

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**

**Contacts:**

Tamon Norimoto  
Resource Development Director  
Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)  
(408) 975-2730 ext. 102  
[tamon.norimoto@aaci.org](mailto:tamon.norimoto@aaci.org)  
<http://www.aaci.org>

Aarti Rao  
Outreach Coordinator  
Asian Liver Center  
(650) 724-2923  
[akrao@stanford.edu](mailto:akrao@stanford.edu)  
<http://liver.stanford.edu>

**Santa Clara County Hep B Free Campaign Launch**  
***B Sure, B Tested, B Hep B Free!***

San Jose, CA (February 15, 2008) – Stanford University’s Asian Liver Center, Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI) and the California Department of Public Health will launch its partnership to provide free hepatitis B screenings and low-cost vaccinations in Santa Clara County at a **press conference on:**

**Friday, February 22, 10:00am**

Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)  
2400 Moorpark Avenue, Suite 111 (first floor)  
San Jose, CA 95128

Santa Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss and San Jose Councilmember Kansen Chu, the California Department of Public Health, and representatives from Asian Pacific Islander (API) organizations will participate in launching the Santa Clara County Hep B Free Campaign which will respond to the great need for hepatitis B and liver cancer intervention countywide.

The free hepatitis B screenings and low-cost vaccinations will be available to anyone regardless of their health insurance status, and the campaign will specifically target the adult Asian Pacific Islander (API) community which is disproportionately affected by hepatitis B. Beginning on March 1, 2008, the Asian Liver Center will hold free screenings and low-cost vaccination events at AACI every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month from 10:00am to 1:00 pm. The vaccinations will be provided throughout 2008 by the California Department of Public Health, a crucial partner in this endeavor. Vaccinations will be provided for patients that present valid HBsAg and HBsAb test results, obtained either from a Santa Clara Hep B Free screening event or from a doctor.

<u>Previous Test Results</u>	<u>Vaccine Recommended</u>	<u>Regular Cost</u>	<u>Santa Clara Hep B Free Cost</u>
Hep B +	Hep A (2 shots)	\$116	<b>\$35</b>
Hep B-/vaccinated for Hep A	Hep B (3 shots)	\$195	<b>\$50</b>
Hep B -	Combo Hep A/B (3 shots)	\$285	<b>\$52</b>

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by infection with the hepatitis B virus (HBV). Infection with HBV can lead to cirrhosis of the liver, liver failure, and liver cancer. Eighty percent of liver cancer worldwide is caused by chronic HBV infection.

Santa Clara County has over half a million API residents, comprising 30% of the county's population and bearing a disproportionate burden of liver cancer and undetected HBV infection. The county has one of the highest rates of babies born to hepatitis-B-positive mothers in the United States. With mother-to-child transmission identified as the main mode of transmission in the Asian Pacific Islander community and hepatitis B often being asymptomatic for many years, the fear is that many in the API community are unaware that they are infected. It is estimated that 1 in 10 Asians and Pacific Islanders—potentially over 50,000 residents in Santa Clara County—are chronically infected with hepatitis B. Two out of three chronically infected individuals, or up to 35,000 people in Santa Clara County, are unaware of their positive status. Asian Pacific Islanders are up to 100 times more likely to suffer from chronic HBV infection and 4 times more likely to die from liver cancer compared with the general population.

Certain subpopulations are especially affected. As many as 1 in 8 Vietnamese are chronically infected with hepatitis B (100 times that of the general population) and Vietnamese men experience the highest liver cancer rates of any ethnic group in the US (9 times greater than white males). The Chinese population has 1 in 10 chronically infected individuals. These two subgroups alone make up nearly 50% of the Asian population in Santa Clara County.

“This is a big problem for Asians and Asian Americans, because most Asian Americans are recent immigrants and their doctors have never tested them” said Dr. Samuel So, Lui Hac Minh Professor of Surgery and Director of the Asian Liver Center at Stanford University. AACI President and CEO, Michele Lew said, “Hepatitis B disproportionately impacts Asian Americans, so AACI is very pleased to partner with the Asian Liver Center to reduce this potentially life threatening disease in our community.”

The Santa Clara Hep B Free campaign will spread its message of *B Sure, B Tested, B Hep B Free!* through media outreach including Asian television, print, and radio as well as mainstream media outlets. The initiative will also provide education in five Asian languages—Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog and Lao—in order to reach out to the diverse communities in Santa Clara County.

Since last year, the Asian Liver Center has been involved in efforts to make San Francisco the first city to test and vaccinate all APIs for hepatitis B. This year, the Asian Liver Center, along with AACI and the California Department of Public Health aims to further these efforts to eradicate this vaccine-preventable virus from the county.

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#### **About the Asian Liver Center at Stanford University**

The Asian Liver Center at Stanford University is the first non-profit organization in the United States that addresses the high incidence of hepatitis B and liver cancer in Asians and Asian Americans. Founded in 1996, the ALC has grown to become a national and international leader in fighting this global epidemic through outreach, education, advocacy, and research.

#### **About Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)**

Founded in 1973, AACI is the largest community-based organization specializing in the Asian American community in Santa Clara County. Current programs include mental health and primary care health services, health education, HIV/AIDS prevention and testing, substance abuse treatment, programs for drinking drivers, a center for survivors of torture, programs and shelter

for women and children who are domestic violence victims, a senior center, after-school youth programs, community advocacy, and English and citizenship classes.

**About California Department of Public Health**

The California Department of Public Health protects and promotes California's health by making it a place where all people can enjoy the best health possible, where we all can live, grow and prosper in clean and safe communities. Its goals are to improve access to quality public health services, to improve health outcomes, and to reduce health care costs through prevention with services such as disease screenings and vaccinations, and patient safety initiatives. The California Department of Public Health plays a vital role in these efforts, collaborating with local health departments, agencies and organizations throughout the State.