



ASIAN ASSOCIATION
of UTAH

ASIAN ASSOCIATION *of* UTAH IMPACT REPORT 2024

Build Today.
Thrive Tomorrow.

www.AAU-SLC.org

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MISSION

Our community is a unique intersection of two groups: Asian Americans in Utah, representing our heritage community, and marginalized refugees, refugee youth, and human trafficking victims, representing the community we serve.

We engage, equip, and empower victims of human trafficking, refugees, and refugee youth to improve, become self-sufficient, and thrive. Our work is trauma-informed and linguistically sensitive, delivered by specialized staff who journey with each individual and family.

HISTORY

Originally established in 1977, the Asian Association of Utah engages, equips, and empowers victims of human trafficking, refugee youth, and refugees from all over the world to improve, become self-sufficient, and thrive. Working closely with Utah resettlement agencies, Utah State Refugee Office, refugee communities, state protective services, Utah's Attorney General Office, law enforcement, and the United States Department of Justice, AAU provides comprehensive trauma-informed and culturally relevant support services including case management, employment assistance, therapeutic counseling, mental health treatment, English classes, afterschool programs, and youth mentoring.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Friends, partners, and community,

As only the second Executive Director in the Asian Association of Utah's (AAU) 47-year history, I send you my greetings, update, and thanks. This past year has been one of significant change, investment, growth, and impact.

Additional financial partnerships from individuals, foundations, public entities, and corporations have allowed us to expand our services to refugees, refugee youth, and human trafficking victims. New senior leaders have brought renewed purpose, culture, excitement, and growth across all of AAU. We have added five new Board Members, updated severely outdated communications systems, and renovated two floors of our old headquarters so we can continue to expand and meet the growing needs of the communities we serve.

As I write this letter to you, I am overwhelmed by:

- The magnitude of the need facing refugees, refugee youth, and victims of crime in our state.
- The resiliency of refugee families and human trafficking victims and their commitment to cope and recover from traumatic experiences.
- The passion, skill, commitment, and dedication of our 60+ AAU staff to journey with each individual through their healing and progress to self-sufficiency and thriving.
- The generosity of so many partners who give their time, talents, and/or treasure to help us make this impact every day.

The danger in developing a report like this is an overemphasis on numbers. These reports can become organizational bragging sessions. "Look at us." "Look what we've done." That is not our desire. We developed this report to be accountable, to inform, to educate, and ultimately celebrate the amazing progress these human beings have made toward recovery, self-sufficiency, and impact in our shared community.

More is not always better. Each number represents a human life going through challenges of real trauma that we would hope no one would ever have to experience. But they have. And now we have an opportunity to engage, equip, and empower these refugees, refugee youth, and victims of human trafficking to improve, become self-sufficient, and thrive.

What an amazing opportunity to serve. What an amazing opportunity to partner with us.



Scott Cougill
Executive Director



AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING



Refugee Youth Served **200+**

Across 5 Afterschool Sites: Sunnyvale Neighborhood Center's Elementary & Teen Program, Evergreen Jr. High, Olympus High School, and William Penn Elementary School

Refugee youth encounter all the challenges local youth face, compounded by additional obstacles of cultural adaptation, language barriers, and social integration. Our program is designed to empower these students by reducing barriers and expanding opportunities. Through the evidence-based Positive Action curriculum, we provide targeted academic support and prosocial skill development. Our approach has demonstrated **measurable improvements in students' social and academic competencies, helping refugee youth build the foundation for future success.**



REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Over three million displaced people have relocated to the United States since AAU was founded in 1977. Today, U.S. efforts to resettle refugees fulfill an important humanitarian mission while also providing significant economic benefits to the country.

This past year, Utah welcomed over 1,700 refugees who received direct assistance from resettlement organizations. The Asian Association of Utah (AAU) played a critical role in this support network, directly **assisting 171 cases encompassing 276 individuals**.



HOUSING



133
HOUSEHOLDS
with over
\$371,063 IN
FUNDING

In the past year, AAU housing support provided critical support to 133 unique households through comprehensive services. Our housing staff leverages the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix to **identify and address each client's unique needs, offering holistic support across multiple life domains.**



ADULT ENGLISH LEARNING CLASSES

10,000+

INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS

132

STUDENTS

Our program offered five classes (three morning, two evening) with a consistent **90-100% enrollment** throughout the year. Students tested demonstrated a 64% level gain, **exceeding the state's 60% benchmark for language proficiency.**





YOUTH MENTORING

Over **100 youth** partnered with **dedicated mentors** to develop personalized service plans focused on **enhancing self-esteem, academic performance, and family connections.** Each mentor carefully collaborated with their mentee to identify and engage in positive, constructive activities such as afterschool programs, sports teams, and extracurricular opportunities. Assessment data reveals that youth with mentors show significant progress in avoiding negative behaviors and actively participating in meaningful, prosocial activities.



SYSTEMATIC TRAINING FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING (STEP)



"My family is more united and we do more activities together"

67

PARENTS

"We feel closer and more connected as a family"

Classes provided in:

English | Swahili/Kiswahili | Afghan Dari درى | Arabic Dinka Thuonjän | Arabic الْعَرَبِيَّة | Spanish/Español | Somali/Soomaali





AAU's Behavioral Health team provides **holistic, trauma-informed, culturally responsive mental health therapy services to migrants resettling in Utah**. Our licensed clinicians use evidence based therapeutic approaches tailored to each client's unique needs. Whether we are working to address adjustment disorders, depression, severe chronic illness, or counseling survivors of domestic violence, we strive to provide services that help individuals and families build on their strengths and become integrated members of the community.

7 Therapists

1 Intake Therapist

1 Advanced Practice Registered Nurse

1 Case Manager

480
Clients Served



Specialized Mental Health Initiatives



Individual & Group Psychotherapy



Medication Management

3,325
Individual Therapy Hours



Outpatient Mental Health, Substance Use, and Domestic Violence Services



Language Interpreting Services for Therapy



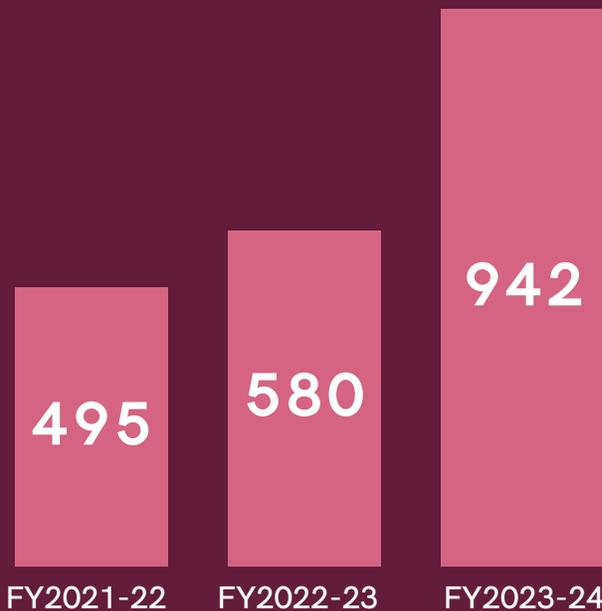
Providing Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) and Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) Trainings





AAU has been a leader in human trafficking support services since 2010. We are **Utah's largest, most comprehensive, and only federally funded human trafficking victim service provider.** In partnership with the Utah Attorney General's Office, we co-chair the Utah Trafficking in Persons (UTIP) Taskforce, working collaboratively to combat human trafficking in our state.

Total Human Trafficking Survivors Served:



PRIORITIZING SAFETY, CONFIDENTIALITY, CHOICE, COLLABORATION, AND EMPOWERMENT

WEEKLY DROP-IN CENTER FOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Mobile Medical Clinic | Housing Consultation | Food Pantry | Hygiene Kit | Clothing | Household Items





With **32 collaborative partners** providing services in 24 of Utah's 29 counties

COMPREHENSIVE MODEL



Client Care
Coordination &
Referrals



Personal
Advocacy &
Accompaniment



Crisis Nursery
& Childcare
Assistance



Crisis
Intervention
Hotlines



Mental Health
Therapy



Substance Use
Treatment



Protection &
Safety Planning



Medical &
Dental Services



Education &
Skill Building



Employment
Services



Criminal & Civil
Justice
System
Assistance



Emergency Shelter
& Transition
Housing





We Offer Interpreting & Translation Services in **35+ Different Languages with 80+ Interpreters**

In the past year,
15,000
 Clients Served With Over
50,000
 Hours of Interpreting



Success Story from One of Our Interpreters

Yusuf's journey began in Somalia during a time of significant turmoil. Seeking safety, he and his family fled to Kenya as refugees, where they lived for eight years. In 2021, Yusuf was given the opportunity to start a new chapter of his life in Utah.

Adapting to his new home, Yusuf lived in a foster home and approached his challenges with remarkable determination. Through dedicated hard work, he mastered the English language. Drawing from his own experiences as a refugee, he began working as an interpreter for AAU, bridging communication gaps for Somali and Swahili speakers. His deep understanding of the refugee experience allowed him to connect with and support others navigating similar challenges.

Today, Yusuf continues to make a meaningful difference as a mentor with AAU's Refugee Services team, guiding and inspiring other refugee youth with his compassion and firsthand insights.



Major Street Renovation

AAU spent the past year revitalizing its Major Street office building in the Ballpark neighborhood. This building, which served as our main office until we relocated downtown 14 years ago, is being transformed from a storage space and human trafficking support drop-in center into a comprehensive community support hub.



UTAH ASIAN FESTIVAL



The Utah Asian Festival has grown to over 15,000 attendees who attend this family-friendly, one-day Festival to discover a diverse array of delectable cuisines from our 30+ food trucks/booths, 70+ booths featuring local artisans, educational cultural booths, Asian-owned businesses, mini health fair, and local nonprofits. And finally, they explore the captivating performance lineup, showcasing an enchanting blend of music, dance, martial arts, and cultural demonstrations.



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Shilpi C. Blanchat

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Heru Hendarto

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Leslie Nuon

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Chris Chong

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Rick Lam

Executive Committee
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THANK YOU!

TO ANOTHER YEAR OF IMPACT.

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