



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CATALYST**  
for **CHANGE**



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PRESS RELEASE

## **2019 COALITION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CATALYST FOR CHANGE AWARDS GALA**

**CACF Honored Four Outstanding Asian Pacific Americans**

NEW YORK (November 05, 2019) -- The [Coalition for Asian American Children and Families \(CACF\)](#) hosted its 3rd Annual Catalyst for Change Awards Gala to celebrate CACF's empowerment of Asian Pacific American (APA) children and families and to honor those who are a force for positive change in the APA community.

Honorees included **Jason DaSilva**, Film Director, Producer, Writer, and President of AXS Lab and founder of [AXS Map](#), a website and accessibility database to find disability friendly places around the world; **Eva Noblezada**, Tony Nominated Actress, [Theater](#) and [Film](#); **Ram Raju MD, MBA, FACHE**, [Senior Vice President and Community Health Investment Officer](#) of Northwell Health who evaluates the needs of [Northwell Hospital's](#) most-vulnerable communities and helps the health system eliminate health disparities; and **Project by Project**, which is an [innovative philanthropic nonprofit](#) that empowers the Asian American community, accepted by **Liliana Chen**, [Co-Founder](#).



From left to right: **Eva Noblezada** (Tony Nominated Actress, theater and film, **Liliana Chen** (Co-Founder of Project by Project), **Anita Gundanna** (Co-Executive Director of Coalition for Asian American Children and Families), **Jason DaSilva** (film director and President of AXS Lab), **Ram Raju MD, MBA, FACHE** (Senior Vice President and Community Health Investment Officer of Northwell Health), **Vanessa Leung** (Co-Executive Director of Coalition for Asian American Children and Families)

The Gala united more than 350 community advocates and professionals across industries. The evening event was held at the Edison Ballroom in midtown Manhattan, and raised funds to benefit CACF's leadership training programs and policy advocacy campaigns. CACF is the nation's only pan-Asian children and families' advocacy organization bringing together community-based organizations, as well as youth and parents, to fight for equity and to fight against racism and discrimination towards APA communities. CACF listens, trains, unites and fights to build an APA community too powerful to ignore. **Jenny Low**, Director, Community Engagement Division, New York City Council, Office of **Speaker Corey Johnson** presented CACF with a citation commending CACF's work and dedication to New York's APA community.

"CACF is incredibly thankful to our generous event sponsors and donors whose support allows us to be an independent and strong voice for those most marginalized in the Asian Pacific American (APA) community. We are honored to share tonight with Jason DaSilva, Eva Noblezada, Dr. Ram Raju and Project by Project and are truly moved by their persistent and incredible contributions towards furthering social justice and equity for APA communities." said **Anita Gundanna, Co-Executive Director, Coalition for Asian American Children and Families.**

"I am truly honoured to be recognized by CACF. My most important mission in life has been to give voice to the unheard. CACF and I have been working closely to gather meaningful data about Asian Americans with disabilities, which could help improve their stations in life. I am grateful to CACF for their continued

efforts to serve the Asian American community.” said **Jason DaSilva, founder and CEO of AXS Lab.**

“Over 70% of Asian Pacific American (APA) New Yorkers are foreign-born, and over one in four APAs struggle in poverty. Our communities face multiple challenges accessing services to support their health, education, and well-being. CACF advocates for equity and opportunity for marginalized APAs and we are grateful to share tonight with our allies, partners, and friends who graciously and generously support our work.” said **Vanessa Leung, Co-Executive Director, Coalition for Asian American Children and Families.**

“I am deeply honored to be awarded as a Catalyst for Change by CACF. In my career I’ve been lucky enough to portray such strong women whose stories revolve around humanity and truth. Little Eva never saw herself represented by roles that dealt with survivorship, identity and a struggle for rights. And these are present challenges that immigrant communities face today. So I am humbled to be recognized by CACF- an organization that for over three decades has helped build a voice to advocate for the largely immigrant Asian American community in NYC. It means the world to me. And I can stand here in confidence knowing that powerful organizations like this are here to lift up such incredibly diverse communities that I am so lucky to be a part of. Thank you,” said **Eva Noblezada, Tony Nominated Actress, Theater and Film.**

**Ram Raju MD, MBA, FACHE, Senior Vice President and Community Health Investment Officer of Northwell Health,** said “I am proud to receive CACF's Catalyst for Change Awards. For over 30 years, CACF has advocated for the most marginalized of our Asian American community. They understand the importance of working with government and other systems to ensure that children and families receive the services they need in a language they understand. As a medical professional and administrator, I believe everyone should have access to quality healthcare regardless of their language, their socioeconomic status and their history. It is important for health care systems to partner with groups like CACF to ensure we build strong connections to communities and work together to address health disparities.”

“Project by Project has built a network of community-minded professionals who care about social issues and building an empowered Asian America. It is an honor to be recognized by CACF — an organization relentlessly fighting for the Asian American community for over 30 years! This award will energize our passion to make a positive difference” said **Liliana Chen, Co-Founder of Project by Project.**

The emcees for the evening were **Ernabel Demillo,** Reporter/Host of 7-time Emmy nominated show "Asian American Life" and Contributing Reporter for "Arts in the City" and "Science and U" on CUNY-TV; and **Alan Muraoka,** Actor/Director of Sesame Street. A live auction and a pledge auction was led by auctioneer **Charles Antin** took place after the awards ceremony.

Event sponsors of CACF’s 2019 Catalyst for Change Awards Gala included Northwell Health, Edward Pauly and Barbara Turvett, Blossom, Frenesco Building Products, Main Street Radiology, Muskasey Frenchman & Sklaroff LLP, and The Poses Family Foundation.

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