



Social Isolation

In the Eyes of Senior Asian Pacific Americans

Asian Pacific
Americans
and the
Media

Where Are
They Now?
25th Anniversary
of OCA's Internship
Program

Q&A with
**Seoul
Sausage
Company**

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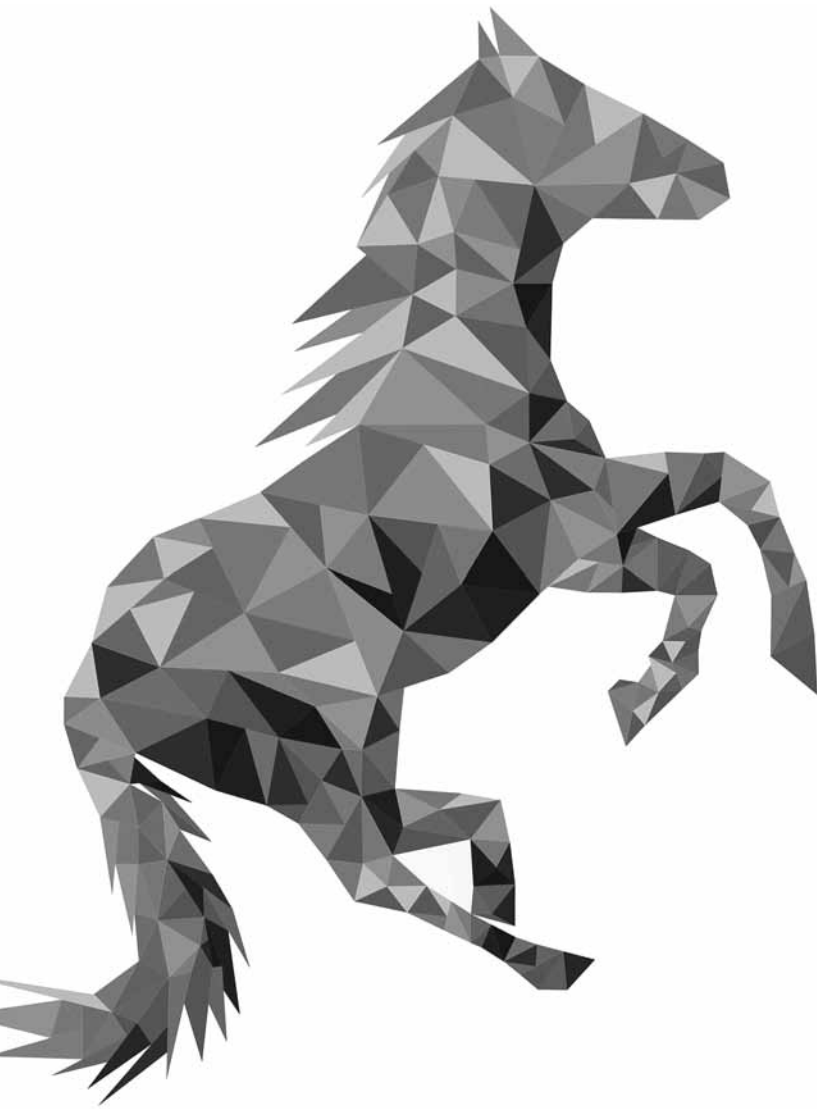
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ADVOCATE

About OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates

OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates is a national membership-driven organization of community advocates 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 as Organization of Chinese Americans in 1973, OCA has since grown to a robust national advocacy organization to advance the civil rights of Asian Pacific Americans and aspiring Americans. The organization presently has over 100 chapters, affiliates, and partners, impacting more than 35,000 individuals all across the country through local and national programming. While the organization’s headquarters remains in Washington, DC, allowing OCA to directly engage in critical public policy issues on a macro level, it continues to largely remain as a grassroots constituency of lay advocates from all walks of life and diverse ethnic identities addressing uniquely local level issues impacting over 19 million Asian Americans across the country.

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

Sharon M. Wong | OCA National President

It is with great humility and honor that I wish you a belated Happy Lunar New Year of the Horse. During this auspicious year, we look toward the animal that represents freedom, passion, community, and leadership; qualities that OCA strives to embody in 2014 and beyond.

Over the course of my presidency, I've had the opportunity to travel and visit with several of our chapters and members across the country. During my visits, I am continuously reminded of the unique grassroots foundation of OCA that makes us strong. It really is truly inspiring to see the diversity and strength of our chapters that project promise and hope for the next generation of Asian Pacific American (APA) leaders.

As we enter a new year, I look forward to continuing our journey together that seeks to not only address some of the most critical issues of our time, but also empower the APA community. While we look forward to strengthening OCA's impact and sustainability in 2014, I would also like to recognize a few of our 2013 accomplishments by the numbers:

- \$50,000 in scholarships awarded in 2013 to APA college students across the United States;
- 3,800 national signatures collected in just 24 days in support of immigration reform;
- 1,000 members, supporters, and colleagues that attended OCA's 40th Anniversary celebration in Washington, DC;
- 500+ student leaders trained through OCA's APIA U: Leadership Training;
- 30 students who participated in the 2013 OCA Internship Program;

After completing my first full year as national president, I have had the opportunity to experience all the wonderful things that OCA has to offer from its membership, allies, and supporters. From our rich history and strong foundation that our past leadership has laid before us, to the exciting new programs that educate, mentor, and empower hundreds of students each year, I am proud to be a part of this extraordinary organization.

As you will see, this publication of IMAGE is unlike any before as it focuses on the unspoken concerns of the APA community. It is my hope that this edition will not only inform you about OCA's ongoing advocacy efforts, but also do a deeper dive into the issues of our community.

We have many wonderful things planned for this year including the 2014 OCA National Convention in Los Angeles, CA from August 7-10, as well as the Corporate Achievement Awards to be held October 3 in Washington, DC. In a commitment to building our pipeline of leaders, we are bringing our APA Y-Advocate Training, APIA U: Leadership Training, and Mentoring Asian American Professional Trainings to chapters across the country while improving our funding model with the roll out of the I AM, WE ARE OCA Monthly Sustainers Program.

As I look forward to all the wonderful things on the horizon for OCA in 2014, I am energized to continue our work toward a better community grounded in freedom, passion, community, and leadership. Thank you for being a part of this journey. ■



Message from the Acting Chief Executive Officer

Ken Lee | Acting Chief Executive Officer

Hello, I am Ken Lee, the immediate past national president of OCA. I am introducing myself under another role for OCA as the acting CEO of the organization. First, a little about myself—I retired from UPS as the vice president of security after 37 years. I have been with OCA since 1997 as a past Corporate Achievement Awardee and the OCA Georgia chapter president from 1999 to 2000. I have also served on the Executive Council since 2001 and was the national OCA president for two terms from 2009 to 2012.

OCA is a true passion to my family. My wife, Ashley, and stepdaughter, Vincy, have been Convention attendees for many years, but more importantly, Vincy has been especially interested in the OCA Youth Track during these last two years. We see all the programs that are being offered as opportunities for all those who participate to benefit from them. Examples are programs like the Mentoring Asian American Professionals that helps to develop professional business managers to navigate through the corporate world, and the APIA U: Leadership Training Program which helps to solidify the foundation of those young college students finding

their footing as Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) in the United States. We see many interns who may have never seen what the political arena looks like and the other potential possibilities in the world for these young folks. Most importantly, OCA is about the protection of civil rights for all Americans living in this wonderful country.

OCA, once known as the Organization of Chinese Americans, has now transformed to OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates. With our tagline “Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans,” OCA has inspired me to give more to the community and to give more of everything we have to “pay it forward.” OCA has been an organization that helps so many in so many ways that it just has to be there to support the community.

With the help of hard-working OCA members, we are able to provide great internships, wonderful mentoring opportunities, and critical outreach to the APA community. We are in our 41st year of civil rights advocacy and look forward to another 40 years. A lot of work still needs to be done. If you can support us through volunteerism, please join in. If you can offer corporate and/or financial support, please give us a call. ■



Message from the Editor

Mary Lee | Vice President of Communications

I was born in China and came to the United States when I was a little over a year old. My father was a “paper son” and toiled hard in this country so that he could have the money to bring my mother, sister, and me to the United States. Unfortunately, my mother was only allowed to bring one child out of China and took me as I was the younger one. My mom was under the impression that my sister would join us in a short time. Well, that short time lasted for more than a decade. Just visualize this: a young couple with a little girl in an unfamiliar country in the 1950’s. As the only Chinese family in the neighborhood, we experienced social isolation, and I can still remember the taunts from classmates and strangers during my childhood. Adding to our challenges were the language barrier, cultural differences, and prevalent prejudice of that time; further contributing to the lack of positive media coverage around Asians. It was only after the immigration quota law was lifted in the 1960’s that I learned about my sister’s existence. She was finally coming to the United States to join her family. While I was thrilled to learn I had a sister to share experiences with, I was also sad—sad because we had been cheated out of being a “whole” family for more than a decade and those years were irreplaceable. It has been documented that social isolation affects one’s health and I often wondered if that was one of the causes for my mother’s untimely passing.

I share this very personal story with you since this IMAGE discusses issues that were prevalent then and now. It is sad that this is still happening today but only now it is in a different

guise. Immigration reform is critical; no family should have to endure years of being separated from their loved ones. I truly wish that an organization like OCA had been around back then to help unburden the feelings of isolation and to help my family and I deal with and understand the results of the way we were portrayed in the media.

On a different note, this year marks the 25th anniversary of OCA’s Internship Program. OCA’s interns work in a variety of fields at corporations, and within the government, nonprofit, and medical fields. Just think of the rich experiences these interns have gained and the ways that they’ve impacted their lives and career choices. Made possible by the generous donations from OCA membership, chapters, and corporations, the Internship Program continues to thrive. Thank you for your continued support.

I hope you will find this IMAGE thought-provoking and inspire you to be more active with OCA. Our success depends on our members and the importance of being a united voice. For the first time, this issue is entirely one color and available electronically. Printed copies are available for those who do not have access to the Internet. I acknowledge and thank everyone for their contributions with this IMAGE. Finally, please mark on your calendar that we have a date this summer in Los Angeles from August 7–10 for our Convention. Until then — stay safe and see you in L.A.! ■

AARP Takes a Closer Look at Social Isolation

Ron Mori | Manager - Multicultural Markets and Engagement, AARP

A Personal Story

If you're like me, talking about caregiving, end of life plans, and finances with parents are uncharted and uncomfortable conversations that we all need to have at some point (sooner than later). Unfortunately, the conversations do not get easier with time, as other life issues change the ground rules with each passing year. Within the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, we have a cultural social network dependent on family, heritage, and respecting elders. In my case, my mother was the primary caregiver for my father for six years. I never appreciated how much she sacrificed, until I had the opportunity to be with her for an extended period of time before my father passed away in 2010.

As the youngest of three children, I had an unwritten understanding with my brother and sister that I would always be living close to my parents and taking care of life issues when they surfaced, as they established lives far away while I started my own family just four miles away. Shortly after my father's passing, I accepted a position with AARP in Washington, DC and moved my family, increasing the distance between my mother and me from four miles to 836 miles.

Suddenly, we were faced with being away and isolated from loved ones for the first time in our lives. My mother, at 86, is a true survivor in every sense of the word. She experienced displacement and disruption in her life as a 14-year old internee during World War II. Relocating from Huntington Beach, California to Poston, Arizona under the watchful eyes of armed soldiers is a memory she will never forget, so a move by her youngest son and his family to another state was an easy move for her to accept. However, the weight of seeing my mother alone in Chicago and isolated was not an easy concept for me to process.

Soon after working at AARP, I learned more about social isolation, one of AARP Foundation's impact areas, and began to better understand my own situation. AARP Foundation is taking the lead in working with some of the best researchers across the country to learn more about isolation and how to address the problem in innovative and effective ways in targeted communities. Researchers have found that social isolation among seniors who live alone at home could be as high as 43%. Social isolation deeply affects AAPI communities, but we are beginning to get a better understanding of how our community is impacted

and how we can address the needs of those affected. In a recent conversation with Daphne Kwok, vice president of Multicultural Markets & Engagement, Asian American & Pacific Islander Audience for AARP, she mentioned, "When I use the term 'social isolation' in the AAPI community, usually I get a puzzled look on people's faces. Not until I explain about the social isolation our seniors face due to cultural and linguistic barriers do I start to get the nods



Terry Mori at the Japanese-American Memorial in Washington, DC



Isolation Impact Vice President Walter Woods of the AARP Foundation, along with VP of Multicultural Markets & Engagement, Daphne Kwok, and Marketing Consultant, June Kao met with Legacy House residents and staff in Seattle, Washington

of understanding. AARP is initiating work on social isolation in the AAPI community and I look forward to working with our OCA members throughout the nation.”

Fortunately or unfortunately for me, AARP had started to study isolation with the AAPI population to address social isolation through an AAPI lens. I use the term “unfortunately,” because it brings to light the negative impact of social isolation in a personal way as I learn more about the risk factors. The bright side is that AARP has started groundbreaking work to look at these issues and their impact. It has piloted projects in Washington, DC; Sioux Falls, SD; and North Carolina with the goal of finding solutions that can be replicated in communities across the country. To better learn about the impact of isolation specifically on the AAPI Community, AARP has also piloted a project in Seattle, WA.

There is a wealth of research that links social isolation to poor health. In “A Review of Social Isolation,” Nicholas Nicholson states that “social isolation has been demonstrated to lead to numerous detrimental health effects in older adults, including increased risk of all causes of mortality, dementia, increased risk for re-hospitalization, and an increased number of falls.” According to the British Columbia Ministry of Health, some of the high risk factors across all populations include loss of spouse, family member, or friends; living alone; poverty; lack of transportation; living with serious health concerns; and loss of a sense of purpose and meaning in life. In a study for the AARP Foundation, Janet L. Soohoo found that AAPI populations share these same risk factors and have additional unique risk factors that include linguistic isolation, acculturation stress, socioeconomic stressors, and cultural norms, associated with the refugee and immigrant experience and minority status within the general community.

It is a fact that the AAPI community has the highest foreign-born rates in the United States. As immigrants and refugees, some of the most vulnerable AAPI elders at risk of isolation are those who are less acculturated and have limited English proficiency. AARP Foundation’s early research shows that while some AAPI elders may be living with family, they still feel isolated because family members are working or are busy with their own lives and unable to provide support or time. Often, AAPI elders say they wish they were not so



Ron Mori with his mom, Terry

dependent on their children for support and struggle to find their role and purpose in the modern American family structure without being a burden to their own children.

The year 2014 marks a significant milestone as the last of the Baby Boomers turn 50. It is important that we continue to be mindful and take action to ensure that our AAPI elders are not isolated, and that we look at ways to engage and address isolation factors in our communities. This year, AARP and AARP Foundation will pilot projects to address social isolation projects in the AAPI community. The intent and goal of these projects are best stated by Walter Woods, Vice President, Programs - Isolation Impact Area, at AARP Foundation who said, “The end of social isolation begins by empowering those in it.” We welcome your personal stories and inquiries, with our hope that our findings — along with your engagement — will make a positive impact to address social isolation in our communities. ■

Ron Mori is the Multicultural Markets and Engagement manager at AARP, and lives in the Washington, DC area.

For more information on how AARP is engaging AAPI community, visit <http://www.aarp.org/aapi>

AARP Caregiving Resource Center, visit <http://www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving>

AARP will also be holding their Life@50+ Convention in Boston, MA (May 8-10, 2014) and San Diego, CA (September 4-6, 2014). Attend to learn more about AARP from educational sessions and fun activities featuring world renowned speakers and entertainers.

Attitudes and Behavior:

Kham Moua | Civil Rights Fellow

I am bombarded by media messages from the moment I wake up until the moment I go to sleep. The things I do in the morning include swiping away breaking news stories on my phone, checking my Facebook, skimming my emails, and listening to news on NPR as I brush my teeth. There is not a single second of my life where I am disconnected from the world. Traditional and new media heavily influence our attitudes, regardless of whether or not we are conscious of their effect. And if they affect our attitudes, can they influence our behaviors?

My everyday conversations are peppered with information that I have heard on the news or read on social media. I comment on the protestors in Venezuela or the Ukraine, even though I've never been to either country and know only fragments about the situations in both countries. It is the same with many of us. Some individuals in the United States, who may or may not know any Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), earnestly believe APAs eat dogs, even though they may have never experienced an event that would prompt that assumption. Likewise, some women who may have never had any experiences with African American men may unconsciously cross the street when they walk her way at night due to misperceptions. These attitudes and beliefs do not occur by themselves. They are oftentimes rooted in television, film, news, and social media.

Frank Wu, dean of the University of California – Hastings College of Law and author of *Yellow*, also agrees that “mass media influences everything we do.” He says, “It creates the images that establish stereotypes. When people think what they think about Asian Americans, it’s not an accident. They get these ideas somewhere. And it’s often because they’re introduced, propagated, repeated, and reinforced by mass media portrayal. Increasingly, scholars are recognizing that there’s a problem with suitable, unconscious bias, much of which is shaped by the mass media. These images are in the background, and they establish the context in which hate crimes occur.”

In Wu’s book, *Yellow*, he writes, “The MSNBC website printed a headline announcing...‘America beats out Kwan’ after Tara Lipinsky defeated Michelle Kwan in figure skating

at the 1998 Winter Olympics... By implying that Kwan was a foreigner who had been defeated by an ‘American,’ the headline in effect announced that an Asian American had been defeated by a white American in a racialized context. If two white Americans compete against each other in a sporting event...it would be preposterous for the result to be described as one of them defeated by an ‘American.’” Headlines like those are examples of the affirmation of negative stereotypes of APAs. Through their constant usage, they normalize these stereotypes. It becomes okay to continue ridiculing and demonizing APAs in media. It’s how ESPN could run headlines like “Chink in the Armor” when covering Jeremy Lin in February of 2012 without a second thought.

Jasjit Singh, SALDEF executive director, believes, “Media plays a tremendous role in the context of hate crimes. It educates and influences public opinions on various topics and holds immense power in its ability to criminalize or create a target of a specific community. When Balbir Singh Sodhi was murdered, there were no images of him in the news. Whereas when Sher Singh was taken off a train for suspicion of terrorism, though he was wrongly accused and the charges were dropped, his image was broadcasted widely across various news channels.” By not showing Sodhi’s image and showing Sher Singh’s image, the media deliberately decided that victims could not look like Sikhs and that terrorists must be Sikh.

Historically, there have been many instances where APAs have been demonized as a threat to non-APAs. In a study by Kathy H. Rim¹, she reasons that Asian Americans have traditionally been portrayed as expendable labor, excludable foreigners, economic threats, inassimilable aliens, and disloyal citizens.

These stereotypes were cultivated by mass media beginning in the 1800’s during the first wave of Asian migrant workers. They were perpetuated in political rhetoric, exclusionary immigration laws, and during prominent wars

1 Rim, K. H. (2007). *Model, Victim, or Problem Minority? Examining the Socially Constructed Identities of Asian-Origin Ethnic Groups in California’s Media*. Asian American Policy Review, 1637-60.

Investigating the Role of Media

where US opposition included Asian countries and still persist today in some fashion in fictional media and news. There were consequences that stemmed from these images. In 1871, over 500 white men attacked, looted, and murdered Chinese residents in the Los Angeles Chinatown. Japanese citizens were forcibly relocated into internment camps during World War II. Media cultivated resentment and hatred, which led to the murder of Vincent Chin in 1982 and the murder of Balbir Singh Sodhi in 2001. It is socialization through media which resulted in the death of Private Danny Chen in 2011.

Daniel Mayeda, an entertainment and media attorney and co-chair of the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition, links the influence of bias in the media to hate crimes, underscoring the socialized influence that shapes perception and behavior. “Things that happen in the news have an influence on hate crimes, such as if there is a lot of coverage on terrorists looking a certain way, having a certain religion,” says Mayeda. “When you take that and mix it with fictional portrayals, it can be cumulative and affect hate crimes that way.”

In current media, we still see few APAs portrayed opposite of the stereotypes noted above. Though representation of APAs has become somewhat more positive, APAs are still presented as foreign, model minorities, submissive, or enemies of the United States. A recent example is in the film *Olympus Has Fallen*, which showed Asians as only villains. After the film, Twitter exploded with racist tweets. “I’ve never wanted to smack a gook more in my life. #merica #olympushasfallen” says one user. “Just saw Olympus has fallen. I wanna go buy a gun and kill every f*****g Asian,” says another.

Even when APAs are presented positively, social media is still ablaze with anti-APA sentiment. When Nina Davuluri was crowned Miss America, Twitter users tweeted comments like “More like Miss Terrorist #MissAmerica” and “The liberal Miss America judges won’t say this – but Miss Kansas lost because she actually represented American values. #missamerica.”

Anti-APA sentiment and ignorance is not new, but the speed and frequency at which it is broadcasted and reaffirmed has become instantaneous through social media. With thousands of likes and retweets at a time, comments that would usually be condemned are now being supported in

real time. Social media is quickly making it acceptable to openly display hate and ignorance. It is why YouTube videos like Alexandra Wallace’s rant against Asian students exist. But does it have the ability to shape identity the way that traditional media has crafted different APA stereotypes?

Phil Yu, the creator of the *Angry Asian Man* blog, observes, “Social media has been a way for people to express ignorance. But it’s also an interesting way to combat ignorance. There is limited access to mainstream media, but social media allows anyone to create an anti-narrative. Social media is a user-powered forum, but if you look at the overall weight of what [traditional] media has done, [traditional media is] still more influential. Mainstream media has had decades upon decades of influence and social media is a relatively new concept right now.” Social media can highlight ignorance and fear brought on by television and film; it forces news outlets to broadcast stories that may not be considered noteworthy or important.

The research on social media and behavior is inconclusive. There has yet to be data that links social media as a motivator for hateful attitudes and behaviors. But if social media is taken as another construct of media, a part of a larger whole, then we can assume that it can influence our attitudes in similar ways. It has yet to demonstrate the ability to create and to shape stereotypes, but it has the capacity to create a narrative, reinforce it, and instantly spread it to millions of people. However, unlike traditional media, social media allows two-way communication. It can respond immediately to bigotry, hate, and ignorance.

Shift in attitudes and perceptions in the larger American public must occur for behavior to change. APAs must be portrayed in the media as more than just one-sided caricatures and stereotypes. Thankfully, television is slowly beginning to show APAs in multi-dimensional ways. And through social media, APA users are combating outdated stereotypes and redefining what it means to be Asian Pacific American. ■

Until recently I had been one of those women who hated their bodies. While I'd never been overweight in my childhood, puberty did a number on me... At family gatherings, I was encouraged to diet and told that all Asian girls fit one body type – slim... Finally, when I was 13, my mother put me on an all-cabbage soup diet. The diet ended on the sixth day when I threw up at the dinner table. My mother begged me for forgiveness as she wiped my watery vomit off the table. She hadn't meant to hurt me. I cried. Not out of the pain or even hunger, but in disappointment. I wanted to be thin and beautiful for my family. I had wanted so badly for it to work.

This is just a taste of some of the materials on *Thick Dumpling Skin*, a blog founded by Lisa Lee and Lynn Chen. The Tumblr-hosted blog offers a space in the infinite Internet to talk about body image issues, specifically in the APA community, where it is rarely touched upon and discussed. In its second year, *Thick Dumpling Skin's* posts have ranged from Lisa and Lynn's recent travels abroad to anonymous submissions from blog readers about society's obsession with thigh gaps. So what's next for Lisa Lee, Lynn Chen, and *Thick Dumpling Skin*?

What's next?

Lisa Lee | Co-founder of *Thick Dumpling Skin*

I have a confession to make. I am ill. I believe I suffer from the “what's next” syndrome. I don't know when this illness kicked in. Maybe it was when I became the publisher of Hyphen magazine and I had to constantly think about the future direction of the publication. Maybe it was during my time at Facebook where I started living life by the “This Journey is 1% Finished” motto, which resulted in me being never satisfied. Maybe my dissatisfaction is also due to the internalized model minority stereotype, telling me that I am not doing enough. All I know is, at some point, I started to cross things off of my to-do list with one hand, and I would start a new list with the other.

Three years ago, actress and food blogger Lynn Chen and I started a website called *Thick Dumpling Skin*. It's a community forum dedicated to discussing body image issues and eating disorders within the Asian American community. We started the site because both of us have experienced first-hand the societal and cultural pressures of (not) having the perfect “Asian body.” We bonded over the times that we dangerously obsessed over food and quickly realized that there were very few academic studies or medical research done on what seemed to be a prominent issue – Asian Americans feeling inadequate and depressed due to their bodies. Even worse, there seemed to be no resources or support for our community struggling with such issues. Through the sharing of personal stories (which hopefully will lead to more research), we built *Thick Dumpling Skin* to create a safe space where

Asian Americans can find solace in knowing that they're not alone in this journey.

In the last three years, we've reached some major, and sometimes, unexpected milestones that we're extremely proud of. We've made an appearance at The National Eating Disorder Awareness Conference. We've partnered with vintage retailer Retrofit Republic on The Real Bodies Manifesto, a fashion lookbook using diverse Asian American bodies as real models. We've been highlighted as the “new change agents” on Marie Claire, a major female lifestyle publication.

Despite the accomplishments, people often ask us what will come next. Kickstarter campaign? Documentary? Book?

Trust me, we ask ourselves that, too.

On February 16, 2014, we celebrated our third birthday. More than ever, I've been wondering how we can create an even bigger impact and how we can further along the conversation on Asian American body image issues. More importantly, I think about how can we really make a difference by doing, and not talking. Our readers who are sharing their stories and voicing their questions seem to be getting younger and younger. Every passing day that we're not doing something feels like we're watching a ticking time bomb from the sidelines.

Last year, I was invited to speak at Dartmouth College. After my talk, a young woman approached me and asked me if I could make time to see her later. Of course I said yes. I felt nervous about why she wanted to see me privately. I worried about



Lisa Lee and Lynn Chen celebrating *Thick Dumpling Skin's* one-year anniversary in 2012.

what she would share and whether or not I would be equipped to help her.

Later that evening, we met up at a local coffee shop. She was too shy to come out to the dinner that the host student organization had planned, she said. She found out about my talk in a random email announcement, and she was so glad that she attended. Sitting amongst the rest of the students, she felt like I was telling her story when I told the audience mine. As we sat there, sipping on our coffee, she told me that she didn't have anything in particular that she wanted to discuss, and that she really just wanted me to sit with her.

That experience had a profound effect on me. This young woman simply wanted company with someone who looks like her, has been where she's at, and “gets it.”

I've had many more experiences like that since then with students and young professionals alike. Those seemingly small interactions ground me every time I think about the future of *Thick Dumpling Skin*. These experiences remind me that before anything else, we started this online space to help people feel like they're a part of a larger community and that they're not alone. Community has been the backbone of underrepresented minorities because of the hardships we had to endure historically, and even today, safe space like ours matter. Before anything else, we're a safe space, and we will always be that.

In this day and age when everything is moving so fast, it's easy to feel anxious about not doing enough. However, in this rush, we get caught up with the future. We forget about what's important. What's important are our connections to each other. People want to feel loved, heard, and understood.

I shouldn't obsess about what's next, because it's not always about that.

So do we have bigger plans for *Thick Dumpling Skin*? To be honest, no. At least, not now; not yet. Do I want to have bigger plans for *Thick Dumpling Skin*? Absolutely. But, I must not forget about the difference that we're making now. We're accomplishing what we originally set out to do, and sometimes, that's enough. ■

25 Years of Building a Base of Advocates: The OCA Internship Program

Kendall T. Kosai | Development Associate

Deeply rooted in a rich history, OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates continues to stand at the forefront to developing the next generation of Asian Pacific American (APA) leaders. No program has demonstrated this commitment more than the OCA Internship Program, now in its 25th year, which aims to empower the next generation of community leaders by providing opportunities to APA students across the United States. Founded in 1989 with a single intern and a strong backing by OCA’s national network of chapters, the OCA Internship Program was born.

Since its establishment, not much about the OCA Internship Program has changed. The driving principles of leadership development and equal opportunity continue to lie at the heart of the program and the impact of the internship has opened doors for participants in all fields. Hundreds of Intern Alumni continue to do inspiring work for their communities and new generations of leadership continue to emerge to tackle some of the most pressing issues of our time.

One change in the past 25 years is that the internship was initially backed by OCA’s national network of chapters and members— the program’s funding model has since shifted for sustainability purposes.

“In order to have adequate resources, the Internship Fund was established 20 years ago,” says Michael C. Lin, past OCA national president and former executive director. “Over the years, the overwhelming generosity of our membership allowed the expansion of the OCA Internship Program by more than 10-fold and it became what it is today.”

Now funded by the William & Sinforosa Tan Kaung Internship Endowment Fund, Mary Ann & Paul C. Yu Internship Fund, the Walmart Foundation, and the Comcast Foundation, the OCA Internship Program has evolved over time to become one of the strongest and well-respected APA leadership development programs in the country.

Indeed, the Internship Program has been able to rapidly grow from offering a single internship in 1989 to over 25 each year, stemming from the tireless support of OCA’s chapters, members, and supporters.

“The Internship Program would not have been possible without the generous donations of OCA chapter, members and friends from throughout the country who contributed financially for the internship stipends,” says Daphne Kwok, OCA executive director from 1990-2001. “This is the most impactful OCA program that has been running for 25 years.”

Building a Base of Advocates

While OCA offers internship opportunities year round, the OCA Summer Internship Program has become one of the organization’s cornerstone programs. Each summer, talented and high-potential college students are selected and given

the opportunity to come to Washington, DC, where they are placed in high profile Congressional offices, Federal agencies, national non-profit organizations, corporate offices, and the OCA National Center.

“This program is personally very gratifying in that, as the National President in 1993 when the first summer class of interns came on board, I have had the opportunity to interface with many OCA interns over the years,” says Ginny Gong, OCA past national president. “They are wonderful reminders to me of OCA’s mission and why I’ve been so committed to it over the years.”

Throughout the 10-week period, with a combination of substantial workplace experience and networking opportunities, OCA interns develop into productive and highly desired workforce ready employees with skills that allow them to excel in their careers and communities.

“It is gratifying to see many exceptional young people already emerging from the program and contributing to the community in many ways,” says Lin. “One of the major goals of OCA is to nurture our future generations by providing opportunities for them to see and feel the real world through the OCA internship.”

While the OCA Internship Program continues to serve as an important program for workforce development, OCA is also committed to cultivating the next generation of APA advocacy leaders through its signature Friday Sama-Sama – the Tagalog word for “together” – classes. Each Friday, participants discuss race, gender, society, economics, and identity, some of the most pressing issues of our time.

“I remember how exciting it was to meet so many other Asian American college students interested in race, organizing, and social justice,” says Amy Tang, a 1993 OCA summer intern alumni and current assistant professor of English and American Studies at Wesleyan University. “While now I focus on Asian American politics in the very different realm of literary study, I always try to keep in mind this world of grassroots organizing and community of which OCA is such an important part, as something that makes possible my place in the academy.”

Passing the Torch to a New Generation of APA Leaders

“Through the internship program we have been able to introduce, expose, inform, educate, catalyze, identify, propel AAPIs into the critical careers of policy and politics at the AAPI community grassroots level all the way up to the White House,” says Kwok. “We should all be so proud of the seeds that we have planted into the OCA interns that are now sprouting and making us so proud.”

To date, there are now over 450 OCA intern alumni, many of whom continue to exemplify a commitment to their community.

Notable OCA intern alumni include: 1993 intern alumni Kathay Feng, executive director of Common Cause; 1994 intern alumni the Honorable Franklin Kang, Merit Systems Protection Board administrative judge; 1999 intern alumni the Honorable Ramey Ko, Austin Municipal Court; 1999 intern alumni Giles Li, executive director at Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center; 2001 intern alumni Clifford Yee, director of youth programs at Coro Northern California and OCA vice president of chapter development; and many more who make their community a better place every day.

“This experience of navigating as an APA in [Washington, DC] is invaluable as they become the new contributors to our socio-political world for our community,” says Stan Lou, OCA national vice president of education and culture. “After 25 years, the fruits of this program are clear, and we need to

do all we can to sustain this program for newer generations of students.”

And while the program has benefitted hundreds of former intern alumni, the program has also paid back OCA in many different ways.

“OCA has benefitted tremendously from their energy and commitment. They exemplify the fulfillment of OCA’s goal to develop our next generation of leaders,” says Gong. “As I consider the growth of OCA’s signature Internship Program over the last two-plus decades and witness the return of some of the interns to OCA in other leadership roles, I am filled with a deep sense of pride in the organization and its mission.” ■

The OCA Internship Program continues to run because of the support of the organization’s chapters, members, and corporate partners. To give a gift or learn more about the program, please visit www.ocanational.org.

Where Are They Now?

Mary Dynne Montante | Associate Director Programs and Constituent Development

OCA is proud to celebrate 25 years of empowering the community, one leader at a time, through the OCA Internship Program. Read from the alumni how the OCA Internship Program contributed to their life.

I can trace back my current professional career and personal life to the 10 weeks spent in the OCA’s internship program in 1994. The internship program gave me the unique opportunity to get involved with issues at the national level that were affecting the community locally. Currently, I do website/social media issues and campaigns for a similar non-profit. The skills I picked up from the summer internship—communications, project management, and organizing—have certainly helped me tackle my current workload. I think the lasting part of the internship is the friendships, personal and professional, that developed and stay to this day.

Keith McAllister – 1994

I still tell people that the OCA internship changed my life. Why? Because I had not previously considered tying together my interests in Asian American advocacy and in medicine. OCA helped open my eyes to those possibilities, and after my internship, I decided to work

towards becoming a primary care physician who works in underserved Asian American communities. I am now an assistant professor of family medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in my hometown of Houston, providing healthcare to low-income APA patients in Chinatown. I am still active with our OCA-Greater Houston chapter and encourage more APA pre-meds and medical students to come back to our community and “serve the people.”

Stephen Chao, M.D. – 2001

My OCA internship placement at Department of Housing and Urban Development was my first stepping stone into the field of urban planning and development. I later earned my master’s degree in planning and have been working in the affordable housing industry. Through this internship, I learned how policy making affects local community development and connected with APA organizations in this field. After the internship, I stayed connected with OCA and participated in programs such as B3 and MAAP, which helped me learn about personal branding, networking, and mentoring. In 2013, I had the chance to give back and mentor high school youth through the recent program AMPD.

Elaine Kam – 2004



Class of 2004

Following my 2009 OCA internship with the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, I have continued my interest in addressing health disparities by focusing my education and volunteering opportunities on how to elevate immigrant groups in both the political and health spheres. Learning about language access and its importance in helping people navigate their daily lives prompted me to study language access in our healthcare system and work on bilingual voter outreach to the Asian American community in Houston.

Cindy Dinh – 2009

I wrote my first press release as an OCA intern the summer after my freshman year. Now, as a communications consultant, my job focuses on helping nonprofits connect with policymakers and the media. I help organizations working on important issues in education, public health, and poverty to craft compelling messages, get media coverage, strengthen fundraising, achieve policy goals and much more. My internship experience with OCA inspired a passion for advocacy and social justice. It offered an early glimpse into the power of strategic communications to advance important causes and to promote change. It also allowed me to connect with amazing people I continue to stay in touch with, more than a decade later.

Olivia Doherty – 2000

OCA allowed me to explore my identity and make an impact on my AAPI community. As the Associate Student Life Intern at the MSC, I oversee interns and promote social justice to ensure a diverse campus. I also serve as the co-president of (Asian American Student Union) AASU and work with a dedicated executive board to bring together an Asian American community on such a white-dominated campus. Currently, I am creating a Hmong American Women's group on campus so that they may share in dialogue about issues concerning Hmong American women. My OCA experience helped me to create a voice for myself. I feel grateful that the people I have met and this experience has set me on many news paths and more to come.,

Bao Nhia Moua – 2011

Being from the South, I never could have envisioned a year ago that I would be living in New York City with a great company dedicated to diversity. Today I work with Nielsen, and the OCA Summer Internship Program and my experience at the White House Office of Management and Budget was invaluable. The OCA Internship Program has been, and its legacy continues to be, an integral part of my life. Working in OMB provided critical real-world experience and formed a cornerstone in my search for my first post-college job. Above all, the friendships that were made that summer with both my fellow OCA classmates and the mentorship of the National Center staff are relationships which I continue to cherish.

Michael Satyapor – 2012

Being an OCA intern has greatly influenced and impacted my life. During the program, I was a congressional intern at Congresswoman Judy Chu's office. On my first day of work, I was already researching policy issues dealing with immigration and education. I attended committee and caucus meetings and drafted response letters to constituents. The wide range of duties I was assigned to has tremendously helped me in my current position as a legislative session assistant at Senator Bill Perkin's office. I am honored to be a past OCA intern and will continue to help and make an impact on my community.

Linda Ren – 2013



Class of 2010



Class of 2011

Chapter's Corner: OCA–Greater Los Angeles

Lisa Thong | Chapter President, OCA–Greater Los Angeles

The heat lamps flickered as a cold breeze swirled the aroma of *chashu* tacos around the patio. Everyone had silenced, moving to the edge of their seats, waiting for the announcement.

“The winner of the OCA-GLA’s inaugural APA InQUIZitive Minds Trivia Night is...Team ‘Aiyah!’” The crowd cheered and roared as the winning team raced to the stage to accept their prize.

One look around the room and you knew this was an OCA-Greater Los Angeles (GLA) event—in one night, awareness was raised about historic Asian Pacific American (APA) milestones and individuals, APA Heritage Month was honored and celebrated, and community members from diverse personal and professional backgrounds got to better know one another through friendly competition while enjoying some of the best food Los Angeles has to offer in historic Monterey Park. Events and programs like InQUIZitive Minds and the participation of a myriad of community members has branded OCA-GLA as a distinct presence in Greater Los Angeles.

From its inception in 1991, OCA-GLA has made an impact through community service, advocacy and organizing, education, and leadership development. In 2013 alone, OCA-GLA was one of the first organizations to speak out against Days Above Ground’s song and music video “Asian Girlz” as well as a proposed “Modern Latin Alphabet” Signage Ordinance in Monterey Park that would have mandated modern Latin lettering on business storefront signs. Days Above Ground was consequently dropped



from a House of Blues performance and “Asian Girlz” was removed from major media platforms. Similarly, the Monterey Park City Council voted unanimously to table the “Modern Latin Alphabet” ordinance indefinitely after OCA-GLA collaborated with Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles (AAAJ-LA) to mobilize youth and the city’s residents to speak out against the proposed ordinance. OCA-GLA also played an instrumental role in speaking out against a breach of voting rights in the City of San Gabriel that involved the election of an Asian American candidate. Over and over again, OCA-GLA has been the first to provide a voice for the APA community in situations of discrimination and injustice.

Indeed, OCA-GLA’s ability to provide a critical bridge to the largely immigrant Asian population by mobilizing second- and third-generation APAs has resulted in substantive programs organized over the past two decades. Most recently, OCA-GLA created the Mentored Path to Citizenship Grant, which provides free legal and financial assistance to qualified individuals applying for U.S. citizenship, and developed “Imma Be,” a series of career talks that connect local high school students with professionals

who work in less traditional careers for APAs, such as entrepreneurship, product management, and election campaign management. “Imma Be,” along with our college summer internship programs and our Civil Rights Fellowship, are particularly designed to foster the next generation of APA leaders. These programs ensure that community-based organizations, like OCA-GLA, will have skilled and committed leaders in the future, and that OCA’s legacy of social justice for the APA community will continue to thrive both locally and nationally.

OCA-GLA is a space for those who care about the APA community to gather, connect, grow, and make a difference. We are a unique connector between government, nonprofit, and private sectors with a common purpose: to be a voice for Asian Pacific Americans in the fight for socioeconomic justice for all. ■

Remembering Laura Chin

Ginny Gong | Past National President

Everyone has their own OCA inspiration story. For me, my inspiration was the late Laura Chin. She served two terms in the early 1980's as OCA's Executive Director. As it turned out, aside from our commitment to OCA, Laura and I shared much in common.

Turning back the clock to 1983, I recall moving back to New York from North Carolina. OCA's National Convention was taking place in Washington, DC at the time. Since I was considering joining OCA, I decided to drop by and see what this organization was all about.

I recall being impressed with the large number of Asian Americans in one location who appeared to be focused on a common cause. I specifically remember watching a very elegant, vivacious woman dressed professionally in a suit and high heels running around from room to room trying to ensure things were moving as planned. She was a woman on a mission and yet stopped for a few minutes to speak with me about the organization. Her passion for what she was doing was infectious. Her focus on getting the job done was admirable. The subject of the conversations captivated my interest. I remained on site for the day observing and gathering literature.

I came to realize that this woman was the executive director of OCA and her name was Laura Chin. Many have referred to Laura as OCA's first executive director since she served at a time when OCA was making great strides in its emergence. She paved the way for the organization to move forward and is



highly regarded and respected by those who worked with her.

Interestingly, our active years with OCA did not really coincide, but we were constantly crossing each other's paths in many ways. By the time I was heavily involved with OCA, she had moved on and was then coping with her illness. But when I needed support on a project, Laura was always there and vice versa.

When I started working for the Montgomery County government in 1998, Laura and I became colleagues. She was one of the founders of the county's Asian American Employees Association which had become inactive over time. She needed help resurrecting the organization and asked for my support. Together, we made a commitment to serve as advisors and the organization quickly became a vibrant part of the county's employee support network.



We soon realized that our shared common values most likely stemmed from our Chinese laundry upbringing and the fact that both our fathers were World War II veterans and active leaders of the same Kimlau Post in New York City. Laura was always forthcoming in educating the public about the history of the Chinese laundry experience. I am grateful to Laura for her review of the first draft of my book, *From Ironing Board to Corporate Board: My Chinese laundry experience in America*. The latter decade of her life was spent facilitating reunions for Chinese World War II veterans, for which I was fortunately able to provide logistical support.

Laura lost her battle to cancer on May 31, 2013 at the age of 67. A memorable tribute to celebrate Laura's life was hosted by her loving husband, Peter, and son, Aaron, at their beautiful home in Bethesda, MD. I, along with so many others, miss her candor, humor, commitment, and camaraderie.

It is unfortunate that Laura was not able to be a part of OCA's 40th Anniversary celebrations. OCA is honoring the memory of one of its legendary leaders with the establishment of an OCA scholarship. Donations to the Laura Chin Scholarship Fund can be made directly to OCA. ■



Bette Bao Lord, Kung-Lee Wang, and Laura Chin.



OCA Executive Director Laura Chin, who is leaving her position shortly, smiles at the bonus award given to her by the National Board. In the background (l to r): Helen Zia, ACJ; T.L. Tsui, Mari and Allan Seid.

Business Advisory Council

An Important Arm of OCA

Mary Lee | Vice President of Communications

Founded in 1980, the Business Advisory Council (BAC) is a vital link between the business community and OCA, providing financial, professional and corporate guidance – all for the betterment of the Asian Pacific American (APA) community. Consisting of representatives from corporations around the country, the BAC’s objectives are:

- Foster principles of equal rights and opportunities for APAs by working through our corporations and in concert with OCA
- Promote and enhance the awareness of APA culture and career opportunities by encouraging BAC to be involved with the activities of OCA
- Educate the corporate community in understanding the issues affecting the APA community
- Advise OCA on strategies for increased productivity with respect to membership and fundraising

The BAC has been prominent in OCA’s history and its events. It was a former BAC chairman who, in the mid-1990s, recommended that OCA consider a name change to better reflect its advocacy for all APAs, believing doing so would enhance the organization’s fundraising efforts from corporate America. Council members have also supported OCA’s various programs and events, including its National Convention and the National Asian Pacific Corporate Achievement Awards (CAA), which was established in 1991 by the BAC.

The 2013 BAC members are:

AARP; Allstate Insurance Company; American Honda; Anheuser-Busch; AT&T; Avon Products, Inc.; AXA Foundation; The Boeing Company; Brinker International; Caesars Entertainment; Coca-Cola Company; Comcast/NBCUniversal; Crossings TV; DAE Advertising; Ford Motor Company; General Motors Corporation; Goodyear; IW Group, Inc.; Kraft Foods Group; McDonald’s USA; MGM Resorts International; Shell Oil Company; Sodexo; Southwest Airlines; Starwood Hotels and Resorts; State Farm Insurance Companies; The Nielsen Company; The TJX Companies; UPS; United States Postal Service; Verizon; Walmart; Waste Management; Wells Fargo; and Yum! Brands.

The CAA is the first national program of its type to recognize corporate achievement and service by honoring the leadership and dedication of APA employees. Since its inception, over 200 community-conscious leaders have been inducted into this esteemed group. Every year at the CAA, a corporation is recognized for its support and commitment to OCA and to the APA community by receiving OCA’s “Outstanding Corporate Partner Award”. In 2013, Comcast/NBCUniversal, one of OCA’s most valued and dedicated partners, received the award. Since 2008, the Comcast Foundation has provided generous support to OCA’s Internship Program giving APA college students summer



Maria G. Arias from Comcast/NBCUniversal receiving OCA’s “Outstanding Corporate Partner Award” with (L-R): Sharon Wong (OCA National President), Vida Lin (OCA Vice President of Economic Development), Maria G. Arias (Comcast/NBCUniversal - Vice President, Diversity & Inclusion), and David Lin (Chair, OCA-BAC/ Vice President, Public Affairs and Advocacy, IW Group).

internships in Washington, DC. Comcast also played an integral role during OCA’s 2013 Convention by supporting events that included “A Night at the Newseum” and a private screening of *Linsanity*. In 2011, OCA participated in Comcast Newsmakers, a public affairs platform for issues to be discussed and aired both regionally and nationally, helping to raise the profiles of participating organizations. Accepting the award on behalf of Comcast/NBCUniversal was Maria G. Arias, Vice President, Diversity & Inclusion, who highlighted two areas of the corporation’s partnership with OCA:

OCA, through its national and regional partnerships, has been a great partner in Comcast’s effort to bridge the digital divide. In just over two years, in partnership with elected officials, school districts, the faith-based community, and thousands of nonprofit community partners, including the OCA, we’ve connected more than 1.2 million low-income Americans to the power of the internet at home through our Internet Essentials program.

OCA has been an invaluable partner in our launch of Cinema Asian America and in the promotion of our new, highly popular online microsite, Xfinity.com/Asia. It’s a state-of-the-art multimedia offering for compelling and cutting edge Asian Pacific American news and entertainment content.

Celebrating its 34th anniversary this year, the BAC demonstrates the value of connecting the business community with OCA through the many opportunities that have been fostered over the years. If you would like to learn more or become a BAC member, please contact Victoria J. Rumsey, director of development at vrumsey@ocanational.org. ■

OCA Launches Monthly Giving Program to Support National, Chapter Efforts

Kendall T. Kosai | Development Associate

In a new era that is increasingly focused on convenience and efficiency, nonprofit organizations continue to struggle to keep up. As OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates continues to grow and thrive as a national civil rights organization, we look toward the establishment of a monthly giving program.

Launched at the 2013 OCA National Convention in Washington, DC, the I AM, WE ARE OCA Monthly Sustainers Program is an opportunity for supporters to give to the organization through easy, automatic monthly payments. Bringing a new level of convenience and simplicity to donors, the program seeks to help bring a stable stream of revenue for the organization's national and local efforts. It seeks to bring a sustainable source of income to chapters while continuing OCA's important work in voting rights, immigration, and military hazing.

"This new program will bring an easy and efficient way for members and supporters to give to OCA," says Victoria J. Rumsey, OCA director of development. "As we continue to look toward new ways of diversifying our funding model, the I AM, WE ARE OCA Monthly Sustainers Program will become one of the most reliable sources of income to help advance our mission."

Giving begins at \$20/month and can range up to \$500/month. Annual membership dues will be included for program participants as well as other incentives, such as exclusive discounts, VIP invitations, and OCA memorabilia. Program participants will not only be supporting OCA's national efforts, but also local chapters, with half of each monthly gift being allocated back to their home chapter. This initiative is the first of its kind and is projected to be a cornerstone of OCA's funding model.

"At the price of a few cups of coffee, I am able to back a cause that I deeply care about," says Clifford Yee, OCA vice president of chapter development. "The I AM, WE ARE OCA Monthly Sustainers Program is an opportunity for members to support OCA's national advocacy efforts while providing much needed support for chapter growth."

"Like OCA, I want to build a broader, more powerful APA movement," says Nicholas Kor, an OCA intern alumni and monthly sustainer. "I believe that the true power of our movement comes from the grassroots support of our community. That's why I'm a sustaining donor."

All donations made under the program are tax-deductible and are processed through OCA's secure giving site. For more information on how to become a monthly sustainer, please visit www.oceanational.org/?monthlysustainers or contact the OCA Development Department at Development@oceanational.org. ■



40th Year Anniversary – Celebrating 40 Years of Advocacy and Empowerment

Victoria J. Rumsey | Director of Development

As OCA turned 40 in 2013, we celebrated and reflected on the theme of our anniversary year through our programs throughout the United States and during our two main events, the annual National Convention and National Asian Pacific American Corporate Achievement Awards. Let's take a look back at some highlights that took place during our milestone year.

National Convention

More than 900 OCA members and friends came to celebrate the 40th OCA National Convention in Washington, DC in July. Co-hosted by the OCA-Greater Washington, DC and OCA-Northern Virginia Chapters, the convention gave attendees and our community the opportunity to reflect on those achievements as well as to look toward a collective vision that aims to further empower Asian Pacific Americans (APAs).

With so many APAs from across the country representing the nonprofit, education, health, media, government and business sectors, the OCA National

Convention demonstrated that APAs truly are part of the fabric of America. This diversity was also reflected in the large variety of workshops and plenaries offered throughout the three-day event. OCA members listened and participated in OCA's ongoing national dialogue on issues such as comprehensive immigration reform, advocacy within our community, and civil rights. Attendees were able to take advantage of OCA's various tracks: general advocacy, youth and college, professional development and chapter advancement. Members also had the opportunity to attend workshops and plenary sessions such as Politics Powered by APAs to Capturing Linsanity: On and Off the Court. Outside of the workshops, conference attendees were able to experience many festivities, which included the Welcome Reception, Youth Recognition Luncheon, Night at the Newseum, Chapter Awards Luncheon, and Gala Awards.

We look forward to bringing this auspicious event to Los Angeles, California August 7-10!

National Asian Pacific American Corporate Achievement Awards

The 2013 National Asian Pacific American Corporate Achievement Awards took place the evening of November 8 at the South San Francisco Conference Center in South San Francisco, California.

The night was full of inspirational and touching remarks from accomplished professionals who excelled in their careers and showcased the contributions that APAs continue to play in the corporate sector. Ten distinguished individuals were showcased for their achievements in the corporate world as well as their commitment to the Asian Pacific American community. Comcast/NBC



FRANK JANG

2013 National Asian Pacific American Corporate Achievement Award Recipients: (L-R Back Row) Kevin Naya; The Boeing Company, Sang Kim; Wells Fargo, BK Vasani; Walmart, Eric Lim; UPS (L-R Front Row) Erica Rendall; Kraft Foods Group, Joanne Hawk; State Farm, Cheryl Forsatz; McDonald's USA, Deborah Buhles; Comcast/NBCUniversal, Ron Mori; AARP (Not Pictured: Michelle DiTondo, MGM Resorts International)

Universal received OCA's "Outstanding Corporate Partner Award."

Towards the end of the evening, a surprise presentation was made to Ken Lee who received the OCA Executive Excellence Award. Moving forward, this award will be called the Ken Lee OCA Executive Excellence Award and it will be given to an individual who has been exemplary in his or her ability to not only lead and inspire, but also to serve as a role model for other executives and professionals in the Asian Pacific American community.

The success of the 2013 Corporate Achievement Awards is due in part of the OCA's Northern California Bay Area Chapters of San Francisco Bay, East Bay, Greater Sacramento, San Mateo, and Silicon Valley and the generous support from our sponsors: AARP, The Boeing Company, Comcast/NBCUniversal, Kraft Foods Group, McDonald's USA, MGM Resorts International, UPS, State Farm, Walmart, and Wells Fargo.

We look forward to welcoming each of you back to the Washington, DC area as we celebrate this year's Corporate Achievement Awards on October 4 at the Hilton Arlington in Arlington, VA. ■



Dancers at the Welcome Reception.



OCA celebrates its 40th anniversary with founder K.L. Wang.

2014 Convention Preview

Victoria J. Rumsey | Director of Development

Since 1973, OCA has held one of the premiere annual events for the Asian Pacific American (APA) community. This year the tradition continues in the City of Angels and will take place from August 7-10 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel.

The National Convention is a packed three-day event dedicated to advancing APAs of all ages, from youth to experienced executives, in advocating for social justice, leadership, education, and community development. For 2014, the host chapter, OCA- Greater Los Angeles, will help showcase all the grandeur Los Angeles has to offer and more as it will be the first time Los Angeles has hosted National Convention in 20 years.

The Convention theme, “**On LOCATION for AdvOCacy**,” highlights the activism and accomplishments within our community and the role we can play in redefining the landscape for advocacy. This is a great opportunity to celebrate our accomplishments, but it is also a chance to move forward and

engage our community in our continued commitment to civil rights.

Some of these featured events include **Thursday’s Welcome Reception** where the host chapter will kick off the National Convention with a sampling of the sights, sounds, and tastes that LA has to offer.

Workshops will focus on issues and topics from community advocacy with American Chinatowns to APAs in the Public Service to touching on APAs in the arts and entertainment to taboo issues such as mental illness. The Youth and College Tracks will feature workshops and panels around empowerment, personal and leadership development, advocacy issues and much more!

B3: Emerging APA Professionals and Employee Resource Groups track will explore the value of diversity and the importance of relationship building in personal and professional growth in today’s global economy through skills building, workshops, and inspirational speakers and panels.

The **Friday Night Event** will be held at the Chinese American Museum and encompass an evening centered around local food venues and booths with entertainment, giving attendees the “night market” atmosphere.

The National Convention will conclude with the **Gala Awards**, celebrating and honoring individuals for their contributions and accomplishments to the APA community. Last year’s honorees included former White House Cabinet Secretary and Assistant to the President Chris Lu and Hawaii Senator Mazie Hirono.

The OCA National Center staff has been working closely with the host chapter OCA – Greater Los Angeles to assemble an amazing schedule of programs and special events that bridge together the goals and theme of the National Convention – **On LOCATION for AdvOCacy**. For more information and to register for the 2014 National Convention visit www.oconational.org. We hope to see you in Los Angeles! ■



American Chinatown: A People's History of Five Neighborhoods *by Bonnie Tsui*

Book Review

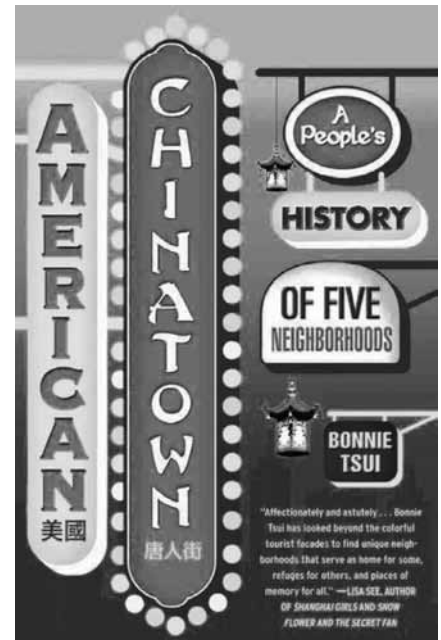
Virginia L. Ng | Chapter President, OCA–New Jersey

I like reading books about my ethnicity, buying two to three books at a time, but I was truly disappointed when I started reading this book. I don't know what I was expecting, but I guess that my perspective was not what the author had in mind. Like the author, no matter which city I am visiting, both my husband and I would look for the "Chinatown" of the area. We have the Chinese food craving which needs to be satisfied every several days. And like the author, we usually find some semblance of a Chinatown, or at least a Chinese restaurant, not just in the United States, but also in Toronto and Vancouver—which I think has the best food—Madrid, London, Costa Rica, Mexico and Rome. Once on a cruise to Jamaica, we got off the boat and made a mad dash to get our Chinese food fix and came across a restaurant whose owners had emigrated from Toi-San. After several generations, they could no longer speak the language, but they understood it and cooked one marvelous meal for us.

The book outlined five Chinatown communities, and growing up in one, I thought that I was going to read highlights of my neighborhood, where I had grown up and where I spent my childhood. But it didn't touch upon them. Was this really a history? Maybe not. The author touched upon some history, but left the real history of Chinatown out. There were no mentions of the origins of New York's Chinatown before it became what it is today. There were no mentions of the building with a Star of David over the door that used to serve as a safe house for "Jews" or the park on Mulberry Street, known as Columbus Park, which use to have a statue of Christopher Columbus at the far end. And there is no mention of the many Chinese Associations who helped and provided support and solace to many men in their "bachelor society."

The book did touch upon racism, paper sons, sojourners and the Anti-Chinese sentiment of the early years. It also outlined that immigration is vital for the survival of Chinatowns, or they will disappear. First generation sustains their culture and habits, with the second generation becoming educated, affluent and leaving for a different life in the suburbs.

I did enjoy reading about the oldest Chinatown, the Chinatown in New York, and the movie business Chinatown in Los Angeles. I hope that this review does not deter you from otherwise reading an interesting and informative book and hope that it brings you your own memories of Chinatown, no matter where it might be. ■



Food for the Soul

Q&A with the Creators of Seoul Sausage Company

Mary Lee | Vice President of Communications

What started as Chef Chris Oh's idea to marry Korean flavors with the classic sausage has now blown into a popular niche food experience in the name of **Seoul Sausage Company**. Alongside co-owners brothers Ted and Yong Kim, the trio cooked its way into the hearts of America by winning season 3 of Food Network's *The Great Food Truck Race*. And yet, their success doesn't stop there. In October 2012, the Korean-American entrepreneurs opened Seoul Sausage Co.'s first retail deli-restaurant in West Los Angeles' "Little Osaka" neighborhood, continuing to introduce Korean flavors in unconventional ways. Take for example their menu item Galbi Poutine—braised short ribs served on top of twice fried French fries with cheese, kimchi pickled onions, and avocado lime crema.

With a successful retail experience, in-demand catering company and food truck pandering to their devoted fans all over Los Angeles, there are no limits to what Chris, Ted, and Yong can conquer in the food world. They are, in fact, well on their way to fulfilling Seoul Sausage Co.'s mission: "To take over the world one sausage at a time."

OCA: *Your name is Seoul Sausage but do you plan on introducing other types of food besides Korean-inspired foods?*

SSC: Seoul Sausage started out as new way to eat Korean BBQ. Simply put, a lot of our food is just things we loved eating growing up. Some of our best sellers include Galbi Poutine (originally a French Canadian staple) but one that we've slightly remixed with Korean flavors. Lil Osaka is another dish that technically isn't Korean but is a Japanese curry fried rice ball.

OCA: *Is your business appealing to a mainly Asian clientele?*

SSC: Seoul Sausage is for everyone. We don't discriminate.



From left to right: Chris Oh, Yong Kim, and Ted Kim with the Seoul Sausage Truck.

OCA: *Which is more fun—running a food truck or a restaurant?*

SSC: It's both. We're fortunate to have a mobile AND brick-and-mortar option for people to try our food. Each has its own set of problems and strengths, but the fact that you can have people experience your food out on the streets AND at our own store is a very cool feeling.

OCA: *If you could only eat one dish from your menu for the rest of your life—what would it be?*

SSC: Yong: BBQ Beef burger
Ted: Osaka ball
Chris: KFC (Korean Fried Chicken)

OCA: *During the Great Food Truck Race, you had to compete in different cities that did not necessarily have a large Asian Pacific American population (compared to Los Angeles). Do you think your truck was able to create a lasting impression in the local population?*

SSC: Sometimes, being different works to your advantage. What we think we did right was to present our food in a very approachable form, like a burger or a ball, with the Korean flavors packed inside. One thing that became very evident while filming the 'Great Food Truck Race' was that people would try all the trucks, but would come back to

Seoul Sausage for seconds and thirds. And these were cities like Amarillo, Texas or Fayetteville, Arkansas. It was truly an eye-opener. I mean some of these cities didn't even sell kimchi!

OCA: *What dishes were inspired by recipes from your family?*

SSC: Our parents never made a "Galbi sausage" in their days, but we can definitely say that our food is a labor of love. We want to convey that "mom's home cooking" feeling when you take a bite of our food. We hand make everything from scratch, every day.

OCA: *Are you looking to expand to other parts of the country?*

SSC: We are always looking for the next opportunity. We would love to someday open one near the bay area, our hometown.

OCA: *What is your goal and legacy for your business?*

SSC: Let's just say that if we get you (reading this) to try our food sometime in the near future, we would be very happy.

OCA: *Will you deliver to my house?*

SSC: If you live in a two-mile radius, sure!

For more information about Seoul Sausage Company, please visit www.seoulsausage.com.

OCA Lifetime Members

We salute OCA Lifetime Members 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 membership@ocanational.org to provide updates and or corrections.

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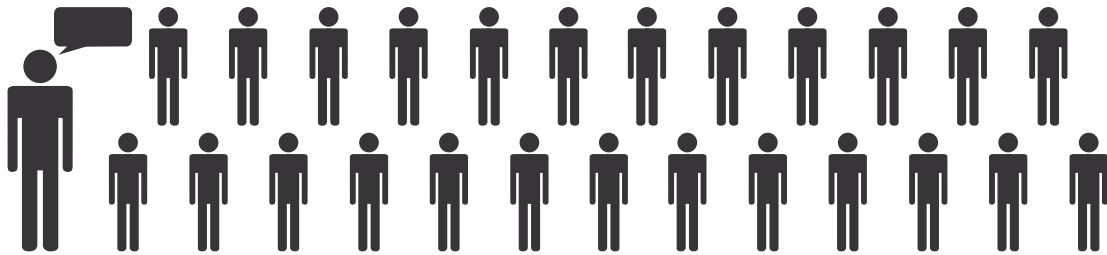
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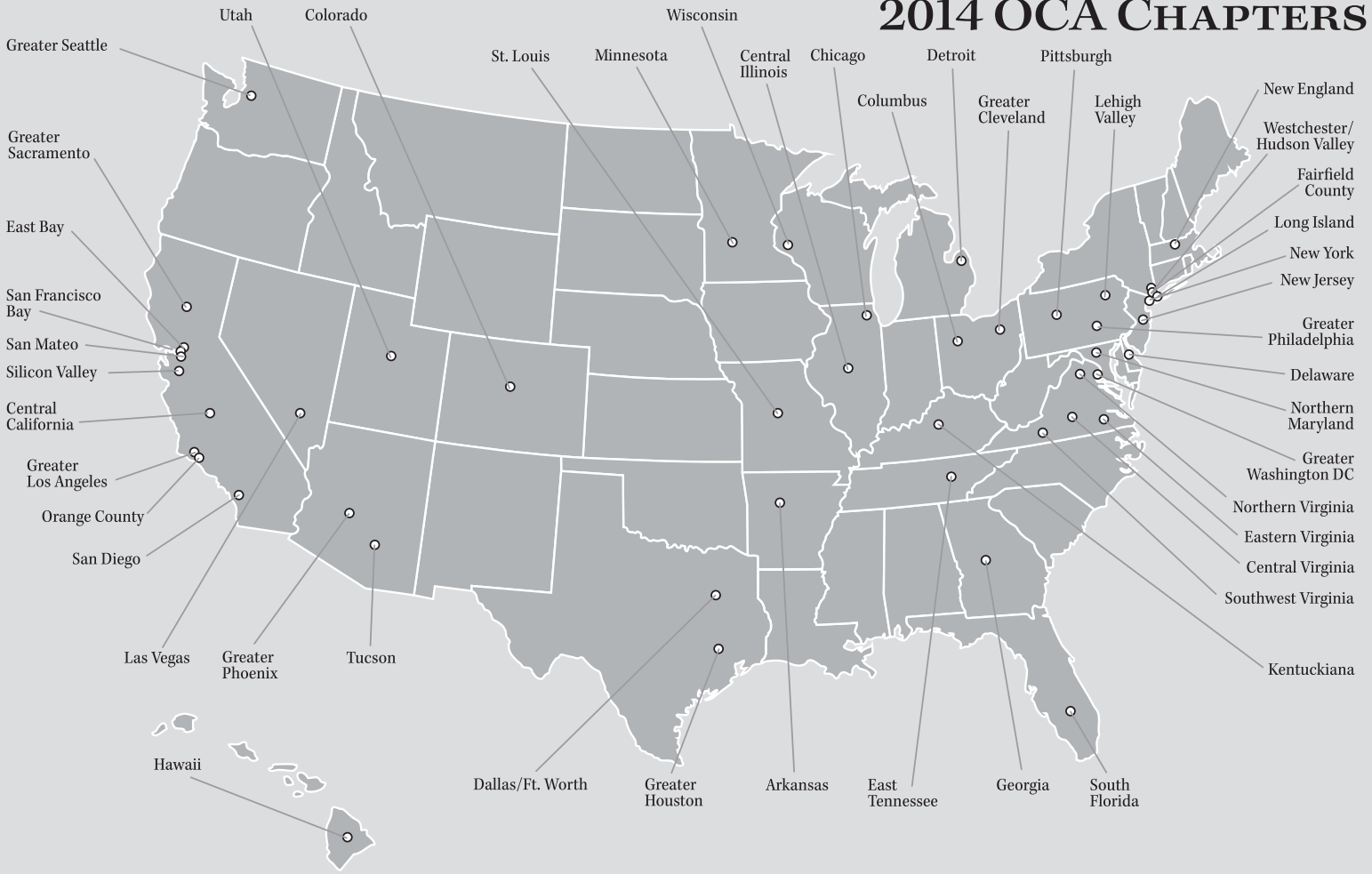


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