



# Central California Asian Pacific Women



Empowering  
Asian Pacific Islander women  
in the Central Valley  
for over 30 years



CENTRAL  
CALIFORNIA  
ASIAN PACIFIC  
WOMEN  
(CCAPW)  
www.ccapw.org

## August 2012

### Board of Directors

**Grace Liu**  
President

**Lisa Lee**  
Vice President

**Anjali Kapoor-Davis**  
Financial Officer/Treasurer

**Rita Bawan Merzoian**  
Secretary

**Maishing Xiong**  
Sunny Takhar

## 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 Vang
- 2010 Roberta Barton
- 2011 Ellen Junn

## Congratulations to our 2012 Scholarship recipients!

(from left to right) Y Nhu Heather Ho-Le, Erica Chung, Karen C. Manzano, Annabelle Tam-Ha Lolingo, Maikor Xiong, Mae Takahashi Scholarship winner: Vina Cao Nguyen, Jillian Christine Fernandez, Kelsey Frances Quintos, Joan M. Agustin Memorial Scholarship winner: Azua Vena Xiong, Shannalyn Elise Vito, Stephanie H. Kim.

## August 2012 President's Message

By Grace Liu

Greetings. I was honored to be chosen as CCAPW's 2012 President, and I am excited by the events we've held over the last few months. After a successful capacity building year in 2011, we are aiming to increase our membership and to increase attendance at our events. We will accomplish both goals by communicating more effectively with our existing and prospective members, and by hosting and sponsoring many informal and fun events to raise our profile.

In order to better communicate with our members, we are in the middle of redesigning our website and we regularly update our Facebook page with reminders of upcoming events.

In order to have an energized membership base, we need to see each other more often than only twice a year at our formal events. To that end, we are endeavoring to host more small and informal events where people can socialize. The best way to empower each generation of Asian Pacific women is to have each generation learn from each other.

Our membership includes accomplished and inspirational women who have much to share with other members. My goal as President this year is to present forums for that to happen.

I thank you for you for your continuing support of our wonderful organization.

Thank you Wells Fargo for your generous donation of \$5,000.00 to the CCAPW Scholarship fund!!

Sandy Cha, Wells Fargo Assistant Vice President Community Affairs Representative and Geri Yang, Wells Fargo Community Development Officer both members and former board members of CCAPW continue to support the CCAPW Mission of empowering each generation of API women in the Central Valley. Wells Fargo's donation will help CCAPW provide scholarships for very deserving young women in our community. We are thankful to have their support.



Left to right: Wells Fargo representatives Geri Yang and Sandy Cha, with CCAPW President Grace Liu and Treasurer Anjali Kapoor-Davis

## Kelly Masuda, 2008 Recipient, After the Scholarship...

By Zoua Yang

Kelly Masuda is thousands of miles away from home, but she is on target. Kelly was one of eight young ladies selected as a Central California Asian Pacific Women (CCAPW) Scholarship recipient in 2008. She graduated from Atwater High School in Merced and her goal was to study physical therapy.

Kelly was awarded the coveted Mae Takahashi Scholarship for \$1,000. Mae Takahashi was the founding president of CCAPW and she has been an integral part of improving the status of Asian Pacific Islander women in the Central Valley. Kelly said she was especially honored to receive this special award, "It feels good knowing that other Asian women care about young people like me and they willing to support me."

Right after high school, Kelly entered California State University, Fresno and pursued the sciences. She said while the \$1,000 wasn't a huge amount of money, it helped to relieve a huge amount of stress.

"My parents couldn't afford to help very much, but they also wanted me to focus on school and not have to work so much that my studies suffered. So the CCAPW Mae Takahashi scholarship allowed me to buy textbooks and a meal plan while keeping my classes as a priority."

She didn't feel obligated to work and was able to focus on school.

"I got a strong foundation my first few years and was able to keep up my GPA," Kelly said. "I was able to take challenging courses while maintaining good grades, as well as participate in extracurricular activities such as club water polo."

While at CSUF, Kelly was an Honors student, a President's Scholar, and a member of Phi Kappa Phi. She graduated from CSUF in May 2012 and was accepted to pursue a doctorate in physical therapy at Simmons College in Boston. Due to her academic excellence in her undergraduate work, she earned a partial scholarship from Simmons College.

Right now she is going to school on the east coast, but her goal is to return to the west coast eventually to practice physical therapy. If all goes according to plan, Kelly will be a part of the Doctorate of Physical Therapy class of 2015.



*Pictured: Kelly Masuda in London, England.*

## Scholarships 2012

By Rita Bawanani Merzoian

Congratulations 2012 CCAPW Scholarship Winners! At our annual Scholarship Luncheon on July 29 2012, the CCAPW community of members, sponsors, donors, and friends celebrated our 2012 academic scholarship winners. Thank you to board directors, committee members and evaluators who assisted in the six-month long scholarship process for CCAPW this year. With the scholarships we give out this year, our 32-yr-old organization has given out a total of \$124,500 since it formed in 1980.

Thank you to the many sponsors and donors who support this worthwhile effort to invest in the promising young women in our community. This year we would especially like to thank the following table and ad sponsors: Wells Fargo, PG&E, the Women's Foundation of California, Valerie Davis, Fresno County School Board, StageWorks Fresno, Golden Palace Banquet Hall, Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, Fresno County Library, Fresno Community Development Financial Institution, the Agustin Family, and Anthem Blue Cross. We would also like to thank Wells Fargo who matched 100% of all donations raised for our scholarship campaign for 2013.

When we sit down and read the applications, we are moved by the stories of these young women at the beginning of their academic career. We are proud of these young women seasoned and well-versed in what motivates them to become educated and give back to their communities. We are inspired by their hopes and dreams. I reminded each recipient, "You have a very important role to fill in the history of our organization. As a 2012 scholarship recipient, we will look to you to succeed, then turn around and lend a hand to those that come next. This scholarship is our investment in you, your studies, and in our future, and the future of our community."

Congratulations to your parents, your families, and your teachers and counselors who provide a support system to help you succeed. Thank you to the donors and members of CCAPW whose funds support the scholarship effort. Thank you to all of you here who are part of this success.

Flavia Takahashi-Flores, President/Founder of P\*DE\*Q provided inspirational words for our recipients and guests, while we tasted samples, then a delicious luncheon by Sunny Takhar and her staff at the Golden Palace Banquet Hall. In addition to a CCAPW certificate and their scholarship check, our scholars received commendations and congratulations from elected officials. Each of the recipients thanked the CCAPW community of friends, told us about their academic and career goals, then introduced family members who accompanied them to the luncheon. Our emcee, Zoua Yang, facilitated a well-paced, fast-moving event which provided a perfect venue to celebrate our scholars and kick off raising funds for 2013.

## CCAPW Activities



*Pictured: Spring Tea Attendees MaiLa Yang and Fresno City Council Member Blong Xiong*

### SPRING TEA SOCIAL

APRIL 21, 2012

by Anjali Kapoor-Davis

Our Spring Tea Social at Teazer's World Tea Market in the Downtown Fresno Galleria was well received by all. With more than 200 kinds of tea in Teazer's to try we started with five delectable selections for tasting, with the Pomegranate Hibiscus being the favorite. Scrumptious hors d'oeuvres from the newly reopened Iron Bird Café were the perfect accompaniment to the tasting.

Several of our API community running for elected office this year were also able to join us for the afternoon, including Council Member Blong Xiong, 22nd District Congressional Candidate Otto Lee, 23rd Assembly District Candidate Vong Mouanoutoua and long time CCAPW supporter and Fresno Unified School District Member Carol Mills.

Comments made from attendees include "Enjoyed the opportunity to meet new people and mingle", "Wonderful venue" and "Great food and tea".

As part of our Capacity Building grant last year, many of our members were interviewed and requests for a social event that would provide the opportunity to network and connect with friends was at the top of the list. We are hoping to continue our tea socials in the fall and would love to see you there!

*Pictured: Jada, Gena and Andrea Gong enjoy tea and hors d'oeuvres.*



### CCAPW SUPPORTS ASIAN FEST

By Grace Liu

The colorful pinwheels spun in their flower pots in the CCAPW booth. On Saturday, April 28, 2012, CCAPW Vice President Lisa Lee and myself were stationed in the CCAPW along the main drag of Asian Fest, an annual celebration of Asian culture at Fresno City College.

Our brightly colored pinwheels drew many smiles and comments as people walked past. We told people about our mission of empowering Asian Pacific women in our area. We handed out membership envelopes, CCAPW bookmarks, told students about scholarships and invited people to our July scholarship luncheon. We ate good food and enjoyed the music and dancing of different Asian cultures.



Asian Fest is one of the largest annual pan-Asian cultural celebrations in the Central Valley. It is a one-weekend event including food vendors, dancers, musicians, vendors, and community organizations.

CCAPW believes it is important to support events that draw together Asian community organizations. We can raise our visibility in the community, as well as lend our support to a great event. And most importantly, we can have fun and eat good food. What is more Asian than that?

**API POLICY SUMMIT****APRIL 30 - MAY 1, 2012**

By Maishing Xiong

I've heard of the Asian Pacific Islander (API) Summit, but I've never had the opportunity to attend until this year; when I became a part of the Central California Asian Pacific Women (CCAPW). CCAPW received a grant to send a few attendees to the 2012 API Summit in Sacramento, California on April 30 and May 1, 2012. I gratefully seized the opportunity to attend the summit on behalf of CCAPW.

I want to be a stronger advocate for Asian Pacific women in the Central Valley, which is why I joined CCAPW and why I eagerly awaited the API Summit. I was so lucky to have Lisa Lee, a fellow CCAPW Board Member, attend the event with me. She arranged everything for a smooth and easy trip to Sacramento and back. We took the Amtrak train that Monday morning and arrived to the API Summit just in time for the technology breakout sessions. I joined the social media session to pick up tips on keeping up with the fast pace of technology. I learned that I needed to be more active as a social media user and that taking advantage of the social networking system could easily and quickly help CCAPW reach a wider range of audience.

During the rest of the summit, I hoped for a more instructional session to ease into legislation and its process, but the API Summit was much more ambitious than me. The Summit organizers were ready to lead participants in supporting bills that impact minorities. The campaign to advocate for bills that would affect the API community was split into the following groups: Civil Rights, Education, Environmental Justice, Health & Human Services, and Labor & Economic Justice. I chose to attend the Labor & Economic Justice track throughout the summit.

I was astounded by the information on workplace challenges for the API community and the current policies that threaten workers' rights, fair wages and retirement benefits. I learned that Domestic Workers did not have workers' rights to take breaks, lunches, time-off and overtime.

I also learned that the API population in California is 1.2 million and is the second largest population in the state, but the least politically active for policy changes. My biggest concerns with these statistics were determining what percentage of the 1.2 million API population is from the Central Valley, and how much advocacy occurs for the Central Valley API community.

I came home confident in the API Summit's efforts to increase interest in and from the Central Valley. And I left the summit knowing that API leaders were learning how to develop stronger API communities by understanding the importance of organizing and advocating for reform. I appreciate the opportunity to attend the event and thank the API Policy Summit for ensuring that the future of the API community continues to thrive.



*API Policy Summit Attendees Maishing Xiong (2nd from left) and Lisa Lee (2nd from right).*

**Mission: CCAPW leads by empowering  
API women in the Central Valley.**

Newsletter Editor: Anjali Kapoor-Davis

Thanks to board directors and members for  
contributing articles and for submitting pictures.

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For more information please go to  
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