CHAPTER 10

AANAPISI Program Directors: Opportunities and Challenges

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Since 2008, the U.S. Department of Education has designated 227 institutions, including community colleges and regional and research-1 universities, as Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs) (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education [CARE], 2013; About AANAPISIs, 2018). This designation, which represents one of the four Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), is often accompanied by access to significant funding to develop programming aimed at improving the educational outcomes for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) identifying students. Prior research foci have illustrated the importance of AANAPISIs to AAPI student engagement and achievement (Nguyen, Nguyen, Nguyen, Gasman, & Conrad, 2018; CARE, 2014), but attention to the leadership—staff and faculty—that directly administers the grant-funded projects remains limited.

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The role of AANAPISI programs is often treated as entities that work in a silo, when in fact, how institutions embrace this designation and implement associated initiatives involves a multitude of staff and/or faculty, policies and procedures to create the conditions meant to facilitate positive outcomes for AAPI students (Conrad & Gasman, 2015). Because student bodies are diverse with unique needs, programmatic initiatives often require those leading and managing AANAPISI grants to demonstrate savviness in developing connections and partnerships that cut across their campuses in order to effectively address the challenges that their target population faces (CARE, 2013). The purpose of this chapter then is to give attention to the quality of leadership we believe is necessary to manage AANAPISI grant-funded projects because staff and faculty leaders play a significant role in shaping the capacity of the institution to meet the goals and expectations as proposed to the primary funding agent, the U.S. Department of Education.

We first provide a brief background on the history and contemporary status of AANAPISIs, including the general expectations and requirements of the U.S. Department of Education. An overview of how AAPI student success is broadly understood is also given in order to demonstrate the ongoing importance of AANAPISIs, and MSIs more broadly. Second, we draw upon emerging research on AANAPISIs to chart the dominant challenges and opportunities that come from leading and implementing an AANAPISI grant across varied institutional contexts. This discussion includes practice-oriented recommendations. Third, we end with a call for future research in the area of leadership and AANAPISIs.

Before we begin, we take pause to clarify our point of reference, providing context for the content, as well as its delivery, that we have chosen to share in this chapter. The canon of literature on AANAPISIs is still in its infancy. Very little empirical work on these institutions and their faculty, staff and students exists; this makes it difficult to draw empirically driven recommendations. Although this volume's commitment represents the latest effort toward broadening the inclusion of AANAPISIs into the scholarship of leadership and higher education, the current state of empirical work on these institutions remain insufficient. Our approach to this chapter pairs this emerging canon of work with our former research experiences at the Penn Center for Minority-Serving Institutions and National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education and our current, national project on AANAPISIs. Since our start in the academy as doctoral students, we have had the privilege of being on multiple projects that have exposed us to different AANAPISIs across the

country. In some cases, we partnered with them to support their programmatic infrastructures, which gave us both an in-depth and bird's-eye view of their achievements and challenges.

Background

Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs) emerged from a broader legacy of racial injustice in postsecondary education. As the youngest MSI designation, AANAPISIs joined their counterparts—Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)—in 2007 as a consequence of significant advocacy by the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, the Southeast Asian Resource Action Center, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other political allies (Gasman, Nguyen, & Conrad, 2015). The AANAPISI legislation was brought into existence "as part of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act" and later "expanded in 2008 under the Higher Education Opportunity Act" (About AANAPISIs, 2018). Similar to their MSI counterparts, the authority of the latter gives eligible institutions access to federal funds that are to be used to support the achievement of AAPI students. AANAPISIs then represent federal-level effort to address the unjust experiences and outcomes of AAPI students that often go hidden by the Model Minority Myth (CARE, 2011).

The Model Minority Myth (MMM) is a dominant social construct meant to reinforce a belief in the universal achievement of individuals categorized as Asian. The MMM came into fruition in the mid-twenty-first century when those of Asian descent were lauded by popular press and academics for their work ethic, compliance to dominant social standards and academic achievement, despite the racial injustices that disproportionately plagued other communities of color. Asians exemplified the type of minority that was acceptable in the eyes of the dominant, which the latter attributed to individual intellect and perseverance. The rise and prevalence of the MMM lead to two deleterious consequences that scaffold the importance of AANAPISIs: (1) a universal belief in Asian achievement meant that differences—in ethnicities, languages, histories, cultures, class status—within the pan-ethnic Asian community (Le Espiritu, 1993) ceases to exist, thereby marking individuals within this group as indistinguishable and, thus, making it difficult to express alternative narratives; and (2) because Asian achievement is seen as a by-product of individual

effort, one's circumstance in life is a result of one's choices. This type of thinking disallows the acknowledgment of structural inequality (e.g. racism, income inequality) that constrains and explains the opportunity and mobility of minorities in, this case, education (Kao, 1995). Non-Asian minorities are then blamed for their own struggles in light of the "model" status of Asian people. AANAPISIs are designed to promote more equitable educational outcomes for AAPIs which include pushing back against the MMM and its consequences by highlighting the rich diversity within the pan-ethnic Asian community and developing programs and initiatives that mitigate the influence of structural barriers on students' pathway to degree (Teranishi, 2010, 2012).

The path to becoming an AANAPISI and accessing its associated benefits begins with applying for this designation. Unlike their HBCU and TCU counterparts, prospective institutions must meet demographic criteria in order to be considered. Eligible institutions must have an undergraduate population that is at least "10 percent students who are Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander" (CARE, 2013). Of their AAPI undergraduate population, 50% must be considered "low-income," as defined by a student's participation in "one or more of the following programs: The Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work Study (FWS), or the Federal Perkins Loan" (About AANAPISIs, 2018). The emphasis on income is critical to the AANAPISIs' purpose of addressing structural inequality that disproportionately influences some groups over others within the pan-ethnic Asian community. To date, there are 37 institutions that have been funded through the AANAPISI funding stream. Of those receiving funding, 54% are two-year institutions (About AANAPISIs, 2018). These institutions are located across the nation, but they primarily cluster around the following states: California, Hawaii, Illinois, New York, Massachusetts, Texas and Washington (CARE, 2011).

Once an institution is designated an AANAPISI, it is eligible to pursue legislative-driven grant funding that is to be used to promote the achievement of their AAPI students. The legislation allows for many diverse possibilities in how the funds can be used, ensuring that the institution has the opportunity to support the unique needs of its students. This may include funding for the renovation of space, equipment for instructional and research purposes, faculty development, curriculum development, the purchase of books and other instructional materials, academic tutoring, counseling programs, student support services, partnerships with local

elementary and secondary schools and community-based organizations, establishing an endowment fund, improving instruction in which AAPI students are underrepresented, conducting research and data collection for AAPI populations and subpopulations, and education and counseling to improve the financial literacy of students and their families (CARE, 2013). Although these items may seem distinct from one another, they demonstrate how efforts to promote AAPI student achievement are a collective project. AANAPISI leadership must be in tune with their AAPI student population, including how their outcomes, successes and challenges are differentiated by the rich diversity that lies within this community of students and contingent upon their relationship to various departments and divisions across an institution. In other words, they must consider the current state of their institution, identifying the extent of its collective capacity to manage and implement the AANAPISI grant.

The AANAPISI designation is a significant opportunity for institutional leaders to reshape their institution's organizational culture to reflect a new identity that accommodates the concerted effort to promote the achievement of their AAPI students. Because the educational outcomes of students are contingent upon a wide range of variables, program directors of AANAPISI grants then must envision their role as multifaceted and relevant to many areas of the institution, including both student and academic affairs. Below we lay out the issues at stake for AANAPISI program directors. We organize our discussion around the themes of opportunity and challenges because being an AANAPISI offers new possibilities that are promising in addressing, yet revealing of, the stubbornness of racial inequality in American higher education. We conceive "opportunity" as a moment that allows institutional leaders to take pause to better understand how well they are serving their AAPI students, to reflect on the quality and quantity of resources needed to address gaps in achievement, and to innovate among various departments and divisions in light of the collaborative nature that is required to help students thrive. But organizational change can be difficult to promote, especially when current policies and practices are embedded within the dominant and historical culture of the institution, making them durable and unyielding (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). We then frame our discussion of "challenges" around practices that are key in helping the institution understand and embrace the work related to the AANAPISI grant. Taken together, we believe that these approaches and practices could promote program director's capacity to meet the needs of their students.

Opportunities

In our work with Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs), it has become apparent that there are particular institutional opportunities that either emerge organically or can be cultivated to support the efforts and overall success of AANAPISI programs and the students they serve. We broadly define these opportunities as recognizing student needs, leveraging institutional goals and cross-campus collaboration. We illuminate each in this section.

Recognizing Student Needs

Program directors of AANAPISI programs hugely benefit from having or being given a clear understanding of the institutional context upon stepping into their roles. Learning and making sense of the history of the institution's relationship with the target group, in this case AAPIs, provides strategic information about how to navigate the norms, practices and policies that are in place when leading the initiative. Due to the nature of AANAPISIs, many of which are formerly predominantly White institutions, there are systems in place that do not center the needs of students of color given their past dispositions. How, why, when and if the institution has begun to pivot or alter their support and focus to students of color become central to how a project director might navigate the institution, gain support for AAPI students and shape the manner by which these students are supported.

One critical part of this institutional knowledge is recognizing the needs of students. Institutions that conduct needs assessments, for example, provide critical insight to guide the project director in developing programs, engaging with stakeholders and implementing services that are best suited for addressing student needs. A needs assessment quantitatively and/or qualitatively evaluates students, identifies their academic barriers and offers opportunities or recommendations for how to address those barriers. This information is particularly useful for program directors who are hired on post-proposal process, as they are stepping into institutions that are not necessarily familiar to them and unaware of the challenges facing the students on that campus, specifically. As such, student needs assessments or other similar informatory appraisals allow program directors to "hit the ground running," so to speak, and avoid the time-

consuming process of determining what programs actually align with the needs of AAPI students.

The needs of AAPI students will vary widely by how institutions define student success and the extent by which it is affected by other institutional variables (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2011). These mediating issues may be a matter of improving student engagement and involvement, promoting belongingness on campus and in the classroom, or addressing more basic needs, such as transportation and food insecurity. Strong data—both quantitative and qualitative—must be paired with the process of distilling the needs of their AAPI students in order to identify and address the institutional areas that can benefit from the AANAPISI grant project. Depending on the institutional context, we understand that access to any kind of data can be mixed. Student data often resides in institutional research, but it can also be found within academic or student life units. When meeting with various stakeholders or departments that may inform project choices, program directors should consistently inquire about any available data that would be available for their review. This request should be couched within the broader premise that student success is shaped by multiple points across the institution. How different divisions and departments make sense of the needs of AAPI students will determine how the grant can best meet its expectations.

The process of learning more about the institution and its AAPI populations represents an opportunity for the project director to further acknowledge the rich diversity within this student community and to question any assumptions they or the institution may have about it. Through our time working with AANAPISIs, despite the tireless efforts of AAPI advocates and allies to dispel the Model Minority Myth, we have found the MMM quite pervasive and durable in institutional logics and individual psyches. Program directors then must have and use concrete information and evidence to demonstrate the importance of their work to their institution—anecdotes are not sufficient. Unlike HBCUs, HSIs and TCUs, AANAPISIs are young, and many institutions and their staff and faculty are unfamiliar with this new designation and even unconvinced that AAPI students struggle. Learning about the home institution and its relationship to AAPI students is the first and most critical step toward building an effective grant project.

Leveraging Institutional Goals

In addition to recognizing student needs, an opportunity for program directors is leveraging institutional goals that already exist on campus in order to reinforce the AANAPISI program. For example, institutions are increasingly, publically committed to diversity and equity. This is an opportune, joint interest between institution and program where resources can be aligned to support both the overall campus mission and the specific AANAPISI aims. To improve the retention of students of color, for instance, programs like the AANAPISI must be available, functioning and supported. AANAPISI directors can leverage this institutional interest to foster greater administrative backing for their efforts. Another way through which to leverage institutional goals is during times of strategic planning, when program directors can insert their voice and imbed their program's needs into the institutional direction for years to come (Nguyen et al., 2018).

What are some concrete examples of converging institutional and programmatic aims? One example is in physical space, which is a challenge on nearly every campus, particularly community colleges and comprehensive universities. Providing institutional space for the program is a symbolic gesture of committing to equity efforts, and simultaneously provides a central location for AAPI students—an important feature for building a welcoming campus environment (Patton, 2006). Another example is coordinating class schedules, as to accommodate for AANAPISI-specific classes. Some campuses have offered linked courses, such as one developmental education class alongside an Asian American Studies class or a course that provides students with social navigational tools. These courses are difficult to integrate into class schedules that are typically full and rigid. Program directors can leverage institutional goals, such as improving the transfer from developmental to college-level courses, to secure a greater likelihood in scheduling their classes at a time that most benefit students.

Aligning the intentionality of the AANAPISI grant project with broader institutional goals and commitments is a strong pathway toward gaining support from various institutional constituents. Oftentimes, there already exists a department dedicated to promoting student success, especially for students at the margins. If the AANAPISI grant project is not explicitly addressing an unmet need, it will be important for the project director to communicate how the grant is not meant to replace, but to extend and

even amplify the reach of current services. This framing may improve the reception of the AANAPISI grant across the institution, including the program director's capacity to collaborate.

Cross-Campus Collaboration

A final opportunity for program directors is to engage in cross-campus collaboration, which is a critical tool for both generating more leverage and securing a supportive network. Program directors have a wide array of responsibilities and face a great deal of pressure to execute successfully. As such, finding camaraderie among other campus leaders can be important for persevering through the challenges—this camaraderie, a coming together of sorts, should be based on centering the needs and success of students.

Collaboration is an effective means through which to share best practices and resources so efforts are not unnecessarily duplicated. AANAPISI grant projects can even bring departments together, which, in our experience, can improve how AAPI students navigate and adjust to new institutional norms (Conrad & Gasman, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2018). An example of this is when AANAPISI directors collaborate with programs supporting other racial minority and low-income student groups, such as TRIO, UMOJA or MESA programs to leverage their collective voice to garner further institutional support. They may coordinate efforts to get more space for students or collaborate on joint events, which reduces the resources of any one program. This also begins the process of weaving dimensions of the AANAPISI project into the body of the institution.

Other cross-campus collaborations that are important for AANAPISI directors include the development of relationships with campus-wide institutional offices, such as financial aid. AANAPISI programs that have been able to foster these kinds of partnerships were able to leverage more fiscal resources for students, such as access to scholarships or information related to funding. Other examples include collaborations with student services, library services and tutoring and counseling services, which have all been effective partnerships for AANAPISI programs to provide wrap-around services for students that the program itself does not have the capacity to offer (CARE, 2014).

All three opportunities discussed—recognizing student needs, leveraging institutional goals and cross-campus collaboration—are valuable and effective means for program directors to support the success of their AANAPISI programs. Some of these opportunities may emerge organically

as program directors become integrated into their campus institutions. Others, however, are opportunities that program directors may need to cultivate. The latter are those that require more time, intention and navigational skills of program directors, but are also those opportunities that have the greatest benefit to the program and potential for sustainability because they are integrated into the very fabric of institutions. In this way, these opportunities for program directors are valuable both during the tenure of the program, and also beyond the life of the AANAPISI grants.

Challenges

Equally important to engaging opportunities is recognizing challenges that are likely to arise as program directors embark on leading their programs. Challenges are vast and can take on many variations; however, we group the overarching barriers that most stifle AANAPISI progress as assessment, developing an AANAPISI identity and sustainability. We discuss each below.

Assessment

By nature of their funding, AANAPISI programs must assess and evaluate their programs and services for the purposes of federal accountability. While that is one rationale for assessment, tracking progress, earmarking challenges and capturing areas of improvement are generally productive for changing the program to continuously meet the needs of students and for gaining greater institutional legitimacy. Despite the importance of assessment to AANAPISI programs, it remains a great challenge primarily due to lack of capacity to conduct effective and meaningful assessment. Ensuring that each student interaction, engagement and event are evaluated for their impact and effectiveness is a time-consuming task and can often fall to the wayside as attention is paid to maintaining relationships and program duties. Assessment can also be challenging when there is a lack of resources, such as access to software or ability to hire on an institutional researcher with dedicated time. We offer two suggestions to overcoming this challenge.

The first way that program directors can address this challenge is to develop a partnership with their campus' institutional research office as early in the grant cycle as possible. This critical collaboration can (1) provide crucial institutional knowledge about the target population, (2) skirt

some of the capacity issues related to assessment by converging efforts and (3) afford an infrastructure to storing and analyzing some data that the program collects. At a minimum, the partnership can give some quantifiable data about the target population, and the gaps they face in their academic trajectories, which can help cultivate the direction of the program. Additionally, program directors may consider using existing assessment templates from other programs on campus, different AANAPISI programs across the nation or examples from other organizations to reduce the time it takes to develop new assessment tools.

A second way to embed assessment and evaluation into the AANAPISI grant is by identifying and partnering with researchers, graduate students or faculty members, who would be interested in conducting a study on the program. Researchers can come with their own research questions and, in return, fold assessment and evaluation within that broader agenda. Not only would this minimize the hefty financial and human costs associated with assessment and evaluation, this would provide the program director with an external, theoretically rich perspective that may bring new insights to inform and change current practice.

As we mentioned earlier in this chapter, gathering current, available data is key to understanding the institutional context and the broader needs of the AAPI population. This is the basis for developing and implementing the AANAPISI project. Understanding its effectiveness and identifying areas for future growth, however, require the project director to early on cultivate and maintain a "culture of evidence" for which assessment and evaluation are normal and routine practices within that space (Yousey-Elsener, Bentrim, & Henning, 2015). With data on their AANAPISI project, directors can better communicate their purpose, importance and successes to their campus and the broader higher education community. Moreover, it improves the capacity of the project director to advocate for additional resources or a renewal of their grant and to convince their university or college to institutionalize the AANAPISI project once the grant has expired.

Developing an AANAPISI Identity

Receiving funding to be an AANAPISI does not necessarily equate to an institutional identity as an AANAPISI, which signals a commitment to serving AAPI students. This is a challenge that program directors face, as they are tasked with developing that identity by telling their programmatic

story. With limited resources, it can be a tall order to build a website, develop marketing materials and be creative in capturing the many aspects of the AANAPISI program and its impact on students. Like assessment, developing an external AANAPISI identity requires dedicated time and attention that is typically far beyond the already vast job duties of a project director. It is important, however, to demonstrate to both current and potential AAPI students that there are services dedicated to their success, which help with enrollment and retention efforts. An AANAPISI identity can also play a key role in engaging stakeholders and outreaching to the local community. For all these reasons, program directors must take this challenge in stride.

The AANAPISI grant project is the defining manifestation of what it means for a given institution to embrace an AANAPISI identity. Program directors should take time to collaborate with their staff or stakeholders to develop a mission statement that reflects both the goals of their campus, the expectations of the federal grant program and the beliefs that guide their approach to addressing AAPI student success. As the project develops and data are gathered and assessed on its effectiveness, the director needs to consider the type of narrative they wish to share with their campus and external funders. The process of sharing the project narrative is a key aspect to securing institutional legitimacy, which can then be used to solicit greater support from students, staff, faculty and senior leaders.

Social media offers one opportune outlet for developing an AANAPISI identity (Esters et al., 2016). Although it still requires dedicated time, social media demands less time and skills than a fully interactive website. It also is a pathway to broadening the program's reach to students, community members and other stakeholders by networking with them online. Most importantly, social media can be used to share stories, feature students and generate publicity, which all help to develop the institution's chosen AANAPISI identity. Perhaps most convenient of all, program directors can encourage students to use and/or manage the social media, which is a tool for engagement and platform for elevating students' voices. We recommend hiring a student associated with the project that can help establish a vision for how the narrative can be shared and delivered. Although directed to HBCUs, we believe that the following also applies to AANAPISIs: "Social media is a tool for raising the visibility of an institution, increasing fundraising success, speaking out on key higher education issues and communicating the ethos of the HBCU to a larger community" (Esters et al., 2016, p. 5). These efforts are even more

consequential for AANAPISIs, a designation that is less common and only ten years old.

Determining an organizational identity and sharing project accomplishments are challenging in light of the day-to-day administrative duties. However, we contend that if program directors and their institution are interested in institutionalizing the project, time and resources must be dedicated to forming and sharing an AANAPISI identity for this process gives expression and life to the needs of AAPI students.

Sustainability

The greatest challenge for AANAPISI program directors is the concern of sustainability. Grant cycles typically last up to five years, which means that the programs supported directly by the grant are at risk of being discontinued at the close of the funding. Program directors are, first and foremost, invested in their programs because of their students, and they want to ensure that AAPI students have resources whether or not the AANAPISI program is formerly funded. This puts program directors under pressure to not only manage programs, but to consider their sustained existence for years to come.

To support sustainability efforts, program directors can consider three approaches. The first has already been discussed as an opportunity—cross-campus collaborations. By developing partnerships with institutional offices that are permanent, such as financial aid or other support services, AAPI students will have more sustained pathways to resources post-AANAPISI program. Moreover, these offices may normalize their support for AAPI students, further sustaining the efforts inspired by the AANAPISI program. Second, program directors can develop a relationship with the grant writing office or submit grants themselves. This can provide other forms of financial support for their work and keep a spotlight on the target population, compelling the institution to further acknowledge AAPI students and their needs. Program directors without grant writing experience might consider partnering with another administrator or with a faculty member. In fact, we encourage program directors to review and refer to the latest grant writing guide from the Center for Minority-Serving Institutions titled “Guide to Grant Writing for Minority Serving Institutions” (Ginsberg, Karolczyk, Gasman, & Jimenez, 2016). This publicly available guide lays out critical dimensions of the grant writing project, including implications for working in a team. Finally, program

directors can fold fundraising into their programmatic efforts, which will similarly generate more aid for their efforts. Some programs hold fundraising breakfasts or find organizations that will match donations to the program. Program directors should early on in the program's inception begin developing relationships with the foundation arm of their institution as usually there are dedicated staff that can fundraise on their behalf. This approach is only effective if the project director communicates clearly the AANAPISI program's purpose and ongoing needs. These efforts can help with elongating the program and reinforces the value of the program on campus. The more attention there is garnered, the more difficult it is for the program to be discontinued.

The challenges discussed here—assessment, developing an AANAPISI identity and sustainability—are certainly trying barriers for program directors. Some form of these challenges emerge in nearly every AANAPISI campus; however, it is critical to keep in mind that there are excellent models—such as the Full Circle Project at Sacramento State University (Nguyen et al., 2018). Program directors are encouraged to look to other AANAPISI leaders and other successful programs on their own campuses to address these challenges. Furthermore, they should leverage the creativity and energy of students to engage in thinking innovatively about assessment, identity and sustainability as they may bring a refreshing perspective that is particularly useful at each individual institution.

Being a project director of an AANAPISI grant requires a broad outlook of institutional life. Leadership within this realm is not relegated to any specific functional area because the goal of the grant—AAPI student success—can really only be accomplished by the program director's capacity to build relationship with others. These relationships are demonstrated in the very opportunities and challenges that we laid out earlier and have learned from our time working with AANAPISIs. Across the opportunities and challenges discussed, we would like to reiterate our recommendations for leadership and practice. When it comes to opportunities, program directors must (1) **gather information** (understand the relationship between the institution and the target group), (2) **listen to others** (communicate and consider how other departments and divisions may already be supporting students similarly), and (3) **act collectively** (identify a space for which collaboration and coordination can exist with those departments in order to amplify the efforts of the entire institution in promoting AAPI student achievement). When it comes to challenges, program directors

should (1) **aim to continuously improve the project** (build assessment and evaluation practices into the day-to-day routine and consider faculty members as research partners), (2) **develop and carry forward an AANAPISI identity** (develop a mission statement and actively construct what it means for the campus to embrace an MSI identity; this narrative and corresponding accomplishments should be widely shared with students and both internal and external constituents), and (3) **envision a long-term plan** (anticipate and begin the process of cultivating resources needed to operate the program when the grant expires).

Agenda for Future Research

The empirical research on AANAPISIs is almost non-existent. Even more so is the lack of work on the role of leadership at MSIs. This chapter demonstrates that program directors can play a critical role in the implementation of the AANAPISI grant and the extent to which an AANAPISI identity is embraced, adopted and sustained by the institution. In laying out both the opportunities and challenges for this leadership role, we hope it inspires new questions that can be taken up by both practitioners and researchers. So often the literature on MSIs is focused on student-level measures or perceptions that we forget that institutional agents play a significant role in shaping and contributing to the former. Future research should explore and explicate the relationship between AANAPISI leadership and the institutional conditions needed to successfully execute and sustain MSI grant projects. We suggest three guiding questions:

- What institutional levers can program directors use to drive institutional support for AANAPISI programs?
- What level of entrepreneurship must program directors bring to the role to successfully navigate institutional barriers?
- What are the greatest institutional constraints that hinder program sustainability post-grant? How might these constraints vary by institutional context (two- and four-year institutions)?

Concluding Thoughts

AANAPISIs celebrate the rich diversity among the AAPI populations and address the structural barriers that discourage students' pathways to degree. How well AANAPISIs can maintain this purpose is largely

dependent on those leading and shaping their growth. In this chapter, we brought attention to the very individuals—program directors—in charge of managing the AANAPISI grant's day-to-day duties. In light of the unique sociohistorical context of AANAPISIs, we lay out opportunities and challenges that are emerging, and current MSI leaders may wish to consider as they reflect on their needs and strategies for implementation and sustainability. AANAPISIs and HSIs are growing every year. They will need new leadership that will innovate and cross campus boundaries to help their institutions move forward in promoting more just and equitable outcomes for minority students.

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