



## QUEER & API: ENGAGING WITH API COMMUNITIES

# THE FILIPINO AMERICAN COMMUNITY



## BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

- 53% of Filipino Americans are foreign-born; 63% of these have naturalized as citizens.
- From 2001-2010 the U.S. issued the most immigrant visas (366,678) to people from the Philippines than any other Asian country.
- A majority of Filipino Americans who obtained legal permanent resident (LPR) status in 2010 were immediate relatives of U.S. citizens.
- 51% of LPRs are eligible to naturalize.
- 280,000+ Filipino Americans are undocumented.

Source: A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans in the US 2011, Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

## OUR PURPOSE

### BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

API Equality-LA and API Equality-Northern California partnered with Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy to collect research on **Asian Pacific Islander (API) views on same-sex marriage and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people.**

These fact sheets highlight key findings from a combination of one-on-one in-depth interviews and focus groups among voters and individuals in California's Chinese, Filipino, and Korean communities. Interviews and focus groups were conducted in each ethnic community in English and participants' primary languages: Mandarin, Korean, or Tagalog. Participants were of varying genders, age, and education levels. This research was designed to explore views on same-sex marriage as well as values, attitudes, and feelings related to LGBT people.

**Factsheets are for community members and LGBT advocates looking to gain a better understanding of these communities, so they can reach out and build better understanding across difference between and among our communities.**

## FILIPINO AMERICAN PRESENCE

### IN THE UNITED STATES

According to the 2010 Census, the total population of Filipino Americans numbers 3.4 – 4.5 million, about 1.1% of the total population of the United States. This figure also includes multi-racial Filipinos. Furthermore, Filipino Americans are the second largest API subgroup, accounting for 17% of the total API population in the U.S. and 21% of California's API population. The states with the largest Filipino American presence include: California, Hawaii, Illinois, Texas, Washington, New Jersey, New York, Nevada, Florida, and Virginia.

Filipinos in the U.S. make up the largest enclave of Filipinos outside the Philippines. Due in part to the Immigration Act of 1965, many Filipino professionals emigrated from the Philippines and settled in the U.S.

Filipino Americans are not strangers to discrimination and the struggle for equality. In fact, like other API ethnic communities, Filipinos were explicitly singled out for exclusion by immigration laws in the early 20th century. And, despite serving honorably in many of the country's armed services during World War II, many veterans of Filipino descent were denied access to veterans benefits because of their immigration history.



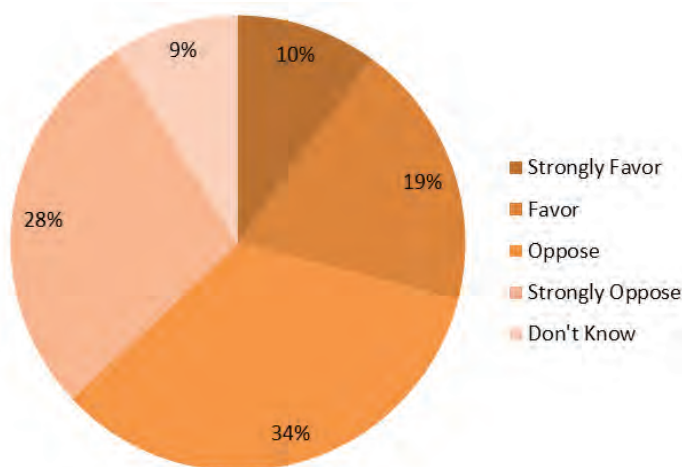
Source: API Equality-LA Facebook

## VALUE FOR FAMILY AND CONNECTION

Filipino Americans value family as a high priority and as a core foundation in their lives. They are deeply influenced by their upbringing, home culture, and life experiences. The notion of family includes extended family beyond the U.S.-based conventional nuclear family. Moreover, Filipino Americans often express a collective concern for society, in contrast to the individualist ideals of American culture.

Religion is also important to many Filipino Americans, with the vast majority affiliating with a religion and mostly identifying as Catholic. This value informs customs and traditions, regardless of church attendance and other religious practices.

## FILIPINO SUPPORT OF LGBT MARRIAGE EQUALITY

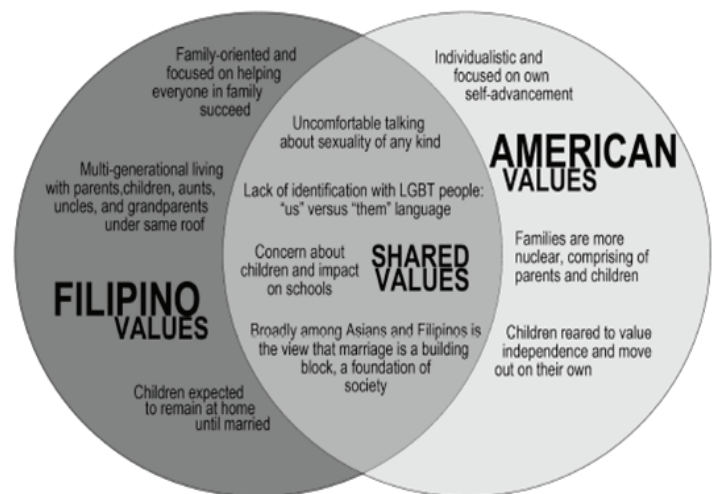


Source: National Asian American Survey

Filipino Americans, with their large immigrant population and history, view and interpret the world around them drawing from the traditions of the Philippines, the United States, the Catholic Church, and their immigration and acculturation experience.

Like other API communities, a majority of Filipino Americans support immigration reform, increased access to health care, and improved access to social services for limited English proficient residents. There are also signs of increased progressive thinking in Filipino American community, including the topic of LGBT rights. Still, for many, same-sex marriage and LGBT equality are touchstones for their fears of losing tradition. But this perceived tension between Filipino tradition and American acculturation is felt less acutely among the majority of English-speaking Filipino Americans, compared with Filipino American limited English proficient community members.

## PERCEIVED VALUES: SHARED AND DISTINCT



Source: Talking to Filipino Americans About LGBTQ Issues, API Equality-Northern California

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Support for this work was provided by Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, the Gill Foundation, and Horizons Foundation. API Equality-LA and API Equality-Northern California are generously supported by the Arcus Foundation, Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, and Liberty Hill Foundation.



**API EQUALITY-LA**  
Asians and Pacific Islanders for LGBT Equality

API Equality-LA advocates in the Greater Los Angeles Asian and Pacific Islander communities for the fair treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and marriage equality for same-sex couples. API Equality-LA's vision is to create a society that celebrates the loves and lives of all people - free from discrimination and injustice.



**API EQUALITY**  
Northern California

API Equality-Northern California works at the intersections of the Asian and Pacific Islander and LGBTQ communities to transform people, practices, and policies to make the world an equitable and safe place for everyone. API Equality-Northern California envisions a world where LGBTQ Asians and Pacific Islanders are empowered to practice self-determination, cultivate intergenerational connections, and live truthfully.