

Statement from the ACRS Board of Directors

March 10, 2011

The Board of Directors at Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS) would like to express our profound disappointment in a purported TV news “investigation” into the ACRS Food Bank.

ACRS has been assisting low-income, immigrant clients in 30 languages since 1973. The ACRS Food Bank has been providing clients culturally appropriate food, and currently distributes 117,000 pounds of food per month to nearly 5,000 unduplicated individuals. We, as the Board of Directors, are proud of the work that ACRS performs for its clients, which has earned state and national recognition and respect. We applaud the numerous volunteers who selflessly serve others through ACRS, whether in the food bank or in a myriad of other ways.

As you may know, an investigative TV reporter gathered information for a story regarding certain activities at the food bank that aired on March 2nd. Prior to the airing of the piece, ACRS listened to the allegations presented and acted quickly and appropriately to investigate those allegations. What ACRS learned through that investigation differs substantially from what was reported in the story.

Our intent in writing this letter is to express our disappointment in the station’s report, which either omitted or misrepresented several critical facts and their context. Our Executive Director, Diane Narasaki, shared important details and considered the reporter’s requests with careful thought and decency. The Board feels the reporter violated the trust and spirit of cooperation that was extended to him by ACRS.

Our disappointment also stems from the adverse impact this piece has had on ACRS’ dedicated volunteers, who are also clients eligible for the food they serve. We are saddened that their service to the community has been repaid with disproportionate disrespect. ACRS’ concern, first and foremost, is to ensure that our clients are being served, and the story’s inaccurate portrayal of those connected to the food bank has only hindered ACRS in providing clients the food and service they desperately need. As the Board of Directors for ACRS, we know the ACRS Food Bank well. We received regular reports regarding this situation from ACRS management prior to the airing of the story on March 2nd. We fully support the management of ACRS, both in the manner in which they operate the food bank and how they handled the TV reporter’s investigation. ACRS will continue to educate and serve the community and carry out our daily mission to support immigrants, seniors and community.

In closing, we wish to extend an open invitation to any interested parties, to attend ACRS’ *Walk for Rice* fun-run and walk in June, which raises money and awareness for the food bank. The event is a tremendous display of culture and community support for ACRS and its food bank. We hope attendance will give members of the community and beyond a deeper understanding of how culture is a significant factor at this particular food bank in King County.

Respectfully,
The ACRS Board of Directors

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