

Developing Leadership Among Asian Women

Founder and President Bonnie Wong sets leadership example

By Tasha Miller

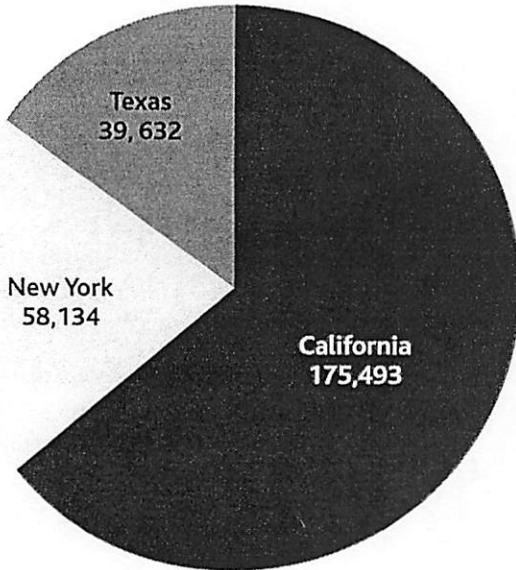
After attending numerous events for women business owners and noticing the low participation of Asian women, Bonnie Wong saw the need for a successful nonprofit membership organization that would assist Asian women in realizing their entrepreneurial potential. Asian Women In Business was incorporated in 1995 to promote the inclusion and leadership of Asian women professionals in all fields, with Ms. Wong as its founder and president. AWIB has become a platform for Asian women business owners and professionals who share common goals to connect with each other. In 2005, AWIB launched its Corporate Initiative to meet the identified needs of corporate Asian women. To date, AWIB has successfully served over 35,000 women and minorities.

AWIB's strength lies in its membership base. When an AWIB member and handbag shop owner at Grand Central Station was in jeopardy of



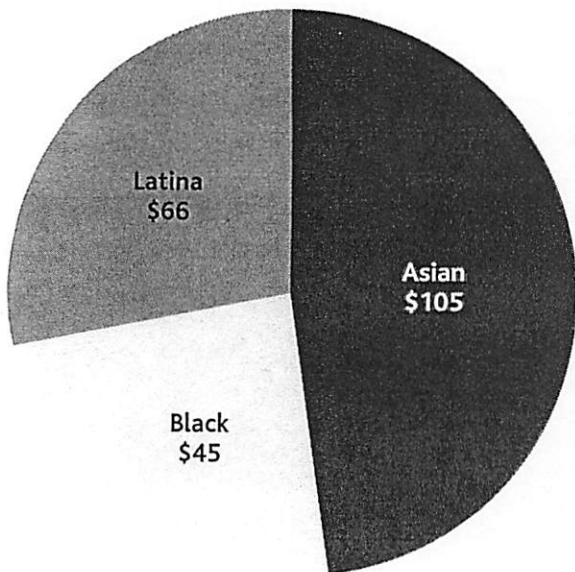
Bonnie Wong addresses AWIB's Annual Asian Women Legal Professionals Forum "Raising the Bar."

States w/largest Asian Woman-Owned Businesses



losing her store lease, she approached Ms. Wong and the organization for help. She had been a tenant at Grand Central for 10 years, but the management was refusing to renew her lease. Ever a believer in and advocate for its members, AWIB brought the issue to the attention of local politicians, the landlord and shoppers. Their efforts were rewarded with the renewal of the storeowner's lease. This is but one example of how AWIB has become a valued resource for Asian women professionals navigating an ever-changing workplace.

Revenue Asian, Black and Latina Women in Business \$ in billions




Ms. Wong has a strong community background and presence. She is active in many organizations, including being a member of the Multicultural Committee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Diversity Advisory Board of Ogilvy & Mather. Her prior associations include participation on the Diversity Board of Deloitte & Touche, membership of the transition team for Mayor Michael Bloomberg, founder and board member of the Chinatown Partnership LDC, founder and co-chair of the 21st Century Women's Leadership Center, NYC Commission on the Status of Women, vice chair of the National Women's Political Caucus and president of the Asian Women's Political Caucus. She has founded several nonprofit community-based groups and is a recipient of dozens of awards. She has been featured or quoted in The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Newsday, Crain's, Working Mother Magazine, Christian Science Monitor, and many other mainstream and Asian media outlets.

The need for an organization such as AWIB is supported by recent statistics on the state of Asian women business ownership. According to American Express OPEN, Asian American women owned an estimated 620,300 businesses in 2013. These firms employ 649,000 workers. They generate an estimated \$105 billion in revenue compared to \$66 billion generated by Latina women and \$45 billion generated by Black women. While nationally, Asian American women own 7 percent of women-owned firms, the greatest share of Asian American women-owned firms (compared to all women-owned firms in the state) can be found in Hawaii (54%), California (17%), New Jersey and New York (both 10%).

Even though AWIB's office is located near Wall Street in New York, AWIB's membership base is national in scope. Also, AWIB offers something for everyone. The organization provides skills building workshops, training seminars, networking events, mentorship opportunities and much more to help take each individual's professional success to the next level.

Membership benefits include:

- Procurement Opportunities Conference for Minority and Women Business Enterprises
- Annual Leadership Awards Gala
- Corporate Leadership Forum
- Skills Building Workshops
- Scholarship Fund for Asian female undergraduate students
- Asian Women Legal Professionals Forum
- Networking Opportunities

AWIB's membership base is not only a source of strength for the Asian American community, but it is also a great resource for other business owners looking to expand their current network in this dynamic demographic. 



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