

IMAGE

FALL 2010

OCA | EMBRACING THE HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS OF ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS

**Interview
with Daphne
Kwok**

HOT ISSUES:

**Gulf Coast
Fisherfolks**

**Immigrant
Exclusion Acts**

**Birthright
Citizenship**

**2010 Convention
Highlights**

Mrs. Hall, a crabber in Alabama shows us her traps, which have been out of use since the oil spill.

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Fall 2010



OCA and JACL talk to fishermen in the Gulf Coast



OCA National President Ken Lee and BAC members present the 2010 OCA Corporate Achievement Award to AT&T



Kam Mak with OCA-NJ at an OCA APA Heritage Month National Children's Book Tour Reading

About the Cover:
Photo by Nalea Ko, reporter for Pacific Citizen. Republished with permission from Pacific Citizen.
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Our Mission

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

To fulfill its mission, OCA has established the following goals:

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

Founded in 1973 as the Organization of Chinese Americans, OCA aims to embrace the hopes and aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans.

OCA is engaged in organizing its over 80 chapters and affiliates across the nation to develop both leadership and community involvement. OCA chapters and our affiliates are establishing strong local programs in all parts of the country.

OCA's headquarters in Washington, D.C. gives the OCA National Center an effective vantage point for monitoring legislation and policy issues affecting Asian Pacific Americans. In addition, OCA is able to build national support and to work in coalition with other national groups around issues affecting Asian Pacific Americans.

OCA takes no collective position on the politics of any foreign country, but instead focuses on the welfare and civil rights of Asian Pacific Americans.

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Message from the President

Ken Lee | OCA National President

Two years have passed since I became president of OCA, and I am proud to see great growth in an organization that has become such a large part of my life. As we say repeatedly, OCA is an organization dedicated to “Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans.” If we have made any progress, it should be towards this goal. In looking at OCA’s development and success, we should first ask ourselves, what are the hopes and aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans?

One thing can be ascertained, our dreams are diverse. While Asian Pacific Americans are often confined to the stereotype of the “model minority”, we are, in reality, a community of unique individuals. We come from every walk of life, and our hopes and aspirations are no less diverse. The development of programs which cater to the unique aspirations of each member of our community has laid a foundation for the hopes and ambitions of many Asian Pacific Americans. From internships to scholarships to corporate achievement awards, our organization has grown to offer all of our members the opportunity for personal and professional development.

This year, our drive to organize a national children’s book tour for APA Heritage Month not only gave a platform for Asian Pacific American authors to showcase their work but also helped connect young children to great literature that they could relate to. Our national convention this year in Houston was attended by almost 1,000 people from across the country. It was a great and successful convening of members, sponsors, and new faces as we honored Wat Misaka, Dr. Thang Nguyen, and Leroy Chiao. The theme of “Diverse Communities-United

Commitment” resonates with the reality that while we are unique, we are also a community that faces similar challenges and share in each other’s success.

Currently, there are many crucial issues to be addressed. A crisis in immigration continues to separate family members from their loved ones, an oil disaster in the Gulf Coast has devastated an industry which many Asian Americans depend on and an unprecedented economic downturn has left many thousands unemployed. This issue of IMAGE takes a look at Asian Americans who have had the audacity to challenge issues facing our community and find solutions for the people who need them now. Their advocacy and passion sets an example for how we all can be a part of the movement supporting our community and removing the obstacles facing Asian Americans.

The challenges ahead may be daunting, but our chapters and members have shown a level of courage and energy that gives OCA the strength to move forward. I believe that we can all lead. Simply by standing up for our community, voicing our concerns and being a part of the movement for equality, we are leaders who represent American values and our nation’s diverse history. By donating bone marrow, discussed later in this issue, we are life-savers. By participating in the Gulf Coast clean-up, we are activists. The men and women who I saw at the 2010 OCA National Conference were pioneers. There are many avenues for advocacy, and our community is waiting for us to take the lead. ■



Message from the Executive Director

George Wu | OCA Executive Director

My family has been in the fishing industry since before my father was a child. I grew up around a lot of fisher people and even more fish, and still cherish the memories of joining my dad on boats when they came into the harbor. I even have an odd affinity for the smell of fresh fish being loaded onto trucks for transport. To be honest though, aside from my ability to properly debone and serve fish at the dinner table, that part of my identity had laid dormant for many years. That is until my recent trips to the Gulf Coast, where I had the opportunity to meet, speak with, and bond with fisher people who reminded me of the amazing community that has helped to make me who I am today.

Along with other Asian Pacific American (APA) leaders like Floyd Mori of the Japanese American Citizens League and DJ Ida of the National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association (both of whom made similar journeys in the wake of Hurricane Katrina) and representatives of APIAVote, the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum, the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center, and BPSOS, OCA traveled to the Gulf Coast in the months after the BP Oil Spill to better understand the impact on the APA community. What we found not only shocked and enraged us, but also gave me profound hope that the people of the Gulf Coast will survive once again.

Throughout our extensive travels through Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, we met fisher people who showed up every day to take care of their boats regardless of the obstacles they faced personally and financially. We met families who never compromised on their standard of Southern (and I guess Southeast Asian) hospitality despite the enormous strains on their psyche and budgets. And we met tireless advocates

who strove to help fisher people make sense of an extremely complicated world of claims, restrictions, and reports.

We noticed troubling versions of issues OCA has long tried to eradicate. From the lack of culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate communications, to fraud perpetrated on vulnerable communities, we knew we had many short and long-term civil rights and social justice issues to address. The fisher people also taught us that access to higher education has become a problem and the mainstream programs for job retraining were inadequate. Their families spoke of the tremendous pressure they felt to maintain individual, collective, and mental health. Most importantly, these proud community members shared with us their immense desire to get back to work.

For OCA, we are dedicated to being a resource to the fisher people of the Gulf Coast to rebuild their lives, businesses, and communities. As always, the OCA National Center is leveraging our connections in Washington, DC to push the White House, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and individual government agencies to provide the right services and help to the APA community in the Gulf Coast. And we continue our commitment to all our other programs, because throughout our journey, we found people who have been touched directly by an OCA member or program in the past.

I found a lot of myself in the Gulf Coast these last few months and I think you will find much of your identity and goals in the following pages. I don't know exactly where the OCA journey will lead in the future, but I know we will always be guided by the will of Asian Pacific American communities who refuse to give up. OCA will always honor their commitment to their families and their country. ■



Message from the Editor

Mia Youhne | Vice President of Communications

Greetings from Las Vegas!

As I write my last Editor's message, my desk is covered with past IMAGE magazines since 2000. The year 2000 was when I first became involved with OCA and I can't believe it has been ten years since then. As I look through the past IMAGE magazines, it is amazing how far we have come as an organization. Throughout the years, IMAGE magazine itself has taken on a new design, starting from the look and feel, to the overall layout design.

I must say that I am quite saddened by the fact that this is my last issue, but I am also very excited to see how IMAGE will continue to progress. As your Vice President of Communications for the past four years, I would like to take this time to thank you for allowing me to serve as your VP of Communications. It has been an honor and a great pleasure to serve as an Executive Council Member for OCA.

I would like to thank our chapters for being a voice for our organization. I would like to encourage each chapter to continue to share with us your stories and continue to be the voice of our organization. OCA exists and continues to grow stronger because of you. Please continue to send us your photos, chapter updates, and highlights! We will continue to make sure we share your stories both through IMAGE magazine and our e-newsletters. We will continue to

strive to bring you the latest news and highlights from across the nation.

In this issue of IMAGE, we highlight the 2010 OCA National Convention which took place in Houston, Texas. I would like to take this time to applaud the co-chairs of the 2010 convention: Victoria Ma and Gene Wu, our Executive Council members: Debbie Chen, Rogene Calvert, the Houston Chapter, and the many volunteers from across the country who helped organize and put this fabulous event together. I would like to also take this time to acknowledge and thank the young professionals of the Houston chapter, our OCA Summer interns, and our OCA Intern Alumni.

Convention is always a time when I become rejuvenated and re-energized. It was my first time in Houston, and I must say I was quite impressed. I now understand what Southern hospitality truly means and what it is all about thanks to our Houston chapter. Our OCA Houston Chapter members and volunteers definitely deserve to be recognized for their dedication and hard work. Remember to mark your calendars for the 2011 OCA National Convention in New York from August 4 - 7, 2011.

Once again, it has been a pleasure to serve as your VP of Communications and I hope to see all of you at next year's convention in New York City!

Grow. Lead. Succeed ■

OCA National Convention 2010 Diverse Communities –

Victoria Rumsey | OCA National Center
All photos by Rui Barros

Almost 1,000 OCA members and friends came to celebrate the 37th OCA National Convention in Houston, Texas this past June. This year's convention was hosted by the OCA-Greater Houston Chapter. Since hosting their first convention in 1991, Houston continues to grow as a vibrant and diverse community. This year's convention theme, *Diverse Communities – United Commitment* truly defines how OCA works to address the issues facing APAs today and in the future.

Over the course of the four days of Convention, OCA members listened and participated in OCA's ongoing national dialogue on issues such as health care, immigration, and civil rights. Members also had the opportunity learn about new issues such as the Gulf Coast Oil Spill and green energy. This year, OCA organized workshops by specific tracks: general advocacy, youth and college, small business development, professional development and chapter advancement. Outside of the workshops, conference attendees were able to experience many festivities including the Youth Recognition Luncheon, Starry Nite Market, Chapter Awards Luncheon, Houston APA Film Festival, Convention Gala, Banana Republic Fashion Show, Space Center Tour with Leroy Chiao and much more!

Thursday, June 17

Kicking off the OCA National Convention in the morning were programs such as the Chapter Advancement Track, Youth Leadership Training, College Leadership Training and the National Board Meeting.

The Business Advisory Council (BAC) went offsite for their meeting at Maggiano's Little Italy where they had lunch served family style and listened to special guest, Houston City Council member Gordon Quan, who spoke on the issue of immigration reform.

That evening, OCA Greater Houston welcomed convention attendees with an amazing reception focusing on Asian Pacific Americans in the creative arts. The highlight of the evening was a fashion show by a local fashion designer, Danny Nguyen, and a screening/talk with film directors, Christine Toy Johnson and Bruce Johnson about their film, "Transcending: The Wat Misaka Story."



Chapter Advancement Track



Youth Leadership Training



Applause for the fashion show at the Opening Welcome Reception



Opening Welcome Reception

United Commitment

Friday, June 18

The Opening Plenary entitled “Green Energy, Green Economy” centered around the convention theme, Diverse Communities-United Commitment with an emphasis on increasing the APA community’s commitment to the environment, alternative energy, technology, and green businesses. Mayor Annise Parker welcomed attendees to Houston to start off the plenary session. She was followed by Nick Lampson, Former US House of Representative Member, Floyd Mori, Executive Director of JACL, and Laura Spanijan, City of Houston Sustainability Director.

Convention attendees were then able to visit the Exhibit Hall, which featured major corporations, government agencies, local community businesses, and community organizations. Exhibitors were there to recruit APA talent, as well as showcase their products. OCA also featured APA authors, filmmakers, and artists.

Attendees also participated in numerous panels focusing on Small Businesses, The Gulf Coast Oil Spill, and APA Identities and Ethnic Enclaves.

Over 300 local seniors had an early lunch at the Chinese Community Center, then made their way over to the Westin Galleria to enjoy mini-plenary sessions where speakers talked about diet and nutrition, Healthcare Reform, and Social Security.

The Youth Recognition Luncheon recognized the 2010 Summer Internship Class and thanked our many sponsors for their commitment to education. Jennifer Kao, OCA-San Mateo’s Speak and Lead winner read her winning essay about education. Then, the luncheon’s keynote speakers, Wei Chen and Duy Ngoc Nguyen, spoke on behalf of the South Philadelphia High School students who drew national headlines last year when they staged an 8-day boycott of their school following repeated physical assaults and harassments. OCA members who attended the luncheon participated in a fundraising exercise for the internship program. The winning table with the most raised during the luncheon received an autographed basketball or t-shirt signed by 2010 OCA Pioneer Award Honoree Wat Misaka. Thanks to everyone, OCA raised over \$4,000 which is the cost to fund one intern!

To wrap up Friday’s long day, guests loaded onto buses that took them on a police-escorted tour of Asia Town, ending at the Chinese Community Center for the Starry Nite Market and Film Festival. At the center, guests enjoyed a night filled with samplings of Houston’s cuisine, games, a film screening, and amazing entertainment that showcased Houston’s diversity. Performances included Johnny Hi-Fi, Giles Li, Ryukyukoku Daiko, and Mariachi Imperiale.



Taiko performance at Starry Nite



Kam Mak at the Starry Nite Market in front of the stamp he illustrated



2010 OCA Summer Interns

Saturday, June 19

The State of APA Summit kicked off day 3 of the convention and focused on the changing demographics of the APA community in relationship to other national demographic changes. Panelists included: Dr. Stephen Klineberg, Professor of Sociology at Rice University, Larry Shinagawa, Associate Professor and Director of Asian American Studies at University of Maryland and Andrew Chang, graduate student at the University of Florida and 2009 OCA Summer Intern.

The day was full of various workshops and panels with speakers who discussed issues ranging from leadership and professional development to racial profiling and immigration. The Chapter Awards Luncheon recognized the different chapters for their advocacy and community programs and development efforts for the past year. OCA-New Jersey won this year's Chapter of the Year Award, with OCA-Greater Sacramento coming in second, and OCA-Greater Houston in third. OCA-Greater Houston also won the award for Excellence in Economic Development and Excellence in Projects and Programs. In addition, OCA-Greater Sacramento won a second award for Excellence in Community Involvement. To round it off, OCA-Greater Cleveland won for Excellence in Communications, while OCA-New York won Excellence in Advocacy and OCA-Orange County won Excellence in Membership.

And at last...the event we were all waiting for...OCA Gala Awards Dinner! OCA presented their Unsung Heroes and UPS Gold Mountain winners and announced AT&T as this year's Corporate Partner of the Year. OCA also was thrilled to present the Outstanding Citizen Achievement Award to Dr. Thang Ding Nguyen, Executive Director of BPSOS. The Pioneer Awards were presented to Wat Misaka, the first person of color to play in the NBA and Dr. Leroy Chiao, the first APA commander of the International Space Station.



APA author Cynthia Chin-Lee, who was a part of OCA's APA Heritage Month Children's Book Tour



OCA-NJ wins the 2010 Chapter of the Year Award



2010 Unsung Heroes Awardees with Kim Delevett, Wendy Wilbur and Ken Lee



OCA National Center Staff with Debbie Chen from the OCA-Houston Chapter



Gala Emcees: Miya Shay and Richard Lui

Sunday, June 20

For those who stayed on Sunday, the morning started off with a breakfast and fashion show at Banana Republic, where OCA's members modeled the latest Banana Republic fashion and enjoyed a 25% shopping discount!

"Houston...we just landed." The Johnson Space Center Tour was an exciting way to end our stay in Houston. Members were greeted with a warm welcome from Leroy Chiao, Ph.D who was kind enough to speak about his time in space and share amazing photos he took from space. OCA members visited numerous sites and NASA buildings where it all happens and finished their evening with a dinner at Landry's on Kemah Boardwalk.

Thank you Houston for the southern hospitality and making the Convention such a success! ■



OCA at the NASA visitor's center

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MAAP

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Tom Hayashi | MAAP Consultant

As an extension of OCA's commitment to leadership development and under the generous and visionary support from the UPS Foundation, OCA developed the **Mentoring Asian American Professionals (MAAP)** program. MAAP strategically addresses the professional development needs of emerging Asian Pacific American leaders. The program has successfully operated in Atlanta, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. Altogether, over 80 individuals have enrolled in MAAP to engage in skills building, relationship development, mentoring dialogue, and networking. In the current calendar year, MAAP will introduce new mentoring cycles in Chicago, New Jersey, and Orange County—2010 total national enrollment is projected to exceed 110. Each program cycle spans approximately three-months and includes over four one-on-one mentoring sessions and three half-day network convening.

The Mentoring Asian American Professionals program was successfully launched and executed in the Washington, DC, region in November 2009. The goal of the program was to cultivate the next generation of confident, empowered, equipped, and collaborative Asian American professional leaders through mentoring, skills building, and networking. Nine young professional mentees were each paired off with experienced professional mentors.

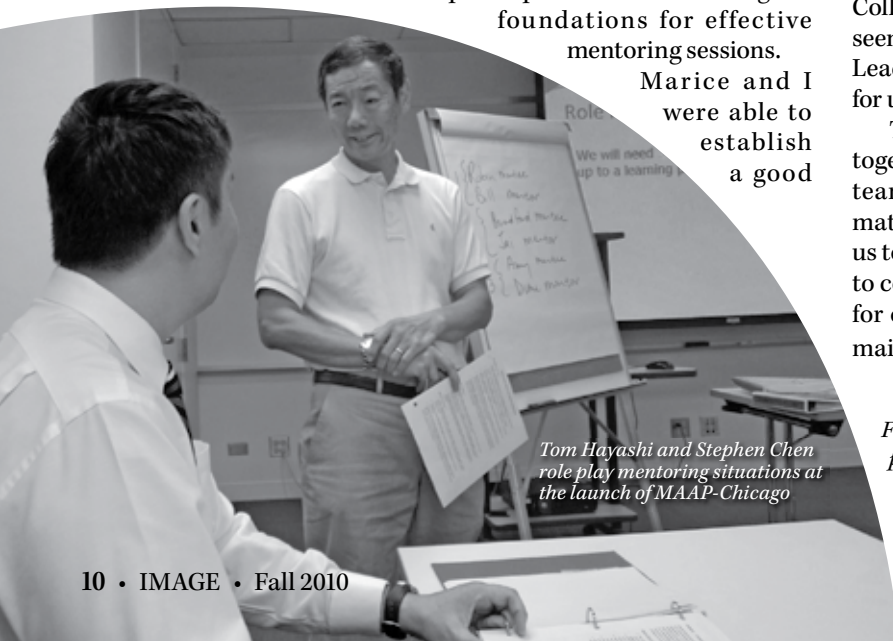
The teams were well matched and all functioned very effectively. I was paired with Marice Fernando, a graduate student at George Mason University studying International Conflict Resolution. I am a retired civil engineer and program manager who worked for the Federal Aviation Administration. At first look, this appeared to be an odd pairing, but as Marice and I learned during the course of the program, we were very compatible together and learned much from one another. At the opening session, the participants became acquainted through interesting exercises and began building bonds that would help each mentor-mentee team. I am sure that I was able to glean some of Marice's personality through this session, and she was able to do the same with me, particularly in the role playing exercise. The facilitators introduced us to an overview of the program, concentrating roles and responsibilities of each participant, and establishing the foundations for effective mentoring sessions.

Marice and I were able to establish a good

The primary objective of MAAP is to cultivate the next generation of confident, empowered, equipped, and collaborative Asian American professional leaders through mentoring, skills-building, and networking.

routine for the four scheduled sessions. We approached the sessions well-prepared and objectively, with the premise that we each had valuable contributions to offer and that we each could learn from the other. Her experiences as a student and a leader in a number of social advocacy groups and mine during my FAA career and involvement in many organizations made for an excellent blending of thoughts and opinions. Although as the mentor, there may have been a tacit understanding that I was the leader of the team, I believe that we both felt an equal partnership in the mentoring program. We enjoyed having spirited discussions on the various subjects of Networking and Relationship Building, Communications and Negotiations, Collaborative Decision Making, and Leadership. Each session seemed to build toward the next one until the final session on Leadership did stand out as a very solid learning experience for us.

The two mid-term network meetings for all teams to come together were very energizing and an effective way for each team to gain strength from the whole group. The subject matter dealt with personal reflection and helped to ground us to the task at hand. Finally, the last session was a good way to confirm to all that we all learned many important lessons for our careers and our lives. Most mentoring teams have maintained relationships after the conclusion of MAAP. ■



Tom Hayashi and Stephen Chen
role play mentoring situations at
the launch of MAAP-Chicago

For more information or to host MAAP at your local chapter, please contact Mary Kong, Program Assistant at mkong@ocanational.org or visit the OCA National Center website: www.ocanational.org.

OCA Intern Alumni Journey to India to Stop Human Trafficking

Sharon Choi | 2010 OCA Spring Intern
Will Xu | 2009 OCA Summer Intern

The OCA Internship Program allows students from various backgrounds to connect and build friendships to last a lifetime. Although we are intern alumni from different semesters, Will Xu and I crossed paths as facilitators of Youth Day at OCA's 2010 National Convention. After discussing a cycle rally against trafficking I was involved in last year with the NGO Odanadi Seva Trust, Will became very interested in the work I had done in India. Then, when I was asked to help build Odanadi US and go back to India, Will was very enthusiastic about joining me!

We followed Odanadi's grassroots fundraising method to raise funds for our volunteer work to cover the cost of airfare, vaccinations and work materials such as arts and crafts, notebooks, and posters. We set up a blog with information on our work and reached out to all of our networks, including OCA. Staff members and fellow interns at OCA alone contributed over 300 dollars to our trip.

Odanadi US has invited seven survivors of human trafficking and the Founding Directors to a US National Tour in May 2011 to help officially kick off a new branch of Odanadi. Our volunteer work at Odanadi this summer will include training the seven survivors in public speaking and getting them excited for their advocacy work in the US. Another exciting part of our trip will feature the OCA Youth Day leadership training on the 7 Habits of Highly Successful Teens. A simplified version of this workshop will be given to the survivors to build confidence and help them realize their dreams.

Sharon Choi:

Last year, I had the once in a lifetime opportunity to go on a 30-day Cycle Rally (or "jatha" in the local Kannada language) with 20 female survivors of sex and human trafficking and 10 global volunteers. We cycled throughout the state of Karnataka, stopping in over 60 villages to advocate against trafficking and domestic violence against women

and children. At each village, we sang songs and passed out pamphlets, talked to women and children about trafficking and domestic violence, planted a tree and listened to the stories of survivors. We slept wherever we could – in temples, schools, huts, generous home stays and community halls.

Even in overwhelming heat and hours of cycling, we all pressed on. We pressed on because we were so empowered by

the cultural exchanges between our strong Indian survivors and international volunteers, by Odanadi's mission and our shared passion to stop trafficking.

Will Xu:

"Why do you miss India?" were the five words that really started my involvement in Odanadi. I was commenting on Sharon's away message online and it led to a whole discussion on human trafficking. From Sharon, I learned about kids from Mysore, India who had to survive against the odds of sex and human trafficking. Most of us live our lives with our own goals and ambitions, raised to believe we can do anything we put our minds to. This is what hit me the most, that these children, who were exploited and abused from a young age, never had proper role-models, never had the same promise of opportunity, nor the nurturing that we take as a right here in the United States. I feel that if my interactions with them can put them even a small bit closer to the opportunities that I have been privileged to receive, then my trip would be worth it.

In the United States, we always say that the youth are our future. These youth deserve a bright future too, and their potential to achieve should not be compromised because of their unfortunate past. I hope to generate support and awareness against human trafficking within the U.S. communities upon my return. To me, if we are able to prevent even one child from being robbed of their innocence and future, it would be worth all of our efforts. ■



Survivors from Odanadi will travel to the US next year to speak out against human trafficking, officially launching Odanadi U.S.



Sharon and William prepared the survivors by helping them to build self-confidence and empowering them through leadership development trainings

Our volunteer work at Odanadi this summer will include training the seven survivors in public speaking and getting them excited for their advocacy work in the US.

Read more about Sharon and Will's Odanandi trip on their blog:
<http://www.willandsharongotoindia.blogspot.com>

You can also read about Sharon's first trip to India here:
<http://stoptraffickingcycle.blogspot.com>

OCA Advocacy Day for Summer Interns

Maruel Unrein | 2010 OCA Summer Intern

As a student leader at the University of Kansas, and resident from my home state of Hawaii, I'm used to advocating for various issues pertaining to Asian Pacific Americans on a local or regional level. I've spoken with college students at meetings, attended conference workshops, and posted links on social networking sites. Unfortunately, I never focused on the bigger picture of discussing national issues such as immigration reform. It never occurred to me how big of an issue it was due to the lack of involvement from my community, my fellow students and most importantly, from myself.

OCA trained me to become a stronger advocate of comprehensive immigration reform through a brownbag luncheon on immigration and advocacy. I learned about potential areas in the immigration system that could be improved such as E-Verify, the Dream Act and the Family Reunification Act. To put our knowledge into action, OCA scheduled Advocacy Day on July 15 for all of the 2010 Summer Interns to make legislative visits. The 19 interns scheduled 15 meetings, 3 of which were with their actual Representatives. Advocacy Day really pushed us to be politically active. This was something new to me, especially when it came to talking to a legislator. I had never talked to any politicians

when I was in Kansas or Hawaii so how was someone like me going to talk to the big guys at Capitol Hill? It was a scary thought but my fellow interns as well as the OCA staff really gave me the confidence to push forward.

I felt prepared to speak with the Legislative Director for Representative Djou, the recently elected congressman from Hawaii. The conversation went extremely well and was a nice contrast to my earlier legislative visit with another intern's representative from Missouri. Fortunately, the Legislative Director, Austin Weatherford, was knowledgeable about my Representative's stance on immigration reform and actually discussed with me and my fellow interns other issues that Hawaii faced with legal immigrants from places like Micronesia, which I wasn't aware of. It was a substantive experience and inspired me to schedule appointments with Representative Djou himself as well as Senator Inouye. I would not have had the confidence to address issues such as immigration, the economy, and education in Hawaii with these powerful elected officials without having experienced Advocacy Day first.

Being able to be politically active has allowed me to not only voice my concerns for the APA community in Hawaii or Kansas, but also showed me

I would not have had the confidence to address issues such as immigration, the economy, and education in Hawaii with these powerful elected officials without having experienced Advocacy Day first.

that I can make my voice heard at the national level. It only takes one person to make a difference, and with that knowledge I can advocate to my fellow peers and respective communities wherever I am. ■

Maruel Unrein is a senior at the University of Kansas studying Economics. He was placed at the Department of Veteran's Affairs



Support APA Youth Invest in the OCA Internship Program

OCA's Internship Program offers college students unique opportunities and hands-on experience in Washington, D.C. that will shape their lives and careers forever. Won't you be part of this rewarding program? We ask you to join us in supporting OCA's Internship Program, which has been part of OCA's leadership development programs for over two decades.

Why support the OCA Internship Program?

- OCA's Internship Program provides unique opportunities for college students to intern at the OCA National Center, Congressional offices, federal agencies, and other prominent non-profit organizations for ten weeks or longer.
- The OCA Internship Program emphasizes developing future APA leaders by empowering students for personal and professional growth. The program provides opportunities to hear guest lectures, participate in brown bag luncheons, career development activities, and special events such as networking receptions and Hill briefings.
- OCA interns are highly accomplished, driven young leaders who are passionate about social justice. Through their internship experience they become part of the OCA family.

Many former OCA interns are already making an impact and contributing to the APA community. In addition to continuing their service to OCA at the chapter, National Board, and staff level, OCA Internship alumni have gone on to become: MacArthur "Genius" Award Recipient, Municipal Judge in Austin, Texas, APIAVote Executive Director, SF Civil Service Commissioner, Congressional APA Caucus Executive Director, Harry S. Truman Scholar, OCA Executive Director, and more!

It is important, especially in these difficult economic times, to continue to invest in programs that have a positive impact on the lives of APA youth. A tax-deductible donation of \$4,000 can support one intern for their 10-week, full-time internship and invest in a future APA leader.

Since 1989, your generous support has allowed OCA to fund over 400 interns. **Our goal is to raise \$15,000 in individual giving from members, by November 12, 2010.** Please donate and invest in the future of APA leaders by going to www.oconational.org!

“As an OCA intern, I learned how important it was for APAs to have a voice in national policies and politics. Meeting strong, articulate and principled Asian American leaders like Norman Mineta, Daphne Kwok, Karen Narasaki, Paul Igasaki and so many more inspired me to pursue a career as a civil rights attorney. OCA's internship program has come a long way from I started in 1991. Donating to the program is the most valuable contribution you can make to building an engaged, informed generation of new APA leaders.”

Kathay Feng, 1991 OCA Summer Intern; Executive Director of California Common Cause



“My OCA summer internship was not just an internship – it was a transformative experience. OCA opened the door and introduced me to many APIA elected officials, professionals, and organizations in a setting where I could engage in discussion and ask candid questions. I now feel empowered and confident in bringing up the APIA perspective in talks about policy and connecting my peers to the resources that I discovered through OCA.”

Cindy Dinh, 2009 OCA Summer Intern; 2010 Harry S. Truman Scholar, OCA-Greater Houston Board Member



Campus Action Plan: *Retracing Our Roots* Retreat

Kimberly Sarabia | 2010 OCA Summer Intern

Growing up Asian American in Indiana and the Midwest can be a complex and sometimes confusing experience. As a response to the difficulties that many Asian Americans face in dealing with their identities as a person of color, I am organizing a retreat for first and second year college students in Indiana University. The *Retracing Our Roots* retreat will be a weekend-long self-exploration and empowerment program for Asian Pacific Americans. It will be held on October 16-17 in the Bradford Woods nature reserve. The goal of the retreat is to provide a safe, progressive, and inclusive space for 15 to 20 college students. It will be spearheaded by the Indiana University Asian Culture Center and will be coordinated by myself. The goal of the retreat will be to encourage young college students to explore the issues affecting their identities such as stereotypes and the absence of APA history in the classroom. My hope is for attendees to become inspired, educated, and united as a community of Asian Pacific Americans.

In this retreat, students will be able to meet other Asian Pacific Americans

My hope is for attendees to become inspired, educated, and united as a community of Asian Pacific Americans.

and share their experiences in dealing with their identities. Students will be able to participate in issues-based and

hands-on workshops that are relevant to them personally. The workshops will be accompanied by various nature activities in Bradford Woods. They will also be able to gain meaningful exchanges with other Asian Pacific Americans and work towards creating a foundation for an APA community in Indiana University.

The main workshops for the retreat will involve rediscovering APA history and asserting an APA identity. I chose these two topics because of the overall lack of knowledge that many students in my campus have in regards to APA history. Growing up in Indiana, I was never taught about the Chinese Exclusion Act and other anti-immigration policies. In addition, important parts of history pertaining to Asian Pacific Americans such as the internment of American citizens of Japanese descent were granted one line in history textbooks. By having a history workshop, I hope that students will be able to rediscover their own history and recognize its significance in their lives. In addition, students will be participating in an identity workshop that will provide them with the space to contextualize their experiences as “the other” through poetry, drawing, and other art forms.

So far, planning for the retreat has been an exciting and gratifying experience. I have received incredible support from the Director of the Asian Culture Center as well as the OCA staff for my vision. In addition, I am extremely grateful



Kimberly Sarabia, 2010 OCA summer intern

for the advice that many of my fellow OCA interns have given me on the best workshops to have. At the moment, I have been able to set the date, reserve the space for the nature reserve, and finalize the workshops. My next step is to promote the event and outreach to freshmen and sophomores through social networking sites and Welcome Week events.

I am looking forward to successfully implementing my Campus Action Plan and creating a safe space for Asian Pacific American students to learn about their history, strengthen their identity, and connect with each other. ■

Kimberly Sarabia is a senior at Indiana University studying Political Science. She was placed at the OCA National Center.

OCA Scholarship Expands Horizons for Recipient

Wenjun Grace Ge | OCA-UPS Gold Mountain Scholar

Entering as a freshman at Rice University, I thought that the biggest change for me this summer would be transitioning from high school to college. Needless to say, I was wrong. I never thought I would receive the OCA-UPS Gold Mountain Scholarship. When I stumbled upon the application on the web, it seemed like a long shot. Every year over 300 high school seniors apply for the scholarship, awarded to Asian Pacific American students who are the first in their families to attend college in the United States. OCA also offers the OCA-AXAsm Scholarship for high school seniors who demonstrate academic achievement, leadership ability, and community service. Finally, the OCA-Verizon College scholarship awards current undergraduate sophomores and juniors who have outstanding achievement in the fields of technology, engineering, computer science, and business. All three of these scholarships help Asian Pacific American students from low-income families achieve their dream of a higher education. OCA has awarded almost \$1 million in scholarships to APA students since beginning its scholarship program in 1999.

I am very grateful to be part of this program and one of 12 students selected to receive the \$2,000 OCA-UPS Gold Mountain Scholarship. The scholarship changed my life in many more ways than just helping me pay for college. I can honestly say OCA altered my life and perspective when

All three of these scholarships help Asian Pacific Americans students from low-income families achieve their dream of a higher education.

they invited me to attend the OCA 2010 National Convention in Houston. I was a part of the Youth Track program, and participated in events such as fun icebreakers that allowed me to establish amazing friendships, incredible workshops, and artistic events like the Johnny Hi-Fi musical performance.

The convention expanded my limited scope on the issues facing the APA community today. I was able to interact with people like the South Philadelphia High School students who possessed first-hand experience with violence, racism, and challenges that were worlds apart from the bubble I lived in. They successfully battled violent racism and attacks against Asian American students at their school through peaceful protests and boycotts. Before the OCA Convention, I was oblivious to problems such as violence and racism, but now, I realize

that I am not independent from these issues.

With the summer fast ending and my freshmen year at Rice University about to begin, I will take with me the values that OCA and the outstanding individuals I met have taught me. Because of OCA and the opportunities I received as an OCA-UPS Gold Mountain Scholar, I can now not only overcome the financial barriers hindering my ability to attend college, but also have the desire to pursue a course of studies that will help me alleviate the issues affecting the Asian Pacific American community. ■



OCA-UPS Gold Mountain Scholars

The Need for Bone Marrow Donation from APAs

Ruby Law | Asian American Donor Program, Recruitment Director
Pei-Un Yee | OCA National Center

If you had the power to save a life, would you? It's difficult to watch a loved one with a long-term illness linger, knowing that with more resources, their pain would be eliminated and they would have a new lease on life. Those who are not Caucasian are more likely to die of leukemia or other blood diseases because there is a shortage of multi-ethnic donors on the Be the Match® bone marrow registry. Asian American Donor Program (AADP), affiliated with Be The Match program, works to increase the availability of potential stem cell donors for patients with life-threatening diseases curable with a marrow/stem cell transplant. AADP holds marrow/stem cell drives throughout the year, registering potential donors; these potential donors are then available to patients in need.

An important fact to know is that becoming a match does not automatically equate to a becoming a donor. Many times

The national drive is dedicated to the Team Teri Challenge for OCA-Wisconsin member, Teri Li, who was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia.

if a match is made, more tests need to be done to ensure that the individual is the best possible match. If someone is selected, the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), which operates the Be The Match Registry, will schedule an information session to share about the donation process, risks and side effects. At any point during

the process, potential donors can change their minds and NMDP will continue to search for other donors.

There is also a common misconception that bone marrow donation is a painful procedure. However, most donations do not involve surgery. About 80 percent of the time, the patient's doctor requests a peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) donation, which is a non-surgical, outpatient procedure. PBSC donation involves removing a donor's blood through a needle in one arm. The blood is passed through a machine that separates out the cells used in transplants. The remaining blood is returned through the other arm. If the patient's doctor requests marrow (about 20 percent of the time), the donation process is a surgical procedure performed in a hospital, during which liquid marrow (found inside the bone) is withdrawn from the back of the donor's pelvic bones. General or regional anesthesia is always used for this procedure, so donors feel no pain during

marrow collection. Most donors feel some soreness in their lower back for a few days afterwards. The doctor decides which of the two methods is best for a patient.

Donors also never pay for donating, and are never paid to donate. All medical costs for the donation procedure are covered by the NMDP or by the patient's medical insurance, as are travel expenses and other non-medical costs. The only costs to the donor might be time taken off from work.

In an effort to bring awareness to the lack of bone marrow registrants, OCA started its first national bone marrow registration drive. For the month of August, OCA mobilized its chapters to not only host a drive, but to educate members and their community about the importance of bone marrow donation. The national drive is dedicated to the Team Teri Challenge for OCA-Wisconsin member, Teri Li, who was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Her immediate family members are not a match and she is urgently looking for a donor. OCA chapters are working together with organizations such as AADP to bring in more registrants and hopefully increase the chances of finding Teri and other Asian Pacific Americans a match.

"I was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML), and am in a fight for my life. Registering at aadp.org can help save my life and the lives of 400 other Asian Americans. We can only fight this cancer with your help." – Teri Li

What can you do? Encourage more people of multi-ethnic heritage to join the marrow/stem cell registry and potentially save a life. You can also organize a drive or volunteer to reach out to potential donors. Volunteering to be a marrow/stem cell donor is simple. Donors must be in good general health and between the ages of 18 and 60. A cheek sample is collected on swabs for testing. Each participant is asked to give his or her consent to have his or her tissue type listed on the NMDP registry. For additional information, call 1-800-593-6667 or visit www.aadp.org. ■

Teri Li, OCA-Wisconsin member and cancer survivor



What You Should Know About HIV and Hepatitis B

Stephanie Gross | Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center, Communications Manager

There are over 13 million Asians and Pacific Islanders (APIs) living in the US and, as the fastest growing ethnic minority, we've made significant strides in business, politics and education. Yet when it comes to health, particularly sexual health, we're still struggling. Despite the fact that APIs are disproportionately affected by HIV and hepatitis B, misconceptions about our collective risk for these diseases abound: "It's not our problem; it doesn't affect us." The statistics tell a different story.

The most recent data show API men and women have the highest percentage annual increase in new HIV infections, higher than any other racial or ethnic group. Despite this, APIs have the lowest testing rates—over two thirds of us have never been tested for HIV. Even more alarming is the fact that 1 in 3 APIs living with HIV don't know it.

APIs are also disproportionately affected by hepatitis B, which can lead to liver cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer. In the US, **1 in 10 APIs is chronically infected with hepatitis B**—compared to 1 in 1000 in the general population—and we account for half of all hepatitis B-related deaths in the country. In California, liver cancer ranks as the leading cause of cancer death for API men. 100 times more infectious than HIV, hepatitis B is transmitted in comparable ways: through blood transfusions, dirty needles, unprotected sex and most commonly, from mother to child at birth. It's important to note, however, that neither hepatitis B nor HIV can be transmitted through air,

water or casual contact like kissing, hugging or sharing utensils and dishes. Even more importantly, **hepatitis B is easily prevented with a safe and effective vaccine.**

Hepatitis B is a silent killer in our community; two-thirds of all cases don't exhibit any symptoms and if they do develop, they mirror the flu. If you haven't been screened for the virus, you could unknowingly infect your family and friends. Getting vaccinated is easy and only requires three shots delivered over a series of weeks. All newborns should be vaccinated at birth.

So why aren't APIs getting vaccinated for hepatitis B? The answer is complex, but one major factor is a deep lack of awareness and sense of fatalism about the health crisis in our community. We don't like to talk about disease, often perceiving it as "weak" or "disgraceful", and we certainly don't like to talk openly about sex. "If it's going to happen, it's going to happen," we think. "There's nothing I can do about it." We often choose to "save face" and avoid topics that might shame us, our families, or our community. But the fact remains that saving face really can't make us safe.

Living with HIV or hepatitis B is not shameful; with treatment and care, it's possible to live full, healthy lives. Educate yourself. Arm yourself with compassion and courage. Start by getting tested for HIV. Get screened and vaccinated for hepatitis B. Talk about it—for you, for me, for everyone. ■



from left to right: Dr. Tri Do, Ryan Ong Palao, CA Assemblywoman Fiona Ma, and API Wellness Center Executive Director Lance Toma. We hosted the press conference here in SF in honor of World Hepatitis Day and National API HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Dr. Do is a researcher with particular interest in APIs while Ryan is a person living with HIV who first disclosed his status on national television. CA Assemblywoman Fiona Ma is living with hepatitis B and is an outspoken leader in the fight to eliminate the disease in CA.

To find out more about HIV and hepatitis B, call 1-866-5BANYAN or visit:

<http://www.banyantreeproject.org>

<http://www.apiwellness.org>

<http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HBV>

Find an HIV/STD/hepatitis B testing site near you at:

http://www.hivtest.org/std_testing.cfm



right: Two test counselors at A&PI Wellness Center hold the Orasure HIV test swabs (results in 20 minutes!)

far right: "Saving face can't make you safe" 2010 campaign

AALDEF

Defending the Voting Rights of Asian Americans



Glenn Magpantay | AALDEF, Democracy Program Director

The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) and OCA have entered into a strategic partnership to protect the voting rights of Asian Americans.

In the past, Asian Americans have had to overcome a series of discriminatory barriers to exercise their right to vote. For example, poll workers were rude or hostile; poll sites had too few interpreters; translated voting materials were missing or hidden from voters; and ballots were mistranslated, one time listing Democratic candidates as Republicans and Republicans as Democrats.

Previously, when the news media reported on election returns and the vote by specific demographic groups, Asian Americans were overlooked.

In response, several OCA Chapters have worked with AALDEF to conduct a non-partisan exit poll to document Asian American voting patterns. AALDEF has also monitored the elections for compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act, which mandates bilingual ballots and forbids anti-Asian voter discrimination.

OCA and AALDEF are again working together to mobilize volunteers to defend the Asian American vote during the Congressional Midterm and Gubernatorial Elections on November 2, 2010.

AALDEF focuses on critical issues affecting Asian Americans, including immigrant rights, civic participation and voting rights, economic justice for workers, language access to services, Census policy, affirmative action, youth rights and educational equity, housing and environmental justice, and the elimination of anti-Asian violence, police misconduct, and human trafficking.

AALDEF has a 21-person staff, including 11 lawyers. We are assisted by over 300 volunteers, including pro bono attorneys, community workers, and students. AALDEF receives financial support from foundations, corporations, individual contributions, and special fundraising events. AALDEF receives no government funds. ■

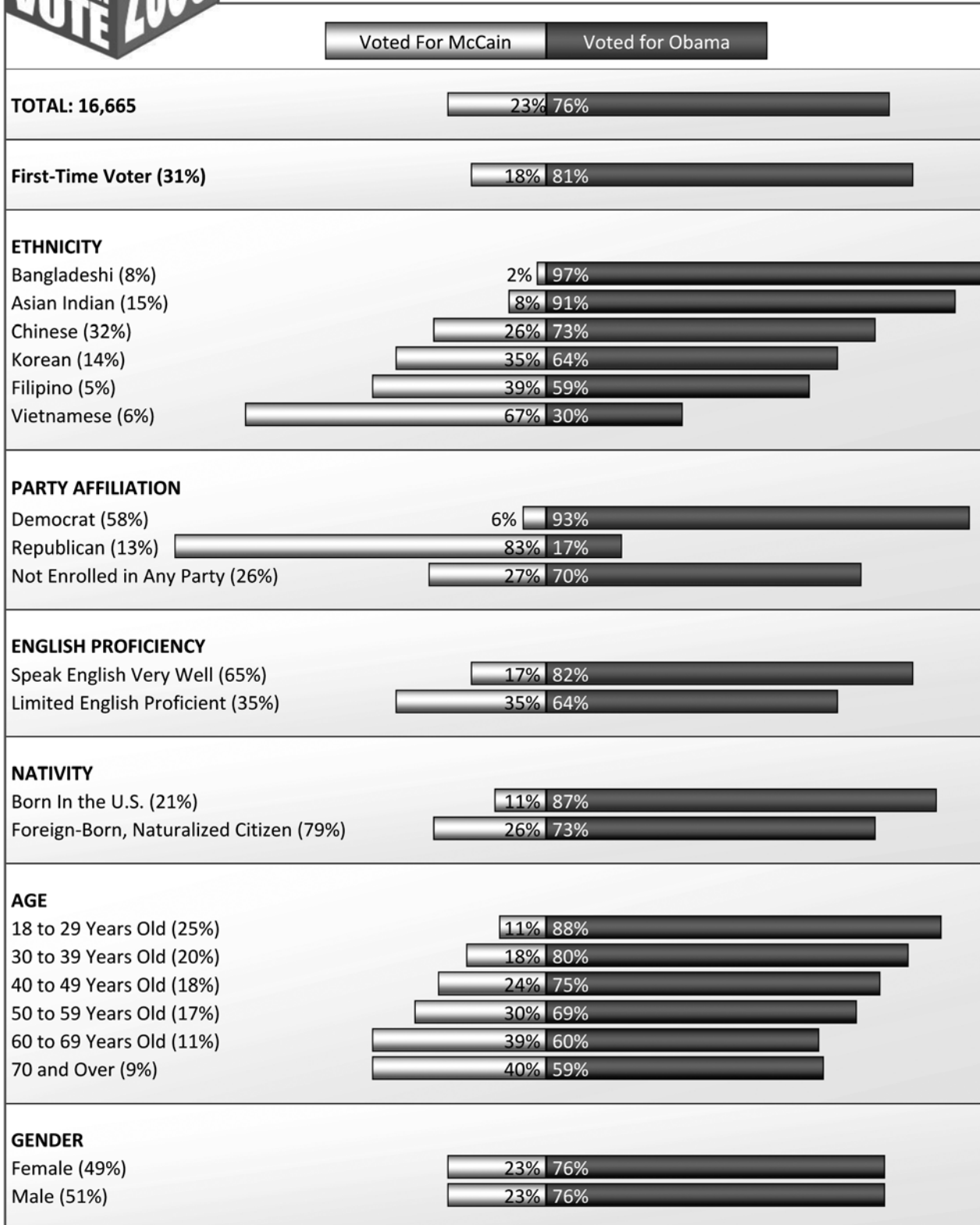
Founded in 1974, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund is a national organization that protects and promotes the civil rights of Asian Americans. By combining litigation, advocacy, education, and organizing, AALDEF works with Asian American communities across the country to secure human rights for all.

To sign up to help defend the Asian American vote on Election Day, go to www.aaldef.net, call 800-966-5946, or email info@aaldef.org.



THE ASIAN AMERICAN VOTE FOR PRESIDENT

A Multilingual Exit Poll Conducted by
the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund on November 4, 2008



"()" percent of total polled

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How Health Care Reform Will Affect You

Alice Dong | Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, Senior Policy Analyst

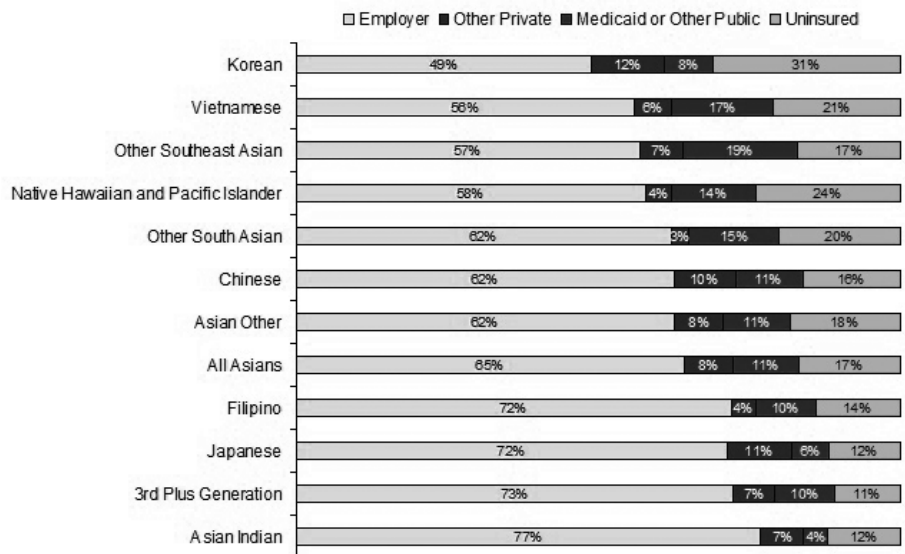
Nearly six months ago, the decades-long push to modernize our health care system achieved passage of Health Care Reform. This historic legislation is a critical step to ensuring that all Americans get the care they need, including many Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, (AAs and NHPIs) who have previously been left uninsured or underinsured.

Some improvements have already begun. Many small businesses can receive tax credits for offering health coverage to their employees, and youth up to age 26 can remain on their parents' health insurance plans. Health plans will also be prohibited from excluding coverage based on pre-existing conditions. Next year, community health centers, which many AAs and NHPIs rely upon for care, will receive the first installment of funds to expand operations and build new centers. By 2013, primary care physicians will receive higher Medicaid reimbursements, which are critical to ensuring that doctors can continue to serve low-income communities.

The most significant reforms, however, will take place in 2014, when almost everyone in the country will be required to carry health coverage. The creation of the American Health Benefit Exchanges will also increase coverage for millions of uninsured Americans by providing low- and moderate-income individuals with tax credits to help them purchase coverage. The Exchanges will

By 2013, primary care physicians will receive higher Medicaid reimbursements, which are critical to ensuring that doctors can continue to serve low-income communities.

Health Coverage of Nonelderly Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, 2004-2006



Note: "3rd Plus Generation" includes individuals who reported their and their parents' country of birth as the U.S.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation and Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum Fact Sheet 2008
Data: March Current Population Survey, 2004, 2005, and 2006

include a Navigator program to conduct outreach and help guide enrollment for people in our communities who struggle with English which will help many in our communities overcome significant language barriers.

For the lowest income Americans, health care reform will allow childless adults to be eligible for Medicaid. This expansion, along with the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a companion program for low-income children, is estimated to cover an additional 16 million people by 2019.

Health care reform also includes new requirements to improve the collection of information on race, ethnicity, and primary language. Enriching health care data to provide information particular to the distinct groups within our diverse population is critical in providing policy makers, public health experts, local leaders, and service providers with the ability to set priorities and allocate resources to address disparities in our communities.

Despite these historic reforms, there is still much work to be done. We must remain engaged with our policymakers

and demand that Congress provides sufficient funds to support beneficial provisions. We must still address the barriers that remain for our communities by eliminating the current five-year waiting period imposed on tax-paying, legal immigrants who are eligible for Medicaid coverage, and by ending the inequitable treatment of the U.S. Territories. The bill also prohibits undocumented immigrants from purchasing health insurance through the newly created Exchanges, which only serves to make health care more expensive for everyone.

Health care reform serves as a significant step forward in addressing the needs of underserved communities, but not a final one. It marks only the beginning of a series of improvements necessary to advance the health of this nation's low-income, minority, and immigrant populations. For more information about the impact of the health reform law on AA and NHPI communities, please visit our Health Care Reform Resource Center at www.apiahf.org/hcr. ■

Exclusion Acts of 1882-1962

Lan Nguyen | OCA National Center

The earliest documentation of Chinese immigrants is in 1820. The 1848 Gold Rush brought thousands more, who came as free laborers motivated by gold discoveries and job opportunities. The Burlingame Treaty that established formal relations between the United States and China in 1868 included provisions to encourage immigration between the two countries.

“The United States of America and the Emperor of China cordially recognize the inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance and also the mutual advantage of the free migration and emigration of their citizens and subjects, respectively from the one country to the other, for the purpose of curiosity or trade or as permanent residents...”

– Text of the Burlingame Treaty

The treaty was established during a time when cheap labor was needed by railroad companies and other industries, but as Chinese workers continued to immigrate after completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869, anti-immigrant sentiment grew rapidly. The Page Act of 1875, characterized as an attempt to limit prostitution, actually caused a nearly complete exclusion of Chinese women from immigrating to the United States and prevented the natural formation of families for the largely Chinese male worker population. Compelled by congressional pressure, President Hayes renegotiated the Burlingame Treaty in 1881 to give the U.S. ability to “regulate, limit or suspend” but not “entirely prohibit” Chinese immigrants. This set the stage for the passage of the 1882 Act.

Exclusion Act of 1882

The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was the first substantial federal restriction on U.S. immigration. The law prohibited the immigration of both skilled and unskilled Chinese laborers. Critically, it also prohibited Chinese from becoming American citizens. Passage of the Exclusion Act on May 6, 1882 was the culmination of many local ordinances and state laws aimed at excluding and harassing Chinese laborers and merchants through zoning laws, exorbitant taxes and esoteric regulations



In 1907 the Chinese exclusion provisions were expanded to include anyone born in the “Asiatic Barred Zone” from immigrating to the U.S.

such as forbidding persons from carrying goods in baskets suspended from a pole.

In 1892, Congress renewed the exclusion law as the Geary Act, extending it for another decade and requiring all Chinese residents to register and carry a Certificate of Residence that would render them immediately deportable if they were caught without the document. The act was renewed again in 1902 and made permanent soon after. In 1907 the Chinese exclusion provisions were expanded to include anyone born in the “Asiatic Barred Zone” from immigrating to the U.S.

Civil Rights Violations Against Immigrants

Violence against Chinese immigrants escalated in the 1880’s, with little-to-no repercussions for the guilty party because of laws like the 1850 Criminal Act, which noted “No Black, or Mulatto person, or Indian, shall be allowed to give evidence in favor of, or against a white man.” Vigilante action and violence was widespread throughout the Pacific and mountain states. In California alone, there were over 200 roundups of Chinese. In 1885, Wyoming riots by 150 white miners left 28 Chinese killed, 15 wounded and several hundreds driven out of town. In Oregon, the entire Chinese population of Tacoma was forced out onto barges after their homes and businesses were burned to the ground. Violence against individual Chinese was so common that “not a Chinaman’s chance” entered into the lexicon as a derisive dismissal of hopeless causes.

Repeal Only After Decades of Discrimination

During World War II, when China was a U.S. ally, the 1943 Magnuson Act repealed the provisions that excluded Chinese and allowed for them to naturalize. However, even after the exclusion provisions were lifted, only 105 visas were allotted to Chinese immigrants a year. This limited number came from the 1924 Immigration Act and its national origins quota for immigration based on the 1920 census, which was conducted after the exclusions and mass expulsions of Chinese from the United States. Not until President Johnson signed the Hart Cellar Act in 1965 was race, ancestry, or national origin abolished as a basis of immigration. President Johnson called the previous laws “un-American in the highest sense.” ■

AA Gulf Coast Fishermen's Frustrations

Nalea J. Ko | Pacific Citizen, Reporter

BILOXI, Mississippi—The sun rose over the horizon a few hours before 62-year-old Sung Nguyen stood dockside with tears steadily flowing down his cheeks.

The new day brought the same stress of being out of work with few prospects. The Vietnamese American fisherman watched his nearby docked boat, wrapped partially in “Dream Girls” movie posters, as it rocked gently in a Biloxi, Mississippi harbor.

Wiping his tears with a sodden tissue, Nguyen pointed to the boat, explaining through a translator how he lost his house following the Gulf Coast oil spill and now calls the “Dreams Girls” decorated vessel his home.

His worries have heightened he says because his compensation from BP has decreased each month from \$5,000 to \$1,800. “And now for August he hasn’t gotten anything,” said translator Lan Nguyen, program associate with OCA.

Without work opportunities Sung Nguyen and other nearby fishermen sit idly at the docks hoping for their luck to change.

“There’s no shrimp to be caught and no one is coming to buy the shrimp,” said Sung Nguyen through a translator about consumers’ fears of potentially contaminated Gulf seafood.

Frustrated fishermen say work opportunities have dried up, just like the well that was capped in mid-July.

Information gathered in late August from scientists aboard NOAA’s (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) research ship, the Pisces, one of some 10 vessels researching at the site, shows that the oil plume at the failed BP well site has vanished.

But other researchers dispute those findings.

Scientists with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution found that the “deep-sea microbes were degrading the plume relatively slowly.” Those findings are based on about 57,000 chemical tests conducted from June 18 to 28.

Oil has disappeared from the water’s surface near the failed well, but some out-of-work fishermen say their troubles are overflowing.

A few blocks down the street from Sung Nguyen in a harbor outside of the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, fishermen angrily voiced their concerns about not being called to work for BP’s Vessels of Opportunities program.

Rumors among the fishermen are swirling that those who speak out against BP in the media or seek help from community organizations are blacklisted from work opportunities or aid.

With rumors circulating, some fishermen are hesitant to express their feelings of the company that is responsible for the Deep Water Horizon explosion on April 20 and Gulf Coast oil spill.

Out of work, Ta Hai Hong questions the process of placing workers with

Some scientists say the deepwater plume at the BP failed well site has vanished, but Gulf Coast fishermen say they’re still feeling the financial and emotional impacts from the oil spill.

BP’s Vessels of Opportunity program, but adds that the company is his only lifeline.

“People who bring back oil to say that there is still oil out there they get fired,” Hong said through a translator



Community members at a meeting in Coden, Alabama

about fishermen who have worked on the clean-up efforts for BP. “And the people who are cleaning but say there isn’t oil, then they continue to work.”

“The community and everyone just wants to work,” added Ricky Nguyen, a Mississippi fisherman. “But no one is able to do work.” He has been fishing the Gulf waters for about 28 years and there has never been a year like this, he said.

As a community, fishermen in the area send out one or two boats daily to see if there’s anything to catch. They say there is nothing to be caught. Some blame dispersants that they say have sunk the oil down to the bottom of the Gulf.

Others say it does not matter if they did return with a hefty seafood catch because customers will not buy it.

“[I] caught about 500 pound worth of shrimp,” said Tua Van Ta, a boat owner. “I called the seafood company and they don’t buy. They say no customers [will] buy it.”

Officials with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries reopened Aug. 21 commercial crabbing in waters east of the Mississippi River and north of Pass a Loutre.

The emergency reopening came after crab samples underwent sensory and chemistry testing by the Food and Drug Administration.

About 4,281 square miles of the Gulf waters reopened Aug. 27, according to NOAA’s Jane Lubchenco. Seafood samples at NOAA undergo the “sniff” test by sensory technicians to determine

Teem Over Four Months After the Spill

if there is an odor or taste from the oil or dispersant. Samples then undergo chemical analysis.

The contaminant of most concern is the potentially cancer causing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs. PAHs are usually released in to the environment by car exhaust, forest fires or volcanoes. They are also present in tobacco smoke.

NOAA scientists say fish like the grouper, snapper, croaker and tuna are less likely to have an accumulation of PAHs because of their efficient metabolism.

Reopening protocol of Gulf waters requires seafood samples pass testing at NOAA.

President Barack Obama, who recently visited Florida, has also been promoting the safety of Gulf Coast seafood. Still, some fishermen and their families are not convinced.

"My son don't eat no more seafood," Tua Van Ta said about his 11-year-old

son Levi. "He doesn't want it because he's scared of poison."

"He said, 'Mom I'm not eating them crabs.' And he is a crab eater," said Eva Ta about her son as he giggled at her side. "He can sit and eat about 30 or more by himself. Now he won't even touch them."

The three Ta children are not the only ones skeptical of eating Gulf seafood. Tua Van Ta says when he does catch shrimp, the only people who buy it are friends and community members.

"Doing shrimping is really dangerous," Tua Van Ta said at a town hall meeting. "But it's good money for fishermen. We don't want to work flipping hamburgers or work in a factory."

Community organizations like JACL, OCA, Boat People SOS and others were a part of a town hall meeting Aug. 17 in Biloxi, Miss. The meeting, one of a series of town hall discussions, was held to address the questions and concerns of

fisher families that have been impacted by the oil spill.

Ideas to possibly create new jobs for displaced fishermen were also discussed.

"We hear this a lot, 'We need jobs,'" said Floyd Mori, JACL national director, at an Aug. 17 community organization meeting in Mississippi. "We have got to look at what the structure of the economy here is. What is the future? When you take a fishermen, who that's all he knows. How can you retrain a 50-year-old guy that has limited English to do something new?"

Switching occupations is a scary prospect for some families who have relied on fishing.

"They won't hire you without a high school education," Eva Ta explained about seeking other jobs. "See I didn't graduate. Back then it wasn't a big issue. Now it is. Everything that I've known has been taken away."

The Mississippi town hall meeting was held days before the five-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Areas residents say they were still recovering from Katrina when the oil spill occurred.

"It's not just jobs lost," said Thao Vu, coordinator for the Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese American Fisherfolk and Families, about how Katrina affected the job market. "Particularly for many ethnic minorities these resources like housing programs, we were the last to get it. ... We've always been underserved, overlooked and marginalized."

Gulf coast residents say at least after the hurricane they could still fish.

"His friends who do the shrimping, they [used to] go out come back and catch 500 pounds a day and it will be gone in two hours," Lan Nguyen said, translating for Sung Nguyen. "Now they have 200 pounds and they won't be able to sell even that."

"He had a house before. Now he lives on his boat," she said. "All he wants is to work on his boat." ■

**We thank Pacific Citizen for letting OCA republish this article.*

Siriporn Hall

Mrs. Siriporn Hall, featured on our IMAGE cover, is an amazing survivor. She currently lives in Bayou La Batre, Alabama, where she catches crabs for a living. Now, hundreds of her traps lie land-bound and useless at her home because of the BP oil spill. Mrs. Hall has faced numerous obstacles in her life, over 40 years of which have been in America. An immigrant from Thailand, she did back-breaking work in the Kentucky coal mines for over 15 years and is a breast cancer survivor. She has made a home in Alabama, after moving down the coast to do crabbing. It has been a laborious, but rewarding job as she puts out her traps every season and spends the off-season with her daughter and granddaughter.

But since the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion on April 20th, Mrs. Hall has been struggling to make ends meet because she has been unable to go out on the water to catch crabs. House and boat bills have piled up while Mrs. Hall has tried relentlessly to get a job with the Vessel of Opportunity program, where BP hires fishers to help clean the oil spill, but has not heard back. Now all she can do is hope that her claim goes through fast enough so that she can keep her house and boat. She hopes that she'll be able to crab next season, but is very worried about the long term effects of the oil spill on the environment and what the fisher people in the Gulf Coast will do until things recover. A vocal advocate for the Thai, Cambodian and Laotian communities in Alabama, Mrs. Hall represents the fierce determination and hardworking spirit of the fishers in the Gulf Coast who have had the odds stacked against them.



Defending the Fourteenth Amendment – Birthright Citizenship

Christopher MacKenzie | OCA Communications Intern

Our constitution begins with the phrase, “We the People,” a phrase which has, for more than 200 years, described the community that forms the foundation of our republic. But who are “We the People?” Since the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, citizens of the United States allowed to participate and shape our democracy have included all persons born within the country, regardless of race, ethnicity or heritage. The concept of birthright citizenship is known as *jus solis*, the law of the soil, means that any person born within the territory of the U.S. is a citizen.

In the past year, a group of legislators has proposed that the national debate over immigration include a discussion of birthright citizenship and whether such a right may be repealed. Proponents of such legislation, mainly anti-immigrant groups, claim that birthright citizenship encourages undocumented immigrants to enter the United States to give birth. The Immigration Policy Center counters that “Immigrants come to the U.S. to work, to reunite with their families, or to flee persecution. Denying birthright citizenship will not discourage unauthorized immigrants from coming to the U.S., and it will not encourage those already here to leave. Comprehensive immigration reforms that solve the root causes of undocumented immigration are necessary to resolve our real immigration problems.”

Attacking the fourteenth amendment will not solve our immigration problems. Trying to overturn birthright citizenship is unconstitutional and will be detrimental to everyone, including American citizens.

The debate over immigration and citizenship dates back to 1868, when the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment was written, stating that, “all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States.” The wording of the Citizenship Clause was no mistake. Legislators held an extended debate on whether children of immigrants should be allowed citizenship. While not all legislators agreed with the phrasing of the amendment, its meaning was clear and birthright citizenship was established with the amendment’s ratification.

Supreme Court decisions have reinforced this interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment. In *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* (1898), the Supreme Court was asked to rule whether Kim, born in California as the son of Chinese Immigrants, was a citizen of the United States. Kim had left the country temporarily to visit China and had been denied entry upon his return due to a strict interpretation of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The court, in a 6-2 decision, ruled that Kim was a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment and should be allowed reentry into the United States.

In more recent years, the issue of legal versus illegal immigration

has added an extra dimension to the debate. Some legislators contend that the phrase “subject to the jurisdiction thereof” contained in the Citizenship Clause does not extend to include the children of undocumented immigrants. In *INS v. Rios-Pineda* (1985), the Supreme Court decided otherwise, ruling that the child of an undocumented Mexican immigrant was a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Supreme Court has also held in *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) that undocumented children are innocent because they “can affect neither their parents’ conduct nor their own status.”

A federal statute ignoring these decisions would not only be unconstitutional, it would also have a tremendous impact on the Asian Pacific American community and the country as a whole. Such laws might create a second class of Americans. Those born to immigrant parents would be denied the rights of a citizen in the United States but at the same time would not hold citizenship in any other country. This could mean generations of immigrants denied the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and a redefinition of “We the People” to exclude Asian Pacific Americans. ■



Museum of Chinese in America: A National Museum in the Making

S. Alice Mong | MOCA, Director



Exterior of the Museum of Chinese in America. Courtesy of Maya Lin Studio/Museum of Chinese in America.

The Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) was founded in 1980 in New York City and moved into its new home last summer and officially opened its door to the public on September 22, 2009. The new 14,000 square foot facility, designed by Maya Lin, spans the block between Centre and Lafayette Streets —linking Chinatown with the contemporary art worlds of SoHo and Nolita. MOCA's new home symbolizes the institution's growth from its roots as the New York Chinatown History Project, founded by John Kuo Wei Tchen and Charles Lai, to its expanding identity as the preeminent museum of Chinese American culture and history in the United States.

As visitors enter the lobby, they are greeted with a bronze tile "Journey Wall" which reveals the breadth of the Chinese American Diaspora. The tiles are inscribed with the places of origin and the current homes of Chinese American families throughout the fifty states, illustrating that these families do not just live on the east and west coasts or in big cities, but have made their homes all across the country.

The Core Exhibit: "With a Single Step: Stories in the Making of America" revolves around the Museum's historic sky-lit courtyard, which Maya Lin has left deliberately raw and untouched as

a reminder of the past and also to evoke a Chinese courtyard house. Projected onto the windows facing the courtyard are the Core Portraits: short biographic films of Chinese Americans from the 1850s through the present day. From within the courtyard, the changing faces of these Chinese Americans are visible as a collective family.

MOCA's vision is to be the preeminent national portal, museum and cultural center representing Chinese Americans and showcasing their contributions to America's past, present, and future. MOCA's mission is to bridge multiple generations, backgrounds and communities by bringing to life the stories of the Chinese American Diaspora, physically and virtually.

MOCA believes that America's strength is through its diversity and inclusiveness. We believe that Chinese



Artist/Designer and MOCA Trustee Maya Lin at the Museum of Chinese in America grand opening and in front of Xu Bing artwork, September 22, 2009

Americans, like other ethnic groups, are an integral part of the colorful mosaic of America. We believe how history is remembered is critical and relevant for knowing ourselves, our communities, our society, our nation and our nation's place in the world. Through history, we bear witness to intersections of past, present and future and must learn from past injustices and mistakes. We believe that we can replace outdated and misguided stereotypical images with accurate and appropriate portrayals of Chinese Americans across a myriad of backgrounds. We believe that we can promote new meaningful ways of understanding our communities and collective history by fostering honest dialogue, exploring innovative methods of learning, and collaborating with a wide range of scholarly and creative fields.

We invite you to be a part of our dynamic and growing community and come visit us in person at 215 Centre Street, New York, NY and online at www.mocanyc.org. ■

Cantonese opera costume, a reversible robe for an Immortal, ca. 1900

Courtesy of Museum of Chinese in America, Chinese Musical and Theatrical Association Collection

INTERVIEW WITH

BIO

Ms. Kwok's career as a leader and advocate began with her work as the Executive Director of OCA, formerly known as the Organization of Chinese Americans, where she coordinated programs and services for 45 chapters and monitored issues pertaining to the AAPI community. During her time at OCA, Ms. Kwok continued to take on leadership roles that would transform advocacy around issues facing AAPIs. In 1997, Ms. Kwok was the first elected Chair of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, a network of national APA organizations. Since her time at OCA, Ms. Kwok has begun work as the Executive Director of Asians & Pacific Islanders with Disabilities of California (APIDC), a non-profit which seeks to give a voice and a face to AAPIs with disabilities. In July 2010, President Barack Obama appointed Ms. Kwok as Chair of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.



INTERVIEW

OCA: *You were the executive director of OCA for 11 years. During your time here, what programs/issues were particularly memorable or significant for you? What are you most proud of accomplishing at OCA?*

DK: To me, the most important aspect of my time at OCA was working with the next generation of leaders for our community. I would also list several accomplishments.

■ **Justice for Wards Cove Workers Act.** When the Civil Rights Act of 1991 was passed, 2,000 Asian American and Pacific Islander cannery workers, who were the plaintiffs in an employment discrimination case *Wards Cove v. Atonio* Supreme Court case, were purposely left out of the legislation due to politics. It was a travesty that a civil rights law exempted the very people who brought forth the challenge. Today in the year 2010 these 2,000 AAPIs are still not covered under this legislation. OCA took a leadership role in this unsuccessful effort; therefore, to this day this is unfinished business for me and I need to keep this injustice alive.

■ **Repeated successful attempts to beat back elimination of the 5th preference immigration category** of brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens (now 4th preference). Every time immigration reform was brought up, one of the first immigration categories that came up on the chopping block was the 5th/4th preference – brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens. A large percentage of Asians enter the U.S. through this category. The

demand for slots in this category has created waiting lines of over 20 years for some Asian groups i.e. Filipinos. OCA was part of every effort to defeat these attempts and to this day we still have this category in existence.

■ **Fighting for Bill Lann Lee's appointment as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.** He was preeminently qualified for the position and had the backing of the entire civil rights community, but his nomination was tied up because of politics. OCA took a lead in coordinating the AAPI community's two year grassroots effort to seek a Senate vote for Bill Lann Lee.

■ **JACL-OCA Leadership Conference.** I asked JACL if OCA could join the leadership training with the intention of using the joint program to continue to break down the historical animosity between the Chinese and Japanese community. Over the years, I saw a number of older generation OCA members who, as a result of that joint program, truly understood and appreciated what Japanese Americans went through during the internment experience.

OCA: *What motivates you to keep doing the work that you do for the APA community? Did you always know you would be doing this kind of work?*

DK: I happened to stumble into this work, I had no idea that I would be doing this. I never thought I would be so heavily involved in politics. Politics was not something that our family was

involved in, even though we lived inside the beltway and my father was a federal government employee. When I grew up in Northern Virginia, it was a very white suburban area, so there was not much of an Asian American presence at all. Even through college, there was only a small Asian American community on my college campus. It has been really exciting to see the growth of the Asian American community, especially in the D.C. area.

I think what motivates me is the knowledge that our voices need to be expressed and heard, especially at the federal government and national level. When I was involved with the Asian American community in the mid-80's and 90's, OCA and JACL were the only national Asian American groups in D.C.. Someone needed to step up to the plate and do as much as possible on behalf of the community. I feel very fortunate that I was able to have that opportunity during my years at OCA.

OCA: *What do you hope to accomplish as chair of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders?*

DK: First I want to thank George Wu and OCA for the steadfast support during this process.

One of my main goals is to continue to break down the model minority myth. When it comes to policy making, the model minority myth is very detrimental. If policy makers are under the false assumption that all of our communities are highly successful, educated, and

DAPHNE KWOK

motivated, then the issues that really need to be addressed (such as high drop out rates and high level of poverty within our subpopulations) will continue to be masked. We need to express these realities and facts to policy makers in order to be included in federal programs.

I want to be able to continue to raise the issues that have not gotten much attention, either within the AAPI or mainstream community. For example, we need to bring attention to the issues facing the Pacific Islander community and have them be addressed. AAPIs with disabilities is another group in our community with tremendous needs, but have remained hidden away. Overall I hope that during my tenure on the Commission, that I am able to demystify the federal government and to continue to empower our community to be active citizens.

OCA: *How do you think OCA and other national organizations can help to promote civic engagement in the APA community?*

DK: OCA can help promote civic engagement by continuing programs like the OCA-JACL Leadership Conference and internship program. OCA-SF has just started an internship program that places students with locally elected officials. The JACL-OCA Leadership conference brings people into D.C. so they can see how things work. This is critical to increasing civic engagement. We can read and study about how government works, but unless you can see it in action and hear what's happening in DC, to meet the movers and shakers in our community, it is very hard for people to understand how D.C. works.

Encouraging the next generation to enter public service is also vital. For AAPIs who are in top leadership positions – mentoring and bringing people into the fold is how we are going to advance as a community. The National Council on Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA) also plays a very critical role and I'm pleased to see that it is still going strong. I think being able to speak with one voice and being able to mobilize together is key. There is so much more infrastructure

within the AAPI community now, especially at the national level, so much more can be done.

OCA: *What do you think is the AAPI community's biggest misconception of the government and federal programs?*

DK: Our biggest misconception is that we won't make a difference. I have seen time and time again individuals through their own initiative and hard work can move mountains! That is why it is so important to have AAPIs appointed to senior positions within the federal government, especially AAPIs who understand the needs of our community and are not afraid to be a champion within the federal government for our issues. Serving the country, working to improve the livelihood of the American people, even if it means a temporary salary cut, is a duty one should accept. By joining organizations like OCA, we can organize and continue to be involved. By having the collective voice of OCA members throughout the country, OCA has the power and gravitas to go into meetings with federal government agencies and say this is what our organization does, this is what our members think about X, Y and Z issues.

OCA: *What is one current issue that you believe is crucial to the APA community? How will your work as chair of the President's Advisory Commission on AAPIs help this issue?*

DK: I am waiting for our first commission meeting to find out what issues the other commissioners are interested in. In that process, after the first meeting, we will have a general sense of what our priority issue areas are.

I would say immediately that what is happening in the Gulf Coast, the oil spill and its impact on the Asian American community needs to be and will continue to be a top priority issue. The national AAPI community needs to engage. A large number of the fisherfolk in the Gulf Coast region are Asian Americans, predominantly Vietnamese, but also Laotian, Cambodian and Thai. Their whole livelihood has been severely

impacted. Mental health issues are rising due to the financial stress of losing their livelihood. This is an issue that we, as a community, need to assist with and help.

OCA: *What would you like to add or say to the OCA membership?*

DK: For an AAPI national non-profit civil rights organization to be in existence almost 40 years is no small feat! OCA's longevity is due to the decades of volunteers, leaders, and members committed to making America a better nation. I continue to be so proud of the work that is happening at the chapter level. I eagerly read the chapter news about so much great work being done, whether it's members standing up for the rights of a hate crime victim or battling racist comments that are made over the airwaves. I know how time consuming it is to work at the chapter level – having done so for many years as president of OCA-NOVA. I cannot emphasize enough that local chapter programming, spreading the information that comes out of OCA National, fully supporting OCA National programmatically as well as financially, is key to OCA's continued presence in D.C.

What has set OCA apart from other organizations is that we had the foresight to be headquartered in Washington, D.C. Having an effective presence means staff and resources, and of course OCA has never had enough resources. But I think we have been able to do miracles over the years with our limited funding. We are entering the 2010 decade. It is more than past the time for OCA to analyze itself and to assess the role that we play in the national AAPI community. Can we clearly state what niche we play now in 2010 and beyond? There are so many new AAPI organizations that have come up over the last fifteen years. How does OCA stand apart from the others? If we can't convincingly answer this question, then we will have a hard time increasing membership and raising funds for the organization. With our rich history internally as well as in the annals of Asian American history, OCA does serve a vital role for our community. We just need to define who OCA is in the 2010 decade. ■

Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America

Book Review

Stan Lou | OCA-Greater Washington DC, co-president

This is the sort of book that should be part of the American history curriculum in the nation's education system. It thoroughly recounts a history of immigration into the United States that has been ignored, or most likely, hidden away. The authors of *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America*, Erika Lee and Judy Yung, have meticulously shown us the procedures that were used to screen immigrants at the Immigration Station on Angel Island from 1910 to 1940. Furthermore, the book explains how these procedures reflected American immigration policies and attitudes at that time and may have carried over into the present time.

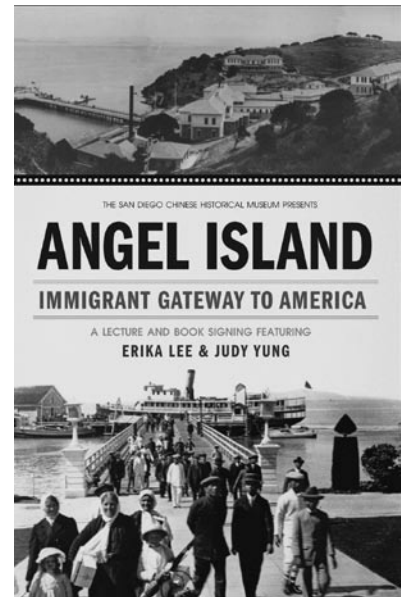
Lee and Yung wrote a detailed account, carefully dissecting the history of the Angel Island Immigration Station. We learn of their personal connections with Angel Island, and how that serves as their primary motivation to write this book, timed for the centennial celebration of the Immigration Station. Then there was an enlightening overview of the background for Asian immigration and the overall concept and workings of the Island. A major portion of the book is devoted to analyzing the experiences of the various ethnic groups that went through Angel Island. Finally, the authors tell the inspirational story of the successful efforts to save and preserve

The primary theme of the book was that the screenings by immigration officials were blatantly biased and used race and socio-economic status as principal gauges for deciding whether immigrants should be allowed to enter the country.

the Immigration Station as a National Historic Landmark and conclude with a discussion of the legacy of Angel Island.

The primary theme of the book was that the screenings by immigration officials were blatantly biased and used race and socio-economic status as principal gauges for deciding whether immigrants should be allowed to enter the country. Many immigrants were unfairly discriminated against and belittled by officials. They were subjected to rigorous and intimidating interrogations. This caused large numbers to be detained in overcrowded, unsanitary, and segregated barracks. We learn of the distress felt by the detainees through the discovery of poetry and messages that were carved and inscribed on the walls. The book tells that the overall procedure used at Angel Island was uneven at best and racist, or xenophobic, at worst. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 gave immigration authorities leverage to deal particularly harshly with Chinese immigrants, and they used this to the utmost. The immigrant officials tried very hard to weed out and discover the "paper sons" who were desperately trying to reunite with their families or escape poverty, leading to a war of wits between the parties. While waves of Japanese, Korean, Filipino, South Asian, Mexican, Russian and Jewish immigrants came through Angel Island, the wall-writings found in Immigration Station were almost all Chinese in origin as Chinese immigrants were detained for the longest periods.

Lee and Yung strongly state that the current immigration situation is not unlike what it was on Angel Island one hundred years ago. There are detention centers all over the country instead of in a centralized location. Racial and ethnic standards are still applied in an unfair manner. There is much to be done to overcome the negative legacy of Angel Island in order to fulfill America's promise as a nation of immigrants.



Cover of *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America*

I found *Angel Island* to be a very readable book. It was extremely educational, which is why I opened with the recommendation that it be part of the Nation's education system. It is a detailed history lesson and would be an excellent text book. I wanted to know the facts about what happened at the Angel Island Immigration Station and this book delivered on that. I have become very passionate about wanting to learn more of the Asian American assimilation into this country, and I have been reading many publications to do so. As I have read more and more, my desire has shifted from wanting to know just the facts to knowing the personal stories of early immigrants. I want to know their pain, their feelings, their heartaches, their triumphs. *Angel Island* gave us glimpses of many such stories, but given the nature of the book, I can understand that it could not go into the passionate details that I wanted. Therefore, I found the book to be too academic for my taste. However, I am very glad to have read the book and will want to keep a copy for my library. I recommend it as a "must read" book to all who want to know more of the Asian American history that is not in most of American history journals. ■

Angel Island Immigration Station Centennial Wall

Grant Din | Director of Special Projects at AIISF

Angel Island is a national symbol of immigration from the Pacific Rim much as Ellis Island is a symbol of immigration from Europe. January 21 was the 100th anniversary of the opening of the United States Immigration Station, Angel Island, which for thirty years served in large part to enforce the infamous Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882-1943. Despite these barriers, hundreds of thousands of Chinese and other immigrants were able to persevere and contribute to the building of America.

President Obama proclaimed January 21 as National Angel Island Day, noting "racially prejudiced immigration laws of the time subjected many to rigorous exams and interrogations, as well as detention in crowded, unsanitary barracks...If there is any vindication for the Angel Island immigrants who endured so many hardships, it is the

success achieved by those who were allowed entry, and the many who, at long last, gained citizenship. They have contributed immeasurably to our Nation as leaders in every sector of American life."

During the 100th anniversary year of the Immigration Station, you have a unique opportunity. With the cooperation of Angel Island State Park, the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation (AIISF) is building a Centennial Wall to provide an opportunity for permanent recognition of immigrants to America, from all periods of time, whether or not they passed through Angel Island.

For more information, please visit www.aiisf.org and click on "Centennial Campaign." You can also call Grant Din at 415-262-4433, or email at gdin@aiisf.org. ■

If there is any vindication for the Angel Island immigrants who endured so many hardships, it is the success achieved by those who were allowed entry.



Left: Women going through the Angel Island detention center

Right, from top: Immigrants arriving at Angel Island

What a typical detention room on Angel Island would look like

Chinese poetry similar to those etched on the walls on Angel Island detention center



Empowerment Through Entertainment

Kollaboration-DC



Left: Philip Jung and Dong Woo Seo; Center: Lily B - photographed by Kollaboration DC intern Joanne Ku; Right: All Girl Band - Ivy Rose

Kollaboration, an Asian and Pacific Islander (API) organization movement that puts on talent showcases and competitions, was first founded in Los Angeles by Executive Director Paul PK Kim. Since its inception in 2000, Kollaboration has grown and expanded as a platform for APIs to display their talents on stage and inspire others – or as Kollaboration’s mantra goes: Empower through Entertainment. This “movement” has spread to several cities including: Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Toronto, Atlanta, San Francisco, Houston, Seattle, and Tulsa.

Kollaboration now comes to Washington, D.C. for the first time on Saturday, September 25th at the George Washington University Lisner Auditorium. The eight competitors who will perform in the



upcoming show were chosen from over 75 auditions that took place over two months in D.C. Christian Oh, regional director of Kollaboration-DC says this about the goals of the organization, “It is about providing visible role models and widening the pool of aspirations. Not all APIs will become doctors, lawyers, engineers, we have to help cultivate our artists, and overcome the barriers that exist in the

entertainment industry, that’s the stuff that really feeds me, and I know it does that for a lot of those who are involved in Kollaborations across the country.”

Oh was introduced into the world of APIs in the arts when he first met Paul PK Kim, who was performing at the Laugh Factory in Los Angeles at the time. Kim’s involvement in the entertainment industry and his ability to expose API issues through a comedic lens inspired Oh to further explore how APIs could contribute through the arts. After working almost 5 years with the DC APA Film Festival, Oh reconnected

DC. Kollaboration-DC quickly found support and talent in the community. Organizations, including OCA-Greater Washington DC, NAAAP-DC, the Chinatown Community Cultural Center, and local businesses are all sponsors of the event.

The Kollaboration show in September will be the 1st Annual Kollaboration DC happening in the Washington Metropolitan Area. The volunteer staff expects a large turnout at the upcoming event, with attendees of all ages. “We need to reach API youth, API families, and the API community at large,” said

It is about providing visible role models and widening the pool of aspirations. Not all APIs will become doctors, lawyers, engineers, we have to help cultivate our artists, and overcome the barriers that exist in the entertainment industry.

with Kim at the Network of Korean American Leaders. Kim, in the mean time, had started Kollaboration, with the concept of raising public awareness of APIs in the arts. Excited about the idea of giving local APIs a public platform to showcase their art, Oh worked with

Kim to bring Kollaboration to

Oh. “While providing a creative outlet for young Asian Pacific Americans is one of our goals, we also expect the show to offer a platform for communication that bridges the gap between parents and children and addresses issues critical to the API community”.

If you are interested in contributing to the mission of Kollaboration, find more information at www.kollaboration.org ■



Updates from OCA Chapters

OCA is engaged in organizing over 80 chapters and affiliates across the country to develop local leadership and community involvement. OCA Chapters are at the core of the work that OCA does in achieving its objective of advancing the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans.

For this issue of IMAGE, we asked chapters to give updates about their work in following three categories:

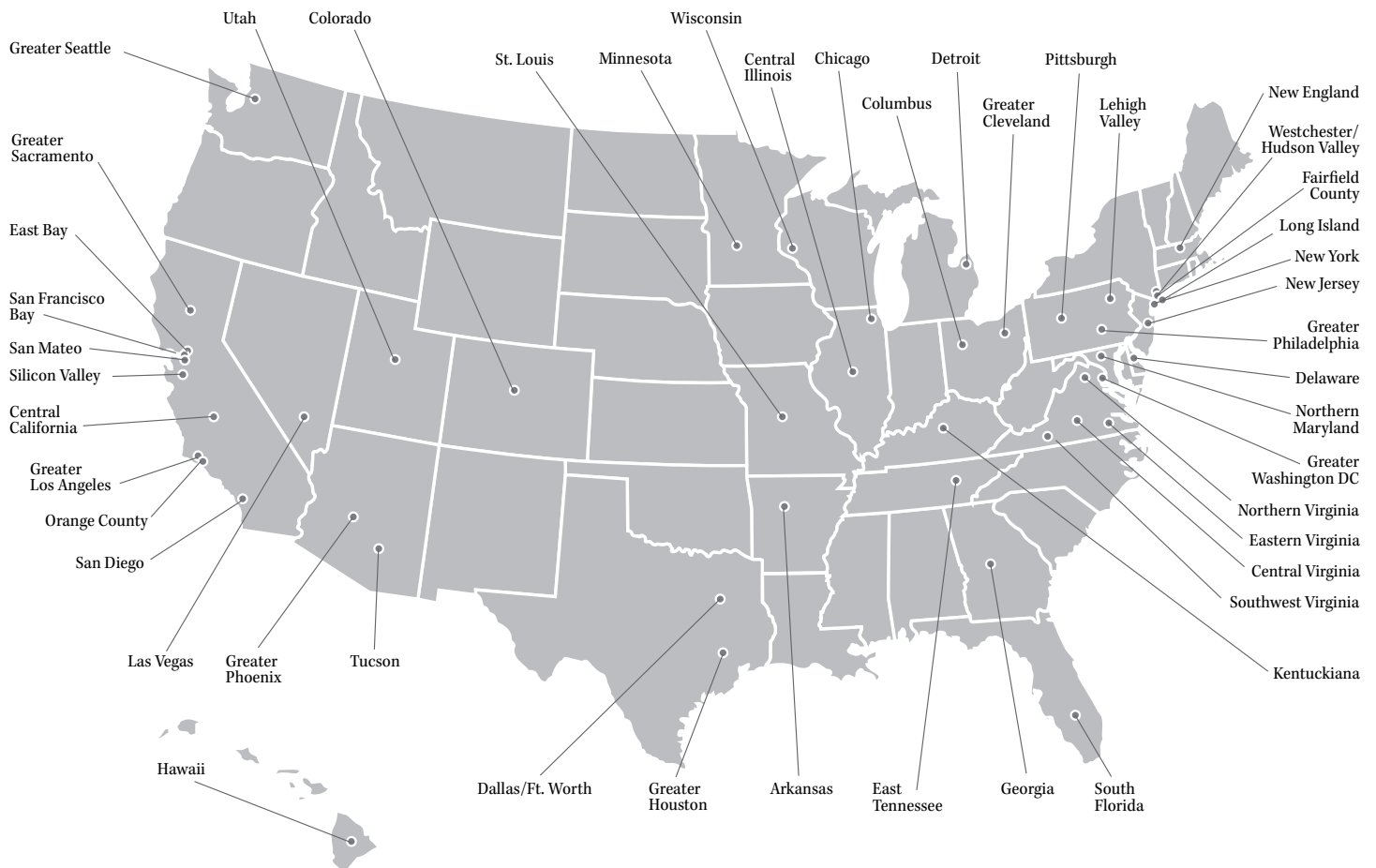
- 1) Signature Events
- 2) Advocacy/Policy Efforts
- 3) Other Chapter Highlights

and answer the following question:

“It has been 67 years since the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, how should America ensure that we do not repeat the exclusions and discriminations against immigrants that occurred then? What part do you think OCA can have in this?”

See the quote in each update for the chapter’s unique answer to the question.

For full chapter map, please visit www.oconational.org



OCA-Central Illinois

Events

- In conjunction with OCA chapters across the country, OCA-CIL hosted an APA children's book author to do a reading for local youth! Chinese American illustrator Kam Mak read his book, *My Chinatown* to children at the Metcalf School and answered their questions about his life, the book and how he comes up with his illustrations. Several copies of the book were donated to Metcalf's library.

Advocacy/Policy

- This spring, OCA-CIL was the topic of the local radio program, "WJBC's Forum". Local NAACP branch president, Mike Williams, talked about the role of OCA in supporting the Chinese and Asian Pacific American community in Central Illinois. He encouraged everyone to embrace the diversity in our community and to work in partnership with the many civil and human rights organizations in the area.

Other Highlights

- OCA-CIL members, family, and friends enjoyed a night of fun, fireworks and baseball on August 20th at the Normal Cornbelters game. Board members hosted this free event that included hot dogs, chips, soda and special seating in the "Magic 100.7 Family Section".

“We need to educate and raise awareness, then focus on advocacy against exclusion and discrimination. At the national level, OCA must continue build coalitions and maintain good working relationships with congressional leaders. Local chapters can continue grassroots efforts to educate the community and inform elected officials of the community's stance on the issue.”

– Jimmy Mapugay, OCA-CIL President



Antoinette D'Souza Hutchison attending Culture Fest 2010 in Bloomington, IL.

OCA-Colorado

Advocacy/Policy

- Census Drive 2010 - Final Census Push: OCA Colorado assisted local Census officials with community outreach to encourage last minute Census registration.

Other Highlights



Teams competed in a donut bobbing contest for a chance to throw a pie in the face of one of the local organization's presidents. Pictured: Jan Bryant, Board of Directors, OCA-Colorado (left) and Suzy Shimasaki, President, MileHi JAACL (right)

- 2010 Asian American Heroes: OCA Colorado partnered with local organizations to recognize five outstanding members of our community in recognition of Asian Heritage Month.
- A Community Affair: OCA organized a non-branded potluck/picnic event in an effort to build a cohesive and inclusive community across all Asian groups in Colorado. Over 15 different groups participated in the inaugural event. We had remarkable feedback from participants and next year promises to be bigger and better!

OCA-Las Vegas

Events

- On May 22, 2010 OCA-Las Vegas joined in OCA National APA Heritage Month Children's Book Tour by hosting a book read for *Landed* with Author Milly Lee at the Paseo Verde Library in Henderson, Nevada.
- On September 18, OCA-Las Vegas is holding a Diversity in Marketing and HR event. Speakers will include Michelle DiTondo, Vice President Human Resources at MGM Resorts International, and Paul Jung, Director of Casino Marketing MGM Grand Hotel.

Other Highlights

- OCA-LV is participating in OCA Serves by working with the Assistance League of Las Vegas Thrift Shop on September 25th.
- On October 2, APIA U is coming to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

OCA-Las Vegas members with Author Milly Lee



“America is a country governed by the people, for the people. We, the people, must be proactive and speak up in our communities. OCA serves a great purpose by advocating for the rights of APAs. And it is important to recognize that what happens to one of us, often happens to many of us. We at OCA Colorado, endeavor to follow National’s lead and continue to build and strengthen cross cultural community collaborations.”

– Theodore Lau, OCA-Colorado President

OCA-Dallas/Ft.Worth

Events

■ **APA Heritage Month Activities:** In the month of May, the OCA-DFW Chapter was active in supporting APA Heritage Month with a number of activities including booths at Asian Festivals, fundraising for youth leadership activities and participation in the annual Dragon Boat, Kite, and Lantern Festival. Several OCA-DFW board members were directly involved in organizing the festival. The OCA-DFW Chapter entered a dragon boat team to race for Cancer Awareness, placing third in their division.

Other Highlights

“We need to be more visible in our community, foster relationships with our civic leaders, and have a voice on city and state boards. It is through education and awareness that we can help to reduce and eliminate the discriminatory actions of the past.”

– Lily Mak, OCA-DFW President

- On May 22nd, OCA-DFW sponsored the DFW Junior Leadership Seminar. Fifty students attended the half-day workshop. This annual junior leadership seminar was designed for teenage youth from grades nine to twelve and is aimed at helping students to build self-confidence in preparation for college.
- The 9th Annual Asian Film Festival of Dallas was held July 23-29. The OCA-DFW chapter has been a long term supporter and sponsor of the Asian Film Festival which has grown successfully each year since its inception.
- OCA-DFW Chapter was a sponsor of the 2010 Community Youth Leadership Camp, held July 26-31 at Austin College in Sherman, Texas. About 270 students, ages 8-13, and 25 volunteer teachers, attended the week-long residential summer camp dedicated to fostering leadership skills in young people.
- On August 12th, OCA-DFW hosted Professor Judy Yung for a presentation on her new book: *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America*. The event was well attended by OCA members and the public. The event received press coverage and articles were written on the event in the Dallas Morning News as well as in the Asian media.

Graduates of Junior Leadership Seminar shown with Shannon Chen (front left), Past-President of OCA-DFW and organizer of the seminar



OCA-Detroit

Events



Ladies preparing Zongzi during the Dragon Boat Festival

- AA free community event celebrating the Dragon Boat Festival was held at the OCA-Detroit Chinese Community Center. Highlights of the day included cultural performances, Zongzi cooking class, food, and entertainment.
- OCA-Detroit's annual 3-week Summer Camp program in July was attended by approximately 70 campers and 30 high school and college-aged counselors. This year's camp included a multicultural immersion day in which campers were introduced to a variety of cultures from around the world.

“The perceived negative role of immigrants is just myth... solid evidence suggests that immigrants disproportionately contribute to vibrant communities, economic growth, employment, and wage gains. OCA should continue to educate the public on the many positive contributions to our country from immigrants and continue to support positive comprehensive immigration reform.”

– Ron Wong, OCA-Detroit President

Advocacy/Policy

- The Asian American Men's Health Day was held on three different occasions: May 8th in Canton, May 15th at the Chinese Community Center and May 23rd in Ann Arbor. Program highlights included a keynote speech on Hepatitis B Awareness and Tai Chi and yoga group exercises.

Other Highlights

- About 115 people attended the Mother's Day Luncheon on May 7th. Guests enjoyed an Asian buffet and a lively give-away of raffle items and door prizes.
- Over 90 people braved Michigan's annual infestation of fish flies to attend the Father's Day Outing at Lake Erie Metro Park. Attendees walked along the shoreline, participated in group activities, and gathered for a picnic lunch.
- Other Fall events include OCA-Detroit Serves clean up day at the Chinese Community Center on Sept. 11th, OCA-Detroit's 38th Anniversary Celebration Banquet on Oct. 15th, a Thanksgiving event on Nov. 20th, and a Christmas Luncheon on December 10th.

OCA-Long Island

Events

- OCA-LI participated in organizing the *First Asian American Festival in the Town of North Hempstead* on May 22. Attracting 5000 attendees, the festival featured performances, Asian crafts, and culinary delights.
- OCA-LI co-sponsored the *10th Annual Liberty and Justice for All Symposium* at Stony Brook University. The Symposium showcased play acting, storytelling, film, and poetry depicting the struggles of immigrants and the vision of a nation dedicated to “liberty and justice for all.”
- The Cammy Lee Leukemia Foundation, Inc. hosted a bone marrow drive with the help of Friends of Teri Li, and registered donors at Nassau County’s *Chinese American Night*. The event featured Chinese dance, musical performances, martial arts, and acrobatics. VP of Community Affairs, Gladys Yan, and VP of Communications, Janis Woo, were honored at the event as community leaders.



At First Asian Festival in Town of North Hempstead, OCA-LI members Ann Chan & Janis Woo with committee members from China, India, Japan, Korea, Pakistan & elected officials from Town of North Hempstead

Advocacy/Policy

- On June 10, Ben Chan, VP of Community Affairs, attended a rally and press conference in front of Senator Schumer’s office. He gave a speech on behalf of OCA-LI in defense of the Dream Act, calling for the Dream Act as a stand-alone bill.

Other Highlights



Ann Chan at Senior Citizen Affairs luncheon held on May 14 with County Executive Mangano presenting award

- OCA-LI President Ann Chan was recognized as a 2010 Senior Citizen at a luncheon at the Marriott Hotel in Uniondale. County Executive Edward Mangano presented Ann with her award.
- Board member John Tandana was honored as Chairman’s Honoree at Josephine Foundation’s *Follow Your Dreams* Gala.
- Past OCA-LI President Gladys Yan was honored by the Chinese American Real Estate Association at Mudan Banquet Hall.
- OCA-LI President Ann Chan worked with seniors at the Chinese Center on Long Island, where she coordinated Qi Gong exercises, computer classes, and cooked twice a month. At the Self Help Prince Street Senior Center, Ann also planned monthly field trips and monitored programs to acquire funding.

OCA-Greater Los Angeles

Events

- On May 7th, OCA-GLA hosted the “Imma Be” Career Talk with Eric So, to encourage students to explore different career opportunities. The event took place at the Mark Keppel High School in Alhambra, CA.
- OCA-GLA participated in the OCA Reads: APA Heritage Month Book Tour by hosting two readings. One reading was with APA author Icy Smith on Saturday, May 15th at the Alhambra Civic Library, where she read *Mei Ling in China City*. The second reading was with APA author Lisa Yee on Saturday, May 29th at the Los Angeles Chinatown Branch Library, where she read *Good Luck, Ivy* and *Bobby Vs. Girls*. The books were also donated to the library and given to the children in attendance.
- June 5th was the Annual OCA-GLA Summer Kick-Off Potluck Picnic with FCC (Families with Children from China). The picnic was held at Vincent Lugo Park, in San Gabriel, CA.

Advocacy/Policy

- OCA-GLA wrote a letter of support to Racebending.com to protest the casting of characters in the recently released “The Last Airbender”.



Bryant Yang, OCA-GLA's President, and Jeri Floyd, Education and Culture Chair, distribute books to the attendees of OCA Reads: APAHM Book Reading with Author Lisa Yee at LA Chinatown Branch Library.

Other Highlights

- At the end of April, the chapter hosted the China Care Bruins Mentoring Workshop at UCLA.
- On June 30th, the chapter held a social mixer to celebrate the naturalization of Mr. and Mrs. Cababos, the winners of OCA-GLA's first citizenship grant. The event was held at Urban Noodle in Los Angeles, CA.

“America can ensure that we do not repeat past mistakes by protecting the 14th Amendment, which grants birthright citizenship. Before 1965, the only way APAs gained citizenship was through the 14th Amendment. OCA can share this historical fact to raise appreciation and understanding of how the 14th Amendment has protected the ideals of our country – equality and justice for all.”

– Bryant Yang, OCA-GLA President

OCA-New Jersey

Events



Panelists at the Branding Yourself for Professional Success program

- OCA-NJ hosted the inaugural program, “*Branding Yourself for Professional Success*” on May 15. Conceived by OCA-National President, Ken Lee, and his wife, Ashley, the program was a huge success and attended by approximately 70 people. Ken and Ashley will be presenting this program to other chapters in the future.
- On May 22, OCA-NJ held its annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Luncheon to honor and celebrate the OCA-NJ scholarship and internship recipients. We also awarded the Robert E. Wone Memorial Scholarship for the fourth year.

“OCA can fight future exclusion acts by helping new immigrants assimilate through educational, cultural, and political opportunities. Stressing the importance of not being invisible will make it harder for exclusion acts to be passed. I hope our country has learned from its mistakes and that there will never be any exclusion acts against ethnic groups again.” – Mary Lee, President, OCA-NJ

Advocacy/Policy

- OCA-NJ invited Kam Mak, designer of the current Lunar New Year stamps, to host an APA Heritage Month Children’s Book Tour reading at Forest Avenue School in Verona on May 21. The event was a great success and all in attendance had an enjoyable time, with the children receiving copies of Mr. Mak’s book.

Cinnamon Joy Lee and author Kam Mak at the APAHM Children’s Book Tour reading



Other Highlights



Scholarship and internship winners at the APA Heritage Month Luncheon

- OCA-NJ received Chapter of the Year – 1st place at the OCA-National Convention in Houston, Texas. This is the first time in OCA-NJ’s 32 years that the chapter received the honor. It was made possible by the hard work and efforts of the board and membership. Other highlights included OCA-NJ’s Helen Yu receiving the well-deserved 2010 Unsung Hero award and OCA-NJ’s David Lin accepting the OCA Outstanding Corporate Partner Award on behalf of AT&T.
- Future events will include a health program, OCA Serves project, the Mentoring Asian American Professionals (MAAP) Program, and the annual Holiday Ball Scholarship Fundraiser.

OCA-New York:

Events

“Asian Americans must exercise their right to vote and elect states-people into office at each level of government who will protect and advance the civil rights of all races, nationalities, and religions.”

– Elizabeth R. OuYang,
President, OCA-NY

- On August 6, OCA-NY combined its 4th Annual Hate Crimes Prevention Act Project with a sports tournament in the Lower East Side, Manhattan to respond to the recent hate crimes against Asian American women, ages 50-70 in the Lower East Side and the attacks on Latinos in Staten Island.
- OCA-NY, sponsored by Kraft Foods, Inc. raced in the 20th Annual Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Festival in Flushing Meadows Park, Queens on August 7 and 8. The OCA-NY team won the mixed division in the semi-finals and placed 2nd in the women's competition.



OCA-NY Krafty Dragon Team members Peter Hong, Chi Loek (center-captain) and Haining Chen race in the 20th Annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in Meadow Lake, Queens, New York

Advocacy/Policy

- On July 8, OCA-NY co-sponsored a rally, led by the New York Immigration Coalition, outside the headquarters of the National Baseball League in Manhattan to urge the NBL to pull the all-star game from Arizona in 2011 to protest S.B. 1070, a law in Arizona that criminalizes undocumented status and promotes racial profiling.
- OCA-NY has collected over 700 signatures to date on a petition to President Obama for comprehensive immigration reform so states will not pass immigration laws like Arizona's S.B. 1070 that will disrupt national unity and economic productivity.

Other Highlights

- To promote Asian Americans in the arts, OCA-NY co-sponsored the film, “The Mikado Project” shown at the International Asian American Film Festival in Manhattan on July 20. Members also attended the August 12 showing of “Made in Taiwan.”

OCA-Orange County

Events

- OCA-OC hosted the “Changing Media Images of Asian Americans” panel discussion about past and current images of APIs in the media. Our distinguished panel included: Teddy Zee, Tamlyn Tomita, Gina Hiraizumi and Guy Aoki.
- As a part of the APA Film Festival, OCA-OC was the community co-presenter for Lixin Fan’s film, “Last Train Home,” an emotionally engaging film that follows one migrant family caught up in the annual migration during Chinese New Year.
- OCA-OC hosted Speed Networking, which focused on teaching how to develop the right pace, professionalism, and polish to effectively network with business and community leaders.

Advocacy/Policy

- OCA-OC began working on Eddy Zheng’s deportation case, an undocumented Chinese immigrant whose immigration status is threatened by his past.
- OCA-OC received a Census grant and resources from the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance to raise awareness and encourage local residents to complete and return their 2010 Census forms.
- OCA-OC supported AB 1775 “Fred Korematsu Day,” which encourages schools to hold activities to discuss Fred Korematsu and civil liberties.

Other Highlights

- The chapter participated in the APIA U leadership training hosted at UC Irvine.
- With the assistance of the OCA National Center and Southern California Edison, OCA-OC put on its inaugural Mentoring Asian American Professionals (MAAP) and Bamboo programs as part of our Professional Development Series.
- OCA-OC Board of Director, Dr. Howard Wang (Associate VP for Student Affairs at Cal State Fullerton) was awarded the “Pillar of the Profession” by the National Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. Dr. Howard Wang and another board of directors member, Tammy Peng, have also been invited to sit on Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez’s APIA Advisory Board.

“America should ensure that we do not repeat policies of exclusion and discrimination against immigrants through public education efforts, legislative oversight at the state and federal levels, and grassroots mobilization.”

– Jacqueline Wu



OCA-OC Officers and board of directors at the 2010 OCA National Convention in Houston

OCA-Greater Philadelphia

Events

- On April 25, OCA-GP hosted its General Membership Meeting at Mango Moon Thai restaurant
- As part of the 4th Annual APA Heritage Month Celebration, OCA-GP chaired the Children's Fair as well as supporting the new Health Fair, which ran health screenings, dental checkups, and registered people for the bone marrow registry via the Cammy Lee Leukemia Foundation. Over 4,000 members of the community attended the APA Heritage Month Celebration this past May.

“OCA must continue to remain vigilant in speaking up against the exclusion and discrimination of immigrant populations.”

– Jason Yu, OCA-Greater Philadelphia President

Advocacy/Policy



OCA-Greater Philadelphia members at the chapter's April general meeting

- “Race Dialogues, A Program for Parents and Children” was held on June 13. The purpose of the program is to enable parents and children to have positive and affirming conversations on topics of race. The program is geared towards families with school-aged children and takes special consideration for families raising multi-racial or transracial children. During the event, two discussions were facilitated by OCA-GP volunteers using the books “American Born Chinese” by Gene Luen Yang and “Let’s Talk about Race” by Julius Lester. Over 12 families attended the event and we had a very productive conversation.
- On August 6, OCA-GP brought our friends at State Farm® to present their “Slice of Life” financial literacy class to the students involved in the Boat People SOS Delaware Valley Youth Career Exploration program. Roughly 20 youth participated in the workshop, learning about personal finance and getting support from our wonderful local State Farm® agents.

OCA-Pittsburgh

“It is extremely easy for the general public, policy makers and the government to blame immigrants for the economic and security problems in this country. The only way to prevent the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the like (e.g., Japanese-American internment) from occurring is to have an amendment in our constitution. OCA should take the lead to work with other organizations to achieve this goal.”

– **Tong-Chang Lee, OCA-Pittsburgh President**

Events

- On the weekend of May 14 – 16, 2010, OCA-Pittsburgh participated in the 53rd annual International Pittsburgh Folk Festival to promote cultural diversity in the Greater Pittsburgh area. Volunteers from the OCA-Pittsburgh, with the help of Pittsburgh Chinese School and Tzu Chi Academy Pittsburgh, organized a food booth, a cultural display booth and a marketplace at the festival. The OCA Youth Performance Ensemble also performed a lion dance and Chinese folk dances on stage. Attended by more than 8,000 people, the event was not only an excellent opportunity to showcase our culture to the people in the Pittsburgh area, but it also helped raise money for the OCA-Pittsburgh that will be used to fund activities and better serve our community.



The OCA-Pittsburgh Youth Performance Ensemble dances at the International Pittsburgh Folk Festival

Other Highlights

- On June 6, OCA-Pittsburgh held an annual members' picnic at Townsend Park in Murrysville. More than 40 members attended the BBQ and potluck picnic. Although we experienced a downpour in the afternoon, everyone who attended enjoyed the food and the company of their fellow members.

OCA-Greater Sacramento

Events

OCA Sacramento Essay Contest Awardees beam with pride at the 2010 Dragon Boat Festival and 15th Anniversary Celebration



- For APA Heritage Month, OCA-Sacramento hosted the Dragon Boat Festival Celebration to commemorate the chapter's 15th Anniversary. Assembly member Mike Eng, Mark Wilson of Wilson Vineyards, Sacramento Chinese of Indochina Friendship Association, and 8 essay winners were recognized for their community contributions.
- The chapter hosted a BAC reception attended by over 400 dignitaries, sponsors and guests. The reception highlighted our sponsors and BAC members and was followed by a formal dinner program.

Advocacy/Policy



OCA Sacramento's Linda Ng addressing the Sacramento City Council against the Arizona's Law SB 1070

- Rallies for SB 888 to protect Asian Noodle Manufacturers: OCA-Northern California Region Chapters including Sacramento, San Francisco, San Mateo, East Bay and Silicon Valley, and the Orange County Chapter joined forces to speak out about Asian culture on rice noodles after Bay Area health inspectors threw out batches of fresh noodles citing health and safety concern.
- Theresa Saecheo, Chapter VP of Public Affairs spoke before the Senate Health Committee in support of a bill to permit the sale of Asian rice-based noodles stored in room temperature for no more than 8 hours.
- Sacramento speaks out against Arizona's Anti-Immigration Laws: Advisor Linda Ng and VP Public Affairs Theresa Saechao addressed OCA-Sacramento's concerns to the City Council on May 25 and June 14 respectively before a standing room only crowd and asked the Council members to vote against SB 1070 and HB 2162.

Other Highlights

- 10th Anniversary of Reception at the Capitol was held on August 10 with State Farm® as the title sponsor. Former National President Claudine Cheng delivered opening remarks and Wells Fargo was recognized as Corporate Partner of the Year. Khalid Elias, Regional Sales Manager of Wells Fargo told his staff that he has learned more from OCA's Reception at the Capitol, about advocacy and civic engagement with the legislators, than all the years he participated in Legislative Day.

“Assembly member Mike Eng’s ACR 76 acknowledges December 17 as a “Day of Inclusion” in recognition and appreciation of immigrant contributions, especially Californians. It is important for OCA-Sacramento to join force with the assembly member to commemorating the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act.” – **Steve Yee, OCA-Sacramento Chapter Director**

OCA-San Francisco Bay

“I believe that in order to prevent future exclusion and discrimination against immigrants, schools must begin offering Ethnic Studies courses and programs for all students to learn about their ancestry. OCA can play a major role to make sure these events do not repeat by working with community allies and engaging the community to actively continue pushing for Ethnic Studies programs in local schools.” – Clifford Yee, Vice President, OCA-SF

Events



- OCA-SFB participated in San Francisco's Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebration on May 3rd. Past National President, Claudine Cheng was steering committee chair, while OCA-SFB board members, Jack Song and Viva Mogi served on the steering committee.

Frank Wu, new Chancellor & Dean of UC Hastings School of the Law, at welcome luncheon hosted by OCA-SFB chapter and other Northern California OCA chapters

Other Highlights

- On May 25, OCA-SFB participated in the SF Giants Chinese Heritage Night, which supported the SF Hep B Free campaign.
- OCA-SFB launched our inaugural 8-week Leadership Academy program. Three interns were placed in a local public official's office: Charles Tsai with Supervisor David Chiu; Judy Huang with Assemblywoman Fiona Ma; Linda Liu with Assemblywoman Fiona Ma. Interns developed an understanding of the legislative process, political awareness, civic engagement, APA issues and leadership skills.
- The Leadership Academy interns concluded their internship on August 13 and presented a group project portraying the similar struggles faced by both Asian immigrants and the LGBTQQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning) community.
- OCA-SFB, with other Northern California chapters, hosted a welcome luncheon for Frank Wu, the new Chancellor and Dean of the UC Hastings Law School. The welcome luncheon was held at the Far East Cafe and close to 40 community leaders attended to welcome Chancellor Wu and his wife to the Bay Area.



OCA-SFB President Sherman Tang welcoming Frank Wu, new Chancellor & Dean of UC Hastings School of the Law

OCA-St. Louis

Events

- OCA-St. Louis participated in the Annual Chinese Culture Days celebration at the Missouri Botanical Garden which featured a grand parade, martial arts, Chinese calligraphy, painting and authentic regional cuisine. This year, immediate past Chapter President Helena Hseu was the Chairperson for the event.
- Dr. Hung-Gay Fung, Eling Lam, and Thong Tarm were on hand to help celebrate APA Heritage Month with the FBI. Dozens of FBI employees listened to Dr. Fung speak about Chinese culture, Feng Shui and I-Ching.
- Supervisory Special Agent David Jenkins from the DEA kicked off the APAHM lunch celebration by reading the 2010 AAPI Proclamation on behalf of the President. It was followed by very tasty Asian food and a documentary on martial arts film history.

Advocacy/Policy

- OCA-St. Louis held a Restorative Justice event. Professor John Haley spoke about his ideas and techniques to reduce crime and recidivism in our individualistic culture. Bonnie Miller from Family Court of St. Louis County provided her insights on how Japan's community-based restorative-justice system could impact America's crime problem.
- Chapter attended an immigration rally with other major minority and church groups calling for a stop to racial profiling.



Immigration Rally at downtown St. Louis

Other Highlights

- OCA-St. Louis received special discounts for Jammin' at the Zoo. There were unlimited sampling of wines at over 50 different wineries and live entertainments.
- OCA-St. Louis recently joined the Adopt a Highway program and our sign is posted at the Manchester road and Ruck road intersection in Ballwin.
- Our OCA-St. Louis's family members, Peter Tao and Helen Lee with the design firm TAO +Lee Associates Inc. were chosen to work on the Saint Louis Art Museums expansion. They faced tough competition from 25 firms nationwide.

“The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was formed out of ignorance and arrogance. Social and racial justices are much more improved through the resolute work of early immigrants. Today's America is not our great grandparent's America. OCA will remain steadfast to our principles to embrace all races in the fight for equal justice of all Americans through education, economic development, and political advancement.” – **Matthew Yu, Past President, OCA-St. Louis**

OCA-Greater Washington DC

Events

- OCA-DC held its annual community picnic in Gaithersburg, MD, on July 10. The event is offered by the chapter in order to bring the diverse segments of the APA community together for a summertime break. This year featured a gathering of young people, particularly the OCA summer interns and students from the University of Maryland's Asian American Studies Program. UMD interns Xinqian Qiu and Liting Cong served as co-hosts to approximately 70 attendees.

Advocacy/Policy

- OCA-DC partnered with the Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington DC and Bristol Meyers Squibb to present a session in May called "Chronic Hepatitis B & the Asian Community" to approximately 80 attendees. OCA member Dr. Mark Li was the featured presenter, and he did a bilingual presentation.
- The DC chapter is actively engaged with a coalition of various organizations to campaign and draft language for a Congressional apology for the enactment of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Congresswoman Judy Chu is expected to introduce the resolution in January 2011.

Other Highlights

- The Chapter joined in several celebrations of APA Heritage month in May. The highlights included sponsoring booths at a University of Maryland Job Fair and at the National Asian Heritage Festival near the Nation's Capitol. The latter booth was shared with the Maryland chapter of the Women's OCA and a high school group, Asian American Youth Spectrum.

“We should join the efforts to have Congress formally apologize for the enactment of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. In this way, our country will acknowledge the wrongness of this Act and highlight that any similar attempts to exclude and discriminate immigrants based on ethnicity will not be tolerated.”

– Stan Lou, OCA-Washington DC co-president



Dr. Mark Li presents at the "Chronic Hepatitis B and the Asian Community" event



OCA-Wisconsin

Events

■ The Annual OCA-WI Graduation and Scholarship Award Party was on June 6. As part of its annual tradition of over 20 years, OCA-WI awarded high school graduate Zoe Retzlaff with the Arsenio & Co Bit Siy Scholarship merit scholarship. OCA-WI also awarded the RP & JL Carr Social Justice Scholarship to Nicholas Hartlep and Nancy Chu-Rossi. This is a merit award for full-time graduate students pursuing studies related to peace and social justice. Over 60 OCA-WI members and friends attending this dinner celebration.



Advocacy/Policy

- Team Teri Bone Marrow Drive for Teri Li: OCA-WI worked with the Medical College of Wisconsin APA Medical Student Association to encourage the Asian American community to participate in a Bone Marrow Drive held at the Medical College, to support Teri Li, who was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia in February. The drive yielded approximately 135 total registrants, of which 40 were Asian.
- OCA-WI co-hosted a film presentation and discussion by Curtis Chin, who produced the documentary “Vincent Who?” which highlighted the key issues associated with Vincent Chin’s murder in Detroit, MI. Approximately 60 people attended the event held at UW-Milwaukee on March 4.

Other Highlights

- OCA-WI was honored to host Milly Lee, a Chinese American author at a local library, as part of OCA’s APA Heritage Month Book Tour. She authored *Landed*, *Earthquake*, and *Nim and the War Effort*. About 40 adults and children attended. Milly graciously met with OCA-WI members and their children for dinner the night before, as well as for lunch the day of her book reading. OCA-WI also held a Bone Marrow Drive at this book reading event.

“All Americans, whether yellow, brown, black, or white need to be informed and reminded of the importance of keeping civil rights and social justice a priority in our public policies and private relationships. While some people advance, others are taken advantage of and excluded from these opportunities.”

– Lorna Young, OCA-Wisconsin President

Milly Lee entrances Milwaukee audience with her stories of her childhood and family roots in San Francisco.



OCA Lifetime Members

OCA would like 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@ocanational.org to provide any updates you may have.

Aiden Yee Detroit
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Alex Mark At Large
Alfonso & Lana Tan Long Island
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Amy Ai Yu-Mei Lee San Francisco Bay
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OCA's Building Fund

OCA started with three chapters and a modest office of a hundred square feet with no heat. Thirty seven years later, the OCA family has grown to a national network of eighty chapters and affiliates. With over 10,000 members, partners and program participants, OCA continues to advance the social, political and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans (APA).

In 2006, we took a giant leap forward with the establishment of a permanent home. Located in the heart of Washington, DC the OCA National Center has become the premiere location for federal officials, Congressional staffers, supporters, civil rights advocates, community leaders, and corporate sponsors to access the APA community. It has also become a welcoming home for all OCA members.

The OCA building has provided a tremendous amount of space for staff, a library, facilities to hold coalition meetings, educational programs, and press conferences. But we still need your help. Your gift is essential to OCA's building fund as we continue to meet challenges in maintaining the building while sustaining and developing our programs.



We must remind ourselves of the purpose of acquiring a permanent presence.

We are building a promising future for the APA community by nurturing the next generations of leaders. Let's continue to build on the purpose, for the FUTURE LEADERS in our community. We ask you to remember the building in future donations. All donations are tax-deductible.

For giving and donation opportunities please contact Victoria J. Rumsey, Development Manager at the National Office at 202.223.5500 or vrumsey@ocanational.org.

Thank You for Your Support!

Thanks to the following contributors for supporting the work and mission of OCA and the National Center. These represent donor records as of September 9, 2010. We regret if any names were omitted. Please contact us for corrections.

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