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ON THE COVER: National Convention highlights. Clockwise: National President Ginny Gong and Outstanding Citizen Award recipient, former Washington State Governor Gary Locke; Convention co-Chairs Duy Nguyen and Mia Youhne (first and fourth from left), Gala Banquet Chair Vida Chan Lin (third from left) and Ginny Gong; OCA/GM Unsung Heroes (front row from l to r): Gladys Yan, James Chu, Linda Lee, Kim Szeto, Colleen Seto, and Matt Tsien of GM, (back row from l to r): Michael Head, Jose Gomez of Brinker International, Leo Lee, Leon Wang, Cora Chin, National President Ginny Gong, and Thomas Chien; National Office staff and interns with Gary Locke; unveiling of rendering for the National Center for APA Leadership with Past Building Campaign Chair Michael Lin, Building Campaign Chair Claudine Cheng, and Ginny Gong. Photos by Corky Lee and Kwong Eng. from Andy Luong.

IMAGE

"Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans"

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OCA is a national organization dedicated to advancing the social, political and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans in the United States.

Our Goals

- To advocate for social justice, equal opportunity and fair treatment
- To promote civic participation, education and leadership
- To advance coalitions and community building
- To foster cultural heritage



After taking office in January, the newly elected Executive Council took an oath before the National Board to dedicate the next two years to elevating OCA to another level of operation, accountability, funding, programming, and visibility. As part of this commitment, a strategic plan was proposed and supported by the National Board. The mission statement was updated and streamlined to better reflect OCA's current agenda; one that identified social justice, equal opportunity, and fair treatment as a priority.

We've come a long way since 1973, from a staff of one to a staff of seven, and from a non-existent budget to one that totals little more than \$1 million. In 2000, with the addition of the GMS/APIA program, six additional staff joined us and an additional \$13.5 million, of which \$13 million is earmarked for scholarship awards, was added to the budget. We've sustained the commitment of longtime members with institutional knowledge and history, inspired the commitment of newer members, and nurtured partnerships with corporations that have lasted more than two decades. Moreover, our local/national infrastructure as a grassroots organization has strategically positioned us to fill a niche in the APA community.

We've always agreed that as an organization, we cannot be all things, to all people.

But we are at the point where we need to ask ourselves some hard questions, especially if we are truly committed to taking the next leap forward. Are we as visible and as functional as an organization that has

been around for more than 30 years should be? Should the staffing and the annual budget be much greater? How does our growth compare to other comparable non-profit organizations? Is our funding as diversified as it can be? What must we do to enhance our membership? Where do OCA's strengths lie—in other words, what do we do best, and what are we not as well-equipped to do?

“There should be no doubt that one of our strengths is our ability to develop and motivate the next generation of interns, scholars, and public servants into assuming leadership roles.”

For the purpose of analysis, let's for a moment, fast forward and imagine where we would be two years from now if we continue our current path without making some major shifts in strategies and operation....

With a few major contributions and the support of numerous donors, the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership is established and OCA is occupying its new headquarters. A number of other national APA organizations are sharing space in the building. The impact of mortgage payments and maintenance costs on OCA's annual budget is substantial.

As scheduled, the GMS/APIA program has transitioned over to the APIA Scholarship Fund and no longer managed by OCA. Resources for infrastructure are no longer available as they were in the years when GMS' funding was managed by OCA. There is always the chance some of the sponsors of OCA's other scholarship programs may opt to shift over to the Scholarship Fund as well. The office has returned to a staff of six or seven, depending on continuing funding for immigration outreach. Our annual budget has reverted back to approximately \$1.5 million.

The demand for additional programs to address social justice issues continues to surface, making it necessary to seek supplemental funding and additional staff. Meeting the needs of our ever-changing APA community and membership (more new immigrants) demands more creative programming and diversified financing.

Our loyal BAC partners continue to believe in our mission and support our programs. However, due to corporate downsizing, funding from untapped sources is difficult when the competition for such funding increases with the addition of many new pan-Asia American organizations. The effort to clarify our inclusive agenda remains a constant challenge when approaching potential funding sources as the “Organization of Chinese Americans.”

A membership drive is in place – but as in the past, no significant increases are evident. Maintaining a current and accurate database is difficult with the constant flux in volunteer leadership at the local level.

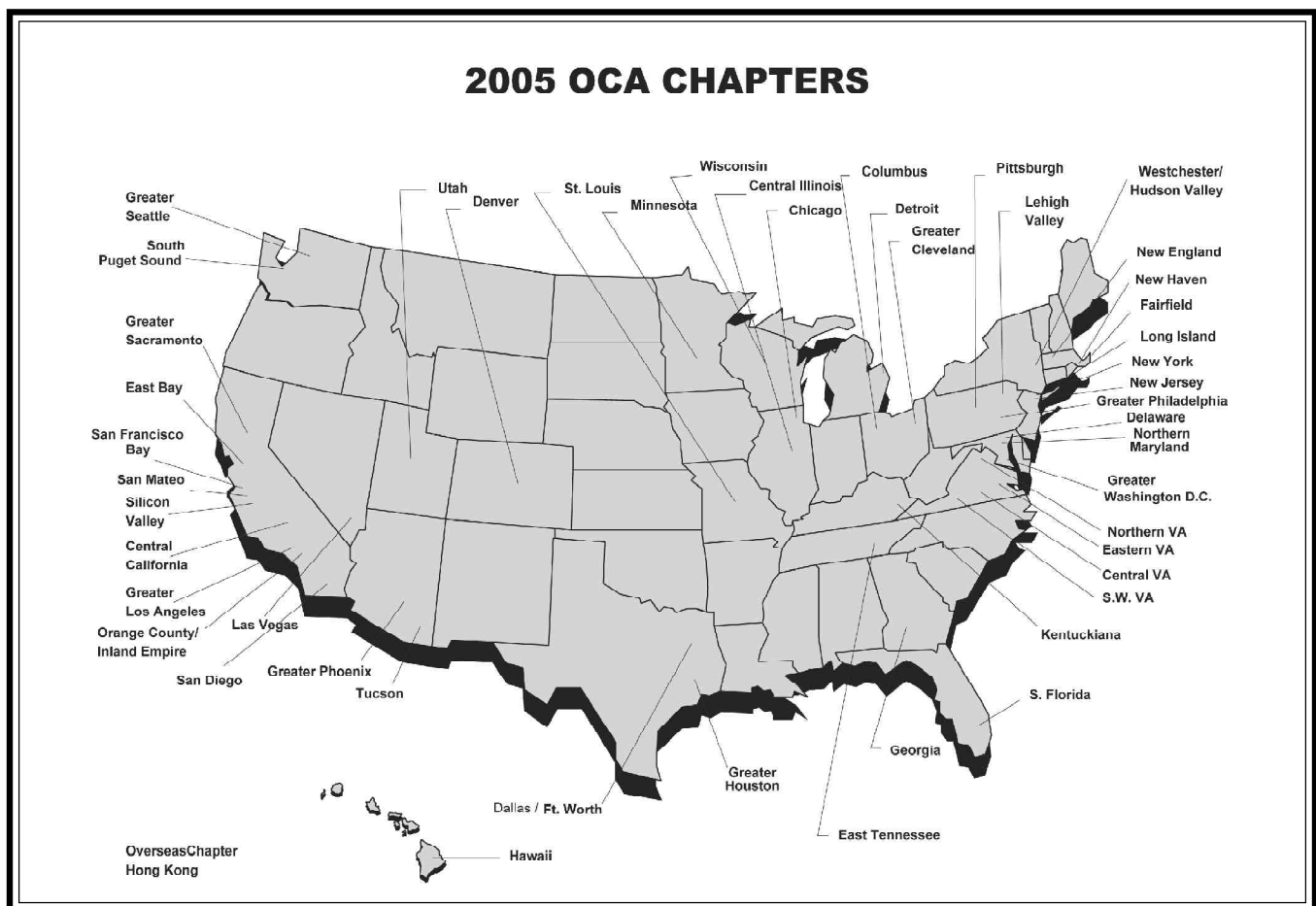
Technology continues to change and so do members' expectations. Information being distributed on a day to day basis is significant. In order to survive and compete, we need to be technologically astute and efficient.

The picture is a very real one – one that the Executive Council is committed to enhancing. A long-term strategic plan is in place to be more creative in our fundraising efforts. Presently, more than 75 percent of our funding comes from the corporate community; virtually no funding comes from other sources. With a marketing strategy focused on inclusiveness in the branding of "OCA," along with our track record of accomplishments, we should be in a better vantage point for corporate, foundation and federal funding.

We should strive towards centralized dues collection. As an organization largely impacted by leadership changes at the local level, it is critical that we streamline operations to improve efficiency.

More recently, there have been comments and concerns expressed regarding the time and energy OCA expends on leadership development and scholarship programs. There should be no doubt that one of our strengths is our ability to develop and motivate the next generation of interns, scholars, and public servants into assuming leadership roles, e.g. the internship and scholarship programs.

Our current Executive Council is an excellent team of individuals who bring with them vast historical and institutional knowledge, and diversity in age, gender, talent, and experience. Together, with the leadership on the National Board and support from staff, we will set OCA on a path that will elevate its presence, improve its financial health, and fortify its operations. Your support is a critical part of this effort.

As you peruse through this year's third issue of IMAGE, ten months will have come and gone. We hope you've enjoyed the improvements we've made to the publication and are looking forward to continued improvements in the quality as well as quantity of its look and contents. All of this, and more, would not be possible without the support and commitment of the National Board, Executive Council, national office staff, and our corporate partners to move IMAGE and OCA to the next level.



Teamwork has been the key to our being able to produce three issues thus far. It also heartens me to see an increase in the number of people willing to express their latent talents and explore their creative sides by being a contributor in IMAGE. After all, this is a forum for all of you to share your thoughts and ideas with the members and our readers.

Part of this issue of IMAGE is focused on Asian Pacific Americans and Corporate America, as its release coincides with OCA's National Asian Pacific American Corporate Achievement Awards banquet being held in Chicago; highlights of the event will be shared in the next issue. You will read about the experiences of three individuals as an APA in Corporate America, and about APAs in the Information Technology arena. You will also read about the lessons learned by Abercrombie & Fitch, and lessons yet to be learned by Hallmark.

The youth and the next generation of leaders from our community have and always will be a priority for the organization, and IMAGE reflects that sentiment as well. In this issue, we feature an article on how the effects of parental pressures to succeed have affected, and still are affecting, our youth. You will also read a loving tribute from a proud son to his parents, both who were touted as OCA Unsung Heroes at the 2004 and 2005 Conventions. And, an up and coming female spoken word poet shares her views about continuing the oral history tradition in the APA community.

"OCA is at the crossroads and 2006 will be a true testing ground for our success (failure is not an option)."

Of course, the 2005 National Convention in Las Vegas is still fresh in our minds, and we've set aside a special section in this issue to provide you with a scrapbook of some of the event highlights, session summaries and photos from the four fun-filled days in the "City that Never Sleeps," just in case you weren't able to catch all the fun the first time around!

We have much more for you to read and enjoy in this issue and future issues. But more important than the support and commitment of the National Board, Executive Council, national office staff, and corporate partners to make this publication success is the support and commitment of the chapters and the members. The best way to show your support is by contributing to the magazine. We need to receive highlights from all of our chapters and be inundated with features and articles on a wide range of topics and issues. We need to hear from our members and readers with Letters to the Editor and editorials. We need to know that IMAGE has a purpose and a place within OCA; and that can only be demonstrated by picking up a pen or getting on the computer and submitting something to be published.

With 2006 fast approaching, we can proudly say that we have accomplished much. But in the same breath, we also need to acknowledge that there are many more challenges ahead. OCA is at the crossroads and 2006 will be a true testing ground for our success (failure is not an option). IMAGE will be a key partner in promoting the establishment of the National Center for APA Leadership, implementing our marketing strategy, and ensuring that our members and readers are kept up to date with the latest news and information within the organization.

Let us hear from you.



Since 1978, various members of corporate America have served as partners with OCA as we strive to advance the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans in the United States. From the beginning days in 1978, our friends at General Motors worked with OCA founder K.L. Wang and others in creating OCA's Business Advisory Council (BAC). Early support from these corporations in the beginning stages of OCA's development allowed the organization to focus on its infrastructure. Throughout the years, our friends in the business arena have provided insight and advice on issues such as trends in the corporate community, educating the OCA leadership on funding priorities for certain sectors and the corporate culture, as well as the funding cycles. This education has allowed OCA National to become a better partner as we continue to solidify our relationships.

As a full partner, OCA has provided insight to the changing demographics and issues that affect the Asian Pacific American community. We have become known as an organizational resource that can identify additional national and local leaders within the community in which a corporation can work with to achieve their various goals, whether they are in recruiting, marketing, and/or community relations.

Recently, the synergy between OCA and the corporate sector has turned to a new direction of advocacy. The first half of this year, OCA worked with and led coalitions in the New York City and New Jersey area, battling derogatory comments made by commentators and shock jocks on various radio programs. Advertisers of the programs were identified and companies that have worked with OCA throughout the years were immediately notified about the situation. In these incidents, OCA worked with our liaison from McDonald's and Verizon Communications to communicate our concerns about the program. By working together, the companies were viewed as good corporate citizens who were sensitive to the needs of the community, and it provided OCA and the greater APA community the leverage required to address the incident with the radio stations.

As OCA and the Asian Pacific American community has grown in the last 10-15 years, our corporate partners have also been supportive of the ever-changing needs of the community and the organization. For example, as the office has increased in staff size, we have been receiving in-kind computer donations from IBM every year and the SBC Foundation provided seed money for OCA to begin to build an online membership database for the chapters to use. Northwest Airlines has provided in-kind printing for new materials and for the last two years has provided airline tickets for staff travel for the four national board meetings. We have also worked with various Asian Pacific American advertising agencies such as Intertrend, Dae Advertising, and IW Group as they provided expertise in marketing as OCA has moved to professionalize the organization's promotional materials.

In the last decade, OCA has also focused on recruiting and developing new leaders of all ages. This included expanding our internship program to over 30 students every year with funding from Ford Motor Company Fund and Pepsico, and our scholarship program with support from UPS, AVON, AXA, and Verizon. With State Farm, OCA developed a leadership program which trains over 600 college students every year in 10 different regions. Their support for the JAAC/OCA Leadership Conference allows local chapter leaders to participate in this four day training in Washington, D.C. every year. Within the last 2-3 years, OCA also focused on producing publications about the APA community. These publications exemplify the proactive approach OCA is adopting in educating the public and our corporate partners about APA issues. With funds from Cathay Bank, OCA produced the publication "Voices of Healing: Spirit and Unity after 9/11 in the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community." State Farm also supported OCA's desire to assist in the production of **"The New Face of Asian Pacific America: Numbers, Diversity and Change in the 21st Century."** Ongoing magazine publication of IMAGE, the quarterly you are reading, is facilitated by Yum! Brands and our other advertisers.

With the generous support of the Allstate Foundation, OCA has been also able to publish the significant hate crimes prevention manual *Responding to Hate Crimes: a Community Action Guide*. This is the first issue based publication that OCA has created entirely in-house and is a model to follow for other non-profits and community activists alike. Adding this essential resource to the arsenal in our ongoing fight against hate crimes strengthens both the Allstate Foundation's mission as well as our own.

OCA is only as strong as its local chapters and members. General Motors values OCA as a membership-based organization and with their support, every year we present the OCA/General Motors "Unsung Heroes" Volunteer Award. This award recognizes ten OCA volunteers who, year in and year out, are the "unsung heroes" working behind the scenes in their respective chapters dedicating their time and efforts to advancing the many causes on behalf of OCA and their local community.

As you can see throughout the years, our partners in the corporate world are truly part of the Asian Pacific American family and the OCA family. We thank them for all their support and efforts to work hand in hand with OCA in addressing the needs of the community and helping us build an infrastructure to help us give voice to those who have traditionally been underserved.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A LEADER?

This is a question that will garner 20 different answers, if one asks 20 different people. And not too surprisingly, many of the answers will use similar words and phrases; but we each see leaders and leadership from very different perspectives.

Think for a moment, who is your favorite leader, and why? The responses people tend to give represent a wide diversity of people and reasons. Most of the answers involve well-known men and women across history, politics, sports, business, academics, etc.; however, one often will get answers such as: "my father," "my grandma," "my softball coach," or "my scoutmaster." So, as there are different definitions of being a leader, there are different examples that one would associate as one's favorite.

In a recent American Express television advertisement, Duke University's world-renown men's head basketball coach, Mike Krzyzewski, doesn't describe himself as much as being a coach, but rather as being a leader who happens to coach basketball. So, the qualities of leadership are transferable, from situation to situation, from circumstances to circumstances, from one business to another.

One of the all-time best business management books ever written is

in developing the next generation of OCA leaders through our programs. They come up through the ranks as members in the local chapters, become committee, board, and officers in service to their local communities, become National Board members and eventually, some become elected officers on the Executive Council.

In parallel, the development of staff employees at the National Office is extremely important in sustaining our momentum. We start with an internship program to on-board and introduce our vision and mission to college students looking to give back and contribute to society. Our interns graduate and permeate all areas of industry; some stay within the non-profit arena and extend their desires to serve into a career.

Just as important is the development of the leaders and members within our chapters. Without a good succession plan and efforts to encourage and provide opportunities for the next generation to participate, take initiative and lead, we will be doing a great disservice to the organization and the community.

"Before you become a leader, success is all about growing yourself; when you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

"Winning" by Jack Welch. The book is definitely required reading for anyone who wants to succeed...not just in business, but in any professional endeavor. Welch says, "Before you become a leader, success is all about growing yourself; when you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

For over 30 years, OCA has taken the lead in helping others grow. We are all about "Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans." Our founding was based on the principles of social justice, political equity, and economic wellbeing for APAs, and all Americans.

We take the lead in advocating for those who can not, and we lead by example

Once you have gained leadership experience and skills within OCA, a number of doors and opportunities are opened for you to transfer those skills and experiences into other areas of your personal and professional life.

So, what does it mean to be a leader? Look at how OCA has been a leader throughout the past 32 years. Look at the platform our previous and current leaders have created for our future growth, how we've nurtured and developed interns, staff, members and other organizations, and the how we've made a tremendously positive impact on the American landscape. By being a part of the OCA team at whatever level, the experiences gained will make you a better leader.

WHAT APAS WILL LOSE IF CONGRESS PASSES H.R. 609

By Irene B. Schwoeffermann and Douglas Lee

Our community is being left behind in higher education. As college costs increase and financial aid decreases, many students are left without options to pay for college. Although it is Congress' responsibility to make choices that benefit our students, recent proposals demonstrate a divestment in education. Our government has started a campaign to turn its back on students.

“One of the most detrimental effects the model minority myth has had on APA students has been their exclusion from minority programs designed to help disadvantaged students attain a college education.”

In the College Access and Opportunity Act of 2005, H.R. 609, Congress outlines its plan to abandon students and exclude many people from participating in higher education. One proposal actually increases the costs of loan consolidation by disguising it as an offer students have between consolidation options. The bill offers the option of variable rate and fixed rate loan consolidation to students. The fixed rate option, however, is made more expensive by altering the formula used to calculate the interest rate for such loans. This change in the formula will cost students thousands of extra dollars in loan repayment.

In addition to H.R. 609, Congress is considering passing a bill in a

process called Budget Reconciliation that will cut up to \$9 billion from student loan programs. The cut will make higher education more expensive for students. The average student will pay thousands of dollars more in their period of repayment with these changes. Students will face additional mandatory fees for each student loan and lose the ability to consolidate while in school, among many other cuts.

Education has always been and will always be highly valued in the APA community. The high matriculation rate of APAs from high school is a clear indication of the emphasis APA families place on education. According to the 2000 Census, 42 percent of APAs, ages 25 or older, have a college or professional degree. Much public attention has been given to the academic accomplishments of APA students, some of whom have been in the country a short time and only recently mastered the English language. However, “Model Minority Myth” stereotypes of APAs is alive and well, and presents the community as a monolithic group; there is much evidence that shows the situation that H.R. 609 would place on our community along with the general population.

According to the Bureau of the Census for 1999, 12.6 percent of single-race Asian households are under the poverty line, compared with 8.1 percent for non-Hispanic Whites. One of the most detrimental effects the model minority myth has had on APA students has been their exclusion from minority programs designed to help disadvantaged students attain a college education. For students from lower income families whose dream it is to receive a college education, access to financial aid is crucial in making those dreams a reality.

What Congress is failing to realize is that by making it significantly more expensive for students to go to school, they are not only turning their backs on students, they are turning their backs on the future economy of our country. A generation of young people bogged down in debt will deter them away from investing in property and in their retirement. Without an investment in the future leaders of our nation, we cannot have a strong, competitive and secure America.

Irene B. Schwoeffermann is Director of the Student of Color Campus Diversity Project at the

United States Student Association (USSA) Foundation in Washington, D.C.

Douglas Lee is Program Manager for OCA.

OCA HISTORICALLY ROOTED IN ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHTS OF IMMIGRANTS

Immigration policies are a basic civil and human right for Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), and have been historically used to minimize the presence of APAs in the United States. OCA has a long-standing history of political activism for the rights of the APA community, and a particularly strong history of fighting for the rights of Asians to immigrate.

One of OCA's first legislative advocacy efforts was made by Past National President and Founder, K.L. Wang when he became a member of the Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Chinese Americans of Maryland on Vietnamese Refugees in 1979. He encouraged Congress to take more action on legislation concerning Indochinese refugees and reported to the President's Select Committee on Immigration and Refugee Policy.

During the period between 1978 and 1982, OCA also actively participated in research to effectively change immigration quotas placed upon Chinese, and advocated for family reunification for Chinese and APAs. OCA effectively formed coalitions with other APA groups to lobby the White House to appoint more APAs to serve on policy making bodies.

OCA's role in immigration advocacy has led to victories for several laws and acts, including the increase of Hong Kong's immigration quota in the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986.

In 1994, protests by OCA was one of the forces that led to the defeat of an Anti-Immigrant Amendment attached to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. In 1995 and 1996, OCA fought to save the fourth preference family reunification visa, and against several provisions in welfare reform legislation which pertained to legal permanent residents.

During 1995 and 1996, Congress considered several anti-immigrant pieces of legislation that particularly excluded non-citizen immigrants from receiving

benefits from Supplement Security Income (SSI) and American Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). These laws were the first to deny immigrants privileges of American society. OCA educated the community, and our chapters across the country reached out to their legislators through town hall meetings, letter writing campaigns, and meetings. OCA was especially noted by their partners in the civil rights community for putting up an exceptional fight.

OCA also has a history of responding to community crises that affect the immigrant community. One of the most significant events was the attacks on September 11, 2001. The attacks were compared to Pearl Harbor and coined as the "Second Pearl Harbor," bringing a new wave of racism and intolerance to the immigrant community, and especially to the Asian Pacific American community. In New York, while Chinatown was rained on by ashes and rubble, Chinese American business owners and South Asian cab drivers received less business on the whole due to community backlash against immigrant population and South Asian Americans. OCA played a role in convening the Asian Pacific American community to provide support for those most affected.

In February 2004, the National Board passed a resolution supporting the following Comprehensive Immigration Reform principles. In summary, the resolution states that "OCA supports any comprehensive immigration reform that is humane, and takes into account the preservation of the national security and economic well being of the United States, and which includes: significantly reducing the backlog of family-based immigration; creating a path for legalization of undocumented immigrants; and creating additional programs for individuals to enter legally into the U.S. to work temporarily or permanently."

OCA will continue to work towards making sure that these principles are included in legislation that is passed and signed into law.

2005 - 2006 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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CENTRALIZED PROCESSING UPDATES TECHNOLOGY IN THE NATIONAL OFFICE

Keith McAllister, Technology

During this past April, we began moving all of OCA's membership records online to our new Association Management software, OCANet. Working together to ensure successful implementation of the new membership module, Project Assistant Mingchee Wen and other National Office staff have been reviewing the data in the existing system to determine what information needed to be converted and what information needed to be "cleaned up" during the conversion process. Although she has been extremely busy during the last few months with updating chapter records, Mingchee has also been working with our chapters to determine what information can be transferred from the old system.

The second phase of implementation will consist of a pilot program where the Membership Chairs of several participating chapters will acclimate themselves with the OCANet system. Once training has been completed later this year, local chapters will be able to log on to the new system to perform a variety of tasks, including the capability to add new members, update existing member information, and generate chapter reports.

With the implementation of the OCANet system, the National Office will also be able to initiate online scholarship submissions, new membership registration, and online donations. These new tools will assist the staff in providing better support for the chapters and their members.



Anh Phan, Communications

This quarter marks the release of OCA's issue-based, in-house produced publication, *Responding to Hate Crimes: A Community Action Guide*. Made possible through a generous partnership with the Allstate Foundation, this hate crime prevention manual has been hailed as the most detail-oriented, comprehensive and thoroughly researched of its peers. I am pleased to have been a part of this production team, which was helmed by former OCA Deputy Director Aryani Ong, and Naomi Tacuyan, the contract designer.

In this manual are practical, step-by-step checklists of how to identify hate crimes or hate incidences, what to do in response to a hate crime, and how to prevent hate crimes from happening in your community. Pains were taken to make a complicated and sensitive subject easily understood and accessible to the community activist and to a broader audience.

The guide has three sections:

- Section I is an introduction to hate crimes. The reader learns about what constitutes a hate crime or hate incident, who commits them, how they are tracked and the importance of reporting them to the police.
- Section II discusses victim support. The reader is provided resources to give a victim legal referrals, places to apply for monetary compensation and mental health counseling. The reader also learns about the different roles that community leaders can play in relation to the victim, including victim assistance provider, victim advocate, and community

advocate.

- Section III focuses on community responses. The reader is guided through typical actions that a community pursues in the aftermath of a hate crime. The section discusses holding community forums, organizing the community, working with the media, public education and coalition building.

The guide speaks to all community members and leaders, from those who have little to no organizing experience to those who are veteran activists.

The production of this manual coincided with the preparation of the OCA National Convention, which took considerable effort to publicize in the Las Vegas area. Looking ahead, *Responding to Hate Crimes* will become an integral teaching tool for OCA chapters, through upcoming hate crime prevention events in Dallas and Sacramento, as well as the national audience, about how to prevent the scourge of hate crimes from occurring in their communities.

PREPARING COLLEGE PROGRAMS FOR THE 2005-2006 ACADEMIC YEAR

Doug Lee, Programs



OCA is busily preparing for another exciting year of programs to offer to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) college students across the country. Our

two main programs are the College Affiliates Program and the APIAU: Leadership 101 trainings, both of which will be entering very important stages during the coming year.

Formed in 1993, the College Affiliates Program provides students with a foundation for networking, effective coalition building, organizing, and activism. OCA assists colleges with developing their own infrastructure by helping them advocate for resources or support for an Asian Pacific American student services office or personnel. OCA also serves as a resource, provides guidance on a wide range of issues including funding, programming, leadership development, and connects campuses with up and coming APA artists, filmmakers, and authors.

Thanks to a generous grant from Abercrombie & Fitch presented during our National Convention in Las Vegas, OCA is now able to further expand its successful College Affiliate Program. Multimedia and project grants will be available to College Affiliate Program members for various campus projects that will enable them to become better advocates and educate their community about issues at the local campus, regional and national levels. The grants will also help further establish OCA as an organization committed to bringing APA students together at the national level.

OCA is entering its sixth year of offering the APIAU: Leadership 101 program to college students. Sponsored by State Farm®, the interactive college leadership training program will be selecting a number of schools to host the trainings. Look for additional information, including dates and locations of the trainings, to be announced on the OCA website very soon.

These two programs have been established not only to help college campuses, but to also provide an opportunity for our chapters to outreach to college students nearby. The OCA National Office relies on local chapters to develop partnerships with nearby

campuses and to help introduce college students to the local APA community and available local resources.

OCA CONTINUES LEGACY AS APA COMMUNITY'S VOICE FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

Namrata Mujumdar, Policy and Legislation



Continuing its legacy as an unyielding defendant of the immigrant population, OCA is participating in a broad coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform, consisting of organizations from the labor, business, civil rights, and faith-based communities to launch a campaign called the New American Opportunity Campaign.

The organization's participation gives the campaign a special advantage because OCA members in 26 states are active in both the Democratic and Republican parties and are well connected to their communities. The diversity of our membership consists of active leaders in the business, education, nonprofit, and government institutions. This enables us to employ a unique strategy as an advocate in Washington, DC, and at the grassroots level. Grassroots organizing in this campaign will be a driving force for legislative advocacy policy makers on Capitol Hill to propose real solutions to problems facing the nation.

OCA has been specifically assigned to organize its membership within four states: Utah, California, Virginia, and Hawaii. However, since our membership has influence throughout the nation, advocacy from all members will play an important role in voicing the demand for comprehensive immigration reform. Since we have chapters in districts where undecided Representatives and Senators are needed for the passage of a bipartisan bill, OCA has been providing the tools necessary for chapters to advocate their legislators. Chapter participation in both grassroots and the overall legislative strategy is key to the passage of the bill.

OCA's presence in this debate is crucial. The system as it stands, has tremendous backlogs in family reunification and is devastating to the basic family unit. Sometimes it still takes decades for families to reunite. Lately, in the press, the immigration debate is framed as a border enforcement and worker programs issue. Backlog reduction and family reunification are often the first to be left out of Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Excluding family reunification from Comprehensive Immigration Reform is a major disadvantage to the entire immigrant community. The Asian Pacific American community is especially affected since half of those waiting to reunite are Asian. Only by being active members of the debate can OCA members ensure that immigration reform is *comprehensively* addressed.

What can you do?

- Go to: <http://www.formsite.com/leadership/form189570156/index.html> and sign the online petition, and submit your stories;
- Contact your legislators in the House and Senate with a letter, a phone call, or a meeting;
- Coordinate your activities with the national Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform; and
- Contact Namrata Mujumdar, OCA's Policy Advocate to discuss how you can help in your State.



Are you going to college?

Are you looking for scholarships?

The Gates Millennium Scholars (GMS) program, funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was established in 1999 to provide outstanding Asian Pacific Islander American, African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic American students with an opportunity to complete an undergraduate college education.

The GMS Award is a renewable scholarship offering students an opportunity to study at a U.S. accredited college or university in any discipline area of interest.

For more information, please visit the following website: www.gmsp.org

DEADLINE:

GMS nomination materials may be submitted on-line on or before January 13, 2006 11:59 p.m. EST at www.gmsp.org

or

***postmarked on or before January 13, 2006 and sent to:
Gates Millennium Scholars
P.O. Box 1434
Alexandria, Virginia 22313***

Toll-Free Ph: 1-877-690-GMSP (4677)

Students are eligible to be considered for a GMS scholarship if they:

- Are Asian Pacific Islander American, African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, or Hispanic American;
- Are a citizen, legal permanent resident or national of the United States;
- Have attained a cumulative grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale (unweighted);
- Will be enrolling for the first-time at U.S. accredited college or university as a full-time, degree-seeking, first-year student;
- Have demonstrated leadership abilities through participation in community service, extracurricular or other activities;
- Meet the Federal Pell Grant eligibility criteria; and
- Have all three required forms (Nominee Personal Information Form; Nominator Form, and Recommender Form) completed and submitted by the deadline.



To apply on-line or to download nomination materials, please visit www.gmsp.org.

To have nomination materials sent to you or if you have any other questions, please contact Bindi Patel, GMS/APIA Outreach Coordinator, via email: gmsoutreach@ocanatl.org or call toll free: **(866) 274-4677 ext. 5**

From Xanthomonas Protein Functionality to Asian American Dance Troupes:

INTRODUCING THE OCA SUMMER INTERN CLASS OF 2005



Photo by Keith McAllister

First Row Left to Right: Anna Cheng, Cindy Cheung, Annie Lam, Peggy Ho, Diana Chiang, Jackie Dan, Jian Zapata, Tina Wei, Second Row Left to Right: Matthew Tsou, Su Luo, Ricky Ly, Darlene Gou, Drew Austria, Evonne Lai, Charlie Ngo, Nina Wong, Elizabeth Chu, Demeter Trieu

OCA concluded another extremely successful internship program this past summer. The Summer Intern Class of 2005 included students from all over the nation. From California to Florida, they gathered in Washington, DC, to spend their summer in pursuit of civil rights advocacy and for an introduction to public service as a potential career. Over the past 32 years, OCA has been able to cultivate flourishing relationships with other nonprofit organizations, as well as Congressional and Federal government executive offices, to place the interns.

Su Luo, a sophomore majoring in Biology at the University of Miami, interned at the Association of American Colleges and Universities Program for Health and Higher Education. "I believed that the OCA internship program would help me with my goals. Not only would I work with other motivated peers, but I would have the invaluable opportunity of meeting Asian American national political leaders as well as watch the process of creating government policy in action," she explained.

While the OCA Summer Internship Program traditionally attracts students interested in the fields of politics and Asian American Studies, OCA could not deny the potential of a few science-based majors. **Darlene Gou**, interned at the OCA National office and is a junior at University of Texas at Austin, pursuing a degree in Biology. When asked why she chose to spend her summer working on civil rights advocacy over research in a lab, she answered, "Participating in this internship allows me to broaden my horizons and expand past the science

world. With this experience, I know that I have the opportunity to learn more about policy and advocacy."

Matthew Tsou, interned at the Department of Health and Human Services and recently graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in Molecular and Cell Biology. Last winter, Matthew researched xanthomonas outer protein functionality in the Plant and Microbiology Department. Currently at the University of Central Florida, **Ricky Ly** interned at the Department of Transportation and will major in Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering. Placed at the Office of Management and Budget, **Charlie Ngo** is a junior at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and plans to major in Organizational Studies and Economics.

More than just a stepping stone to various political or nonprofit paths, the OCA internship provides students the opportunity to actively participate in the legislative processes and advocacy that most had previously only read about. OCA National Office intern **Elizabeth Chu**, a sophomore at the University of Virginia, said, "This internship has allowed me to experience first hand what a nonprofit civil rights advocacy group does. It has given me many opportunities to learn more about the issues affecting the APA community at large." She and the majority of her fellow interns sought a way to apply the focus of her educational career toward real world politics.

Students pursuing a major or minor in Asian or Asian American Studies, and/or Political Science brought to the table an incredible wealth of leadership experience. NAACP intern

Drew Austria, a junior at the University of Virginia, plans to pursue a degree in Government/ American Studies and Asian American Studies. **Demeter Trieu**, a junior at UC Santa Barbara, also interned at the OCA National Office and plans to double major in Political Science and Asian American Studies. **Evonne Lai** recently graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in Ethnic Studies and African American Studies. She interned at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights with Commissioner Stuart Ishimaru.

Two like-minded OCA interns worked together at the National Education Association. **Jackie Dan** and **Peggy Ho** both plan to major in Political Science and have a special interest in the effects of education on underrepresented minorities and how it is implemented in the educational system. **Jian Zapata**, interned at APIAVote and will finish her final year at George Mason University, pursuing a degree in Integrative Studies. **Annie Lam**, who interned with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's Office, and **Anna Cheng**, who interned at the Department of

Justice, are both from UC Davis and focusing their educational careers on Asian American Studies. **Tina Wei**, an English major from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, interned at the offices of Senator Richard Durbin and Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr.

Cindy Cheung, a Human Resources Management/ Marketing major at the University of Central Florida, also interned at the OCA National office. **Diana Chiang**, a junior at Brandeis University, interned at the Environmental Protection Agency, and **Nina Wong**, a junior majoring in Urban Development Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, was also placed at the NAACP.

After nearly three months in the bustling political hub that is Washington, DC, interns are leaving with a different perspective. Their hitherto book-based knowledge became enriched by the vast hands-on experiences made available to them through the OCA Internship Program. The success of the program will continue to facilitate the opportunities vital to the education and success of future Asian Pacific American leaders.

I enjoyed the Brown Bags in that they allowed the interns to meet on a weekly basis to learn more about a variety of topics and to network with local community organizers. The luncheons covered everything from coalition building to labor organizing to comprehensive immigration reform, providing a space to discuss issues that affect our community.

-Jian Zapata, APIAVote Intern

The OCA convention showed me what a group of APAs could accomplish. Through discussion, organization, and collaboration, OCA was able to educate youth, converse about issues, and commemorate our heroes, truly celebrating the real meaning of diversity.

-Darlene Gou, OCA Office Intern

OCA has given the interns the opportunity to meet with prominent figures in the APA community here in Washington D.C. It's not everyday you have the opportunity to have lunch with EEOC Commissioner Stuart Ishimaru. It's not everyday that you have the opportunity to meet with two cabinet members and have a photo-op with them. It's not everyday you meet two wonderful Members of Congress, Michael Honda and Doris O. Matsui.

-Cindy Cheung, OCA Office Intern

Having the opportunity to meet with Secretary Mineta was the greatest moment of my life. I could not ask for anything better. I enjoyed interning at the Department of Transportation.

*-Ricky Ly, Department of Transportation,
Civil Rights Division Intern*



(l to r): Linna Lee, Naydia Chantarasompoth, Jennifer Chou, Kotomi Nanjo at the National Convention Gala Awards Banquet.

OCA WEST COAST SUMMER INTERNS

This past summer, the OCA-Greater Los Angeles Chapter hosted four interns based on the West Coast. Home to the largest population of Asian Pacific Americans of primarily Chinese descent in the country, the interns had an opportunity to work alongside experienced and veteran board members to lend support to Los Angeles' vibrant and diverse Asian American community. Under the supervision of OCA National Director of Outreach and Development Clara Chiu, the interns worked on a large variety of projects including APIAVote, hate crimes initiatives, the OCA-GLA Image Awards, membership events, and the OCA National Convention.

Naydia Chantarasompoth is a sophomore at USC and currently pursuing a B.S. in Business Administration as well as a B.S.A. in Psychology, while minoring in the Study of Children and Family in Urban Neighborhoods. As an intern, Naydia's contributions ranged from designing GLA's Image Awards invitations to managing the chapter's membership database, while attending many OCA-hosted and sponsored events.

Wellesley student **Jennifer Chou** is studying Asian American Studies and Political Science and hopes to attend law school at UC Berkeley for her graduate studies. A self-proclaimed "grammar nut," Jennifer drafted countless letters and edited newsletters and articles published by the chapter. "This internship has been a great learning experience for me. Not only was I given the opportunity to see first-hand the amount of dedication and the quality of administration needed to keep a non-profit running smoothly, but spending my summer in an office in downtown LA, also gave me the opportunity to work directly within the community that OCA

aims to support and empower," Jennifer said

All of the West Coast interns, along with the 18 interns based in Washington, DC, have been instrumental in helping organize the National Convention in Las Vegas. This year's program book was designed in part by **Linna Lee**, who will be completing her studies in Political Science and International Studies at UC Irvine. She had previously interned in Washington, DC, for the late Congressman Robert T. Matsui and plans to pursue advanced degrees in law and public policy.

An English and Japanese major at UCLA, working with the Greater Los Angeles chapter has been one of the first real-world exposures to politics and public policy for **Kotomi Nanjo**. As with her other fellow West Coast interns, Kotomi has participated in many of OCA-GLA's events both as an attendee and as a behind-the-scenes assistant. "Interning for OCA has taught me a lot about the non-profit world. The people I've met through this internship are amazing – they all have a genuine interest for Asian Americans advocacy and listening to them talk about their work is engaging because you can tell they're passionate about their job," Kotomi said. "Being exposed to this kind of environment has really inspired me."

All of this summer's four West Coast interns leave with renewed appreciation for organizations such as OCA, along with invaluable experience and lasting memories. They, along with the other past interns, will always be a part of the OCA-GLA family.

WHERE ARE THE OCA INTERNS NOW?

The OCA internship experience has become a tradition that stretches back to the early 1990s of the organization. Interns are an integral part of OCA, filling in for the short-handed staff and gaining real-world experience in Washington DC, or Los Angeles. One unique aspect of the OCA internship is the often-heard adage around the OCA National office, "Once an intern, always an intern," referring to the fact that many former interns stop by to visit years after their internship is over, and former interns are recruited to volunteer for various OCA projects.

Over 250 interns have gone through the program in the last 15 years, so where do the hundreds of OCA interns go once their internship is finished? What are they doing in their professional lives? A few of them are still at the OCA National Office: Christine Chen (1994), is the current Executive Director and former Director of Programs; Keith McAllister (1994) is the Director of Technology; Doug Lee (2004) is Program Manager; April Rongero (2004) is a Program Assistant with the Gates Millennium Scholarship program, and Vicki Shu (1990) is consultant as a coordinator for OCA special events.

Kathay Feng (1991) transitioned to become OCA's Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) Employment Discrimination National Education Director for one year through 1992. After law school, she became the Project Director of Voting Rights and Hate Crimes at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC). Earlier this year, Kathay became the Executive Director of California Common Cause, guiding the organization towards a leadership role in election and redistricting reform, government sunshine and accountability laws, campaign finance reform, media access, and championing the voting rights of traditionally disenfranchised communities.

In Las Vegas, **Mia Youhne (2001)** is busy with graduate school at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and co-chaired the 2005 OCA National Convention while also serving as Chapter President of the Las Vegas chapter. Back in Washington DC, **Victoria Tung (2001)** has also remained active in the APA community as the newly-named Executive Director of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. **Elaine Kam (2004)** is currently working at the Asian American/Pacific Islander Resource Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz as a Program Coordinator. She is hoping to get into graduate school and pursue a degree in Urban Planning in a year or two.

OCA interns are all over the world, and all over the map in their professional lives. "I am a currently a Peace Corps volunteer in Bulgaria, in a town called Etropole," writes **Lucia Chan (2004)**. Her primary assignment is to teach English to secondary school students. **Evan Wong (2004)**, recently finished a missionary trip to Brazil. **Elsa Tung (2004)**, is about to travel to China on a Fulbright Fellowship. She writes, "I will be in China on a 10-month long Fulbright Fellowship. The topic of my research is the status of formal sex education in Chinese high schools and universities. I will be based in Beijing but will also conduct research in 2 other locations in China." **Margot Seeto (2003)**, writes, "I just finished my MA program in Social Sciences in Education at Stanford University in June and am planning to participate in a six-month work exchange program in London in the later this year." **Steven Chan (1995)** is in the Diplomatic Corps and currently based at the U.S. Consulate in New Mexico.

A sizable majority of OCA interns have gone on to graduate school, or have plans to do so. **Franklin Kang (1994)**, is an Administrative Judge for the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board

in Federal sector employment law." He writes, "I recently resigned from my OCA-San Mateo County Chapter President position to avoid any appearances of impropriety or conflict as a newly appointed judge." **Julie Su (1989)**, shared, "I am a civil rights attorney at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles where I started in September of 1994 as a Skadden Fellow. Over the last 10 years, my primary focus has been on workers' rights representing and working with garment workers in impact cases for corporate accountability. More recently as Litigation Director, I have also been working on cases that seek to ensure equal educational access to all communities of color and that challenge corporate practices that prey on Asian Pacific American consumers." **Clifford Yee (2001)** is in his final semester at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. His current career goal is to work with Asian Pacific American children of divorce. Clifford's concentration within his chosen field is community organizing with children and youth.

Janet Kim (2004), is in her last year of undergraduate studies at Brandeis University but is preparing for the LSAT and plans to be in law school by next fall. **Jessica Lee (2004)**, is currently working at a Los Angeles law firm but planning on entering law school next fall. **Sophia Lee (2000)**, writes, "I just finished my first year of law school at Lewis and Clark's Northwestern College of Law in Portland, Oregon." **Alan Huang (2002)** is in law school at Indiana State. On the other hand, **Kenny Chao (2001)**, just graduated from law school and writes, "I just graduated from Cornell Law, and will be starting work in the fall in Palo Alto at a firm that specializes in tech and start-up work." **Alexander Saingchin (1999)** is in law school at Rutgers, and working to establish a legal clinic in New Jersey for Asian immigrants. **Chung-Han Lee (1994)** graduated from Stanford University with his Bachelors degree in American Studies, received a Masters in

Public Policy from UC Berkeley, and obtained a law degree from the University of Michigan Law School. He now lives with his wife Nita and daughter Meena in San Francisco where he is a lawyer for the law firm of Holland & Knight. **Yu-Yee Wu (1998)** became a project coordinator for OCA in 1999 and is currently an attorney for the California Department of Industrial Relations working on workers' compensation reform issues. She is also serving on the board of the San Francisco Bay chapter.

Bryan Jung (2002) is in Washington, DC, where he writes, "I am currently working at the American Federation of Teachers as the Assistant in the Political Department. I help run the PAC (Political Action Committee) for all Federal candidates as well as internal union operations." **George Cheung (1993)** is partner in his own research firm, Lopez Cheung in Seattle. "I do social science research and demographic analysis. Much of it is for political organizations," he writes. **Betty Lin (2004)** is in Washington DC, where she writes, "I am currently working for the Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) as a consultant for nuclear non-proliferation." **Yi-Ru Chen (1995)** is Interim Chief of Staff for the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice in Washington, DC.

A few interns found that they had a taste for working at a nonprofit and have continued to work in public service. **Giles Li (1999)** was the OCA Director of Communications from 2000 to 2001. From Boston, he writes, "I currently work at the Asian Community Development Corporation in Boston's Chinatown." He is the founder of the Boston Progress Arts Collective, an organization using art as a tool to organize Asian Pacific American communities; he also tours college campuses and conferences nationwide as a spoken word performer. **Noelle Dong (1999)**, writes, "I am Director of Communications for the "I Have a Dream"® Foundation, a national nonprofit organization based in NYC that helps kids from low-income communities stay in school and go to college." **Beverly Wong (2002)** also helps the community

by working at AmeriCorps. She writes, "After graduating Seattle University, I spent a year in the AmeriCorps VISTA program. I recently began the Master's program at the Columbia University School of Social Work in New York, and will graduate in May 2006." **Celine Liu (1999)** taught high school for three years before obtaining her MSW. She is now working at a workers' center, the Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York, organizing restaurant workers, specifically Chinese restaurant workers, for improved working conditions in NYC.

Many OCA former interns are pursuing careers and further education in the health field. **Mona Patel (2003)** is getting her Masters in Health Services Administration at the University of Michigan. She writes that her first foray into the healthcare field was as an intern working for the Agency on Healthcare Research and Quality. **Ho-Shyuan Wu (1996-1997)**, tells OCA, "I received a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and am a licensed psychologist specializing in geriatrics. I currently see patients in nursing homes, assisted living homes, and rehabilitation hospitals and do testing and psychotherapy in New Jersey." At the other end of the country, **Janxin Leu (1995)** writes, "I am currently a post-doctoral student in Public Health at UCSF and UC Berkeley, and will start as an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Washington next year." **Grace Chen (1997)**, is also practicing on the West Coast where she writes, "I just graduated with my Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin. I'll be doing a post-doctoral fellowship (as a counselor) at UC Berkeley's Counseling and Psychological Services for the 2005-2006 academic year." **Ronnie Huynh (2002)**, is studying for two graduate degrees, a Master of Public Health (health care administration) and a Master of Social Work.

The business world is impressed with OCA former interns. Marketing seems to be an area where OCA interns are excelling. **Deborah Lao (2001)** worked at the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Economic Development and in June of

2003, became the first non-founding employee for Barbary Coast Consulting and recently promoted to Senior Project Manager. She has been working with her client, Nielsen Media Research, in developing a relationship with OCA and the APA community. Deborah also serves on the board for the San Francisco Bay chapter. **Dan Suh (2001)** is residing in San Francisco and working in the advertising industry.

"I'm working as a Marketing Coordinator at Lollicup Corporate Office," writes **Shana Fu (2003)**. "Lollicup is a leading supplier of Boba tea, coffee, juice and restaurant solutions." **Ada Lien (1995)** is the Director of Makeup Marketing for Prescriptives Cosmetics, while **Paul Dien (2000)** is working at MTV2, the alternative music channel associated with MTV. "I'm a Marketing Manager," he writes. "I work in Integrated Marketing where I come up with sponsorship and integration opportunities for the channel's advertisers." **Felicia Chao (2001)** is working at Cranium in Seattle, managing customer experience, while **Christine Hum (2002)** is in New York. "I am a Financial Analyst at Guy Carpenter in New York City. I graduated from Cornell in 2004 and am planning on heading to business school in a few years to pursue finance and marketing," she writes. **Sam Kaddoura (2004)** has not graduated from the University of Central Florida but has already finished two other internships in addition to his OCA experience. He writes, "I wrapped up two internships, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control, and UBS Financial Services, both in Orlando, Florida. I am planning on entering the investment banking business." **Jean Shia (1997)** has just started a full-time MBA program at Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley.

Stay tuned for more OCA intern updates! If this first report is any indication, the future seems bright for OCA's intern alums. Please update the OCA National Office with any of your stories, educational, professional, and personal achievements by e-mailing oca@ocanatl.org.

2005 NATIONAL OCA-KFC ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS



OCA is pleased to announce the winners of the 2005 National OCA-KFC Essay Contest, sponsored by the KFC Corporation. "It is an honor for OCA to sponsor an essay contest that helps educate and inspire youth to be more aware and active in the APA community," said OCA Vice President of Education and Culture Sharon Wong. "The many submissions we received for this year's essay truly demonstrate the developing leadership qualities among our youth."

This year's essay question was, ***"Your United States Senator has asked you to suggest an idea for a bill pertaining to Asian Americans and civil rights. What would you propose to your Senator and why?"***

Jeremy Hsu of Winter Springs, FL, placed first, followed by Karen Shih of Silver Spring, MD in second Ralph Austria of Chesapeake, VA in third.

OCA would also like to take this opportunity to thank the following individuals for their time and commitment to judging the OCA/KFC Essay Contest: Diana Chiang, Elizabeth Chu, Jackie Dan, Peggy Ho, Quyen P. Huynh, Ricky Ly, Tina Wei, and Nina Wong.



Winning essay by Jeremy Hsu

For decades, Asian Americans have struggled to gain acceptance in America. The first wave of immigrants came from Asia into a land foreign to them – a land filled with strangers, a new language, and a new culture to learn. Yet we Asian Americans have always possessed a sense of resiliency- whatever challenges we face, we will always overcome the obstacles.

Since then, Asian Americans have made enormous strides, becoming senators, governors, doctors, lawyers, scientists, and other respected professions. We Asian Americans are an integral part of the diverse ethnic landscape in America.

While much progress has already been made in making America a land of true equality, there remains much more to be accomplished. As evidenced in the 2004 elections, Asian Americans are often unfairly represented in the voting process. Though Asian Americans comprise a vast percentage of the registered voting population, Asian American issues have been virtually ignored by politicians. In addition, there is often a paucity in the promotion of Asian Americans to top managerial positions in enterprises. Barriers contributing to this "glass ceiling" may be our language and education.

Inequalities have always been in existence in America for all racial and ethnic groups. Despite the major reforms made in the 60s and 70s, America is not truly integrated yet. Until we can rightly judge a person without considering the skin color, we cannot stop fighting for justice and equality for all.

Thus, I am proposing today a bill that would be the first step toward achieving justice and equality. The bill, entitled *Asian Minority Education, Reform, Innovation and Cultural Awareness (AMERICA)*, would mandate that each state create a special department devoted solely to monitor the civil rights of Asian Americans, lobby the legislative branches of each state for reforms benefiting all minority groups, and raise awareness of the Asian culture. Several states have already successfully created such a department; for

example, Washington state created its Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs in 1974. CAPAA, as it is known, has not only helped preserve the Asian heritage for over 30 years in Washington, but has also significantly increased the Asian American voting percentages. In addition, it is no coincidence that Washington State had the first Asian American governor in the United States. However, all 50 states would benefit from similar departments. To assist each state in creating a new department or commission, the federal government would provide a starting sum of money to every state. In addition, *AMERICA* would also create one main federal department located in Washington, D.C. overseeing all 50 of the state departments.

Each state's commission would be responsible for all affairs pertaining to Asian Americans and minorities in general. One of the most pressing issues facing Asian Americans that each commission would be responsible for would be voting rights, a critical issue that affects all Americans. Minority voting percentages have traditionally been lower than the national average, stemming to discriminatory laws passed in the midst of the decade filled with anti-Asian feelings. Though these laws have long been repealed, our voting percentages remain extremely low. Another cause of the voter apathy in minority groups is the lack of accessible language materials. A report by the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) found that the 2004 national elections was marred with a lack of bilingual translators, voting instructions in Chinese dialects, and awareness of the candidates in Chinese communities. In addition, AALDEF also found sporadic cases of racial discrimination by trained poll workers, causing several eligible voters to be denied the right to vote.

Each state's Commission would be responsible for turning the increasing voter apathy in Asian Americans into fair, just elections representing all the diverse groups of America. However, voting would not be the only problem facing Asian Americans.

Minority groups too often face a "glass ceiling"- promotions are unfairly given to non-minority candidates over well-qualified Asian Americans. While it is virtually impossible to prove racial discrimination, the "glass ceiling" does impede Asian Americans. In order to be promoted, we have to be much better qualified than the other candidates are, so that there cannot be any doubt about who was the most qualified candidate. This "glass ceiling", while extremely unfair, occurs at most companies throughout the United States, whether by accident or by purpose.

It would be the job of each state's commission to work to eradicate the glass ceiling, so that every person, regardless of color, would have an equal chance of promotion and advancement in companies. In addition, the commissions created by *AMERICA* would also have to deal with a host of problems facing Asian Americans, including the lack of proper English education and the ever-touchy affirmative action issue.

Affirmative action, while ruled legal by the U.S. Supreme Court, awards minorities "points" in college admissions. While no quotas are ever enacted, having been ruled illegal, these additional boosts give an advantage to minorities in the interest of keeping the college diverse. Is it right or legal to give someone an advantage because of skin color? On the other hand, should an ethnically diverse collegiate be the primary focus? These arguments would have to be taken into consideration by each *AMERICA* department.

Despite the problems faced by Asian Americans in the fight for equality and civil rights, each commission would also be responsible for spreading Asian languages and cultures. To stay competitive in this fast-paced, ever-expanding economy where Asian countries are rapidly becoming economic and industrial powers, we must promote Asian languages and raise global awareness by sponsoring cultural awareness programs and language schools. Each state would have to enact diverse cultural programs to promote global understanding. The cultures that date back over 5000 years are full of priceless treasures of humanity that cannot be lost.

This *AMERICA* legislation is a critical part in giving Asian Americans the voice they need in public matters and also in keeping the tradition of justice and equality for all. Therefore, I urge that *AMERICA* be passed and implemented immediately.

OCA SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO CLASS OF 2009

For the last decade, OCA has been providing scholarships with generous funding from the Avon Foundation, UPS Foundation, and AXA Foundation to support Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) college students entering their first year of college. OCA and its sponsors are proud of this year's winners and wish them the very best in their future plans and endeavors.



"The OCA-Avon Scholarship for Asian Pacific American women is a special milestone for Avon.," said Shirley Dong, Marketing Manager for Avon Products. "Avon feels proud that we are able to continue providing economic and educational opportunities for young women through this partnership with OCA."

extremely worried about the costs of college, my sister, and general life expenses. Having this scholarship is going to help my family out so much this year!"

The 2005 OCA-Avon Scholarship recipients and the college they will be attending are:



- Saliha Akhtar, Budd Lake, NJ
Montclair State University
- Carol Conlin, Piedmont, SC
Furman University
- Christine Lee, Los Angeles, CA
University of Southern California
- Rica Ocampo, Las Vegas, NV
University of California, San Diego
- Victoria So, Glen Carbon, IL
Georgetown University
- Sandy Tang, Malden, MA
Tufts University
- Rachelle Uy, San Jose, CA
University of California, Berkeley
- Alecia Wong, Great Falls, MT
University of Washington
- Somy Xiong, St. Paul, MN
College of Saint Benedict, St. John's University

OCA-AVON SCHOLARSHIP

Nine students were selected this year as OCA-Avon Scholarship recipients. Presented with awards of \$2000 each, the nine Asian and Pacific Islander American female high school students with financial needs and will attend the higher education institution of their choice in the Fall.

Thanks to the Avon Foundation, two of the nine recipients received an all-expense paid trip to the OCA National Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, and were presented with their award during the Scholarship Awards Luncheon. "Receiving this scholarship is a relief to the financial burden put on my family," said Carol Conlin. "With my going off to college and having a 19-month old sister at home, my parents were

OCA-UPS GOLD MOUNTAIN SCHOLARSHIP

The OCA-UPS Gold Mountain

Scholarship provides an opportunity for Asian American and Pacific Islander students who are the first in their family to attend an institution of higher education. Established in 1999, the scholarship awards \$2,000 to each recipient and was named in recognition of the early Chinese immigrants who came to America in search of a better life and opportunities. The literal translation of the Chinese term for America during the 1800s was "Gold Mountain," making reference to the California gold rush. The 12 OCA-UPS scholars are continuing the hopes of these immigrants by being the first to reach the "Gold Mountain" of higher education.

"UPS is proud of its role in building stronger communities by providing opportunities for our youth," said Evren Epps, UPS Foundation President and UPS Corporate Relations Vice President. "Through organizations like OCA, UPS helps qualified students pursue their dreams of a better life through education."

Thanks to the UPS Foundation, four of the 12 recipients received an all-expense paid trip to the OCA National Convention in Las Vegas, and were presented with their scholarships during the Gala Awards Banquet. Nhu-Y Ngo from Lincoln, Nebraska, commented, "I learned an incredible amount of information, met great people, and took away many memories." She hopes to study political science or journalism at Columbia University.

The 2005 OCA-UPS Gold Mountain Scholarship recipients and the college they will be attending are:

- Paul Boupfa, Las Vegas, NV
University of Washington
- Ai-Nhan Do, Indianapolis, IN
Purdue University
- Nancy Huynh, Palacios, TX
Baylor University
- Danica Iglopas, Tamuning, GU
Seattle University
- Duc Le, Panama City, FL
Florida State University
- Qiao Li Huang, Chicago, IL

- University of Illinois-Urbana
Champaign
- Sarah Martinez, El Prado, NM
Berklee College of Music
- Nhu-Y Ngo, Lincoln, NE
Columbia University
- Alvin To, Oakland, CA
University of California, Berkeley
- Nelson Truong, Brooklyn, NY
New York University
- Alexander Tsao, Sedalia, MO
University of Missouri, Columbia
- Anson Tsui, Union City, CA
University of California, Berkeley

OCA-AXA ACHIEVEMENTSM SCHOLARSHIP

The OCA-AXA AchievementSM Scholarship is funded by the AXA Foundation in an effort to improve the quality of life in communities across the country where AXA has a presence. These individuals were selected on the basis of academic achievement, leadership and community service, and plan to attend an institution of higher education.

"OCA-AXA AchievementSM Scholarship winners exemplify the kind of student we look for," said Pamela Gee, Program Director for the AXA Foundation, which underwrites the AXA AchievementSM Scholarship. "Our scholarship winners are young people who have accomplished something special, who show the determination to set and reach goals."

The scholarship provides \$2,000 to each recipient to be used for college expenses.

The 2005 OCA-AXA AchievementSM Scholarship recipients and the college they will be attending are:

- Nadia Hostetler Bulkin, Lincon, NE
Barnard College, New York City
- Jennifer Chiu, Sugar Land, TX
Trinity University
- Troy Hashimoto, Kula, HI
University of Denver
- Annie Liang, San Fancisco, CA
Whitman College
- Alexander Nguhen, Westminster, CA
University of Southern California

- Amanda Parkman, Tucson, AZ
University of Arizona
- Agnes Yuen, Portland, OR
University of Oregon
- Pei Zhang, Petaluma, CA
Stanford University

OCA would like to express its thanks and appreciation to the judges who generously gave of their time and commitment to judging the various scholarship awards.

Scholarship Awards

- Emerald Adams
- Richard Chang
- Debbie Chen
- Kurt de la Cruz
- Zhiyong Gao
- John Ho'omanawanui
- Tong Lee
- Joe Mazares
- Anne-Marie Meegan Fahina
Pasi
- Leo Pangelinan
- Amy Hwang Powers
- Neel Saxeena
- Ping Tcheng
- Daniel H. Teraguchi
- Jennifer Wong
- Sharon M. Wong
- Gene Woo
- Jenny Yang
- David Yao
- Miriam Yeung

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FAIR AND EQUAL ACCESS TO HOUSING

Passed July 31, 2005

Access to safe and affordable housing is an important human right. Housing issues, including housing discrimination, access to culturally & linguistically appropriate housing counseling, home ownership initiatives, and housing quality and affordability, affect Asian American and Pacific Islander communities across the United States. Census data show that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) and immigrant communities continue to face housing and economic disparities, with the home ownership rates for Asian Americans and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (NHOPIs) much lower than the national home ownership rate. Research by the Department of Housing and Urban Development revealed that AAPIs in large metropolitan areas face considerable levels of discrimination when searching for housing, requiring greater community education efforts about, and enforcement of the Fair Housing Act.¹

WHEREAS: OCA will continue to be an advocate for fair housing and housing opportunities for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in the United States; and

WHEREAS: OCA recognizes that 12.6 percent of Asian Americans and 17.7 percent of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (NHOPi) households live in poverty versus the national poverty rate of 12.4 percent; and

WHEREAS: The Department of Housing and Urban Development issued a report in 2003 documenting the fact that AAPIs face discrimination at levels comparable or higher than other minority groups when searching for housing; and

WHEREAS: AAPIs have lower home ownership rates than the population as a whole with only 53.2 percent of Asian Americans and 45.5 percent of NHOPIs living in owner-occupied housing in comparison to the national average of 66.2 percent; and

WHEREAS: The 2000 Census indicates that AAPIs face severe overcrowded housing with a rate of 14 percent compared to 3 percent of all owner-occupied housing units; and

WHEREAS: OCA recognizes that there is a need for federal and private sector efforts directed toward AAPIs to increase access to housing and decrease the incidence of housing discrimination; and

WHEREAS: OCA recognizes that the enforcement of policies and legal provisions for fair housing will benefit AAPIs seeking housing and home ownership opportunities.

THEREFORE: BE IT RESOLVED that OCA supports policies and programs that protect and preserve the right to fair housing opportunities, promote access to affordable housing, and facilitate home ownership opportunities among AAPIs in the United States.

¹ The facts presented in this resolution are from a publication entitled "Discrimination in Metropolitan Housing Markets: Phase 2 – Asians and Pacific Islanders" published on July 1, 2003 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research and from statistics compiled by the National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Passed July 31, 2005

- WHEREAS:** The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, and political belief, economic or social condition, and
- WHEREAS:** Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity; and
- WHEREAS:** Governments have a responsibility for the health of their peoples which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures, and
- WHEREAS:** Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders suffer disparities in health and health care when compared to the general population, and
- WHEREAS:** One out of five Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders do not have health insurance (compared to 14% for the white population), and
- WHEREAS:** Those without health insurance tend to go without care for serious medical conditions and do not even get routine or preventive care, and
- Whereas:** Disparities in healthcare still occur for the 80% of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who do have insurance, and
- Whereas:** Cultural and linguistic competence is necessary for the provision of quality care, and
- Whereas:** There is very little research to document the health conditions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and
- WHEREAS:** The research that does exist often excludes Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, especially if they don't speak English, and
- WHEREAS:** Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders experience higher rates of hepatitis B, certain types of cancers, diabetes and tuberculosis, and
- WHEREAS:** Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders experience higher rates of depression and suicide, some cancers (prostate, colorectal, nasopharyngeal, liver), and deaths from breast cancer, and
- WHEREAS:** Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders use mental health services and health screening services at a lower rate than the general population, and
- WHEREAS:** APIA communities and community-based organizations must be a part of the healthcare system, and
- WHEREAS:** More resources should go into developing community-based research and health Promotion and disease prevention programs, and
- WHEREAS:** Health is necessary to participate in and contribute to in America's political, social and economic arenas, and
- WHEREAS:** Thirty-six percent of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders speak English less than "very well" and are considered Limited English Proficient (LEP),
- THEREFORE:** BE IT RESOLVED that OCA supports universal affordable access to healthcare for all; efforts to improve quality of care through programs and policies that encourage a diverse and culturally competent workforce in medical schools, research institutions and health care institutions; efforts to improve quality of care through interpretation and translation services for those who are LEP; and increased research and improved data collection on the health and healthcare needs of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; and
- FURTHER:** BE IT RESOLVED that OCA supports increased investment in community-based health promotion and disease prevention programs.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING OCA NATIONAL BUILDING CAMPAIGN

Passed July 31, 2005

WHEREAS: Upon recommendation of the OCA Executive Council,

THEREFORE: BE IT RESOLVED that the "OCA Building Fund" be renamed the "OCA Legacy Fund," and

FURTHER: BE IT RESOLVED that a building purchased through the OCA National Building Campaign shall be known as "The National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership," and

FURTHER: BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Council is hereby directed to create and operate an 'OCA National Building Campaign Committee' to administer the National Building Campaign in lieu of the presently authorized 'OCA Capital Campaign Committee," and

FURTHER: BE IT RESOLVED that the OCA National Board hereby reaffirms that administration and management of the OCA National Building Campaign shall be a top fundraising priority of the Executive Council, individual officers of OCA, OCA staff at all levels, and every OCA chapter, including but not limited to allocation of organizational resources, time commitments, and operational decision-making.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

Partnering is important to **OCA-Chicago** as the following activity will attest. On May 21, the chapter held a Career Management Workshop at Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). Chapter Treasurer

Brian Chen delivered welcome remarks, and Keynote Speaker Thomas Chen, Vice President, Pacific, Asia and Africa



OCA-Chicago teams with Chinese American Bar Association to paddle their Dragon boat to a win.



OCA-Chicago members attending the commemoration of Zheng He's first voyage 600 years ago.

Operations of Abbott Laboratories spoke about leadership traits. Chapter VP of Information George Mui conducted workshops on steps to manage careers and a panel discussion followed featuring five successful Asian Americans. Harris Bank provided financial support for the workshop and co-sponsored with IIT.

The chapter joined forces on July 23 with the Chinese American Bar Association and fielded a team in the third annual Com Ed Dragon Boat Race for Literacy. The race was organized by the Chicago Chamber of Commerce and is held each summer at the Ping Tom Memorial Park in Chinatown, with over 1,000 spectators and participants. The team was one of 22 and faced strong competition and won the second race in the first round.

You've heard of Columbus, but do you know about Zheng He? The goal of the Zheng He Foundation is to make him as well known as Christopher. The 600 year anniversary of the first voyage of Zheng He, an explorer in the Ming Dynasty years before Columbus sailed to the New World, was commemorated on Aug 6 at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry. The event began with a lecture by history scholars, followed by a banquet attended by more than 300 guests; the Foundation donated a replica of a Zheng He Treasure Ship to the Museum. OCA-Chicago, along with other

organizations (including the National Geographic Society), co-sponsored the event.

OCA-South Florida will be presenting a series of seminars on "How to Manage a Cancer Free Lifestyle" in October to promote National Breast Cancer Awareness Month" at Miami's NANAY Community Center.

During mid-September, the chapter co-sponsored the first Chinese Language Schools Sports Day to encourage Chinese youth to be physically fit while learning their Chinese culture. They also co-sponsored an evening program to celebrate the annual Moon Festival and promote Chinese culture.

As a result of the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, the chapter is joining forces with the South Florida Asian community to host a number of fundraising events.

During mid-October, OCA-SFL's Dragon Fire will gather once again with their paddles for the third annual South Florida Dragon Boat Festival, to be held at the beautiful Intracostal Waterway in Haulover Park and Marina. The chapter will be setting up a booth to promote the OCA National Building Campaign, as well as collect donations for Hurricane Katrina victims.

OCA-Greater Houston celebrated the opening of its new offices with a dinner reception and karaoke evening on Friday, September 9, to kick off its second Annual Houston APIA Film Festival spanning three weekends and ending with the Annual SunLai APIA talent Showcase and Identity/Leadership Conference at Rice University on September 24.

The new offices are located at 9800 Town Park, #142, in the CCC Building. This new office space will allow the chapter to expand its programs and work towards having staff to ensure the consistency and sustainability of its local community service programs. An ambitious part of the plan for the office is the establishment of the Houston APIA Legal Clinic, starting with providing wills, living wills, powers of attorneys, and other related documents for low-income APIA clients. This is an expansion of the program which started earlier this year.

A Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament was held to raise money for the APIA Katrina Relief Fund. Additionally, OCA-GH initiated an online donation system to assist in the collection of donations for local APIA organizations working directly with people from New Orleans.

Members of **OCA-Long Island** truly exemplify the spirit of the APA community in the New York area. All of the chapter's efforts were duly recognized as its members proudly



Photo by Chel Dong

Some of the OCA-Long Island members at the National Convention in Las Vegas with their awards, including First Place for Chapter of the Year.



Photo by Kwong Eng

OCA-LI members Gloria Lum (top left) and Lianne Chew (top right) at the HOT 97 protest in New York City over the "Tsunami Song" earlier this year.

accepted the "Chapter of the Year" Award," as well as four other chapter awards and an "Unsung Hero Volunteer" Award, at the National Convention. An enthusiastic group of 42 Long Islanders crossed the country to attend the convention, forming the largest contingent from a single chapter.

The chapter and its members have been busy throughout the year with projects, activities and events in the areas of advocacy, education, culture, and community involvement. They have also been raising funds for their annual scholarship as well as for the Building Campaign, and are currently preparing for this year's gala on October 15, the largest fundraiser of the year for the chapter.

All members receive a quarterly newsletter edited and designed by Pearl Dong. This year, OCA-LI added a new website, www.ocalongisland.com, coordinated by Lianne Chew and developed by Steven Chung to share the latest developments and events and to build membership. Members Kwong Eng and John Tandana captured all of the events throughout the year as unofficial photographers.

These combined efforts were sweetly rewarded with the Chapter of the Year Award. President Gene Woo and his committee, Gladys Yan, Janis Woo, Pearl Dong, Debbie Leong, Ann Chan and Monica Lam, worked tirelessly to

coordinate and collect all of the materials needed for the application.

The **OCA-Greater Philadelphia** chapter reactivated in 2000 and is abuzz with activity after the formal announcement was made that it will be hosting the 2006 Annual National Convention on July 20-23 at the Wyndham Hotel; many volunteers will be needed and the chapter is hard at work planning for a successful endeavor.



Photo by Phillip Russell

Greater Philadelphia board members at annual Lunar New Year banquet in Philadelphia's historic Chinatown with OCA National President Ginny Gong and VP Public Affairs Kwong Eng. Back row (l to r): VP Programs Lien Vu, Advisory Board Member Ophelia Fetter, Secretary Mandy Lin, Co-President Lily Fong, Kwong Eng, Treasurer Theresa Ju. Front row (l to r): General Counsel Tsiwen Law; Co-President Zhiyong Gao; Ginny Gong, VP Communications Hsin-I Russell.

The year has been eventful. On February 19, National President Ginny Gong and VP of Public Affairs Kwong Eng addressed OCA-GP members, family and friends at the Lunar New Year banquet held at the Ocean Harbor Restaurant in Philadelphia's historic Chinatown.

In late April, OCA-GP co-President Zhiyong Gao volunteered at the "Symbols of China" celebration of Chinese culture hosted by the International House, University of Pennsylvania. He contributed a Chinese poem written by Boxun Yang and translated into English by Zhiyong; OCA-GP member Che Mee (May) Law created the calligraphy for the Chinese poem which was displayed on the Friendship Gate.

May also helped sell copies of "My Country Versus Me," and Frank Wu's book "Yellow," to increase awareness of the socio-political plight of Asian Pacific Americans. The books generated proceeds of \$39.00, which May donated to OCA-GP. Not only did she cover her own expenses, she also donated an additional \$100 to the chapter.

OCA-Greater Sacramento held its fifth annual "Reception at the Capitol" on August 23. The event has become a venue in which participants have an opportunity to establish strategic partnerships with legislators, business entities, and



OCA-Greater Sacramento Chapter President Linda Ng (first row) with California Secretary of State Bruce McPherson (back row second from left) and OCA-GS board member Tom Bhe (back row fourth from left) at the annual reception in the State Capitol.

APIA community organizations, to assisting the chapter and OCA in achieving our mission in advancing the social, political and economic well being of APIAs, and help address the importance of being in a civic role.

A number of Federal, State and local legislators and elected officials joined an enthusiastic crowd of more than 350 guests at the State Capitol Basement Rotunda. Many of the legislators shared his/her perspectives on the California's cultural diversity and issues affecting the community, and encouraged the audience to play a proactive role in the legislative process.

Allstate Insurance, made landmark history as the first Title Sponsor of the event. State Farm was also a generous sponsor; both are OCA BAC members. Other co-sponsors included the Asian Pacific State Employees Association, Merrill Lynch, ABC Hardware Co., and the Asian Bar Association of Sacramento.

The presence and support of elected officials, corporate representatives, community leaders and members, and OCA members has made a significant difference and reflects a true alliance among API community groups and heightens

our voice on public policies and issues that affect our community.

OCA-St. Louis hosted a seminar given by Dr. Lilly Cheng for approximately 60 attendees on multi-cultural



OCA-St. Louis board members attend seminar given by Dr. Lilly Cheng. (l to r): VP Communications Eling Lam, VP Finance Grace Lee, VP Public Relations Helena Hseu, Dr. Lilly Cheng, Chapter President Jason Tang, Immediate Past President Matthew Yu, VP Education Dr. Cody Ding, Executive VP Dr. Hung-gay Fung.

communication. The event was sponsored in August by Anheuser-Busch at their corporate headquarters in St. Louis. Dr. Cheng is a professor at the University of San Diego where she has done extensive study and research in Human Communications. All the participants enjoyed a tour of the brewery after the seminar.

On September 24, the chapter partnered with the U.S. Department of Commerce, SCORE and the Small Business Administration to host a Small Business Development workshop.

In October, the chapter will host a joint picnic with the organization Families with Children from China (FCC) and the chapter's Young OCA group. The first joint picnic was held in 2003.



Phil Ting
Appointed Assessor-Recorder

OCA MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

OCA congratulates the following members for their accomplishments.

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom named Phil Ting as his choice to fill the vacant position of Assessor-Recorder. "Phil Ting is the best person in the city to bring reform to an office that needs it. He is a real professional who will keep politics out of this important job," said Newsom.

The Assessor-recorder's

Office is responsible for assessing and evaluating properties, recording and maintaining property titles, and raising tax revenues for the City and County of San Francisco. The Office has approximately 110 employees.

Phil is a past OCA-San Francisco Bay Chapter president, and since 2002, was

Executive Director for Asian Law Caucus, fighting for the rights of immigrants and non-English speaking residents in San Francisco. Raised in Southern California, he obtained his BA in Development Studies from UC Berkeley and his Masters in Public Policy from the John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.

CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS UNITE

With 4.6 million Asian and Pacific Islander Americans living in California, the state has both the largest population—one-third of all APIAs in the country—and the fastest growing. California is a major gateway for APIAs coming to mainland USA and faces many unique questions, ranging from how to provide engage APIA voters, many of whom do not speak English as a first language, to how to have a presence in the capital and on hot-button propositions and bill.

OCA's Convention in Las Vegas provided a perfect opportunity for the OCA California chapters to meet and strategize for the future. OCA has eight active chapters in the state, including Greater Los Angeles, East Bay (includes Oakland), Orange County/Inland Empire, Greater Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco Bay, San Mateo County, and Silicon Valley.

Led by Past National President Claudine Cheng, the chapters discussed the need to impact the state government in Sacramento, improve APIA appointments at all levels of government, show strength in numbers, serve areas where there are diverse and needy populations, and generally strengthen our state presence and infrastructure. In the past, the California chapters united to take stances on propositions (such as opposing the ban of collection of racial data) and speak out against social injustices (such as the Wen Ho Lee case or the hiring of the tsunami parody song writer and producer by a Bay Area radio station). Our united voice has provided a powerful catalyst for change.

The 22 people present at the meeting had a vivid discussion and decided that the California chapters could take collective action on statewide initiatives; work together on supporting APIA vote training and voter registration; organize chapter support of Sacramento's Legislative Day to meet with state lawmakers and staff; and develop a Rapid Response Network for hot-button issues.

If all goes well, communications and coordination between the California chapters will be facilitated by a pending grant from SBC to create a communications system that will link the chapters and websites, create list-serves for electronic newsletters and send out action alerts.

While a lot of challenges remain, all of the participants left with excitement about the possibilities of collaborating and supporting each other's efforts.

SUPPORT THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN EVACUEES OF HURRICANE KATRINA

OCA is actively soliciting donations for Asian Pacific American (APA) evacuees of Hurricane Katrina through its local chapter, OCA-Houston. Thousands of the 30,000 to 50,000 Vietnamese Americans and other APAs living in Louisiana have lost their homes and livelihoods to the hurricane. For many, this is the second time in their lives that they have had to flee their homes with little more than the clothes on their backs. OCA is also reaching out to OCA members and scholars in the GMS program who live, or may have lived, in the Gulf region and surrounding affected areas.

APAs have played an integral role in the hurricane relief efforts in other ways. For example, Sheriff Harry Lee of Jefferson Parish, a Chinese American who has been elected sheriff off and on since 1979, has been involved with on the ground relief efforts.

Congressman Bobby Jindal (R-LA), an Indian American who was elected in 2004 and has been left homeless by the hurricane, introduced the Student Grant Hurricane and Disaster Relief Act (H.R. 3368) in the House of Representatives. The legislation will provide waiver authority to the Secretary of Education and permit her to prevent low-income students from being forced to begin repaying their grants and scholarships in full if they have been forced to interrupt their studies due to the disaster. Without the waiver, the students affected would have been forced to begin repaying their grants and scholarships without any grace period. The bill was passed by Congress last week.

The city of Houston was one of the first cities to accept the displaced residents. OCA-Greater Houston has been active in working and supporting the APA social service agencies that are providing direct service support. This includes supporting organizations who are helping people with FEMA applications, food stamps, vouchers for prescription medicine to the non-insured, food, and other assistance.

The chapter has set-up an online donation system to assist in collecting donations for distribution to the two APIA community relief funds that do not have online donation capacity. Please give what you can. Go to www.oca-houston.org and click to make an online donation by credit card or Paypal. Funds will also be used to provide medical, food, shelter, and other basic needs.

Checks to may also be sent to CCC-Katrina CARE, 9800 Town Park, Houston, TX 77036, or to Houston Asian Relief from Katrina (HARK), c/o Council Member Gordon Quan, P.O. Box 1562, Houston, TX 77251. Your donation to either of these two organizations is tax deductible.

OCA LIFETIME MEMBERS

OCA would like to take this opportunity to highlight our Lifetime Members and salute them for their lifetime commitment and dedication to the organization.

We apologize if we have inadvertently omitted anyone from this list.

Please contact the OCA National Office at 202-223-5500 or oca@ocanatl.org to provide any updates you may have.

NAME	CHAPTER NAME	CITY AND STATE	NAME	CHAPTER NAME	CITY AND STATE
Mary Lee Au	Past National	President	Wen Ching Lee	Greater Houston	Houston, TX
Linda & Alan Bien	San Francisco Bay	Los Altos Hills, CA	David F. Lee III	San Francisco Bay	San Francisco, CA
Jason Bobadilla	Westchester Hudson Valley	Nesconset, NY	C. Joanna Lei	Westchester Hudson Valley	White Plains, NY
Charles & Alice Cha	Chicago	Northbrook, IL	Patrick Leung	Minnesota	New Brighton, MN
Flora & Shu-Wing Chan	San Mateo County	Hillsborough, CA	Kai Tung Li	Dallas/Ft. Worth	Arlington, TX
Alice Chang	Northern Virginia	Chantilly, VA	David Lin	New Jersey	Hillsborough, NJ
Colin Chang	Dallas/Ft. Worth	Arlington, TX	Michael Lin	Past National President	Potomac, MD
Jean Chang	Westchester/Hudson Valley	Scarsdale, NY	Pearl Lin	Fairfield County	New Canaan, CT
Theresa Chang	Greater Houston	Houston, TX	Dominic Ling	Greater Sacramento	Hong Kong
Felix Chao	Dallas/Ft. Worth	Arlington, VA	Frank Liu	Past National President	Pittsburgh, PA
Andrew Chen	Past National President	San Jose, CA	Alex Mark	Past National President	St. Petersburg, FL
Jane Chen	New Jersey	Westwood, NJ	George M. Ong	Past National President	San Francisco, CA
Claudine Cheng	Past National President	San Francisco, CA	Sam Ong	Greater Sacramento	Sacramento, CA
Jessie Cheng	Hawaii	Honolulu, HI	Karl Rosenberger	At-Large	Visalia, CA
Joe Chiu	Dallas/Ft. Worth	Ft Worth, TX	Paul Y. Sha	Greater Houston	Houston, TX
Michelle Chiu	Greater Los Angeles	San Gabriel, CA	Alfonso Tan	Long Island	Great River, NY
Chi-Ming Chow	Detroit	Ypsilanti, MI	Austin Tao	Past National President	St. Louis, MO
Jaclyn Allison Chu	Westchester Hudson Valley	Manhasset, NY	Peter To	Westchester Hudson Valley	Harrison, NY
Thomas Eng	Long Island	Maspeth, NY	Stanley F. Tseng	Eastern Virginia	Virginia Beach, VA
Frank C. S. Fang	Eastern Virginia	Williamsburg, VA	James Tso	Past National President	Sebastian, FL
Celine Fong	Westchester/Hudson Valley	Rye, NY	Keith Wang	New Jersey	Ramsey, NJ
George Gee	Greater Houston	Houston, TX	Kung Lee Wang	Past National President	Rockville, MD
Ginny Gong	Past National President	Gaithersburg, MD	Philip Wang	San Mateo County	Honolulu, HI
Hwa-Shan Ho	Greater Houston	Spring, TX	Stanley Wang	San Mateo County	Belmont, CA
Helen Y.H. Hui	San Francisco Bay	San Francisco, CA	Claire Faith Weinar	Detroit	Torrance, CA
Kenneth Hum	Greater Washington, DC	Arlington, VA	Andrew Wong	Long Island	Oakland, CA
Stanley Jsa	Kentuckiana	Louisville, KY	Dai-Shan Wong	Greater Houston	Houston, TX
Edward Kang	Long Island	Garden City, NY	David Wong	Long Island	Freeport, NY
William Kaung	Westchester Hudson Valley	Pelham Manor, NY	Martha J. Wong	Greater Houston	Houston, TX
William Kwan	Dallas/Ft. Worth	Fort Worth, TX	Raymond L. Wong	Past National President	Houston, TX
Cassandra Kwoh	Greater Los Angeles	Rolling Hills Estate, CA	S.B. Woo	Past National President	Newark, DE
Elaine Lai	Westchester Hudson Valley	Larchmont, NY	Moses & Margie Wu	Detroit	Troy, MI
Wai Ching Lam	At-Large	San Antonio, TX	Raymond Wu	Columbus	Dublin, OH
Albert Lau	Long Island	Garden City, NY	Robert Wu	Past National President	Hong Kong
Amy Lee	San Francisco Bay	San Francisco, CA	Victor Yau	Westchester Hudson Valley	W. Harrison, NY
David S. Lee	At-Large	N/A	Aiden C. Yee	Detroit	Plymouth, MI
Geoffrey Lee	Lehigh Valley	Allentown, PA	Jessie Lee Yip	San Francisco Bay	San Francisco, CA
Marjorie Lee	At Large	Los Angeles, CA	Mary Ann Yu	Westchester Hudson Valley	Los Altos Hills, CA
Robert E. Lee	San Francisco Bay	San Francisco, CA	Ai Zhen Xu & Qu Zhou	Detroit	Madison Heights, MI
Songbae Lee	Northern Virginia	Great Falls, VA			

ON THE HILL - LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Asian American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions

House Resolution 2616 was introduced on May 24, 2005 by Congressman David Wu (D-OR). Wu's office is drafting a letter to the General Accounting Office requesting that it investigate the disparity of higher education attainment among the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, the schools that serve large percentages of these students, and whether a federal grant program similar to Hispanic Serving Institutions would be beneficial to the AAPI community. National AAPI organizations, including OCA, are seeking to ensure that the findings of a report support the AAPI Serving Institutions bill and will serve to address disparities in higher education.

Higher Education Act Re-Authorization

The Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 is a large omnibus bill that covers all aspects of higher education. However, this year's bill includes large cuts to student financial aid and omits hate crime reporting language. HEA is the single largest piece of legislation governing most higher education programs, including all federal financial aid programs, graduate fellowships, childcare assistance and early intervention programs. It is re-authorized by congress every five to seven years; however, included this year among the language dealing with student loans and finances is proposed language that significantly reduces the access that poorer students have to college.

The House proposed reauthorization of HEA is HR 609 and includes drastic cuts to higher education funding, especially student loan programs. Additionally, the legislation imposes a mandatory 1 percent student fee for every student loan and makes fixed-rate loan consolidation more expensive. House Education and the Workforce Committee majority leadership also rejected a friendly amendment from Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA) that would fix the discrepancy in the reporting of college hate crimes with the FBI and the Department of Education.

Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act

The LLEEA passed the House by a decisive 223 to 199 bipartisan vote on September 14, taking a giant step toward giving law enforcement the tools they need to enforce and prosecute hate crimes against Americans based their race, color, religion, or national origin. The measure was passed as an amendment sponsored by Congressman Conyers, John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) to H.R. 3132, the "Children's Safety Act." In addition, the LLEEA would permit federal involvement in the prosecution of bias motivated crimes based on the victim's gender, sexual orientation, or disability.



NATIONAL CONVENTION SHOWCASES “FACES OF DIVERSITY” IN LAS VEGAS

To the resonating drum beats of the Las Vegas Kaminari Taiko Group, upbeat music of the Filipiniana Dance Troup, soulful songs of folk singer Cynthia Lin, and the soothing island rhythms of the Nani Ola Hawaiian Dance Company, OCA's 27th Annual National Convention kicked off on July 28 in the "City that Never Sleeps." As National President Ginny Gong and convention co-chairs Mia Youhne and Duy Nguyen of the OCA-Las Vegas Chapter welcomed nearly 500 attendees at the Welcome Reception, there was much excitement and anticipation for what the next four days would hold, beginning with the unveiling of an artist's rendering and announcement of the establishment of the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership in Washington, DC.

This year's convention was held on July 28-31 at Bally's Hotel, and the convention theme, "Faces of Diversity," very much reflects the Asian Pacific American community in Las Vegas and that of the OCA-Las Vegas chapter, whose members comprise Americans of Korean, Japanese, Hispanic-Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese and Chinese descents.

"Over the years, the Convention has evolved and expanded to meet the needs and demands of OCA members and convention participants. The workshop sessions, and the job fair and corporate exhibits are free to the public and this year's programs and activities added new components and offered something for everyone to enjoy," said OCA National President Ginny Gong.

The convention's opening session, "Changing Faces of Diversity," gave attendees an overview of the Asian and Pacific Islander population and the challenges and opportunities in today's society. Other workshops offered a wide variety of topics relevant to the APIA community, including: the history of APIAs in Nevada; mental health issues; technology; financial literacy; responding to stereotypes; and the impact of the media.

Chapter Advancement Tracks were

added to the program this year to provide the leadership of local OCA chapters with helpful information on organizational development, collaborations, and strategies utilizing knowledge gained on current issues pertinent to the APA community to take back to their communities. OCA chapters were also recognized with the Chapter Excellence Awards and the Chapter of the Year and Award at the Friday luncheon, and the long-awaited "Responding to Hate Crimes: A Community Action Guide" was unveiled during the Saturday luncheon.

There was also time for a little fun with a session on makeovers and fashion trends for APA men and women. But the fun didn't stop there. Convention goers also enjoyed attending a reception with food and dancing at MGM's Studio 54, followed by a showing of KA, Cirque du Soleil's newest show, followed by a dessert reception complete with ice cream sundae stations and salsa dancing lessons at the MGM.

One-day tracks were offered to high school and college students which consisted of workshops that provided them with opportunities to explore their leadership potential and to network and exchange ideas with peers on topics such as the media, education, activism and politics. The Student Scholarship Awards luncheon showcased the many scholarships OCA offers, and presentations were made to the recipients of the OCA/Avon Scholarship program. Tributes were also paid to the late Dr. John Tsu and the late Iris Chang during the luncheon and the 22 OCA interns from the Class of Summer 2005 were introduced.

The first National APA Corporate Affinity Groups Summit was convened for APA young professionals representing corporations from across the country to discuss issues of concern relevant to Corporate America. The one and one-half day summit included topics such as regional affinity groups; best practices; lessons learned; individual development; and group development.

The convention also had keynote speakers who inspired and motivated the

attendees. Minnesota State Senator Mee Moua and NASA astronaut Leroy Chiao encouraged their audiences to reach for the stars and to think that anything was possible with hard work and perseverance. The State of Asian Pacific America Summit provided an Oprah-like talk show setting for a discussion on the importance of running for elected office and the impact of the 2004 elections.

And there was more. Nearly 1,000 participants visited the free job fair and corporate exhibits, where over 60 government entities and public and private sector companies were given an opportunity to recruit potential employees from the APA population. Companies also had a chance to showcase their products and services.

The highlight of the convention was the Gala Awards banquet, attended by over 800 guests who watched as OCA presented its highest honor, the Outstanding Citizen Achievement Award, to the late Congressman Robert Matsui and to former Washington State Governor Gary Locke, for their contributions and commitment to the APA community. Also presented with awards were recipients of the OCA/General Motors Unsung Hero Volunteer Awards, and the OCA/UPS Gold Mountain Scholarship recipients. The evening culminated with the live auctioning of a one of a kind poster, a composite of five mosaic faces pieced together with over 900 photos donated by our very own "undisputed unofficial Asian American Photographer Laureate," Corky Lee. With all the interns on stage cheering and encouraging the bids to soar, and thanks to fast talking emcee and auctioneer David Louie, the poster sold for \$3,888. All proceeds from the auction of the poster went to support the internship fund.

"I am amazed at the diversity of the participants and attendees of this year's convention," said Gong. "We've come a long way from our beginnings as a national organization of and for Chinese Americans, to one that is now nationally recognized as a major pan-Asian American organization headquartered in our nation's capital," she added.

BUILDING A STRONGER APA PRESENCE IN CORPORATE AMERICA

The second National Corporate Affinity Network Summit was held this year as part of OCA's National Convention in Las Vegas. With participants representing over 12 organizations from various regions, the Summit began with several workshops, continued with a lunch, and ended with panel discussions and a keynote speaker. Sponsored by Mercedes Benz USA, the Summit was facilitated by the Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP).



During the breakfast sessions, LEAP facilitated a group session that allowed participants to discuss their current perception on who they are at home and at work, versus a vision of their ideal situation. The participants were instructed to use pictures to describe the comparisons and discuss their pictorials in front of the group. Their own depiction helped participants to visualize personal goals.

The second session was facilitated in small groups where participants talked among themselves about the current status of affinity groups at their organizations and best and worst practices. Membership development and gaining support from executive level employees were two dominant discussion points.

The afternoon sessions were organized as panel discussions. The first group of panelists included Joyce Chan from the Corporate Asian American Employee Network (CANE) in San Francisco, Natalie Chin with the Asian Pacific Islander American Corporate Leadership Network in New York, Vijay Sharma with the Midwest Asian American Business Network in Chicago, and Fonda Wu with the South Bay Asian American Network in Los Angeles. They gave an overview of how their affinity groups coordinate and work together as a regional entity. The panel members described how they were able to make an impact in addressing issues that APA employees are facing and share resources and lessons with this infrastructure in place.

The second panel comprised of Bill Imada with the IW Group, Linda Akutagawa from LEAP, and Christine Chen with OCA. They spoke with participants on how proper positioning of an affinity group can expand their roles in providing training, working strategically on addressing issues such as the glass ceiling, and providing input on services and products provided to the community.

Imada gave the participants several tips in the form of two acronyms "RESPECT" and "LUCKY."

Respect is something all groups want from their corporation and constituencies. Skill and luck are needed for connections, media, and exposure. "RESPECT" stood for research, education, support, partners, evaluate, create, taste and "LUCKY" stood for local angle, unique programming, conflict, known quantities, yield benefit of numbers.

The Summit closed with comments by Wes Hom, Vice President of Market Development for IBM. He spoke candidly about the realities of being an Asian Pacific American in corporate America. In his speech, he insisted that Asians strategize their path to executive leadership by taking action towards putting themselves in the pipeline for promotion. Many APAs are hired into technology oriented jobs, but very few transition into management positions as well as transcend up the corporate ladder. Hom suggested that APAs open themselves to the opportunities in departments such as human resources, sales, and finance, since those are the departments that lead to promotions into management. Another important step APAs can take is finding a mentor who can help them learn the realities of what it takes to climb the corporate ladder. He noted his mentor was not Asian American, rather he was African American. Hom also emphasized that when we are working our way up, we must not have the "us versus them" mentality. We need to show that we bring value to the table by doing our job very well, and that we have leadership potential. Our personal success, Hom said, relies on planning ahead, persistence, and motivation.

OCA CHAPTERS TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT IN CHAPTER EXCELLENCE AND CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The strength of OCA lies in its 50 chapters and grassroots activities across the country. Without the outstanding work of the members and the leadership at the local level, OCA would not be where it is today.

In recognition of the contributions and commitment demonstrated by our chapters on a 24/7 basis, the Chapter Excellence and the Chapter of the Year awards were presented this year during the Friday luncheon at the National Convention in Las Vegas.

The OCA Chapter of the Year Award is the organization's highest honor bestowed to an OCA chapter. Selection of the winner is based on membership retention and/or growth, financial support to OCA National, support of national programs and projects, and local community involvement. This year's Chapter of the Year went to the OCA Long Island chapter.

"OCA-LI truly deserves this award. The hard work the chapter has done shows and is reflective in its pursuits of OCA's goal and mission," said OCA National Vice President of Chapter Development Virginia L. Ng. The Greater Los Angeles chapter took second place and Greater Houston and New Jersey chapters tied for third place.

The Chapter Excellence Award for Projects and Programs is awarded to a chapter for outstanding projects that impact its members and local community. The South Florida chapter placed first this year, followed the Greater Seattle and Long Island chapter in a tie for second place, and Greater Houston and Greater Los Angeles chapters tied for third place.

First place for the Chapter Excellence Award for Community Involvement was presented to the Central Illinois chapter for providing role models for youth, outreaching to the media, and educating the APA community and the general public. The Long Island chapter placed second, followed by the South Florida chapter in third.

The Chapter Excellence Award for Advocacy is awarded to the chapter that has been effective in bringing issues such as equal liberties, civil rights and hate crimes to the attention of their local media and elected officials. First place went to the Long Island chapter, followed by the New Jersey chapter with second place and the Greater Seattle chapter with third place.

Communications, both internal and external, is important to foster a sense of community within OCA. A chapter's newsletter and/or website is essential in conveying OCA's messages to the public. First place for the Chapter Excellence Award for Communications was presented to the Long Island chapter. The Central Illinois chapter took second place and the Greater Los Angeles took third place.

First place for the Chapter Excellence Award for Economic Development was won by the Greater Los Angeles chapter. This award seeks to recognize a chapter for distinguished events/projects that advances economic development in its local community and strengthens the financial security of the chapter and OCA National. The Greater Houston chapter placed second and the Long Island chapter placed third.

The New England chapter took first place honors for the Chapter Excellence Award for Membership, which is presented to the chapter with the greatest percent increase in membership. The Utah chapter also made impressive gains in membership to garner second place and the Eastern Virginia and Central Illinois chapters tied for third.

OCA would like to express its thanks and appreciation to the judges who generously gave of their time and commitment to judging the Chapter Excellence and Chapter of the Year Awards.

Rogene Gee Calvert

George Y. Cha

Grace Chen

Jack Hom

Roland Hwang

Daphne Kwok

Jhemon Lee

Ken Lee

Linda Ng

Cindy Tong

Rosemary Watts

Sharon Wong

David Yao



UNsung HEROES SHINE AT 2005 NATIONAL CONVENTION

In partnership with General Motors Corporation, ten extraordinary individuals were selected for the OCA/GM Unsung Hero Volunteer Awards, in recognition of each of their outstanding contributions to OCA. Recipients were extended an all-expense paid trip to Las Vegas, where they were honored during the Gala Awards Banquet at the OCA National Convention. Representing GM to present the awards was Matt Tsien, Executive Director, Vehicle Systems for General Motors North America Product Development.

These individuals far exceeded expectations both as members of their respective chapters and as contributors to OCA as a whole. They were recognized for their commitment and passion, for continuing to strengthen OCA, and for their inspirational efforts in support of great causes.



Thomas Chien of the Fairfield County Chapter has been an active OCA member since 1990. He has been serving on

the Board as Treasurer for five years. Fairfield County Chapter President Jy-Gon Su praises Tom for his role as “main captain” at the annual Oyster Festival where he organizes the food booths and manages the volunteer recruitment process.



For over 30 years, **Cora May Chin** has been a member and a valued affiliate of OCA. After many years as a member of the Long Island chapter, she moved to Chicago and immediately became involved with that chapter, resulting in a series of noteworthy contributions. She helped organize the 1997 OCA National Convention in Chicago and volunteers as co-Chair for the Annual Gala Committee. She is also a presenter for several seminars in which she shares her China travel experiences.

James Chu, Treasurer and Webmaster of his chapter is the Westchester Hudson Valley Chapter’s choice nominee. As the only board member who holds two positions, his role at OCA has been



extensive and admirable. As Treasurer, he was instrumental in pulling together a proposal and successfully obtaining a \$10,000 grant from Verizon. As webmaster, he maintains and updates the Chapter website. His most recent task to convert the membership database from excel to an online database has helped various duties more efficient and their operations run smoothly. Despite recent major hip surgery, James continued serving the chapter by attending events or undertaking other responsibilities.



Since his introduction to the organization in 1999, **Michael Head** has continually played a key role in serving the Greater Sacramento Chapter as Secretary, Vice President, and now Director. Michael is one of the founding members of two of OCA-GSC’s most successful events: the

Annual Reception at the Capitol promoting civic participation and access to political leaders; and the Annual Lunar New Year Seniors Luncheon, which honors Sacramento's senior citizens. Michael also revived the newsletter as Editor; and as Historian, manages the chapter's archives by preserving and documenting history and events that the organization has supported, sponsored or attended.



New York Chapter's list of contributions for **Leo Y. Lee** runs extensively; he has been involved in almost every facet of the chapter's activities and programs. He has served as the Chair of Public Affairs by raising public awareness and acting as spokesperson; Chair of the Sponsorship Committee to raise funds for the annual Gala; the Finance Committee to improve revenue reports; the Communications Committee for development of their website; the Nominating and Election Committee as an advisor; and the Newsletter Committee as a contributor and photographer.



Former high school counselor **Linda Lee**, nominated by New Jersey Chapter President Jeffrey R. Chan, serves on what he describes as the two most important committees: the Holiday Ball and the Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Scholarship and Intern Awards Programs. She has been the driving force behind the Holiday Ball's silent auction, as well as on the essay contest for

scholarships. She has also spent her time researching and processing the attaining a bulk mail permit, which has contributed financially to the Chapter's funds.



The Greater Los Angeles Chapter nominated **Colleen Seto**, a past Chapter President and current active contributor of the chapter. In addition to securing donations and reconnecting the chapters to funders such as Cathay Bank and UPS, she also continues to act as the liaison for the annual Asian Pacific American Legal Center Toy Drive as well as their Citizenship Workshop. Stacey Toda, the current president, explains:



Greater Houston Chapter's **Kim Szeto** has been the main contributor to many of its main events, such as the Flower Drum Song show, dinner, and reception with David Henry Hwang, and the April 2004 launch reception hosted by the chapter for the APIA Scholarship Fund. Her most commendable contribution, however, is her work with the annual "They Served with Honor" Awards Banquet, where outstanding APIA employees and community leaders are recognized for their achievements. The Chapter describes her as the driving force who manages everything from the booking of the hotel to details such as writing the script for the speakers.

The Eastern Virginia Chapter recognized **Dr. Leon Wang**, a past Chapter President and Honorable Life Member. His



achievements include advocating for the passage of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB) amendments; organizing the chapter's 2004 Legislative Forum; Heading the VAAB Public Hearing and Reception in Norfolk; evaluating Chinese American college students to receive President Chao Nee's scholarship; organizing a luncheon meeting for Old Dominion University retired professors; and many other significant contributions to the chapter. He is described by Past Chapter President Stewart Shen as a person of uncompromising commitment, unceasing dedication, full enthusiasm, and selfless efforts.



Long Island Chapter Executive Vice President **Gladys Yan** is Long Island's nominee for the award. As VP, she has chaired the OCA-LI dinner dance gala where she covered all aspects ranging from the dinner menu to business sponsorships. She also stays highly active in the community and OCA- and APA-related events and organizations such as the James Yee Fundraiser in New York Chinatown; the Asian Pacific Americans Voter Alliance; Martin Luther King Celebration; the CUNY School of Law and their efforts to establish a relationship with the Flushing business community; and two Stony Brook University symposiums, entitled "With Liberty and Justice for All" and "Emerging Opportunities." She was also responsible for OCA-LI's decision to pledge \$10,000 for the National Building Campaign.



**EXCERPTS FROM
GARY LOCKE
SPEECH
AT THE NATIONAL
CONVENTION
GALA AWARDS
BANQUET**

July 30, 2005, Las Vegas, NV

I'm proud of the contributions the Chinese have made to civilization over the course of thousands of years, from the arts and architecture, to the philosophies and religions of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. I'm proud of the countless innovations and inventions, including the abacus, the seismograph, silk, and cast iron. The compass, the clock, gunpowder, and of course, fireworks. Paper, the printing press, acupuncture, and herbal medicine. Proud of the countless achievements advancing technology and science. Proudest of all, perhaps, the timeless values of family, of honor, and respect that are so central to Chinese culture.

And I'm proud that here in America, the Chinese have continued to make this legacy of advancing civilization. Six Chinese Americans are Nobel Laureates in Chemistry and physics. The ongoing legacy of professors Wong Ying Lei, a pioneer in insulin synthesis, and David Ho, at the forefront of the fight against AIDS. From An Wang's remarkable contributions to computer technology, to Jerry Yang's development of Yahoo!, the most used website on the planet. Our legacy continues. We see that in the great architectural achievements of I.M. Pei. We feel it in Maya Lin's profoundly moving design of the Vietnam War Memorial. And our proud legacy sings in the music of cellist Yo-Yo Ma, and glides gracefully on the ice with Michelle Kwan.

Our families began this journey as immigrants. The Chinese helped build the railroads, worked in the goldmines, logged the forest for the wood that would become cities and towns and factories and homes, they farmed the land to feed the nation, and they fought in world wars to keep America safe and free. Because our ancestors gave their blood, sweat and tears, to build and defend this prosperous America, we have every right; indeed we have the responsibility to help set the policies that affect this country and our people, and that means getting politically involved. We have shown that we can challenge the glass ceiling thorough political involvement, and empowerment, and excellence in the arts, science business technology and government. We can challenge the glass ceiling and indeed, we can shatter it. We still have a ways to go on this journey.

Because it was not long ago that the Alien Land Laws made it illegal for non-citizens, including the Chinese, to own land here in America. We can never be complacent. We must remain constantly vigilant against injustice. And that has never been more important than right now, today. There are those who question our government policies. And those who question our government policies are now wrongly criticized for being unpatriotic by the very people who have forgotten what democracy and freedom actually mean.

Having faced hardships and discrimination in the past, Asian Americans must make it crystal clear that we will never abdicate our basic freedoms and our constitutional rights. We must never tolerate injustices and discrimination against Asian Americans or any American. America is a land of immigrants, whether first generation or tenth generation. Whether our ancestors came here voluntarily or involuntary.

Our diversity of people, cultures and religions is the source of our nation's strength, ingenuity and amazing progress. And when our society embraces its rich diversity, we reach for the highest, best potential of civilization in each of its people. We must always work towards such a society and such a world. A world with no glass ceilings, and with ample economic, social and political opportunities for everyone. For us, for our children, and future generations.

Twenty-six years ago, my family came to the United States, fresh from a refugee camp in Thailand. Speaking no English and without any skills or means to make a living, we were hopeful and determined to make some kind of a life in this country. In my recollection, that optimism stood in sharp contrast to the cold and hostile welcome we had to contend with as we struggled to adjust to life in this country.

Even more significant was the fact that we came to this country at a time when the Vietnam conflict was still fresh and hurtful in the American psyche. When we first arrived, many of our white neighbors saw us as surrogates for the Vietcong in Southeast Asia. And because most white Americans don't know Asia, or for that matter, can't distinguish one group of Asians from another, we would often get called 'chinks,' or 'gooks,' or get the slanty Chinese-eyed gesture; and many times we were told to go back to China. I remember walking to school with my brothers and sisters and having cars stop next to us, whose occupants often greeted us with the middle finger.

As a first-year student at Brown University, I discovered for the first time, words and vocabularies that spoke to my negative experiences, which articulated and gave voice to the heavy, silent weight in the pit of my stomach. I learned the principles of diversity, and pluralism, and racism, and my newfound understandings of these principles liberated me, gave me a political voice, and have come to shape the political person that I am today. I learned that diversity beyond political correctness speaks to an understanding that each and every one of us comes from very specific cultural, religious, political and economic conditions, and that those forces are tremendously powerful in how they shape our thoughts, our words, and affect our actions.

Today, as a sitting Senator in the Minnesota State Senate, I am profoundly aware of the ultimate power that I have, and I constantly seek to check myself and my every action. I have come to believe that the stroke of a pen is much, much more harmful than the strike of a baseball bat. You hate someone, you hit them with a baseball bat, they are hurt, but they will heal. As a policymaker, when I cut a specific program, when I eliminate a specific category of persons from eligibility, when I take away investments in education, healthcare, and job creation, I not only hurt families today, but I have crippled the generations to come.

When I was first sworn into office back in January of 2002, our country was still reeling from the attacks of September 11. This brought Americans together and united us like never before. But only for one moment. In the four years that I have been a member of the Minnesota legislature, I have experienced more hostility and am more afraid than I have ever been in my 27 years as a political refugee living in this country. Propagated at the national level and permeating throughout state and local governments is an effect of parochial partisan politics that is devoid of compassion and vision. A politics of hate and divisiveness, a politics based on defining who is and is not an American, mostly people who look like me are not Americans, a politics that thrives on defining who is and is not a patriot, again, mostly people who look like me are not, and a politics whose alleged compassionate principles demands a definition of who is and is not deserving of government's resources, mostly those that are affluent and influential are deserving so that they can stimulate the economy, and definitely not the most vulnerable among us, especially the youngest and the oldest among us.



**EXCEPTS FROM
KEYNOTE SPEECH
BY MEE MOUA AT
CHAPTER
RECOGNITION
AWARDS
LUNCHEON**

July 29, 2005

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OCA would like to acknowledge and thank the sponsors of the 2005 OCA National Convention for their support and commitment to the organization and the APA community.

SPECIAL EVENT SPONSORS

Abercrombie & Fitch

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VIP Reception

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OCA/GM Unsung Heroes Volunteer Awards

Harrah's Entertainment

Convention Pocket Agendas

IBM Corporation

Silver Level Gala Awards Banquet

Kraft Foods Global, Inc.

Gold Level Gala Awards Banquet

MGM MIRAGE

FOD – Fames, Opportunities, Dreams Reception

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National Asian Pacific American Corporate Affinity Groups

Summit

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NATIONAL BUILDING CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Unveiling the Vision: A National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership

During OCA's 27th annual National Convention this past July in Las Vegas, the OCA National Building Campaign achieved four significant milestones.

I. Establishment of a National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership

The National Board adopted a resolution and unanimously adopted the establishment of a National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership as the mission of the National Building Campaign. This concept was conceived during a strategic planning meeting of the National Building Campaign Steering Committee in June, which was attended by members of the Executive Council, Business Advisory Council Chair David L. Kim, and trustees of the OCA Endowment Fund.

II. Establishment of the OCA Legacy Fund

The National Board adopted a resolution to establish the OCA Legacy Fund, which will be the account for designated funds raised for the purpose of purchasing of a building in which the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership (National Center) will be established. In proposing this resolution, the Building Campaign Steering Committee believes that the name "Legacy Fund" more accurately represents the mission of the National Center, which is to "Build a Legacy for

Future Generations." All previous pledges and contributions made towards the building campaign are effectively rolled over to the Legacy Fund for purposes of accounting.

III. Unveiling of a Rendering of the National Center

A rendering of the National Center, produced by the renowned architecture firm of Patri Merker Architects, was unveiled by National President Ginny Gong, Building Campaign Chair Claudine Cheng and former Building Campaign Chair Dr. Michael Lin.

While the rendering is for purposes of illustration only, it definitely drew much excitement from all who attended the convention and gave everyone a visual of the possibilities. As the old saying goes (and is very true), "a picture is worth a thousand words."

Upon unveiling the rendering, National President Ginny Gong stated, "For more than three decades, OCA has demonstrated its leadership at the local and national levels. We have been a passionate voice for Asian Americans throughout the nation, and we have been visionary in our efforts to facilitate the gathering of hearts and minds. It is now time for us to once again set our sights on a new horizon and lead the effort to establish a permanent presence in the nation's capital."

According to Cheng, "The establishment of a National Center for

Asian Pacific American Leadership is a logical next step in the history and development of OCA. Since its founding in 1973, OCA has been dedicated to 'Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans.' Over the years, creating opportunities to nurture the future leaderships of our community has been a center piece of OCA's programs."

IV. Announcement of a Plan to Acknowledge Donors

The National Building Campaign Steering Committee has adopted a plan where each and every individual contributing to the National Center is a part of the community's legacy at the National Center.

In essence, every person or organization that contributes \$1,000.00 or above will have an opportunity to designate a name of the donor's choice (individual, family, or organization) to be inscribed on a wall at the National Center. Location of the inscription will be in accordance to the various levels of giving.

The Steering Committee believes this to be an appropriate and wonderful way for contributors of the Legacy Fund to be part of the community legacy that the establishment of the National Center will embody and promote. All previous contributions meeting the same criteria of giving will be honored with the same name inscription opportunity.

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

The Steering Committee announced an updated plan that offers naming opportunities for contributions at certain specific levels of giving. Please refer to page ___ of this issue of IMAGE for details or contact Claudine Cheng, Building Campaign Chair, at claudinec@earthlink.net

Watch for the next issue of IMAGE for further news on the National Center.

PLEASE ACT TODAY!

We need your help and support today. Any new contributions that meet the criteria of the Legacy Challenge Fund will be matched by the generous pledges of George Y. Cha and Ken Lee.

Honor a special someone!

Take advantage of the wonderful opportunity to honor your family and/or friends by making a minimum contribution of \$1,000 and designate a name to be included on a wall within the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership in Washington, D.C.

Continuing the Tradition of Giving Back

As long-time OCA members, my wife Cecilia and I have always felt strongly that our national office should be housed in its own building with other APA advocacy organizations. Having a permanent home will help elevate feasibility and effectiveness of OCA. Like many other major corporations, my employer, Frito-Lay/Pepsico, offers a matching gift program for charity. In addition, employees actively involved in non-profit organizations are qualified for double matching. I encourage other OCA members and friends to take advantage of similar programs with their companies to help expedite the fundraising process.

— Henry Leung,
Past Chapter President
OCA-DFW Chapter

Why the Center is Important

The effort of OCA to establish the National Center for Asian Pacific American leadership is so important. The Center will house in Washington DC the national headquarters for OCA, but will also bring together other Asian American organizations that are committed to addressing the economic, social and political needs of all Asian Americans. The Center will also be a place for our children to learn of the hard work and sacrifices in achieving the American dream. It will give the next generation a sense of permanence and roots.

— Gary Locke
Former Governor, State of Washington

The establishment of this Center will have tremendous impact in the nation's capital and across the country. It is a message to America, and to policy makers such as myself, that not only is the Asian and Pacific Islander American community united in speaking with one voice, it is now united as an entity in this facility. This Center will also serve not only to strengthen our collaborative efforts and give our community access to the elected officials on Capitol Hill, but give legislators direct and easy access to our community as well.

— Congressman Mike Honda
Chair, Congressional APA Caucus

The Asian Pacific American Program at the Smithsonian Institution has hosted half-a-dozen exhibits from across the nation in various museums on the National Mall, but we desperately need additional space to represent our diversity and rich experiences. OCA would provide a fantastic service by building in flexible space for our communities to share in the Nation's capital.

— Franklin Odo
Director, APA Programs, Smithsonian Institution

The OCA Center building initiative is a milestone opportunity for OCA to propel itself to a higher level in its pursuit of its vision and fulfillment of mission. Supporting this key initiative is a truly exciting prospect for the BAC because it means that a select group of corporations will be part of a defining moment in OCA and Asian Pacific American community history – one that will see OCA cross a critical threshold and emerge as an even stronger community-based institution.

— David L. Kim, Chair,
Business Advisory Council
Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

RISE TO THE CHALLENGE!

LEGACY CHALLENGE FUND 2005

WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE FUND?

On July 29, 2005 during the National Convention, Building Campaign Vice-Chair George Y. Cha and OCA National Vice President of Economic Development Ken Lee announced their collective pledges of \$200,000.00 to establish the Legacy Challenge Fund. This challenge fund is intended to motivate contributions for the purchase of a building to establish the National Center and expand the donor base for the Legacy Fund for a period of 18 months following the announcement date (July 29, 2005).

HOW DOES IT WORK?

George Cha and Ken Lee will fulfill their collective pledges of \$200,000 if a total of \$200,000 is contributed on or before January 29, 2007 ("funds in the pool"). If the challenged fund is met, then George and Ken will put in their \$200,000, netting the Legacy Fund a total of \$400,000.

WHAT CONTRIBUTIONS ARE APPLICABLE TO FUNDS IN THE POOL?

Any donation to the Legacy Fund pledged on or after July 29, 2005 through January 29, 2007, which include the following:

- a. Donations not previously pledged or contributed as of July 29, 2005;
- b. An incremental increase of an existing pledge prior to July 29, 2005, and;
- c. Any donations made on or after July 29, 2005.

WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE POOL?

- a. Individuals
- b. OCA chapters who give collectively as a chapter
- c. Private family foundations

Please note that contributions from corporate and public foundations are excluded from the pool.

Building a Legacy for Future Generations
THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

**GUIDELINE FOR DONOR RECOGNITION AND
 ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Donation Level	Recognition Level	Acknowledgement
Up to \$999.99	Community Friend	Recognition in newsletter, annual report, website
\$1,000.00-4,999.00	Community Supporter	Published recognition plus permanent inscription in building
\$5,000.00-9,999.00	Community Leader	Published recognition plus permanent inscription in building
\$10,000-24,999.00	Community Builder	Published recognition plus permanent inscription in building
\$25,000.00-99,999.00	Community Mover	Published recognition plus permanent inscription in building
\$100,000.00 & above	Community Patron	Published recognition plus permanent inscription in building

NOTE:

Permanent acknowledgment locations within building will be determined by the OCA Building Campaign according to Recognition Levels.

All contributions payable to the OCA Legacy Fund will benefit the OCA Building Campaign for the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership in Washington D.C.

OCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions to the OCA Legacy Fund is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Guideline for Donor Recognition and Acknowledgment effective as of August 1, 2005.

Building a Legacy for Future Generations
THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

GUIDELINE FOR NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

FACILITY	CONTRIBUTION REQUESTED
Building	\$ 5,000,000.00
Exhibit Gallery	\$ 2,000,000.00
Floor	\$ 1,000,000.00
Main Conference Room	\$ 500,000.00
Library	Committed
Small Conference Room	\$ 250,000.00
Multimedia Technology Center	\$ 500,000.00
Lounge (each)	\$ 50,000.00
Office (each)	\$ 25,000.00

NOTE:

All contributions payable to the OCA Legacy Fund will benefit the OCA Building Campaign for the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership in Washington, D.C.

OCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions to the OCA Legacy Fund is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Guideline for Naming Opportunities effective as of August 1, 2005.

The OCA Building Campaign committee welcomes the opportunities to discuss any ideas pertaining to naming opportunities that are not published in this guideline.

OCA NATIONAL BUILDING CAMPAIGN

Legacy Fund Donors Acknowledgement

We thank the following contributors to the Legacy Fund for the OCA National Building Campaign for helping the establishment of the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership become a reality.

We regret if we have unintentionally and inadvertently omitted anyone from the following acknowledgment list for a donation or pledge made to date.

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George and Assunta Cha
Ken and Karen Lee
Chi Wang

COMMUNITY MOVER (\$25,000 - \$99,999)

Jessie and Claudine Cheng
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COMMUNITY BUILDER (\$10,000 - \$24,999)

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Jy-Hong and Ching-hua Su
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William and Annie Tao
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 Irene Wu
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 Ray Wu
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OCA NATIONAL BUILDING CAMPAIGN

OCA Chapters Acknowledgement

We thank the following OCA Chapters for generously pledging and contributing to the Legacy Fund to help establish the National Center for Asian Pacific American Leadership.

We regret if we have unintentionally and inadvertently omitted anyone from the following acknowledgment list for a donation or pledge made to date.

COMMUNITY MOVER (\$25,000 - 99,999)

New Jersey
Westchester Hudson Valley

COMMUNITY BUILDER (\$10,000 - 24,999)

Dallas/Fort Worth
Eastern Virginia
Greater Houston
Greater Seattle
Long Island

COMMUNITY LEADER (\$5,000 - 9,999)

Chicago
Greater Washington, DC
Greater Sacramento
Hawaii
Las Vegas
San Francisco Bay
San Mateo
South Florida

COMMUNITY SUPPORTER (\$1,000 - 4,999)

Columbus
Georgia
Greater Philadelphia
New England
New York
Northern Virginia
Wisconsin

COMMUNITY FRIEND (UP TO \$999)

Detroit



"Members of the BAC benefit greatly by being associated with OCA. There is great value in having their company identified within the community as being associated with a premiere national pan-Asian organization. Corporate representatives have an opportunity to share ideas with other strong diverse companies on the Council; and by gaining knowledge and insight into the APA communities' issues and concerns, their company can become a better corporate citizen and community supporter."

David L. Kim, BAC Chair
 Director, Sales and Community Relations
 Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

OCA BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL 2005

FOOD AND BEVERAGE



AUTOMOTIVE



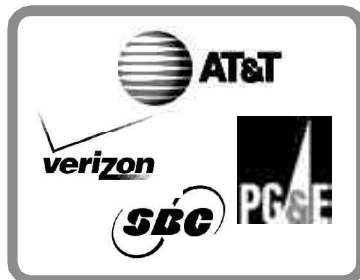
DIRECT SALES AND SERVICE



TECHNOLOGY



UTILITIES



INSURANCE



TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY



WHERE BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY BRIDGE HEARTS AND MINDS

The OCA Business Advisory Council

For more information on becoming a BAC member, contact David Chu, Development Manager at the OCA National Office at 202-223-5500 or at dchu@ocanatl.org.

Founded in 1980, the OCA Business Advisory Council (BAC) is a vital link between OCA and the business community, providing financial, professional, and corporate guidance to the organization.

Comprised of key representatives from Fortune 500 companies located around the country, the BAC's goals are to:

- Foster principles of diversity and opportunities for Asian Pacific Americans (APAs);
- Nurture business opportunities that are mutually beneficial to OCA and BAC members;
- Promote and increase the awareness of APA culture and issues; and
- Advise OCA on strategies to enhance its organizational and operational effectiveness.

Benefits of Joining the BAC

Business partners benefit from an array of personal, professional and community development opportunities through their involvement in the BAC. Partners collaborate with other talented and outstanding business and community partners on projects that will enhance the corporation's reputation and have a far-reaching impact in the communities it serves. There are many other reasons to

become a BAC partner:

- It allows corporate partners to share OCA's vision and strong belief in equity;
- It demonstrates corporate commitment to diversity in the workplace;
- It provides an opportunity to forge relationships with other corporate representatives who share a similar interest in the Asian market;
- It publicly demonstrates corporate commitment to OCA and the APA community; and
- It's good business practice.

BAC and OCA Working Together

BAC members are loyal supporters of OCA's annual events such as the Asian Pacific American Corporate Achievement Awards Banquet, which celebrates the accomplishments of APAs in the corporate sector, and the OCA National Convention.

BAC members also contribute to OCA in other meaningful ways. Through their respective corporate and community foundations, OCA's corporate partners have supported worthwhile endeavors such as scholarship and internship programs, leadership development for youth, special outreach and education programs, and various innovative community projects.

"The BAC is another example of OCA's strategic partnerships. Its members share OCA's commitment to civic responsibility and diversity. The BAC's association with a national pan-Asian American organization provides the corporations with valuable knowledge and insight into the APA community's issues and needs. It's a win-win for OCA and the BAC."

— Ginny Gong, OCA National President

"The BAC is an increasingly valuable resource to corporations and the communities in which these companies do business. The BAC member partnerships that are developed through support of programs benefiting Americans of Asian descent also create opportunities for companies to gain deeper access to diverse global markets."

— David L. Kim, BAC Chair, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

WAVE OF CONTROVERSY CONTINUES

Fired Tsunami Song Parody Producer Hired at San Francisco Station

On July 7 of this year, the OCA-Silicon Valley chapter was contacted by the San Jose Mercury News to comment on rumors that Rick Delgado, twice-fired radio show producer and composer of the infamous "Tsunami Song" parody, had been hired to produce a morning show on Wild 94.9 (KYLD-FM) to air in the San Francisco Bay Area. Wild 94.9 is owned by Clear Channel Communication, Inc. Delgado, it was confirmed, was hired to produce the station's new morning show, "Strawberry in the Morning."

The Silicon Valley chapter issued a press release that day, warning Delgado, the radio station and its parent company that they will be held accountable by a significant APA community for racially offensive programming. Jeffrey Lee, co-President of the Silicon Valley chapter, commented, "The Tsunami Song aired at a time of great tragedy. The responsibility for the insensitivity to the pain and suffering of over 200,000 tsunami victims and for the racially offensive content of the January broadcasts toward Asians and Africans lay squarely on Mr. Delgado." He added, "We expect that he has learned from his experiences in New York that

he and his employers will be held accountable by listeners and advertisers for any similar broadcast. The Silicon Valley Chapter of OCA represents a region comprised of 26% Asian Pacific Americans that make listener and consumer choices on a daily basis. Mr. Delgado and his new station are well-advised to consider the potential impact of airing a 'Tsunami Song'-like show on Bay Area airwaves." The Mercury News published its story in print and on-line media the next day. "Strawberry in the Morning" commenced on-air broadcasts on July 11.

Previously, the Silicon Valley – and other OCA chapters — had joined the national condemnation of broadcasts of the inappropriate and racially offensive Tsunami Song parody that aired repeatedly on New York City's HOT 97 FM morning radio show in January 2005. Many of that show's advertisers withdrew after the protests of a community coalition that included OCA National and its chapters, other prominent Asian American organizations, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ("NAACP"). Among the advertisers withdrawing support were McDonalds, Sprint, Reebok, and Toyota. Todd Lynn, the on-air host of the HOT 97 morning show, and Delgado, its producer, were ultimately fired. Emmis Communications, owner of HOT 97, stated that it would donate \$1 million to tsunami relief efforts.

After the July 8 San Jose Mercury News story was published, the local APA community's responses included

demands for Delgado's termination, calls for boycotts of the station, petitions to Clear Channel, and demands to meet with the station, among others.

After a short period of monitoring the show, the Northern California OCA Chapters (comprising East Bay, Sacramento, San Francisco Bay, San Mateo County and Silicon Valley chapters), agreed that deterrence was as important as responding to Delgado's hiring, and formed an ad hoc committee to monitor the "Strawberry in the Morning" show. It was also agreed that Wild 94.9 and Clear Channel must provide the community with an explanation of Delgado's hiring and remain accountable for offensive programming incidents.

OCA and the APA community continue to pressure Clear Channel and the radio station. On August 22, OCA San Francisco Bay chapter representative Yu Yee Wu echoed the Silicon Valley chapter's message, reminding the station and its parent that the APA community is closely monitoring the programming of the morning show in an interview with KTSF, a San Francisco-based Chinese-language television station. More recently, on September 16, the Youth Media Council, a local non-profit organization dedicated to media justice, organized a rally to protest Wild 94.9 and Clear Channel's unresponsiveness to community concerns. APA groups including the Chinese for Affirmative Action and Asian Law Caucus were in attendance to speak out against Delgado's hiring. The OCA Northern California chapters will continue to monitor the situation.

ANOTHER CHANCE AT LIFE - DAVID WONG LANDS IN HONG KONG

By Kwong Eng



David Wong Support Committee Founder Yuri Kochiyama with committee member and OCA National VP of Public Affairs Kwong Eng share a private moment at the victory celebration.



Members of the David Wong Support Committee celebrate David's release from NY State Prison.

In 1987, David Wong, at the age of 25, was convicted and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison for a murder that he did not commit. He was a symbol of injustice for simply being an undocumented Chinese immigrant who did not speak English at that time. For the past 15 years, hundreds of people from all walks of life tried to right this wrong.

Losing appeal after appeal would seem to lead any normal group to disband. But no, Yuri Kochiyama and her faithful followers like Wayne Lum, Gloria Lum, Patti Choy and Rex Chen continued on with their tireless efforts and persistent activism. Eventually, they raised enough money to hire a very special private investigator, Joe Barry. They also received endless hours of help without pay from lawyers with big hearts.

Finally, they were rewarded. On December 10, 2004, the District Attorney filed a motion to drop the murder charge. Later that month, David was released from New York State Prison, his home for the last 20 years. He was now 42 years old. Within seconds of his release, he was shipped to a Homeland Security detention facility in upstate New York. Just as quick, the community held a press conference and pushed for his freedom based on human rights issues.

By early August of this year, as a member of the David

Wong Support Committee (DWSC), I was already seeing hope that our recent efforts to free David were about to come true. And then it was official. On August 10, I received an e-mail from long-time committee member Patti Choy.

She wrote, "It took about three hours for David to get through immigration and when he arrived at his mom's place she was waiting on the street with her grandson to greet David as he arrived by taxi. David's mom served him the traditional 'welcome and peace' meal." He had flown to Hong Kong from Chicago. "I'm finally a free man," said David.

A few days later I spoke with David's niece, Fay Yeung, who lives in New York City and was also a member of the DWSC. She had asked her grandmother, David's mom, "Are you happy?" She said that she was very happy. Fay said, "This was the first time that I ever heard her say 'she is happy.'"

A week and a half later, while at work, David surprised me with a call from Hong Kong on his cellular phone. He thanked me for my efforts. I wished him well.

David is learning technology and how to use e-mail. He wrote, "I am feeling very lucky and grateful that I am finally free. I am presently happy and comfortable living at home and enjoying time with my mom, my two sisters and their families. Thanks to the wonderful efforts, support and dedication for so many years from all my friends, supporters, relatives in the U.S., and the China Consulate in New York for making my freedom and homecoming a reality for me. Without their help and dedication for all those years, I would not be home and free today."



David Wong, walking free at the Po Lin Monastery on Hong Kong's Lantau Island

STATEMENT BY DAVID WONG

For a brief period after my wrongful murder indictment was dismissed by the Court, I thought and wished that I might be able to stay in the U.S., at least for a short time, because I really wanted to see and meet my friends and supporters who helped me so much with getting my freedom back and to say thanks in person for their kindness and compassion, and possibly to contribute in the community struggles.

However, not long after I entered the INS/ICE detention facility, I realized that my wish will be difficult, if not impossible, to realize. That is because in reality, the INS/ICE detention facilities are nothing but an extension of the prison industry complex, whose function and purpose are to warehouse, in this case immigrants, and to create business and jobs in mostly rural areas for whites where companies have been moving out over years. I saw people who have been in the detention facility for over five to six years fighting for their deportation simply because they wished to stay close to their kids and family.

There are also some Chinese detainees who have been detained for almost two years waiting for their deportation simply because the ICE personnel believe that they can be deported back to China. When the detainees complained about their long detention with no end in sight, the ICE personnel and the deportation officers simply state that their job is to deport people, that they are not in the business of releasing people, and that if anyone had any complaints, they should write to the court.

But they fail to mention that the Federal District Court for which the detainees must seek relief from is the Western Federal District Court in New York, located in Buffalo and Rochester, and is the most racist and conservative district in New York State. Besides, I am not aware if the Western Federal District Court has ever ordered anyone's release in the circumstance. In fact, I saw a Chinese detainee denied relief even though he had been detained for more than 17 months, simply because "the Chinese government has taken back Chinese Nationals in the past years." I was aware of the possibility that after a couple years if I was not deported, I might be released in that circumstance. But such release must be subjected to conditions and supervision and thus, I would not be completely free or able to do and move as I wished.

So, even though I had some doubt at first, and in considering other factors, I believe that I made the best decision under the circumstances not to fight to stay in the U.S., especially after returning to Hong Kong and seeing my mom and sisters and the vibrant city.

Things have changed greatly since I was last here and have gotten lost few times. But in general, I am doing okay and just trying to take things easy. I know I will do well here. My only regret is that I will not able to see and meet some of my friends and supporters who have been like my family throughout all the years and had given me so much hope and inspiration, and to say thanks in person. But I will forever be grateful to them and keep them close to my heart, and they will continue to be my inspiration in my life. I hope I can use this opportunity to say thanks to them and wish them and their families all the best with good health, peace and prosperity. Thank you all for your kindness, sense of justice and compassion.

Respectfully yours,

David Wong via e-mail from Hong Kong

HOLDING ABERCROMBIE TO THE FIRE ON DIVERSITY



Abercrombie gained notoriety in 2002 for selling T-shirts with the slogans, “Wong Brothers Laundry Service: Two Wongs Can Make It White” and imprinted with racist caricatures of slanty-eyed Asians with conical hat (left).

Most recently, A&F’s now-famous ads are featuring a young APA male (right). The text that goes with with ad reads, “Diversity is about who we are as individuals – what is seen and unseen.”



CAN A&F MAKE IT RIGHT?

By Yu-Yee Wu

Trendy. Alluring. White. Male. These hallmarks of the popular clothing store, Abercrombie and Fitch, have brought the company success — but at a cost.

Wall-sized photographs of half-naked, young white studs, like pubescent Calvin Klein models, adorn Abercrombie stores. Its employees, although clothed, do not look much different. The pretty boy faces of Abercrombie’s ads and its employees may appeal to youth wanting the shabby chic, “casual luxury” American look, but they also reflect an attitude that excludes minorities and women from Abercrombie advertising and from its employee ranks.

Abercrombie gained notoriety in 2002 for selling T-shirts with the slogans, “Wong Brothers Laundry Service: Two Wongs Can Make It White” and imprinted with racist caricatures of slanty-eyed Asians with conical hats. Denounced as racist, the offensive T-shirts resulted in nationwide protests. Abercrombie ended up pulling the tees.

Not long after, three class action lawsuits were filed for race and gender discrimination in employment. Federal Judge Susan Illston approved a final consent decree in April of this year and is running through 2011.

"Abercrombie is starting to take the first steps in implementing programs to come into compliance with the settlement," says Jack Lee of Minami, Lew and Tamaki, plaintiffs' attorneys for the gender class suit. He adds that the 22 named plaintiffs have been paid from \$8,000 to \$23,000. The remaining \$49.9 million will be distributed to approximately 20,000 employees who claim discriminatory treatment.

The settlement also requires the creation of an Office of Diversity, which is now headed by Vice President for Diversity Todd Corley. Corley declined to be interviewed.

According to the plaintiffs' attorneys, Abercrombie has hired 24 of 25 requisite diversity recruiters, who are to focus on seeking women and minority employees. It is not clear whether any of the hired recruiters are Asian American.

Abercrombie did, however, sponsor the College Leadership Summit at the National Convention for the Organization of Chinese Americans in July.

"This was one of the few times where we actually had an issue with them and they were actually present to answer questions [for over an hour]," said Christine Chen, Organization of Chinese Americans' Executive Director.

Despite recruitment and hiring efforts, A&F and plaintiffs confront the racial stigmatism of what Asian Americans have recently faced in two of the nation's heavily APA regions.

One twenty-something resident in the Bay Area said, "A couple of months ago I went to three interviews and never got a job. I felt kinda weird at the group interview, I was the only Asian guy there."

Jacob Ishida of Honolulu and a university student said, "I shop there all the time and wanted to work there, but didn't even waste my time applying. I'm not a 6-foot, blonde-haired, blue-eyed dude."

Lee says there is a benchmark of 4 percent for APAs in Abercrombie's sales force nationwide. For management, the

minimum is 3.4 percent APAs and increases with each 6-month period. "Abercrombie met or was very close to meeting its sales force benchmark for Asians," says Lee. For blacks, Latinos and women, however, Lee noted that Abercrombie was further away from its hiring goals.

Other requirements involve changing Abercrombie's hiring practices. "The company used subjective and value-based criteria not related to job duties to determine who to hire," says Lee. A common hiring question was defining what being cool means. If it fit what the hiring manager thought was cool, the person was hired, Lee says.

"The company has hired a job-testing expert to come up with a new job analysis," Lee adds.

Abercrombie is also prohibited from targeting fraternities and sororities, where it found many of its employees before. "There was no job-related reason for such a practice that disproportionately kept job opportunities from many minorities who either did not participate in the college Greek system or did not attend certain colleges," states Lee.

"One of the terms Abercrombie resisted the most was control over its advertising materials to reflect the gender and racial diversity of their customer base and soon-to-be employee base," comments Lee. The settlement requires that Abercrombie reflect diversity in its marketing and advertise positions to minorities of both genders.

Other requirements include providing diversity training for all employees with hiring authority and establishing a new internal complaint procedure.

Lee points out that the community can help ensure that Abercrombie cleans up its act. "Minorities have to remain vigilant that Abercrombie is doing what it promised to do," says Lee. "Not only should minorities apply to Abercrombie, we need to monitor if Abercrombie is treating Asian Americans and other minorities fairly in the hiring process and when they are working. We need to hold Abercrombie's feet to the fire."

Yu Yee Wu is a former OCA intern and board member of the OCA-San Francisco Bay Chapter. She is an Industrial Relations Counsel for the California Department of Industrial Relations.

Victor Wong also contributed to this article.

CALL TO ACTION SEND A MESSAGE TO HALLMARK

By Doug Lee

I recently went to a local Hallmark store at the local mall to find the perfect present for my friend's grandmother. Unexpectedly, I came across two money jars with very offensive depictions of Asians. The "Take Out Money" jar had an Asian man with a Manchurian queue, exaggerated buck teeth and slanted eyes holding a food pail with the words "Ping Pong" on it; octopus tentacles, eyeballs and noodles peered out of the pail. The "Manicure Money" jar portrayed an Asian woman with fabricated dirt painted on her clothes, and a face mask with squinty eyes holding bottles of nail polish in one hand and a giant nail buffer in the other.

After seeing these money jars, I immediately talked to the manager of the store and asked why the store was selling such offensive merchandise. Instead of a direct answer or prompt corrective action, I was referred to the corporate office of this particular franchise. Although the operations manager has since informed me that the two stores owned by the

"By appropriately investing their resources, and taking steps to understand the APA community, corporations can prevent costly mistakes like this from occurring again."

franchiser had removed the items off the shelves, it accounts for only two of the 42,000 Hallmark stores that could possibly be selling this merchandise.

These hurtful stereotypes are tired and outdated.

As with many immigrant populations, service-orientated work dominates the newly-arrived APA immigrant community. Chinese restaurateurs have been in America since the mid-1880s. Will someone please inform the makers of these money jars that Chinese men don't wear queues anymore? And that Korean and Vietnamese Americans began opening nail salons because it was an efficient way to earn a sizeable income and minimal English is required? This does not mean all manicurists are Asian or dirty. The representation reinforces negative stereotypes that do not belong in a tolerant society.

These racist portrayals of Asians is reminiscent of Abercrombie and Fitch's graphic t-shirts that showed two Asian men in conical hats at a laundromat with the slogan "Two Wongs Can Make It White," back in 2002. The shirts were immediately pulled off the shelves after Abercrombie and



Fitch received overwhelming complaints from the APA community.

OCA will be asking Hallmark Gold Crown for a meeting to discuss how the company might implement specific strategies to avoid selling such offensive merchandise. By appropriately investing their resources, and taking steps to understand the APA community, corporations can prevent costly mistakes like this from occurring again.

The community is urged to take action and call for the removal of these offensive items from Hallmark's shelves by contacting Hallmark, Banner Management (the franchise owners of

the local Hallmark), and What a Concept (the manufacturer of the money jars):

Hallmark Customer Service
P.O. Box 419024
Mail Drop 216
Kansas City, Missouri 64141
1-800-HALLMARK (1-800-425-5627 - Customer Service)

Banner Management Corp.
443 N. Frederick Ave
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
301-670-4140

"What a Concept!"
45 US Highway 206, Suite 106
Augusta NJ 07822
(888) 666-3687
www.whataconcept.us

Doug Lee is Program Manager at the OCA National Office. Intern Cindy Cheung also contributed to this article.

THE STATE OF DIVERSITY IN AMERICA'S INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE

By Richard C. Chang

Over the last 50 years, if you had to choose one word to describe the driving force behind America's economic growth, that word would be "innovation."

Innovation, specifically in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, has generated tremendous advances in products and services across all industries and fundamentally changed our lives and fueled our economy. Every business, large and small, is intricately dependent upon information technology (IT), and therefore the IT workforce is a major determinant of the future competitiveness of the U.S. economy.

Even if you do not work for a pure technology company, you are considered part of the IT workforce if you have responsibilities that cover programming, database administration, computer operations, network security, systems analysis, and even data entry; for example at a bank, a music company, or a legal firm. So, what is the state of diversity in America's IT workforce?

The answer is, not good. Women and most racial minorities remain significantly under-represented in America's IT workforce, according to studies conducted by the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) in 2003 and 2004. The percentage of women in the IT workforce declined from a high of 41 percent in 1996 to 32.4 percent in 2004, while the

percentage of women in the overall workforce remained relatively unchanged, around 46 percent, during the same time period. African Americans were under-represented by 22.4 percent, and Hispanics by 50 percent. Based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data, Hispanics make up 12.9 percent of the U.S. workforce, but only 6.4 percent of the IT workforce.

Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), however, buck this trend and continue to experience significant over-

representation in the IT workforce, by almost 200 percent! While this might be good news on one hand, the bad news on the other is, the percentage of Asian American senior managers and executive leaders in the IT workforce drops off significantly, suggesting a glass ceiling.

So, what can companies do to foster greater diversity and more access to senior leadership roles in the overall workforce, and the STEM workforce specifically? One of the first things we must do is help breakdown societal barriers. Stereotypes that women and certain minorities are not skilled in math and sciences are still very common (ITAA 2004 report), and the underlying result discourages women and certain minorities from pursuing careers in the IT field. Leaders in the media, education, and toy industries can help with more positive shows, stories, images, examples, curriculum, and games to counter the perpetuation of these negative stereotypes, and societal barriers.

There is also a lack of mentors and role models at the very top of the IT profession, often categorized as a "good old

boys" network. Without strong coaching, mentoring, and leadership from senior corporate executives, women and minorities have a difficult time moving up the ladder.

We need stronger commitment from corporate leadership, beginning with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Until and unless CEOs hold themselves and their executive management teams accountable for improving the number of women, minorities, disabled and older workers employed in the IT function, including executive positions, these questions will linger. This commitment requires hiring, promotion, and retention objectives for the profile of women and minorities in the IT ranks (ITAA 2004 study).

Companies with stated diversity goals are a tremendous start. Those who have been successful have been recognized with better overall financial performance, as well as a place in annual polls as Best Places to Work. Leading companies extend their involvement into the local communities in which they work, live and play. In addition to providing financial support, companies should consider such targeted activities as providing endowed chairs, academic faculty internships, student internships, curriculum advisement, adjunct instruction, and employee volunteers for community-based organizations (ITAA 2004 study).

OCA is one of these community-based organizations with the broad mission of "Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of

"Without strong coaching, mentoring, and leadership from senior corporate executives, women and minorities have a difficult time moving up the ladder."

Asian Pacific Americans." Our collaboration with corporate sponsors, in particular members of our Business Advisory Council, is an example of successful outreach. And we can do more, by reaching out earlier in the development cycle of women and minorities to help them gain exposure, experience, and skills that will position them well for career advancement and future leadership.

The recipients of the OCA 2005 National Asian Pacific American Corporate Achievement Awards are examples of individuals who represent a diversity of backgrounds, but who have all benefited by the support and coaching of their leaders and mentors. It is the proof in the pudding. And it is a three-way win-win-win proposition for the company, the individual, and our community.

Richard C. Chang is Vice-President and General Manager for Perot Systems' China operations, and has over 22 years in the IT and Business Consulting industries serving various leadership and executive management roles. He is also the OCA National VP of Finance and President of the OCA-Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter.



OPPORTUNITIES IN CORPORATE AMERICA

By Martin Chen

My parents immigrated to the United States in 1977 with no college education and approximately \$200 between them. They had to take the first jobs offered to them as dishwashers at a popular Chinese restaurant in Los Angeles. The two worked hard for the next several years, saving money all the while in hopes of opening up their own restaurant. My parents' hopes turned to reality in 1983 when they opened their first restaurant. Within three years, the restaurant started producing a decent profit, and in 1986 my parents decided to bring me over to the United States from Taiwan, where I had been living with my grandparents.

Growing up in a family-owned restaurant meant that I had to start working at a very early age. I remember working after school while my friends went home and played. To this day, I recall complaining to my parents about my lack of playtime, to which they always answered, "In this family we all have to work hard to get what we want." What my parents told me almost 20 years ago has stuck with me to this day, and I can honestly say that hard work does pay off.

With the hard working entrepreneurial spirit I learned from my parents, I put myself through college while working part-time at various jobs. While I was in college, my perspective of Corporate America was not very favorable. I saw many of my parents' friends who were highly educated lose their jobs in the economic downturn of the late 80s and early 90s. That led me to think "Why put myself through that when I can take over my parents' business and work for myself?". But what I did not realize was that Corporate America could provide many wonderful opportunities that my family's business could not.

During my senior year at Arizona State University, I started to realize and see the different opportunities that Corporate America could provide. I wanted to do more with my own career than just run my family's business. I also felt the need to prove to my parents that I could carve my own path in life, just as they did by coming to America. I started looking for jobs at various career fairs on campus and came across Kraft Foods. It has been almost six years since I graduated,

and looking back I realize that accepting a position with Kraft Foods was the best move I could have made for myself.

In the six short years, I have learned more than I could have from my family business and my perspective on Corporate America has completely changed. Kraft Foods has given me many different opportunities to learn about the food industry through various challenging positions. Kraft has also supported my future aspirations through their investment in my graduate studies, as well as placing me in their leadership-training program. I now know that my dream job of heading up one of Kraft Foods' international division is achievable through hard work and dedication to the fulfillment of my personal aspirations.

So, is Corporate America something I want to be a part

"I wanted to do more with my own career than just run my family's business."

of? Six years ago I would have said "No." But after my experience at Kraft Foods, my answer is an emphatic "YES!" While still in school, I always said, "If only I was the CEO, I would have done it differently." Could I have gotten that chance running my parents' restaurant? Definitely not, but through a corporation such as Kraft Foods, I can make a positive difference in millions of people's lives. I am sure that U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao could never have dreamed that she would become the first Asian Pacific American female appointed to a cabinet position, but through hard work and dedication she is now making a difference in every American's life.

The most important thing I have learned in my short career within Corporate America is that no one is entitled to a job, so don't be afraid to get your hands dirty and work your way up. We are all in charge of our own careers, so make opportunities happen, and be prepared when they do.

Martin Chen is a Region Category Planner for Kraft Foods.



THRIVING IN CORPORATE AMERICA

By Cindy Cheung

Asian parents are notorious for being fanatical. They demand perfection in anything and everything their child does.

While that ubiquitous mandate often became tiresome growing up, it has proved indispensable in the world of Corporate America. I was raised with corporate life up on a pedestal. "If only," my father would murmur. If only he had an education, he could more easily provide us with one. A smart suit, expensive briefcase and all the trappings of corporate life became the pinnacle of his dream. If he could somehow rouse his three children to aspire to such greatness, he would be content. I have come to learn however, that getting into Corporate America is the easy part. Thriving in it is far more challenging.

"Now, it's no longer your mother asking why you only scored a 98%; you begin to ask of yourself for nothing but your best."

I have been fortunate enough to have had multiple exposures to corporate life; each one different from the last. However they all culminate to the same resounding message: be prepared. It's not quite the same as cramming for a final where you have to memorize the semester's worth of work sitting before you. It's more like presenting to a crowd of your peers and superiors on a topic you had previously not given any thought to, but could now potentially claim to be an expert of. Preparing for such an occasion requires going above and beyond the scope of the assignment. It entails truly digging in deep for every little known tidbit of information that will most assuredly be asked of you. It is here that the staunch Chinese upbringing comes into play. The attention to detail ingrained since kindergarten becomes an invaluable asset. Now, it's no longer your mother asking why you only scored a 98%; you begin to ask of yourself for nothing but your best.

With such a mentality, excelling at any given task seems somehow expected of Asian Americans. I was fortunate enough to attend a presentation by Michael E. Chen, general manager of Airport & U.S. Aviation Finance with GE. Of the many pearls of wisdom bestowed that day, one that has lingered was the notion that employers expect Asian Americans to deliver. It's not whether you'll complete a project by its deadline; it's how good the project is and how much earlier

it's completed. Corporate America is a complex beast. It won't growl at you if perform inadequately. Rather it will merely file away your oversights and lapses in judgment. You will see the repercussions of your transgressions in the form of subsequently diminished assignments. In an internship environment, merely gaining a supervisor trust in your performance is a feat unto itself. Thankfully, I have been blessed with a battery of amazing supervisors. Most notable is Shirley Dong, Senior Marketing Manager of Avon Products, with whom I am currently working.

This past summer at Avon has shown me what corporate life could be. Corporate internships have the potential to be an indispensable learning experience. Conversely, however, they could also be a drab nine-to-five where your most substantial responsibility is making sure that all the

photocopies are collated correctly. Shirley began my experience at Avon assuming that I could perform to her expectations; each subsequent assignment reflecting the results of the

former. For that reason, I was granted more responsibility than an intern could hope for. Her sheer presence demanded respect, and her no-nonsense attitude was extraordinarily effective. Working closely with her allowed me a taste of efficiency and efficacy. In a culture where women are brought up to be demure creatures who speak softly and are easily influenced, a character such as Shirley is a breath of fresh air. Her grasp of her multiple businesses as well as those she relies on to get the job done are motivating. I have accomplished more in my two months at Avon working with Shirley than all my other corporate experiences combined. It is from this experience that I have proven to myself that being prepared for everything is crucial.

Corporate America is certainly challenging, but when approached with vigilance, diligence, and confidence in your abilities, I find that it can be quite fulfilling. A far cry from the image painted by my father years ago, corporate life seems less insurmountable. In a way, I embrace corporate culture as yet another environment to prove and differentiate myself. Differentiating from the masses will be challenging to say the least. Yet, learning to embrace the values instilled since childhood, I believe that I, as well as other Asian-Americans, have an edge. Hopefully with a mixture of meticulousness, hard work, and the help of motivational supervisors, I will come to thrive in Corporate America.



CHALLENGING PERCEPTIONS IN CORPORATE AMERICA

By Sam Chae

This is my third year with Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. I am currently in charge of all East Coast import operations for Sam's Club, a division of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. The only perspective I have about being an Asian American in Corporate America is to be different and be proud of it. This does not mean use your ethnicity as a tool for advancement or opportunities; rather utilize the difference to change people's perspectives of Asian Americans and lessen their lack of knowledge of your culture.

I am Korean and proud of it. At one time in my life I was not proud being an Asian American. I did not like the fact that I was different. I remember telling my father that I would do everything in my power to assimilate myself, so I would fit in. My father told me that no matter what I do or say, I will never be able to hide my ethnicity. I did not know what that meant at the time, but as I grew up it was clearly evident that

his statement was true. I remember being the only Asian American athlete in high school. When I

served in the United States Navy, I was the only Asian American in boot camp. When I was in college, I was the only Asian American with a baseball scholarship. There would be numerous comments from my peers stating how good I was for an Asian American or how big I was being an Asian American. If you read between the lines, they would always accredit or mention my ethnicity.

This would translate to Corporate America. There are numerous perceptions concerning Asian Americans in our society. There is nothing you can do about that, nor can you change your appearance. That is where my father challenged me to accept my ethnicity and change how society perceives Asian Americans and channel it in a positive manner.

I take the extra effort to make myself approachable and

answer any questions concerning my culture or background. Do not punish people for their lack of knowledge or ignorance, but use it as an opportunity to educate them. Use negatives and turn them into positives. Asian Americans are known for their work ethic; prove them right and surpass their expectations.

In Corporate America, I believe that hard work makes up for any perceptions society has labeled to any ethnicity. That is where I am very proud to be an Asian American in the retail industry. There are so many opportunities to grow and anything is possible.

There are numerous people I credit for my development. My parents are the biggest influence in my life. They are responsible for my development and moral standards. There is one person who has helped me develop and desire to pursue my career

"My father told me that no matter what I do or say, I will never be able to hide my ethnicity."

in Corporate America. Her name is Seong Ohm, Vice President and Divisional Merchandise Manager for Electronics for Sam's Club. Her position and stature in our company is not the reason I admire her. It is her logical way of thinking, work ethic, and willingness to adapt to any situation that is presented to her that amazes and intrigues me.

I have talked to Seong on numerous occasions and there has never been a time when I did not benefit from our conversation. Early in her career, she was one of first women in electronics. The secret to her success is work hard, produce results, and be adaptable. Even with all her accomplishments, she never takes credit. She always credits her family, people, and culture. Seong has also influenced me to further my education. It is an honor and privilege to have her as an advisor and friend.

INSIDE THE ASIAN PRESSURE COOKER

By Pueng Vongs

Asian immigrants' drive for material success and shame-based culture may be causing many to place impossibly strict expectations on their children. Health and social workers say rates of depression are disproportionately high among Asian American youths, and in some cases this results in suicide.

San Francisco — It's become cliché: Asian parents browbeat their kids into pursuing prestigious professions in technology, medicine or law, and their children suffer the resulting stress and depression. But speaking with other Asian professionals at a recent social gathering, I found we all agreed that we shared the same affliction.

Jane Wong, 40, from Hong Kong just quit her lucrative software job because the 60 to 80 hour workweek reminded her of constantly struggling to anticipate the needs of her demanding Chinese parents. Wong says she pursued only the most visible projects, craving recognition, but still felt dissatisfied. Rebecca Wee, 40, from Malaysia also walked off her job as a high-tech manager to pursue her dream of becoming a writer. But after decades of being told by her parents that only the most well-paid and stable career goals were worth pursuing, she spends many days paralyzed, undermining her decision and herself.

As for me, after 15-hour days working as a hotel manager my Thai immigrant father still had enough energy at night to scrutinize my schoolwork — and let me hear it if he was not satisfied. He made it clear that his love was dependent on me making perfect marks. The message that it is not who you are but how well you do still consumes me.

Experts are beginning to take greater notice of the impact of intense academic pressure and strict parenting on Asian youths, and they say these factors contribute to high rates of depression among young Asians. Chinese, Filipino and other Pacific Islander youths topped the charts of groups reporting symptoms of depression in a survey of middle school kids taken by the San Francisco Unified School District in 2001, in numbers disproportionate to their population.

In the worst cases, Asian youths see no way out. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people aged 15 to 24, but second among young Asian and Pacific Islanders (unintentional injuries rank first), according to the Centers for Disease Control in 2000. Asian American girls have the highest rates of depressive symptoms of all racial groups and the highest rate of suicide among all women age 15 to 24, according to an American Psychological Association study in 2003.

Coleman Wong says pressures facing Asian kids have changed little in the 30 years he has counseled students in San Francisco schools. "For the bulk of Asian parents it is all about succeeding, and there is no middle ground."

Wong mentions two recent suicide attempts, one successful, by Chinese students in San Francisco as examples of how the enormous pressure to succeed may contribute to suicide. An American-born Chinese captain of Lowell High School's football team, who maintained a high GPA in the district's most competitive high school, killed himself in 2002. "A bad grade on a test or a fight with a girlfriend or boyfriend

can be devastating to a kid if they don't know how to reach out," Wong says. In 2004, a student from Balboa High who ranked high in student government survived a suicide attempt.

Wong says often Asian immigrant parents don't know how to give positive reinforcement or show their kids that it is OK to make mistakes. "In Chinese there is a word for making a mistake, 'chuo,' and a word for being bad, 'huai.' Parents confuse them both. It is a shame-based society. You do well for your family's sake, not your own."

Asian girls are especially at risk. When he walks into a classroom and asks how many students are depressed and how many have thought about suicide, Wong says it is consistently Asian girls, often the oldest in their families, who raise their hands. "They often have the most pressure because they also have to look after the other kids." He thinks more bilingual counselors are needed to communicate with parents.

But some parents, like those of Kao Saephanh, 19, may be hard to reach. Saephanh's Mien parents grew up on a small village on a mountainside in Laos trying to protect their culture from modern influences. Saephanh says they are traditional, "archaic" refugees who count on their oldest male child to help provide them with greater economic security.

Sandy Dang, who runs Asian American Leadership Empowerment and Development for Youth and Families in Washington, says it's important to acknowledge the challenging backgrounds of many parents from the Vietnamese and Hmong communities her group serves.

"Many are refugees. Others were brought up with corporal punishment, and that's what they know. Others are orphans of war. How do you teach someone who has not been parented to parent?" she asks.

Dang also points to many parents' difficulties communicating with schools. Their children become mediators between home and school. Dang's group helps open lines of communication between parents and teachers.

Cheo Saetern, 17, says the group Asian Pacific Islander Youth Promoting Advocacy and Leadership helped her face her parents' put-downs when her grades were not up to par. "They used to constantly compare me to other kids and my cousins and say that I am not good enough," Saetern says. AYPAL, she says, helped her develop a voice, so that "whenever they yelled at me I could explain to them what was going on. I could tell them why I was out late and that I've done my homework."

Saetern says the program has helped her think positively about herself and develop a better relationship with her parents. Now, she says, she has grounded visions of becoming a social worker or studying immigration law.

She shows a confidence I wish I had when I was her age, and still struggle to grasp as an adult.

PNS contributor Pueng Vongs is a journalism fellow in Child and Family Policy, a program of the University of Maryland and the Foundation for Child Development.

CHINESE AUCTION, CHINESE FIRE DRILL, CHINAMAN'S CHANCE...

What do all of these words have in common? Are they as derogatory as we think, or are they harmless expressions used in today's society?

Many of us have heard the phrase, "You don't have a Chinaman's Chance." In fact it was recently used by a political candidate in Westchester, New York, and the OCA-Westchester Hudson Valley Chapter made sure he understood that this type of terminology was derogatory and insulting. The Chinese media even printed an article which quoted several of the chapter's members. Hurray! Let all of us be more diligent.

So, where does the term come from and what does it really mean?

I have actually heard two origins of this phrase.

Version One: A special provision in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 ensured that teachers, students, merchants and diplomats would be not barred from entering the United States. Consequently, the U.S. government then looked for ways to control the flow of merchants entering the country by requiring the Chinese merchants to provide proof that they were indeed merchants. The government then further deemed that proof offered by Chinese merchants already in the U.S. was not acceptable. The Chinese merchant wanting to enter the country had to offer testimony from two non-Chinese witnesses with whom he had had business dealings with at least one year before his departure to the United States. So, if the merchant was not allowed to enter the country, how was he to have established business contacts and be able to produce two witnesses? Hence, the phrase "A Chinaman's Chance," or no chance at all.

Version Two: During the building of the Transcontinental Railroad, one of the jobs performed by Chinese laborers was to lower themselves down the side of a mountain in a basket, light a bundled stick of dynamite placed into the side of the mountain, and get themselves pulled back up to safety before the dynamite exploded. More often than not, they were killed because they could not reach safety before the dynamite exploded. Hence, the phrase "A Chinaman's Chance," or no chance at all.

In today's world, "A Chinaman's Chance" still means "no chance at all." What a sad origin! All of us should be diligent in monitoring the usage of this type of terminology and educate the public of the origins and negative connotations of their usage in today's society. And if you look up the word "Chinaman" in the Funk & Wagnall Dictionary, the word "Chinaman" is described as "an offensive term."

Next issue: Chinese Fire Drill

Virginia L. Ng, National VP Chapter Development

In the past two years, I have had the good fortune and honor of seeing both my parents (Linda and Ray) receive the OCA/General Motors Unsung Hero Volunteer Award. Watching as my Dad was presented the award in 2004 at the National Convention in Boston, and this year as my Mom accepted her award at the Convention Las Vegas has been an awesome experience for me.

The themes of the two past National Conventions "Education and Solidarity: The Road to Empowerment," and "Faces of Diversity," have truly been a part of their philosophy even before they became OCA members nearly four years ago. It was an honor for them to be recognized by our New Jersey Chapter as well as being selected for one of ten prestigious Unsung Hero Awards because it represented their good works and deeds.

I might be slightly biased, but my parents are certainly deserving of this honor. Mom and Dad have always gone the "extra mile" to assist those in need, whether it was spiritual, educational, emotional or financial. This includes all people and not only those of Asian Pacific descent. Throughout the years, my parents have always been there for me and have always exhibited their spirit of "volunteerism" as I was growing up. I remember Mom as a Cub Scout Den Mother. For many years she organized the annual Boy Scouts Christmas Wreath Sale; making hundreds of red bows each year. And she always made sure my baseball teams had plenty of snacks and cold drinks for the many years I played in the 90 degree summer weather. Would you believe she even provided ice cold water and towels to drape around our necks to cool off?

Dad was often a coach for my sports teams. He was always one of the fathers who volunteered to drive our team to the baseball field an hour or more before the game so we could get in some additional practice time. Naturally, all the boys fought to ride in Dad's car because they knew Mom would have lots of snacks and cold oranges cut up for us. Dad would often use his creative talents to create great team photos as mementos for the season party, and his volunteering for our Boy Scout camping trips provided opportunities for us to spend many good times together. These are just a few remembrances of my childhood and growing up as a teenager.

Mom and Dad both have been involved in numerous church, civic and community activities throughout the years. They have been good role models for me throughout my life and I would like to follow in their track. It will be a tough act to follow, but I will always have two faithful supporters who have always encouraged me along in my life.

CONGRATULATIONS, Mom and Dad. I love you both.

"Nemo timedo ad summum pervenit locum," (No man by fearing, reaches the top.)

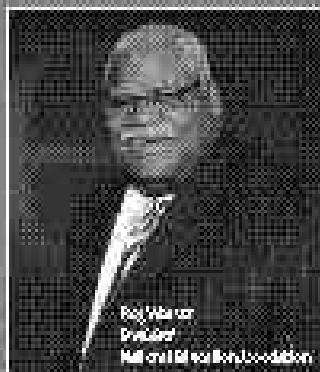
Christopher is a senior at Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania.



ROLE MODELS FOR LIFE AND LIVING

By Christopher R. Lee

ALL GREATNESS STARTS HERE.



Dr. Victor
Dorson
National Education Association

"We're working to make every public school as good as the best public school."

Every child can learn, but not all children learn at the same pace and in the same way.

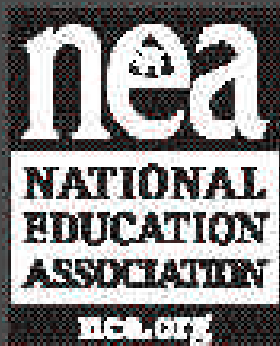
Children need individual attention based on their individual needs.

One size does not fit all.

That's why the National Education Association and the Organization of Chinese Americans have always advocated for quality teaching, smaller class sizes, greater parental involvement, and increased resources for programs that improve student achievement for every child.

From the classroom to communities to capitol - parents, teachers, education support professionals, and community leaders are working side by side to make every public school as good as the best public schools.

To learn more about *Great Public Schools for Every Child*, visit www.nea.org/greatschools.



*Great Public Schools
for Every Child*

PLANNING AHEAD

By **Debbie Chen, National VP of Membership Services**

As we near the close of 2005, let us take stock of what each chapter has accomplished this year and begin laying out the basic framework of a calendar plan for 2006. In the last issue of IMAGE, the reality of our changing and growing membership base and chapters' needs to update their bylaws, increase program and administrative support materials, and develop leadership and program organizing skills were discussed. The time is now to begin planning for the implementation of this and assess its potential effects. It is vital to membership retention and recruitment that each chapter works towards consistency in its programs and projects. Our members and local communities need to be able to know what we are doing at the local level and how our collective work contributes and supports the national organization and the national office.

Chapter Organization

In the last issue, suggestions were made about how chapters should consider revising their bylaws. Now is the ideal time to implement those changes as each chapter prepares for its annual elections dinner. Updating each chapter's organizational structure is the first step to preparing for an increase in membership numbers.

Secondly, as the number and variety of projects and programs from OCA National increases, so do the opportunities for chapters to take these ideas and implement or adapt them to their respective communities. Because many of the programs are standardized, chapters have the opportunity to present projects as their local signature annual event or program. Examples include annual elections dinner, scholarship information receptions or fairs, APA Heritage Month activities, APIA film screenings, issues advocacy and community education seminars (hate crimes, immigration, employment, etc.), fundraisers, National Building Campaign fundraiser, joint projects with College Affiliates, networking mixers, and/or youth identity and leadership development.

Each chapter should already be thinking about a general calendar for 2006 that they can include "Save the Date" notices on the bottoms of their e-mail blasts, community advertisements/flyers, and websites. This serves the dual purpose of not only getting the word out, but also lets other community leaders know about program dates in an effort to avoid concurrent date conflicts. Be sure to leave room for one or two new projects that the chapter may want to take on after attending next year's January and April National Board meetings where new information and ideas will be shared.

Now that your calendar has been set for your annual programs, the next recommendation is for chapters to consider moving their board retreats from January 2006 to early December 2005. Since most chapters hold their annual elections dinners and general membership meetings in November, this would give chapters the opportunity to convene the new and old board in early December to work transitioning and implementation strategies, timelines, or strategic planning.

We are fortunate that most times board members rotating off the board simply go into a committee and remain involved with the organization. By taking care of this administrative side in December, your local board can come back after the holidays rested and ready to attend the January National Board meeting as well as better prepared for projects starting in February.

Programs Development and Support Materials

As reported in the last issue of IMAGE, a CD of sample chapter program support documents were updated and distributed at the National Board meeting at the OCA Convention. The next version will be available at the January Board meeting. Also distributed at the board meeting were copies in English, Vietnamese, and Mandarin of an informational videotape on employment discrimination and employee rights that was made as a joint project with OCA and the EEOC as a part of the TIGAAR project (The Information Group on Asian American Rights). OCA is not only mentioned specifically on the tape, but many of the amateur actors were OCA members volunteering their time.

The videotape is an example of an opportunity for a chapter to use as a program or community service. One, the tapes can be distributed to local community centers and/or libraries to be made available for viewing (and our local websites/newsletters should list where it is available). Copies of the tapes can also be used to arrange for local seminars with a local EEOC/DOL office for viewings and a community outreach type of educational panel on the issues covered in the videotape. Chapters with local offices can have tapes available for viewing by the community in their local offices in the waiting room or other area with availability of a tv/vcr. The information will be digitized and burned onto a DVD for further distribution. These are simple examples of the creativity our chapters have in making the most of scarce resources as a grassroots organization.

The Chapter Advancement Track (CAT) at this year's convention was a successful example of strategic planning and utilizing the resources we had on hand. Thank you to everyone who participated and the support of the track sponsor, Citigroup. The evaluations received were all positive and we will definitely be offering CAT at next year's convention. Discussions have been initiated with speakers on how we can improve and expand the topics.

In closing, I want to reiterate that chapters rely on the strength of our board and committee members to create and provide programs that in turn, help us recruit and retain the members who support the work we do. OCA is a unique organization in that we are a national grassroots volunteer-based organization headquartered in Washington, DC. Thus, ours is a symbiotic relationship where every chapter has a different local working environment and we tailor ourselves to try and address the various needs of our local communities; yet we are secure in the knowledge that each of us belongs to a national organization where the activities of our fellow chapters and the national office also reflects upon our respective chapters.

Please contact me if you have ideas, suggestions, or projects to contribute to the "Chapter How-To" CD at debbiechen@earthlink.net, or at 713.446.8430 (after 7 p.m. CST weeknights or all day on weekends).

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is a coalition partner with OCA. Both are members of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and have collaborated extensively in matters of hate crimes legislation, such as the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, the Higher Education Act Re-Authorization,

and the nexus of education and hate crime prevention. Local ADL chapters have also worked with local OCA chapters to address hateful speech situations New York, such as the tsunami parody song issue, and name changes such as the "Jap Road" in Texas and Chink's Steak's in Philadelphia.

The Anti-Defamation League was founded in 1913 "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all." Now the nation's premier civil rights/human relations agency, ADL fights anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry, defends democratic ideals and protects civil rights for all.



A leader in the development of materials, programs and services, ADL builds bridges of communication, understanding and respect among diverse groups, carrying out its mission through a network of 30 Regional and Satellite Offices in the United States and abroad.

ABOUT THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

- After 9/11, hate became everyone's problem. It has always been the primary focus of ADL. The League fights anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry here and abroad, combats international terrorism, probes the roots of hatred, works with government leaders and policymakers, mobilizes communities to stand up against bigotry, develops educational programs, and serves as a public resource for government, media, law enforcement and the public, all toward the goals of countering and reducing hatred. With its National Headquarters in New York City, ADL has a network of Regional and Satellite Offices throughout America, and in Jerusalem and Moscow.

ANTI-SEMITISM, BIGOTRY, RACISM

- ADL is on the frontlines fighting the new wave of global anti-Semitism. The League challenges world leaders and the United Nations to take action against anti-Jewish violence and bigotry; denounces worldwide anti-Semitism in national advertising; and exposes and condemns attacks on Jews on our Web site, www.adl.org. ADL also continues to meet and work with government and law enforcement officials to combat the new growth of this age-old hatred.

EXTREMISM

- ADL monitors an entire range of dangerous extremists, from obscure militia groups to international terrorists. *Extremism in America: A Guide*, ADL's continually updated encyclopedia of American extremists, is now available on CD-ROM and links to www.adl.org. It provides law enforcement with vital information.

- ADL continues to expand its activities in monitoring extremists, providing security awareness guidance to Jewish institutions and specialized training for law enforcement professionals.

COUNTERTERRORISM

- With its William and Naomi Gorowitz Institute on Terrorism and Extremism and its Leon and Marilyn Klinghoffer Memorial Foundation, ADL plays a key role in combating terrorism in the U.S., the Middle East and the world over through promoting effective counterterrorism legislative initiatives and other programs, as well as educating on the threat of terrorism.

HATE CRIMES

- A leader in national and state efforts to deter and counter hate-motivated crimes, ADL pioneered the development of a model statute with enhanced penalties for bias-motivated crimes. Approximately four-fifths of the states have enacted laws based on or similar to the ADL model developed in 1981. In 1993, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously upheld the constitutionality of such hate crimes legislation. *Hate Crimes: ADL Blueprint for Action*, an ADL publication prepared for the White House Conference on Hate Crimes, presents tactics for countering hate crimes gathered from League offices around the country, including training programs, information on hate crime legislation, videos, hate crimes legislation, community programs and other materials.

- Through its “Law Enforcement Agency Response Network (LEARN)” Web site (www.adl.org/learn), ADL keeps thousands of law enforcement professionals up-to-date on developments in the battle against extremism.

ISRAEL

• Through programs, publications and contact with officials, ADL interprets Israel to U.S. policy-makers, the media and the American public. ADL seeks to explain the political and security issues confronting Israel, educates about the complexities of the conflict, urges support of Israel and explains why a strong Israel is important and valuable to the United States and the Western world. The League also combats efforts to delegitimize Israel by the Arab world, the international community and the media. ADL's Jerusalem Office hosts fact-finding missions to Israel for American government leaders and other opinion-molders.

• The League has published *Advocating for Israel: An Activist's Guide* for individuals who want to “do something” to support Israel, but may feel they lack the know-how to do so. Regularly updated, *Advocating for Israel* provides both substantive “talking points” to the user and practical “how-to” information.

• The CHILDREN OF THE DREAM® program brings Ethiopian-Israeli teenagers to the U.S. to share experiences with their American peers. In turn, American students travel to Israel to learn about that country.

• In Israel, the A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute program — begun in 1991 after a media campaign on tolerance broadcast simultaneously on Israel's Education Television Channel and its Cable Television Children's Channel — is now accredited by the Ministry of Education.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

• ADL monitors and combats international anti-Semitism and extremism and promotes the security and well-being of Jewish communities around the world. Just as it does in the United States, ADL conducts this effort in the international arena through the promotion of legislation, education, the exposing of extremists, and the advancement of intergroup relations. ADL has established an international reputation on these issues, and is called upon by foreign governments as a resource in assessing and counteracting anti-Semitism and intolerance in their countries. In this regard, ADL conducts anti-bias training in schools, hospitals, the workplace and with military personnel. In addition, ADL has an office in Moscow and a representative in Rome.

EDUCATION

• ADL's Education staff works to further the League's mission through programs and materials that address four core priority areas: anti-bias education, combating anti-Semitism at home and abroad, Holocaust awareness and remembrance, and education to combat extremism and hate crimes. ADL delivers programs and creates materials for preschool through 12th grade school communities, college and university campuses, community groups, corporations, civic associations, religious organizations, youth movements, law enforcement agencies and other learning environments. ADL's A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute provides anti-bias education, training and resources to help children and adults challenge prejudice and discrimination and learn to live and work successfully and civilly in an increasingly diverse world. The Braun Holocaust Institute and the Hidden Child Foundation/ADL® seek to educate people about the Holocaust and apply this tragic event's lessons to contemporary issues of prejudice and moral decision-making.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

• ADL regards the separation of church and state as essential to preserving religious freedom in our increasingly pluralistic society, and our work in this area is an integral part of the League's mission. Recent efforts to undermine church-state separation have prompted the implementation of a new ADL action plan to safeguard religious liberty. ADL's church-state publications include a handbook and a color poster on the *ABCs of Religion in the Public Schools*, and pamphlets on related issues (*The Case Against “Charitable Choice,” School Vouchers: The Wrong Choice for Public Education*, and *The Creationism Controversy*).



CONTINUING A TRADITION OF ORAL HISTORY IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Kelly Zen-Yie Tsai and many artists in her generation are empowering the APA community with stories of our lives in the U.S. through spoken word poetry.

By Giles Li

You may have seen her on HBO one night and wondered, "Who this young Asian American woman wearing her politics on her sleeve and performing her poetry in front of millions of people on television?"

Her name is Kelly Zen-Yie Tsai, one of the fastest-rising stars in the world of spoken word poetry. The 27 year-old Chicago native has been featured at over 100 performances across the country including venues like the Nuyorican Poets Café, the House of Blues, and the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem.

Spoken word poetry is not generally considered an APA art form. But if you pay attention, you'll notice just how important it has become to APA communities nationwide. These performers give new perspective to the APA experience, while honoring the great tradition of oral history in our communities. In the past few years, spoken word performers have slowly, but very surely, become part of the OCA family; once even culminating in a feature performance from the Filipino American group *isangMahal arts collective* at the 2001 National Convention in Seattle.

Kelly hopes to take that enthusiasm to another level, focusing on her creative work full-time. She is the author of two chapbooks *Inside Outside Outside Inside* and *Thought Crimes*. Her first full-length play, "Murder the Machine," will be excerpted at Chicago's first Hip Hop Theater Festival this coming Fall. Visit her website at www.yellowgurl.com.

Q: How did you get involved in spoken word?

Writing is a natural part of who I am. I got introduced to spoken word in high school through some friends and a teacher who was involved in the Chicago poetry slam scene. From then, I hosted an open mic and slam at college, started a women of color spoken word group, and then met up with a lot of folks in Chicago including a lot of APA artists. I've been living and working in New York as a spoken word and multimedia theater artist full-time for over a year now.

Q: What is it about spoken word that is appealing as a form of expression? Anything specifically for you as an APA woman?

Spoken word is a place where people can express their hearts and emotions with a community. People can share intimate stories or political messages. People can use music, humor, anger, all of that. Spoken word is diverse in terms of

influences, styles, content, form, personalities, rhythms. As an APA woman, my only choice is to write if I want to be represented in this society at all.

Q: You're a part of Mango Tribe, an all-APA women's performance collective made up of members from all over the country. Can you tell me about your experiences with that group?

Mango Tribe is my heart. Our first show, "Sisters in the Smoke," combined spoken word, theater, video, music and dance to examine issues of violence in the APA community. We premiered it in Chicago in 2002 and in New York in 2003. We workshoped our second production, "The Creation Mythology Project," in New York in 2004, and we're currently working on a third production while touring nationally. It takes a lot of work to collaborate and grow together as we have.

Q: Do you feel it is important for APAs to have their own spaces to create and perform? What about creating a presence in the mainstream performing arts community?

I do think it's important for APA's to have our own spaces to support each other and discover our own voices. I'm really not concerned about affecting the mainstream performing arts community. I am interested in connecting with other minority groups because I think we have more to gain by listening to each other and working together.

Q: How do you feel the work of the APA spoken word and performing arts community helps to empower our communities?

I think that APA spoken word and performing artists help to empower our communities by telling the stories of our lives here in the U.S. It always helps to know that other people share your experiences and feelings. Artists help provide a space to reflect on what's been going on in our communities.

Q: What would you say to young APA's who see you on TV and want to be like you?

Don't let anyone separate you from what you love. Not your friends, your family, your boyfriend/girlfriend, your teachers, your community, or even yourself. Stay true to your craft. Follow your curiosity, and trust that it's important. Start, continue, go deeper, and start again. Do "you," and have faith that you're not alone in your dreams and desires for yourself and the world!



RESPONDING TO HATE CRIMES

A COMMUNITY ACTION GUIDE

Published by OCA
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RESPONDING TO HATE CRIMES A COMMUNITY ACTION GUIDE



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respond support mobilize



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Responding to Hate Crimes: A Community Action Guide is an educational tool for OCA chapters and all communities seeking a practical, step-by-step guide to hate crimes response.

The guide has three sections:

Section I: Introduction to Hate Crimes

Learn about what constitutes a hate crime or hate incident, who commits them, how they are tracked and the importance of reporting them to the police.

Section II: Victim Support

Provides victims with resources for legal referrals, places to apply

- An integrated guide of broad topics that a community leader will face when responding to a hate crime, among them including victim assistance, community organizing, working within coalitions and the media;
- Resources for law enforcement personnel, attorneys, community leaders, educators and parents, youth, and victim assistance providers;
- Examples of community best practices to address and prevent hate crimes;
- Web resources that lead to more information by leading organizations fighting hate;
- Quick tip sheets and checklists;
- Summary "Points to Remember" at the end of each section;
- Easy-to-read text for quick reference; and
- Reader-friendly visuals.

Nationally distributed, the **Responding to Hate Crimes: A Community Guide** is free to the public for all who request the manual. Copies are limited. A copy of the guide in PDF format can also be obtained in easy-to-download sections from the OCA website, at www.oceanatl.org. For more information, contact Anh Phan, OCA Communications Director, at 202-223-5500 or aphan@oceanatl.org

OCA, founded in 1973 as the Organization of Chinese Americans, is a national organization dedicated to advancing the social, political and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans in the United States.



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BECOME AN OCA MEMBER TODAY

We encourage you to join the OCA chapter nearest you. If there are no chapters in your area, you are welcome to join as an OCA Member-at-Large.

If you would like to join as a Member-at-Large, please complete the Membership Application Form and submit along with your dues payment to: OCA, 1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20036. Please make check payable to OCA.

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I would like to join an OCA chapter in my area. Please send my contact information to the local chapter president (or person in charge of membership services).

I am interested in starting an OCA chapter in my local area. Please send me relevant chapter development materials and information.

Please send me additional information regarding: _____

**For more information, contact:
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