

JOHN C. YANG

John C. Yang is the president and executive director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC in Washington, D.C.

At Advancing Justice | AAJC, John leads the organization's efforts to fight for civil rights and empower Asian Americans to create a more just America for all through public policy advocacy, education, and litigation. His extensive legal background enables Advancing Justice | AAJC to address systemic policies, programs, and legislative attempts to discriminate against and marginalize Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other minority communities. Because of his expertise, John has appeared in over 50 different media outlets, including Tucker Carlson Tonight on FoxNews, PBS NewsHour, NPR, NBC News, USA Today, Time Magazine, New York Times, Washington Post, San Francisco Examiner, Houston Chronicle, and Huffington Post. He has received numerous national and local awards for his community and public service.

In 1997, John co-founded the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the direct service legal needs of Asian Pacific Americans in the D.C. metropolitan area. He served as chair of the Asian American Justice Center (former name of Advancing Justice | AAJC) and as general counsel for the Organization of Chinese Americans. John was president of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) from 2003 to 2004, and since 1998, he has served as Co-Chair of NAPABA's Judiciary and Executive Nominations & Appointments Committee. In that capacity, he has worked extensively with the White House and the U.S. Senate in securing the nomination and confirmation of over 25 Asian American and Pacific Islander federal judges and numerous other Senate-confirmed Presidential appointments.

He served in the Obama Administration as Senior Advisor for Trade and Strategic Initiatives at the U.S. Department of Commerce, where he was the principal advisor to Secretary Penny Pritzker on issues related to Asia and worked with the White House and other U.S. agencies on strategic and economics issues concerning the region. Previously, John was a partner with the Washington, D.C. law firm Wiley Rein LLP, and also worked in Shanghai, China for several years as the legal director for the Asia-Pacific operations of Illinois Tool Works – a U.S. Fortune 200 company.

John's other leadership positions have included: Board Member, Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights (2017–present); Executive Committee, National Council on Asian Pacific Americans (2017-present); Member, American Bar Association House of Delegates (2008–2018; Minority Caucus Chair, 2014–16); Member, U.S. Census Bureau National Advisory Committee on Race, Ethnicity, and Other Populations (2017-2019); Board Member, ABA Rule of Law Initiative (2013–2017). John also has served on the external diversity councils of BB&T, Charter Communications, Comcast NBCUniversal, and Verizon.

John graduated with honors from George Washington University Law School, where he served on the George Washington Law Review and the Moot Court Board.