

GatherRD

Asian
Americans
and Pacific
Islanders

a member interest group of the
Academy of Nutrition
and Dietetics



Newsletter of the Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders MIG

featuring

Taiwanese Food with Elaine Huang (p. 7-8)

Career Spotlight :Grace Derocha(p. 9-11)

Research Updates (p. 12)

Our Mission:

Equip and empower AAPI MIG members to be the leaders in culturally evidence-based nutrition practices for people of Asian and/or Pacific Islander origin.

Our Vision:

Enhance the nutrition care provided to people of Asian and/or Pacific Islander origin.

ISSUE 5 • VOL 3 • AUGUST 2023

www.aapimig.org





Levin Dotmas MS, RD, CD
Chair, AAPI MIG
2023-2024



Inside this Issue

Message from Editors

AAPI Updates

From the Academy

Legislative Updates

Taiwanese Food with
Elaine Huang

Career Spotlight:
Grace Derocha

Research Updates

Greetings AAPI members,

As the Chair of our vibrant community, I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to each one of you this new membership year.

First and foremost, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our dedicated members who have been with us on this enriching journey. Your commitment and passion for promoting health and nutrition within the AAPI community are truly inspiring. For our new members, a heartfelt welcome to our family! We are thrilled to have you join our mission of fostering better health and wellness among Asian American and Pacific Islander populations through evidence-based dietary practices. It has truly been amazing to witness how AAPI MIG has grown in the last few years.

I am excited to share that we will have our member reception at the Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo® (FNCE®) in Denver (details to be announced later). This is an incredible opportunity for us to come together, learn from experts in the field, and network with like-minded professionals. Please stop by the DPG/MIG showcase so we can meet you there!

Keep an eye out for the various events we are currently planning for this year. I can't wait to see what amazing things the leadership team will do this year!

As always, reach out to us via our social media channels or via email at aapimig@eatright.org. Our members-only discussion board is also open for anything you'd like to discuss!

Sincerely,

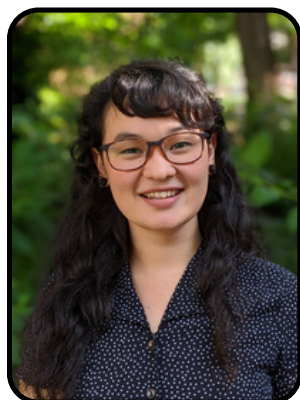
Levin Dotmas MS, RD, CD

AAPI@eatright.org

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS



Brianna dela Torre
MS, RDN
Communications Chair
Co-Editor



Kimberly Baishnab
RDN, LD, CLS
Co-Editor

If you are someone who is looking to get more involved in the social media, or AAPI community, we are always looking for more members on the team. Send us a message to **AAPI@eatright.org** to learn how you can become more involved and volunteer within the organization.

The Executive Committee is looking ahead and planning for FNCE, located in Denver in October 2024. Stay tuned for more ways to interact with AAPI, and at our upcoming sponsorship of FNCE registration for two lucky students. I attended my first FNCE last year in Orlando, and can't speak enough to the positive experience I had meeting with other nutrition-focused professionals.

Hello AAPI members,

Summer is in full swing, and for our student and educator AAPI members, the start of the semester is just around the corner. For any new members that we have within the AAPI MIG - we're so excited to have you share and connect in this space! Myself and the other members of the Social Media team are looking forward to creating more content and engaging with you in the upcoming months.

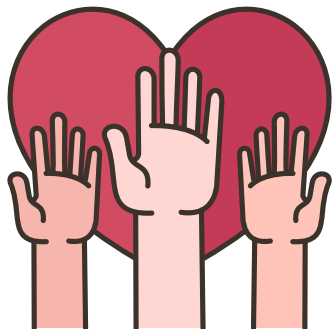
Until next time!

Bri dela Torre MS, RDN

AAPI Social Media & Communications
Chair 2023-2025
Newsletter Co-Editor

AAPI UPDATES

GET INVOLVED WITH AAPI MIG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Interested in volunteering with AAPI MIG? Let us know! It's an amazing way to get involved, network, and gain leadership experience for dietetic students, RD2Bs, or dietitians.

We have different positions and groups to get involved with, so contact us! Let us know what you're interested in and we can find the best fit.

For more information on our positions, **[click here](#)**.
Or email us at **AAPI@eatright.org**.

MORE AAPI UPDATES

UPCOMING WEBINARS: ENERGY BALANCE INITIATIVE

St. Jeor Nutrition Associates announces several upcoming workshops to improve and individualize the energy balance equation!

Join the Energy Balance Initiative

**"Go Far" Beyond the
Mifflin St. Jeor Equation**

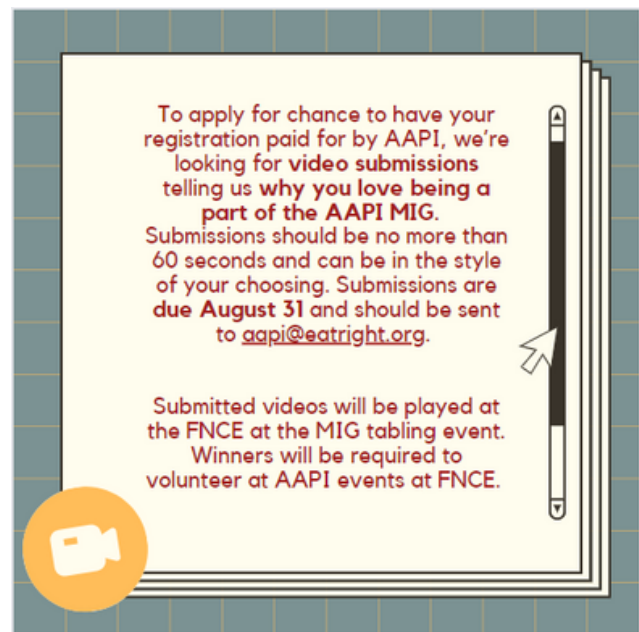
A panel of experts have been recruited to move our profession "FAR BEYOND" using only the Mifflin-St. Jeor Equation (MSJE) to predict resting energy expenditure (REE), refining measures of the physical activity level (PAL) and simplifying measures of food intake (FI).

Upcoming webinar: August 24, 3:00-7:00pm PT

The workshop has been approved by the CDR for **4 CPEUs** for full attendance along with a Certificate of Attendance (COA) for EB Assessment. Student pricing is available.

For more information on the webinars, [click here](#).

STUDENTS: AAPI MIG WANTS TO TAKE YOU TO FNCE!



Seeking Nominations for Leadership Positions 2023-2024

AAPI MIG is still seeking nominations for the upcoming year's **Chair-Elect**, as well as additional volunteers for each committee. Nominees should have prior leadership experience and a passion for serving the AAPI MIG. If interested, please fill out our online application [here](#) or email AAPIMIG@eatright.org.

Support For Racial and Cultural Equity in the 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Sign on to show Your Support for Racial and Cultural Equity in the 2025-2030 DGAs. Please fill out the form below to add your organization or your signature to the list of signatories for this letter. For a copy of this letter to send on your own, please email: dr.yenang@gmail.com

Meet 81-year-old Mrs. Koh and 10-year-old Anna – whose lives are impacted by food choices.

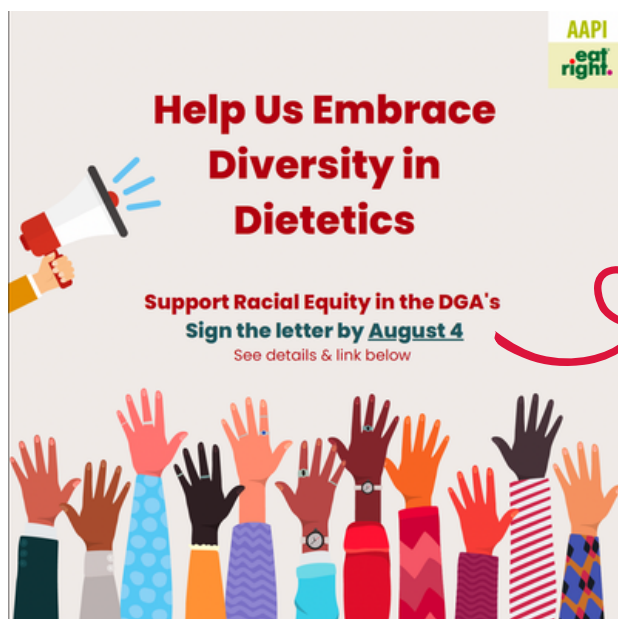
Mrs. Koh, residing in a nursing home, often feels semi-hungry, not due to food shortage, but lack of culturally appropriate options. Young Anna loves school but not school meals. She will always have one less food to eat in her lunch tray. She needs a medical note to get a milk alternative. But she is not sick. Anna does not drink milk because that is not how she is being fed at home.

Sadly, their stories aren't isolated incidents. Up to 70% of ethnic minorities, especially BIPOC communities, suffer from lactose intolerance, which affects their access to essential nutrition.

Government-funded nutrition assistance programs driven by Dietary Guidelines for Americans leave many, from seniors to children, with limited food choices or a lot of hoops to jump through for dairy-free options. It's time for change.

We have the power to rewrite the DGA to be inclusive and equitable for all, one that de-emphasizes cultural food that is not tolerated by diverse populations. Let's help Mrs. Koh and Anna!

SIGN THE LETTER "Support Racial Equity DGA" by the extended deadline of August 31.



**Deadline
extended to
August 31!**

FROM THE ACADEMY



CEU Opportunity - Asian Cuisine: A Conversation on Regional Cooking Techniques & Recipes

This CEU session succeeds FNCE 2020's session on Asian Cuisine entitled Beyond the Soy Sauce with the original panel of Asian registered dietitians return to discuss regional cooking techniques and ingredients of Asian cuisine. The intent of the presentation is to provide knowledge RDNs, chefs, and food bloggers need to know to provide informed culinary guidance. This session features speakers Tessa Nguyen, Michelle Jaelin, Manju Karkare, and Rahaf Al Bochi. and is available to students for \$10.00.

Click [here](#) to view the Certificate Training.

IDEA Action Plan Progress Report - June 2023

The IDEA task force was appointed by the Academy's Board of Directors in late 2019 in an effort to develop a new strategic plan regarding Diversity and Inclusion for the Academy. The Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Committee includes members from MIGs and a proposal was drafted for Foundation Fellow. This Fellow will be announced later this year and will work on IDEA priorities in a two-year period.

The IDEA Action Group was created by 25 representatives and provided input to the action plan's overall goal. The four goals were incorporated and received by the Board of Directors in July 2021 and outlined the plan's strategies and tactics. Results from the first self-assessment survey regarding IDEA-focused activities were collected in May 2023 and are currently under review.

The Academy Foundation established the IDEA Fund to expand opportunities for students, interns, and professionals of diverse backgrounds and cultures. In FY23 the Foundation awarded 180 recipients scholarships totaling \$555,200 which is representative 65% of total scholarship funding awarded for the year. The Foundation prioritized IDEA in all fundraising and grantmaking activities. Due to this focus, educational advancement of diverse students and dietetic interns was supported through the scholarship program.

Click [here](#) for more information.

August is Kids Eat Right Month!

The Academy and its Foundation celebrate Kids Eat Right Month each August to support nutritious and healthy choices within patient and client families. This year they have outlined the following steps to support healthful habits and allow parents and caregivers to act as role models for their children.

- Shop Smart.
- Cook Healthy.
- Eat Together.
- Create Healthful Habits.
- Get Moving.
- Get Talking.

To see more about this topic and share the content within your clients and communities, the Academy has created a media toolkit with corresponding materials.

Click [here](#) for more information.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Advocate for strong nutrition and health policy standards through the Academy's new and improved [Action Center](#). Enter your contact information once and it will be saved for future action alerts, including your U.S. Representatives and Senators. Each alert has a pre-filled message that can be tailored to your unique experience in the field of dietetics.



Support Senior Hunger Prevention

For many older adults, including grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities, access to federal nutrition assistance programs supports their ability to remain healthy and independent, while also improving their overall economic well-being. An estimated 5.2 million older adults and 28 percent of households with an adult who is out of the labor force because of a disability struggle to put enough food on the table.

Programs administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), help to support households facing food insecurity by providing access to healthy food. Many older adults, grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities are eligible for federal nutrition assistance programs. Yet, they often face preventable barriers to accessing critical nutritional benefits, which can result in significantly lower participation rates than other groups. In 2020, for example, less than half of eligible older adults and grandparent caregivers were enrolled in SNAP compared to nearly 80 percent of all eligible people.

Confusion over eligibility criteria, complicated applications and limited enrollment periods, as well as transportation and mobility limitations are some of the barriers older adults, grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities face when trying to access nutrition assistance.

Read more [here](#).

Public Announcement: Revisions in the WIC Food Packages

The Academy recognizes and applauds the updates to the WIC food packages and the work that has gone into the changes. WIC provides at least 50% of priority nutrients and is a critical intervention to improve health outcomes of babies, young children, and both pregnant and postpartum people.

The Academy strongly supports the increase of the cash value benefits (CVB) and expansion of the food options allowed for purchase with WIC benefits. During the pandemic, the CVB for children increased \$9 to \$25 for children, from \$11 to \$44 for pregnant people, and from \$11 to \$49 for breastfeeding people. Proposed revisions for the program aim to make the change permanent to allow WIC family access to 50% of DGA-recommended intake for fruits and vegetables.

Read the letter [here](#).



Taiwanese food culture by: **ELAINE HUANG**

Taiwan is an island in East Asia, and I consider it to be a hidden gem for foodies! One of the most well-known foods that originated from Taiwan is bubble tea, also known as boba. Taiwanese people love boba so much, that some of us drink it like water! Despite boba's popularity, there is more to Taiwanese food culture than this drink alone.



Taiwanese food is a diverse culinary treasure that combines the best of Chinese cooking traditions with influences from Japan, Southeast Asia, and its own indigenous heritage. One of the most interesting aspects is the street food culture, and the best way to find street foods is to visit a night market. Taiwan's night markets are famous, and some have up to 500 stands and can serve thousands of customers each night. Historically, night markets started out as a place for workers to get delicious, affordable food, and created a space for socialization.

Two dishes I think foreigners would be scared or intimidated to try are stinky tofu and pig's blood cake. Stinky tofu is known for its pungent aroma during the fermentation process. Despite the strong smell, its unique texture and flavor make it one of the most popular street foods. Another popular street food item is pork blood cake. This savory dish is made from coagulated pork blood and then mixed with rice. Personally, I like to sprinkle sweetened peanut powder and cilantro on top of the cake to create a blend of sweet and savory.



The location of Taiwan geographically also impacts the ingredients in our food. The coastal location offers abundant marine resources and is a huge geographical benefit to the seafood selection. This proximity to the ocean makes seafood an important component of Taiwanese cuisine. If you were heading out to grab something to eat, you could easily find oyster omelets, grilled squids, or even fresh sashimi at the night market.



Tawain is blessed with a subtropical climate, which allows for the cultivation of a wide variety of delicious and exotic seasonal fruits throughout the year. This is thanks to a combination of geographic location, the balmy climate, and the island's landscape. These factors allow Taiwan and other countries in the region, like the Philippines have access to delectable fruit options throughout the year.

My personal favorite is the sugar apple, which has a creamy, custard-like texture and doesn't match what it looks like on the outside. The exterior of the fruit is heart-shaped and has a rough outer layer that is thick and hard. They can be high in sugar and are best enjoyed in moderation. Another favorite is a wax apple, which despite having a similar name to the sugar apples has very different appearances. Typically wax apples are red with a crisp texture, in comparison to the green and bumpy sugar apples.



Another favorite is a wax apple, which despite having a similar name to the sugar apples has very different appearances. Typically wax apples are red with a crisp texture, in comparison to the green and bumpy sugar apples.



I would highly recommend trying Taiwanese food or learning more about Taiwanese street food culture. While some of our foods may offer new textures or items that may be intimidating, there may be a flavor you try and end up loving. Remember to think of Taiwan the next time you walk into your favorite boba spot for a drink.

Do you have a feature piece to share and want to be featured in the next AAPI Newsletter? Email submission suggestions with the title: AAPI Newsletter Feature Piece, or send us a message on our other social platforms

**Contact us via social media or
AAPI@eatright.org**



CAREER SPOTLIGHT



Grace Derocha RD, CDCES, MBA

Tell us a bit about yourself!

I was born and raised in Michigan and appreciate the beauty of the four seasons here. I am a proud Filipino American woman. I am a wife and a mom of two to Kahlea, Tommy and our doggie, Bruno. I am a daughter, sister and a loyal and fun friend. I love dancing, music, going to concerts, trying the latest yummy restaurant, taking Bruno for a walk, yoga, reading, movies, cooking (but not cleaning LOL) and breaking bread with loved ones, traveling (who doesn't love a bonding road trip?), spending quality time with family and friends, laughing and smiling.

What foods or food-related customs from your culture do you love?

There is so much to love about Filipino food and culture. For Filipinos, food is truly a love language. You will never meet a Filipino person that does not want to feed you. I love that we eat with our hands and use a spoon and fork to efficiently eat. I love that we eat family-style, which gives everyone a variety of food options to choose from. I enjoy the wide range of flavors and taste buds that Filipino food brings to the table to highlight and excite the palette. During colder months, the soupy and stewy dishes are like comfort food and they warm your soul. Some of my favorite Filipino foods include sinigang, a tamarind-based broth with a protein source and veggies served with rice, pancit (all varieties), lumpia. There are tons of seafood dishes and even though Filipino food may not look the prettiest it is delicious so try it. Not to mention our desserts, ube, which has gained a lot of popularity, is a Filipino purple sweet potato. I also love all the rice flour creations and use of coconut, like cassava cake.

What led you to study dietetics?

Well, if you would have asked my parents, I was supposed to be a doctor. My dad was a surgeon. He tragically died when I was 13 of a stroke secondary to his diabetes. When I was at Michigan State, I was on the pre-med track. But then, I took my first nutrition class and learned about becoming a registered dietitian. This made me

Hometown: Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan

Present Location: Troy, Michigan

Education: Undergraduate degrees from Michigan State University – Bachelor of Science Degrees in Dietetics and Psychology, Dietetic Internship also completed at Michigan State University and MBA from Wayne State University

Current Position & Employer:

Clinical Services Manager for Insulet/Omnipod for the Metro Detroit Territory, also a volunteer honor as a National Spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

CAREER SPOTLIGHT

think about the fact that I wanted to be in a profession where I could help people before they became sick, and hopefully prevent anyone from losing someone they love.

How did you obtain your current position?

My current position with Insulet, the makers of Omnipod, I obtained by being reached out to by a recruiter via LinkedIn. I didn't think it was real, so I ignored it at first, but then my husband nudged me to respond. And 7-8 interviews later, I was offered this dream job to help people with diabetes live healthier, more simple lives with more freedom.

Take us through a typical day in your job!

The beauty is that no day is typical. On any given day, I may be teaching a group class (in-person or virtual) to help people learn how to use their Omnipod properly. On another day, I may be meeting with doctors, nurses, PAs, NPs, MAs and other CDCES to explain to them the benefits of Omnipod for their patients.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I love being able to help people with diabetes manage it better to live healthier and improve their quality of life.

What challenges have you faced in this field and how have you overcome them?

Some of the challenges include only being one person and wanting to help everyone and managing my time to allow me to excel in my career, while also showing up for myself and my family and balancing it all.

What advice would you give to aspiring dietitians?

Be you. Learn about yourself and know yourself and let that shine. Being you is your super power and there is no one else like you out there. As a Filipino American registered dietitian, I never thought I would be the one on the news or the radio or being interviewed as a National Spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. But here I am, hopefully inspiring other Asian Americans, my kids, my peers to be able to see themselves in places that we have not been in the past.

The topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion have been very important recently. How do you think the AAPI dietetics community can contribute to this conversation?

We need to be in the forefront reminding people that we are here and that our culture, food and traditions have a place - and also that it can be inspiring to others. I remember as a kid, having Filipino meals packed for my lunch and other children making fun of me. They would say it smelled bad or looked weird. This made me feel shame and nervous about lunch time and I hated that feeling. Now, my kids ask for traditional foods and they ask their friends to try it. This makes me beam with pride.

CAREER SPOTLIGHT



Do you know a dietetics student, RD, or DTR who would like to be featured in our newsletter?



**Contact us via social media or
AAP1@eatright.org**



RESEARCH UPDATES



Centering Asian American Women's Health: Prevalence of Health Care Discrimination and Associated Health Outcomes

The prevalence of discrimination in health care towards Asian American women is largely unknown and current research has not yet evaluated if discriminatory health care experiences are associated with poor physical and mental health. The center of this study was on focused experiences of Asian American women and looked at prevalence rates of unfair treatment due to factors including: gender, culture, language, age, race, and sexual orientation. Current studies find that 13.0% of Asian American adults report experiences of racial discrimination in healthcare settings, although studies centering the experiences of Asian American women are scarce. Many of the studies conducted within the Asian American population have collapsed samples across both men and women.

The goal of this study was to address gaps between discriminatory experiences towards Asian American women and associations of poor physical and mental health through evaluation of sociocultural factors within a sample of this population. Researchers wanted to assess if experiences of health care discrimination had higher associated odds of chronic morbidities and functional impairments.

The sample population of Asian American women in the study was 905. Participants completed surveys and were compensated through gift cards in exchange of providing information on their discriminatory experience with health care providers. Types of discrimination reported highest by the sample group regarded: insurance, age, gender, race, language, and generalized discrimination. The findings from this study saw common health care discrimination toward Asian American women; approximately one in three Asian American report recent discriminatory experiences with providers. These results indicated that discrimination of by a medical provider had a significant association with poorer health and functioning outcomes in Asian American women.

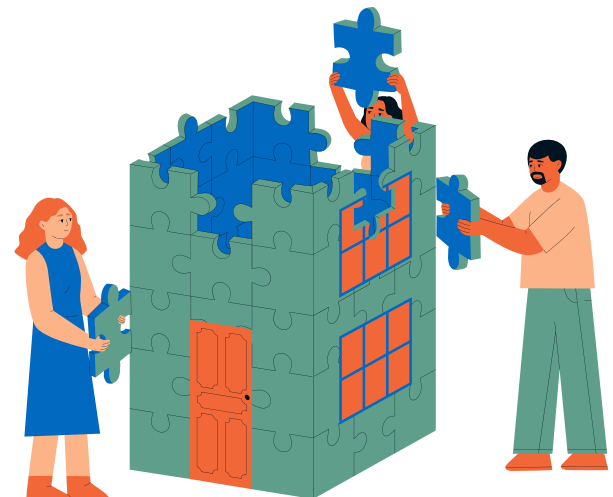
Results from this study provides further evidence that trainings for providers specific to Asian American women are needed to help support this population. The researchers suggest education on implicit bias, alternative complementary practices, and cultural sensitivity when faced with practices different than their own can improve interpersonal relationships. The study has further recommendations regarding policy for health care settings to support the population.

[Click here](#) to read the full article

Family Involvement in Asian American Health Interventions: A Scoping Review and Conceptual Model.

The researchers in this study wanted to explore family involvement in health interventions at the various stages of change. The research team conducted an analysis and of the 7175 studies identified through database, used 48 of the studies within the final analysis. Many of these studies focused on Chinese or Vietnamese populations, were located in California, and involved children or spouses. Analysis of these studies found that families were involved in three stages, including intervention development, intervention process, and intervention evaluation. The impact viewed from family involvement was seen both as positive and negative for sources of encouragement and negative influence, respectively. Further research interventions suggested by the team include the exploration of family involvement in South Asian or young adult interventions.

[Click here](#) to read the full article





Interested in writing for the newsletter?

Writing for the newsletter is a great way to build on your writing skills, not to mention sharing your voice with the AAPI MIG community. You can contribute many types of work, including:

- Article about a part of your country or culture
- Asian-style recipes
- Recent research in nutrition or dietetics
- A current issue in nutrition or dietetics

EMAIL AAPI@EATRIGHT.ORG

WHERE TO FIND US



@aapi_mig



aapimig.org/home



facebook.com/aapimig



AAPI@eatright.org



Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders MIG