

## MEMORANDUM – DENVER AAPI COMMISSION

<b>TO:</b>	<b>City Council</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>Office of Boards &amp; Commissions</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>7/8/24</b>
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	<b>Appointments for Denver AAPI Commission</b>
<b>PROCESS:</b>	<b>City Council Confirmation</b>

**CURRENT BOARD STATUS**

**Staff Liaison:** Nydia Gomez, HRCP

**Scope of Board/Commission:**

The Denver Asian American Pacific Islander Commission (DAAPIC) serves as a support liaison and facilitator between the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in Denver, the Agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships and the office of the Mayor of Denver.

Further, it is the Commission's objective to act as catalyst, educator, collective voice, and respond to issues and/or advocate based on community assessment of need, and create awareness and visibility of Asian American Pacific Islander community.

**Appointment Process:**

The Mayor appoints up to 21 members and City Council confirms appointments for a term of 3 years.

**Appointment Candidates:**

**Jane Burke, (Female, Asian)** Curator, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (2022-Present)



**Source:** Mayor’s Office Boards & Commissions Outreach

**Term:** 08/01/2024 - 07/31/2027 or until a successor is duly appointed.

**Bio:** Jane Sook Burke is currently the curator at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art in Boulder, Colorado and has recently curated: *AgriCULTURE: Art Inspired by the Land, Simulated Selves*, and *Tracking Time*. Just prior, she was the curatorial fellow for the Textile Art & Fashion department at the Denver Art Museum where she co-organized exhibitions including: *Shock Wave: Japanese Fashion Design from 1980s-90s*, *Dior: From Paris to the World*, and *Carla Fernández Casa de Moda: A Mexican Fashion Revolution*. She has also guest curated *Colorado Asians* at Artworks Center for Contemporary Art in Loveland, *Imminent Archive* for RULE gallery in Marfa, TX, and *Another Angle* for the University of Denver Museum of Anthropology. Previously, she held positions at the Honolulu Museum of Art, The Contemporary Museum, and The East West Center Gallery. Burke received a bachelor’s in studio art from the University of Colorado at Boulder and obtained an interdisciplinary master’s degree in

Asian art history and Mandarin from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

**Sean Choi, (Male, Asian)** Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, First Bank (2011-Present)



**Source:** Mayor's Office Boards & Commissions Outreach

**Term:** 08/01/2024 - 07/31/2027 or until a successor is duly appointed.

**Bio:** Sean Choi is a Colorado Native and Korean American. As a first-generation college student, Sean attended the University of Colorado at Boulder with a B.A. in Political Science and later attended the University of Colorado at Denver graduating with an M.B.A. in Finance. He is a graduate of the Stonier School of Banking program at University of Pennsylvania, completed the Wharton Leadership Program at University of Pennsylvania, completed the Diversity and Inclusion certificate program through Cornell

University, and is a graduate of Leadership Aurora (Aurora Chamber of Commerce). After joining FirstBank as an intern in 2011, Sean spent over a decade as a residential and commercial real estate lender and is currently serving as the Director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for FirstBank. Sean has a passion for implementing diverse, equitable, and inclusive strategies that benefit employees, customers, and the community, having assisted with the bank's multicultural banking efforts, sitting on the company diversity committee, and now directing the bank's DEI strategy. He is currently a board member for the FoodBank of the Rockies and a board member for B:Civic. He also serves on the advisory boards for ActivateWork and Sharing Connexions. He has previously served as a Board Member on multiple non-profits including the Asian Chamber of Commerce (former Board Chair), Scholars Unlimited (former Board Chair), the Havana Business Improvement District (Aurora, CO), and the Aurora Symphony Orchestra.

**Aaron Lombardi, (Male, Asian)** Program Manager, Denver Families for Public Schools (2023-Present)



**Source:** Mayor's Office Boards & Commissions Outreach

**Term:** 08/01/2024 - 07/31/2027 or until a successor is duly appointed.

**Bio:** Aaron Lombardi is a Chinese-American adoptee. He grew up in Southern Colorado and moved to Denver close to two years ago. He works as a community organizer and has advocated on a number of issues including civil and reproductive rights, youth organizing on Colorado college campuses, and now on issues around educational advocacy. He currently works for a non-profit called Denver Families for Public Schools that partners with DPS parents, families, and educators to uplift their voices. His interest in the AAPI commission comes from both his diverse background as an Asian American adoptee and his belief in the importance of

authentic community engagement through my professional work.

**Neal Walia, (Male, Asian)** Deputy Director, Asian Pacific Development Center, Aurora Mental Health & Recovery, (2022-Present)



**Source:** Mayor's Office Boards & Commissions Outreach

**Term:** 08/01/2024 - 07/31/2027 or until a successor is duly appointed.

**Bio:** Neal Walia is the Chair of the Colorado South Asian Democrats, an initiative under the Colorado Democratic Party (CDP) that seeks to increase South Asian participation in electoral politics. He recently served as the Deputy Director of the Asian Pacific Development Center (APDC), an organization that supported all immigrant and refugee communities with a whole health, community-based engagement approach through health, education and advocacy. Additionally, Neal was appointed in 2023 as Co-chair of Denver Mayor Mike Johnston's Neighborhood Well-being and

Community Safety transition committee. Neal ran for U.S. Congress in the 2022 Colorado Democratic Primary. Prior to running for office, Neal spent a handful of years living in Washington D.C. working for Quorum Analytics and the National Governors Associations' government affairs teams. Neal started his political career as a staffer for former Governor and current U.S. Senator to Colorado, John W. Hickenlooper, and spent two years before that living and teaching in Okayama, Japan. Neal holds two master's degrees from the University of Colorado Denver and a bachelor's degree from the University of Colorado Boulder.

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**CURRENT BOARD****Mayoral Appointments:****TERM END DATE**

Shauna Medeiros-Tuilaepa, (F)(NHPI)

01-22-25

Lulu Lantzy, (F)(Asian)

01-22-25

Chenthuran Jayton, (M) (Asian)

01-22-25

Kimberly Phu, (F)(Asian)

01-22-25

Jory Zhang, (M)(Asian)

01-22-25

Chelsea Cordero, (F)(NHPI)

05-31-27