



NABEA
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR BLACK ENGAGEMENT WITH ASIA

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

04	Letter from the President
05	Mission, Vision & Values
06	2025 at a Glance
09	Our Program Model
10	Community & Cultural Exchange
12	Professional Development & Education
14	Public Leadership & Representation
16	727 Armistice Spotlight
18	Press & Thought Leadership
19	Talent Pipeline Infrastructure
20	Organizational Growth
23	Financials
24	What We're Learning
25	Looking Ahead: 2026 Strategic Priorities
26	Thank You to Our 2025 Donors

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear NABEA Members & Partners,

When NABEA was founded, we imagined a future where Black professionals engaged with Asia didn't have to search for community, wonder if they belonged in the field, or navigate their careers alone. We envisioned a network where expertise is celebrated and the next generation can see themselves reflected in the people shaping U.S.-Asia relations.

Each year, that vision becomes more real.

In 2025, we hosted 46 events that brought members together to build skills, expand their networks, and share their expertise. We also grew our Database of Black Asia Experts to 293 professionals, sponsored a Black Korean War veteran at the 727 Armistice Event on Capitol Hill, and published an op-ed in *The Diplomat* highlighting the HBCU-to-Asia pipeline.

What inspires me most, however, isn't the numbers. It's what they make possible.

Students are finding mentors. Professionals are discovering new career opportunities. Members are meeting collaborators, language partners, and lifelong friends. Together, they're building a community that is reshaping who is seen and heard in Asia-related spaces.

This work is only possible because people believe in it. This year, our Hong Bao campaign exceeded its goal, and we welcomed our first recurring monthly donors. Those milestones may seem small, but they represent a community investing in its own future.

I won't pretend this work is easy. We're an all-volunteer organization, building something that didn't exist before while navigating limited resources and a challenging political environment. But talent was never the problem. It's already here. Our job is to make sure it's connected, visible, and given every opportunity to lead.

As you read this report, I hope you'll see more than a list of programs and accomplishments. I hope you'll see a community creating opportunities, opening doors for future generations, and ensuring that the faces of America's engagement with Asia are as diverse as America itself.

Thank you for being part of that journey.

With gratitude,

Chadwick Eason

Chadwick Eason

President, National Association for Black Engagement with Asia

OUR MISSION, VISION & VALUES

Our Mission

To connect and empower Black Asia specialists who are advancing U.S.-Asia relations.

Our Vision

A future where Black contributions to Asia-related fields are recognized and valued.

Our Values

Diversity

Ensuring the faces of America's engagement with Asia are as diverse as America itself.

Community

Building a vibrant network of Black professionals in Asia-related fields worldwide.

Empowerment

Positioning Black Americans as leaders and changemakers in Asia-related fields.

Who We Are

The National Association for Black Engagement with Asia (NABEA) is a global community of Black professionals, students, and scholars working across Asia-related fields. We exist to strengthen connections between Black Americans and Asia through community-building, professional development, and public leadership.

NABEA operates at the intersection of representation and strategy — ensuring that Black expertise is visible in the institutions shaping U.S.-Asia relations. As both a movement and an institution, we build belonging while advancing long-term structural impact.



2025 AT A GLANCE

**445
Members**

74 new members in 2025
— 20% growth

**293
Experts**

44 added to our public
database in 2025

**46
Events**

Across 6 cities in the U.S.
and Asia

**730
Email
Subscribers**

7 newsletters with member
spotlights and job listings

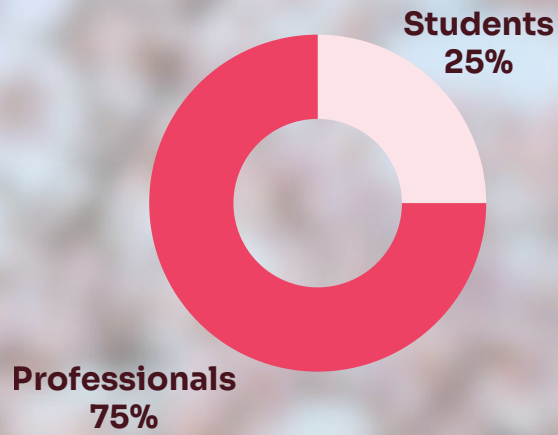
**5
New
Partners**

George Washington
University, Johns Hopkins
University, Black China
Caucus, Sejong Society of
Washington, D.C., and U.S.-
Asia Ladies Network

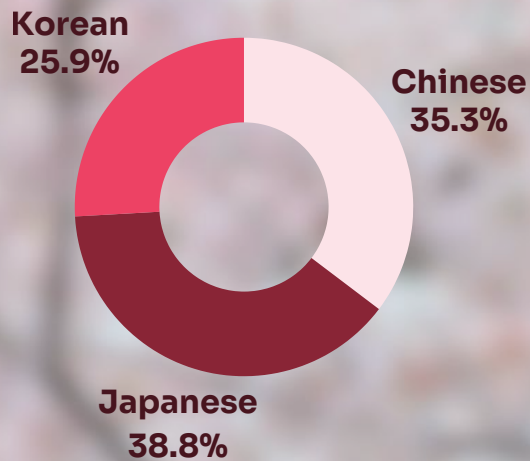
**3
Language
Groups**

Chinese, Korean, and
Japanese — all member-led

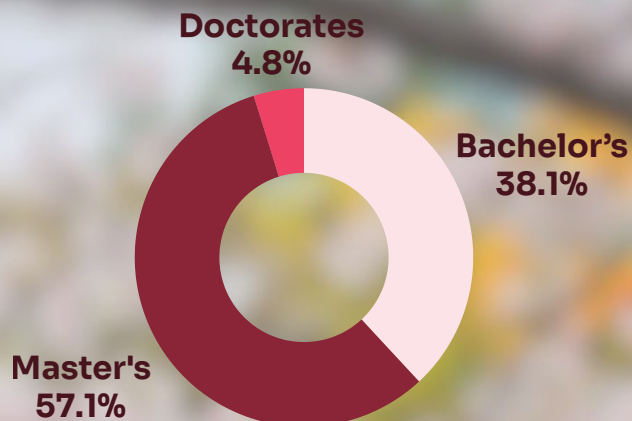
Who our members are



Languages our members speak



Degrees our members hold



MEMBER SNAPSHOT



NABEA President Chadwick Eason with NABEA member and professional manga artist Kofi Bazzell-Smith.

“NABEA has become a safe space to share my experiences as a Black woman visiting and living in Asia. I have made so many connections and genuine friendships through this organization.”

— Ihechiluru Ezuruonye

OUR PROGRAM MODEL

NABEA’s programming is organized across three pillars — each designed to strengthen the pipeline of Black professionals in Asia-related fields while building a lasting institutional presence.



Community & Cultural Exchange

We create spaces for connection, belonging, and cross-cultural engagement across the United States and Asia.



Professional Development & Education

We equip members with the tools, networks, and visibility needed to thrive in Asia-related careers.



Public Leadership & Representation

We ensure Black expertise is visible and influential within institutions shaping U.S.-Asia relations.

Together, these pillars position NABEA as both a professional network and a community dedicated to expanding opportunity, strengthening leadership, and shaping a more inclusive future for U.S.-Asia engagement.

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Member Meetups

12 meetups • 6 cities • 2 continents

Being Black in Asia means navigating experiences that are different from those of other expats. Whether it's finding someone who knows how to do Black hairstyles, finding clothes that fit our bodies, or simply having someone who understands what it's like, our meetups provide a safe space and a support network.

These gatherings foster the connections that strengthen our community. In Tokyo alone, we've built a network of more than 25 members, and in 2025 we expanded our reach by hosting our first meetup in Seoul, launching events in Shanghai, and bringing members together in Washington, D.C., New York, Atlanta, and online.

2025 Meetup Locations





“Before NABEA, the number of people I met who looked like me and spoke Chinese... I could count on one hand. And now being able to have others whom I can talk to and have a shared experience is really rewarding.”

— Jordan Giles

Language Groups

22 sessions · 3 languages · 100% volunteer-led

NABEA’s language groups provide welcoming, judgment-free spaces where Black professionals and students can practice Asian languages for travel, career development, cultural connection, or simply the joy of learning.

Members range from complete beginners to fluent speakers, and each group evolves based on the interests, goals, and teaching style of its facilitators and participants.

Chinese (Mandarin)

11 sessions

Led by Obi Eneh & Raven Witherspoon

Guest speakers present in Chinese on various topics.

Korean

6 sessions

Led by Ademola Adeyemi

Launched April 2025. Classroom-style with worksheets, slides, and structured lessons.

Japanese

5 sessions

Led by Nichole Mayfield & Darlene Onuorah

Relaunched July 2025. A lighthearted mixer where members gather each month to discuss different topics in Japanese.

INTELLECTUAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NABEA Conversations

Every NABEA member brings a unique perspective on Asia, shaped by their professional expertise, research, creative work, or lived experiences. NABEA Conversations provide a platform for members to share that knowledge while building confidence as thought leaders.

Each month, a member leads a discussion on a topic they're passionate about in a member-only session followed by Q&A.

For students and early-career professionals, these conversations offer a supportive environment to develop public speaking and presentation skills. For experienced practitioners, it provides an opportunity to reflect on their careers and inspire the next generation of Black Asia specialists.

Protecting Queer & BIPOC
Communities in South Korea
Kirsten Keels



Professional Development Workshops

NABEA's Youth Education Team offers professional development workshops designed to help students and early-career professionals build the skills often missing from the classroom but essential for career success. **Sessions cover topics such as LinkedIn optimization, resume writing, networking, professional writing, study abroad opportunities, and career pathways.**

By addressing common gaps in professional preparedness, these workshops help members navigate internships, job searches, and career transitions with greater confidence. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with members consistently requesting additional sessions.



Behind the Lens: 35 Years of
Black Filmmaking in Japan
Regge Life



Securing the Future:
Cybersecurity & Data Privacy
Vincent Jenkins



Health for All: Taiwan's
Healthcare System
Tamorie Mayweather



The Language Learning Shortcut
Ademola Adeyemi

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP & REPRESENTATION

Public Programming & Institutional Partnerships

In 2025, we deepened our institutional footprint through strategic collaborations with leading academic, policy, and professional networks across Washington, D.C., and beyond. These partnerships positioned Black experts in Asia-related fields within public conversations shaping U.S.–Asia relations and federal career pathways.



Women of Color in the U.S.–Asia Space

US–Asia Ladies Network

A panel highlighting the career journeys and experiences of women of color working across U.S.–Asia policy and international professional fields.

Speakers:

Niharika Chibber-Joe, Deputy Executive Director, Japan–U.S. Friendship Commission; **Kayla Orta**, Non-Resident Fellow, Indo-Pacific Security Initiative

Career Panel

Johns Hopkins SAIS — Korea Club

A roundtable discussion exploring career pathways, professional development, and the lived experiences of Black professionals studying and working in Asia-related fields.

Speakers:

Mai Anna Pressley, Korean Economic Institute; **Chadwick Eason**, Deloitte; **Britt Robinson**, And Daughters, LLC



**“I WANT THE NEXT
GENERATION OF ASIA-
PACIFIC INDUSTRY
LEADERS TO LOOK
LIKE ME.”**

— Alex Foote

Career Crossroads: A Guide to Transitioning to Federal Government

The Sejong Society of Washington, D.C.

A career discussion providing practical guidance for professionals navigating transitions into and out of federal government service.

Speakers:

Greyson Mann, US-China Business Council; **Lance Devreaux Jackson**, East-West Center; **Calita Woods**, Freelancer



Diversifying Asia Specialists Roundtable

George Washington University – Institute for Korean Studies (GWIKS)

A panel connecting graduate students with practitioners to discuss careers in Asia policy, international affairs, and public service.

Speakers:

Danielle Fallin, Foreign Service Officer, State Department; **Seth Joyner**, Sr Program Manager, National Committee on North Korea; **Chadwick Eason**, President, NABEA; **Kayla Orta**, Non-Resident Fellow, Indo-Pacific Security Initiative

HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED BEFORE US

On July 27, 2025, NABEA supported the annual 7/27 Korean War Armistice Day commemoration honoring the end of the Korean War. This annual observance recognizes the service and sacrifice of veterans and underscores the enduring ties between the United States and the Korean Peninsula.

As part of this year's commemoration, NABEA helped facilitate the recognition of Army Corporal Asbury Lloyd Jr., a 97-year-old Black Korean War veteran whose service had never been formally acknowledged. With his family present, CPL Lloyd was awarded the Ambassador of Peace Medal by the Republic of Korea — a long-overdue recognition of his service and sacrifice.

The Korean War is often referred to as the “**Forgotten War**.” For Black service members in particular, that history carries additional layers of complexity — service abroad amid segregation at home. Honoring CPL Lloyd was a reminder that recognizing Black veterans is essential to honoring the full history of U.S.–Korea relations.

As we build the next generation of Black specialists in Asia-related fields, we remain grounded in the legacy of those who served before us.



Army Corporal Asbury Lloyd Jr., 97, joined by his family at the 7/27 Korean War Armistice Day Commemoration, July 23, 2025.

PRESS & THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

NABEA intern Moorea Bell and Director of Communications Britt Robinson co-authored an article for *The Diplomat*. This was NABEA's first major press placement, positioning the organization as a thought leader in the conversation about diversity in U.S. foreign policy.

The next century will be defined in Asia. If Black Americans are not part of that conversation, the United States' Indo-Pacific policy will pay the price."



TALENT PIPELINE INFRASTRUCTURE

Database of Black Asia Experts

293 Black Asia Experts • 44 added in 2025

NABEA's publicly accessible Database of Black Asia Experts is a first-of-its-kind resource that connects media, academic institutions, government agencies, nonprofits, and employers with Black professionals whose expertise spans Asia-related fields. By increasing the visibility of Black experts, the database helps diversify who is called upon to inform research, policy, public dialogue, and professional opportunities.

Fields of Expertise Represented

Diplomacy & Foreign Policy	Education & Exchange	Media & Culture	
Linguistics & Translation	Economics & Finance	Defense & Security	Art & Filmmaking
Energy & Climate Policy			

Geographic Expertise Represented

China & Hong Kong	Japan	South Korea	Taiwan	Vietnam	India
Philippines	North Korea	Thailand	Maldives	Indonesia	Mongolia
Malaysia	Singapore				

Our experts span 12+ countries • 25+ fields • 57% hold a master's degree or higher

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

Our Team

To support its continued growth, NABEA welcomed Mai Anna Pressley and Brandy Darling to the leadership team in 2025, expanding the organization's capacity for strategic partnerships and community engagement while increasing the number of language group facilitators to meet member demand.

Co-Founders

Tyrell Walker, CEO

Chadwick Eason, President

Alex Foote, Director of Youth Programming

Khyle Eastin, Director of Research

Directors

Brandy Darling, Community Outreach

Britt Robinson, Communications

Mai Anna Pressley, Strategic Partnerships & Public Programming

Interns

Moorea Bell, Administrative & Communications (Spring)

Deshalia Murray, Public Relations (Spring)

Nailah-Benā Chambers, Administrative (Fall)

Community Volunteers

Obi Eneh & Raven Witherspoon — Chinese Language Group

Ademola Adeyemi — Korean Language Group

Nichole Mayfield & Darlene Onuorah — Japanese Language Group

Lorena James & Brianna Harrison — Education Committee

Harvey Beasley & Russell Duncan — Tokyo Community Co-Leads

All leadership roles in 2025 were volunteer-based.

“U.S.-Asia relations are incomplete without the participation of Black Americans. Since we founded this organization in 2019, I’ve seen this group grow from four individuals to hundreds of people throughout the Indo-Pacific.”

— Tyrell Walker, Founder & CEO, NABEA





Tokyo NABEA member meetup



NABEA members visit Tencent headquarters in China



Seoul-based NABEA member visits Gyeongbok Palace

FINANCIALS

In 2025, NABEA operated entirely on individual giving. Revenue came solely from the annual Hong Bao (Red Envelope) Campaign and individual donations. NABEA received no grants in 2025.

With total revenue of \$2,747, the organization hosted 46 events, maintained its expert database, and supported programming across the United States and Asia.

REVENUE

Grants & Contracts	\$	0
Contributions	\$	2,747.19
Other	\$	0
Total	\$	2,747.19

EXPENSES

Program & Services	\$	283.95
Management & General	\$	1,676.34
Fundraising	\$	292.56
Total	\$	2,252.85

Change in net assets for the year	\$	+315.83
Net assets at the beginning of the year	\$	178.96
Net assets at the end of the year	\$	494.79

100% of leadership made financial contributions.

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Growth brings new challenges. We share these openly, not as setbacks, but as areas where intentional investment will unlock NABEA's next stage of impact.

Organizational Capacity

NABEA's entire team operates without salaries, stretching personal time and resources to serve a community of 445 across 27 countries. The work gets done because people care deeply — but passion alone isn't a staffing plan. As demand for our programs grows, so does the need for paid capacity to match.

Funding Sustainability

A budget of less than \$3,000 delivered extraordinary results in 2025. But operating at this level of resource constraint limits what's possible and puts the organization at risk of burnout. Securing institutional grants and growing our recurring donor base are critical to building a foundation that matches our impact.

Maintaining a Global Network

With members in 27 countries, engagement requires intentional programming, localized events, and a reliable digital infrastructure. Every time zone is a member's time zone, and every one of them deserves to feel connected to the community.

Navigating a Challenging Environment

The broader political landscape around diversity, equity, and inclusion continues to evolve. NABEA remains committed to its mission and sees this as a moment that makes our work more important, not less. The need for diverse voices in U.S.-Asia relations isn't going away — it's growing.





LOOKING AHEAD

2026 Strategic Priorities

NABEA enters 2026 with momentum, a growing community, and a clear vision for what's next.



Reach 500 Members:

Growing from 445 to 500 members — expanding our reach across the the Midwest and West Coast of the U.S. and into more communities in Asia, including our first presence in Thailand.



Grow Recurring Donor Base:

Building upon the milestone of our first two monthly donors to create a sustainable, predictable revenue stream that lets NABEA plan ahead.



Secure First Institutional Grant(s):

Transitioning from solely individual donor funding to institutional support that matches the scale and impact of our work. This annual report is a key step in that process.



Build a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) Network:

Our op-ed in *The Diplomat* laid out the case: fewer than 15 percent of HBCUs have Asian Studies programs, and that gap carries strategic consequences. In 2026, NABEA will begin building relationships with HBCUs to connect their students to Asia-focused career pathways, language resources, and our professional network — turning the argument we made in print into action on the ground.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 DONORS

Sustaining Supporters

Shanti Shoji

Justin Flynn

Hong Bao Campaign Donors

N. Rashad Jones

Jane Foote

Cheryl Eason

Chadwick Eason

Jessica Taylor

Walter Mebane

Sharon Mebane

Amani Core

Annette Robinson

Jan Berris

Ashley Hayes

Codi Smith

Tyehimba Turner

Tamorie Mayweather

Bahia Simons-Lane

Mai Pressley

Britt Robinson

Jesse Schooley

Jessica Meagher

Brianna Chang

Takiva Pierce

Sloane Clark

Lyndah Lovell

Justin Seymour-Welch

Cassidy Charles

Deon Bell

Natasha Taliferro

Ramatu Musa

The future we're building is bigger than NABEA.

It's a future where Black expertise helps shape U.S.-Asia relations, where students find mentors, and where every generation has greater opportunities than the last.

If this report inspired you, we invite you to join us. Become a member, make a gift, or partner with NABEA as we continue building that future.

Join Us.



usnabea.org/donate



NABEA

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR BLACK ENGAGEMENT WITH ASIA

WWW.USNABEA.ORG