

Central California Asian Pacific Women



Tena DORN, graduate of Duncan Polytechnic High School in Fresno County, Cambodian, will study Business/Engineering at CSU Fresno, \$850

Geri Yang, Peggy Saika, Sandy Cha and Lang Fang pose at the 2008 Membership Social at the home of Valerie Davis on April 19.

Creating Spaces

Dear Friends and Members:

CREATING SPACES

CCAPW's Spring Membership Social at the home of Valerie Davis was the perfect setting to gather and model our speaker's, Peggy Saika, advice of the importance of sharing our personal stories and of creating spaces to share our work. She said, "We must create safe spaces to talk, build relationships, and share concerns." In her talk, she shared her personal experiences sitting with friends to safely discuss current topics, strategies, ideas and action plans. She expressed, "When talking with each other we learn leadership, communication, and learn that we are not so much alone in our feelings in the professional settings of our world. These 'spaces' are the foundation of building, learning and growing." She applauded CCAPW for creating spaces for API women to just talk whether it occurs at our board meetings, planning committees, and especially our events.

CCAPW DOUBLES TOTAL \$\$ AWARDS IN 2008

Congratulations 2008 Scholarship Recipients! Join us on Saturday, July 26, 2008, 11-1:30 p.m. at the Thai Palms Restaurant (see details in this newsletter and on the enclosed invitation) to congratulate our newest honorees:

Kelly Marie MASUDA, graduate of Atwater High School in Merced County, Japanese, will study Physical Therapy at CSU Fresno (\$1000 Mae Takahashi Scholarship)

Emma Kaiulani AH SING, graduate of Desert High School in Kern County, Hawaiian Chinese, will study Art Education/History at Whittier College, \$850

Fatema S. DOSSAJEE, graduate of Ridgeview High School, Kern County, Southeast Asian, will study Pre-Pharmacy at UC San Diego, \$850

Amy A. PATEL, graduate of Los Banos High School in Merced County, Asian Indian, will study Pre-Med at UCLA, \$850

Pa THOR, graduate of Golden Valley High School in Merced County, Hmong, will study Business Management at UC Merced, \$850

Kao Houa VANG, graduate of Edison High School in Fresno County, Hmong, will study Micro Biology/Pre-Med at UC Berkeley, \$850

Lee XIONG, graduate of Duncan Polytechnic High School in Fresno County, Hmong, will be an Undecided major at CSU Fresno, \$850

Note: We had no applicants studying in the academic area of Early Childhood Development in this pool of applications. Therefore, the Joan M. Agustin Memorial Scholarship will be held and combined with funds for the 2009 scholarship.

LEAP (Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc.)

Dr. Song Lee, Assistant Professor at CSUF writes a commentary of her participation at the LEAP conference held on June 7, 2008 at Willow International Community College. See page six for her thoughtful and motivating review. Dr. Lee was the speaker at our holiday luncheon in December 2007.

CONTINUING COMMUNITY WORK

We are proud to continue our work in the Central Valley community. In addition to collaborating with local community

(continued on back page)

July 2008

Board of Directors

Mai Der Yang
President

Rita Bawan Merzoian
Vice President

Sandy Cha
Financial Officer/Treasurer

Michelle Her
Secretary

Valerie Davis

Wanda Hasadsri

Marlene Kubota

An Ly

Debbie Tom

Geri Yang

Yi Yang

CCAPW Presidents

1980-81 Mae Takahashi
(1936-2001)

1982 Jo Ellen Ichihana

1983 Thelma P. Haw

1984 Jeanette Ishii

1985 Celeese Kai

1986 Deborah Ikeda

1987 Laurie Wong

1988 Cathy Tokubo

1989 Nani Rabago (1923-2006)

1990 Veena Kapoor

1991 Julia Pucay

1992 Ling Cho

1993 Edna Pucay

1994-95 Dorothy Pucay

1995-97 Yupayong Thirakomen

1998-99 Judith Simuns

2000-01 Sandra Moy

2002 Loretta Seina

2003 Michelle Abenoja

2004-07 Debbie Tom

2007-09 Mai Der Yang

CCAPW Activities

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

December 1, 2007

Zoua Vang, mistress of ceremonies, welcomed all and introduced special guests that included: Blong Xiong, City Councilman from District One, Dr. Song Lee of CSUF and our guest speaker, Lue Yang of FCNA, Tia Lam of the Khmer Society, Judge Dale Ikeda, Judge Anthony Ishii, and members of SHE, Sister of Hmong Empowerment of Stone Soup. Zoua acknowledged our sponsors: Wells Fargo, MaRoo Restaurant, FCNA, KSEE24, R&N Market, Stress Relief and Innovation, CSU Fresno Department of Education, Yi Yang and Rick Yoder, Digital Memories/Slide Show, and the Women's Foundation of California.

Incoming CCAPW President, Mai Der Vang called the business meeting to order and introduced, Immediate Past President, Debbie Tom. Debbie acknowledged the progress made in the last few years and applauded the board members both past, present, and future for helping make CCAPW a viable organization. Financial Officer/Treasurer, Sandy Cha reported on our financial status and Secretary, Rita Bawanan Merzoian thanked members who approved the recent changes and updates in the bylaws and elected new officers and board members. She introduced Ari Martinez a volunteer webmaster assisting us with designing the CCAPW website. She also announced the opening of our 2008 Scholarship Applications.

Mai Der thanked outgoing board members Kimtruc Cao, Maia Pucay, Judith Simuns, Zoua Vang, Tia Lam, Barbara Sellars and Yupayong Thirakomen. She introduced Jeanette Ishii, CCAPW President in 1984 and Debbie Ikeda, CCAPW President in 1986, who conducted the Installation of the 2008 board of directors. Mai Der closed the business meeting and invited all to lunch provided by MaRoo Restaurant.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Song Lee, Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling, Special Education and Rehabilitation, CSU Fresno gave everyone tips on keeping healthy both mentally and spiritually by taking steps to balance their lives. She encouraged us to take care of ourselves physically and nutritionally. She reminded us to lower our stress levels by taking things one at a time looking more at the big picture rather than the millions of tiny stresses that seem overwhelming. She thanked us for giving her the opportunity to speak and congratulated the organization on its work in the community.

Outgoing board member, Judith Simuns, introduced representatives from the Community and Family Engagement Network of Fresno Unified School District, Brendel Jackson, CFEN Manager, and Xee De Yang, CFEN Manager, who both thanked the members for their donations and told us a little about the programs CFEN offers.

The holiday luncheon closed with our traditional raffle prize drawing with proceeds going directly to the scholarship program. Thank you all for your participation and support.

ENTERING CYBERSPACE / WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

July, 2008 Launch

In a year-long effort of writing, designing, and reworking our website, www.ccapw.org has been launched. An ad hoc Website Development



Board directors formally receive \$3,000 from Sandy Cha representing Wells Fargo. From left to right: Wanda Hasadsri, Michelle Her, An Ly, Valerie Davis, Mai Der Vang, Sandy Cha, Rita Bawanan Merzoian, Marlene Kubota and Geri Yang.

committee has been working with a volunteer webmaster, Ari Martinez, to develop and design the CCAPW website. As all of you know, a website is a huge undertaking and is a work in progress. We look forward to expanding our reach and entering cyberspace with information about CCAPW and the work we do in the Central Valley. We hope the website will give us the opportunity to communicate with membership, share information quickly and efficiently and provide a resource to other community organizations. Take a look and give us your feedback.

ENTERING CYBERSPACE / MYSPACE AND ONLINE GIVING

As www.ccapw.org is launched we will make the final arrangements to create our MySpace page and arrange online giving capabilities. Please be patient as we test the waters of these communications tools. Let's explore together what works for an organization like ours as it opens new challenges to our capacity but great future potential and possibilities.

SCHOLARSHIP ACTIVITIES

November 2007-July 2008

Thank you to the 2008 Scholarship Committee consisting of: Rita Bawanan Merzoian, Chair, Mai Der Vang, Michelle Her, Debbie Tom, Wanda Hasadsri, An Ly, Sandy Cha, Mary Ellen Clay, Ka Her, Xee Yang who participated in a series of working meetings since November of 2007. We volunteered our evenings and Saturdays updating the process, spreading the word, and collecting completed applications. We read and rated the applications and made the final recommendations to the board. Looking back, it was a long but fulfilling process.

- 38% of the applicants are from Fresno County; 28% from Merced County; 25% from Kern County; and 9% from Tulare County.

CCAPW Activities

- 38% of the applicants will attend UC campuses; 38% will attend CSU campuses; 12% California community colleges; and 12% will attend private colleges/universities
- 40% of the applicants are Hmong but we received applications from Asian/East Indians, Cambodians, Chinese, Filipino, Guamanian, Hawaiian Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Pakistani, Thai, and Vietnamese (all applicants self-identified)
- 56% of our applicants will pursue careers in the health field; 15% in business; other areas of study include art/art history, earth environmental science, history, humanities, mathematics, and psychology.

Each year we are convinced why this CCAPW scholarship project is so important and so vital to the future of our community. Every applicant is worthy and deserves to receive financial support as we agonize over which of numerous excellent students to be acknowledged. We are encouraged and motivated to work harder to raise funds to meet the needs of the many deserving students.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' RETREAT

January 26, 2008

The board of directors' gathered for a one-day retreat at the home of Rita Bawanar Merzoian in Modesto, a midpoint for directors who travel from Sacramento (Wanda Hasadsri changed jobs to the position of Staff Attorney at Sacramento Child Advocates), Los Angeles (An Ly recently relocated to Los Angeles from Visalia) and Fresno. Mai Der welcomed everyone to this very important first gathering of the year for orientation and board of directors' meeting. Mai Der outlined the goals of the meeting which included getting to know new board members (Michelle Her, Wanda Hasadsri, and An Ly), reconnecting with continuing board members, orienting new board members and updating directors' orientation guide.

Directors revisited their reasons for joining the CCAPW board and reviewed the organization's vision and mission statements. We brainstormed ideas for developing a shorter 'mantra' or 'call to action' when communicating the longer, broad vision and mission. We tried out shorter, more concise descriptions of our work defined its words into action-oriented statements.

Take a look at ones we came up with and email us with your own.

CCAPW is: "Making a difference"

"Support and empower API women in the Central Valley"

"Bring API women together"

"Growing young Pan API leaders"

"To reward higher education"

"Empower API women"

"API access to education"

"Bridging generations"

"Representing, supporting and bringing API women in Central California"

"API women's network"

We recommitted ourselves to director roles and responsibilities by reviewing governance issues and bylaws, studying fundraising techniques, addressing committee work, and orienting new and continuing directors to policies and procedures. We candidly evaluated our work and how to streamline duties, enhance our collaboration in the community, and engage members. We also brainstormed ideas for future projects, ways to collaborate with like organizations in our communities, and explored ways to expand our capacity.

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE Pinedale Memorial Dinner

February 17, 2008

The following is an excerpt from the Day of Remembrance booklet provided to participants at the dinner. CCAPW was proud to support this effort and was listed as a 'silver sponsor'.

History of Fresno and Pinedale Assembly Centers. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942 which authorized General DeWitt to exclude the Japanese from the West Coast, two-thirds of whom were native born Americans.

Ten permanent internment camps were being built in desolate areas away from the west coast. While these camps were being built, Japanese Americans were sent to temporary assembly centers. Two of the assembly centers were located in Fresno, one being the Fresno Assembly Center and the other was Pinedale Assembly Center of Pinedale.

The Fresno Assembly Center was located at the Fresno Fairgrounds. Over 5,100 Japanese Americans from Central California were interned at the Fresno Assembly Center from May to October 1942, before being moved to Jerome Internment Camp in Arkansas and Gila River and Poston Internment Camps in Arizona. A monument was dedicated at the site on February 19, 1992, the fiftieth anniversary of Executive Order 9066.

The Pinedale Assembly Center was built at the former site of the Sugar Pine Lumber Mill. In May 1942, Japanese Americans from Sacramento and Amador Counties and Oregon and Washington began arriving by train.

Many of the 4,832 internees were from the Pacific Northwest where they had never experienced the heat of the San Joaquin Valley. Later recollections included heat so intense that the legs of the cots sank into the asphalt floors of the barracks.

Because of the atmosphere of the camp life and the lack of privacy, family unity diminished. Whole families lived in a single room. They showered in a communal shower and even toilets were no longer private. These conditions continued, even after they moved to permanent internment camps elsewhere.

In July 1942, the internees were sent to permanent camps in Poston, Arizona and Tule Lake, California.

Japanese Americans were held for over three years without charges or trial. In Hawaii, where 37% of the residents were of Japanese Ancestry, there was no similar internment.

Throughout the war, not one Japanese American in the U.S. or Hawaii was ever charged or convicted of espionage or sabotage.

In 1982, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians found that a "grave injustice" was committed on Japanese Americans during the War and recommended a Presidential apology, token monetary payments and the creation of an educational trust fund.

Those recommendations were enacted in H.R. 442, The Civil Liberties Act of 1988. The House bill was numbered in honor of 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an all-Japanese American unit that became the most decorated unit in American military history for its size and length of service. At the signing ceremony, President Ronald Reagan stated, "Here we reaffirm our commitment as a nation to equal justice under the law."

WWW.CCAPW.ORG

CCAPW Activities

NON-PROFIT LEGAL SEMINAR

March 2008

San Francisco attorney, Gene Takagi, recently launched a 4-part legal seminar for minority leaders (and emerging leaders) in the nonprofit sector. He offered this seminar after reading an article in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* about the problem with diversity in nonprofit leadership positions. Because of her work in San Francisco, board director, Rita Bawan Merzoian, was able to take advantage of this valuable opportunity by attending a series of four lunchtime programs with topics covering: governance (board duties); fundraising and earned income; lobbying and advocacy; reporting; and employment, intellectual property, and real estate law. The sessions were meant to be a general overview for small organizations. Rita shared what she learned with board directors and introduced this important aspect to the governance area of our small nonprofit organization. For more information about Gene Takagi, see

www.attorneyforprofits.com

CALIFORNIA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER POLICY SUMMIT

“Reaching New Heights” By Mai Der Vang

April 15,16, 2008

Sacramento, CA—Over 200 API community leaders and advocates from throughout California gathered together on April 15-16 in Sacramento for the API Policy Summit. I had the unique opportunity to attend on behalf of CCAPW, along with Sandy Cha.

California APIs continue to grow in the state, and so does our representation at the civic level. The summit gave us the chance to learn about pressing issues affecting API communities, such as budget cuts, pending legislation, and local issues. We also completed State Capitol legislative visits to voice specific concerns to our local elected officials.

Working in teams with other participants from our local community, we brainstormed around issues, such as a language access, civil rights, health and social services. We shared stories about how these issues affect our families and communities. One participant, Sue Vang, shared the story of her non-English speaking elder relative, who was wrongfully arrested by the police when he tried to demonstrate that someone was abusing his daughter. Related to tenants' rights, I told the story of a young person I know, whose family was evicted from their

home and became homeless because they were not given enough time to seek new housing. These stories and others were shared during legislative visits with the hope that elected officials will support pending legislation to improve language access in the justice system, and also support a tenants' rights to increased time to find new housing be-



Participants Dr. Song Lee, CCAPW board member, Debbie Tom and Kevin Vu at the LEAP Conference.

fore eviction.

Legislative visits were made to offices of Assemblymember Mike Villines, Assemblymember Juan Arambula, Assemblymember Leland Yee (representing the SF area), and other offices as well.

The evening closed with a special dinner program paying tribute to Congressman Mike Honda, along with guest emcee, Yul Kwon, winner of Survivor: Cook Islands. Sandy was fortunate enough to steal a picture moment with Yul, lucky Sandy!

The second day of the summit focused on small workshops and roundtables, which gave us the opportunity to listen to speakers on specific topics and network with others. Sandy and I attended an insightful workshop on building sustainable communities, where speakers shared experiences of how they built programs to improve neighborhoods, how they started a chamber of commerce or school. There were also roundtable sessions for just about every topic, from voting rights to environmental justice, from substance abuse/problem gambling to youth/senior discussions.

This year's API Summit drew many young participants as well, most seemed in their twenties (as Sandy and myself). Many API leaders have paved the way for younger leaders to take part, and it is exciting to see what next year's summit holds.

SPRING MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL

April 19, 2008

The home of board member Valerie Davis was the setting for our 2008 spring membership social on Saturday, April 19. Co-chairs, An Ly and Valerie Davis plus board directors hosted members and community representatives with great food and an intimate atmosphere for networking. President Mai Der Vang encouraged all to reconnect with 2008 board members and take the unique opportunity to talk with nationally-recognized AAPI



Susie Vang and Mai Der Vang at the Spring Membership Social.

CCAPW Activities

leader and friend of CCAPW, Peggy Saika, our special guest.

Sandy Cha presented a check for \$3,000 from Wells Fargo representing a sponsorship contribution supporting CCAPW programs and activities from 2008-2009.

Included in the social program was press release announcing the Leadership Equity And Diversity (LEAD) award presented to Peggy Saika by Women & Philanthropy, a project of the Council on Foundations at a Capitol Hill ceremony on May 6 which included House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. The press release describes, "The LEAD Award recognizes innovators in the philanthropic community who have increased resources from programs that promote gender equity and diversity."

Peggy is a long-time friend of CCAPW having served as board retreat facilitator in 2006 and presented AAPI's PEACH award to Fresno county community leaders at CCAPW's 2006 Holiday Luncheon. Peggy graciously shared her expertise and experience in a talk highlighting the many personal relationships over her career.

She spoke of her work at AAPI and its growth over the last five years including its support of AAPI giving circles around the country. "We as AAPI extend our cultural practices of pooling resources to give back to our own communities." Peggy elaborated, "Instead of waiting for philanthropy to change, we are the ones we've been waiting for." She added, "We must build great organizations that become the vehicle for doing the things we want to do."

We were able to ask questions about Peggy's national work and how to expand opportunities in our local area and the Central Valley. We discussed strategies to attract funders to address the needs of Central Valley AAPI communities and organizations.

Peggy's encouragement was inspiring and complemented the perfect spring weather, gracious setting and gathering of exceptional community leaders. As we honored our mothers in May and all year round, Peggy reminds us of the value of who we are and the importance of relationships we make today. Thanks to all who attended and to those responsible for helping CCAPW "create spaces" of which Peggy spoke.

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

MAYORAL FORUM MEETING

Fresno City Council President Blong Xiong organized an API advisory council of which Debbie Tom and Sandy Cha will attend and report back to CCAPW. This is an excellent opportunity for CCAPW to connect with city government, learn how government officials work, and bring community issues to local representatives.

LEAP

June 7, 2008

LEAP (Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc.) with CCAPW organized a second conference in as many years to engage participants in the civic process. This "simulation activity" different from the traditional conference format asked participants to learn how to be more involved in their community, how to address community issues at the civic level and with community leaders, or just how to speak up for their community. The participants played the roles of community/civic leaders, community organizations, media, agencies, constituents, etc. while hashing out a given issue. Dr. Song Lee, Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling, Special Education and Rehabilitation at CSU Fresno and CCAPW's holiday luncheon speaker attended and submits her observations on page seven in her recount of the day, "Leadership Conference Worthy of My Weekend."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

July 26, 2008—Scholarship Luncheon & General Meeting
September 6, 2008—Board of Directors' Meeting
October 4, 2008—Board of Directors' Meeting
November 1, 2008—Board of Directors' Meeting
December 6, 2008—Holiday Celebration & Annual Meeting

Central California Asian Pacific Women

SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON & GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, July 26, 2008

11 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

Thai Palms Restaurant

7785 N. Palm Avenue #101, Fresno, CA 93711

Palm/Nees

Please join us to congratulate

2008 scholarship recipients.

SPEAKER:

Giang T. Nguyen, R.N., M.S.N.

Director, Fresno County Department of
Behavioral Health Administration
CCAPW Scholarship Recipient in 1983

\$20 per person

RSVP by July 20, 2008

An Ly, angelz817@gmail.com or (714) 766-9040

Michelle Her, michelleher@gmail.com or (559) 286-7942

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CCAPW News

WELLS FARGO SPONSORSHIP

Many thanks to Wells Fargo who announced they will sponsor CCAPW operations and events for 2008/09 with a check for \$3,000. The check was presented by Sandy Cha to the CCAPW board of directors at the Spring Membership Social at the home of Valerie Davis. This sponsorship will enable CCAPW to provide greater avenues for deserving Asian and Pacific Islander women to access higher education, to engage in vocational training or professional development activities as well as to access opportunities to participate in civic life. These funds will support CCAPW's networking efforts, its annual events and production and dissemination of our newsletter. Thank you Wells Fargo.



WELCOME 2008 BOARD MEMBERS:

MAI DER VANG (CCAPW PRESIDENT) Central Valley Youth Media Coordinator, Pacific News Service/New America Media

RITA BAWANAN MERZOIAN (CCAPW VICE PRESIDENT) Database Management Associate, AAPIP, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy.

SANDY CHA (CCAPW FINANCIAL OFFICER/TREASURER) Community Development Officer, Assistant Vice President, Corporate Community Development Group.

VALERIE DAVIS Trustee Area No. 3, Fresno Unified School Board

MARLENE KUBOTA Customer Service Representative, County Bank

DEBBIE TOM Nonprofit Organizational Consultant

GERI YANG Trustee, Women's Foundation of California, Student/Community Activist

YI YANG Medical Assistant, Refugee Health Screening, Department of Community Health, Communicable Disease Division, Fresno County.

INTRODUCING NEW BOARD DIRECTORS FOR 2008:

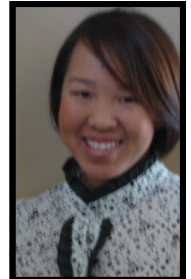
WANDA HASADSRI, Staff Attorney, Sacramento Child Advocates, 1999 CCAPW Scholarship Recipient. Wanda is currently working as a Staff Attorney at Sacramento Child Advocates, representing abused and neglected children in the juvenile dependency court. She grew up in Taft and Visalia, CA. She received a CCAPW scholarship in 1999 and attended U.C. Berkeley, majoring in Ethnic Studies and Political Science. At U.C. Berkeley, she was active in the Southeast Asian Student Coalition, Thai Students Association, and volunteered for programs to tutor elementary school students and to recruit high school youth to attend college. She then attended law school at U.C. Berkeley School of Law, Boalt Hall. At Boalt, she served as the Co-Editor In Chief of the Asian American Law Journal and as the Community Service Chair of the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association. She volunteered at different legal clinics, taught "Street Law" classes to high school students, and worked at the East Bay Community Law Center. During the summers, she worked at California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. (CRLA) in Fresno and at the Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco. She worked as a Staff Attorney at CRLA in Fresno during 2006-2007, and now lives and works in Sacramento at Sacramento Child Advocates. This is her first year serving on the CCAPW Board.



AN LY, Accountant, Pacific Life. An Ly graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology/Criminology. During school, she volunteered at YWCA Crisis Intervention Center working with women and children of domestic violence. She was on-call as a crisis advocate and helped with the hotline calls. When she moved to California, she found a job working as a staff accountant and volunteered at CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) in Fresno. An now works as an accountant and is a yoga instructor. She volunteers to teach yoga to people who cannot make it to class—for those who have a hard time leaving their house or simply cannot afford a gym membership. An also works part-time in the travel industry, promoting medical tourism to other countries. Teaching yoga has made An realize that she loves teaching and educating people on health and wellness. She is currently going back to school to study physical therapy.



Michelle Her (CCAPW SECRETARY), Office Manager, at Wilbur-Ellis, Helm Branch and Principal, Spotlight Planning. Michelle uses her extensive coordination and organizational skills to launch her event planning business, Spotlight Planning, and is the Office Manager for Wilbur Ellis Company in Helm, CA. She has held many student leadership positions which required multiple networking skills in the community while completing her business administration/marketing degree at CSUF. She's also worked in recruiting, radio and other health and marketing environments. In her limited spare time, Michelle enjoys reading, exercising and spending time with her family.



KSEE PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS

(KSEE honors four community leaders including CCAPW member MaiKa Yang. See details in this excerpt from a KSEE press release.)

On Wednesday May 28, 2008 KSEE 24 Central Valley's News Station and the Companies You Count On, in connection with their 2008 Portraits of Success program, honored four outstanding Asian American contributors during the Asian Pacific Islander American Portrait of Success noon luncheon at Pangea Restaurant. Currently in its Fifteenth year, Portraits of Success combines a multi-part news series and public service announcements with an awards luncheon to publicly recognize the accomplishments of local honorees. Chosen by KSEE's Community Advisory Board, this year's award recipients are Wilma Hashimoto, Allen Ishida, Florisse Raypon, and MaiKa Yang.

Wilma Hashimoto is the Assistant Director for Early Child Development in the Clovis School District. **Allen Ishida** is the Supervisor for District One in Tulare County and one of the first API/Japanese Americans to be elected in Tulare County. **Florisse Raypon** is a homemaker and volunteer. For the last 20 years she has dedicated her time to the Filipino Community in Fresno.

MaiKa Yang is a Development Training Officer for the Stone Soup Fresno. MaiKa arrived to the U.S. as a refugee as a young child. At Stone Soup Fresno there is a mural with a picture of MaiKa and her family getting off the plane when they first arrived to Fresno. MaiKa attended Fresno Unified and went to college at UC Davis where she obtained her B.A. degree in Community and Regional Development. After college she returned to the Valley to use her skills and education to give back to the community. She overcame a lot of struggles but kept a positive attitude and works hard to create a stronger better community. MaiKa is currently participating in the 2008 Women's Policy Institute coordinated by the Women's Foundation. She is also a member of CCAPW.

CCAPW Feature

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE WORTHY OF MY WEEKEND

By Dr. Song Lee

On a Saturday morning on June 7, 2008, I forced myself to get up to attend the Fresno Civic Engagement Conference (FCEC). Although I was tired from a hectic week and sleeping in was extremely tempting, I had promised a friend I would attend and so I forced myself out of bed. I am glad I chose to attend the conference because it was a wonderful experience. The event was coordinated by the Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP) organization, along with CCAPW and Willow International Community College.

I gained a great deal of new knowledge, insights, and networking contacts within the 5 hour span of the whole conference. I also felt rejuvenated and motivated to carry on my role in the community through the simulation activity we did. We were presented with a scenario: the hospital where we lived in "Willow County" did not have the means to provide appropriate language services to its culturally diverse patients. The simulation taught me and the attendees that whether we play a role in the community, in a huge organization, on boards, or as elected officials, we each have an important role. Additionally, we have to respect other professionals and civic participants in the community and work together to create a better working system within the city. I have a newfound respect and appreciation for everyone in the community, whether they are a community member or elected official. Everyone makes a difference and helps to make the city run more effectively, as demonstrated in the simulation. The workshop, on the other hand, taught me that there are other ways I could be more productive and effective in my community. It encourages me to take on other roles such as serving on boards and commissions.

Everything about the conference was great, even the food. Yet, what I enjoyed the most about the conference were the people. The speakers, organizers, and attendees, who are all leaders of our community, made this conference enjoyable and powerful. The people made the conference a safe learning environment and a great place to network and find role models. I come from a culture that traditionally has not allowed many girls and women to take part in any leadership roles in the community. Many women and girls are groomed to be worthy wives, not necessarily leaders. At the conference, I met and saw numerous women who are female role models for me, which is powerful because female role models are lacking in my own Hmong community.

This conference and other LEAP trainings I have attended have always helped to expand my knowledge of leadership skills and how and where to use them. I definitely encourage everyone to attend the next Civic Engagement Conference and other trainings by LEAP because of the personal and professional development that they always provide.



Dr. Franklin Ng, Ari Martinez, Silas Cha, and Dr. Song Lee, among other participants at the LEAP Conference.

INTRODUCING

Giang Nguyen

Director, Fresno County Department of
Behavioral Health Administration
CCAPW Scholarship Recipient in 1983



Giang Nguyen was born and raised in South Vietnam. In 1981, she left Vietnam and came to Fresno. Giang has a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and a Master of Science degree in Nursing and Leadership and Management. She is currently writing a dissertation for the doctoral program in education and business with the focus on organizational leadership.

Giang has 20 years of professional experience in the behavioral health field for Fresno County. She is honored to have served the County in different job levels and capacities from a mental health registered nurse for the former 40-bed Acute Psychiatric Unit, to Charge Nurse, to Director of Nursing, to Division Manager managing five different 24/7 programs providing inpatient and crisis treatment programs for County residents. She was responsible for the development and ongoing successful operation of the County's 16-bed acute inpatient Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF). Giang later transferred to the Department of Community Health to expand her experience in the public health field and managed the California Children Services (CCS) which serves children under age 21 who have physically handicapped and debilitation physical health conditions. She was responsible for working collaboratively with the State and local Clovis Unified School District to establish a Medical Therapy Unit for children needing physical and occupational therapy services in the Clovis school district. In 2003, Giang was promoted to Assistant Director for the County Department of Community Health and in 2005, she was appointed as interim Health Director.

In May 2005, Giang received the appointment as interim as Local Mental Health Director and returned home to the Department of Behavioral Health as Department Head to direct the Department that had approximately 600 employees and almost a \$90 million dollar operational budget. In November 2006, Giang received the appointment as permanent Local Mental Health Director for Fresno County. In the past three years, she has aggressively planned and begun a transformation plan to redesign the adult behavioral health system to ensure efficiency and quality of services and long term sustainability for the Department.

Giang is married and has a wonderful 18-year-old son. Her parents and siblings live in California and all desire to work hard as public servants to give back to the community.

In honor of CCAPW's scholarship investments in young women of the Central Valley, we feature stories and messages from our former scholarship recipients. We are reminded to celebrate how our scholarship investments continue to contribute to our communities. If you know the contact information of former recipients, please forward that information to any board member for follow up and to be featured in future publications. Giang Nguyen will be the featured speaker at the 2008 Scholarship Luncheon.



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Asian Pacific Women
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Fresno, CA 93729
www.ccapw.org

(continued from front page)

organizations, we connected with national organizations and their leaders to either expand their work to include valley participants or sent representatives to participate in statewide and/or national forums. Read in this newsletter more details about our work with/support of CSU Fresno, Peggy Saika of AAPIP, Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial Project, Fresno City Council API Advisory Council, LEAP, API Policy Summit and the Southeast Asian Educational Conference, among others.

THANKS WELLS FARGO

We are honored for the second year in a row to receive recognition from Wells Fargo who will generously sponsor CCAPW programs for 2008/09. Their commitment of financial resources to CCAPW continues to support our mission/vision that Asian Pacific women in the Central Valley will have access to all possible educational, employment and health opportunities while celebrating one's distinct heritage. Thank you Wells Fargo.

TAKE A MOMENT...

Although our organization's focus is on local communities, we cannot ignore world events. The lives of so many people are changed with natural disasters in far away lands and also in the hearts of our community relatives and friends. Please take time to see what other organizations both large and small are doing in response to the needs as a result of the Myanmar Cyclone and Earthquake in China. Although the events are no longer on the front pages of our newspapers, the need is still great. Start with these two resources to find out more how each of us can help.

MYANMAR CYCLONE: InterAction has organized a list of agencies ready to accept donations related to the Myanmar Cyclone. See

<http://www.interaction.org/burma>

EARTHQUAKE IN CHINA: www.sfgate.com (search Chinese Earthquake Relief)

CLOSER TO HOME

We have inserted a flyer titled, "The Governor's Proposed Budget Would Disproportionately Affect California's Women", compiled by the California Budget Project. Please find out more information at www.cbp.org.

CCAPW Executive Committee

Central California Asian Pacific Women

Vision:

Asian Pacific women in the Central Valley will have access to all possible education, employment and health opportunities while celebrating their distinct heritage.

Mission:

- To bring together Asian Pacific Women in Central California to share in their commonalities and distinct cultural heritage
- To address the educational, employment, health needs/concerns of Asian Pacific women by promoting the visibility, participation, and representation of Asian Pacific women in the community
- To provide leadership opportunities to empower Asian Pacific women in their education, career and life

CCAPW DONORS 2007 and 2008

Visionaries, \$500+

Thanit Hasadsri
Debbie Ikeda
Jeanette Ishii
Rita Bawanani Merzoian/Joan Agustin Family
Susan Rabago/Nani Rabago Family
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If we omitted your name in error, please notify us.

CCAPW MEMBERS June 27, 2008

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Shelly Cha

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Mai Summer Vue

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Nzong Xiong

Say Xiong

Kao N. Yang

Gerri Yang

Yi Yang

Kazong Yang

MaiKa Yang

Newsletter Editor: Rita Bawanani Merzoian ♦ Thanks to board directors and members for contributing articles and for submitting pictures. ♦ Special thanks to Wells Fargo for their sponsorship of CCAPW programs in 2008/09.