



G R E A T E R
AUSTIN ASIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2024

YEAR IN REVIEW

Serve local. Think global. *and act*

OUR VISION

The Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce is the leading partner for driving local economic growth and opportunity for businesses with ties to Asia and Asian Americans.

OUR WORK



WE SERVE LOCAL

A fundamental value of GAACC's work is building opportunity for local businesses to grow. From mom'n'pops and startups to established regional players, we can help.



WE THINK GLOBAL

Austin is poised to take the next step building international business ties to strengthen our region's economy. We are among the local organizations spearheading this work.



WE HELP YOU GROW

Whether through networking events, referrals, business development workshops, or digital exposure, we create nurturing spaces to help your business bloom.

ADVOCATE • CONNECT • EDUCATE

OUR MISSION

Serve our members, champion the Pan-AAPI business community, enrich the community at large, and foster growth and opportunity through Advocacy, Connectivity, and Education.

OUR CHAMBER'S REACH



1,580+

MEMBERS
(COMPANIES & ORGANIZATIONS)



5,000+

INDIVIDUALS
(COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES &
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS)



40+

GAACC EVENTS
IN 2024



13,000+

ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS &
EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

THE CENTRAL TEXAS ASIAN LANDSCAPE

GROWTH

Asians are the **fastest-growing** racial group in the Greater Austin region.

The Asian population in Greater Austin **doubled** between 2010 and 2021 (=82,000 → ≈160,000) and is projected to **triple** in size by approximately 2050.

DIVERSITY

Austin's Asian community is **highly diverse** with significant populations representing India, China, Vietnam, Korea, Bangladesh, and the Philippines, among others.

Greater Austin has seen a significant influx of **foreign-born** Asians in the past decade.

IMPACT

Asians are the most **highly educated** and **high-earning** population group in Central Texas; typically working in business, management, and science professions. Asians are a key contributor to Austin's burgeoning knowledge economy and ability to compete with other cities and metros for jobs and talent.

Learn more about the impact of Asians and Asian-Americans in the Austin region with the Central Texas Asian Impact Project: www.austinasianchamber.org/impact



2024 GAACC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Guiding the direction and work of the GAACC takes a lot of talent. Our Board of Directors and Advisory Board bring that talent and mix it with dedication, experience, and leadership to grow our community's impact across Central Texas and the globe.



Pilar Castillo
Senior Vice President
First United Bank



Clifford Chiu
Senior Advisor & External
Corporate Director
Vista Equity Partners, Austin



Min Choe
CEO
Tso Chinese Takeout &
Delivery



Naoko Cole
Director of Business
Operations
Tokyo Electron



Mojdeh Gharbi
Business Leader & Advocate



Helen Haman
Strategic Program & Operations
Senior Manager
Accenture



Shanaz Hemmati
COO & Founder
ZenBusiness



Jessica Huynh, Secretary
Senior Associate Attorney
Smith & Vinson Law Firm



Rashed Islam, Past Chair
Senior VP,
Regional Transportation Dir.
HDR Engineering, Inc.



Kannan Kaliyur
CEO
Connect Tech+Talent

This page reflects GAACC Board of Directors members and committee assignments as of December, 2024.

2024 GAACC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Ali Khataw, Chair Emeritus
President and CEO
Encotech Engineering



Harrison Kim
Senior Vice President of
Business Strategy
Austin FC



Wan Kim
Senior Investment
Strategist & Vice President
Dimensional Fund Advisors



Ahmed Moledina, Past Chair
CEO
SOAL Technologies



Sharad Mudhol
Founder & CEO
smartDigs Austin



Kurian Panicker
Director, Consulting
Services
CGI



David Teo
CEO
Centauri Capital Group



Minh Tran, Chair
CEO
EmmyEvan



Yuen Yung, Past Chair
Co-Founder & Partner
Halbar Partners

This page reflects GAACC Board of Directors members and committee assignments as of December, 2024.

2024 GAACC ADVISORY BOARD

Jeff Hahn
Principal
Hahn Public

Amu Patel
Chief Operating Officer
Ascension Seton Williamson

Anbu Anbarasu
Managing Partner
Retex Investments

Debbie Hiott
General Manager
KUT Public Media

Colin Pope
Editor
Austin Business Journal

Angelos Angelou
Principal Executive Officer
Angelou Economics

Brandon Janes
Partner
Jackson Walker LLP

Eddie Rodriguez
Vice President
Capstone Title

Mark Borenstein
Area Operations Manager
HDR

Ali Khataw, Chair
President & CEO
Encotech Engineering

Miguel Romano
President
Ascension Texas Foundation

Bradley Compere
CEO & President
Capstone Title

Paul Kim
CEO
ATX Environmental Solutions

Abdul Subhani
President & CEO
Centex Technologies

Jimmy Ferguson
Chairman
APIA Chamber

Robert Lee
Founder
Pearlstone Partners

Amber Warne
Senior Director of Business
Engagement
Workforce Solutions Capital Area

Michele Glaze
Community Affairs Director
Samsung Austin
Semiconductor

Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart
Chancellor
Austin Community
College District

Byron Wilkinson
President and General Manager
KVUE

Larry Graham
Community Relations
Manager
Texas Gas Service

Anna Panossian
Major Events Finance Officer
Circuit of the Americas



This page reflects GAACC Advisory Board members as of December, 2024.

2024 GAACC COMMITTEES

GAACC committees work with staff, the Board, and our community to guide GAACC activities across several focus areas: Development, Membership, Finance, Nomination & Governance, Advocacy, Ovation Gala Planning, Golf Tournament Planning, NextGEN, and Korean Business & Technology Development.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Helen Haman
Chair

Pilar Castillo
Co-Chair

NOMINATING & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Jessica Huynh
Chair

Mojdeh Gharbi
Co-Chair

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Shanaz Hemmati
Chair

Yuen Yung
Co-Chair

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

Rashed Islam
Chair

Ahmed Moledina
Co-Chair

SIGNATURE EVENTS PLANNING COMMITTEES

Minh Tran
Golf Events
Planning Chair

Ahmed Moledina
Ovation Gala
Planning Chair

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Naoko Cole
Chair

Wan Kim
Co-Chair
Membership Growth Captain

Aileen Yu
Women's Club Captain

Michael Wei
Facebook Community Captain

Michelle Sledz
Small Business Development Captain

Kimberly Chung
Member Events Captain

Min Choe
Conversations Series Captain

NEXTGEN COMMITTEE

YJ Lin
NextGEN Community Engagement Captain

Tu Ta
NextGEN Professional Development Captain

Rohan Thapar
Leadership Accelerator Co-Captain

Shenghao Wang
Leadership Accelerator Co-Captain

KOREAN BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Jay Choi
Co-Captain

Francis Pahng
Co-Captain

This page reflects GAACC Committee members who served during the 2024 calendar year.

Serve local.

We live here, so supporting small and local businesses with ties to the Asian community is a fundamental focus and value throughout our work.

The continued efforts of our Chamber and the Asian business community will help to advance regional economic growth across Central Texas.





GAACC WOMEN'S CLUB



The GAACC Women's Club provides an intimate space for our community's dynamic woman-identified leaders to network and learn from one another.

FEBRUARY

"Lioness Vibes: Top 5 Skills for Women in Business" with Vidya Moorthy
Venue: JOI Asian Bistro

APRIL

"Finding Your Voice as a Person of Color" with Drs. Sarah and Saamiya Seraj
Venue: Simar Seafood & Steak

MAY

"Build a Roadmap to Success in 2024" with Michal Calairo
Venue: West China Tea House

JUNE

"Limitless Leadership" with Pavi Theva
Venue: Casa Chapala Mexican Grill & Tequila Bar

JULY

"Let's Golf!"
Venue: Golfinity

AUGUST

"Networking 102 for Business Owners" with Sarah Klein
Venue: Happy Lemon

SEPTEMBER

"Yoga in the Park" with Cara Smith
Venue: Zilker Park - The Monkey Tree

OCTOBER

"How to Navigate Generational Clutter" with Julianna Chung
Venue: Oseyo
Member Event: "Girls Night Out - Karaoke & Dancing!" with Lisa Kang
Venue: Austin Karaoke

NOVEMBER

"Mind What You Consume!" with Kristine Viray Lai
Venue: GAACC

DECEMBER

"Stay Out of Trouble with the Government" with Ericka Redic
Venue: VeraBank

The 2024 Women's Club was programmed and organized by Women's Club Captain Aileen Yu (Owner - Mathnasium of Southpark Meadows). Thank you!

LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT

From Master Classes to ribbon-cutting events, Austin's Asian Chamber supports startups, small businesses, and other regional enterprises by providing them the information, resources, and connections they need to take their business to the next level.

Small businesses are the core of our region's economic development and supporting their growth is a major component of our mission. In Summer, 2024, we helped to heat things up by launching Small Business Summer - a series of informative and useful opportunities for small business growth.

SMALL BUSINESS SUMMER

JUNE

Resources & Procurement Forum

Venue: LCRA Red Bud Center

Attendees learned how to access free resources that support business development and heard from the experts about procurement opportunities for small, local, minority-owned businesses.

JUNE & OCTOBER

Korean Tax and Banking Workshops

Venue: GAACC Conference Room

GAACC launched an ongoing series of informative workshops presented in Korean. These workshops offer essential training in various aspects of business initiation with a primary focus on taxes, banking, and tax-related laws and information.

We look forward to continuing this series with additional opportunities in 2025.

JULY

Project Rebuild Small Business Forum

Venue: Workforce Solutions Capital Area

We reignited our partnership with the Asian American Business Development Center (AABDC) on the Project Rebuild Small Business Grant & Assistance Program.

With the support of Bank of America, we awarded ten Austin-area AAPI-owned small businesses with \$3,000 business development grants!





Diversity Ethnic Chamber Alliance
SERVING CENTRAL TEXAS

DECA represents the heartbeat of Austin's economic landscape – championing fairness and representation to shape the city's future. With a mission rooted in fostering resilient economies and guided by the REED Plan, DECA stands as a pillar supporting the Austin region's vibrant tapestry of businesses and entrepreneurs.



DECA is a 501(c)3 organization comprised of the Austin LGBT, Greater Austin Asian, Greater Austin Black, and Greater Austin Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. Through a spirit of collaboration, DECA works to foster access to economic growth within the Greater Austin Region.

ABOUT THE REED PLAN

The REED Plan is a first of its kind in the nation: a regional economic development plan built by and for minority economies; a visionary blueprint for nurturing our region's diverse economies over the next five years. REED is not meant to replace other regional plans but rather to complement existing work with a focus on supporting historically underutilized businesses. The REED Plan incorporates community voices to ensure it reflects differing needs and fosters ownership, leading to more effective outcomes.

JULY

DECA REED Plan Announcement

Venue: Austin Central Library

With the support of city and community leaders, DECA unveiled the initial draft of the REED Plan and introduced numerous founding partners and sponsors.

AUGUST

2024 DECA Small Business Summit

Venue: City of Austin - Permitting and Development

The 2nd Annual DECA Small Business Opportunity Summit explored critical business development topics - including technical assistance, access to capital, certification and procurement, and advocacy - with expert panels, discussions, and Q&A opportunities.



GAACC LEADERSHIP ACCELERATOR

The GAACC Leadership Accelerator is an all-new, immersive program focused on empowering high-potential AAPI business and civic leaders in Austin. Our goal is to create a dynamic leadership activation program that equips high-potential AAPI business and civic leaders in Central Texas.

WELCOME OUR INAUGURAL GAACC LEADERSHIP ACCELERATOR COHORT!



Niki Chen

Senior Technical
Program Manager
Oracle



Hussain Hashim

Vice President
Bank of America
Merrill Lynch



Paul Lam

CSO /Head of Finance
BOT.auto



Sammy Lam

Owner
Wanderlust Wine Co.



Alan Lin

Associate Attorney
Cornell Smith Mierl
Brutocao Burton, LLP



Ruishi Wang

Assistant Principal
Georgetown ISD

Six young local leaders were selected for the inaugural GAACC Leadership Accelerator cohort following a straightforward but rigorous application process. Our sincerest welcome goes out to these dynamic and impactful individuals!

The nine-month Accelerator program consists of engagements with leaders from Fortune 500 companies and civic institutions through leadership classes, mentoring sessions, networking dinners, and a capstone project.

night market.fun

ARTS. COMMUNITY. FUN.



Beginning in early 2024, GAACC partnered with The Lunar Foundation to launch the inaugural NightMarket.fun Asian Night Market. This highly-anticipated and successful event, held May 24th in East Austin, drew over 2,000 attendees enjoying 80+ vendors and 20+ performances across three stages along with cosplay contests, food-eating competitions, and much more.



The mission of **NightMarket.fun** is to establish immersive, story-driven Asian Night Market festival and other cultural events that not only promote Central Texas AAPI businesses, artists, and performers, but also emphasize the local Asian community's strength, courage, creativity, and innovation.



NIGHTMARKET.FUN 2024 EVENTS

MAY

Inaugural Asian Night Market

Venue: Distribution Hall & Plaza Saltillo Station

DECEMBER

Chef vs. Chef Throwdown & Asian Day Market

Venue: Texas Farmers' Market at Mueller

An Evening with Author Curtis Chin

Venue: Din Ho Chinese BBQ

NightMarket.fun has numerous exciting events planned in 2025, including the return of our flagship Asian Night Market – coming to Cedar Park's Lakeline Park in October.

Visit www.nightmarket.fun for all the details and join us!



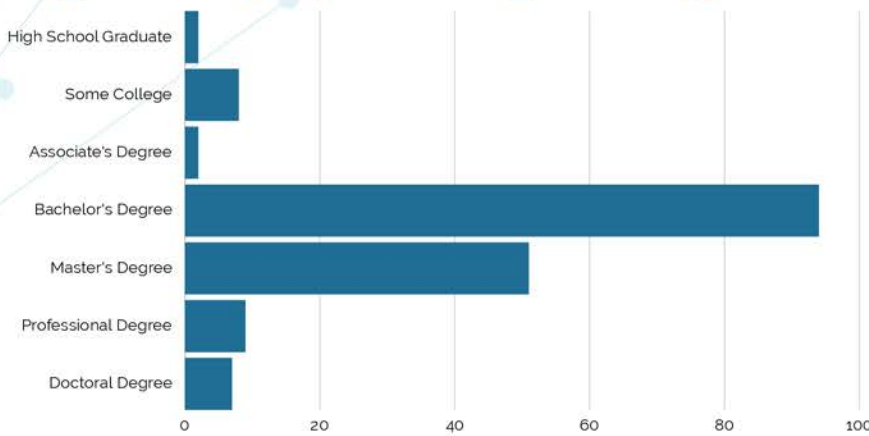
CENTRAL TEXAS ASIAN IMPACT PROJECT

The goal of the Central Texas Asian Impact Project is to provide the most comprehensive set of actionable demographic and business insights on the Asian population here in the Greater Austin region.

To complete its first year of activity, the Central Texas Asian Impact Project conducted a community survey from December, 2023 to March, 2024, followed by a focus group session in early May. Findings from the survey were shared with stakeholders and community leaders during Austin Asian Impact Day on May 20th, 2024.

Of the survey participants who self-identified as Asian...

A significant majority hold a college-level degree:



39% Own or run a business

70% travel to Asia

66% plan more Asian travel in the future

Other key takeaways and insights from the 2024 Impact Survey include:

- Our communities are truly Pan-Asian - with 18 origin countries/nationalities self-identified and at least 63 cities in Asia noted as planned travel destinations.
- A majority of surveyed Asians and Asian-Americans came to Central Texas for work or school.
- The top three business challenges faced by our respondents are overall business environment, workforce availability/cost, and access to capital.

IMPACT PROJECT KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS

It takes a village to achieve the work of the Central Texas Asian Impact Project. With the Asian Chamber serving in its established role as a superconnector, a robust "Ecosystem of Knowledge" has formed around the project in both research and advisory capacities.



Dr. Lila Valencia
Demographer, City of Austin

Visit www.austinasianchamber.org/impact to learn more.

GAACC CONNECTION PROGRAMS

Member mixers. Appreciation parties. A golf tournament. An annual gala. The GAACC knows how to have fun. Engaging directly with our communities through in-person programs and events drives the engine of our ongoing growth and success.

"Connection" is a core value of the GAACC. While all of our events can and should be considered "connection events," we express this value through a robust series of signature events, community meetings, parties, ribbon-cutting events, and much more.

FEBRUARY

Austin Asian ERG Coalition - Q1 Meeting / GAACC Conversations

Venue: Indeed - Austin Domain Tower

State of the Chamber: Time to Level Up!

Venue: Cambria Hotel Austin Uptown

MAY

DECA: How to Leverage your Local Chambers

Venue: Inn Cahoots

Austin AAPI Professional Summit

Venue: Asian American Resource Center

Austin Asian Impact Day 2024

Venue: Opportunity Austin | Austin City Hall | Headliner's Club

NightMarket.Fun - Inaugural Night Market

Venue: Distribution Hall & Plaza Sattillo

JULY

Brunch With Austin City Manager T.C. Broadnax

Venue: Hold Out Brewing

AUGUST

Austin Asian ERG Coalition - Q3 Meeting / GAACC Conversations

Venue: Expedia Group Austin

Mathnasium Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting

Venue: Mathnasium of Southpark Meadows

OCTOBER

11th Annual Fall Classic Golf Tournament

Venue: Twin Creeks Country Club

2024 Annual Advisory Board VIP Mixer

Venue: JW Marriott Austin

Austin Asian ERG Coalition - Q4 Meeting / Navigating the Future

Venue: Dell

NOVEMBER

Ovation Gala 2024 - Awaken The Dragon

Venue: Hyatt Regency Austin

DECEMBER

2024 Winter Member Appreciation Party

Venue: Golfinity

NightMarket.Fun - Chef vs. Chef Throwdown & Asian Day Market

Venue: Texas Farmers Market at Mueller

NightMarket.Fun - An Evening with Author Curtis Chin

Venue: Din Ho Chinese BBQ



11TH ANNUAL GAACC FALL CLASSIC GOLF TOURNAMENT

TWIN CREEKS COUNTRY CLUB
OCTOBER 7, 2024

With activities like a helicopter ball drop, games, and prize giveaways, the GAACC Fall Classic Golf tournament pushes the boundaries of traditional tournaments while providing opportunities for networking and fun.

One of our longest-standing signature events, the GAACC Fall Classic Golf tournament is an annual tradition bringing together business and civic leaders from across Central Texas for a day of golf and connection while raising funds supporting GAACC's mission.



**OVATION GALA
AWAKEN THE DRAGON
NOVEMBER 16TH, 2024**

Each year during the Ovation Gala, we recognize outstanding enterprises and individuals from our Central Texas community with the GAACC Business Awards. These awards signify excellence in business, community engagement, and cultural visibility.

The Ovation Gala is GAACC's annual celebration of Asian Pacific American heritage and accomplishments.

COMMUNITY LEADER OF THE YEAR

Ruchi Gagrani

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Samsung Austin Semiconductor

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Sammy Lam

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Jerry Won

EMERGING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

A Better Force

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

Clifford K. Chiu





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@GAACCAustin

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The GAACC Foundation (GAACCF), formed in 2024, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization affiliated with the Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce.

The GAACC Foundation embodies a mission to raise, manage, and distribute funds to create and amplify opportunities for growth and resiliency in AAPI young professionals, entrepreneurs, small businesses and communities in Central Texas.

The Foundation is aligned with the Greater Austin Asian Chamber's focus on business, and drives or supports initiatives with a special focus on promoting Asian art, cuisine, and culture as important facilitators of community and commerce. Our initiatives include programming to bolster small businesses and programs that provide or enhance educational opportunities for youth and young professionals.

Learn more at www.austinasianchamber.org/gaacc-foundation.

FEAST FOR A CAUSE. PARTY WITH PURPOSE!



The innovative flagship event of the GAACC Foundation is **Asian Eats ATX**. With its inaugural edition held on September 7th, 2024, hundreds of foodies gathered at participating restaurant locations across the Greater Austin area to enjoy fantastic, Asian-inspired meals hosted by restaurateurs and private chefs, all to support a great local cause. **After dinner, we partied!**

How does it work?

- STEP 1** Participating Asian Eats ATX restaurants and private chefs donate multi-course meals for 8-12 people. 
- STEP 2** Table Hosts bid online for a table during the AEATX Table Auction. 
- STEP 3** Winning Table Hosts are notified by AEATX staff at the end of the Table Auction. 
- STEP 4** Table Hosts invite friends, clients, and associates to dine with them at the restaurant they won in the Table Auction. 
- STEP 5** After dinner, everyone gathers at AEATX After Dark for the afterparty of the year! 



Our thanks go out to all the restaurants, chefs, entertainers, and vendors who participated in the inaugural Asian Eats ATX and Asian Eats ATX After Dark!

Bar Peached
Bep Co Tham
Chef Rene Helit & Chef
Jason Desmarais
Chef Pham
Chef Vesh
Chi'Lantro BBQ
Chodang Village
Chosun Galbi
Din Ho Chinese BBQ
Donkey Mo's Korean
Fried Chicken
El Raval
Kababji Grill

Kapatad Kitchen & Cafe
Korean Grill Austin
Oseyo
Sazan Ramen
Soupleaf Hot Pot
Sunflower
Tatsumi
The One Pho
The Peached Tortilla
Toshokan
Twin Panda
Uroko
Wanderlust Wine Co. & Acento
Zaviya Grill

A EATX
AFTER DARK

Bake Your Feels
DJ Steady B
Swoona Faye (aerialist)
Happy Lemon
Ng Cafe
Renee's Beignets
Rollie Rolls
Sharetea Austin
Sherpa Snacks



Think ^{and act} global.

In just over two decades, Austin has evolved from a college town to a tech and startup hub to standing on the precipice of being a global destination for companies and capital investment.

We are now poised to take the next steps toward building international business ties in our city - and the Greater Austin Asian Chamber is hard at work.





GAACC INTERNATIONAL MARKETS SERIES

Austin's Asian Chamber works to connect our region with the most robust international markets in Asia and beyond in a two-way highway of economic opportunity.



FEBRUARY

Japanese Startups Reception
Venue: GAACC

SEPTEMBER

Doing Business with Japan
Venue: Rollins Theatre, The Long Center



“THINK GLOBAL” 2024 ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS

GAACC's "Think Global" Organizational Partners are local, regional, and international entities that, through active collaboration, facilitate our efforts to help make Austin global while cultivating regional economic equity.



We look forward to introducing our community to global influencers from new international markets throughout 2025.



ASIA x AUSTIN

Summit | March 2024

Our inaugural Asia x Austin Summit brought Asia to Central Texas! This full-day conference at the Austin Public Library featured deep dives into the burgeoning bilateral connections between Central Texas and some of Asia's most robust markets.



With a welcome message from Austin Mayor Kirk Watson, briefings with economic and business leaders from some of Asia's most powerful markets, an energetic pitch session by nearly 20 Asia-based startups, a review of the Central Texas talent ecosystem, a fantastic afterparty presented by Singaporean Metaverse developer Smobler, and more, the 2024 Summit brought the world to our doorstep.



THE GAACC STAFF

The Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce staff helps make things happen. This group of domain experts brings dedication, nimbleness, skill, humility, and a "can do" attitude to GAACC's critical work supporting Asian businesses.



Mark Duval
President & CEO



Mark Hanson
Operations Manager



Andrea Lee
Communication & Marketing



Dayeon Lee
Business Development Intern



Sunny Lee
Business Development Intern



Erich Pelletier
Communication & Marketing
Manager



Pauline Pham
Member Engagement Intern



Albert Tinay
Events & Program Coordinator



Tiffany Vela
Communication & Marketing

This page reflects GAACC staff members who worked at GAACC during the 2024 calendar year.

2024 GAACC CORPORATE PARTNERS

Our Corporate Partners make it possible for the Chamber to conduct our community engagement events and outreach programs. Through their generous support of the GAACC, they elevate the Asian business community in Central Texas. Thank you!

IMPACT, GOLD, AND SILVER PARTNERS



PROGRAM SPONSORS



This page reflects GAACC corporate partners and sponsors as of December, 2024.

ADVOCACY • CONNECTION • EDUCATION



G R E A T E R
AUSTIN ASIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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