



APAPA

SEATTLE CHAPTER

JULY ISSUE

INSPIRE. ENGAGE. EMPOWER.

We are a non-profit and non-partisan organization with a diverse membership representing all communities throughout the nation.



DEFUNDING POLICE

On July 25th, we had a panel with state and local officials to discuss what defunding the police actually means and how it will affect the community

INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

This month, interns were tasked with completing their independent projects which involved listening to three public hearings and interviewing one state official or candidate.

CLUSA WEBINAR

This month, we attended the second webinar of CLUSA's Young Leaders for America summit.

APAPA IN THE COMMUNITY

APAPA donated 2000 facial masks to the seattle police department. Assistant Chief Arian Diaz and two other police officers received them on July 7th





DEFUNDING POLICE

When many people hear the phrase “defund the police”, they often equate it with abolishing the police and a descent into chaos. However, that is not what defunding the police actually means. The demand to “defund the police” refers to divesting from the police force and reinvesting that into the community. This can be in the form of social workers, mental health professionals, and other positions that are more equipped do deal with certain situations than the police often is. Defunding the police can also be beneficial to the police department as they are often stretched too thin dealing with mental health crises they are unprepared for, nonviolent disputes, schools, etc. In fact, based on studies conducted, 56% of calls made to the Seattle Police Department (SPD) are nonviolent situations that could be handled by other professionals with more knowledge in dealing with circumstances. Shifting the responsibility of nonviolent situations from the police to other forms of response means the police can better focus on violent crimes only they are equipped to handle. As Senator Manka Dingra shared in the panel, we must divert the funds to other forms of emergency responses that can better serve the community and understand the needs of the community. One final thing to consider is that policing is often reactive, meaning they primarily respond to crime. As such, investing in other forms of security could be more proactive in preventing crime than the police currently are.



DEFUNDING POLICE



While more needs to be done to combat police brutality and racial injustice within the SPD, we must also consider what defunding the police by 50%, as proposed by the Seattle City Council, will actually mean. According to SPD Assistant Chief Adrian Diaz, a 50% cut in the SPD budget for 2021 will lead to massive layoffs of up to half the SPD workforce as personnel. Additionally, Assistant Chief Diaz states that many studies indicate when considering the size of Seattle, the SPD should operate with around 1700 officers and that cutting it down 633 officers will impact SPD's ability to perform effectively. Additionally, there are concerns that massive cuts to the SPD budget could potentially undercut accountability and de-escalation programs already taking place. Despite concerns, SPD Assistant Chief Adrian Diaz does agree that in cases such as mental health and homelessness, "these are areas that policing should be able to take a step back and have other units or organizations take the lead".



INDEPENDENT PROJECT

Government and Community - Interns needs to attend at least 3 local public speaking

What Interns learned from this project:

- "I gained a lot of knowledge about both of these committees by attending their meetings. Everyone on the committees were adults, typically on the older side (40+) so everyone was very professional and mature. I feel more involved in my community now after attending and documenting these changes."
- "I gained a lot of insight as to how governmental or school board committees function. One thing that stood out to me is how time consuming bureaucracy is and how long it takes for proposals to pass and for action to be taken."
- "Although these meetings were great, I should've chosen some with more issues at hand so I could try to reflect more. But at the same time I learned what also happens with smaller commissions."
- "As a student in LWSD, I think this meeting helped me understand my district better and why they made those decisions."

Election and Policy - Interns needs to interview at least one official or candidate Official or candidate that interns interviewed:

- Lisa Wellmann - 41st district Senator
- Gentry Lange - WA secretary of state candidate
- Phil Fortunato - 31st District Senator
- Gene Hart - ran for WA governor in 2020
- Raul Garcia - ran for WA governor in 2020
- Liz Hallock - ran for WA governor in 2020
- Tim Eyman - Washington state governor candidate
- Gael Tarleton - WA secretary of state candidate, 36th District Representative
- Mia Gregerson - 33rd District Representative

CLUSA WEBINAR 2

The APAPA Seattle Chapter was incredibly lucky to attend CLUSA's second webinar where we were able to listen to speaker Allen Su teach us the importance of backing our answers and actions with knowledge and experience we have obtained through events and others. We were also fortunate enough to talk with panelists about the importance of mentorships and steps to finding a mentor for yourself, which all members of APAPA Seattle will hold onto dearly.

We would like to thank CLUSA for hosting this successful and insightful event.

