these opportunities helped to more deeply understand the perceived impacts of the AANAPISI program. "A pilot case study [can] help you to refine your data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed…" (Yin, 2014, p.96). The pilot study was particularly helpful in two specific areas: First, it increased my knowledge of the AANAPISI grant, which was particularly helpful in drafting the interview protocol (main method of data collection for this study) for this study; second, it helped me to build relationships with institutional agents directly involved with the 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant, which led to having more in-depth discussions regarding the impact of the grant on serving minority students and later led to receiving support when identifying appropriate study participants that were not directly involved with the grant but had some connection to the AANAPISI grant or the grant-funded program.

In short, the findings from this pilot study demonstrated that the AANAPISI-funded leadership program helped students in three ways. First, the program helped students foster a stronger sense of belonging on campus and in their communities. Second, it helped students develop a deeper understanding of their own cultural identity (e.g., What does it mean to be a minority student at a community college?, What does it mean to be an Asian American?, etc.). Third, it helped students gain confidence in navigating resources on campus that can help with their academic plan of transferring to a four-year institution. Based on the understanding gained from the pilot study, this case study is employed with a series of data collection methods, which are organized in terms defined by Yin (2014).

Interviews

One-on-one semi-structured interviews with institutional agents (staff, faculty, administrators) were conducted to examine to what extent the funding has shaped the changes in understanding of serving students and AAPIs in particular at WCCC. Semi-structured interviews have the "purpose of obtaining description of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomenon" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.3). In addition, the "…stream of questions in a case study interview is likely to be fluid rather than rigid" (Yin, 2014, p.110). Thus, within the context of a real-life phenomenon (Yin, 2014), semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore how the grant drives new, broader, and deeper insights on serving students at an AAPI-serving institution and how do the overall changes in understanding lead to on-going campus-wide conversations on sustaining and expanding the current and future student support programs and services at this institution.

In this study, perspectives from both groups—the first group includes individuals who are directly impacted by or involved with the grant and the latter group includes individuals beyond the people directly impacted by or involved with the grant—were explored. Given that I had built relationship with the former group of study participants, they were directly contacted by me and were recruited for the study. Regarding the latter group of study participants, the first few were recommended by the former group of study participants, and I directly contacted these individuals in the latter group to explain the purpose of the research study. From there on, snowball sampling took place to identify and contact study participants who were not directly impacted by or involved with the grant but had some connection or an understanding of the grant-funded program. "Snowball sampling may be defined as a technique for gathering research subjects through the identification of an initial subject who is used to provide the names of other

actors. These actors may themselves open possibilities for an expanding web of contact and inquiry." (Atkinson & Flint, 2004, p.1044).

Thus, the latter group of study participants were identified and recruited through snowball sampling or recommendations from both groups of study participants.

The audio-recorded semi-structured interviews lasted between 1-1.5 hours. Each interview took place either at the participant's office or in a classroom that was reserved in advance. In addition to the recording each interview, some notes were taken during the interview to either ask follow-up questions to the interviewee or for the purposes of highlighting themes that were repeatedly discussed by several interviewees.

Direct Observations

Through multiple campus visits, observations took place at all four campuses but mainly at the Fairview campus which houses the AANAPISI center. At the AANAPISI center, observations were focused on the AANAPISI-funded student support programs and services including the 2020 AANAPISI-funded student leadership conference, which was held at WCCC. In addition, in this study, field notes taken from the pilot study (e.g., observations of the AANAPISI-funded leadership program classes, 2018 AANAPISI-funded student leadership conference, etc.) were used as a reference to provide additional information regarding the contexts of the grant-funded student support programs and services.

Documentation

Various documents were reviewed in this study to gain a deeper understanding of the institution and its student support programs and services. With permission from the Office of the Institutional Research & Grants, I gained access to a copy of WCCC's 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant application, which included information on how WCCC identified the unique educational

needs of students, particularly AAPI students, at WCCC and the rationale for pursuing the grant. In addition, relevant documents were provided by the AANAPISI grant-funded program staff including a copy of the AANAPISI-funded leadership program's student booklet and AANAPISI program's core values, which provided a wealth of knowledge on the AANAPISI grant-funded program and its student support programs and services at WCCC. Some of the relevant documents were also available at the institution's website. From the institution's website, I gained more information about the institution including the student demographic at WCCC and overall student support programs and services outside of the AANAPISI grant-funded program. Also, from the institution's website, the research was able to view an informational page that included detailed information about the federal AANAPSI funding and its grant-funded program at WCCC. The information gained from a review of various documentations supplemented my understanding of the interview data.

The Pandemic and Data Collection

Toward the end of the data collection, there was an outbreak of the pandemic. However, it did not significantly impact the data collection procedure as most of the data was collected before the pandemic. One minor exception involved an interview with a Dean of Academics that had to be canceled as she had to manage her campus situation in response to the pandemic. However, the pandemic did delay the overall writing process as I was trying to analyze the data while trying to adjust to the mandates related to the pandemic. Some personal and professional contexts have delayed the data analysis and the writing process.

Data Analysis Procedures

While collecting data, data analysis was done simultaneously by relying on theoretical propositions. "The proposition helped to organize the entire analysis, pointing to relevant

contextual conditions to be described as well as explanations to be examined" (Yin, 2014, p.136). The federal AANAPISPI program and its funding enables institutions to build and develop institutional capacity to serve AAPIs and low-income students (AANAPISI, 2016). The proposition of this study is that the federal funding drives new, broader, and deeper insights on understanding and serving students, both AAPIs and beyond AAPIs, at an AAPI-serving institution. Therefore, through a case study, this study focuses on examining how the grant shapes changes in understandings of serving students at an AAPI-serving institution. While collect data through interviews, documentation review, and direct observations, I documented an on-going list of institutional agents' changes in understandings related to the following areas as a result of the grant: recognizing the unique needs of AAPI students, serving beyond AAPI students, and serving students after the grant ends.

The overall data analysis involved combining all of the data into one platform. The data collected through interviews was transcribed and imported into Dedoose along with observation notes and documentation memos for the purpose of using a computer-assisted tool as a platform to triangulate and organize data by specific themes. According to Yin (2014), a computer-assisted tool such as Dedoose is can be used as an "analytic strategy…[to] code and categorize large amount of data" (p.132-134). In the process of organizing and triangulating data, three central themes were identified in regard to institutional agents' perceived impact of the grant on serving students at an AAPI-serving institution. Before delving into these three themes, a deeper understanding of the study site, a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution, was developed, particularly related to a large proportion of AAPI student population at this college. Thus, I briefly introduce the study site in relation to a large proportion of AAPI student population.

The AAPI Student Population at WCCC

All study participants shared that a large number of AAPI students are found at WCCC. Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) said, "…I know for Asian Pacific Islander [students,] there's a lot of various groups…[based on their] different cultural backgrounds, but it's mostly Vietnamese specifically [at WCCC]."

Among the AAPI student population that is spread across the four satellite campuses— Fairview, Ky-Pham, Pacific Coast, and Wayland— at WCCC, higher concentrations of AAPI students are found at the Fairview campus, which houses the AANAPISI center, and the Ky-Pham campus that offers many courses associated with the English Language Learning (ELL) program compared to other campuses. For instance, Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty) described her experiences working with AAPI students at the Fairview and Ky-Pham campuses. "I would say… 75% [of the students I meet are AAPIs]. I feel like it's high…So 50-75%, especially over at [Fairview] campus, and then actually one semester, I was over at [Ky-Pham]…and that was more like 90-100% [of AAPI students] because there was a lot of [ELL] classes over there."

One notable difference between the AAPI student population at Ky-Pham campus and Fairview campus is that while the former has a larger number of English language learners who are largely identified as "older-generation Asian American students" (also referred as non-traditional students or adult learners), the latter has more "younger-generation Asian American students" (also referred as traditional college students) that are likely to be native English speakers. According to Susan Garcia (Latina, Professor of Sociology), "there are a lot of older [English language learning AAPIs], but there's also some that are young.

More specifically, a large proportion of Vietnamese students are found among the AAPI student population at WCCC. Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Center Specialist/Faculty) described that "we do have a large Vietnamese population [at WCCC] and for that large Vietnamese [student population], there's two kinds of camps. There's the younger crowd and the older crowd, and the older ones tend to be like [ELL] students that come from Vietnam and they take English classes, their [ELL] classes, and it's a different population [between the older and the younger-generation AAPI, particularly Vietnamese students]."

In other words, depending on the campus each participant mainly works at or a specific AAPI student population one works with, institutional agents' changes in understanding as a result of the grant can focus on both the unique needs of the AAPI student population as a whole and distinctive needs of a specific AAPI student group at WCCC (e.g., unique characteristics found between AAPI students at Ky-Pham campus and Fairview campus or older-generation and younger-generation AAPIs at WCCC).

A large proportion of AAPI students found at WCCC is a direct result of high concentrations of AAPIs living in the nearby cities. Vietnamese-American students make up the largest AAPI ethnic sub-group at WCCC and Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) shared that this is also because a large number of Vietnamese-Americans are found in nearby cities: "I actually have a very large population of, in particular, Vietnamese students. I think it's because our main office is located in [Wayland]. There's a big Vietnamese community that lives near [Wayland] and [Fairview]…So, I have many minority students, probably the biggest group of them being Vietnamese…" Put another way, serving AAPI students at WCCC can lead to serving the broader AAPI communities in nearby cities and Garcia stated that the AANAPISI grant-funded

programs and services are particularly beneficial and necessary for serving a critical mass of AAPI students at their institution.

> I think that [the AANAPISI program at WCCC] mostly has benefited our Asian students, which to me makes sense. Since the majority of our students are Asian, that we would have a lot of support services in place for a population that we know is present at our school…So, yeah, it's my understanding that the majority of resources are specifically for Asian and Pacific Islanders students.

Focusing on the AANAPISI grant-funded program at WCCC, Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared that over 70% of the AANAPISI program students are AAPIs and of the remaining 30%, most identify as Latinas/os. In other words, the AANAPISI program is significant in serving the racial/ethnic minority students at WCCC and as the racial/ethnic minority student enrollment at WCCC is over 70% of the student body, the grant can provide unique opportunities to understand and serve the educational needs of this minority student population, particularly their large numbers of AAPI students. In addition, 60% of the AANAPISI program students are onsite and 40% are online, making online student support services a big part of WCCC.

Acknowledging a large proportion of AAPI students enrolled at WCCC, Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) emphasized that WCCC is committed to serving all students including a large proportion of AAPI students. Jude stated, "I think there's always been that desire to be responsive, sensitive, and supportive of the needs of AAPI students. I think there's an understanding that a large part ...you can't help it because [of particularly large numbers of Asian American] students that are in each and every classroom." Therefore, it is important to examine beyond the student demography and explore the extent to which the grant drives new, broader, and deeper insights on understanding and serving students' needs and the needs of AAPI students in particular.

Researcher Bias

Growing up in an immigrant family and having to learn the English language as a non-native English speaker, my racial/ethnic and cultural experiences as an Asian American have helped build rapport with institutional agents and students, particularly those from similar cultural/ethnic backgrounds. In addition, although I have attended a four-year institution and had limited experiences with community colleges, my personal experiences growing up as an racial/ethnic minority and the understandings I have gained through previous research studies on community colleges have helped to have in-depth discussions; these discussions were around the educational experiences of underserved minority community college students and the role and function of the AANAPISI funding on serving students. Furthermore, when analyzing the interviews, observation notes, and documentations, my positionality, experience, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds have helped to gain an in-depth understanding of how the grant drives new, broader, and deeper insights on understanding and serving students, particularly AAPIs, at an AAPI-serving institution.

My identity as an Asian American can have an influence on the study design and the process of data collection/analysis in terms of how the questions were developed and asked during the interview and how study participants' responses were perceived and analyzed. I recognize the personal biases as an Asian American and researcher (Merriam, 2009). This study started off with the statement of problem on the inequitable educational outcomes found among undeserved minority students and a lack of attention on the unique educational needs of AAPI students in higher education research and practice. I had specifically selected a lens to examine the perceived impacts of the federal AANAPISI funding, which narrowed the focus of the study

as well as a range of possible study sites. While I recognize my personal biases, I pursued this study because of personal and professional experiences as an Asian American researcher.

To accurately and deeply understand the context of this study, a preliminary study and several campus visits/observations were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the institution and develop rapport with institutional agents. Furthermore, to minimize biases, I used member checking (Candela, 2019) as a strategy to ensure my analysis of the data is accurate.

Limitations

The strength of this study is that it focuses on one institution that serves a large proportion of AAPI students. However, a large proportion of students at WCCC take one or more online classes. Although AANAPISI program offers student services both online and onsite, a wider range of campus resources are available to students who come to campus.

For instance, the leadership program classes require students to come to campus. Thus, there are some limitations in understanding the online students' experiences at WCCC. Although the findings discuss how the grant has shaped the changes in understandings of serving online students at WCCC, it is also an area that needs to be further examined.

Furthermore, on the one hand, there is a small number of Pacific Islander (PI) students enrolled at WCCC and thus, there can be limited understandings of how the grant has shaped the changes in understandings of serving PI students in particular. However, on the other hand, one of the AANAPISI grant-funded program's staff member identifies as a Pacific Islander and brings wealth of knowledge regarding the unique educational needs of PI students and how the grant can shape changes in understandings of campus-wide conversations on expanding the current AANAPISI-funded student support programs and services to include more PI students.

Since this study is an in-depth case study at one federally designated and funded AAPI-serving community college, the findings may not be generalized to represent all AAPI-serving institutions. What this in-depth case study can do is shed light on how one particular federal MSI program, the federal AANAPISI program and its funding, can help build institutional capacity and better understand and serve the unique educational needs of AAPI students and what that means to serve beyond AAPIs at an AAPI-serving institution. Furthermore, the study aims to explore to what extent the AANAPISI grant has shaped changes in understandings of serving students after the grant ends how do the overall changes in understandings lead to on-going campus-wide conversations on sustaining and expanding the current and future student initiatives.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the quality and rigor of a research design, Yin (2014) suggested the following four tests: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. Some other tests include trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, and data dependability (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 1990). In this section, the four tests offered by Yin (2014) are discussed to ensure the quality and rigor of this case study research design.

Construct Validity

Construct validity is "identifying correct operational measure for the concepts being studied" (Yin, 2014, p.46). Centering around the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation which evolved from the concepts of transformational change (Kezar, 2013; Bensimon, 2005) and educational pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012), in this study, I examine and reimagine change. In other words, I focus on the extent to which the AANAPISI grant has

brought changes to understanding and serving students by drawing from multiple concepts of transformational change at an organization.

Internal Validity

Internal validity "seek[s] to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as disguised from spurious relationships" (Yin, 2014, p.46). Thus, to strengthen the internal validity of a study, it is important not to conclude a causal relationship between two things such as a phenomena and a context without being certain that there may be a third factor in play. In a case study, Yin (2014) shared the concern over internal validity where "a case study involves an inference every time an event cannot be directly observed" (p.47). To work around the concern and increase internal validity, data triangulation was done; observation notes and documentation memos included great detail and these notes were triangulated with the interview data.

External Validity

External validity pertains to whether the study findings can be generalizable beyond the current study. The limitations of generalizing the study findings are discussed in a previous section above (see the limitations section). In addition, another area where this concern arises is the way research questions are drafted. On the one hand, in most descriptive or explanatory case studies, "how" or "why" questions are asked, respectively. On the other hand, if questions do not have "how" or "why" questions, in other words, asking "what" questions, "arriving at an analytic generalization may be more difficult" (Yin, 2014, p.48). This study focuses on examining how the grant drives new, broader, and deeper insights on serving students, particularly AAPIs, at an AAPI-serving institution. Thus, to increase external validity, in this descriptive case study, "how" questions are asked.

Reliability

According to Yin (2014), "the goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study" and ensuring that "if a later researcher follows the same procedures as described by an earlier research and conducts the same case study over again, the later investigator should arrive at the same findings and conclusions" (p.48-49). Thus, to ensure that other researchers can follow the same procedures as described in this study and arrive at the same conclusions in future studies, each step of the research procedure must be well-documented with great detail. In this study, I have documented the entire research procedure, from designing a research study to collecting/analyzing data, in great detail. Thus, thick rich descriptions are provided. In addition, to minimize biases, member checking was used as a strategy to accurately interpret the data.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the data collection and analysis procedures as well as a description of the study site to better understand the extent to which this site can help to understand how a grant that focuses on serving AAPI students can drive new, broader, deeper insights into understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving insiutiton. In doing so, the researcher's bias, trustworthiness of the study, and study limitations were discussed as well.

The purpose of the next three chapters (Chapters 4, 5, and 6) is to discuss the findings. The review of literature demonstrated that a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution is a unique site for understanding and responding to the educational needs and challenges of underserved minority students with particular attention to low-income Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) student population. As the federal AANAPISI funding helps institutions to build capacity and target support specifically toward their AAPI and low-

income students, this study focuses on the changes that this grant has brought about on understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution.

Guided by the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation and the multiple methodological tools of a case study, the study findings are organized into three parts— The perceived impacts of the grant on understanding and serving AAPI students; The perceived impacts of the grant on understanding and serving all students; The perceived impacts of the grant on serving students after the grant ends—and thus, the next three chapters are titled after these three parts and elaborated based on the salient findings.

Chapter 4: The Perceived Impacts of the Grant on Understanding and Serving AAPI Students

"…on paper and from a statistical higher education standpoint, I saw AAPI students. But through my work [with the AANAPISI funding], I was able to witness [AAPI students'] needs on a personal level, in a way that was felt and not just known."

--Patricia Lim (AANAPISI Program Staff)

Nine salient themes emerged about AAPI students' unique educational needs and challenges described by institutional agents at the West Coast Community College (WCCC), a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution. Within each theme, I explore how institutional agents understand and describe a distinctive need of AAPI students and how their understandings have evolved as a result of the AANAPISI grant; put another way, I examine how the grant has shaped the changes in understandings related to the unique needs of AAPI students.

The study participants who are directly involved with the AANAPISI grant engage frequently with the AANAPISI program students, who are largely AAPIs. Beyond the participants who were directly involved with the AANAPISI grant, I also spoke with staff, faculty, and administrators who either have developed relationships with the AANAPISI grant-funded program's director, staff, and students or have experiences interacting with the AANAPISI center and its student support programs and services. Many of these study participants also interact with AAPI students on a regular basis through their own classes and other student support programs and services on campus. Thus, an in-depth discussion is provided

about both groups of study participants on how the grant has shaped the changes in their understandings of the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students.

Making Sense of Racial/Ethnic Heterogeneity within "Underserved" AAPIs

The model minority stereotype (Lee, 2006), which assumes the universal success of all AAPIs, is problematic for the AAPI population. Within the educational sector, this stereotype assumes that all AAPI students have access to resources to achieve educational success and therefore, do not need additional support. As a result, AAPI students are often left out of campus-wide conversations that focus on providing additional support for underserved students. In other words, while AAPIs come from underserved backgrounds (e.g., low-income families, first-generation college students, AAPI ethnic sub-groups, etc.) and have unique educational needs and challenges, there is a lack of recognition of acknowledging AAPI students as an underserved group.

In this section, I explore how study participants have shared their understandings around these two areas—AAPIs as an underserved group and the racial/ethnic heterogeneity of AAPIs—and the extent to which the grant has shaped changes in their understandings. As there are over 50 different ethnicities that make-up AAPIs (Teranishi, 2010), acknowledging racial/ethnic heterogeneity reveals educational disparities that exist within AAPI ethnic sub-groups and more specifically, the unique educational needs and challenges that are found within AAPIs. Furthermore, these understandings can help shape the institutional programming, policies, and practices that focus on serving this student population. Therefore, I examine institutional agents' understandings around AAPIs, particularly their understandings around AAPIs as an underserved group and racial/ethnic heterogeneity of AAPIs, and how their understandings have evolved as a result of the grant.

AAPIs as an Underserved Group

At WCCC, there is a lack of recognition of AAPIs as an underserved student group compared to other racial/ethnic minority student groups. Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) said, "Unfortunately, the lens to which people view things are, 'AAPI populations are considered a special population?'" In other words, people are not recognizing AAPIs as an underserved group with unique needs.

This is not just found among institutional agents, but also among students. For instance, it is not surprising for Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) to hear an AAPI student say, "[I am] AAPI, [I] should be doing well in school." However, with the implementation of the grant, Santos noticed a change in people's perspectives, particularly among AAPI students, of recognizing AAPIs as an underserved group. "Sometimes I'm having conversations [with AAPI students] and that's not necessarily the case. So, it's way more fulfilling where I'm seeing that here [at a federally funded AAPI-serving institution]."

Furthermore, institutional agents have come to acknowledge a shift in recognizing AAPIs as an underserved group as a result of the grant. Reyna Villar (AAPI, AANAPISI Program Staff) discussed, "…the AAPI population at [WCCC] was underserved [,but] wasn't so much pushed for equity. They just wanted to increase [AAPI students'] success rate [,but] I don't think anybody was looking at [AAPI students as an underserved group] prior to the grant." Therefore, with the implementation of the grant, there has been a greater push to understand AAPI students from an equity-based perspective and implement equity-based practices on campus such as the AANAPISI student infinitives.

In a similar vein, recognizing AAPIs as an underserved student group is important as it can influence the institutional programming and practices that respond to the diverse needs of

students. For instance, the AANAPISI grant can help form a task team that focuses on targeting support toward AAPI students. Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) works at other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) that are both federally designated but not funded as an AAPI-serving institution. This puts her at a unique place to understand the impact of the grant on targeting support toward AAPI students. Zhang shared,

> At these other institutions [I work at]… neither of those institutions have AANAPISI [grants]…They may have like an anime club or something like that, but a lot of the [AAPI-focused] cultural weeks are coordinated by counselors as a side responsibility…[At another AAPI-serving institution,] I'm actually not even sure if there is one and who's in charge of [supporting AAPI students]…[whereas at WCCC] we were a team of [several staff members that work with the grant that focuses on AAPI students.]

For Maria Jackson (White, Faculty), she noticed changes after the implementation of the AANAPISI grant at two levels. First, there is a greater focus on serving AAPI students at the institutional level. Second, her own understanding of the unique needs and challenges of AAPI students has increased as a result of the grant. Jackson stated,

> I was on some committee work back in 2010, 2011. And it's true, I don't remember as much of a focus specifically on the AAPI students. So, I think that there has been a stronger sense of highlighting about the needs of this particular group. And [Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program] has done a lot of work in this area. And the [AANAPISI center] also really is a great place for these students, they can really benefit from the services there. So, I think there's been a lot of improvement and development. I know about more of these things now than in the past five years or so. It seems like there's a lot of effort, a lot of great things happening, a lot of improvement. And I know as far as the student success rates are concerned, and enrollment retention, all these numbers have gone up…So, I'm sure [the AANAPISI funding] has been helpful.

As a White male, Daniel Johnson (White, Grant Specialist)'s involvement with the AANAPISI grant as a grant writer and staff of the Office of Institutional Research and Grants has helped him to be more deeply aware of the unique needs of AAPI students from the least advantaged backgrounds. Johnson discussed,

> I think for me as an individual of a white Caucasian male I've had a great opportunity, whether it's serving as the primary point of contact for the [AAPI] scholarships [program

> on campus]…[and] serving as an activity coordinator on these grants or also just working through the development of grants...Yes, I have a greater appreciation for the AAPI population, and the challenges, and disadvantage backgrounds that they may come from educational challenges that they face once they're here. And so, I would just say that yes, my knowledge of the population has grown over the years.

Although Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) has grown up in an Asian household and is familiar with various needs of AAPI communities, the implementation of this funding has helped her to better understand the unique educational needs and challenges of low-income AAPI community college students in particular. Basa stated,

> …when I was working with AAPI students at [a] Cal state [campus], I actually didn't really know what some of those community conditions were affecting those students. I didn't even know what low income even first-generation would look like for AAPI students at [a CSU campus] because that's something that you really don't talk about or something that no one really kind of focuses on. But here that's where they start like having that lens and really start thinking more about those needs……without this funding…I wouldn't have known that this was really going on [for AAPI students]…So, it's been a really interesting learning experience.

Put another way, the funding provided an opportunity for her to learn, or re-learn, the various challenges faced by AAPI students including those from the least advantaged backgrounds.

Furthermore, instead of looking at students based on their demographic make-up, the personal relationships that have developed with students, particularly a large proportion of AAPIs at WCCC, as a result of the grant have helped Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) to understand the experiences of AAPI students in a deeper way. Lim said,

> When I first came to [WCCC], I didn't even really have an understanding of what the needs were to begin with…on paper and from a statistical higher education standpoint, I saw AAPI students. But through my work [with the AANAPISI funding], I was able to witness [AAPI students'] needs on a personal level, in a way that was felt and not just known.

Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) discussed how WCCC's designation as a federally-funded AAPI-serving institution provided opportunities for her to bring up discussions around the grant's targeted student population, AAPIs. Zhang stated,

> I think the fact that [WCCC] is an AANAPISI demonstrates that there is specific support and programming for that population of students that so often slips under the crack, and when I've spoken about it, most people actually don't care too much until I bring it up, and then I have to actually voice out the things I've learned before and they get interested whereas I don't think it receives that much kudos as other special population groups.

Thus, recognizing AAPI students as an underserved group is an important step to understanding and serving this student population and the grant has provided various opportunities to expand people's knowledge of understanding and responding to AAPI students' unique needs .

Understanding the Racial/Ethnic Heterogeneity of AAPIs

There are over 50 ethnic sub-groups that make up the AAPI racial/ethnic group (Teranishi, 2010). At WCCC, Vietnamese Americans make up the largest sub-group. With the implementation of the grant, study participants have shared their increased understanding of the racial/ethnic heterogeneity that exists within AAPIs and what this means in terms of understanding and serving the unique educational needs of AAPIs.

Through her personal experiences as an Asian-American, Sandy Jude (College President) is knowledgeable about the racial/ethnic heterogeneity that exists within the AAPI population. With the implementation of the grant, her understanding of the heterogeneity and the diverse experiences of AAPIs deepened. Jude said,

> I am [Asian]-American, but then I also realize that I have a lot of commonalities with other Asians [from diverse AAPI racial/ethnic sub-groups]. And while we're very different...yet there is a sense of belonging together, understanding each other, being in the same struggle.

> [With the implementation of the AANAPISI grant,]…I have a deeper understanding [of AAPIs] because I don't think you can say that every AAPI has the same experience. I think we all have different levels of identification and different levels of understanding…

Similarly, the grant has provided a deeper understanding of AAPI ethnic sub-groups and implications for developing support systems for AAPI students from diverse racial/ethnic sub-groups. For instance, Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) has come

to learn more deeply about developing a strong support system for their Filipino students in particular as a result of the grant. Smith stated,

> One of the things that we're finding [through the AANAPISI program] with our Filipino population is they need more of a community. And that they're really tied to their home and the community at home…what we're learning is a lot of organizations like church organizations [can provide that supportive community to students]...And that's where if you're able to connect with that population, for the Filipino population, [Ron Reyes] was [able to do that through the AANAPISPI program].. But then also, we have our different populations like our Vietnamese population. There are specific areas that we are looking into.

Rather than assuming all AAPI students have similar needs and challenges, Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director), who is Southeast Asian but not Vietnamese-American, has come to learn more deeply about the unique educational experiences of Vietnamese-American students in particular and gained a deeper understanding of the racial/ethnic heterogeneity of AAPIs as a result of the grant. Reyes shared,

> … when I got here, I realized, one, I don't know if there's anyone who can really say that they're an AAPI expert, AAPI student expert because of how different every community is. And so, for me it was a learning experience in terms of understanding what Vietnamese American students experience. There are certainly the same issues that are tied, shame is a huge factor, intergenerational conflict is a huge factor, all these like little things that are very unique about Asian Americans are there, but it manifests very differently. And in particular for Vietnamese you have to include the fact that it's a refugee community. And I think the fact that I was trying to accomplish these objectives [through the implementation of the AANAPISI grant] , and it wasn't connected to my own experience or connected to what I've been doing and I had to change it, forced me to have to think about student needs differently.

With the implementation of the grant, some staff have come to pay closer attention to the unique characteristics found between Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. For example, the AANAPISI grant has increased understandings related to the Pacific Islander students, who are often masked due to a larger number of Asian Americans on campus, and disparities of educational opportunities based on the diverse AAPI ethnic sub-groups. This understanding is

significant in understanding and serving both the current and future AAPI students at WCCC, said Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff).

> For the [AAPI student] population that exists at [WCCC], [a large proportion of AAPIs is] Vietnamese Americans, and sometimes I think overlooked is the huge amount of [Pacific Islanders] in [our] County…With the amount of students who are attending [WCCC], or with the potential of attending [WCCC], the disparity of opportunity was just astronomical in comparison to other student groups.

Carrie Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) discussed how family is uniquely understood among Asian American and Pacific Islander households and the implications for understanding students' support systems. Lopez shared,

> There is a difference [between Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans]…Pacific Islander I think is much more open…initially they are more open, in terms of [bringing things up to] their families…I think Asian population they're less likely to even bring things up to their family at all. They won't even bring it up where the Pacific Islanders will bring up stuff. I think in terms of Asians, a lot is kept within the family.
>
> I think Pacific Islanders family is not just who was under your roof. I think it could be the next door neighbor who has known you your whole life, other family as well, or your church, or whatever it might be…it gets considered as family, so I think they [Pacific Islanders] have a potential for a bigger support system. Yeah, it's more of that village raises the child versus I think [for] the Asian population…we don't go outside of that family unit [to share our issues].

Furthermore, Reyes shared that the AANAPISI team or staff members "…started asking a lot of questions to [AAPI] students [from various ethnic sub-groups] and started being curious about what they're experiencing." Through this inquiry process of learning the racial/ethnic heterogeneity of AAPIs, the ways in which the college approaches or implements institutional practices to serve the diverse needs of AAPI students have shifted. Reyes said,

> I think [the implementation of the grant] has forced me every single year to really question what we do and don't know. So, I assume, I don't know enough about [AAPIs]. So, I think that continues to keep us on our toes in terms of asking us questions. So, that's how my understanding of student needs has changed. It's like it changed, to be honest, as much as I understood that Asian Americans were treated as this like Pan Asian group, I don't think that necessarily, sometimes I thought about it like that, in terms of the way that I programmed things. And now I had to change things specifically programming-

> wise, in regard to language, in terms of framework, in terms of just how I approach things. I think that's how our office has changed post-grant for me because now there is this pressure, to actually like figure out how to do these objectives and in the past [WCCC] had not hit them. So, I had to figure out how those needs and our methodology and practices needed to mesh together.

Prior to working at WCCC, Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) worked for another federally funded four-year AAPI-serving institution. Initially, her assumption was that all federally designated AAPI-serving institutions—both two-year and four-year AAPI-serving institutions—serve AAPI students with similar educational needs and challenges. However, with the implementation of the grant at WCCC, Cha has learned that each AAPI-serving institution is unique in serving the varying educational needs and challenges of AAPI students from diverse ethnic sub-groups; additional differences can be found between two-year and four-year AAPI-serving institutions. Cha discussed,

> …what I've learned [through the grant] is that, the mistake that I made when I first came to [WCCC] was thinking that like all AANAPISIs are the same. But that was like a huge mistake because when I came here I was like, "This is so different from like [my previous four-year institution]." You can't replicate a [four-year AANAPISI student initiatives] here…it's not going to work because the student population is different. And so, I think that has really opened my eyes to see what's working with different AAPI students [from various ethnic sub-groups]. And also, just seeing where I can fit into helping them in terms of like…"I am Southeast Asian [,but] we're also very different too.

More specifically, Cha, who is Southeast Asian but not Vietnamese-American, primarily interacts with Vietnamese-American students as a result of the grant and has come to understand the differences that exist between these two Southeast Asian ethnic sub-groups. Cha said,

> …seeing how different the students are, it's like giving me a new perspective of like Vietnamese students here. I think [the implementation of the grant] helped me to just expand my knowledge of the different student populations. I think when people say that AAPIs are very diverse in that there's like 48 plus ethnicities. Like I kind of knew that because I'm an AAPI, I'm like, "There's like different [AAPI] ethnic groups." I feel like I didn't really understand the impact of that until I worked at the [AANAPISI center] where the majority of the students didn't look like me…I've really just come to see how different my experience is from them although we're Southeast Asians, we've all been impacted by the Vietnam War.

Furthermore, Cha shared that many of their Vietnamese-American students did not know about the Vietnam war or their family's immigration backgrounds. However, after going on a grant-funded fieldtrip such as a visit to a local four-year University's Southeast Asian-focused museum, students had the opportunity to learn about the similarities and differences found within Southeast Asians.

Thus, with the implementation of the grant, institutional agents have gained new, broader, and deeper insights into recognizing AAPIs as an underserved group and the racial/ethnic heterogeneity within AAPI ethnic sub-groups that contributes to understanding more deeply about the unique educational needs and challenge of AAPI students.

"Saving Face": Difficulty Navigating Campus Resources

With the implementation of the grant, study participants have gained deeper understandings related to the difficulties AAPI students may face while navigating campus resources. In this section, I focus on how students are hesitant to ask for help; I discuss how study participants have noted this challenge based on AAPI students' backgrounds and tried to develop culturally-responsive practices for AAPI students as a result of the grant.

While the model minority stereotype assumes the success of all AAPI students, AAPI students may face difficulties navigating and accessing campus resources and student support services. In this section, I discuss AAPI students' challenges in actively reaching out for various supports on campus Then, I describe how institutional agents have noted this unique need of AAPI students and tried to develop culturally responsive approaches as a result of the grant.

Knowing how to navigate the higher education system, such as identifying relevant campus resources, can be a huge advantage for students. Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty), who has been working specifically with the low-income student population,

particularly a large proportion of low-income AAPIs at WCCC, has highlighted this point. Garcia said, “The more [students] know, the more questions they ask and by the time they leave us they have a pretty good understand[ing] of the way higher education works. I think that's why our students continue to finish their degrees at a four-year institution at a pretty high rate.”

However, for AAPI students, the challenge is that people often assume that AAPIs know how to navigate the higher education system. “I think there are challenges for our AAPI students in terms of just negotiating sort of how do you participate [in student support programs and services]? I'm just thinking in terms of sort of a bicultural model or just negotiating all of that. I think those are some of our key challenges,” said Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students).

Using a term, “saving face”, Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), described that this cultural issue of feeling ashamed in seeking resources can hold back many AAPI students from reaching out for help. Then, with the implementation of the grant, Zhang has gained a deeper understanding of how institutional agents can help AAPI students overcome this specific educational challenge by focusing on building a strong rapport between institutional agents and students and gaining students’ trusts. Zhang shared,

> Students I worked with…the saving face is pretty strong. It's really hard to break past that, the façade with students. Especially if you don't know them, you have to have a consistent long-term relationship with them. But then, once you break past it, they could end up feeling comfortable with you. And when they open up, they open up. Everything that happens ... one student was sharing with me that ... it was a student employee [for the AANAPISI program] that I had, and she was sharing that she had a stalker. But then, I was also having to balance that knowledge with her showing up late or not showing up to work. So, it's like, how do you, as a professional know this intimate information and feel empathy and sympathy for that student and want to help them, but also think about their quality of work.
>
> So, I don't know…if I have all the right answers for working with API students, but I definitely have a better understanding of all of the underlying things that could be affecting [AAPI students]. Because from the surface, it can look like they're completely fine, that they're doing really well like the model minority myth that they are

> achieving/they're overachieving, sometimes, but miss all those underlying factors or underlying issues that they're also trying to deal with.

AAPI students' reluctance to reach out for help stems from the narratives that are closely related to the model minority stereotype; a sense of shame in asking for help is derived from the idea that AAPI students are independent learners who can self-support oneself. For instance, Sandy Jude's (Asian American, College President) understanding of this particular cultural issue has deepened as a result of the grant:

> ….based on some of the research that [Dean Andy Smith] and his [AANAPISI grant] team has done, and just from what I know. I think maybe there's a disconnect between some of [the AAPI students'] needs…in some of the Asian cultures, you should be able to [figure out things] on your own, like you don't need help seeing a counselor…You should be able to sustain yourself or be more independent in terms of that.

In addition, some institutional agents have discussed this specific student need in conjunction with the challenges faced by first-generation AAPI college students. Thus, students' diverse backgrounds (e.g., home contexts, high school experiences) are highlighted. For instance, Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) said, "…most of the time, the parents aren't college-educated, so [many AAPI students] don't get that help at home…[Therefore,] I feel like a lot of the struggles is the lack of knowledge [of finding] someone to talk to." It is very important to understand that this is not to say that students are unable to receive any support from their family members. Instead, it is highlighting the challenge AAPI students may face during the process of identifying a mentor and getting answers to their college-related questions.

Furthermore, Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty) discussed that there is a need to articulate to students the differences of navigating campus resources at a high school versus a college campus. For example, in college, students are expected to make academic-

related choices and see a college academic counselor more often than they did in high school to discuss their educational plans. Williams said,

> We're always dispelling myths of the difference between what a high school counselor does versus what a college counselor does, or here's another one I hear a lot from my AAPI students, "Well, my high school counselor just told me what to take, you guys aren't just going to tell me what to take?" and I'm like, "No, you have choices."…So that is a big leap too for them.
>
> The other one is, "I'm in trouble, so that's when I see a counselor." As opposed to, "Oh, I could just go and talk to a college counselor, I didn't realize that I could just go in and talk to them, or that I had to make the effort to go talk to a counselor. In high school, they just told me like, 'Okay, you've got to go on Tuesday.'" It's very set up for them and they're just told, whereas they're like, "I haven't seen a counselor for a year because I have to make the effort to do it, and I didn't realize that was what happened. I have to do this."

While working with AAPI students in particular, Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) has come to understand the students' challenges in asking for help; the grant has helped to work around this student need by unpacking what factors are hindering students from reaching out for help. Basa stated,

> I think one thing I've also recognized in students…is like their inability to ask for help and inability to seek different resources because sometimes being AAPI, there is that challenge of asking for help and having to feel like you need to do everything on your own…And so, then reaching out to resources have been really challenging.
>
> But usually through mentorship that's how we were able to kind of unpack sometimes what's really like going on. Like what's stopping you from seeking out those resources? So…I've seen [how the grant-funded student initiative has] affect[ed] their education.

Similarly, with the implementation of the grant, Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) has come to understand that AAPI students are hesitant to ask for help and utilize campus resources:

> …a lot of students don't recognize the importance of utilizing resources. There's this stigma behind asking for help. Specifically, AAPI students, they will go through a semester without using a resource because there's this mentality of like, "I don't want to be a burden to this resource," or that like, "I'm going to this resource because I'm in trouble," or something like that. So that's one of the things that, at least for me, I notice

> with our AAPI students. And I think also having to maintain home life, school and how that impacts their mental health.

The different learning styles of AAPIs are recognized by Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) as a result of the grant, which later has helped Zhang to implement culturally-sensitive practices. Zhang said,

> …the one thing that I learned from [WCCC] being an AANAPISI college is how to work with students who are also AAPIs but understand their learning styles. An example is when I'm talking with a group of students at [the AANAPISI program] and I tell them, "All right, what do you think of this question?" and all of them stay quiet. I've learned from experience that there's an internal process happening. I have to ask them to think their process out loud and I have to reassure them that it's okay to throw it out there because if you're wrong, it's all about what you're thinking and us having to explore what those thoughts are, rather than having to make sure, "Is what I'm thinking absolutely correct before I say it? Because I don't want to look foolish in front of other people," or saying, "Okay, let's brainstorm, first. And then, once we have a sheet of paper, let's talk about some of the things you wrote," so giving them that time to prepare instead of just throwing out a question out there.

According to Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), the implementation of the grant allowed WCCC to develop specific practices to better serve students, particularly the unique needs of AAPI students:

> …if [WCCC] was only designated, they wouldn't have been like a program to focus on that student experience. Because of the [AANAPISI center] is here that I have access to really give these services to students and that's how I'm learning about what they need and their history. If it was only designated, I think we will only know that there's students here that need it. But because there's no services, you're not really learning like the trends of what students need**…**I think one thing that [the AANAPISI center] has done very well is highlighting the fact that there's so much that goes on in students' lives, in terms of [AAPI students] being like first-generation and being low-income. And I think the [AANAPISI center] has done a good job of like bringing those things to light with students as well as the campus [of the identity development and recognizing the need to support outside of students' academic needs].

Maria Jackson (White, Faculty) has been supporting the needs of AAPI students through culturally-responsive pedagogical practices that are sensitive toward students' diverse personal and cultural backgrounds. Jackson shared,

> Because of the grant, definitely, I've been exposed to [AAPI students'] special needs as a population at our campus that has caused me to be more in tune with meeting their needs specifically, it's like I have this awareness in my consciousness about paying attention to what they need and interacting with them and connecting with them and making sure that they are successful in staying in the class and able to write about things that may interest them.

Therefore, the grant has helped institutional agents to better understand AAPI students' challenge related to a cultural issue of feeling ashamed in seeking resources or "saving face." Furthermore, institutional agents' changes in understandings of this specific need as a result of the grant have promoted culturally-responsive strategies to be incorporated into their practices of serving AAPI students.

Selecting a "Good Major" and Navigating Family Expectations

Family is an important part of students' education. One of the salient themes that was repeatedly discussed by study participants was the challenge AAPI students face in selecting a major that was different from their family's expectations. This theme can be understood in two larger strands.

First, there is a strong preference of STEM majors (referred to as the "good major") over Arts and Humanities majors. For instance, AAPI students often face challenges selecting a major of their choice due to their family's expectations and preferences for a STEM major, which is connected to AAPI families' perceptions of which majors lead to better opportunities and career options in the future.

Second, unlike the perception that assumes the universal success all AAPIs such as having a strong support system that is provided by all AAPI families (Lee, 2006), as students share caregiving responsibilities with family members (e.g., work long hours or take care of the household/younger siblings, etc.), some families expect or prefer students to work so they can contribute to the family rather than spending time at school and studying.

Therefore, within the sub-section—Selecting a "Good Major"— I first discuss how institutional agents describe the difficulties AAPI students face in selecting a major while navigating their families' expectations and how their understandings of this specific challenge have evolved as a result of the grant.

Then, within the sub-section—Family Responsibilities vs. Educational Needs— I focus on the understandings around AAPI students' experiences of navigating family expectations and prioritizing family situation over education and the extent to which the institutional agents' understandings have evolved as a result of the grant. In addition, what is discussed within this sub-section is further elaborated in another section that focuses on the challenges of low-income and first-generation AAPI college students in particular.

Selecting a "Good Major"

Many participants described in particular how AAPI students' families prefer their children pursue a career in the medical field than Social Sciences due to the perception that being a medical doctor, for example, is better than being a sociologist/psychologist or that being a medical doctor can lead to a wider range of opportunities and career options. This understanding is more personal as Jude (Asian American, College President) had a similar experience growing up in an Asian American household:

> I certainly experienced it, even in my own generation is parents wanting to have more input based on their perspectives as to what would be a good major, and what would be good for someone to pursue because they really understand the law, and medicine, and accounting, and business, but they probably wouldn't understand what it means to pursue English or Humanities or, I don't know. [Social Sciences majors]. Yeah, and [a Social Science major] is an amazing field that will take you to a lot of different careers. Even I with my parents ... God, I couldn't have been furthest from the truth started me out in business. Hopefully the parents that are younger generation might have a better understanding of that.

When comparing between older and younger-generation AAPIs, there was also a difference in their choice of majors. Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) shared,

> In terms of majors, it is very broad. Older AAPIs definitely don't go for the arts or humanities degree. They tend to go for things such as business or taxes, or those type of degrees. And then, the younger AAPI, you can see a variety, there's some that are interested in arts and humanities, social science, liberal studies.

Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty) shared that there is a gap between what students want to study and their families' expectations:

> So, in terms of major…at least weekly, students will sometimes bring up choosing a major based on what they're familiar and encouraged to do, and in my class, I heard that a lot too like, "I really am interested in art, but my family says I can't go into that, I've got to do some sort of science." And I heard that a lot from especially the Vietnamese population. So, in terms of picking a major, that was decided upon through the family, and so then we talked about what that meant and what those implications are for what their choices for a degree… there is a blanket statement of, "You're going into science, you're going into math, you're going into computer science." Something like that whereas I've had a couple students share with me, "But I don't like that, I'm not good at it but this is what I was told I was supposed to do." And I would say that I've seen that a lot in a lot of Asian American cultures.

This issue of selecting a major is an important one to further look into because as Williams mentioned, "depending on [staying at a community college] versus transfer, what that choice gets to be depending on it may be at odds with what they want to do, so I see that as a big, sometimes, roadblock for them in trying to kind of navigate that." Deciding on a major is not simply selecting what to get a degree in, but this also impacts students' pathways to transfer and having a career. Thus, it is particularly challenging for AAPI students to select a major while navigate their families' expectations.

As a counselor and faculty member, Williams teaches courses that focus on topics such as life planning and strategies to college success at WCCC. Recently, Amy Ocampo, a college academic advisor from the Academic Counseling program has joined Williams' class as a

teacher's assistant. Ocampo's role is very unique; with a recent collaboration between the Academic Counseling program and AANAPISI program, Ocampo has moved her office space into the AANAPISI center and meets with students there instead of her regular office space in the Counseling center. This move has allowed Ocampo to interact with AANAPISI staff and be familiar with their upcoming events and workshops.

Knowing Amy Ocampo's unique role as a college academic advisor who not only understands AAPI students' unique needs but also meets regularly with AANAPISI program students (primarily AAPIs), Williams has asked Ocampo to share weekly announcements on upcoming AANAPISI program's workshops and events to the class. Williams and Ocampo also have opportunities to talk in the classroom about the unique needs of AAPI students. Williams stated, " [Amy Ocampo] could give perspectives a lot of the times too on things, especially when we talked about choosing majors and the familial connection to that…" This has led Williams to personally visit the AANAPISI center and meet with the AANAPISI program staff to learn more about the kinds of support services offered to students so she can refer her students to the AANAPISI program.

Therefore, with the implementation of the grant, Williams has gained a deeper understanding of AAPI students' difficulties with selecting a major while navigating their families' expectations and offers a few strategies for AAPI students to work around this specific challenge such as having a conversation with their parents. For instance, when students tell Williams that "they don't have a choice" or "can you call my mom?", Williams suggests to students that they show their parents a copy of their transcript and "…show them what's going on in your class."

Even with this, some students are still reluctant to speak to their parents about their preferences for non-STEM majors. As an academic counselor who meets with many AAPI students on a regular basis, Williams continues to see this specific challenge among AAPI students. Thus, Ocampo's unique role at the AANAPISI center, which is a result of a development of the AANAPISI-funded space to offer various student support programs and services, has helped shape Mandy Williams' change in understanding of AAPI students' needs, particularly the complexities of selecting a major. Furthermore, this has led her to not only learn about the grant-funded activities that target support toward AAPI students, but to also apply this knowledge when she is advising AAPI students regarding how to navigate family expectations while selecting a major (e.g., strategies for talking to parents when they have a different expectation of a student's major, etc.).

Several study participants have shared that they can personally relate to AAPI students regarding challenges in selecting a major while navigating their families' expectations. Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) can personally relate to students' struggle in selecting a major as she grew up in an Asian household and shares a similar experience. Ocampo said,

> I feel like the parents of AAPI students sometimes causes educational struggles, or parents ... being Asian myself, I understand because my parents are like, "Oh, no, don't major in this. Do this. You'll make more money," or whatever, so I understand when these students talk about their parents…very common among all college students…[is]… choosing of majors and what careers to go for and not really knowing what school they want to transfer to. I met with one student who took a gap year because she didn't know what she wanted to do, so she's been here for a while and I hope she's going to be able to transfer next year, but yeah, so, if she didn't take the gap year, she would have already probably finished and got her bachelor's.

Similarly, Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) shared that he can relate to the struggles AAPI students face in selecting a major while navigating their

family expectations of a major: "…happens, especially for AAPI community where it's like, 'I need to become a doctor, lawyer, engineer.' And I get that perspective too because I grew up with that. My dad said, 'You got to be one of these.' Either you're a doctor or you're a failure"

Collaborating with the AANAPISI program and facilitating workshops on major and career choices at the AANAPISI center as a result of the implementation of the grant, Santos discussed that sharing his personal experiences helped him relate with AAPI students and learn more deeply about their needs: "Being able to share [my personal experiences] makes it easier for them [students]… So, having those conversations of, 'How do I tell my parents that I want to study this without them disappointing?' So that also happens as well." This challenge of selecting a major while navigating family expectations is not just a concern for AAPI community college students, but for students from other racial groups as well. However, given that many AAPIs, including those at the AANAPISI program, face this challenge, the implementation of the grant creates a space to facilitate culturally-relevant conversations specifically around AAPI students' struggles in this area.

Like Santos, Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) also shared how the grant allowed the facilitation of conversations with students on selecting a major while navigating family expectations. Latu discussed,

> We talk about majors. A lot of them…come in knowing that they want to pursue a specific major. But as they go through community college, things start to happen where, one, they start thinking about changing their major because of maybe talking to their [AANAPISI program] mentor. Two, talking to other resources [suggested by the AANAPISI program such as the Transfer center and the Career center].

In understanding how the grant changed institutional agents' understanding of how to work with students as they navigate the tension between family expectations and choice of major, Latu brought up the need to understand the importance of WCCC's Enrichment program,

a state grant-funded program that provides both financial and academic support to students to promote degree completion and transfer. In this program students are on a track system and are required to take a set number of courses. According to Latu, because the Enrichment program was developed along with the first AANAPISI grant's (2010-2015) student initiatives, although there were some "…limitations within the [Enrichment] program in terms of providing support with students that might want to change their major," the grant-funded advising services were available for these students in addition to other opportunities such as major and career exploration workshops. In fact, over 40% of AANAPISI students that participated in the Enrichment program ended up switching to a different major of their choice. Latu stated,

> There's also been a shift in the [Enrichment] program. I think that's one of the changes I've noticed with the program is students... [AANAPISI program] students have gone through the [Enrichment] program, but then it also has impacted their major. So that's one of the things I've noticed with the focus of the programs…So if a student is interested in business by the time they finish or transition out of their first or second year they start thinking about changing their major to [a Social Science major] or something else…And then as they go through the AANAPISI program, as they go through their different course works that they would take there [through the Enrichment program], then they would start thinking about, is this the major for me? And so, they go through this transition phase of like, do I really want to pursue this major or do I really want to pursue something else?...There's a lot of factors that play into why the student would change their major. One is family. Their family wants them to pursue a prestigious career or major. So sometimes it conflicts with their values. So, they also go through a transition of do I follow my career path, what I want to pursue, versus what my family wants to pursue. Through the students that have come to our [AANAPISI] services they've also mentioned there's difficulty in being able to apply these classes to another major. So that's another challenge that comes up for students.

For Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair), the AANAPISI grant shaped her understanding of the challenges that AAPI students face in selecting a major and what this means in terms of advertising a Social Science major and major-related career options to their current and prospective AAPI students and their families. Given Miles' role as the department chair of a Social Science major, her discussion focuses on the change in

understanding of AAPI students' experiences with pursuing a Social Science major in particular as a result of the grant. Miles shared,

> The funding definitely impacted in an arena where I'm just more cognizant of students now. I'm talking to my Asian students and they're explaining to me, "Well, my parents aren't too happy about me taking [Social Science courses]. They really want me to take something that has more to do with a career path type of thing. What are you going to do with [a Social Science major]?" Because that's an important question for students, if their parents are saying, "If you go to nursing school, you're going to be a nurse." That seems like an easy transition for them. But to say that if you go into [this Social Science field], you're going to be…it's not quite that clean cut. And what does that path actually look like for those students? So, if you don't go on to get the full PhD and be [an expert in a Social Science field], what are those other career paths that they can actually take? So that kind of feedback has changed the way we have marketed our [Social Science] program. Like what kind of jobs could you do with a [Social Science] major? So, my presentations that I do are different now. I'll have that component where, hey, there's some critical thinking, there's so much learning that you can do, but I also include that academic, how it's related to your job component as well.

Changing how the department approaches marketing their majors to students and their family members, and by facilitating more conversations around major-career connections particularly for their AAPI students, Miles has seen an increase in the number of students majoring in this Social Science major:

> We have definitely had an increase. I have talked to students about what did they want to see, and they want to see that. If their parents are paying for something, a lot of times they're like, "Well, what are you going to do with this [Social Science] degree? What does this mean that you're looking for?" It doesn't feel like a real degree sometimes to more traditional Asian parents. So, we have to market that to show them what could you actually do with a bachelor's in [Social Sciences] or an associate degree in [Social Sciences], what kinds of jobs could you actually get with that.

Additionally, as a co-chair of the Diversity workgroup, Miles works very closely with the AANAPISI program director, Ron Reyes, who is also a co-chair of this campus committee. She is also on the advisory board with Reyes for the Umoja program, a program that expanded from the AANAPISI program, which targets to serve the needs of the African American student population at WCCC.

Gaining a deeper understanding of AAPI students' needs through the AANAPISI program, particularly the need for students to develop a greater autonomy when deciding on a major, this has led Miles to help implement relevant practices. For instance, to help students build confidence in selecting a major, Miles has collaborated with the AANAPISI program to facilitate several student workshops.

With the implementation of the grant, Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty), has come to recognize the importance of developing culturally-sensitive approaches when serving AAPI students and their families particularly around this unique need of selecting a major while navigating family expectations. Garcia said,

> For a lot of my students, their decision making about their major or what they're going to do for a living is very collaborative in nature. We have to be very sensitive about that because our American society is more individualistic than pluralistic and if we're not careful then students may not have conversations about the conversations they're having with their families about what they want to do for a living or what they want to do with their education…We have to make sure that we check our own cultural values when we're having these conversations with students, so that we're making sure that we allow them to represent their experiences as is and then within that we still have to make sure that we help students choose what they feel is best for them and in some cases that means that they have to have difficult conversations with their families.

Family Responsibilities vs. Educational Needs

Family is an important part of AAPI students' lives and experiences, just like all students at this community college. With the implementation of the grant, in addition to understanding the pressure AAPI students may experience from their families while selecting a "good major", participants have come to understand that students are often placed in a situation where they have to choose between family responsibilities and taking care of their educational needs. Understanding how AAPI students share caregiving responsibilities with family members while navigating their educational needs has great implications for unraveling a stereotype that

assumes the universal success of all AAPIs and more specifically, the assumption that AAPI families prioritize and invest in their children's education over family situations (Lee, 2006).

In higher education, this stereotype is particularly problematic as it overlooks AAPI students from the least advantaged backgrounds (e.g., first-generation college students, low-income students, etc.) and assumes AAPI students do not need additional educational support in achieving educational success. With the implementation of the grant, study participants have taken a closer look at how students navigate their family situations and their own educational needs. They find that students face challenges with meeting their educational needs because they often prioritize their family's needs over their own education.

Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) discussed how family life can impact students:

> one that has come up quite a bit is personal life and family life. And this has come up a few times in my classes where students stop coming to class or doesn't turn in assignments because… and sometimes they'll share a really personal stories, just there's chaos going on at home with family members and it really interferes with their academic path.

Hope Reynolds (Asian European, Transfer Center Specialist), who works closely with the AANAPISI program students and staff, has learned that "[Students] may have other [needs] outside [of] education like family, work and other obligations, which is very unique here at [WCCC]…this is where I get into the [AANAPISI program]…[and found out] where it's some of those family needs supersede an educational need."

Similarly, through the efforts of implementing the grant, Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) emphasized the significance of understanding the role of family related to supporting students' educational trajectory:

> …getting their AAPI families on board. That education is important as opposed to going to work, and balancing life with that. And that return on investment is really good. Having that because traditionally, a lot of homes are like, "Well, no. It's either you go to this to become a doctor to do this, this and this." There's only a few standard ... What

> we've learned in all of our qualitative work is that there's a standard, like five jobs basically.

Another senior-level administrator, Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) has gained a deeper understanding of this unique need as she became more involved with campus-wide conversations as a result of this particular grant and shared that, “I think there are some challenges there in terms of what are student's responsibilities or expectations in terms of their contribution to their family versus their individual advancement academically.”

After the implementation of the grant, Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) has been helping students assess the challenges they face due to an environment outside of their classrooms (e.g., home, etc.) and find ways to navigate these challenges through campus student services and resources. The focus is to provide students the tools and a problem-solving mindset. Latu discussed,

> I think it's something that we continually have to revisit with our students because one semester they can be great, but then the next semester things that can happen at home that can impact their ability to be successful in the classroom. And so, when we talk about them being able to recognize the things that happen outside the classroom impacts what they do in the classroom, that's the beauty of them being able to see, "Oh, I'm not failing at this because it's me." Or it's like, "I feel like this because something is happening outside of my environment. And so, for me, how do I reach out to these different resources to help me address these things?"

Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) discussed the complexities of understanding the compounded challenges of being a community college student and an AAPI student while navigating their families’ expectations. For instance, while some AAPI families prefer their children (AAPI students) work and contribute to the family rather than spending time on school, there are also high (and unrealistic) academic expectations. Therefore, families can dismiss students’ challenges while navigating a community college because parents have initially

expected their children to attend a four-year university rather than transferring from a community college to a four-year institution. Jude said,

> For some [AAPI] families, they probably say, "Well why are you going to school? You need to be staying home and helping the family instead."…Some of the tension exists because of having to spend time in school as opposed to having to work. That varies among students, but I think that's out there. I think there are cross generational barriers, like what a perception of a parent who may have gone to school or not gone to school. I meet a lot of them, I think we still have a large population for which the parents didn't go to school, or if they went to school, they didn't go to school here. So, they have different perspectives of what schooling is about. I'm sure there is a lack of understanding of what a community college is, and maybe for those that think their child should go or would go to a UC or something else ending up in a community college not understanding what that means.

As a way of acknowledging the educational success of students and the support provided by their families, an end-of the-year graduation celebration takes place at the AANAPISI center. This annual AANAPISI grant-funded celebration is open to all members of the institution as well as their families and community members. Jude believes this celebration is particularly important for inviting family and community members, recognizing the support provided by AAPI families and their communities to ensure the educational success of AAPI students. Jude stated,

> It's just really taking the time to celebrate successes, and I think for certain group of students, the ones that we have [at WCCC] because I don't know that it will be as meaningful if you are in [a four-year institution]…they're used to being at the success level, but for the population that we serve [who are community college students] I'm sure [degree completion or transfer] is very meaningful.

It has been a learning experience for Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; EDI) as she reflects on what it means for WCCC to be a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution through her professional work and position as a Director of the Office of EDI. For instance, her involvement working closely with Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program, serving on various campus-wide committees, and having equity-based conversations around institutionalizing the AANAPISI program after the grant

ends, have led her to gain deeper understandings of AAPI students' challenges with their own families, particularly specific equity-related issues faced by AAPI students and their families.

> I've had to do more research and more understanding of what AANAPISI is…Issues were talked about, but kind of just holistically. Professionally, I've just had to do more because that's primarily the student population that I work with. So, having to have a better understanding of what that looks like, especially with [equity-based] issues, what's happening in the Asian community…so that I can be better prepared for when I work with students. It's definitely made me do more work, which is always good.

Therefore, family is an important part of AAPI students' educational experiences. Through the grant, institutional agents not only gained a deeper understanding of the complexities AAPI students may face with selecting a major, but also the need to support AAPI students as they navigate their families' expectations.

Developing Leadership and Self-Advocacy Skills

In their 2015-2020 AANAPISI funding application, WCCC proposed to foster AAPI students' leadership skills. With the implementation of the grant, institutional agents shared the extent to which the grant shaped their understandings of the need to foster AAPI students' leadership and self-advocacy skills, which include proactively seeking helpful resources for themselves.

One of the opportunities the grant created is the annual AANAPISI-funded AAPI student leadership conference, otherwise known as the AAPI Student Leadership Conference. Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared that a deeper understanding of the unique educational needs of students, particularly a large proportion of AAPI students in the AANAPISI program (over 70% of AANAPISI program students are AAPI students), had led to holding the conference. This conference provides unique opportunities for students to organize, present, and facilitate workshops or small group discussions with a focus on better serving AAPI students in higher education. Zhang shared,

> I think that the students are balancing a lot. The first semester I was there, I pulled a student mentor and I asked her, "What are some of the things that you talk about in your mentorship meetings, because I need to know what community resources to pull if [WCCC] is not addressing them,"…and there were a lot of things that popped up, and that's how we based [WCCC's AANAPISI grant-funded student leadership conference] off of, on what some of those needs were…because we were having students facilitate those presentations and then eventually coordinating those presentations, which, in other areas, most practitioners and professionals don't trust students to do that, or they're like, "No, it's way too hard for us to take the time to train our students to do it, so we're just going to do it, ourselves.

Cathy Garcia (Chicana, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) discussed her own experience attending the AAPI student leadership conference and seeing how students, who used to be shy in front of people, were confident in speaking in front of a large group and facilitating workshops. Garcia said,

> That event [AANAPISI student leadership conference] is awesome because I see students that…start[ed] off very timidly [at the beginning of the year]…[are] put[ting] on...workshops [that] are engaging and they're well researched and they're very well presented. Thanks to that funding that we have people that can create that type of experience for our students…I try to go every year and I go to the workshops that my [EOPS] students [who are also AANAPISI program participants] are putting on. I shouldn't be surprised but I always am. I'm always just surprised at how professional they are, and I know they get a lot of training and support from the mentors at the [AANAPISI program] but they seriously do excellent work.…it is my favorite thing that the [AANAPISI program] does.

According to Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), she has developed a deeper understanding around the need to recognize Pacific Islander (PI) students who were often overlooked due to a larger number of Asian American students at WCCC. In fact, the AAPI student leadership conference was a particularly great space for PI students to engage in conversations around their identities with fellow PIs and other conference attendees.

> [The AAPI student leadership conference] was the first thing that came to mind, which is our conference for community college Asian American and Pacific Islander students. I think in particular, that's a really important one for Pacific Islander students, because I think that's one of the only times, they see themselves there in a big way. Because I think [an AAPI community-based college students' organization] has come, some other PI institutions have come, or departments. But besides [the student leadership conference], I

> think on a regular basis would be the workshops, being able to unpack identity. Our programs, like leadership and mentorship, I think that's really where people's friendships and connections grow.

Furthermore, with the implementation of the grant, one of the key activities that students have become involved with is advocating for participation in the 2020 census. Participation in the 2020 census allows funding and other resources to be allocated for specific racial/ethnic groups and provides opportunities for these communities to advocate for themselves. Students have informed their peers and campus/community members to understand the significance of participating in the 2020 census. Put another way, the grant created opportunities to foster student leadership and deepened students' understandings around social issues. Lim said,

> Secondary to [the focus of the AANAPISI grant] is getting students involved in those [social] issues. So, a lot of the effort has actually been around the census. So, a lot of student leaders, a lot of the efforts are trying to get revolved around how do we get students involved? One, understanding the importance of census, but how they can reach out to other students in counting those populations that are really hard to count. So, I think we've been thinking about the involvement, the development piece, but also how we serve those, all the social issues that our students are experiencing.

Similarly, Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared how the grant created opportunities "[brought] awareness of the census to the [WCCC] community…[and helped people at [WCCC] to see the impact that [the AANAPISI grant] has on students." An example of student leadership is students encouraging their peers to participate in the census. Therefore, a deeper understanding of creating opportunities to foster student leadership was gained as a result of the grant.

Some study participants gained a deeper understanding of the need and opportunity to foster students' self-advocacy skills while collaborating with the AANAPISI program. Samantha Cheng (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) interacts with a large proportion of both older and younger-generation AAPI students. In sharing her experiences working with younger-

generation AAPIs and recognizing their need to develop self-advocacy skills, Cheng described how she collaborated with the AANAPISI program during Welcome Week to initiate student outreach and facilitate opportunities for students to learn about campus resources:

> So self-advocacy is a challenge for the younger generation [AAPIs]…And for [the Fairview campus,] I know they have the [AANAPISI center] and when we do Welcome Week, we help them for the collaboration. So, we have a lot of free things just to get [students, particularly younger-generation AAPIs] to come over and give them flyers and stuff like that. So, one of the challenges for [younger-generation AAPIs] is just to come over and just to make that time to look…The young ones, when I do events, it's like pulling teeth just to get them to come over to the table so I can even give them a flyer. Or if I want to give them that promotional item, they won't even do it.

Reflecting on her experiences collaborating with an Asian American student (Jenny) in the AANAPISI program who recently transferred to a four-year university, Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/ Department Chair) saw how the grant-funded opportunities helped strengthen students' leadership skills (in this case, helped co-facilitate a workshop at the AANAPISI center) and thus, recognized the importance of creating opportunities and space to develop students' leadership skills. Miles stated,

> [Jenny] is empowered to do more workshops once she transfers. So, I would hope that people do know more about the [AANAPISI program], see [the AANAPISI center] as more than just a student lounge or like a student life place for students just to hang out. It's more than just a student lounge.

As a result of the grant, Amanda Basa, an Asian American who is the lead staff of the AANAPISI grant-funded leadership program, developed a deeper understanding of the importance of fostering AAPI students' leadership skills. One understanding she has gained is the need to create opportunities for students to explore their cultural identity, understand what it means to be a leader—that there are different types of leaders—and learn how to navigate power dynamics. Basa discussed,

> In the leadership program…I try to always start with some of the things that hinder students from becoming or what they perceive as leadership. Because I know sometimes

> being an AAPI, there's certain barriers or challenges when it comes to leadership position just because you identify being AAPI. So, I think those are things that I try to recognize first. And the thing is, there's actually a lot of the students I work with, they kind of all don't believe themselves to be this leader because of that perception of they have to be extroverted, they need to be loud and need to be an out there person. So, because they're shy, they're quiet and they're just like, I've never been a leader before.
>
> Part of my goal is being able to understand what they bring to the table, what are some skills and things that they're really strong at that makes them be a leader. But I think a big part of it is just having to explore their identity and recognize the challenges that prevent them from thinking they're a leader… [and] recognize power awareness. Especially because if like students are going to present to admins and staff, that's a huge way. Like you have to really recognize power awareness, or it might feel really intimidating being in those meeting rooms.

Furthermore, with the implementation of the grant, Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) has focused on providing opportunities for students to develop as an independent worker and practice public speaking with a goal of helping them gain confidence:

> I noticed that if a student was presenting it to each other, they have a much better attention span and then they're asking a lot more questions so it's a lot more engaging. But at the same time, it felt like [students] had more of an ownership because then it's like "I'm doing this research, I'm the one that's facilitating this." And then so it was definitely a great learning experience from that.
>
> But I think the hardest part is always trying to provide that confidence that they are able to do that. It's so funny because I kept asking her [who was about to present in front their peers], "How are you feeling about it?" She is like, "I'm nervous. I don't know what to say." But then when I asked students in a way of like, "What do you know right now?" She knows all the information. I think it's just about her ability to be able to present it, share it.

According to Basa, helping students to understand the different types of leadership styles and realize that they themselves are leaders are key when fostering students' leadership skills. For instance, Basa saw how one of her shy students, who only heard about deficit narratives in regard to one's own background, had actively participated in organizing the AAPI student leadership conference after gaining a deeper understanding of what it means to be a leader particularly through their grant-funded opportunities. Basa stated,

> So, this one [Asian American] student who's just like, "I'm super shy. People have told me that I'm never going to succeed" because it's hard for her to articulate her words and people always thought that she's a slower thinker, which is why she didn't feel like she could succeed. But the same person is helping lead actually [the AANAPISI-funded AAPI student leadership conference at WCCC] in terms of planning. So, it's been a huge [transformation], if you talk to her where she was like her first semester here last semester, working to now, it's been such a huge growth. And also, just students taking ownership of things that they want to do. I think that's always the biggest thing this makes the job worth it. Because you know that if the impact that you're creating is having students create action steps towards it, I always feel like, "oh my gosh, my heart, they're really doing it."

Relatedly, receiving support through the grant on developing their leadership skills, students in the AANAPISI program established student clubs based on their interests. Prior to the formation of these new clubs, student clubs related to academic majors only existed at WCCC. Basa discussed,

> We have three to four active clubs at [WCCC]. And [our AANAPISI program] students got to attend these on the first week of school. Then our students [particularly AAPIs] felt really inspired because this is something that they wanted to do. So, they got to start their own club. They decided how to organize it themselves and now there's at least three clubs created from our [AAPI] students [in the AANAPISI program]. And that's a really big deal because for the longest time we've always had these three to four like clubs that they're related to their majors only. But we're really surprised that our own AAPI student leaders are creating our clubs based on their interests. So, a gaming club, K-pop club, and Plant-based food club.

All in all, Amanda Basa has come to recognize that when students are able to understand what it means to be a leader and develop self-advocacy skills, they can build more confidence and become actively involved. For instance, Basa shared that at an end of the year celebration event, which was hosted by the AANAPISI program, one of Basa's students invited his family and presented in front of all of them including his little sister. This was particularly a significant moment for his family including his younger sister because he is a first-generation Asian American college student. In addition, as students developed leadership skills as a result of the

grant, their understandings of their various identities were more fully articulated than before. Basa shared,

> I think some of the highlights are like one of my AAPI student mentors transferred last spring and that was such a great achievement because transferring is always a big deal. But then like they've learned so much through our program because one he brought his sister to like this [end of the year celebration] event where you learn a little bit more about your [AAPI] identity. And I was really surprised that he brought like a family member to that because I'm just like, that's a really big deal. You don't normally bring people to those kinds of events or share those events. I'm surprised he brought his sister along with him.
>
> And I think another big highlight is just when students get to the point where they start realizing how their identity impacts their own goals. And then especially how they are able to articulate like what it means to be like first-gen, like let's say Vietnamese American. That's always been like my proudest achievement just because it's like, "I'm really glad that's what you're getting."

As a result of the grant, recognizing the need to foster students' leadership and self-advocacy skills, institutional agents encouraged students to take on leadership roles on campus such as participating in the Associated Student Government (ASG). Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program, recently took on a new position as the Director of Student Affairs and now works directly with the ASG. According to Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President), Reyes' new position is unique because he is at a place where he works with both the ASG and students who are interested in serving in diverse leadership roles on campus. Jude said,

> I remember the time that I've been here there's been very high involvement [of AAPI students]…not only [Daisy] was a first generation Asian American, outstanding student government, she's transferring I think at the end of this semester. [Another student in ASG] right now is Asian American. [The student] before, she was also Asian American…So, of all the [student] presidents that have been here, since I've been here, there's been more Asian American, including in their executive cabinet…I think it makes sense because [Ron] is now also working with student government, and I think even that connection. We've seen more [AAPI] students step up in terms of leadership positions in the student government because of that [connection] as well.

Similarly, Maria Jackson (White, Faculty) has seen an increase in participation among AANAPISI program students, particularly Vietnamese-Americans, in the ASG for the past few years:

> Right now, we've had some students from [the AANAPISI program] on the associated student government or the ASG and both last year and this year, we've had both times Vietnamese students service as presidents. We brought them in [during an academic senate meeting] and heard them talk about what's working for them at the college and what isn't and their firsthand experiences about things that have been put on. So, it's all very positive. It's a good feeling to be connected with these values in mind and these values on the table for us.

Seeing many AANAPISI program students participating in ASG, Ted Jacobs (White, Veterans Center Specialist) has come to understand that when students foster their leadership and self-advocacy skills, they are more willing to actively participate in campus programs:

> Look at the student government, the few that are on there that are involved always come out of the [AANAPISI program]…I can pick out a certain percentage of club members and you'll find them in the [AANAPISI center] at one point or another. I can pick out people in student government, you will find them at the AANAPISI center some point in time. It's those people that are involved, they're involved in all things on campus…So, [with the funding,] we're able to spread the wealth and help students that way [by fostering their leadership skills]. I think that's why the [AANAPISI program] has to continue…[think of] the benefit that the college gets from [the implementation of the grant]…

Like Jacobs, Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) emphasized the need to foster students' understanding of how and why to utilize resources to advocate for oneself. AAPI students, who utilized the AANAPISI program's student support programs and services, were more willing to access other campus resources on a regular basis. Lim said,

> I feel like the [the AANAPISI program] was a funnel for a lot of our AAPI students into other resources on campus. Like, most of our AAPI students who primarily used the [AANAPISI center] also primally saw success coaches, or also saw the counselors regularly every semester, were in EOPS or involved on campus in some other way. Even a few of our students got involved with, not even [WCCC], but community orgs. [A Vietnamese community organization],[in this] County, which is for Vietnamese Americans activist group. I feel like [this Vietnamese community organization] is a very specific resource that we connected with [our AAPI] students who couldn't connect with

> in that way. [AAPI students in the AANAPISI program] definitely got involved outside of campus and within campus in a big way.

In closing, with the implementation of the grant, institutional agents have gained a deeper understanding of the need and opportunities to foster student leadership and self-advocacy skills. Furthermore, as the 2015-2020 AANAPISPI grant particularly focused on developing student leadership skills, institutional agents saw an increase in student participation in leadership roles and confidence to share their stories.

AAPI Students and Mental Health Services

The mental health services at WCCC serves a large proportion of AAPI students who are connected to the AANAPISI grant in various ways (e.g., grant-funded student support programs and services, etc.). One notable reason is because the mental health services office at the Fairview campus is located right across the AANAPISI center. The AANAPISI center is a unique space for students to access various grant-funded student initiatives and other campus resources in one place. Put another way, this center is one of the central places on campus with high foot traffic; students gather at this space to study, hang out, and utilize various services. Illuminating these unique institutional contexts as a result of the grant, participants shared that the AANAPISI center being near the Mental Health services office and being in a highly trafficked place on campus had increased students' participation in other campus resources such as the mental health services. Carrie Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) stated, "So, the Asian-Pacific Islander population. Yeah, it's gone as high as 50% of my caseload or the students that I see. In terms of workshops, [the number of AAPI students is] actually a little higher in the workshops…" In addition, the changes in institutional agents' understandings of AAPI students, particularly their participation in the mental health services, as a result of the grant have fostered collaboration between the AANAPISI and mental health services programs.

Lopez, a mental health therapist, and her colleagues at the mental health services were introduced to the AANAPISI grant for the first time during Flex Day. A Flex Day takes place twice a year at WCCC where institutional agents learn from each other at professional development workshops. Lopez and another mental health therapists heard a presentation given by Ron Reyes, the AANAPSI program director. During this presentation, Reyes focused on what the AANAPISI grant is about and implications for understanding and serving students, particularly a large proportion of AAPI students, at WCCC. Gaining a deeper understanding of the grant and the unique needs of AAPI students, Lopez shared that this led to opportunities for the mental health services to collaborate with the AANAPISI program staff on student workshops. Lopez said,

> The first I heard about the federal program, the AANAPISI was on Flex Day… it seemed like [the AANAPISI program] had a platform [created by the grant]…[WCCC has] such a high online population, and nothing is centralized [with] four different campuses…very difficult to figure out how our students are going to know about [the mental health services]. Since then, I've done workshops with [the AANAPISI program]. It worked out really, really well. I enjoyed that. I would love to do more workshops with them.

Staff who coordinate mental health services have collaborated with the AANAPISI program to develop specific workshops for AAPI students including a workshop on anxiety and depression. Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPSI Program Staff) added, “Mental health. My goodness. I feel like that was probably one of the biggest ones that I saw experienced [by our AAPI students]. Depression and anxiety were something that came up often.”

Mental health therapists focused on the science behind anxiety and depression (e.g., brain activities) while the AANAPISI program staff addressed the stigma of mental illness. Carrie Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) shared,

> One workshop was about understanding depression and anxiety.. we took a cultural perspective on it…so I approached the [AANAPISI program staff] and I said, "Can we do this together?" They said, "Absolutely. We'd love to do this together." I did more of the

> educational, what happens to the brain piece, and then the [AANAPISI program staff] talked about your own story, how people approach depression and anxiety, how is it viewed, what are the myths behind it, that kind of thing.

According to Lopez, mental health therapists selected these specific topics after gaining a deeper understanding of AAPI students' unique needs as a result of the AANAPISI grant. During mental health counseling appointments, although many AAPI students described symptoms that were related to being anxious or depressed (e.g., not eating, not sleeping, etc.), many students did not further articulate that they were feeling anxious or depressed. Lopez described that this unique challenge of AAPI students is associated with the stigma of mental illness that exists within AAPI communities. Lopez said,

> I think the way [mental health] comes up for AAPI students is stress, they're stressed a lot, which is very typical. Culturally, when I'm looking at it culturally, and again, culturally meaning the whole eastern side of the world that there is that aspect of these things doesn't really exist, or it's due to weakness, or they do exist, but we're not going to talk about it. Everybody's aware of it, but we're all going to keep it under wraps, because there's a big shame portion to that. So, people will come in and [say] "I'm stressed out," "I'm not sleeping," "I'm not eating well." They'll give me symptoms, but they won't say "I'm depressed."
>
> In working on that, the other stuff just comes out, because every person loves to tell a story and to tell their story. So, I hear their story. So, we start talking about, "Well, how can we shift your story a little bit so that this doesn't end up being the end of your story?" What you think is going to be the end won't be the end. Some students can even tolerate me saying, "I'm the physician but for emotion, because maybe your emotion has gotten the best of you and so let's figure out a way to manage that again. Just as if you were to have an illness, a medical illness, you would go see the doctor to learn how to manage that." So, I found that that's worked really well.

As a result of the AANAPISI grant, Lopez not only gained a deeper understanding of the mental health needs of AAPI students but also opportunities to better serve these specific needs of AAPI students by collaborating with the AANAPISI program on workshops. This also has led to developing creative and culturally-sensitive approaches when talking to AAPI students in particular about various mental health issues.

Natalie Diaz (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) shared that with the implementation of the grant, there have been various opportunities to learn more deeply how academic stress can lead to mental health issues. On the one hand, there are AAPI students that are experiencing academic difficulties and have various mental health issues as well. On the other hand, although some AAPI students may seem to be doing well because they are passing the course, they may still feel stressed or depressed. This point is also related to AAPIs being overlooked in educational research, policy, and practice; just because AAPIs may be doing well academically, their unique needs should never be overlooked. Thus, it is important to be aware of these complex mental health needs and experiences of AAPI students. Diaz stated,

> So for many of [AAPIs] they're in fact doing well academically. Their academics are a protective and resiliency factor. And the ones that are struggling are reporting, " I'm still passing my classes, I'm still doing well on my exams. However, because of my persistent depressed mood or my lack of motivation, I'm finding that I'm cramming, studying last minute and not keeping up with the readings, but I'm still passing my classes." So there's that group of students and I would say that's probably the majority of what I'm seeing.
>
> Then there are the students that unfortunately are on the brink of getting kicked out of school, are on academic probation are also EOPS students and are on the brink of losing that eligibility. And so, these are students that have more complex mental health needs and experiences.

Furthermore, Lopez found discrepancies between how AAPI students felt about accessing mental health services and how they shared this experience with their families. Lopez shared,

> Our needs assessment said 69% said [seeking out mental health services] is not a stigma. They did not feel stigmatized by having to seek out mental health services. I thought, "That's interesting." I was shocked by that. So, our needs assessment was done here. So, I thought, "Oh, that's high." That's a really high percentage of people in the Asian American population saying, "No we would seek out services. That wouldn't be an issue for us." Now, would they tell their family that they're seeking out services? Probably not.

In other words, saving face or the cultural issue of feeling ashamed in seeking resources such the mental health services can shape the experiences of AAPI students. Although students may think

they can seek out mental health services, they may not end up accessing these services because of potential shame from their families and AAPI communities.

The mental health issues of AAPI students can further be understood by diverse ethnic sub-groups and generational differences between the first-generation parents and children who are born and raised in the U.S. For Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President), these understandings in particular have developed as a result of pursuing and implementing the AANAPISI grant on campus:

> I was reading some of our research before [implementing] the AANAPISI [grant]…I know that in some of the literature it's really the mental health issues that they deal with. For example, the largest number of teen age suicides over K through 12 are from the Filipino community and it's because of these generational differences [between] a first-generation parent [and] a person who was born and raised here… There is a great need for mental health services, and yet that's a service that most [AAPI] students…[have] some stigma.

In discussing AAPI students' unique needs related to mental health, the issue of generational difference was also brough up by Samantha Cheng (Asian American, College Academic Advisor).

> [With the implementation of the grant] I think [I have learned more deeply about]…mental health [issues of AAPI students]…due to depression or the anxiety of the classes. For the younger generation, or you're born here, for them it's just adjusting to it. It's not the language barrier and [more of] trying to adjust to like, "Oh, I have four classes how do I manage my time, how I do stay calm in a test." Just that and being that "Oh, now I'm an adult." For the older students...language is a huge barrier… It's always that stress and that's the challenge [for older AAPI students].

Similarly, Carrie Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) gained a deeper understanding of a particular mental health issue, stress, that younger-generation AAPI students faced in taking to their parents or the older-generation AAPI students:

> My younger crowd [of AAPI students] that have come in [for mental health services], they're very clear. "I don't want my parents to know I'm here." I'll say, a lot of them, some of the issues that they're having is with their parents. So, [I say] "You're more than welcome to bring them in." [Students say]"Oh no, don't let them know that I'm here,"

> because again they can't talk to the older generation, but they're aware of that. I think they're talking amongst themselves about it.

Furthermore, a deeper understanding of AAPI students' mental health of balancing home and school has evolved as a result of the grant. Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) noticed that many AAPI students shared their struggles of "having to maintain home life, school and how that impacts their mental health." Therefore, it is important to understand the complexities of AAPI students' mental health issues and the extent to which AAPI students' diverse backgrounds may shape their experiences differently.

Natalie Diaz's (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) recent experience with AAPI students at WCCC is a unique one. AAPI students have asked Diaz to serve as an advisor for a newly created student wellness club on campus. Diaz shared,

> I met students…heavily involved on campus and they were [AANAPISI program] students, tabling during welcome week…and we struck up a conversation about mental health and students said, "Hey you're the mental health therapist here. I'd love to start a club. These are my ideas." And I said, "Look, great, let's start it." I just think that they're a group of students that are achievers [and] involved. And it seemed like a natural fit.

What was particularly unique for Diaz was that AAPI students that initiated the student wellness club were all active participants of the AANAPISI program; Diaz argued that because AANAPISI program students were guided to actively engage with various campus resources, they were willing to approach a mental health therapist to start a new club. Diaz said,

> I have a predominant caseload of students that are Vietnamese, culturally-identified. And in a lot of those conversations, the [AANAPISI center] comes up. I can say about [AANAPISI program] students, is they are accessing our services…if students are already involved and engaged with a center like [the AANAPISI center] that might make them more proactive and seeking mental health services because looking at their programming, they I think touch on a lot of interpersonal themes that would maybe compel someone to come to see a mental health therapist.

Thus, understanding the impact of the grant on serving AAPI students, particularly in fostering AAPI students' understandings of the mental health services, is highlighted through Diaz's experiences.

In addition, given that the AAPI students who are working closely with Diaz are also a part of the AANAPISI program, the mental health services and the AANAPISI program are discussing opportunities to co-facilitate workshops and events by including students to initiate some of these peer-led workshops and events. Diaz stated,

> So, I think there is an interest in collaborating [with their AANAPISI program] and I did talk about that with the students. "This is a place for you to also create trainings and workshops for your peers and be able to provide them in this setting and, or in a different classroom setting." But again, the collaboration with the [AANAPISI program] seems to be pretty natural.

One related understanding gained specifically by mental health therapists as a result of the grant is a need to have a mental health therapist who can speak students' native languages and better understand their cultural backgrounds. Diaz said, "I'm advocating personally in my position for a Vietnamese speaking and culturally-identified therapist because as an AANAPISI designated site, it doesn't make sense to not have a person from the community provide mental health support."

Overall, with the implementation of the grant, study participants have gained deeper understandings of AAPI students' needs and challenges related to mental health issues, which have fostered collaboration opportunities between the AANAPISI program and mental health services. For mental health therapists in particular, as they have gained a deeper understanding of AAPI students and their mental health issues, unique opportunities have been created such as implementing creative and culturally-sensitive approaches to discuss mental health issues with

AAPI students and developing a new student wellness club on campus in collaboration with AAPI students from the AANAPISPI program.

Diversifying the Representation of AAPI Institutional Agents

Institutional agents at WCCC come from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. With the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, study participants gained a deeper understanding of the need to promote better representation of AAPI institutional agents that reflects the AAPI student population. This is particularly important for supporting AAPI students because an increased representation of AAPI institutional agents can provide additional opportunities for AAPI students to interact with a more diverse group of AAPI mentors. According to Maria Jackson (White, Faculty), the grant has helped create a space that is "staffed with representatives that specifically know about the issues in these that they may have," which has helped students to feel more comfortable being in this space.

After the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) shared that there had been a greater awareness of the significance of diversifying the representation of AAPI institutional agents. Furthermore, this led to a deeper understanding of the need to promote more AAPI representation among institutional agents at WCCC. Jude said,

> [Being federally-funded beyond being designated alone] there is a greater sensitivity to the needs and how to be more responsive to AAPI students. At the president's level, I'm here to represent and make sure that students' interests and their needs are met…That there is an advocate…Also, the importance of making sure that our faculty are more representative…I'm an Asian American president and I'm very proud of the fact that one of our vice presidents is Vietnamese- American, at one time, VP of admin services, very well respected…there's great diversity in the classified ranks…[and it is important,] making sure that our faculty are more representative [of our students' demography]… I think we continue to want to make sure that [WCCC] is aware of the changes demographically [for students], [and their educational] challenges.

In addition, according to Jude, the fact that WCCC serves a large proportion of racial/ethnic minority students and is a federally recognized AAPI-serving institution, fosters " a

sense of pride seeing that we have AAPI students that are represented at that [institutional] level and hearing them actually transform to very articulate representatives of student government and the students."; diversifying the representation of AAPI institutional agents can be understood in a similar way.

Conversing with AAPI students through the AANAPISI program, Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) also learned that many of her AAPI students felt more connected to faculty and staff who came from the same or similar cultural and racial/ethnic backgrounds. Cha said,

> …one thing that I appreciate is, the staff and faculty are, I'd say they're pretty diverse. And so, at EOPS, there's many, there's a lot of staff who are Vietnamese. And so, I think when students see that they can also relate to them. I've met a couple of faculty [members], who are Vietnamese as well. And so, I think that's also helped students to connect with staff and faculty who look like them, which is cool… And so, I do appreciate that there's faculty and staff who are Vietnamese and can connect with students.

The AANAPISI grant-funded mentorship program at WCCC in particular is a student support service that matches students with mentors. Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) shared,

> I really like [the] mentoring program [that was implemented as result of the grant], I think it's very strong. For AAPI specifically, if they do identify as AAPI maybe even younger, older, then having someone [at the AANAPISI center] that they could talk to and talk about their different experiences might help them.

Gaining a greater awareness of the need for more AAPI mentors as a result of the grant, Santos hired a Vietnamese-speaking work-study student at the Career center. "I had a work study before. I wanted someone that spoke Vietnamese because we would go to do presentations in classrooms and I wanted someone that kind of looked like them and spoke their language and had the culture to speak about that as opposed to someone like me, for example," said Santos. As Santos facilitated various workshops at the AANAPISI center, he also learned that even if AAPI

students and institutional agents are from different ethnic sub-groups (e.g., Vietnamese and Filipinos ,etc.), they can relate to each other because of both being Asian/Asian-American. Santos shared,

> I would say if [students] come from a different [Asian] country, we [still] bond…some are really assimilated already, some are not. But either way, we always look back…We always bond about how it was over there [in our home countries], especially for the older ones because they give me wisdom. I'm like, "Wow, you went to the war. You escaped. You were a refugee."

Working closely with AAPI students and collaborating on workshops with the AANAPISI program, Natalie Diaz (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) gained a deeper understanding of the need to ensure a mental health therapist that can both linguistically and culturally understand and serve their large and growing number of AAPI students, particularly their Vietnamese-American students. "I believe that it is important for representation to exist and for inclusivity and I think that could have a different impact, " said Diaz as she advocated for a Vietnamese-speaking mental health therapist.

Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) suggested the need to have more campus-wide conversations about communicating what does it mean to become a federally funded AAPI-serving institution to the larger campus community. This includes highlighting specific student services that focus on AAPI students. Davis said,

> So, we have a significant proportion of our staff who are Vietnamese Americans, who provide all kinds of translation regularly. But we as a college do not communicate that we operate in Vietnamese and English. If you walk into admissions, financial aid, EOPS, many courses, faculty are teaching both in English and Vietnamese regularly…But you will not find a flyer for the college, for non-ESL instruction that is in English and in Vietnamese. So, it's sort of like we do this, but we don't name it. We don't acknowledge it and so there is a need for more conversation about what our role is as an AANAPISI.

Furthermore, promoting a better representation of AAPI institutional agents as a result of the grant, Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) experienced a greater

sense of belonging as an Asian American staff member herself. Ocampo shared, "I really like working in an institution where I can see that the staff are very like me; the students are very like me. We have directors that are Asian Americans. They're like me. I feel a sense of belonging, as well."

Since there is a large population of Asian American staff and students, institutional agents describe the importance of promoting a better representation of Pacific Islander institutional agents in particular. Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) shared, "We have some, not a lot [of Pacific Islander institutional agents], but we have some staff who are Pacific Islanders." Thus, an understanding of the need to hire more Pacific Islander staff has evolved as a result of the grant.

Among many AAPI staff members who are hired through the AANAPISI grant, there is only one Pacific Islander (PI) staff. Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) described, "For Pacific Islander students specifically, it was seeing representations of themselves, both in faculty and even in the [AANAPISI center]. I think [Lana Latu] being the only PI representative on our [AANAPISI program] team, was a lot of pressure on her…And so I think for the Pacific Islanders specifically, the challenge is still remaining invisible." While Lana Latu, an AANAPISI program staff who is a PI, is able to connect more deeply with the PI student population at WCCC, there continues to be a great need of having more PI representation among institutional agents at WCCC.

In addition to institutional agents, it is important to diversify the representation of college leaders in order to recognize and better serve the unique needs of AAPI students. With the implementation of the grant, Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) has gained a deeper understanding of the need to advocate for AAPI students at local and national conferences

and leadership meetings. Now with more AAPI leaders at these conferences and meetings, Jude feels a greater sense of community as she continues to advocate for the need to recognize the unique educational needs of AAPI students. Jude shared,

> It has certainly encouraged me to go to certain programs like the Higher Education Summit or attend APAHE to be with other Asian Americans and to learn about other practices. So, to probably be more informed even within the different circles, professional organizations…So, I think we provide a perspective and that could be taken as advocacy, a lot of times it's just informing if there is a voice that's missing, we make sure that we provide it… [the federal AANAPISI funding] has allowed me to also be more informed about the specific needs, or concerns, or barriers that are there for AAPIs so that I can better articulate them and advocate for them.

Furthermore, Jude's advocacy work for AAPI students extends to strengthening the pathways for AAPI leaders in the higher education sector. Jude discussed,

> …so [the grant] has allowed me to brag about [the designation and funding]…I think the AANAPISI could really help some of the up and coming leaders. Would [WCCC] hire an AAPI [president] because we're an AAPI-serving institution? Maybe that has an impact on future generation of leaders, or even some of the leaders that are in AAPI-serving institutions. The access of AAPI leaders that are in the pipeline might be impacted by whether a college is designated, or funded, or eligible as an AANAPISI.

The grant has shaped Jude's understanding of serving the needs of students, particularly advocating for AAPIs and racial/ethnic minorities in national spaces, and this has led her, a veteran administrator, to support the current and future AAPI leaders who will take on the baton and continue to advocate for the underserved student population including the AAPIs.

Supporting the English Language Learners (ELLs)

The AAPI student population at WCCC have unique and diverse educational needs and challenges based on their backgrounds (e.g., socio-economic; racial/ethnic, etc.). In this section, I focus on AAPIs that are English language learners (ELLs).

Recognizing a large proportion of AAPI students, particularly Asian Americans, who were also ELLs, Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) discussed how the linguistic challenges for this student group could contribute to their participation in classrooms:

> I find that the biggest challenge is language barrier. So, I think a lot of our Asian students are English language learners. And so, they have barriers in terms of lacking command of the English language. And so, it affects their ability to write papers, also, I think to participate in classes. I think I have a lot of students of Asian background in my classes who a lot of times don't participate. And I feel that it's because they feel they're going to say something incorrectly or they don't feel confident speaking out in class because they're not fluent in English. So, I think language is probably one.

With the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, as institutional agents became more deeply aware of a large proportion of AAPI student population at WCCC, they also recognized the unique needs and challenges faced by AAPI students and those that were ELLs in particular.

Olivia Parker (White, Faculty) was aware of the diverse group of students in her classrooms. But, as Parker learned about WCCC becoming an AAPI-serving institution, she gained a deeper understanding of the two types of AAPIs—native English speakers and ELLs—and the need to better serve both groups. Parker said,

> There have been primarily Asian students [and I came to understand that] it's an AAPI-serving campus and the community is, I believe majority Asians. So, I find that the classes that I teach at [Ky-Pham], I actually have a lot of English as a second language learners…[and the other group is] "we're born in the U.S." And I have to bridge a divide in the classroom sometimes between two very different types of [AAPI] students.

These two types of AAPIs can be understood in a more unique way. According to Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty), a large proportion of older-generation AAPIs were ELLs and seemed to take classes to learn the English language while a higher concentration of younger-generation AAPIs aimed to complete a degree or transfer to a four-year institution. Santos described,

> At [WCCC], I'll have to split [AAPIs] into two groups, the older ones and the younger ones. The older ones, I would say their need is the language barrier. That's probably the

> main one and they're learning English as a second language. And there's even a subgroup there, they're just literally taking classes… So, you have the older ones that are just trying to learn English. So, their needs are extra support, tutoring, and all that… This is in fact an example that debunks the model minority stereotype of AAPI students. When it comes to AAPIs at WCCC, particularly older, English language learning students, student support services that help with their language barrier becomes a very important need.
>
> And then the younger ones, I would say from my experience working with them, I would say it's almost the same as all other general population in terms of they are lost. They think they know what they want to do but they really don't. And there's even that subgroup where there's a lot of high pressure from their parents to do well and they're being compared to their older siblings who's going and doing this. And now they're expected to do similar and sometimes there's just a conflict.

Similarly, Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) described the unique characteristics of older-generation AAPI students that were ELLs . During the process of pursuing and implementing the AANAPISI grant, Smith and his office tracked the AAPI student population including their ELLs. Smith learned that many of them (older-generation AAPIs that were ELLs) did not advance to college-level courses after completing their ELL classes:

> But just based on the numbers I track, not many [continue taking college-level courses] after they pass all their [ELL] classes. They just drop off. They don't go on. Maybe out of 500, like 2% will go on to complete college-level English. It is very small. That's not their focus or their aim when they come here. Their aim is to just learn English. And that's fine. That's what we're there to help them with.

Put another way, while small in number, given that some older-generation AAPIs who are ELLs take college-level courses and complete a degree or transfer to a four-year institution, there is a great need to provide relevant student support services.

In a similar vein, according to Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students), one notable challenge faced by ELLs is that their ELL classes are mostly non-college credit courses, which can delay a student's time to completing a degree or transferring to a four-year university. The ELL program serves students by providing English courses, but since many ELL courses do not

have college credit ELL courses, students in these English courses face a dilemma in completing their degree or transferring to a four-year university. Davis said,

> … so I think one of the things that's interesting about community colleges and maybe our college in particular is you have credit, non-credit courses. A lot of our non-credit courses are about [ELL]. So, there is definitely some sense of our [ELL] program is primarily serving the community, it's in [Ky-Pham/Fairview campus], it's right next to City Hall, it's right next to all of these different community resources. What is the pathway of those students into credit courses for a degree, right? There'll be those kinds of conversations. Yeah. It's interesting, it's a really interesting dilemma.

Furthermore, although there are a large proportion of older-generation AAPIs that are ELLs at WCCC, the needs of the younger-generation AAPI students who are ELLs are also important to recognize. Maria Jackson (White, Faculty) discussed that in her online classes, she had ELLs who were in their early 20's who continued to struggle with grammar:

> Their uses of grammar particularly with verbs, it seems like mostly and sometimes with nouns like singular or plural, things that are kind of telltale, that you can tell when a student's first language is Vietnamese or Chinese…There is usually at least maybe two or three per class of students that seems like that, that has some of those issues…In my other courses…some of the students can be a little bit older. But, most of my students have been more like 18 to 22.

As a career services specialist who meets with many AAPI students one-on-one and facilitates the career center's workshops at all four campuses, Paul Santos' (Asian American) perspective is particularly unique as he has been working with both older and younger-generation AAPIs. With the implementation of the grant, Santos has been collaborating with the AANAPISI program to offer student workshops at the AANAPISI center where he has interacted with many AAPI students. Therefore, his understanding of AAPI students, particularly the younger-generation AAPIs, has evolved. For instance, the grant has allowed him to implement student support programs such as workshops that help students navigate campus resources. These workshops also support students in the developing the confidence to advocate for themselves with both their parents and professors. Santos stated,

> The younger[-generation AAPIs], I feel like a lot of them are very shy. They're very quiet and of course it probably has to do with obeying authority and their parents, just listen to their parents and all that stuff, not really questioning authority. But [with the grant], I know [the grant-funded student programs and services] do a good job of training [AAPI students] how to speak for themselves and training them to advocate for themselves and seek help when they need to. They do a very good job of doing that, their mentoring program, I know they have them set goals. Whether it's talk to your professor with X, Y, and Z, whatever it is.

Thus, as the grant has brought greater attention to the AAPI student population and particularly the ELLs at WCCC, a deeper understanding of the correlation between language barriers and students' educational outcomes has evolved.

According to Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), the AANAPISI grant brought opportunities to focus on the expansion of online services when serving the AAPI student population including their ELLs:

> there are a lot of adult learners, and they mainly speak Vietnamese. In my experience, I feel like the institution hasn't really learned how to best support like our adult learners who don't speak English besides maybe like [ELL] classes. And also, the fact that it's online makes it also very challenging too. And I feel like [WCCC] is still trying to figure out like how to support online students. Even we're still trying to figure it out at the [AANAPISI program] too.

Recognizing the need to have diverse student support programs and services for ELLs, Olivia Parker (White, Faculty) shared that the grant created opportunities such as the mentorship program, which provides support beyond students' academic needs to help students articulate their thoughts in their non-native language. Parker stated,

> It's this incredible challenge to express yourself at the college level in writing in your second language. And so, as much as [WCCC] is willing to support [ELL] students like the [College academic advising] center and online tutoring and non-credit classes that they can take, we even still need to do more. And so, I think even more [AANAPISI program's] mentorship is going to be the answer for students.

Furthermore, understanding the opportunities the grant has created in terms of supporting AAPI students who are ELLs, Parker works with these students to identify a mentor through the

AANAPISI program so these students receive individualized and culturally-relevant support. Parker said,

> Being introduced to [the AANAPISI grant] and being educated about [AAPI] issues, to think about how [to better support them]... And so, what I've been trying to do is to really listen and figure out exactly what they've tried already. Whether they've had this problem in another class, whether they've already taken [ELL] classes and then to see if I can think of a person to put them in contact with that can help.

After the implementation of the grant, Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor), who is a part of the counseling program and works at the AANAPISI center, often finds herself translating for the AANAPISI program's student workshops and events even if it means she has to travel to other satellite campuses; the AANAPISI center is located at the Fairview campus and the other satellite campuses are about 20-30 minutes apart by car. This collaboration has been particularly helpful in supporting their large population of Vietnamese students who are ELLs. Ocampo said,

> When I first started here, I was very surprised how much Vietnamese I had to speak…I had to use a lot of Vietnamese when I work at the [Ky-Pham] campus where population is older, so they recently immigrated to the US…sometimes, I will help out the [AANAPISI center] with translating or, when they have workshops, if I can join them, if they have workshops in [Ky-Pham] campus, I will go with them because I know how it's like working there and there's a need for a translator.

Through their work with the AANAPISI program, mental health therapists have gained a deeper understanding of the need to provide more culturally-relevant services to their AAPI students specifically who are ELLs. Gaining this understanding of AAPI ELL students as a result of the grant, Carrie Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) shared the importance of a diverse group of mental health therapists in order to better support AAPI ELL students:

> Unfortunately, when it comes to language barriers for individual, we always have had to refer out because we just don't have someone who speaks any other language other than English and Spanish amongst the mental health therapists. So, we've had to refer those things out, those particular students out. We've discussed this as a mental health services

> department. It is a barrier for people accessing the services. So, it's something we've been trying to figure out, what are we going to do with this?

Furthermore, the financial aid office has been responding to the unique needs of AAPI students that are ELLs. Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) stated, "our financial aid office in our [Ky-Pham] campus, we have a lot of Vietnamese speaking staff because they know that's a huge need." Thus, as discussed by Carrie Lopez and Paul Santos, there is a continuous need to expand student services by having staff members that can both translate and provide additional supports to AAPIs that are ELLs.

Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) recognized that "a lot of our [Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)] students are English language learners." This is an important student characteristic to understand; according to Garcia, many AAPI students are a part of the EOPS, a financial need-based program for low-income students. In other words, the challenges faced by AAPI students can be a result of the difficulties compounded by their needs to acquire the English language while also navigating their socio-economic situations as low-income students. Furthermore, as many EOPS students are also a part of the AANAPISI program, according to Garcia, the continuous efforts to collaborate between these two programs, EOPS and AANAPISI, can shape the way WCCC serves their AAPI student population that are ELLs and comes from low-income families.

In sum, with the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, many institutional agents have gained a deeper understanding of the unique needs and challenges of AAPI students that are ELLs and the kinds of opportunities that can better serve the unique needs of this student group. Furthermore, greater understandings of the correlation between language barriers and students' educational outcomes and the unique characteristics found among older-generation and younger-generation AAPIs including those that are ELLs have evolved as a result of the grant.

Understanding Low-Income and First-Generation AAPI College Students

With the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, study participants have gained a deeper understanding of the educational needs of AAPI students who are from low-income backgrounds and/or the first in their families to attend a college (otherwise known as first-generation college students). I particularly focus on AAPI student experiences related to food insecurity, transportation, and navigating financial and family situations in addition to the complex compounding of these challenges. Organized into four sub-themes, 1) low-income AAPI students, 2) first-generation AAPI college students, 3) intersections of multiple student needs, and 4) support with transferring to four-year universities**,** this section describes the extent to which the AANAPISI grant developed institutional agents' understandings of serving low-income and/or first generation AAPI college students.

Low-Income AAPI Students

Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) learned that both food insecurity and transportation are the two major challenges faced by their low-income AAPI students as a result of the grant:

> So, like when I've seen a lot of students that are food insecure and so that's why whenever we usually have events, I noticed they tend to rely on some of the things that we have to like take home with them. Or like sometimes I feel like when they come to campus, like sometimes the food that we have like might be their first meal for today…them living in those really big family homes. And even just how they utilize public transportation too. So usually those, a combination of those two things I recognize.

Similarly, with the implementation of the grant, Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) has come to understand how low-income AAPI students' unique needs can intersect, which has led her to recognize the diverse needs of AAPI students including transportation, food insecurity, and financial and family situations. Zhang said, "Wow, there's so many [challenges faced by AAPI students]. I think [low-income AAPI students] have trouble

with transportation, so getting to multiple campuses. Homelessness, hunger...There's a pull between having to work to support your family, but then also trying to do your studies."

Understanding students' needs regarding transportation—traveling from home to campus and between campuses—are particularly unique to WCCC. The community college has four satellite campuses and if students do not have access to a car, traveling by public transportation (e.g., bus), can take over an hour from Fairview campus to Pacific Coast campus, which are the two farthest campuses. Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) shared, "So I think there are a number of challenges. I think there are challenges related to economics. I think there are challenges in terms of ease of getting here, right? In terms of transportation."

Each major offers most of their courses at one campus to minimize student travel between one campus to another; this is also why each campus offers the same if not similar student services so students do not have to continually travel from one campus to another to access services. However, some students may find themselves needing to travel from one campus to another and for those without a reliable transportation, this can result in students arriving late to class. Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) shared,

> Finances, finances. I think a lot of our minority students, including our Asian communities, a lot of them they come from immigrant families who are struggling with resources. They don't always have the money to buy the books. Or they show up to class late because they use public transportation, because they don't have a reliable transportation.

Furthermore, with the implementation of the grant, Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students), who previously worked at a four-year federally funded AAPI-serving institution, became more aware of the particular needs of low-income AAPI students in the community college context. Davis said,

> So, in prior institutions, when I have worked with AAPI students, they have primarily been sort of lower middle class, maybe, all the way up to upper middle class. The

> majority of the students who I work with here [at WCCC] are lower class to lower middle class. So, it's a community that I haven't had, they just have not been sort of the mainstream of the students that I've worked with, right? So, I think that's been, that's a huge difference.

Davis' deeper understandings of the educational needs and challenges low-income AAPI community college students as a result of the grant are particularly unique. Davis has been working closely with the AANAPISI program director, Ron Reyes, to better understand how a grant that focuses on serving AAPIs can better serve all students at WCCC including a large proportion of their low-income AAPI students. As a result, the AANAPISI program, which was under the Office of Research & Grants, has recently moved to the Office of Student Programs and Services, shaping the institutionalization process of the AANAPISI program on campus. More on this is discussed in another section (See Chapter 6: Sustaining and Expanding the Current and Future Student Initiatives on Campus).

Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) recognizes that many low-income AAPI students face challenges with meeting their basic needs. According to Ocampo, before fostering students' social and academic developments, their basic needs (e.g., food insecurity, etc.) should be met first through the AANAPISI grant-funded student support programs and services:

> In order for a student to succeed, the first thing is they need to have food, shelter, water, just basic human needs, right? The next is that, after they have those needs met, it's safety, belonging, then love, and then self-actualization. So, once they meet all of that, that's when they really can achieve their fullest potential…They're trying to think about, "What am I going to eat next?" Or whatever, which is why we provide food...[WCCC] has a pantry. Sometimes, the [veteran] center would bring [bakery] bread, boxes of them and just put it out in the lobby way for students to come by and get it…I make sure students meet their needs and really try to understand the students. Sometimes, they just want someone to listen to them and someone to kind of complain to. Students would complain to me about their personal life, and I just listen and let them vent.

Similarly, Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director) shared that many of the AANAPISI grant-funded student support programs and services aim to increase student access in utilizing the diverse support services on campus:

> So, students are having to choose between taking a bus and eating. And so, I feel like we're trying to solve a litany of social issues that are affecting academics but aren't necessarily academic. So, I think that's what we're trying to focus on is, one, bringing those resources to campus, but also two, encouraging students to actually use them. And talking to them and helping them process the importance of using resources, and not just having to prove that they can handle it on their own.

As Ocampo interacts with students in the AANAPISI center, she has also developed a unique understanding regarding their older-generation AAPI students from low-income backgrounds. For instance, she has learned how financial aid and funding from EOPS have helped many older-generation AAPIs from low-income backgrounds to persist with their academics and complete a degree and/or transfer to a four-year institution. Ocampo stated,

> [older-generation AAPIs] get money from financial aid if they take classes…For low income, so, a student who applies to [WCCC] and they apply to financial aid and they're low income, they get some funding. On top of that, they can get funding from EOPS. They can get money for books and stuff like that… Sometimes, I meet with students who are taking classes because they get money from EOPS or financial aid to attend school. Sometimes, they're actually motivated to transfer and get bachelors and work…They're in their late 40s or something, and they're actually motivated to get an associate degree and then work, or some, which try to transfer and get their bachelor's…I would say it's half/half.

A unique understanding is developed on serving low-income AAPI students as a result of the grant. Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) discussed that AAPI students are the largest student group that access the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) at WCCC, a state-funded program that supports low-income students:

> We have students from a variety of different backgrounds. I would say that our largest numbers tend to be Asian American and Pacific Islanders student population, followed by Latino students and then white. We have a growing population of students that identify with either Arabic or Middle Eastern…with EOPS, we have to be California

> residents…primarily right now, a lot of our students are still students that are taking on land courses that are within our local community.

As a result of the AANAPISI grant, Garcia has come to recognize an overlap in students who are served by both the EOPS and AANAPISI Programs, resulting in more collaboration between the two programs. Garcia said, "We talk [together] about what we did in EOPS or what [the AANAPISI program] did...What worked, what would we like to see in response to any trends that we see coming up." As a result, the EOPS at WCCC offer group counseling appointments. Garcia discussed,

> To be honest with you, the only students that I have asking me for group appointments are [AAPI] students…[WCCC] is the first place that's happened…I would say that it mostly happens with the old[er-generation AAPI] students but I do have some of the younger students that are part of the [AANAPISI program] that will ask me if they can come into the appointment together with one of their friends, somebody else who's involved too. We're always okay with that as well.

Additionally, Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program, also works to develop group mentoring sessions; initially, an one-on-one mentoring session is created as a result of the grant, but the AANAPISI program is working on expanding to offer group mentoring sessions as well.

Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) has also come to understand that there is an overlap in the students who are served by the EOPS and AANAPISI program and the extent to which these two programs are connected as a result of the grant: "…if you go to our EOPS program, with some of them they tend to be connected with other programs [such as the AANAPISI program]. The EOPS program, when I go to them, very high [AAPI] population." This led to understanding how both of these programs could expand to better serve their target student group, particularly low-income AAPI students, in various ways such as assisting students with scholarship applications. Jude stated,

> They [AAPI students] tend to get more scholarships. When you go to our scholarship program, probably at least half of them go to [AAPI] students… So [students] have known there's people that are mentoring them [at the AANAPISI program] ... Because a scholarship program sometimes it's easy, but students don't know how to navigate it, but if you have a program like EOPS, or you have the [AANAPISI program] helping you with your application and other areas then you tend to be more interested and more able.

Providing assistance with scholarship applications, particularly the AAPI scholarship program, is available as a result of the grant. The AAPI scholarship program at WCCC is funded by a national AAPI scholarship foundation, an organization that has been supporting students, faculty, researchers, and practitioners for the advancement of AAPI communities. Over the years, Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program, has become the coordinator of the AAPI scholarship program at WCCC as he works closely with a large proportion of low-income AAPIS due to the grant.

First-Generation AAPI College Students

As a federally funded AAPI-serving institution, Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) emphasized the need to better recognize the educational needs of AAPI students, particularly who are first-generation college students: "[There is a need for better] conceptualization of why [we serve] or who are the first-generation Asian American Pacific Islander students…which is the basis and the definition of what our resource provides [as a result of the AANAPISI grant]."

Furthermore, with the implementation of the grant, Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPIS Program Staff) has come to recognize a large proportion of first-generation AAPI college students participating in the AANAPISI program and how their grant-funded student support services can help provide guidance to this student group. Cha stated,

> The other thing is, is that there's a high percentage of first-generation [AAPI] college students [in the AANAPISI program], so then knowing what to access, knowing how to navigate the system because if they don't have any sort siblings or especially parents that

> have gone to college, then that's really tough for them. I hear that a lot too, "Oh, I didn't know I needed to see a counselor, I didn't know, I didn't know."…And it's literally because they just didn't have any sort of guidance on it, to no fault of theirs, they just didn't know.

In some cases, institutional agents' personal experiences (e.g., first-generation college student; low-income student) combined with their understandings of the AANAPISI grant have increased their knowledge of this student group. For instance, Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) shared, "[The AANAPISI grant] helps me understand that…the struggles [students go through as a first-generation college student] is a common thing among AAPI students. I went through it. I know my friends who went through it. It's like a norm, I feel like, especially if the parents of these students aren't college-educated [or] if they were immigrated from another country, it's different."

Having been a first-generation college student herself, Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) has some understandings of the unique needs of first-generation AAPI students. However, the grant has helped her to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural norms and values found within AAPI ethnic sub-groups. Garcia stated,

> I think that I have some understanding about the experience because, I'm first generation too, my parents were immigrants...A lot of the students that I meet with now, they're moving through a similar experience. Granted there are different cultural norms in place and that's been a big aspect of what I feel like I've learned from the [AANAPISI grant]. More about the cultural norms.

Furthermore, as many of the AAPI students at WCCC are first in their families to attend a college, one of the unique roles that many of these students take on is to be a "parent" and guide their younger siblings to navigate the educational system, which can be challenging since many of these students already face personal and academic challenges of their own. To this, Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said,

> A lot of these [first-generation AAPI] students [in the AANAPISI program, who were often low-income students as well] were also trying to advocate for their siblings within the educational system. So, if the teacher was doing something they shouldn't have done, they were the ones who were trying to fight back against the school administration because their parents didn't know.

Intersections of Multiple Student Needs

Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) described that financial and family situations are the two key challenges faced by their low-income and first-generation AAPI students particularly in the community college context. Santos said, "[I have learned more deeply about the student] needs, I would say, because some of them are struggling and they're struggling…because something is happening at home…I would say money is probably the biggest one. Money and family situation. [I have learned that] it's also the same as any general student [at WCCC] as well."

Hope Reynolds (Asian European, Transfer Center Specialist) shared that because of family situations and their socio-economic backgrounds, low-income and first-generation AAPI students often prioritize their family needs over their education. Thus, Reynolds discussed the need to inform students of opportunities to receive financial support, which can help students to continue with their education without making adjustments to their academic plans:

> I think the challenges, especially in this area, it's really a social-economic need, plus depending on where the parents and where that family are, where the bridge is [particularly for first-generation college students]. So, I think it depends on the background of the [AAPI] family, what support that they may or may not have from the parents, and then from there from the community, et cetera. I think the challenges are, is ensuring that we do have the financial aid and areas needed for that student to try to be here full time to work on this. Also, because of other needs, again, social economic needs are what's pulling that child or individual away to need to concentrate on the family first. Working for multiple jobs get that family support, that's there [as a challenge].

Although Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) grew up in a predominantly Asian American community, she was not familiar with the educational challenges

faced by low-income and first-generation students. Her understanding of the unique needs of this student population has deepened as a result of the grant. Basa stated,

> Definitely because I think really without this [AANAPISI] program and without this [AANAPISI] funding and especially for someone that didn't grow up in [the] County, I wouldn't have known that this was really going on because I think even when I was working with AAPI students at [a four-year state university in California], I actually didn't really know like what are some of those community conditions affecting those students? I didn't even know what like low income even first-generation would look like for AAPI students at [a four-year university] because that's something that you really don't talk about or something that no one really kind of focuses on. But here that's where they start like having that lens and really start thinking more about those needs. So, it's been a really interesting learning experience.

Furthermore, as a result of the AANAPISI grant, many institutional agents have come to better understand how AAPI students, particular low-income and first generation students, face a complex compounding of challenges. For instance, Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said, "First generation college students also work. So, navigating the responsibilities, not even just work, but a lot of them have family responsibilities. Navigating their parents' expectations of them. Money, low-income background. Some may have even been undocumented. I feel like it's a whole array of issues."

Similarly, Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared the complexities of challenges faced by their undocumented, low-income, and first-generation AAPI college students: "Other things would be, some of our students are not citizens…Our students are definitely low-income, first-gen. And so, with that definitely comes a lot of challenges."

With the implementation of the grant, Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) has come to understand that many low-income and first-generation AAPI students hold multiple jobs and work long hours to meet their financial and family needs, which can impact these students' educational outcomes such as their, homework, persistence, and time to degree competition/transfer. Basa said,

> One, a lot of them [AAPIs] have difficult time prioritizing their education versus working. So, a lot of the students that we're working with [at the AANAPISI program] are definitely working multiple jobs. So that's something that I definitely have to at least be more mindful for me when it comes to having them engaged in activities. So that's one. Two, there's a lot of challenges when it comes to even prioritizing homework and work when at home. Because one, there's a lot of distraction from like family asking them to do things or even just like why are you doing homework? It's not that important. You should be doing other things…work, taking care of the family. Because a lot of them also live in like multifamily homes. So, like sometimes there could be like four different families living in one home. Sometimes it makes it really challenging for them to really do like homework in an environment like that.

According to Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), many of her low-income and first-generation AAPI colleges students, who were participating in the AANAPISI program, were taking on too much work while trying to navigate their school, work, and family situations but had to do it rather secretly:

> I remember talking to one student in particular [in the AANAPISI program]. She was doing a full load, working full-time and doing an internship. She was involved within our [AANAPISI] programming as a student mentor. And then, she picked up a job, recently. So, her student mentor position was a work-study, and she was getting money for that. And then, the other job that she was doing was under the table. I was like, "Hey, that's below minimum wage. Do you really need this money? And, if so, that's not right for your employer to do," and her response to me was, "But, if I get paid above table and it gets recorded, then my family gets kicked out of low-income housing." So, that type of having to balance as an 18-year-old is insane, and that's a lot of navigating that a student has to do not only within the educational system, but within the federal or the state or the county system.

Working long hours impacted students' productivity and their educational outcomes as well. Zhang shared, "I think the best way [Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program] phrased it was like, 'Let me sacrifice myself for you when it comes to work or let me fall on the sword or whatever it is,' without considering the things they need to do for themselves or the fact that they're going to get in trouble because they didn't finish their stuff." Thus, unique needs of low-income and/or first-generation AAPI students in terms of navigating and balancing their

home, school, and work life are found or more deeply understood as a result of the AANAPISI grant.

All in all, institutional agents have gained a deeper understanding of the complexities of unique needs found among low-income and first-generation AAPI students as a result of the grant.

Support with Transferring to Four-Year Universities

With the implementation of the grant, Hope Reynolds (Asian European, Transfer Center Specialist), who provides support with students' transfer plans to four-year institutions, has come to understand that the AANAPISI grant targets to provide support toward a large proportion of AAPI students with diverse needs at WCCC. According to Reynolds, some of the challenges faced by students who want to transfer to four-year institutions are similar to the challenges faced by low-income and first-generation college students:

> Usually, our standard thing with transfer is…there's three things. Why does a high school student choose a community college? I'm not talking about just [WCCC], but just in general. Number one is they didn't get into the four-year school that was their first choice, so they're going to do well at the community college, then transfer as a junior to their college of choice.
>
> Number two is economics. They might not have the funding or the scholarship monies at that time to go to their first or second choice school. Number three is they're just unsure. They don't know exactly what their major is, they're not too sure about what it's like to be in a college setting, so they'll do this number three and unsure, but when you have this fourth element saying that they really didn't talk too much about going to college in high school, that's perplexing to me.

Then, working closely with staff and students that are involved with and impacted by the AANAPISI grant, Reynolds has come to learn that many high school graduates including a large proportion of low-income and first-generation AAPI students attend WCCC with limited knowledge of navigating campus resources: "I'm hearing and saying about AAPI students because of my relationship with [the AANAPISI grant-funded program], wondering how

students choose [WCCC]. It's because of our outreach, but other than that, they're not hearing too much about life after 12th grade, or something to that effect." The unfamiliarity of a life after high school or how to navigate a college is particularly problematic for AAPI students with plans to transfer to four-year institutions. Put another way, a lack of understanding of how to navigate a community college can result in delaying a student's time to completing a degree or transferring to a four-year institution, which is detrimental particularly for low-income and first-generation college students. Reynolds said,

> One of the things I've spoken with [Keej (an AANAPISI program staff)] and others there [at the AANAPISI center], is when they [AANAPISI program] get the new high school students who's the first year here with us, I'm hearing where a lot of these students didn't hear anything about college from their high school…What's going on there?...That is a "wow". I mean, like really? Yeah, no they never heard of college until they got out of school, and they started seeing some outreach from [WCCC] and some other community colleges about, but there wasn't that deeper discussion within their high school about university or CSUs, that's troubling.

Therefore, the various conversations that have taken place between the Transfer center and the AANAPISI center staff members as a result of the grant have deepened Reynolds' understanding of low-income and first-generation AAPI college students, particularly the challenges students may face when planning to transfer to four-year institutions. Furthermore, Reynolds foresees challenges that part-time community college students from low-income backgrounds may face *after* transferring to four-year institutions (e.g., challenges adjusting their study/work schedule, etc.). She recognizes that there are varying levels (e.g., very supportive, somewhat supportive, or lacking in support, etc.) of student support programs and services at four-year institutions. Therefore, stemming from these various understandings, she emphasized the need for AAPI students to develop skills for navigating diverse campus resources so once students transfer, they can quickly adjust and navigate different campus resources at their four-year institutions.

In closing, the unique needs and challenges of AAPI students, particularly the needs of low-income and first-generation AAPI students, at WCCC have been more deeply understood by institutional agents as a result of the grant. Furthermore, these understandings have led to fostering collaboration between the AANAPISI program and EOPS/Transfer center with particular attention to better serving low-income and/or first-generation AAPI college students.

Fostering a Sense of Belonging

In this section, I discuss how institutional agents have gained a deeper understanding of the need to foster students' sense of belonging/community as a result of the grant.

Institutional agents described how a sense of belonging on campus encourages student involvement, which can contribute to educational success. Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) shared students' engagement on campus can greatly impact their academic and social experiences: "In the majority of the research that we looked at, they always point to student engagement being the key to variety and different success factors."

Working with AAPI community college students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., low-income; first-generation; second-generation refugee family), Reyna Villar (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared a need to foster AAPI students' sense of belonging and experience of community on campus:

> In terms of specific challenges for AAPI students, I would say obviously, because it's a community college and they're commuters, [there are needs for] a sense of community, a sense of belonging, culturally-relevant programs that really understand the students' backgrounds. Majority are second- generation refugee family, or from refugee families. So, a lot of their needs weren't really looked at in a culturally-responsible way.

Similarly, Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) described a lack of sense of belonging as one of the challenges many AAPI community college students

faced compared to their counterparts at four-year institutions: “What I found is AAPI students, especially in community colleges, don't get that sense of belonging. They don't feel connected.”

With the implementation of the grant, Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty) has seen many of her students who participate in grant-funded student programs and services develop a sense (or a greater sense) of belonging on campus:

> [By implementing the AANAPISI grant on campus]…we are putting it out there, we are absolutely recognizing it and offering, and making it available…I absolutely saw [a sense of belonging on campus] in students that had participated in [the AANAPISI grant-funded] events or just went to the center in general, that attended. I saw the impact on those students…I actually could see what impact [the AANAPISI program] had on [students] because they would either tell me, or it would be an assignment [where students would share their experiences attending the AANAPISI center or their events]…So [among] the students that really did actively use [the AANAPISI center’s services], belongingness [was discussed a lot by those students].

In a similar vein, Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) shared, “I think [WCCC] does a really good job in particular with our AAPI students in making them feel that they're part of the community because we have so many resources [such as the AANAPISI program].”

With the implementation of the grant, by connecting with people, particularly staff/peer mentors that share the same or similar cultural backgrounds, on a regular basis, students have developed a greater sense of belonging. Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said, “Typically, I meet with [AANAPISI mentorship students] every two, three weeks. … they’re all AAPIs…I've been really meeting pretty consistent[ly]…they feel really connected to what we're doing…[and] they constantly need [and want] more.”

Furthermore, institutional agents have come to understand the key elements that are helpful in fostering a sense of belonging for students. Notably, the study participants have repeatedly discussed two undergirding elements that are developed and strengthened as a result

of the grant: 1) opportunities to expand students' understandings around their own cultural identities, and 2) significance of developing an AAPI-focused space for AAPI students.

Opportunities to Explore Cultural Identities

Samantha Cheng (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) found the aspects of the grant that support the development of cultural identity particularly special because she faced challenges herself while navigating both mainstream culture and her own Asian American culture as a child. She often dismissed her own cultural background because she thought this was necessary to achieve educational success within the mainstream culture. Therefore, understanding the extent to which the grant fosters a sense of belonging on campus, Cheng continues to refer many of her students, particularly AAPIs, to the AANAPISI program:

> [The AANAPISI program is helping] AAPI students to be aware of other cultures, understanding "how I can fit in this world as a first generation, trying to adapt because I'm going to school to get an education?" That's an experience of itself for each student. And the [AANAPISI program] is there to help along the way.

Furthermore, Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) described how the grant helped their college to implement student activities that focus on developing AAPI students' understandings of their own identity and culture. Basa discussed,

> There's already that assumption that [as an AAPI student,] you have a good awareness of your identity. But it's like, "How do we get you to like act upon it?" or even just like, "How do we get you to engage in more than just being comfortable and knowing your identity?"…[At WCCC,] it's more of like really exploring what that means and how that impacts your education. So, it's a really different way of exploring your identity. It's just really interesting.
>
> [After the implementation of the AANAPISI grant], it tends to be more [focused on] identity in terms of feeling like how you feel belonged. Even just like how you get them to be politically engaged or civically engaged. I don't think there was a space like [WCCC's AANAPISI program] where students really thought about their own identity.

In a similar vein, the relationship building among staff and students at the AANAPISI center has helped Basa to deeply reflect on her own identity and critically question why this

understanding of one's identity is so important for students when navigating the higher education system. This eventually helped Basa develop a deeper sense of belonging on campus herself and thereby think of ways to foster a greater sense of belonging for students. Basa said,

> I think one, it's definitely had me learn a lot about my own identity…this is my first workplace, [and] it's been a really interesting experience because I'm also learning just like the students, how to navigate, what it means to hold onto my own identity. I'm also learning the same things that students are learning, which is how to ask for help, how to utilize resources. So, it's been a really interesting process because as we're trying to get students to be able to do this, I'm also trying to get myself to be able to meet where students are at. Because then it's like, why would I be preaching to them or teaching them things that I don't even practice or value or hold on to.
>
> So, it's been a learning experience about my own self and even made me realize like if I'm working with other students, if I'm working with other people, "How am I considering the different factors or things that they're carrying with them?" and "How am I supporting that?"

According to Maria Jackson (White, Faculty), there has been an increase in culturally-relevant activities for students, particularly for their AAPI students, as a result of the grant:

> …we had some more, I think [AAPI] related events in the last couple years, we had a New Year celebration, a Chinese New Year celebration and we have the actual physical setting of the [AANAPISI] center that we didn't used to have it at [Fairview], and a number of activities going on there. So, I think that there's been an upswing, and these types of activities focused on these students since the grant has been implemented.

Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) also discussed how the AAPI-focused student events on campus that centered around students' cultural backgrounds helped students develop a greater sense of inclusion on campus:

> [The funding] allowed for us to try to be as inclusive with our services to our [AAPI] students. One example would be that we recently had a Lunar New Year celebration at our [Ky-Pham] campus. I think that's one way that we try to be inclusive of our AAPI students because we do recognize that our students do celebrate New Year in different ways. So, we try to bring that to the campus.

Some unique understandings are gained regarding the older-generation AAPI students as a result of the grant. Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) discovered

that fewer older-generation AAPI students participated in the AANAPISI grant-funded student events with particular attention to cultural identities compared to younger-generation AAPIs:

> I would say [the AANAPISI program] is more beneficial [for younger AAPIs]. I don't think the AAPI population at [Ky-Pham campus] is into the cultural piece, the cultural exploration piece that the [AANAPISI center] provides because I feel like the older [AAPI] population, they avoid talking about that [AAPI culture] in a way. They're not willing to share emotions or feelings about their culture in a way like how the [AANAPISI program] does it here with the younger population where they do a lot of exploration, self-exploration…[Older AAPIs may prefer] learning, academic learning, things about career and stuff, but when it comes to cultural pieces, I feel like they [older-generation AAPIs] won't open up as much.

In the same vein, Natalie Diaz (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) shared that fewer older-generation AAPI students were willing to participate in grant-funded events that focus on student life or cultural identities compared to academics. According to Diaz, many of these older-generation AAPIs prefer to focus on academics only:

> I would say that the [AAPI] students that are older because they've been out of school longer. Actually, they do have sometimes more challenges just acclimating again to student life, culture, having deadlines, right? Having frequent class meetings invariably, they just fall out of that structure. And so, a student that is younger, closer to just having graduated from high school, they are still primed as having a student identity and having that student life culture…And so, I think for the older students they may have less time to be able to participate in student life programming [such as the AANAPISI program].

In sum, with the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, institutional agents have come to understand the significance of fostering a sense of belonging by working with students to expand their understandings around their own identities and cultures. These understandings have become an integral part of facilitating student activities that center around exploring cultural identities such as the Lunar New Year celebration.

Development of an AAPI-Focused Space

According to study participants, another undergirding element in fostering AAPI students' sense of belonging is developing an AAPI-focused space. There are two types of

space—physical and symbolic. Chapter 5 includes a more in-depth discussion on the significance of developing both a physical and symbolic space as a result of the AANAPISI grant. Here, the focus is on how an AAPI-focused space has helped foster a sense of belonging particularly for AAPI students.

Many institutional agents have come to recognize that the grant, particularly the grant-funded space, has played a key role in fostering a sense of belonging for AAPI students. Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty), for example, discussed how the grant created an AAPI-focused space on campus that helped many students develop a sense of belonging:

> I feel like [the AANAPISI center] is a space where it's AAPI-focused, [and] anyone that goes to that space benefited because I would hear conversations like when they were just in the space and they were just asking, "Oh, how are you doing?" They're actually checking in. I'm like, "Whoa, that's cool." There's for sure a support group [for AAPIs].

Similarly, Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) discussed that through the AANAPISI-funded space, AAPI students developed a greater sense of belonging and community:

> I think before the [AANAPISI center], there was really nothing to support AAPI students. And so, I think by the [AANAPISI center] being here, students are learning about who they are, their story and why it matters and why it matters to get an education, so they'd come back and support the communities. I think, without the [AANAPISI center], I don't think students have the opportunity to really learn about all those things. And so, I see [the AANAPISI center] being designated as a huge impact for the students, because you really can't get that anywhere else here at [WCCC].

Additionally, Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said, “I witnessed the change in [the AANAPISI program] students. Students were beginning to see the [AANAPISI center] as a place where they could connect, where they could grow, where they could develop.”

Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) works with the low-income student population, primarily whom are AAPIs, at WCCC. Garcia found that the grant provided opportunities for her EOPS students, particularly AAPIs, in the AANAPISI program to build relationships with others from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds; these relationships helped students foster a sense of community. Fostering a sense of belonging/community is particularly important for students at WCCC as there are four satellite campuses that are located in four different cities. Garcia said,

> I mean, they do a lot. I hear from our [AAPI] students [who participate in the AANAPISI program that] they do this game night that a lot of our [EOPS] students like to go to and that gives people an opportunity to meet and engage with other students. The fact that we have all these campuses, [WCCC] has four campuses, it makes it difficult for students to develop communities but the [AANAPISI center], that's a space where students have a community and they can go and meet up and meet other students. I feel like those are always our more successful students. The ones that actually develop those relationships.

According to Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty), with the AANAPISI-funded space, there have been various opportunities to help students develop a greater sense of belonging on campus. For instance, there has been an increase in collaboration between the AANAPISI program and other student programs on campus as a result of the AANAPISI-funded space. And through collaboration, a diverse group of student programs on campus utilizes the AANAPISI center's space to hold various student activities and workshops.

These events create opportunities for staff from diverse student programs to interact with AANAPISI program students, particularly a large proportion of AAPI students, and provide culturally-relevant student workshops. By collaborating with the AANAPISI program and utilizing the grant-funded space, the Career center has customized their student services and workshops to reflect the needs of AAPI students and help foster a greater sense of community for this student group. Santos shared,

> Without that space, I wouldn't be able to interact that much with that many students or overhear things that they talk about. So just being in that space for sure helped because once they're connected and engaged, they're more likely to make it. I mean there's all the stats that say that. And without that space, again like what I said, there would not be a community. And I would also say they benefited because working with [the AANAPISI program], [the career center is] able to develop new ways of doing things and combining things that we do to serve the students better and we customize it towards AAPI students, the [educational needs and challenges] that they go through.

Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty) emphasized the key role an AANAPISI-funded space plays for AAPI students in the community college context: "So I feel like centers like [the AANAPISI center]… it's the belongingness that's really impactful to keep students in college that's really hard to get at community colleges…especially [with large numbers of] online [students]. Because it's hard to feel that connection and that identity and that belongingness."

Therefore, institutional agents have come to understand the significance of developing an AAPI-focused space as a result of the grant and the extent to which this space has helped foster a greater sense of belonging for AAPI students.

Discussion and Conclusion

As the number of racial/ethnic minority students in higher education continues to grow, higher education must address the issue of inequitable educational outcomes found within the racial/ethnic minority student population. Thus, centering around educational equity, there is a great need to better understand and serve students, particularly racial/ethnic minorities, at postsecondary institutions.

Centering around the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation which evolved from the concepts of transformational change (Kezar, 2013; Bensimon, 2005) and educational pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012), I examined the discourse and varying levels of understandings. Given that the federal AANAPISI or AAPI-serving institution designation is

based on an institution's student enrollment of AAPI and low-income individuals and the federal AANAPISI grant is received after an institution undergoes a competitive grant application process, organizational learning at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution (CARE, 2014) provides a unique opportunity to explore the changes in understandings of the educational needs and challenges of students, particularly AAPIs, as a result of the grant. Furthermore, with making transformative and long-lasting changes at an institution as the orienting aim (Kezar, 2018), the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation such as developing pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012) can lead to deeper understandings of sustaining and expanding the current and future student initiatives on campus.

Thus, this study was framed by an explicit focus on the designation and funding as a federal policy and an institution's commitment to becoming more "minority-serving." By focusing on the discourse of institutional agents, this study aimed to examine and reimagine transformation at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution. Various studies (Bensimon, 2007; Museus & Naville, 2012, Stanton-Salazar, 1997) emphasize the role of an institutional agent and the extent to which their understandings influence their commitment in disseminating institutional opportunities and resources to students. Espinoza (2012) stated, "An educational pivotal moment occurs when a college-educated adult—such as a teacher, a counselor, an academic outreach professional, or a professor—makes a concerted effort to support and mentor a disadvantaged student in an informal role, an official role, or both." (Espinoza, 2012, p.53). Thus, centering around the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation which evolved from the concepts of transformational change (Kezar, 2013; Bensimon, 2005) and educational pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012), this study looked at how institutional agents made sense (Bess & Dee, 2012; Garcia, 2013; Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991) of

the grant and grant-funded opportunities related to understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution.

In Chapter 4, I focused on answering the following research question: "How do institutional agents understand and describe the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students? How have their understandings evolved as a result of the AANAPISI grant?"

To answer the above and other research questions discussed in the following chapters, this qualitative case study drew on multiple data collection tools (e.g., interviews with institutional agents; observations; document analysis) to analyze and triangulate the data at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving community college or two-year AAPI-serving institution.

While recognizing a large proportion of AAPI students at WCCC and its connection to high concentrations of AAPIs living in the nearby communities, institutional agents have gained deeper understandings of the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students as a result of the grant. In this section, the perceived impacts of the grant on understanding and serving AAPI students are organized into nine areas. Here, I provide a brief summary of the nine areas (each area is italicized and numbered with an ordinal number) that highlights institutional agents' changes in understandings of the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students as a result of the grant.

First, deeper understandings of AAPIs as an underserved group and the racial/ethnic heterogeneity within AAPIs are gained. There is a lack of scholarship in terms of recognizing AAPIs as an underserved group (Lee, 2006; Park & Teranishi, 2008; Teranishi, 2010). For instance, Park and Teranishi (2008) mentioned, "Unfortunately, the mainstream American discourse has responded all too often by omitting in-depth discourse on AAPIs altogether,

grouping them with Whites, and ignoring cultural-specific issues" (p.118). With the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, institutional agents have come to recognize the underserved AAPI students, particularly a large proportion of low-income AAPI students, at WCCC and their specific educational needs. Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) stated, "I think without this program and without this funding…I wouldn't have known [that AAPIs are an underserved group with unique needs and challenges]." Given that Basa has grown up as an Asian-American herself and interacts with a large proportion of low-income AAPI students at WCCC on a daily basis, this understanding is significant for her both on a professional and personal level. Similarly, Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared that the funding helped her to recognize the diverse needs that exist within the high concentrations of AAPIs at WCCC, which deepened her understanding of the statistics that were associated with the federal Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) designation. Lim said,

> When I first came to [WCCC], I didn't even really have an understanding of what the needs were to begin with…on paper and from a statistical higher education standpoint, I saw AAPI students. But through my work [with the AANAPISI funding], I was able to witness [AAPI students'] needs on a personal level, in a way that was felt and not just known.

In other words, the grant has helped Lim to comprehend what it means to be a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution.

Furthermore, over 50 different ethnic sub-groups make up the AAPI population (Teranishi, 2010) and participants' understandings have evolved on the diverse AAPI ethnic sub-groups as a result of the grant. One way to understand heterogeneity is through the disparities that exist within the educational attainment rate broken down by AAPI racial/ethnic sub-groups (Nguyen et al., 2017). In this study, institutional agents shared their lived experiences of understanding this racial heterogeneity among their AAPI students.

Institutional agents, for example, have come to recognize a large proportion of Vietnamese American students among their AAPI student population at WCCC and the educational disparities that exist between Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans and within Asian American ethnic sub-groups such as Southeast Asians (Maramba, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2017). According to Carri Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist), Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans slightly vary in terms of how they define who is a part of a family. " I think in terms of the Asian, a lot is kept within the family. I think [for] Pacific Islanders, family is not just who was under your roof," said Lopez. Hence, the definition of a family expands to include a wider range of people for Pacific Islander students and their families. Furthermore, there has been an increase in recognizing Pacific Islander students, who are often masked due to a larger number of Asian American students at an institution, and the disparity of educational opportunity and outcomes compared to other racial/ethnic student groups (CARE, 2011; Teranishi et al., 2019).

Second, study participants have come to learn about saving face or a cultural issue of feeling ashamed in seeking resources, which may hinder students from reaching out for support (Yeh, 2002). As previously discussed, the "cultural-specific issues" (Park & Teranishi, 2008, p. 118) such as saving face are often ignored in the scholarship; thus, there is a need to more deeply understand these cultural-specific issues. Furthermore, study participants discussed the extent to which the culturally-relevant approaches should be considered to respond to the different learning styles of AAPI students (e.g., different styles of asking for help, etc.). This cultural issue of feeling ashamed in seeking resources had led many AAPI students to think "I don't want to be a burden to this resource," or "I'm going to this resource because I'm in trouble," said Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff). Pauline Zhang's (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared, "…the one thing that I learned from [WCCC] being an AANAPISI

college is how to work with students who are also AAPIs but understand their learning styles." Therefore, recognizing a cultural factor that may hinder students from reaching out for help and how to work around this unique student need are imperative; the AANAPISI grant has helped raise a greater awareness in this area, providing opportunities to develop pivotal moments where this specific cultural issue is not overlooked (Espinoza, 2012)

Third, with the implementation of the grant, study participants have gained deeper understandings of how family can play a significant role in a student's life. For many AAPI families, STEM majors are considered the "good majors" while other majors outside of STEM, such as Social Sciences majors, are considered differently. Thus, many AAPI students face challenges with selecting a non-STEM major when their families have a strong preference for a STEM major based on the belief that a STEM major can lead to a better career. This is related to what Lee, Juon, Martinez, Hsu, Robinson, Bawa, and Ma (2009) discussed regarding how many Asian American young adults face challenges of " pressure to meet parental expectations of high academic achievement and live up to the 'model minority' stereotype [and] communicating with parents" (p.144). For example, Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty) has experiences of being asked, "Can you call my mom?," or "Can you talk to [my parents]?" In a similar vein, Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) often finds herself talking to AAPI students about "…what [major] they feel is best for them and [what it] means…to have difficult conversations with their families."

Gaining a deeper understanding of AAPI students' difficulties with selecting a major and navigating family expectations as a result of the grant, Emily Miles (African-American, Faculty/Department Chair) has taken a creative approach in promoting a non-STEM major to AAPI students and their families. Miles shared, "The funding definitely impacted in an arena

where I'm just more cognizant of students now…So, my presentations that I do are different now… I also include that academic, how it's related to your job component as well." In other words, gaining a deeper understanding of this unique student need, more emphasis is placed on describing how a non-STEM major or Social Sciences majors can still lead to diverse career options and opportunities. Thus, with the implementation of the grant, pivotal moments developed, which "involve parents and other family members by providing college information [in this case making connections between Social Science majors and career options] and teaching how to support their children's education" (Espinoza, 2012, p.55) or encouraging both students and their families to explore numerous career options/majors outside of the STEM field.

Fourth, institutional agents have gained a deeper understanding of the need to develop leadership and self-advocacy skills for AAPI students as a result of the grant, which is closely related to developing a sense of belonging on campus (Hurtado & Carter, 1997), an important factor that contributes to community college student persistence (Tovar, 2013).

The grant has been understood to create opportunities for students to hold leadership roles on campus including the annual AANAPISI grant-funded AAPI student leadership conference. According to Pauline Zhang (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), "we based [the AANAPISI grant-funded AAPI student leadership conference] off of…those [students'] needs [of building leadership skills]…" This is not only a conference that highlights the lived experiences of AAPI community college students, but also provides a space for AANAPISI program students to facilitate workshops during the conference and foster their leadership skills. Cathy Garcia (Chicana, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) shared, "…that [conference] is awesome because I see students that…start[ed] off very timidly [at the beginning of the year]…[are] put[ting] on…workshops [that] are engaging…Thanks to that funding that we have

people that can create that type of experience for our students…"

Thus, with the implementation of the grant, there has been a greater awareness of the need to develop students' leadership and self-advocacy skills. Furthermore, the grant-funded opportunities such as the AAPI student leadership conference have been recognized to foster students' leadership and self-advocacy skills. This is related to the concepts of reimagining transformation at an institution as many AAPI students who participated in the AANAPISI grant-funded leadership program eventually took on leadership roles in various capacities and utilized diverse campus resources.

> Educational pivotal moments are characterized by a deep and trusting educator-student relationship that provides the student with guidance, information, advice, and emotional support. Those interventions become significant and life changing because through them students gain hands-on knowledge about navigating the educational system and, for the first time, begin to develop the skills and behaviors that launch them on the path of academic success. (Espinoza, 2012, p.53).

In other words, institutional agents played a significant role in developing pivotal moments by facilitating opportunities to foster student leadership and self-advocacy skills as a result of the grant, which Espinoza (2012) described as being "proactive in changing the lives [of students]" (p.54).

Fifth, with the implementation of the grant, study participants have gained deeper insights into AAPI students' understanding of and access to mental health services (Lee et al., 2009). For instance, many participants recognized that the grant-related opportunities, which helped students explore and better understand their own identities and cultures, were encouraging students to reach out for other campus resources, including mental health services. "…looking at their programming, I think they touch on a lot of interpersonal themes that would maybe compel someone to come to see a mental health therapist," said Natalie Diaz (Latina, Mental Health Therapist). This understanding is significant as Lee et al. (2009) said, "Young Asian Americans

tend to not seek professional help for their mental health problems" (p.144). Educational pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012) were developed while diverse opportunities to collaborate on student workshops, particularly "culturally appropriate [workshops]," (Lee et al., 2009) have emerged between the AANAPISI program and Mental Health services as a result of the grant. In addition, another pivotal moment occurred as some AAPI students in the AANAPISI program have reached out to Natalie Diaz (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) about starting a student wellness club on campus, to which Diaz said the collaboration that derived from the grant-related opportunities "seemed like a natural fit."

Furthermore, an understanding of the need to hire a mental health therapist who shares similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds as their AAPI students has evolved as a result of the grant. Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) discussed, **"**We need more cross-cultural psychologists…Not only be able to speak, but understand the cultural context that's causing all this tension and all this angst and anxiety…" This unique need is further elaborated in the next paragraph that focuses on the diversity of AAPI institutional agents.

Sixth, deeper understandings of the significance of diversifying the representation of AAPI institutions agents at WCCC are gained because of the grant. Institutional agents play a significant role in students experiences: "…a student experiencing [an] identity development is supported by the psychological validation of the institutional agent, as well as by the agent's personal and positional resources" (Dowd, Pak, Bensimon, 2013, p.33). For instance, according to Maria Jackson (White, Faculty), there is an increase in understanding of creating "a place where [AAPI students] are comfortable going and are staffed with representatives that specifically know about the issues…[AAPI students] may have. And the AANAPISI grant has a type of perspective…to specifically support students of AAPIs."

In a similar vein, Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said, "for Pacific Islander students specifically, [the need] was seeing representations of themselves, both in faculty and even in the [AANAPISI center]." In other words, with the implementation of the grant, there is a greater recognition of hiring more AAPI institutional agents that reflects the students they serve.

Seventh, one of the ways to understand AAPI students at WCCC is recognizing the unique characteristics found among the native-English speakers (e.g., second-generation Asian American or Pacific Islander, etc.) and the English Language Learners (ELLs). English proficiency is a "reliable predictor of educational success" and limited English proficiency can hinder students' willingness to reach out for support (Yeh, 2002, p.63). With greater awareness of a large proportion of ELLs at WCCC as a result of the grant, there was a greater focus on the educational experiences or unique characteristics of AAPI students that identify as ELLs. For example, a larger proportion of younger-generation AAPIs were native-English speakers while many of the older-generation AAPIs identified as adult learners, non-traditional students, and ELLs.

Furthermore, a large proportion of ELLs who identified as AAPIs were more interested in learning the English language than completing a degree or transferring to four-year institutions. While closely tracking AAPI students' academic progress at WCCC after the grant has been implemented on campus, Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) and his grant team have learned that "…like 2% will go on to complete college-level English. It is very small. That's not their focus or their aim when they come here. Their aim is to just learn English. And that's fine. That's what we're there to help them with."

In addition to supporting English language learning AAPI students' academic trajectory

and providing linguistic assistance (e.g., ELL program), Olivia Parker (White, Faculty) has gained a deeper understanding of the need to foster their social development (e.g., fostering relationships, etc.) as a result of the grant. Parker said,

> It's…incredibl[y] challeng[ing] to express yourself at the college level in writing in your second language. And so, as much as [WCCC] is willing to support [ELL] students like the student success center and online tutoring and non-credit classes that they can take, we even still need to do more. And so, I think…[the AANAPISI grant-funded] mentorship is going to be the answer for students.

The mentorship program focuses particularly on fostering students' relationships and providing support beyond students' academic needs (e.g., linguistic needs, etc.); Parker is emphasizing to look beyond the immediate (and temporary) linguistic/academic needs of their ELL student population and consider ways to support their social needs such as fostering deeper relationships with peers and institutional agents at WCCC. Put another way, when reimagining transformation as a result of the AANAPISI grant, institutional agents can develop pivotal moments by "Facilitat[ing] connections with peers and college personnel." (Espinoza, 2012, p.55). Therefore, with the implementation of the grant, there is a greater awareness of supporting both the academic and social needs of students and what that particularly means when serving a large proportion of English language learning AAPI students at WCCC.

Eighth, institutional agents have come to understand more deeply about the unique needs and challenges of low-income and first-generation AAPI college students as a result of the grant. What can be overlooked at times is that a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution not only serves a large proportion of AAPI students but also a large proportion of low-income AAPI students in particular. An institution is federally recognized as an AAPI-serving institution if 10% or more of the student population identify as an AAPI and 50% of them receive need-based aids such as the Pell Grant (Alcantar et al., 2020; Teranishi, 2012).

According to Espinoza (2012), "Through academic interventions, educators can help any low-income minority student succeed academically." (p.54). Thus, with the implementation of the grant, some key understandings include the following, which are considered to be contributing factors to developing pivotal moments particularly for low-income and first-generation AAPI college students: 1) acknowledging a large proportion of low-income and first-generation AAPI college students at WCCC, 2) recognizing students' challenges related to food insecurity and transportation issue given that WCCC has four satellite campuses, and 3) understanding financial and family situations based on the socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, in the words of Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), many participants said that these challenges are a result of "a whole array of issues." This is what Espinoza (2011) described as the challenges compounded by the intersections of multiple student needs of low-income minority students. In other words, the challenges low-income and first-generation AAPI college students face are due to the intersections of multiple student needs. As the grant was particularly significant in deepening people's understandings of the unique needs of low-come and/or first-generation AAPI college students, this led to fostering collaboration between the AANAPISI program and other student programs on campus (e.g., Transfer center; EOPS, etc.)

Ninth, acknowledging that having a sense of belonging on campus is associated with student engagement and involvement on campus, institutional agents have come to recognize more deeply about a need to help students foster a sense of belonging on campus, a crucial factor that influences community college students' intent to persist (Ek, Cerecer, Alanis, & Rodriguez, 2010; Tovar, 2013), and how grant-related opportunities can shed light about supporting this particular need. Espinoza (2012) discussed the significance of "establishing trust, " when

developing pivotal moments, which can help students foster a sense of belonging (p.53). Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) shared, "What I found is AAPI students, especially in community colleges, don't get that sense of belonging. They don't feel connected…I feel like [the AANAPISI center] is a space where it's AAPI-focused…I would hear conversations like…'Oh, how are you doing?' They're actually checking in…There's for sure a support group [for AAPIs]."

Furthermore, while focusing on fostering a sense of belonging for AAPI students, two specific areas—1) opportunities to expand students' understandings around their own cultural identities, and 2) significance of developing an AAPI-focused space for AAPI students— are more deeply understood as a result of the grant.

In sum, this section has provided an overview of how institutional agents have understood and described the unique needs of AAPI students and how their understandings have evolved as a result of the grant. Overall, the AANAPISI status and grant have revealed the "racial positioning of AAPIs in higher education." (Nguyen, 2019, p.265) where the study participants described the AANAPISI grant in particular was an opportunity to more deeply understand the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students.

Chapter 5: The Perceived Impacts of the Grant on Understanding and Serving All Students

" [Although the AANAPISI grant/program] is meant specifically to help [AAPI] students, it can be used in terms of helping all students become more aware and benefit from [diverse AANAPISI-funded resources] on campus."

--Maria Jackson (Faculty)

While the previous chapter focused on institutional agents' perceived impacts of the AANAPISI grant on understanding how to work with AAPI students, this chapter focuses on how the grant has brought changes in understandings of how to work with both AAPI and non-AAPI students (also referred to as students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds or all students). In other words, this chapter addresses the research question, "In what ways, if at all, does a grant that focuses on serving AAPI students enhance the campus' ability to understand and serve all students?"

With the implementation of the grant, Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared that the funding helped her to "…better understand [all students'] needs, but also better understand how services can help address those needs…[and] to better understand what support is supposed to look like for students." Maria Jackson (White, Faculty) shared, " [Although the AANAPISI grant/program] is meant specifically to help [AAPI] students, it can be used in terms of helping all students become more aware and benefit from [diverse AANAPISI-funded resources] on campus. It is used in that way also."

Similarly, Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared how the funding provided various opportunities to implement AANAPISI-funded student support programs and services and work with students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds:

> If we were federally designated but not funded, like they would just recognize this as an [AAPI-serving institution], but we wouldn't really have the funds to work with [both AAPI and non-AAPI] students, right?
>
> And I was asking [AANAPISI program participants that are both AAPIs and non-AAPIs], "What would your life be if there was no [AANAPISI program]? There was no support like this?" And a lot of them mentioned that, "I would have probably dropped out. I would have probably not attended school. It would be really lonely." And so, they shared a lot of ways that like how their education or even life at [WCCC] would be impacted without the grant…if we were just designated, but we didn't have that support, you will definitely see a lot more students possibly be in that same route.

This chapter discusses three primary themes regarding the role of the AANAPISI grant when working with students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds: 1) the significance of developing two types of spaces—physical and symbolic—for both AAPI and non-AAPI students, 2) the importance of a centralized hub for offering diverse student services in one place, and 3) the significance of fostering cross-racial interactions. Furthermore, illuminating the first theme, developing two types of spaces for all students, I include a discussion of a sub-theme, which focuses on the role of the AANAPISI grant-funded space for serving both online and onsite students at four satellite campuses.

Developing Two Types of Spaces for All Students

According to study participants, the AANAPISI grant has helped to recognize the importance of developing two types of spaces—physical and symbolic—and how these grant-funded spaces can support both AAPI and non-AAPI students or students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. In a previous section, I discussed how the grant has developed an AAPI-focused space, which helped foster a greater sense of belonging for AAPI students or the

target racial group. In this section, I focus on how institutional agents described the extent to which the AANAPISI grant developed both a physical and symbolic—an inclusive environment for all—space and the role of these grant-funded spaces when working with all students or both AAPIs and non-AAPIs.

After the grant was implemented, an institutional committee was formed to search for a place on campus to create the AANAPISI center. During this search process, Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair), a committee member, and other committee members have recognized and voiced a need to create a safe/inclusive and physical space, particularly a permanent space, for both AAPIs and non-AAPI students. As a result, the AANAPISI center has found a temporary space at the Wayland campus and later a permanent space at the Fairview campus where there is more foot traffic; more students are found at Fairview because they take classes at this campus whereas Wayland campus only has administrative offices. Miles stated,

> I think it was my first semester here. I had met [Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program] and [learned] that he received [the AANAPISI] funding. This was before the [AANAPISI center]…So, we wanted to try to make a safe space for students to feel that they can come and talk to their classmates, they could have workshops there as well, so like a two in one type of thing…I was on the committee to look for different sites and help them put together what the [center] should actually look like. So just as far as students having a space not only for workshops, but also a space to just get together and just sit around.
>
> So, I was there from the beginning, helping [the AANAPISI program] decide what the space [or the AANAPISI center] should look like. I remember in its temporary space where it had its own interest, we thought that was important, but the temporary space was also smaller. So, when it moved from that space to where it is permanently now, that was the original goal was to see it as having just a really bigger space…I remember…that space and we had to negotiate to [use that space for the AANAPISI program], so just making sure that the students had a space.

The vision of WCCC's AANAPISI program is to expand its AAPI-focused student support programs and services and work with both AAPI and non-AAPI students. For instance,

the decision to name this AANAPISI center as Culture, Community, and Resource Center (CCRC) was intentionally done to inform their campus community of the AANAPISI program's vision to work with students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.

This vision was more solidified with the development of a physical and permanent space as a result of the grant. With the development of the AANAPISI center, students, primarily AAPI students, who were accessing AANAPISI-funded student programs and services also brought their friends, both AAPIs and non-AAPIs, to this space. Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) discussed, "At the beginning of the grant we weren't able to obtain a physical space. But now that we have a physical space. It's allowed us to bring more students into our services as well as help our students bring other students into the [AANAPISI center] and share out the benefits..."

After relocating to the Fairview campus, students are utilizing the AANAPISI center and its student services before, after or in between classes. Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared,

> I think without the [AANAPISI] center, I wouldn't see a lot of students really staying on campus unless they're at the [College academic advising] center getting tutoring. But at least here at the [Fairview] campus, students are actually staying and hanging out and it really feels like there is a student community. And I feel like if there wasn't that space, everyone would be like all on their own.

Furthermore, Patricia Lim (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said,

> I think there was a real sense of belonging [developed at the AANAPISI center]. [Both AAPI and non-AAPI students] kept coming back [to the AANAPISI center]. They attended APAHE [,a national conference for AAPI students in higher education,] with us. They got friends [from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds] to join [the AANAPISI program]. I mean, they were our best marketers.

Thus, the grant has led to developing a physical and permanent space, which has led to fostering a symbolic space or an inclusive environment for students from diverse racial/ethnic

backgrounds.

Hope Reynolds (Asian European, Transfer Center Specialist) also shared the importance of developing both a physical and symbolic space to foster a deeper sense of belonging for all students or students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. The Transfer center was located right next to the AANAPSI center until the AANAPISI center moved to a bigger space within the same campus during the last year of the grant cycle period. Thus, Reynolds saw how the AANAPISI center developed into an inclusive and communal space for all:

> The Transfer center used to be located here at the [Fairview campus]. I used to be right next door to the [AANAPISI center] and being here at [WCCC] for these many years, one of the things I noticed is that [the AANAPISI program] was the first entity that actually brought students on this campus.
>
> All hours of the day, and believe me Fridays, they had so many great events, and they still continue to have great events for students to come to [WCCC], to form that community and to share. [WCCC] is a distance learning school, so we don't really have students who will voluntarily just come here. It's really just a come here, take a class and leave. But [the AANAPISI program] actually had and still have events and programs that create the community here. In fact, I can remember when I used to be right next door to [the AANAPISI center], they'd come over and say, "Are they too loud?" Because I hear a lot of laughing and you know what? That was music to my ears. It was great to hear students having a great time connecting with the school and enjoying the program.
>
> They've also had mid-year celebrations, end of year celebrations, welcome back celebrations. They're a really a very busy group, but they get people, they get people not only within the college but also within the community come and support what they do. Plus, they also promote the Asian Pacific scholarship opportunities and others too, which the college has had several [WCCC] students awarded.
>
> So, [the AANAPISI program] is willing to tackle the really hard and difficult discussions…bringing people together to open about what their needs are, [their] identity…as well as bridging people together. Plus, they have been the student life here at [WCCC]. The games, the activities, the laughter, bringing communities together. Especially here at [WCCC], I don't see bunch of people necessarily getting together to do craft projects like I've seen next door [at the AANAPISI center]. I've never seen that happen until they did it. It really is a "wow".
>
> Also, what I love, too, is that they actually had students from the [AANAPISI program] who transferred, they had that Wall of Fame, the Wall of Transfer [at the AANAPISI center].

Upon hearing they were accepted to transfer to four-year universities, some of the AANAPISI program students returned to the AANAPISI center to proudly share their acceptance letters. Reynolds shared, "They actually got students to share the letters that they got from the four-year schools or letters of acceptance. That had never been done before. I can attest to that until [the AANAPISI program] did it…Students will not [share their acceptance letters, unless they] have a relationship." According to Reynolds, these particular events were possible due to the development of both a physical and symbolic space for students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds as a result of the grant. WCCC wants to implement something similar to this AANAPISI-initiative and invite their alumni to share their transfer experiences with the current community college students. Reynolds said, "Now [our] college wants to expand upon that." Put another way, the AANAPISI grant sparked a campus-wide conversation on expanding the grant-related initiatives to better understand and serve all students at WCCC.

This space can also foster a sense of community for students' parents and family members. For instance, according to Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President), as a result of the grant, the AANAPISI center hosts an end of the year celebration for students and their families. During this event, people celebrate students' achievements and discusses with students' families the role of a community college in supporting students' success. Jude believes these conversations deepen families' understanding of what it means for their child to attend a community college. Jude said,

> [The end of the year celebration event hosted by the AANAPISI program is] very family oriented, so it's not just the students because in a way you have to impact families. Some of the challenges of AAPI student are related with trying to balance cultural expectations, family expectations etc. So, I'm sure the gathering has allowed families to feel the success as well of the students that they have, and maybe change their minds in terms of ... Because I'm sure our parents sometimes may not fully understand what a community college is.

> Or for some families, they probably say, "Well why are you going to school? You need to be staying home and helping the family instead." So, it's like a victory for everyone…It's just really taking the time to celebrate successes, and I think for certain group of students, for the population that we serve, I'm sure that's very meaningful.

Carrie Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) described that among the students she met for a mental health counseling appointment, several students reported that after their mental health counseling appointment, they were headed to the AANAPISI center to grab a snack or to hang out. Through these students, Lopez gained a deeper understanding of the role of the AANAPISI center and how this physical space developed into an inclusive environment for all, which led Lopez to refer both AAPI and non-AAPI students to the AANAPISI center:

> I know that [the AANAPISI program] provides that space so that students know that there's a place to go. I know that most students know that it exists and that they can go. I know I've had students say to me even after finishing up a session, "I'm going to do the snack from [the AANAPISI center]." Because they know it's available. I know they're also getting some social and some type of support while they're there...In terms of impacting, I know that they have a physical platform and presence and that students know about it, because I do get students who come to see me and have told me about the [AANAPISI center]…[If] I got those that have come to see me that have heard about it, but never gone, I recommend that they go…I've referred other people. I have referred Latino students [to the AANAPISI center].

Thus, the understanding of the importance of developing both a physical and symbolic space for AAPI and non-AAPI students is gained as a result of the grant. Furthermore, the following section, a sub-theme to this first theme, focuses on how institutional agents described the extent to which the development of this physical and symbolic space had expanded their understandings around supporting both online and onsite students at WCCC.

Serving Online and Onsite Students through the Grant-Funded Space

Approximately 70 % of WCCC students take one or more online (also known as distance learning) classes at WCCC. Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared that fostering a sense of community can be one of the biggest challenges of conducting courses

online. Cha said, "[WCCC is known to be a big] online school…[and] some [students] told us before that, 'I can't really interact with students online and I can't make friends that way.'"

In addition to serving a large proportion of online students, WCCC has four satellite campuses in four neighboring cities. Traveling by public transportation, the commute from one campus to another can take up to an hour. This geographic sprawl can create challenges for students, particularly their onsite (also referred to as on campus) students. For instance, Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair) shared that not many students hung out on campus after their classes. Miles said,

> The issue here at [WCCC] is that we do have a lot of satellite locations, so we're here [at Pacific Coast campus], we're here [at Fairview campus], we're here at [Ky-Pham campus] and we're so separate. A lot of the students come take a class and leave. We're not that traditional campus that students stick around…Like even here in [Pacific Coast campus], we don't even have [a] food [court] so it's hard to get students to stick around.

Thus, in this section, I focus on how institutional agents described the extent to which the grant, particularly the grant-funded space, deepened their understandings around serving online and onsite students who are spread across four satellite campuses at WCCC.

Highlighting the significance of developing an inclusive space for both online and onsite students, Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) discussed the extent to which the AANAPISI grant helped to develop this inclusive space for online and onsite students at WCCC:

> if you're going to have one campus [that has] two different types of [students]…[then] I think the most important part is [developing] the space [for both online and onsite students]. The space, the space, the space. I think that's super important…[Then,] they had the [AANAPISI] grant [and] I saw it evolve [to provide a space for both online and onsite students].

Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) has gained a deeper understanding of how both online and onsite students developed a greater sense of belonging through this grant-funded space which fosters relationships:

> Because the campuses are like 20-minute drive from one another, it's sometimes hard to have that student life campus culture that you see at other traditional schools…Once you get to know everyone, it doesn't feel so distant… So, I always knew it was key important, and I just happened to get more involved this year since I got transferred [to work at the AANAPISI center].
>
> Working in the [AANAPISI center], even though I'm not part of the [AANAPISI program] — I use their space as a way to meet with [AAPI/non-AAPI and online/onsite] students — I feel like we're a family. I feel like [WCCC] needs to continue to give to [the AANAPISI program] and get funding for this [online and onsite] population.

When creating a space for online/onsite students, it is important to recognize students' preferences in receiving support such as online, over the phone, or in person. More importantly, it is critical to think of ways to foster a sense of belonging for students whether students come to campus or access the campus resources online. After the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared how the grant developed both an in-person and virtual space which offers student support programs and services to all students. Speaking of the experiences of all students, not just AAPI students, Cha said,

> And the [AANAPISI center] has been a space where they can physically meet people, and just like work together and study together. At [WCCC], because we're also online too, it's really hard to have a student life and have a student community here. But at the [AANAPISI center], I think, especially at [Fairview] campus, it's really the only like student friendly place at this campus. And so, students have been able to just congregate or stay there when they don't have class. And then when they have class, they'll just go back to class or if they take a break and just kind of hang out in this space. And so, it's definitely been a space of community building with each other and learning together. And for the students who are in our leadership program, it's been a way for them to organize and come up with projects with things that they're passionate about.

Through the grant-created space, Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair) has met both online and onsite students at the AANAPISI center. The AANAPISI center

(Fairview campus) is a convenient location for students who live near the Fairview campus and are unable to travel to Miles' office (Pacific Coast campus); the Pacific coast campus is about 30 minutes away from the Fairview campus by car, but it may take over an hour with public transportation. Notably, as her online students continually requested to meet in person at the AANAPISI center, Miles experienced how many of her online students were feeling more connected to the institution. Miles shared,

> I think [the funding] helped a great deal…[The AANAPISI center] is just a really nice space for [me] to [meet with all students, not just AAPIs, and particularly online students]. I do find that a lot of times with my online students…if they're local, they like to meet more [in-person]. They want to make sure that they're doing something correctly, so I make myself available…I've used the [AANAPISI center] a number of times to meet with different students…So, it was like the marriage of bringing those online students out of the dark shadows of online and having them actually come to the campus, which I think was really nice…[When they came out to the AANAPISI center, they also] learned about some of the resources that we have here on campus [such as the AANAPISI program] that maybe as an online student they just really didn't know existed.
>
> With the online classes, I still meet students, a lot of students face to face if they have some issues [and] if they're local. So, I'll meet them at the [AAANAPISI center] a lot of times to help them with papers, research papers and stuff like that…[Ron] makes it very open for us to use it… So, it's a nice space for faculty to meet with students if [students] don't want to come all the way to [Pacific Coast campus] for office hours...It was nice to be there from the very beginning and see [how the AANAPISI grant-funded space] grew…it's a buzzing place.

Furthermore, as Miles gained a deeper understanding of the role of the AANAPISI grant-funded space when working with her online students in particular, Miles has expanded the locations to meet in person to other nearby locations such as a café that was even more convenient for students:

> [In addition to the AANAPISI center,] I've met students pretty much all over [the] County [based on] where they live, [Ky-Pham campus], Starbucks, I've met students at a host of different places just to help them if they're not understanding some of the online content…I have to break those barriers. So, I try to do different things to help even my online as well as my [onsite] students.

Like Miles, a unique understanding is gained for Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) related to online students. Among online students who developed relationships with the AANAPISI program and became familiar with campus resources, a large proportion of them preferred to meet Basa or other staff members in-person. Basa said,

> A lot of my student mentees, they're actually returning students and they usually are students that frequently come to the center. So, I've had in person meetings so far, but like for those that are aren't able to meet, I always give them the option to Zoom or like video chat, but for some reason they're just like, "I'll meet with you in-person or I'll let you know when I'm free [to meet in-person]."

In a similar vein, Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor), who meets with a large proportion of AANAPISI program students, shared that in-person meetings tend to be longer and more in-depth compared to meetings over the phone or online:

> My online or phone appointments, they're not very lengthy, probably 15 minutes, and then that's it. But, when it comes to my in-person meetings, you get that face-to-face interaction. You can be, you know, the body language. It becomes more in-depth and has more meaning. When it comes to phone appointment, it's just straight to the point. "Help me with what I need help with," and check in, "How's your day?" That's about it, very surface level when I have phone meetings, yeah."

Thus, with the implementation of the grant, both AAPI and non-AAPI students developed relationships through this grant-funded space and a large proportion of them, particularly online students, preferred to access various services in-person at the AANAPISI center. This highlights the role the AANAPISI grant-funded space plays when working with both online and onsite students at WCCC.

Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) and her colleagues in the AANAPISI program continue to develop their virtual services to develop an inclusive space for all students. Latu stated,

> So that's one of the focuses for our services overall is we're trying to provide more of an online platform for students to engage with us. Because yes, our workshops are on-site. But we do recognize that our students are online as well. And then we think about

> [WCCC], a lot of our students are online as well. So, if we're going to meet the students where they're at, that being said, we have to go to the student. So, we have to provide an avenue for them to... for us to meet them where they're at basically.

Thus, the physical and symbolic space developed by the AANAPISI grant became an integral part of WCCC when working with online and onsite students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.

The "Hub": Offering Diverse Student Services in One Place

With the creation of a physical and symbolic space, institutional agents developed a deeper understanding of the need to offer a wide range of student support programs and services in one place. This understanding of the importance of a centralized hub of resources led to increased collaboration among student programs to build more robust student support programs and services.

According to Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director), "[The AANAPISI program provides] mentoring, the leadership program, our workshops. And then I think what I separated is the physical space, the physical space being a place to, one be a place for you to study, but also be a hub for all these services. So, it's a congregation space now."

At this hub, student services and resources are provided for "students that either are beneficiaries of the AANAPISI grant… or students from other backgrounds… for their academic success or career opportunities. It's just a special place. It's kind of can be seen as their niche on the campus," said Maria Jackson (White, Faculty).

According to Paul Santos (Career Services Specialist/Faculty), the development of a centralized hub of resources as a result of the grant can introduce students to diverse services and resources on campus. Furthermore, students' awareness of these campus resources can help foster a greater sense of belonging. Santos shared,

> If [students] are in [the AANAPISI-funded] mentorship program, [or utilizing other campus services through the AANAPISI center]…[this] introduces them to different campus resources that sometimes students need to know or else they wouldn't have visited in the first place, especially if they have a goal [to achieve educational success]…[and]]…there's for sure that sense of belonging [for AANAPISI program students].

Understanding the significance of offering a wide range of student support services in one place, AANAPISI staff members reached out to other student support programs and services on campus such as the Career center and Transfer center.. This ultimately broadened the student services offered at this "hub." Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) said,

> We try to meet our students where they're at. So, one of the things that we've tried to change is we bring our resources to the [AANAPISI] Center, and then we do drop-in hours. And then we have students who participate in that. Or we try to do a workshop with that campus resource and then have our students participate in that. Just to ease the uneasiness that students might feel going to a resource. And they can be in a space that they feel comfortable in. Hopefully that will help them build the courage to speak to campus resources.
>
> I think one of the big ones is that we've been able to build relationships with campus resources throughout the institution. And then because of that, our students have been able to benefit off those relationships. So, we've been able to build relationships with the Career services, the Transfer center. We've also been able to work closely with [College academic advisors]. And we, more recently, have been able to build a relationship with the [Veterans center]. So, we've been doing some collaboration with the [Veterans Center]. And then we've also been able to work more with faculty this semester like with [a Social Science] department.

Natalie Diaz (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) holds mental health-related workshops at the AANAPISI center. Describing one particular day when I had walked into the AANAPISI center while Diaz was holding a workshop, Diaz shared, "So that day when we met [at the AANAPISI center], I was using the space." Gaining an understanding that many students are accessing and benefitting from the centralized hub for services, Diaz and her colleagues have been and will continue to utilize this space to hold student workshops. Diaz stated,

> When we are creating our workshops, we definitely think about partnering with programs that already have students and the [AANAPISI program] being one of the few student-

> centered organizations, I think outside of the clubs, it's just a natural fit for a collaboration for us as student mental health services…it's quite a bit of a challenge though when, the [AANAPISI program] is one of the only student-centered programs here at the campus.

In sum, by developing a centralized hub of resources as a result of the grant, this increased collaboration among student programs on campus and provided opportunities to introduce a wide range of campus resources to both AAPI and non-AAPI students who were accessing this space.

Fostering Cross-Racial Interactions

With the implementation of the grant, institutional agents have come to understand the importance of creating opportunities for students to interact with others from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Put another way, study participants shared the significance of fostering cross-racial interactions through the grant-funded space.

Mandy Williams (White, Academic Counselor/Faculty) came to understand that the physical space created by the grant—the AANAPISI center—has potential to evolve as a "safe place" by providing opportunities for students from differing racial and ethnic backgrounds learn from each other. Williams shared,

> What I would hope is when they participate in workshops at the [AANAPISI center] or those field trips or anything like that, that also then the outcome is, is that they just have a better sense of either cultural awareness for themselves or how they relate to people of other ethnicities would be what I would hope would be the outcome.

Similarly, Paul Santos (Asian American, Career Services Specialist/Faculty) discussed the need for a "social component" where students can develop a sense of community through cross-racial interactions:

> You kind of need that social component and without the social component, it's going to be difficult for them to get through… there wouldn't be a community. [The AANAPISI center] is the only space where that's really happening [on campus]. It's creating that sense of community…there's different ethnic groups in that space but they all get along

> because the common cause for all of them is the support, their peers, the social, the food. So, it's really nice for them.

Through one particular AANAPISI grant-funded initiative—the mentorship program—Olivia Parker (White, Faculty), became more aware of the significance of developing students' networks through cross-racial interactions. This mentorship program offers both peer-to-peer and mentor-to-student support. Parker shared that the mentoring service alleviated some of the pressure students feel in navigating campus resources by themselves:

> I can say that the networks that I'm seeing created by the [AANAPISI program] where it's not just friendships but also students mentoring each other and helping one another study are things that are having an incredible impact [on both AAPI and non-AAPI students in the AANAPISI program]…If we're able to scale the kinds of mentoring relationships and community that they are providing then I think all students benefit [from the AANAPISI program].

Similarly, Carrie Lopez (Latina, Mental Health Therapist) gained a deeper understanding of the significance of fostering opportunities for students to meet others, which can help students feel that they are not alone:

> I know that [the AANAPISI program] provides a lot of resources like the mentorship program. So, a lot of different resources for students to feel like I'm not doing this all by myself. Then, [students, both AAPIs and non-AAPIs, participating in the AANAPISI program] can meet with other students [from diverse racial/ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds] too…because meeting with other students is what is going to carry them outside of [WCCC].

Reyna Villar (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said that students, particularly non-AAPI students, who spent time in the AANAPISI center, experienced a greater sense of community through the relationships that were fostered in the center:

> So, I'm talking specifically the non-AAPI students…They would come because they're part of their community, and so their community is essentially ... I mean naturally would come to the center because their friends are going to that center. So, it's really that dynamic. And then also there's a deficit of culturally relevant spaces and safe spaces in every institution. So that was the purpose of that too. They were there because they wanted to feel like they could study and they could feel safe, and they could feel like they have a sense of relationship with staff and their peers…And obviously a lot of these

> AAPI students had relationships [with others] that were not just AAPI, and that were in other groups.

In a similar vein, Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair) has come to understand how the AANAPISI center can help foster cross-racial interactions among students. “I think [the AANAPISI center] makes a safe space for students to have conversations with other students [from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds],” said Miles. As a result, she invited students outside of the AANAPISI program to attend AANAPISI workshops and learn about their programs and services that are available to students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Miles shared,

> I actually asked all my psych instructors to offer extra credit [for students who attended a workshop at the AANAPISI center]…it was a good turnout…even without the extra credit, I think we still would have had some students that came out. But it was nice just to have students outside of the regular [AANAPISI program] students come to workshops…We had [both AAPI and non-AAPI] students that didn't even know that that [AANAPISI program] existed that came out and learned about [the AANAPISI program].

Ted Jacobs (White, Veterans Center Specialist) interacts with many AANAPISI program students on a regular basis because the AANAPISI center is located right next to the Veterans center. With the implementation of the grant, Jacobs learned how the grant-created space provides opportunities for AANAPISI program students, both AAPIs and non-AAPIs, to build relationships with others from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. In addition, he discussed the extent to which this relationship building could foster students’ sense of belonging and shape their educational outcomes. Jacobs stated,

> I think the [AANAPISI center] has a lot more events going on so there's always something for [students] to connect, to meet other students [from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds], connect with other students [from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds] and it also helps them academically through [the relationships they build with] their mentor’s program and the [college academic advisors]. I think [fostering diverse and cross-racial interactions] is an integral part to…how [the AANAPISI grant-funded program is] really serving...

> I've watched students go in, come into the semester that were very shy, not talkative, kind of that personality of just type B just kind of, "I don't want to talk to anybody." By the end of the semester, after you see them at the events and you see them hanging out in the [AANAPISI center], you see them a lot, they're just like anybody else. They're just talkative…because I think it gave them a place to belong and a home.
>
> I see the transformation…So if the school's main purpose is to graduate and transfer, they want success in their students, look no further…Students need a place to belong and students need a place to congregate…to group [and develop relationships with others from diverse backgrounds] to succeed in their college. They need others around them.

In sum, the grant has deepened the understandings around the significance of fostering cross-racial interactions for all students through the grant-created space.

Discussion and Conclusion

In Chapter 5, I focused on how the grant that focuses on serving AAPI students has enhanced the campus' ability to understand and serve all students or both AAPI and non-AAPI students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution.

With the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, institutional agents have gained deeper understandings around the significance of 1) developing both a physical and symbolic (e.g., safe; inclusive) space for all students, 2) offering various student support programs and services in one place, and 3) fostering cross-racial interactions. Furthermore, study participants have come to understand how the grant, particularly the grant-funded space, has expanded their understandings around working with online and onsite students. Below is what I have synthesized based on these four areas—three primary themes and one sub-theme.

A space, which provides "a form of legitimacy, while also building community" (Nguyen, 2019, p.271), is described in two parts—the physical and symbolic space—and institutional agents have gained a deeper understanding of the significance of creating and developing both a physical and symbolic space as a result of the grant. According to Alcantar et al. (2020), "the limited literature on space and place for AAPI students demonstrates that

physical and symbolic space are essential for supporting AAPI students" (p.4). A physical space provides opportunities to offer diverse student support programs and services in one location and create a hub. A symbolic space focuses on creating opportunities to foster a sense of belonging/community for students such as relationship building (Alcantar et al., 2020; Nguyen, 2019).

This centralized hub of resources not only eases students' access to diverse services but also informs students of multiple campus resources, which can help students build confidence that they are not alone in the process of navigating through college. This hub also fosters collaboration between the AANAPISI program and diverse student support programs and services on campus and help institutional agents to build relationships with others outside of their offices/departments. These opportunities are considered to be pivotal moments where "through pivotal moment interventions, students develop numerous positive educational outcomes and a newly transformed orientation toward academic achievement." (Espinoza, 2012, p.53-54).

Furthermore, a deeper understanding of the need to foster cross-racial interactions has evolved as a result of the grant. According to Olivia Parker (White, Faculty), this need can be understood through"… the networks… created by the [AANAPISI grant and its program] where it's not just friendships but also students mentoring each other…those kinds of [relationship building with others from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds]…peer support…have an incredible impact [on] confidence and all the psychological stuff that goes along with that…" Espinoza (2012) also highlighted the importance of facilitating opportunities for students to develop strong relationships with others: "Educators must deliberately guide and mentor students in formal and informal ways to enhance their overall academic achievement. Educators must …develop a strong enough rapport with students to provide long-term academic support." (p.54). And in this

study, through interactions with others from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, pivotal moments have developed as a result of the grant, which has led to fostering students' sense of community.

Furthermore, Alcantar et al. (2020) suggested, "future studies should examine how campus symbolic and physical space and place affect other racial/ethnic minoritized groups" (p.14); with the implementation of the grant, this AANAPISI-funded hub has played an important part in fostering cross-racial interactions and developing a sense of belonging for both AAPI and non-AAPI students.

Finally, WCCC serves both online and onsite students; approximately 70% of WCCC students take at least one online class and this college has four satellite campuses. Acknowledging the grant-developed space and opportunities, institutional agents emphasized the significance of developing both a symbolic and physical space when working with both online and onsite students. Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair) said, "[The AANAPISI center] is more than just a student lounge. It's more than just a facility to goof off between your classes or to hang out with your friends. It's more than just a Student Life-like facility. It's actually an enrichment center for students, which I think is very important." Like Miles, Hope Reynolds (Asian European, Transfer Center Specialist) shared, "[The AANAPISI grant-funded space] was the first entity that actually brought students on this campus."

Furthermore, Maria Jackson (White, Faculty) shared, " [Although the AANAPISI grant/program] is meant specifically to help [AAPI] students, it can be used in terms of helping all students become more aware and benefit from [diverse AANAPISI-funded resources] on campus. It is used in that way also." All in all, the grant that focuses on serving AAPI students has enhanced the campus' ability to better understand and serve all students or students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.

CHAPTER 6: The Perceived Impacts of the Grant on Serving Students After the Grant Ends

"I think overall, [the AANAPISPI grant] helped [by] giving [our institution] a baseline of where our students are, giving us the language to use with our college campuses… faculty are able to use it in their work…the [AANAPISI] grant helped enable other programs to move forward."

--Lee Jones (Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)

This chapter focuses on how the grant has shaped the changes in understandings of serving students after the grant ends. I focus on the extent to which the grant has shed light on: 1) sustaining and expanding the current and future AANAPISI grant-related student initiatives on campus, and 2) expanding another student initiative on campus such as the Umoja program.

Sustaining and Expanding the Current and Future AANAPISI Student Initiatives

At the time of the data collection, WCCC was in its final year of the 2015-2020 grant cycle and thus, many study participants shared their perceived impacts of the grant on sustaining and expanding the current and future AANAPISI-related students initiatives on campus. Thus, the key conversations were focused on institutional agents' changes in understandings of the process of institutionalizing the AANAPISI program and pursuing another AANAPISI grant with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) students. Based on these key discussions, this section is divided into three parts: 1) under new management, 2) expanding the AANAPISI student initiatives at other satellite campuses, and 3) pursuing another AANAPISI grant with a focus on STEM students.

Under New Management

As a part of the process of institutionalizing the AANAPISI program, Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program, became the Director of the Office of Student Affairs. Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) discussed the steps the institution had taken as a part of the process of institutionalizing the AANAPISI program.

> What we've done is we've institutionalized the [AANAPISI program] under [the Department of Student Affairs]. A lot of the activities, the leadership things for the AAPI students and we've established regional connections throughout other colleges. [State universities in the region], all of the places. And through those connections, we're still able to sustain that because we sustained the director [of the AANAPISI program]'s position in [the Office of Student Programs and Services] as a Director of [Student Affairs]. That's going to be where it lives primarily because [AANAPISI program] has a lot of student life engagement activities and things.

With Reyes' change in position, the AANAPISI program is now a part of the Office of Student Affairs, which is supervised by the Office of Student Programs and Services and the Dean of Students. Regarding this change, Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared, "So, [at the institutional-level,] they're thinking [that] the [the AANAPISI program] best fits under [the Office of Student Affairs]…[as the institution] move towards the institutionalization [of the AANAPISI program]."

In addition, Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) has been a part of campus-wide conversations on how to institutionalize the AANAPISI program and continue serving students after the AANAPISI grant ends:

> I've definitely thought quite a bit about what happens when the grant ends? How do we maintain programs and services? How do we as a college think about the programs and services we're currently providing? What do we see as sort of the benefit? And those are probably the biggest things. I think a lot of people at the college see real value in [WCCC] having the [AANAPISI] grant in terms of having the [AANAPISI center].
>
> So, then there was discussion about the grant is ending, we need to figure out how to institutionalize these things. We could tie it in with [the Office of Student Affairs, which

> is a part of the Office of Student Support Programs and Services]. So, then that sort of helped move all that.

In other words, the changes which occurred as a result of institutionalizing the AANAPISI program are a part of the process of sustaining and expanding the current and future AANAPISI student initiatives on campus.

Reyes now works closely with Nancy Davis (Dean of Students) who oversees all programs that are a part of the Office of Student Programs and Services including the AANAPISI program; initially, the AANAPISI program was under the Office of Institutional Research and Grants where Reyes worked closely with Andy Smith, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants. Davis shared, "[As the Dean of Students,] I do have specific oversight for programs [such as the AANAPISI program] that are directed specifically at [certain student] populations." As a result of Davis working closely with Reyes, some extensive conversations had taken place between the two with a goal of better understanding the roles and functions of the AANAPISI program at WCCC. Davis said,

> There's been some interesting conversations since I've been here about why it called the [Culture, Community, and Resource Center]. Is it really [for supporting all students' cultures and communities?] What does that mean? [Does] it only [or mainly] serve AAPI students? [or] maybe it doesn't only serve AAPI students? Do we communicate that it is not only for AAPI students? So, lots of interesting conversations around some of those issues too [as we try to institutionalize the AANAPISI programs and services].
> Along with the change in Reyes' role, Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students)

With the AANAPISI program coming under the Office of Student Programs and Services, Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) shared that this was the best option in terms of finding a permanent home for the AANAPISI program. "[Ron] to move into [the Office of Student Affairs]…that's great because he's able to take his knowledge and start institutionalizing it in [the Office of Student Programs and Services] and our outreach efforts and it becomes part of the college campus."

Furthermore, Jones brought up an important point about the need to revisit some of changes that were implemented as a result of institutionalizing the AANAPISI program.

> However, then I ask, well if he leaves what happens then? I think we still beg the question, [Ron] has moved into the [Student Affairs] positional role, but the [AANAPISI program] doesn't have a project lead, per se. Now he has two jobs [being the] Director of one thing and another. There's still this gap, and I think [with] this overuse of personnel and resources…We have to figure something out for it to truly reach its full potential.

Therefore, on the one hand, a potential challenge is identified regarding the additional roles and responsibilities that Ron Reyes took on. On the other hand, this change can increase opportunities for the AANAPISI program to collaborate with other programs in the Office of Student Affairs or more broadly-speaking, Office of Student Programs and Services.

For instance, according to Keej Cha (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), the AANAPISI program recently collaborated with another student program in the Office of Student Affairs.

> And so, [Office of Student Affairs] and [the AANAPISI program] both did a Lunar New Year event. And so, we just had like lion dancers come out and like do a lion dance. So, the students really enjoyed it. And so, we also partnered up with the International student program to make that happen. And so, I think having [Ron, Director of the AANAPISI program] in [the Office of Student Affairs] has helped to merge our services to work together and to support AAPI students. And so those are things that I've kind of seen.

Through her involvement in a campus committee with Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program and now the Director of Student Affairs, Olivia Parker (White, Faculty) has come to understand the process of sustaining and expanding the current AANAPISI student initiatives on campus. Therefore, Parker plans to collaborate with the AANAPISI program and help digitalize the AANAPISI program's storytelling series so more students can access this resource online. Parker said,

> I heard about the fact that the [AANAPIS center] was doing a storytelling series, I thought that would be amazing to develop that into digital storytelling, into the online magazine, so we can include videos. So, I asked [Ron], "Can we do this?" We've had a

> couple of conversations about it. I would love an opportunity to harness the energy that I think that they have and see if I can get some excitement about student publications and actually just talking about this I might try and link the two when my student gets to talk next few weeks about the [AANAPISI program], I might try and link the two if they're doing the storytelling series again, because I think it would be a neat way to take that to the next level. It would be a lot more work I think besides developing the story for the series and we would have to produce it and film it and edit it. So, it is quite a time investment, but I think it can be really amazing.

In sum, various changes occurred at WCCC as a part of the process of institutionalizing the AANAPISI program. One key change was a change in Ron Reyes' position, which led the AANAPISI program to be under a new department or under new management. And based on these changes, institutional agents are engaging in various campus-wide conversations related to sustaining and expanding the current and future AANAPISI student initiatives.

Expanding the AANAPISI Student Initiatives at Other Satellite Campuses

There are four satellite campuses at WCCC. However, the AANAPISI center is located at the Fairview campus. Although some AANAPISI workshops and events are available at other satellite campuses, they are primarily offered at the Fairview campus. Therefore, study participants discussed the need of expanding the current AANAPISI student initiatives at other satellite campuses.

Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director) shared, "[we need to] think about how we can expand the [AANAPISI center] into different campuses." Similarly, Cathy Garcia (Latina, EOPS Counselor/Faculty) said, "I think that the [AANAPISI program] has done an excellent job developing their services and developing a community [for students]. I would like to see them be able to continue to do that."

More specifically, Amy Ocampo (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) emphasized the need to expand the cultural space on campus:

> I'm grateful that we get that funding and having such a wonderful cultural space like the [AANAPISI center] for students, because I feel like this space right here is the only type of student life we get on this campus, so I'm really grateful for that and I feel like the [AANAPISI program] should be institutionalized [to other campuses]…I enjoy being in the [AANAPISI center] and meeting with the staff and working with the students there.

According to Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff), there are campus-wide discussions on how to expand the existing AANAPISPI student initiatives across all four satellite campuses. Latu discussed,

> Because we were able to get a physical space here at the [Fairview] campus it's created a hub for the students to come to because there's really no other location where a lot of students can gather and just utilize the space more to support each other…For us, it's like, "How do we bring a little bit of [the AANAPISI student initiatives] to [Pacific Coast]? How do we bring a little bit of [the AANAPISI program or the space created by the program] to the [Ky-Pham] center? For us there are limitations for us to be at [all four] campus, because we cannot assume that all students would just come to us [at the Fairview campus].

For instance, Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) shared a plan for expanding the AANAPISI mentorship program in particular at WCCC:

> Our commitment to [institutionalizing the AANAPIS program] has been seen through. And so, that's really good. Making it a part of what we do has been very important. The peer mentors [and the AANAPISI mentorship program], I find that that's going to be something that we're going to fold in I believe to something [at a larger scale].

Focusing on the campus-wide discussions related to expanding the AANAPSI student initiatives at four campuses, Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) described how these conversations can help identify the gaps in campus resources such as which student groups are being left out and underserved at WCCC:

> I don't know how the AANAPISI grant has affected [other campuses at WCCC]. There's no [AANAPISI center] at [the Pacific Coast campus] or at the [Ky-Pham] campus…I definitely know it's affected our younger, 18 to 25, but I wonder how it's affected our adult education learners or students here at [Pacific Coast], because it is [a challenge] our campuses [have].

Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair) discussed the need to expand the current AANAPISI student initiatives at other satellite campuses, particularly the Pacific Coast campus; many in-person classes are offered at this campus but not many students are hanging out or utilizing student services at this location. Miles said,

> [So,] just to continue what we're doing, [but also] trying to expand it even more…Here [at Pacific Coast campus, there is a talk about implementing] a satellite [AANAPISI center]. This [center] would be trying to change the mindset of our students. I think the campus has to be more welcoming [to] change the mindset [of our students].
>
> I would like to help the [AANAPISI program] integrate into other campuses…because distance-wise, there's just a lot of students that probably aren't going to go to [the Fairview campus]. If you live [in Pacific Coast], you're just not going to drive all the way to [Fairview] for the [AANAPISI program]. So, [having] these different [AANAPISI] satellite locations where there could be other pieces or components about the [AANAPISI program can] help students. So, I just hope to continue to work with [Ron] and work alongside his [AANAPISI] team.

In other words, Miles is emphasizing the need to maximize their institutional capacity at each campus and how undergoing a change to expand the current AANAPISI student initiatives at four satellite campuses can develop pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012).

To reimagine this change, Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) emphasized the need to create opportunities where students can tell what kinds of student services they want to see developed at each of the campuses:

> Because if you've been over to [the other campuses]…they are not only sort of structurally are dramatically different, the students at each of those [satellite campuses are] dramatically different. The feel is different. The communities in which they're located are different. So, students who are going to call this [campus as] their place, they're going to be looking for different things, right? So, we [can] set some general ground rules or structure but [we should] allow for the students to say, "Here's what I think I need," and then we provide that and build the momentum in terms of institutional resources. So that's what [WCCC is] trying to think through: How can we do [what we did with the grant at other satellite campuses]?"

Maria Jackson (White, Faculty) shared a plan for expanding the virtual AANAPISI grant-funded space so more students—both online and onsite—can easily access various student

support programs and services online. Some of the AANAPISI student services such as the mentoring service are available online, but there are additional opportunities to expand the current AANAPISI services. Jackson said,

> Right now, I know that [the AANAPISI program is] in development [to expand their services]…It's going to be a virtual [AANAPISI center]. I know that. And so, definitely my students, I would tell them about that and they could participate in that and find commonalities with other students that maybe share the same background that they do and see about various strategies that have worked for them and they can help each other and build relationships in that way definitely. That's just around the corner. That should be up pretty soon.

Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) talked about expanding the virtual AANAPISI grant-funded space with more creative approaches:

> [The AANAPISI program has] a website with services and resources. I think we can always improve upon that. I'm always like, "[Ron,] let's stream that." We do what we can [and] we do have [the AANAPISI] resources online. [We can improve on having more] creative control of our web pages [so] they'd look a little bit different [and better support students who are using the online resources].

Similar to Jackson and Smith, Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) said while expanding the current AANAPISI student initiatives, their virtual AANAPISI-funded student services need to be more visible to reach more online students. Garcia stated,

> I think with a lot of our programs…because we don't have that face-to-face with the majority of them, we heavily rely on emails and people checking the website. [How] do you reach online students ? [So,] making the [AANAPISI student initiatives] more visible on the student website, that might be a way [to reach more students].

Furthermore, study participants discussed about expanding the AANAPISI student initiatives to reach their part-time students, Pacific Islander (PI) students, and those beyond their AAPI students. The 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant focuses on serving full-time and low-income AAPI students in particular. Therefore, Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director) shared, "…another focus, it's either going to be on the part-time students or on Pacific

Islander students." Reyes discussed how their AANAPISI student initiatives can expand to target support toward the part-time student population at WCCC:

> I think we need to move over to part-time students, because full-time students already tend to do better… I think what would take maybe two to three years for a full-time student, I don't think a part-time student understands it'll take like six years, but [part-time students] don't know that because they haven't planned it all out and they don't know it…[Full-time students'] persistence rates were [pretty low before the AANAPISI grant was implemented]. But it's still nowhere near compared to the part-time piece [because part-time students' persistence rates were even lower].
>
> I don't think [many of the part-time students I have met are] even thinking about [when they will complete their degree]. I think they are just going to keep trucking along because, when have they ever had to plan out a stuff outside of high school? And even in high school, there's a track already set up like "Do these many years of Math." You don't even have to get to a certain level. And I think that's maybe what's different about college is that you have to get to a certain level. It's not about a certain amount of years…There's a lot of factors in it. And also, there's hardly any tools, strategies, programs that are designed for part-time students. All the equity based programs they are all more or less designed for full-time students.

Although the AANAPISI grant focuses on serving both Pacific Islanders (PI) and Asian Americans (AA), often times, PI students can receive less attention compared to AA students due to a smaller number of PI students compared to AA students. Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) shared that some discussions are happening at the district-level on expanding their AANAPISI student initiatives to encourage collaborations among local community colleges and community-based organization to better serve the PI student population:

> So, there's been some initiatives that we've tried to create through [the implementation of the] AANAPISI [grant]. One of them is the [West Coast] County Pacific Islander higher ed initiative. And so that's allowed us to work with other community colleges, other institutions to help create a work group that will help address Pacific Islanders' needs. And basically, talking about Pacific Islanders' needs and how we can better support them, or what do Pacific Islander students need to be successful at our various institutions.
>
> It has [also] allowed us to build community-based organization relationships and see the connection between what's happening in the community to what's happening with our [WCCC] students. So, we've worked with a Vietnamese organization…We've also started working with [the West Coast] County Pacific Islander [Organization]. So, it's allowed us

> to, one, create these different [community] tours. We have a [Fairview city] tour, which we pair with a community organization. They come to us and we talk about the things that we're looking for and this is how we'd like you to help us and then vice versa, if they need support or if they have upcoming internship opportunities, then that's something we'd share with our students. [A Vietnamese community organization] had a [Lunar] Festival event. So, some of our [AANAPISI] students and staff went to support them in their event.

Furthermore, Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) mentioned the need to expand the AANAPISI student initiatives to better serve all students at four satellite campuses or students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds:

> So, "How do you provide culturally relevant services in a centralized way [when services are institutionalized] without negating their cultural relevance?"…I think there is a desire then for the [AANAPISI center] to serve all students. So, it's great to have a space for students where students feel like they belong and supported, and we should provide that everywhere and replicate that in a variety of different ways. I think about it also in terms of, "Here's a service that we provide. Let's look at who is taking advantage and who is benefiting from it and why is that?" And "What are the ways in which we might need to modify our provision, modify our assumptions and then what are the ways in which then we assess the viability of that service? And how we offer that both uniformly and distinctly based on our student population?"

Like Davis, Susan Garcia (Latina, Faculty) pointed out the need of sustaining and expanding the current AANAPISI student initiatives to reach more students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Garcia said, "… it might be more difficult for other minority groups, for example, African Americans to maybe feel the connection, because the majority of our [AANAPISI-funded] resources are geared towards our AAPI students."

Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director) talked about taking creative approaches to expand the AANAPISI student initiatives and work with more students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds:

> We still have to create interventions and activities that are going to address [students'] needs [and] it depends on what the focus is…because there will also clearly have to be some cultural responsiveness. The cool thing though about AAPIs is because it's such a wide category. The way that you have to approach AAPI issues is either you go really super focused like Vietnamese, or you have to [implement] a space for everyone to

> engage in and bring out their story. And for me that latter piece is the best way to approach AAPI groups [and non-AAPI groups], unless you're targeting a specific population.
>
> Everything doesn't have to revolve around the AAPI students…Like we just did a lunar new year celebration, and not every one of my AAPI students celebrate lunar new year, right? And the people who were planning it were of any community that were AAPI but were not of any community that like celebrates lunar new year. But at the same time, we wanted to still do something [for our students]…So, I think, we'll end up creating activities that will address AAPI needs, but it will be done in a way, which is that thinking about what students of color are really and making sure that whatever activities we create is going to help address [students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds]. I think it's creating that space of cultural responsiveness [for all students].

Furthermore, Hope Reynolds (Asian European, Transfer Center Specialist) discussed how this process of expanding the AANAPISI student initiatives at four satellite campuses can encourage other local community colleges to consider implementing the AANAPISI-like programs at their own campuses to better serve students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.

> Even though we have a strong Asian student population, I don't think we would be addressing some of these areas at all [had it not been the AANAPISI program]. It is very important to have a presence like [the AANAPISI program] on campus, to be able to even work within this decentralized system [with four satellite campuses]. But something is working here. I just would love to see [the AANAPISI program] become more of a district-wide [program], if these other places don't have [a student support program like the AANAPISI program], so that it is reaching [our] entire community college district. I think [WCCC] could probably lead the way.

In sum, study participants discussed the extent to which the grant shaped their understandings around expanding the AANAPISI initiatives at four satellite campuses to better serve students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., racial/ethnic; socio-economic).

Pursuing Another AANAPISI Grant with a Focus on STEM Students

WCCC has received two AANAPISI grants (2010-2015; 2015-2020). Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) shared how both the first and the current AANAPISI grants helped build institutional capacity and deepen institutional agents' understandings around serving students.

> So, I think on my first year here…[WCCC had] the first AANAPISI grant. So, [our campus] really [had] just a group [that worked toward pursuing the funding]. [This evolved and] now [Dr. Andy Smith] and his team are ...[a] more formalized [group that is a part of the Institutional Research and Grants office]…But before there was no office or anything like that, it was just really a group. And I think that speaks to the culture [and capacity building] that [has evolved] at [WCCC]. [With the implementation of the two AANAPISI grants, we] have an awareness about the different possibilities that could be out there or the different needs that could be better served.

Similar to Jude, Daniel Johnson (White, Grant Specialist) said,

> So those are the 10 years of secured funding and five years of funding looking forward on what we're trying to do to really serve the population and provide services through instruction and support that can greatly assist this [AAPI] population if not the entire population of the college, knowing that these funds can help everyone.

With the understanding of how the grant has helped build institutional capacity to better understand and serve both AAPIs and those beyond AAPI students, WCCC made a decision to pursue another AANAPISI funding for the 2020-2025 grant cycle.

Andy Smith (White, Dean of Institutional Research and Grants) is one of the key institutional agents who is involved with pursuing another AANAPISI grant. Smith shared that the third AANAPISI grant will focus on serving low-income AAPIs in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) majors. In addition, several plans are included in this new AANAPISI grant proposal such as hiring more staff members from the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds as their students who can also understand the mental health issues related to the AAPI communities.

> I think what [the 2015-2020 AANAPISPI funding] has afforded us is the opportunity to be innovative and try different things. See what's worked, what hasn't worked, refine that and then scale that out to different areas of the institution.

> Our future grant…we're going to be looking at STEM. But I think for me, [within the focus of targeting support for STEM students,] the biggest one is going to be mental health support services for our AAPI students. Because of our large cluster of [student] population, 23% being AAPI, it only makes sense to have a dedicated counselor, at least two. One that can speak Vietnamese, one that probably can speak Mandarin. And be

> multilingual. I think for me, that's the biggest need just because we're watching that emerge and it's huge.

According to Daniel Johnson (White, Grant Specialist), their new AANAPISI grant proposal (also referred to as the new AANAPISI STEM initiative), focuses on five areas:

> [First,] limited number of STEM degree pathways. [Second,] underrepresentation of first-time degree-seeking AAPI students in STEM degree pathways. [Third] is low fall to fall persistence rates for AAPI students in STEM majors. [Four], low number of AAPI students receiving degrees in STEM fields. And five, low completion rates of AAPI students finishing a degree within three years.

As an increased number of institutional agents have developed deeper understandings of the impact of the AANAPISI grant on understanding and serving students, Daniel Johnson (White, Grant Specialist) shared that a team of institutional agents is involved with developing this new AANAPISI STEM initiative. Johnson stated,

> [For] the project, there's the college president, then we have the operations, the advisory committee, which is made up of stakeholders from a number of fields…some faculty, [and some representatives from the] associated student government. Then, as the project evaluator, we got a project director [, Andy Smith,] who is our Dean of Institutional Research and Grants. You got the four individual deans, all partaking in this over their specific divisions: Dean of students, Dean of counseling, Dean of [Academics], and Dean of [STEM]. [Then,] you got the Director of [Student Affairs, Ron Reyes,] who's the current [AANAPISI program] director falling under the Dean of Students. You got STEM counselors, you got [college academic advisors], and then you have STEM faculty. And so, they've been involved in the review of the application. They've been involved in the development of activities.

As more institutional agents are involved with the decision-making/grant writing process, this can help people to more deeply understand what it means to be a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution. Johnson continued to share,

> We come together with all the stakeholders that have an interest in this application and we get their feedback, we get their buy-in, we identify what [students'] needs are, how they can help address what the stated problems or weaknesses are, and what we are trying to address through the application. And through that we build budgets, we identify specific needs that are tied back to institutional plans, whether it's program reviews, department reviews, master plans for the institution. We try to create alignment with what we say we are going to do in these plans, then we try to help realign some of these items

> in those plans through grants and other opportunities where we can bring in funds to basically meet some of those needs or opportunities. You need those advocates at your institution, so when the funds are here the federal agency expects us to hit the ground running…And that's even why we send emails like we did this morning. It is a thank you and reinforcement that we did this together. We did this as a team. Here is our collective effort, we will keep you abreast of award information so when the time comes, we will all be prepared and move forward.

Similarly, Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair) recognized the significance of gaining the institutional buy-in when pursuing this new AANAPISI grant:

> I think [not all] faculty members [at WCCC] know what the [AANAPISI center] does… and [I am among some that has] actually been to the facility and met students there and it's not like, "[The AANAPISI center] is this kind of abstract concept,". It's a real center, it's a real enrichment center and it's not just a student lounge. I heard [before] "Is it a student lounge?" So, move beyond and help faculty see that it is more than a student lounge and something that is helpful for students as far as their professional and academic growth. I think that's a big key to [institutionalizing this program] as well. I do hope that we do find a way to continue to fund it to the capacity that it's funded now. If we don't have the AANAPISI funding, what are the plans to do so to make it more long-term? I would hate to see it dissolve or kind of go away just because the funding has been gone. I would hope that over the years, it has proven itself that [the AANAPISI program] is something that we need at the college. I hope so.

Overall, the AANAPISI funding has helped WCCC to build institutional capacity and encouraged to pursue another AANAPISI grant to continue their work. Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) shared,

> [The AANAPISI grant] allows us to look at things that we've always dreamed of, thought about, and now we can actually be able to actualize those desires and plans if we get the money. We could probably start it on our own without that, but it gives us the impetus to really develop it more fully. But in doing that…we're able to pursue other grants… provides [more] information and generates ideas for [pursuing] other grants [as well].

Like Jude, Daniel Johnson (White, Grant Specialist) discussed how implementing the AANAPISI funding became the impetus for pursuing another AANAPISI funding:

> I think [the implementation of the AANAPISI funding] has led to ongoing willingness to go after the AANAPISI grants. It wasn't just a one and done; It's going to be [our third time pursuing the AANAPISI funding]… we'll keep doing this as long as we can have the US Department of Education keep telling us there's funds available. So, I guess that's how we

> look at it. [The grant allowed WCCC to] support students and provide services that really meet the needs and address the gaps and weaknesses [in our campus services and resources.]

In sum, with the implementation of the AANAPISI grant, institutional agents have gained deeper understandings of the impact of the grant on understanding and serving students. Therefore, a decision was made to pursue another AANAPISI grant and more institutional agents are involved with writing the grant application and developing their new AANAPISI STEM initiative.

Expanding Another Student Initiative on Campus: The Umoja Program

One of the significant findings of this study is how the grant has helped to develop AANAPISI-like student initiatives on campus. In this section, I particularly focus on the development of the Umoja program, a state-funded program that focuses on serving African American students.

According to Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), Co-Director of the Umoja program, "I would say probably without the [AANAPISI grant], we wouldn't be able to move Umoja through. So, I think it has allowed the institution to view cultural resources differently than they may have in the past." For instance, the programming aspects of the Umoja program is being developed based on what has been learned through the AANAPISI program. Jones said, "I definitely think because of the AANAPISI funding we were able to use that model and use the resources to help us develop Umoja…there's been no other student groups that have developed [to help other student programs expand]."

In other words, the AANAPISI grant has led to expanding other student initiatives on campus such as the Umoja program. Jones continued to share,

> I think overall, [the AANAPISPI grant] helped [by] giving [our institution] a baseline of where our students are, giving us the language to use with our college campuses.

> Because they've done so much of this research. They've used [an online tool or student database] to navigate the systems that I don't think we have been doing. But because they've already done a lot of the work [through the AANAPISI grant,]…we're able to use it in [other student support programs and services at WCCC], faculty are able to use it in their work…the [AANAPISI] grant helped enable other programs to move forward.

Samantha Cheng (Asian American, College Academic Advisor) came to understand the aim of implementing the AANAPISI grant to develop other equity-based student support programs on campus such as the Umoja program. Cheng said,

> I think [WCCC is] trying to serve everyone and giving them that equity through…having the [AANAPISI program]. That's why [WCCC] has [implemented the AANAPISI grant]. I learned that [WCCC is also] trying to expand [the Umoja program].
>
> [From] my understanding of our institution, [WCCC is trying] to serve everybody, to given them equity. [So, WCCC is] trying to expand [the Umoja program]. I [also] know [there are two] bigger sister schools [to WCCC and] they [each] have [the Umoja program]. Because we're a small school, expanding those programs [such as the Umoja program] that we haven't had a chance [to develop yet]…[can help to] serve the students that could really benefit.

Similarly, Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair), who has diverse experiences working closely with the AANAPISI program and serves on the Umoja program's advisory board, stated, "Without that [AANAPISI] funding, I can't imagine what it would look like for Umoja] to be quite honest." Miles continued to share,

> Without the [AANAPISI program], without the AANAPISI funding, I don't think we would be able to say, "[Umoja program] is something important [and something we need]." I don't think we would've been ready for the Umoja program. So, to me, I think [because the AANAPISI funding] came first…that allowed for [WCCC] to expand into [developing] other programs like Umoja that is focused on Students of Color. I know we probably wouldn't have [the Umoja program] if we didn't have that [AANAPISI funding].

Gaining a deeper understanding of the connection between the two programs, AANAPISI and Umoja, Miles discussed,

> So even though our numbers-wise, even though our numbers, we don't have as many African American students as we have as many Asian students at our college. But we still felt like there was definitely still a need to do so. So, there was still a particular need that was there for those students as well. And even with Umoja, even though it's focused on

> African American students, it also bleeds itself out into Students of Color as well. So, it can encompass AAPI students as well, it can encompass Hispanic students as well and so on and so forth.

In other words, this change in understanding of the role and function of the AANAPISI grant begs the question of: 1) What is the purpose of developing a student program which focuses on serving African American students?, and 2) How can this program develop and expand to serve students beyond African Americans at WCCC?

Gaining a deeper understanding of how the grant contributed to expanding other student initiatives such as the Umoja program, the AANAPISI program staff members identified some similarities between the Umoja program and AANAPISI program. Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) described,

> [WCCC is] trying to pursue Umoja. So I think that's definitely a great opportunity to help support Black students…So, I think it's really great that they're pursuing the Umoja program, which is very similar to [the AANAPISI program's] practices…we were reviewing the Umoja practices and it correlates to a lot of our core values and a lot of the things that we're doing. It's just worded differently.

Similarly, Ron Reyes (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Director), who is on the Umoja program's advisory board, shared the similarities found between the two programs and how one can help develop the other:

> I think particularly [for] the Black administrators, staff , and faculty here [at WCCC]…they are noticing that there's so much overlap between the practices that [the AANAPISI program] use[s], and the practices that the Umoja programs at other institutions [use]. So rather than just creating a completely new program, all we're doing is just taking all the activities and practices that we already do, and then applying it to a new [student] population.

Moreover, based on these understandings, various discussions have occurred on developing collaborative opportunities between the two programs. Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff) said, "When [the AANAPISI program] do[es] identity

explorations or story series workshops…we're thinking about how like that same practice can also be part of Umoja."

Similar to Basa, according to Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff), discussions took place on merging some of the student services to reach students beyond their target racial group and serve more students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds:

> I think one of the conversations that [the AANAPISI program is] trying to take on or to have more of is that we're trying to merge our services with Umoja and in a way to open the net of how many students we serve. Because our grant is more focused on AAPI students, through Umoja, we'll be able to work with more students. And because our services are transferrable, that it could work with other students that don't identify as AAPI. In a way it allows us to be more culturally relevant to not just AAPI students but also to our Latinx population and other students that we serve as well. So, our services can be applicable to other students that we serve.

One way of merging services between the two programs is utilizing the existing AANAPISI-funded mentorship program. However, the mentorship program would look slightly different; for example, they may need to hire a non-AAPI staff. Latu discussed,

> [The AANAPISI program] might be seeing [Umoja] staff members maybe taking on [parts of the] mentorship [service] as a way to [help] maintain and sustain [the mentoring] services [after the AANAPISI grant ends]…when we institutionalize [the AANAPISI program], [our mentorship program] will look different from what [it] look like now.

Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) shared that developing collaborative opportunities between the Umoja program and AANAPISI program can help sustain and expand the AANAPISI student initiatives on campus and vice versa:

> Some of the bigger conversations that we're having as a campus…[is] how [the collaborations between the Umoja program and the AANAPISI program] will all transpire, and my hope is that [WCCC will fully] institutionalize [the AANAPISPI program]…so programs like Umoja and if people want to start a Puente Program, they would all live under the [AANAPISI center, which is being institutionalized to serve all students and not just AAPIs].
>
> [So,] we have our plan for Umoja, and there's also the plan I have in conversation around student equity in general, which will encompass Umoja and AANAPISI. For Umoja, a lot of what we're doing and what we're building out is in collaboration with the [AANAPISI

> program]. Workshops that they have, are there things that we can do together. [For example,] are there already ways in which they've worked with faculty to work on their syllabi that we can work together? There are some pieces where we're looking at that cross-collaboration, because yes, the populations [these two grants target] are different, but there are parts in which we know some things can be the same. So, [Ron Reyes, Director of the AANAPISI program] is on our advisory team to help us build those pieces out.

In addition, Maria Jackson (White, Faculty) discussed another collaborative opportunity which can develop between the two programs. Jackson serves as an editor of the Umoja program's journal. Thus, Jackson plans to expand the virtual AANAPISI grant-funded space and include narratives of students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds (e.g., African American, Latinx, AAPI, etc.).

> I'm the editor of [the] Journal for the Umoja group. It publishes literature, art, photography, and digital storytelling… So, speaking about, like African diaspora, those experiences and also a lot of times responding to things that are kind of similar to what Umoja espouses with the Umoja community. And so online, we're going to be actually featuring a link to the virtual [AANAPISI center] to facilitate [collaboration between the Umoja program and AANAPISI program] there as well. I know about [the virtual AANAPISI center] through [Ron Reyes].

While recognizing the similarities found between the two programs, AANAPISI and Umoja, some programming aspects of the Umoja program are unique and different from the AANAPISI program. According to Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair), who serves on the Umoja program's advisory board, the Umoja program plans on implementing learning communities in collaboration with the Social Sciences departments:

> For the leadership, I'm the faculty lead for the Umoja program. So basically, we have two tracks for the Umoja program that we're going to focus on. Fall…is when we'll roll out the official program, but it'll be a [Social Science major] track and also [another Social Science major] track [learning communities]. So, we're trying to help students that come into college maybe just having a lot of like emotional issues surrounding education that have been related to their race. And we feel like [these two Social Sciences majors] are some of those best disciplines to be able to merge some of the more experiential piece to it, to the more theoretical practical piece to it as well. So, if you're coming in and you've got all these issues that have happened, why not get healed at the same time of learning as well.

In a similar vein, while the AANAPISI program that focuses on developing their student support services, the Umoja program focuses on implementing a learning community model which closely works with academic departments. Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) stated,

> The big difference is going to be we will have…it's going to be not a cohort form, but there will be classes that are Umoja-fied. Faculty will be developing their curriculum specifically for using our Umoja values, so that's different. The [AANAPISI program] is not connected to a class. Umoja will be connected to a class…because really what we feel like the issue is, is students are not excelling in the classroom.
>
> Through connecting with a class, we feel like the students will have these classes together, they'll also have the Umoja community on the side, it will allow for us to retain our students even more because they're building this sense of community with one another.

In closing, according to Emily Miles (African American, Faculty/Department Chair), programs such as the AANAPISI and Umoja can serve as a catalyst for shaping the campus-wide conversations on understanding and serving students. Furthermore, these grants and their grant-funded programs can motivate the college to look for additional funding opportunities to better understand and serve students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Miles stated,

> [The AANAPISI and the Umoja programs at WCCC] are the catalyst for those kinds of conversations [on shaping the change in understanding of serving students]. And we may have probably gotten a couple instructors that were able to get acclimated with [the AANAPISI and the Umoja programs] and then they want to do more, but we need more. We still need more. We still need to have more people that are on board and we have to get past that, "Well, this is something that we don't really need, this isn't important, students are just students." We have to get past that kind of language. Students are [not] just all students and they are [not] all the same…that kind of thinking has to change.

Therefore, institutional agents have come to understand the extent to which the AANAPISI grant can help develop other student programs including the Umoja program. Furthermore, study participants discussed the similarities between the Umoja program and AANAPISI program and how that can bring about collaborative opportunities between the two

programs; these collaborative opportunities can help sustain and develop the current and future AANAPISI student initiatives on campus and vice versa.

Discussion and Conclusion

In Chapter 6, the extent to which the AANAPISI grant had shaped the changes in understandings of sustaining and expanding AANAPISI and AANAPISI-like (e.g., Umoja) student initiatives on campus was discussed. After the grant ends, sustaining and expanding student initiatives afford long-lasting transformative changes at an institution (Kezar & Eckel, 2002).

First, with the implementation of the grant, study participants' understandings of sustaining and expanding the current and future AANAPISI student initiatives—the "scalability, replicability, and sustainability of their best practices" (Nguyen, 2019, p.272)—have evolved, which are organized into three areas: 1) under new management, 2) expanding the AANAPISI student initiatives at other satellite campuses, and 3) pursuing another AANAPISI grant with a focus on STEM students.

A few significant understandings were discussed by study participants related to the AANAPISPI grant being under a new department. The AANAPISI program, which was originally supervised by the Dean and Office of Institutional Research and Grants, is now a part of the Office of Student Affairs, which is supervised by the Dean of Students and the Office of Student Programs and Services. Furthermore, while Reyes has moved into a higher-level administrative position, Director of Student Affairs, Reyes continues to be in-charge of the AANAPISI grant-funded program. This begs the question of whether a position or an individual should oversee the AANAPISI grant-funded program.

Another important change in understanding of serving students after the grant ends centered around the discussions of expanding the AANAPISI student initiatives at other satellite

campuses. Illuminating this understanding, Lana Latu (Pacific Islander, AANAPISI Program Staff) said, “How do we bring a little bit of [the AANAPISI student initiatives] to [other campuses at WCCC?]”

Similarly, Nancy Davis (White, Dean of Students) stated,

> [we should] allow for the students to say, “Here's what I think I need,” and then we provide that and build the momentum in terms of institutional resources. So that's what [WCCC is] trying to think through: “How can we do [what we did with the grant at other satellite campuses]?”

Study participants have developed deeper understandings of pursuing a new AANAPISI grant and developing their new AANAPISI STEM initiative. Furthermore, as the 2015-2020 AANAPISI grant focused targeting support toward full-time and low-income AAPI students, study participants discussed the need to expand their future AANAPSI student initiatives to focus on specific student groups including part-time students, Pacific Islander (PI) students, and students beyond AAPIs (e.g., African American; Latinx, etc.). Expanding the focus of the future AANAPISI student initiatives is significant because studies (CARE, 2010; Teranishi et al., 2015; Teranishi & Nguyen, 2012) have found that AAPI students at a community college are more likely to enroll as part-time students, enter with lower levels of academic preparation in math and English, and delay time to completion by two or more years. Furthermore, there is a call to action to better understand the experiences of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islander (NHPI) students through research and practice (Teranishi et al., 2019); the findings of this dissertation study contribute to understanding how the AANAPISI grant can create opportunities to learn more deeply about the educational experiences of PI students.

Second, the change in understanding of expanding another student initiative on campus as a result of the grant was discussed by study participants. In other words, in what ways, if any, does the grant shape the change in understanding of serving beyond AAPI students (Alcantar et

al., 2019) at an AAPI-serving institution? Addressing the question at hand, study participants discussed how the current AANAPISI grant had driven deeper insights into developing a new student initiative, the Umoja program, on campus.

The Umoja program is a state-funded program that targets to support African American students. According to Lee Jones (African American, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), Co-Director of the Umoja program, the AANAPISI grant became an impetus to developing a new student initiative, the Umoja program, on campus:

> I think overall, [the AANAPISPI grant] helped [by] giving [our institution] a baseline of where our students are, giving us the language to use with our college campuses…we're able to use it in [other student support programs and services at WCCC], faculty are able to use it in their work…the [AANAPISI] grant helped enable other programs to move forward.

In sum, this section provided an overview of how institutional agents' understandings of serving students after the grant ends, particularly sustaining and expanding the current and future AANAPISI and AANAPISI-like (e.g., Umoja program) student initiatives on campus, have been impacted by the grant.

CHAPTER 7: Implications and Conclusion

Concentrating on one of the most pressing issues in higher education, inequitable educational outcomes that are found particularly among racial/ethnic minority students, there is a great need for higher education to better serve this student population. Through the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation which evolved from multiple concepts including transformational change (Kezar, 2013; Bensimon, 2005) and educational pivotal moments (Espinoza, 2012), this study focused on how institutional agents perceived the impacts of a federal grant on understanding and serving students. More specifically, the study centered around the changes in understandings that the AANAPISI grant has brought on 1) understanding and serving the needs of AAPI students, 2) understanding and serving students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds , and 3) serving students after the grant ends.

Sandy Jude (Asian American, College President) shared how the grant provided opportunities to implement campus resources and work with students at WCCC: "[Without the AANAPISI funding,] I think it would look different. We would have more struggles in terms of trying to do some things that we would really like to do, but not have the resources to do it. We would still be federally designated…[but] definitely the [AANAPISI grant-funded] resources make a difference."

Furthermore, according to Amanda Basa (Asian American, AANAPISI Program Staff), "If we were federally designated but not funded, like they would just recognize this as an AANAPISI, but we wouldn't really have the funds to work with students…[it] bring[s] awareness of the census to the [WCCC] community. But then it's also an opportunity for people at [WCCC] to see the impact that [the AANAPISI grant] has on students." In other words, the federal AANAPISI funding beyond the federal AANAPISI designation alone has supported

WCCC to build capacity and demonstrate its institutional commitment to better understand and serve students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds and AAPI students in particular.

Espinoza (2011) discussed the difficulties that low-income and racial/ethnic minority students face in addition to the challenges compounded by the intersections of these multiple identities. However, despite students' backgrounds and their challenges, "an educational pivotal moment occurs when a college-educated adult—such as a teacher, a counselor, an academic outreach professional, or a professor—makes a concerted effort to support and mentor a disadvantaged student in an informal role, an official role, or both." (Espinoza, 2012, p.53).

Therefore, employing the conceptual framework of reimagining transformation such as understanding the development of pivotal moments, the federal AANAPISI funding, an "intentional academic intervention," (Espinoza, 2012, p.53), highlighted the significant role of institutional agents and served as a catalyst in understanding how institutions can be more "minority-serving" with the orienting aim of working toward achieving educational equity in higher education.

All in all, the federal AANAPISI funding beyond the federal AANAPISI designation alone has brought new, broader, and deeper insights into understanding and serving students at a federally designated and funded AAPI-serving institution. The findings provide implications for new areas of research, institutions that either are a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) or are pursuing a federal MSI designation and funding (particularly the AANAPISI designation and funding), and public policy to improve the educational experiences of AAPI students in higher education.

Implications for Research

Using a qualitative case study method, this study was at a two-year AAPI-serving

institution. While a case study can be helpful in providing a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of students and an institution that serves them, there were limitations related to the region given that this study was at a California community college. For example, both Chan (2018) and Nguyen (2019) discussed the importance of recognizing the region or where the study takes place and the institutional context as student experiences including the experiences of AAPI students can vary. Thus, while this study can inform other institutions that are either MSIs or seeking the MSI designation and funding, there is a great need to expand the region where the studies take place to capture the varying experiences of students, particularly racial/ethnic minorities, and their institutional contexts.

Although limited in number, several studies (Alcantar et al., 2019; CARE, 2014; Nguyen, 2019; Teranishi, 2012; Teranishi & Kim, 2017) have looked at the implications of a federal designation/recognition/status and a smaller number of studies focus on the impacts of the federal funding. Among the colleges and universities that are federally designated as AAPI-serving institutions, 35 programs are currently federally funded (Nguyen, 2019). Thus, this study is a call to action for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to continuously examine the diverse understandings and implications around the AANAPISI funding to ultimately improve the educational experiences of students. It has been over a decade since the federal AANAPISI initiative has been newly added to the federal MSI program. With educational equity as the orienting aim, more studies should look at the ways in which the grant contributes to better understanding and serving students and what it means for institutions that serve them.

In a similar vein, although nearly half of all AAPI undergraduates are enrolled in community colleges, there is a dearth of knowledge of AAPI community college students compared to their counterparts in four-year institutions. This is problematic as there is a gap in

the scholarship in terms of recognizing AAPIs as an underserved group with unique educational needs and challenges (Lee, 2006; Teranishi, 2010). While studies (CARE, 2014; Teranishi et al., 2015; Teranishi & Kim, 2017) capture the diverse characteristics and educational challenges (e.g., low-income, first-generation college students, part-time students that work long hours, navigating between family responsibilities and schoolwork, etc.) of AAPI community college students, there is still a great need for research to more deeply understand the diverse educational needs and challenges of AAPI students and furthermore, the unique needs found among various AAPI ethnic sub-groups. For instance, how can we better understand the unique educational needs and challenges of Southeast Asian students compared to other AAPI ethnic sub-groups? While some studies focus on a specific AAPI ethnic sub-group and their educational experiences, more research is needed that reveals the educational disparities that exist within AAPI ethnic sub-groups and what that means in terms of the lived experiences of students, particularly for NHPIs (Teranishi et al., 2019).

Furthermore, there needs to be a deeper understanding of what the federal AANAPISI initiatives mean to the broader field of higher education and particularly for institutions that serve a large proportion of diverse racial/ethnic minority students. While pursuing or implementing the federal AANAPISI grant on campus, in addition to recognizing and serving the target racial group, AAPI students, there needs to be a deeper understanding of what the AANAPISI grant means in terms of 1) serving students beyond the target racial group and 2) sustaining and expanding the current and future student initiatives on campus; in other words, how can an institution create an institutional buy-in to pursue or implement the grant on campus? While this study contributes to this area of research and offers institutions to situate themselves when creating that institutional buy-in (or a deeper understanding of the grant on serving

students), implementing the grant on campus, or undergoing institutionalization of the current initiatives after the grant ends, more studies are needed to understand the diverse processes and varying experiences of institutions in strengthening its capacity to become more "minority-serving."

Lastly, the study calls for more research on understanding the decision-making process of pursuing a certain type of MSI funding over the other. For instance, an institution can be dual-designated as a HSI and AANAPISI but can only receive either a HSI or an AANAPISI funding, if they pursue Part A; in other words, an institution can be dual-funded as a HSI and AANAPISI, if they pursue Part F. Thus, these variations will have some ramifications as an institution pursues funding. For example, if pursuing Part A, this can place an institution in a tough spot as they have to choose one over the other. Toward the end of the data collection, I have come to understand that there are so many complex layers to understanding the decision-making process of pursuing a particular MSI funding. While pursuing a federal HSI or an AANAPISI funding, for example, an institution can both intentionally and unintentionally send out messages about which student groups are prioritized (Gasman, Nguyen, Samayoa, & Corral, 2017)—in this case Latinx and AAPI students. This can work as a positive factor in validating the target racial group but can have opposite or unintended effects on the non-target racial groups. As more colleges and universities are serving a large proportion of both Latinx and AAPI students based on the geographical regions (e.g., California, Texas, etc.) and demographic changes, more institutions are becoming eligible to be both a HSI and AANAPISI or a multi-designated MSI. Thus, more studies must capture how institutions are navigating their complex dual-designation or multi-designation context in order to help institutions maneuver through any potential conflicts or tensions. This can further help to better understand the development of an institutional identity

(Garcia, 2017) as a MSI.

Implications for Practice

As the number of racial/ethnic minority students continues to grow in higher education, more and more institutional agents are engaging with this student population on a day-to-day basis. While the inequitable educational outcomes found within this student population (Bensimon, 2005) is problematic, the roles of institutional agents related to serving these students are crucial. Institutional agents "…enable [the least-advantaged] students to take advantage of resources available in the collegiate environment (e.g. information, financial aid, transfer advising sessions) that are instrumental to their success" (Dowd et al., 2013, p. 33). Thus, from a practitioner's point of view, understanding the unique educational needs and challenges of students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., cultural; socio-economic) is central to enhancing the educational experiences of AAPIs in higher education.

This study provides a deeper understanding of the unique educational needs and challenges of AAPI students, who are often overlooked in higher education and considered to not require additional educational support (CARE, 2010; Teranishi, 2010; Teranishi et al., 2015). Considering that the federal AANAPISI funding can help an institution build capacity to better understand the unique educational needs and challenges of students, particularly AAPIs, this study contributes to the limited understanding of positioning AAPIs as an underserved student group in higher education. Thus, this study has great implications for institutional agents that work with AAPI students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., cultural; socio-economic, etc.). Put another way, from a design and curriculum perspective, the study is a call to action for practitioners to implement creative and/or culturally-relevant approaches and best practices to better respond to the unique needs of AAPI community college students at a federally-funded

AAPI-serving institution.

Additionally, it helps institutional agents to think about the role and function of the grant-funded student initiatives. For example, in what ways, if any, do the grant-related opportunities strengthen their current student initiatives and what this means in terms of expanding their current and future student initiatives without a federal funding. The study offers implications for institutional agents that serve a large proportion of racial/ethnic minority students at an emerging MSI, which is not yet federal recognized and receiving federal funding but can consider developing key practices based on existing campus resources (i.e., student support programs and services).

Furthermore, "And perhaps most critical is that those involved with the AANAPISI must share a deep commitment to racial justice and the educational needs and success of AAPIs in higher education" (Nguyen, 2019, p.272). Although the knowledge of the unique needs of racial/ethnic minority students has increased, it is also important that this understanding is shared among all institutional agents and most importantly, that this shared understanding leads to an institutional commitment to educational, racial, and social justice. In addition, this provides implications for making long-lasting transformative changes at an institution (Kezar, 2018; Kezar & Eckel, 2002).

Implications for Policy

The role of a federal funding is highlighted in a recent statement that was published by ASHE as key postsecondary education issues for the Biden-Harris administration. With the impacts of the recent pandemic, one of the key recommendations to the Biden-Harris administration is the continuous efforts to provide federal funding especially as the state budget cut has been impacting various sectors including postsecondary institutions.

> When campuses lose support from their respective legislatures, they look to students to fill those budget gaps. This reality can be especially damaging for students since cuts to the state budget increase the tuition and fees at institutions for the average student. The federal government should reward states who maintain preCOVID levels of funding to state postsecondary institutions. States' maintenance of effort is crucial for ensuring that emergency federal funding to institutions, which can be used for students and for institutional infrastructure, supplements instead of supplanting prior funding from the state.

Illuminating the significance of federal funding, one of the key implications for public policy is the need for the federal government to continuously support institutions that serve a large proportion of AAPIs and low-income individuals due to the geographic context and demographic change. The funding can play a significant role in helping institutions build capacity to better understand and serve students.

However, unlike HBCUs, for example, that has an institutional mission to better serve African American students at an institution, we cannot assume that HSIs, AAPI-serving institutions, or even Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) "provide either congenial or intimidating campus environments for students…[because] HSIs began serving the Latino population [based on] geographic location and demographic changes…[and] the institutional missions of many HSIs and some PBIs do not directly address the specific needs of students of color" (Hubbard & Stage, 2009, p. 270). In a similar vein, we must understand that AAPI-serving institutions began serving the AAPI student population due to similar reasons that are described above for HSIs (e.g., geographic location; demographic changes; Hubbard & Stage, 2009). Therefore, just because an institution is federally recognized and funded as an AAPI-serving institution, that does not mean they have fully embraced their identity as a MSI and this study provides implications for policymakers to understand the usage of grant money and how accountabilities can develop between the federal government and institutions.

Relatedly, there is a need for policymakers to re-conceptualize the MSI funding

initiatives particularly for institutions that are dual or multi-designated as an MSI due to the high enrollment of racial/ethnic minority and low-income students. Currently, although an institution is dual-designated or multi-designated as a MSI, it can only receive one type of a MSI funding. This is found to be particularly complex with institutions that are dual-designated as a HSI and AAPI-serving institutions due to high concentrations of Latinx and AAPI low-income students on campus. In other words, an institution has to decide whether their institution will seek a HSI funding or an AAPI-serving institution funding. The dual designation legislation that would allow an institution to be both a federally funded AAPI-serving institution and HSI, for example, can greatly benefit institutions located in regions (e.g., California, Texas, etc.) that serve a large proportion of both AAPI and Latinx students (Nguyen, 2019).

At the state and local (city, county)-level, as nearly half of all AAPI undergraduates are at community colleges and half of all federally-funded AAPI-serving institutions (AANAPISI programs) are two-year AANAPISIs, there are great implications for the state and the city to develop transfer pathways for students (Nguyen, 2019). Furthermore, this study provides implications for considering ways to form a collective group and exchange knowledge and experiences of pursuing/implementing/institutionalizing a grant (or grant-related activities) on campus. This implication is derived from the high-level administrators' responses for this study, particularly the college president, Dr. Sandy Jude. Jude shared that due to her position as the college president of WCCC, a two-year AAPI-serving community college, she is involved with various district committees and nation/state-wide committees/conferences. As local institutions that are alike (similar institutional type such as community colleges) and serve a similar student population gather for various occasions, the camaraderie that is developed among these institutions, for example, can help emerging MSIs to learn and exchange ideas with veteran MSIs

on pursuing a grant.

Additionally, as Jude is an Asian-American herself, she understands that there needs to be more individuals that hold leadership positions among AAPI communities, which includes having more AAPI college and university presidents or AAPI leaders that have the authority to make equity-minded systemic changes at the state, city, county, district, and institutional-level (Dowd et al. 2013). Jude continues to be a part of diverse spaces that focus on developing AAPI leaders and this is a testament to how grant can be considered to foster professional development and networking opportunities beyond an institution and at a broader context.

At the institutional-level, the implications of this study are to more deeply understand the educational disparities among AAPI ethnic sub-groups through data disaggregation practices (Bensimon, 2005; Nguyen et al., 2017). With over 50 different AAPI ethnic sub-groups, it is important for institutions to implement institutional practices that disaggregate data for AAPI students from different ethnic, cultural, historical, and linguistic backgrounds. Additionally, although institutions such as the University of California system do disaggregate data by AAPI students' racial/ethnic sub-groups, it is still unknown how the disaggregated data is being used and applied to specific practices at these institutions. Therefore, this study provides the groundwork for having on-going conversations around the data disaggregation movement for AAPI students and what that would look like in terms of shaping current institutional practices based on the disaggregated data.

Conclusion

While inequitable educational outcomes continue to be a concerning issue in higher education, there are diverse efforts at the federal, state, city, and institutional-levels to close the inequity gap and enhance the educational experiences of racial/ethnic minority students. And

while an institution is federally recognized as an AAPI-serving institution due to a high concentration of low-income AAPI students, the federal AANAPISI funding provides unique opportunities at an institution to allocate funding and target support toward students and AAPI students in particular. Thus, with educational equity as the orienting aim, this study examined the changes in understandings related to serving and understanding students as a result of the AANAPISI funding. Study findings demonstrated how the funding brought new, broader, and deeper insights into: 1) understanding and serving the unique needs and challenges of AAPI students, 2) the extent to which these understandings help better serve students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, and 3) the extent to which these understandings help serve students after the grant ends. However, instead of simply arguing for more federal funding and increased amount of funding, the study had shed light on how the grant shaped the changes in understandings related to understanding and serving students. In addition, the study offered considerations for research, practice, and policy that center around a federal policy or the AAPI-serving institution initiatives.

A decade has passed since AANAPISI became the newest addition to the federal MSI program in 2007. While little is still known about AAPI-serving institutions (CARE, 2014), this study contributes to the understandings of the federal MSI initiatives with particular attention to AAPI students and what that means for serving beyond AAPI students. Ultimately, these understandings add to the knowledge of institutions that serve students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.

As higher education continues to strive toward achieving educational equity, we must constantly ask, "what does it mean to be a 'minority-serving' institution?" I believe this study has taken a step closer to answering this question.

Appendix A: List of Study Participants

Study Participants: Institutional Agents

Name	Race/Ethnicity	Position
Paul Santos	Asian American	Staff/Faculty
Ron Reyes	Asian American	Administrator
Andy Smith	White	Senior Administrator
Lana Latu	Pacific Islander	Staff
Amy Ocampo	Asian American	Staff
Pauline Zhang	Asian American	Staff
Lee Jones	Black	Administrator
Amanda Basa	Asian American	Staff
Sandy Jude	Asian American	College President
Keej Cha	Asian American	Staff
Patricia Lim	Asian American	Staff
Nancy Davis	White	Senior Administrator
Susan Garcia	Latina	Faculty
Reyna Villar	Asian American	Staff
Hope Reynolds	Asian European	Staff
Daniel Johnson	White	Staff
Samantha Cheng	Asian American	Staff
Olivia Parker	White	Faculty
Mandy Williams	White	Staff/Faculty
Cathy Garcia	Latina	Staff/Faculty
Ted Jacobs	White	Staff
Carrie Lopez	Latina	Staff
Emily Miles	African American	Faculty
Maria Jackson	White	Faculty
Natalie Diaz	Latina	Staff

Appendix B: Description of Key Programs and Terms

Name	Description
West Coast Community College (WCCC)	Wayland campus Ky-Pham campus Fairview campus Pacific Coast campus
Culture, Community, and Resource Center	CCRC; Name of the AANAPISI Center
Extended Opportunity Programs and Services	EOPS at the CA Community Colleges System is a state-funded program that supports low-income and educationally disadvantaged students.
Flex Day	In the CA Community Colleges system, flex is defined as professional development. On Flex Day, all institutional agents participate in professional development-related events.
Umoja Program	Collaborating with the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), this state-funded program partners with CSUs and UCs to promote the educational success of African American students.
Guided Pathways	Introduced by the CCCCO, this model is implemented by all CA community colleges to provide clear curricular pathways and promote transfer and/or degree completion.
Enrichment Program	This state-funded program is designed by WCCC and places students in a track to take specific classes to promote degree completion/transfer. Not available for all majors and only offered to freshmen.
AAPI Scholarship Program	Funded by an AAPI scholarship foundation, this program provides scholarships to WCCC students.

Note: This is not a complete list of all programs available at WCCC. This list is put together to highlight the most significant ones discussed by study participants.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol for the Pilot Study

Warm Up

1. What is your current position? Please describe what you do in this role.
2. How long have you been at this institution? How long have you been in your current position?
3. How would you describe your campus' mission?
4. In your current position, what is your connection to working with AAPI students?

I. Background information on Becoming an AANAPISI

1. Who were the individuals or offices involved in the 2nd AANAPISI grant-writing process?
    a. Is the focus of the 2nd grant slightly different/similar compared to the 1st grant?

If respondent participated in the writing process...

1. Are you also involved with developing/sustaining current AANAPISI grant programs? If so, how?
2. How did you learn about AANAPISI in the first place?
3. What made you decide to pursue it? (What are the AAPI students' needs identified by the institution?)
4. Who supported you on campus to pursue it?
5. Were there any challenges in writing the grant or implementing the grant? Will you give specific examples?

If respondent did not participate in the writing process, but is involved with the AANAPISI program...

1. Are those who wrote the grant the same individuals or offices that continue to work on developing/sustaining current AANAPISI grant programs?
2. How did you learn of your campus pursuing or securing AANAPISI designation/funding?
3. Are you aware of any rationale for proposing particular programs/services? Why did the grant committee think particular programs/services would be beneficial for AAPI students?
4. Did it have implications for your job responsibilities? If so, how?

TO ALL:

1. In what ways, if any, has being an AANAPISI impacted your professional practice? In what ways, if any, have you benefited professionally or personally?
2. In what ways, if any, has it impacted your department/program/office? Can you elaborate?
3. What does the ANAAPISI designation or funding have to do with your campus' mission?
4. What would you say are your institution's priorities? How would you say those priorities have come about, if at all, due to the AANAPISI status or funding? Please elaborate.
5. How would you describe the outcomes experienced by AAPI students as a result of the AANAPISI funding? Will you give me a specific example of this?

II. How institutional agents leveraged designation & funding

If AANAPISI current program director or grant writer…

1. Please walk me through how your campus used the funding in the most recent grant cycle, for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017?

TO ALL:

1. Can you describe how the funding has implications for hiring or retaining personnel integral to responding to the needs of AAPI students on campus?
2. In what ways, if any, has your campus's efforts to secure the AANAPISI designation/funding influenced your campus culture?
3. How would you say that being an AANAPISI has impacted how responsible the campus has been to AAPI students?
4. How has your AANAPISI status enabled you to pursue other resources, opportunities, and support for your campus?

III. How institutional agents implemented AANAPISI programs/services

1. Did the 2nd AANAPISI grant supplement any existing program/service? If so, what are they?
2. Were there any challenges in implementing AANAPISI programs? Will you give specific examples?
3. In what ways have the AANAPISI programs and services impact AAPI students' engagement/involvement on campus?
    a. Did it impact where students congregate to socialize or to study? Please tell me if and where AAPI students congregated or studied before and after the grant.
    b. Did the grant change where students go for these services? [Example: academic or financial aid advising, counseling services, tutoring, use of academic resources such as computers or borrowing books, etc.]
    c. Did the grant or designation create any new AAPI-focused student clubs or organizations on campus?
    d. Did it impact distance learning students?

IV. Leadership Program and its Impact on AAPI students

(Questions for the AANAPISI program director and leadership class instructor/lead mentor)

1. Can you describe the leadership program & leadership class?
2. What was the rationale for proposing the leadership program? Was this program implemented during the first grant cycle? Why or why not?
3. In what ways has the leadership program impacted students' engagement/involvement on campus? And their community?
4. How about their Academic outcomes? (persistence, degree completion, transfer)
5. What are the anticipated goals of the leadership program/class?
6. Are there any challenges with the leadership program/class?
7. Is there additional information you would like to share regarding the leadership program/class?

Wrap-up

We are almost at the end of our interview.

1. Are there any individuals on campus who you think I should speak to?
2. Is there anything I did not address in the questions that you would like to share?
3. Do you have any questions?

That concludes our interview. Thank you so much for your time.

Appendix D: Interview Protocol for the Current Study

Interview Protocol for Institutional agents

Introduction

Hi! I'm so glad to have the opportunity to talk with you. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule and allowing me to talk to you about organizational identity, culture, practices, and students at [name of the institution].

I would like to learn how **administrators/staff/faculty** like yourself perceive in what ways the AANAPISI federal funding beyond being federally designated only has facilitated [name of the inst.] to become more "AAPI-serving". I am particularly interested in your understanding of the institution's identity, culture, practices, and AAPI students from prior to and following the implementation of the AANAPISl grant. Please note that the words 'grant' and 'funding' are used interchangeably.

I am going to ask you a series of questions. When possible, please provide concrete examples and context. I anticipate that this interview will take approximately one hour. As stated in the consent form, I will be recording this interview and taking notes. With that, I want to assure you that everything you say will remain confidential and will only be used for research purposes. Your response will be kept confidential and all personal identifiable information will not be shared. Your participation in this project is voluntary. If for any reason, you need to discontinue the interview or state something off the record, please feel free to ask me to stop the recorder.

Do I have your consent to participate? If you don't object, I'd like to use a tape recorder to make sure I don't miss anything. Is that acceptable to you? Before we get started, do you have any questions?

Warm Up

1. What is your current position and how long have you been in your current position?
2. Can you please describe what you do in this role?
3. Did you work at a different position at [name of the institution]?
   a. If yes, proceed in asking: If so, what was your previous position at this institution and how long? In total, how long have you been at this institution?
4. What attracted you to work at [name of the institution]?
   a. Probe: diversity, culture, special programs, AANAPISI status, students
5. In your current position, what is your connection to working with minority students (and low-income students, if appropriate)?
6. (NOTE: Ask this question only if it wasn't answered in question #5) How about for AAPI students? What is your connection to working specifically with AAPI students at [name of the institution]?

I. Background on Pursuing the Designation & Implementing the funding at WCCC

As you are already aware, an institution can be federally designated as an AANAPISI by enrolling 10% or more AAPI students and at least 50% low-income students that receive aid such as the Pell Grant and can go through a competitive application process in pursuing the AANAPISI federal funding to improve and expand capacity to serve AAPIs and low-income individuals.

Here, questions pertain to learning about the institutional context and decision-making process at the time [name of the institution] applied for the AANAPISI designation and particularly for the AANAPISI funding. One key aspect is to understand what was discussed both campus-wide and at the [administrator/staff/faculty]-level regarding the educational needs of AAPI students and pursuing the AANAPISI federal funding.

Questions are mainly focused on pursuing the 2nd AANAPISI grant. However, any insights and/or knowledge regarding the 1st AANAPISI grant can help me to broaden my understanding of the decision- making process for [name of the institution] in pursuing the AANAPISI grant.

If respondent was directly involved with writing the AANAPISI grant...

1. Who are the individuals or offices that were involved in the grant-writing process for the 2nd AANAPISI (2015-2020) funding?
    a. How about for the 1st AANAPISI (2010-2015) funding? Are they different from the committee that worked on pursuing the 2nd AANAPISI funding?
2. Was there a separate process for applying to be federally designated and federally funded? Did the institution have to be federally designated first before applying for the funding? What did the process look like for being federally designated and funded twice?
3. How would you describe the focus of the 2nd AANAPISI funding (or the proposed grant activities) compared to the 1st AANAPSI funding? Is the focus different or similar? What activities were proposed in these grant applications?
4. How did you learn about the federal AANAPISI program (and the designation/funding) in the first place?
5. What made you (and your office) decide to pursue the AANAPISI grant?

Probe: What other reasons besides the student enrollment (low-income, AAPI student enrollment)? What other factors (besides identifying the needs of AAPI students) have led [name of the institution] to pursue this federal funding?

    a. What was the reason for you (and your office) to pursue the AANAPISI funding for the second time? Was there a specific need that led to pursuing the AANAPISI funding for the second time?
6. Given that there are several different federal Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) initiatives and programs, why pursue the AANAPISI grant among many MSI funding?
    a. Probe: Why not HIS?
    b. What other external (federal or state) funding did the institution pursue?
7. What are the AAPI students' educational needs and challenges identified by you and your office (or others involved with pursuing the AANAPISI funding) at the time when applying for the AANAPISI funding?
    a. Rationale for applying for the AANAPISI funding

8. What are the AAPI students' educational needs and challenges identified by other institutional agents (faculty, staff, and administrators that were not directly involved with pursuing the AANAPISI funding) at the time when you and your office applied for the AANAPISI funding?
    a. Put it another way, what was the collective/shared understanding of the educational needs of AAPI students beyond the people directly involved with the AANAPISI funding?
9. Who supported you on campus to pursue it that was not mentioned already in the interview? Were these individuals/offices directly involved in pursuing the AANAPISI funding? What were their connection to pursuing the AANAPISI funding?
10. How did individuals involved with the process of pursuing the AANAPISI designation and funding make meaning of the campus efforts in this area? Was pursuing for the federal designation vs. federal funding perceived differently by these individuals?
    a. How did you make meaning of the whole process? Was pursuing for the federal designation vs. federal funding perceived differently by you? If so, how?
11. Who are the individuals and offices that were responsible for implementing the AANAPISI grant, and developing/sustaining AANAPISI grant-funded programs and practices on campus?
12. Were there any challenges in pursuing or implementing the grant? Will you give specific examples?
    a. Probe: How did other institutional members (faculty, staff, and students) respond to the campus' effort in pursing and implementing the grant?
13. What are the changes you've perceive after [name of the institution] received and implemented the grant? Were there direct changes made to your position (e.g. responsibilities)?

If respondent did not participate in the writing process, but was involved with implementing the AANAPISI funding...

1. Who are the individuals and offices that were responsible for implementing the AANAPISI grant, and developing/sustaining AANAPISI grant-funded programs and practices on campus?
2. Please walk me through how your campus used the funding in the most recent grant cycle, for 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019?
3. How did you learn of your campus pursuing the AANAPISI designation/funding?
4. Are you aware of any rationale for proposing particular programs/services? Why did the grant committee think particular programs/services would be beneficial for AAPI students?
5. Did it have implications for your job responsibilities? If so, how?
6. Were there any challenges in implementing AANAPISI programs? Will you give specific examples?

TO ALL:

1. In what ways do programs and services on campus serve AAPI students?
2. In what ways, if any, has being federally designated or funded as an AANAPISI impacted your professional practice? In what ways, if any, have you benefited professionally or personally?

3. In what ways, if any, has it impacted your department/program/office? Can you elaborate?
4. What would you say are your institution's priorities? How would you say those priorities have come about, if at all, due to the AANAPISI status or funding? Please elaborate.
5. Can you describe how the funding has implications for hiring or retaining personnel integral to responding to the needs of AAPI students on campus?

II. The Perceived Impacts of the Grant on Understanding and Serving AAPIs & Beyond AAPIs

In the next series of questions, I will be focusing on your understanding or organizational identity, culture, and practices from prior to and following the implementation of the grant. I'm hoping to explore to what extent the AANAPISI funding has shaped the change in understanding of organizational identity, culture, practices, and AAPI students.

1. How would you describe the campus mission and to what extent has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
2. How would you answer the question, "Who are we as an organization?" and in what ways has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
3. What does it mean to an "AAPI-serving" institution and to what extent has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
4. How would you describe the culture of [name of the institution] to others outside of [name of institution] and in what ways has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
    a. In what ways, if any, has your campus's efforts to secure the AANAPISI designation/funding influenced your campus culture?
5. How would you describe the students to others outside of [name of the institution] and to what extent has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
6. How would you describe the educational needs and challenges of AAPI students in particular and to what extent has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
7. In what ways are AAPI students represented on campus and in what ways has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
    a. (For Faculty only) In what ways are AAPI students represented in the curriculum at [name of the institution] and to what extent has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
8. (To an AAPI inst. agent) In what ways do you see yourself represented on this campus and how has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
9. In what ways does [name of institution] make AAPI students feel like they are part of the campus community? How has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
    a. Probe: AANAPISI grant-funded programs, practices, events, activities, etc.
10. In what ways have campus programs and policies been implemented to help AAPIs succeed? How has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?

a. Did the 2nd AANAPISI grant supplement any existing programs/services? If so, what are they?

11. In what ways has the curriculum and/or course offerings been altered to reflect the increase in AAPI student enrollment? How has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
    b. (Faculty only) In what ways are your pedagogical practices reflecting the needs of AAPIs at [name of the institution] and to what extend has this evolved form prior to and following the implementation of the grant?
12. How would you describe the outcomes experienced by AAPI students and to what extent has this evolved from prior to and following the implementation of the grant? Will you give me a specific example of this?
13. In what ways do you think external factors have affected [name of the institution] to admit, enroll, and educate a diverse student population?
    a. Probe: Funding, landscape of higher education, state/federal support, education policies, CCC system, etc.
14. In what ways is [name of the institution] unique compared to other campuses in the [State] Community College system?
15. How would you say that being a federally funded AANAPISI has impacted how responsible the campus has been to AAPI students?
16. How has the AANAPISI status and funding enabled you to pursue other resources, opportunities, and support for AAPI students?

III. MOVING FORWARD (ESPECIALLY WITHOUT THE FUNDING)

1. If you oversaw the AANAPISI campus-wide committee, what would you do to make [name of the institution] become more of an AANAPISI and/or more "AAPI-serving"?
2. How would you define organizational success at an AANAPISI?
3. Is there anyone on campus that you would identify as an institutional agent of change for AAPI students? What do they do?
4. What is the campus-wide conversation around continuing the support of students, particularly AAPI students without the AANAPISI funding?

Wrap-up

We are almost at the end of our interview.

1. Are there any individuals on campus who you think I should speak to?
2. Is there anything I did not address in the questions that you would like to share?
3. Do you have any questions?

That concludes our interview. Thank you so much for your time.

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