Asian American Legal Advocacy Center Executive Director Helen Kim Ho Appointed to Welcoming Atlanta Working Group

Mayor Kasim Reed to chair the group charged with creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that promotes economic growth and immigrant integration

Atlanta, GA, May 28, 2014 — The Asian American Legal Advocacy Center (AALAC) participated today in the inaugural meeting of the Welcoming Atlanta Working Group at Atlanta City Hall. AALAC Executive Director Helen Kim Ho is one of 21 members appointed to the Working Group by Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed. The Working Group will develop recommendations to address the gaps in integration of Atlanta’s newly arrived communities and will serve as agents in the community to ensure that efforts to enhance the quality of life of immigrants are being implemented. As part of this effort, Ms. Ho is serving as the Chair of the Civic Engagement Subcommittee that is tasked with providing recommendations on ways to better engage immigrant and refugee Americans in public life.

“It’s an honor to be appointed to such an important effort and share best practices with other thought leaders in our city,” said Ms. Ho. “AALAC applauds Mayor Reed for his commitment to making the city and region a more welcoming place for foreign-born immigrants and refugees and we look forward to working with his office and members of the working group,” said Ho.

The Welcoming Atlanta Working Group will be chaired by Mayor Reed and co-chaired by Jeffrey Tapia, executive director of The Latin American Association, and Charles Kuck, managing partner of Kuck Immigration Partners. The Working Group will break into subcommittees to focus on five key areas of immigrant integration: ensuring equitable access to services; expanding educational opportunities; facilitating economic empowerment; enhancing public safety and fostering a connected community; and building immigrant civic engagement and leadership. The subcommittees will meet regularly between now and August, when they are expected to provide recommendations to Mayor Reed.

“Last year, the City of Atlanta pledged to become a welcoming city that respects the cultural and economic contributions of immigrants,” said Mayor Reed. “The creation of the Welcoming Atlanta Working Group is another step forward in strengthening our city’s standing as a global and inclusive community.”

In October 2013, the City of Atlanta joined the Welcoming Cities and Counties, an initiative of Welcoming America – a national, grassroots-driven collaborative that works to promote mutual respect and cooperation between foreign-born and native-born Americas. As one of 33 U.S. cities participating in the initiative, Atlanta has access to new tools and resources to help advance welcoming resolutions, initiatives and strategies, receive support for efforts to foster more vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming communities and participate in national and transatlantic learning exchanges that highlight promising practice from globally competitive cities.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the metropolitan Atlanta region total foreign-born population exceeds the national average of immigrants. More than 13 percent of citizens are immigrants.

Members of the Welcoming Atlanta Working Group include: -Co-Chair: Jeffrey Tapia, Executive Director, The Latin American Association -Co-Chair: Charles Kuck, Managing Partner, Kuck Immigration Partners -Rudy
About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees (“Asian Americans”) in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation.

We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice. Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org.