

(5-10 minutes)

Greetings. I am honored to be here to help celebrate the *Asian Pacific Endowment for Community Development*.

One of the most important ideas in any culture is *Community*.

Everything important begins at the grassroots level.

There is no doubt in my mind how important Asians have been to developing communities and businesses in Minnesota.

I've learned quite a bit from Dr. Corrie and the various Asian Business conferences I've attended.

But I've also learned a lot from my own eyes.

It used to be that an Asian business in Minnesota meant a *restaurant*.

Now it can mean any type of business or industrial enterprise.

And I have become an expert with how much trade Minnesota has with Asian nations.

That's why two of my major trade missions have been to Japan and China.

In fact the first overseas trip I ever had was to Asia. I went to the Philippines, courtesy of Uncle Sam.

Even today elements of Asian culture are a part of my life – acupuncture, etc.

I know that the Asians in Minnesota have come from many different countries.

Some people have been here for generations; others for less than 20 years.

But they have a lot in common. There's a tendency to work hard, to value education, and to rise into the middle class and beyond.

Even while I have been in office, the number of Asians in the Minnesota Senate has doubled!  
(Senator Chaudrey – and then Senator Mee Moua)

I look forward to the day when we have our first Asian-American governor of Minnesota.



But as I said before – the most important things come from the grassroots level- and what we can do to build our communities.

I'm proud of what I have done as Governor – but I am also proud of what I have done in helping to create the Jade foundation, and to set up scholarships for my old high school – Roosevelt High in Minneapolis.

You know – they call Minnesota the Land of 10-Thousand Non-Profits.

You're not really a Minnesotan until you set up your own non-profit organization.

By that standard – looking at your list of organizations – you are one of us!

And to keep those organizations alive – guess what? – you need money.

That's why I support the Asian Pacific Endowment for Community Development – and the St. Paul Foundation, because they raise money to keep all these non-profits going.

And you know what? Every time a non-profit does something good for society – it's one less thing government has to do.

They both have their place. Government does what people can't do by themselves . . .

But when you really work at, there's no limit to what people can accomplish.

You are proof of that! Thank you.                   ###