

Public Policy Roundtable

**“Improving Race Relations: What Have We Learned in the Past 15 Years?”
Mr. Stewart Kwoh, Executive Director, Asian Pacific-American Legal Center**

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As we approach the anniversary of the of the 1992 Los Angeles riots Mr. Stewart Kwoh, Executive Director of the Asian Pacific-American Legal Center, delivered a timely discussion based on his white paper titled “Improving Race Relations: What Have We Learned in the Past 15 Years?” The unfortunate state of race relations in Los Angeles and elsewhere in the U.S., described Mr. Kwoh, is that the necessary human relations programs and organizations are only funded in times of crisis. Many of the organizations which formed after the Los Angeles riots to address racial tensions have since dissolved said Mr. Kwoh. The challenge he described, is to further the race dialogue through sustainable channels that will still function, structurally and economically, in the absence of a crisis. Mr. Kwoh’s recommendations on improving race relations in Los Angeles included; increasing the governmental resources for human relations agencies, increasing the involvement of the private and community sectors in race relations, and forming networks of community leaders and residents whose common ground is centered on unity. Additionally, Mr. Kwoh recommended that funding institutions can advance the race dialogue by broadening the scope of their funding guidelines to foster multicultural collaboration among grant recipients. Mr. Kwoh’s recommendations are particularly relevant as our population becomes increasingly diverse, and post-9/11 discrimination against immigrants and ethnic minorities continues.