

Asian Profile Series:

Rohingya Community

Culture



The Rohingya people are an ethnic Muslim minority group who have historically lived in Myanmar's Rakhine state. The Rohingya have been persecuted since the 18th century and it continues to this day. Currently the estimated 800,000 Rohingya who live in Myanmar are not acknowledged as citizens or an indigenous Burmese people. As a result of Myanmar's 1982 citizenship law, the Rohingya do not have access to education or freedom of movement and are forced into internment camps. In August 2017, a large influx of Rohingya refugees sought asylum in Bangladesh to escape persecution from the Myanmar military. The Rohingya people continue to be stateless and remain in a precarious situation due to overcrowded refugee camps, exposure to monsoon floods, and a military coup in Myanmar that threatens their safe return.

Health

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is a top health concern in the Rohingya community. While certain cultures may suggest that those with hypertension can resolve the condition with a low-stress environment, this may not always be the case. Hypertension can result from other factors such as diet, limited exercise, other chronic health conditions, and weight. Hypertension can also lead to health complications later in life, such as heart disease, diabetes, and kidney failure, and puts individuals at high risk for severe illness from viruses like the flu and COVID-19. Preventive care and tests can catch these conditions early and prevent worse health later in life.





Center for Asian Health Equity (CAHE)

Spotlights

Community Partner **SMG Antillas**



The Antillas Family Medical Center is a welcoming clinic located in Logan Square that provides health care for diverse communities in Chicago, with providers who collectively speak over 25 languages, including American Sign Language. Antillas is a local refugee service center that provides critical health care for all refugees. As a part of CAHE's Better-HEALTH Program, Antillas works to provide hepatitis B testing, vaccination, and treatment, which are critical to improving the health and well-being of immigrant and refugee communities.

CAHE Staff

Jessica Rubio serves as the Center for Asian Health Equity's Program Administrator and has been with the organization since 2018. She works closely with the center's program directors to make sure all of our programs and daily operations are in smooth running order. Among her many responsibilities include: facilitating orientation for new hires, writing and implementing new administrative policies, and coordinating the center's various social media campaigns. Jessica was born and raised in Chicago but spent all of her childhood summers growing up in Mexico City, which allowed her to connect with her cultural roots. In her free time, Jessica likes to perfect traditional Mexican recipes such as molé, crochet and embroider, and explore all of Chicago's parks and playgrounds with her son.

