

Hirai Farms



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Contact: Katie Tran-Lam
APIASF Assistant Director of Communications and Marketing
(202) 747-7236
ktranlam@apiasf.org

HIRAI FARMS ANNOUNCES SUPPORT OF ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND LOCAL FARMER INCREASES SUPPORT DURING TOUGH TIMES

WENATCHEE, Wash. (March 24, 2009) – Washington state farmer and CEO and Owner of Hirai Farms, Blaine Hirai, announced that his foundation, Annie's Fun, recently launched a multi-year initiative to provide direct support to the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF), the nation's largest non-profit organization devoted solely to providing scholarships to Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) students.

"In today's economic climate, it is becoming more difficult for many people to feed their families and send their children to college," said Blaine Hirai. "In these tough times, it is critical to support organizations like APIASF that are that are helping to address the educational issues faced by economically disadvantaged communities."

Hirai's seven-year commitment to APIASF will provide funds to support the administration of annual scholarships, student services and marketing initiatives. Hirai became a member of the APIASF Board of Directors in May of 2008, which includes representatives of McDonalds, Coca-Cola, AT&T, Wal-Mart, Hilton Hotels, Macy's, IBM, Wells Fargo and Sodexo. He is the only member of the Board of Directors who resides in the Pacific Northwest.

"We are seeing the impact of the challenging economy through the record number of students who are applying for our scholarships," said Neil Horikoshi, APIASF President & Executive Director. "Leaders like Blaine, who have stepped up to the plate during these challenging times, are keeping the dream of higher education alive for deserving APIA students."

Since 2003, APIASF has provided a critical bridge to higher education for APIA students across the country by awarding more than \$1.8 million in scholarships. APIASF's vision is to see that all APIA students have the access to higher education and the resources they need to achieve academic, personal and professional success.

About Hirai Farms / Annie's Fun

Hirai Farms, has been a family owned and operated business in the Columbia Basin of Washington State since 1954. Blaine Hirai and the Hirai family maintain a strong tradition of giving back to local communities in the Pacific Northwest. In 2005, the Hirai family created "Annie's Fun", a non-profit, charitable 501(c)(3) organization named after Blaine's mother, to help those in need. In 2008, Blaine Hirai and Annie's Fun donated 105,000 pounds of potatoes to several food banks in Washington State.

About APIASF

The Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF) is based in Washington, D.C., and is the country's largest non-profit organization devoted solely to providing scholarships for Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. APIASF manages two scholarship programs: APIASF's general scholarship for freshmen and the Gates Millennium Scholars/Asian Pacific Islander Americans (GMS/APIA). Funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and administered by UNCF, the GMS/APIA program provides outstanding Pell Grant eligible APIA students with an opportunity to complete an undergraduate college education in any discipline they choose and a graduate degree in specific fields. APIASF assumed the administration of this program in September 2006. Supporters of APIASF include members of the general public and a wide spectrum of community and professional leaders, organizations and corporations. Corporate supporters include, but are not limited to: Abercrombie & Fitch, AT&T, Bank of America, Chrysler, The Coca-Cola Foundation, Darden Restaurants Foundation, Farmers Insurance, FedEx, General Mills, Hilton Hotels Corporation, IBM, ING, Kellogg's, Macy's Inc., McDonald's USA/Asian McDonald's Operators Association, Met Life Foundation, Nationwide, Sodexo Foundation, Southern California Edison, Target, United Health Foundation, USA Funds, U.S. Navy, Wachovia, Wal-Mart Foundation and Wells Fargo. For more information about APIASF's mission and programs, please visit www.apiasf.org.