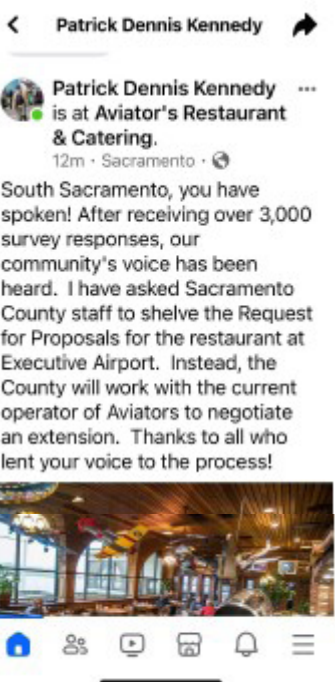


Currents

Asian American Pacific Islander Community Newspaper Serving
Sacramento and Yolo Counties-Volume 37, No. 2 Summer/May 2024



Aviator Restaurant lease negotiations underway

In February, Sacramento County Supervisor Patrick Kennedy posted this message on Facebook declaring that he made the decision to stop forcing Aviator’s Restaurant owner, Cheung-Sang Chik, into competitive bidding to renew Chik’s lease for the Executive Airport restaurant space. Chik’s successful food service run followed Red Baron Restaurant which closed in 1986 and Stick Rudder which left in the late 1990’s. Last December, Chik was informed that his lease would not be renewed. Supervisor Kennedy claimed that “all” of the county’s airport businesses were being reevaluated. How is 3 months notice of intent not to renew an tenant with a 24 year trackrecord a “routine administrative procedure” as described by Stephen Clark of the county airport’s commercial development unit? The county’s goal was obviously reflected in its customer survey - the county felt that Aviator’s needed to attract a different clientele who wanted alcohol service, karaoke nights, theme menus and music events.

What is good government? What are good business practices? Why do you intentionally inflict the stress of threatening non renewal to a 24 year old business which is in good standing with the landlord and survived, with the rest of us, a 2+ year pandemic lockdown which shuttered so many other eating establishments? More than 4,300 signatures were submitted to the county through a change.org petition and postcards to send a clear message to Kennedy and other Sacramento County officials that the Aviator was a valued community asset. Someone finally heard, but that does not excuse the unnecessary trauma inflicted. Editor.

Endo should get Medal of Freedom

Sign Change.org Petition: Recognize Mitsuye Endo Tsutsumi’s Bravery with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. As of April 24, 2024, the petition had 2863 signatures. Her case is one of four challenges to the Japanese American incarceration under Executive Order 9066 to reach the US Supreme Court. Endo was the lone woman litigant and the only one to achieve a successful outcome.

She fought the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and won

Mitsuye Endo rarely spoke about her role in the Supreme Court case that forced the government to free thousands 75 years ago
By Lori Aratani, Washington Post, Dec. 18, 2019

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Anti-Semitic hate crime hurts entire community

The Davis Police has received many reports of anti-Semitic hate crimes including east Davis (Israeli flag theft, vandalism), central Davis (Israeli flag vandalism), Davis High School (swastikas), downtown Davis (anti-Semitic graffiti). A home security video has been posted by the police because “incidents are being investigated as hate crimes because it is believed that the crimes were meant to terrorize the residents of these homes because of actual or perceived religious beliefs.” The uptick of incidents comes after Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu’s military strategy inflicts more crimes against humanity including the bombing of hospitals and civilian housing, the starvation of the Gazan people, and the murder of humanitarian workers.

The Davis Phoenix Coalition issued a statement: “The Davis Phoenix Coalition draws a bright line between reasoned criticism of the Israeli government and hatred against all Jewish people. The latter is never acceptable. All forms of prejudice are interconnected, and when one marginalized community becomes the focus of hate, it makes our community as a whole feel unsafe. This ripple effect damages our bonds of trust unless countered with solidarity.”

Information about the identity of any suspects should be forwarded to the Davis Police investigations at 530/747-5400 or policeweb@cityofdavis.org

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Endo should get Medal of Freedom

Continued from Front Page

Mitsuye Endo didn’t set out to make history.

For years, not even her family knew the pivotal role she played in the only successful Supreme Court challenge to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Legal scholars often cite cases involving three men: Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui and Fred Korematsu, who challenged the government’s efforts to restrict the movements of and eventually remove Japanese Americans from their homes on the West Coast and put them into camps out of “military necessity.”

All lost, but their cases were later revisited and their convictions overturned when researchers found the government had suppressed documents that showed Japanese Americans did not pose a wartime threat. All three were given the Presidential Medal of Freedom in recognition of their stands (awarded 1998-2015.)

Endo’s case, the only one brought by a woman, is less well-known, but her victory on Dec. 18, 1944, is significant because it forced the government to close the camps and allowed thousands of Japanese Americans to return to the West Coast.

The court sided with Endo in its unanimous decision but in doing so sidestepped the thorny constitutional questions raised by her attorney.

“We are of the view that Mitsuye Endo should be given her liberty,” Justice Hugo L. Black wrote in the unanimous decision. “In reaching that conclusion we do not come to the underlying constitutional issues that have been argued. For we conclude that whatever power the War Relocation Authority may have to detain other classes of citizens, it has no authority to subject citizens who are concededly loyal to its leave procedure.”

Ironically, the Supreme Court handed Endo a victory on the same day 75 years ago it upheld Korematsu’s conviction — a decision that along with cases involving Hirabayashi and Yasui has come to be viewed as among the worst rendered by the Supreme Court.

Years later, Korematsu, Hirabayashi and Yasui would share in the push to overturn their convictions in the 1980s as part of the campaign to win reparations for Japanese American internees. But Endo never spoke publicly about her role.

Her daughter, Wendy Weiner, said she learned only when she was about 10 that her mother was interned. She was riding in a car with her parents when a family friend asked Endo where she met her husband.

“She said ‘in camp,’ and I thought, ‘Oh, you met in summer camp?’ And then I realized ... they met in an internment camp,” she said. “I always wondered why she came to Chicago. I think after what happened, she just wanted a new start.”

There would be occasional conversations about her mother’s time in camp, but it was only after Endo died in 2006 that Weiner and her family began to learn more about her mother’s role in the court challenge.

In 2015, Sen. Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) recommended that Endo — like Hirabayashi, Korematsu and Yasui — be honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. [President Obama was in office from 2009-2017.]

“Awarding the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Mitsuye Endo would provide long overdue recognition of the courage and sacrifice of a civil rights heroine whose low-key demeanor belied her steadfast pursuit of justice during World War II,” Schatz wrote.

Interest in Endo’s case has grown amid outrage over the Trump administration’s treatment of migrants housed in detention centers and the Supreme Court’s decision to uphold a travel ban on individuals from certain Muslim-majority countries in 2018.

This fall at a special ceremony in Washington, Endo, Korematsu, Hirabayashi and Yasui were recognized for their fight against internment with the Defender of Liberty Award from the Committee for the Republic, a nonprofit group that “seeks to restore the Constitution and the Republic it created.”

The event, co-sponsored by the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, honors individuals who stand up for the principles embodied in the Constitution.

“Our Defender of Liberty award recipients resisted the racial tyranny of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s executive order issued unilaterally without Congress,” said Bruce Fein of the Committee for the Republic.

Endo was born in Sacramento, the daughter of Japanese immigrants. She attended California public schools and a local Methodist church. She went to secretarial school and was hired to work as a typist at California’s Department of Motor Vehicles. In a rare interview as part of an oral history of the internment, she said it was one of the few jobs open to Japanese Americans.

Endo was 22 when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941 — an event that would dramatically alter her life and the lives of thousands others on the West Coast as anti-Japanese sentiment grew.

Endo and dozens of other state employees would eventually lose their jobs. The reason given? They were Japanese.

In February 1942, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which established curfews and cleared the way for the internment of more than 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast.

Endo did not initially seek to fight the government’s orders.

In June 1942, she and her family were sent to the Tule Lake internment camp in a remote area of California. They were later transferred to a camp in Topaz, Utah. Her older brother was drafted into the Army in 1941, before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and fought as part of the much decorated all-Japanese American 442nd Regiment.

Through an emissary, she was approached to become the lead plaintiff in a case challenging the internment. James Purcell thought Endo would be an ideal candidate. In



addition to being U.S. citizen, she had never been to Japan and spoke only English. Historians said Purcell could not have found a better candidate.

“Mitsuye exemplified all the best things you could find in trying to describe an American citizen,” said John Tateishi, who interviewed her for his book “And Justice for All: An Oral History of the Japanese American Detention Camps.” “The only problem for Mitsuye was she didn’t have a face that people identified as American in 1942.”

But agreeing to be part of the case would be a big step. Endo was reluctant.

“I was very young, and I was very shy, so it was awfully hard to have this thing happen to me,” she told Tateishi. “I said, ‘Well, can’t you have someone else do it first?’ It was awfully hard for me, but I agreed to do it at that moment, because they said it’s for the good of everybody, and so I said, well if that’s it, I’ll go ahead and do it.”

In July 1942, Purcell filed Endo’s petition for a writ of habeas corpus in district court. In it, he argued that the government, which justified the detainment of Japanese Americans because of questions of their loyalty to the United States, could not continue to detain them when they declared their loyalty in questionnaires given to them by the U.S. government. (Hirabayashi also challenged the internment in his case, but the Supreme Court did not address the question in its ruling).

A ruling was not issued until a year later in 1943, when Judge Michael J. Roche denied her petition. Roche offered no explanation. The case went to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, which in a rare move declined to hear the case and sent it directly to the Supreme Court.

The government, realizing that it would probably lose the case, offered Endo the opportunity to leave camp as long as she did not return to the West Coast, Amanda L. Tyler, professor at the University of California at Berkeley School of Law, said in her book “Habeas Corpus in Wartime: From the Tower of London to Guantanamo Bay.”

“She resisted,” Tyler said. “Given the chance to leave the internment camp, Endo opted to stay. She knew that if she took the government’s offer it would end her case and it would never be heard before the Supreme Court.”

As a result, she would remain in camp for two additional years.

The impact of the court’s decision in Endo’s case may have been blunted by an

K.W. Lee Comes Full Circle at ACC



Those who follow the history of ACC and social justice issues in the Asian community will appreciate that K.W. Lee is now a resident of ACC Maple Tree Village. K.W. immigrated to the U.S. from Korea in 1950 and became an award-winning journalist who wrote for several mainstream newspapers across the U.S. When ACC was founded in 1972, K.W. was a 43-year-old investigative reporter for The Sacramento Union. He wrote a series of articles about Leo Goto's pioneering efforts to build a Japanese community and cultural center in Sacramento. This helped Leo galvanize community support and incorporate the Japanese Community Center of Sacramento Valley (JCC), which today is ACC Senior Services.

Peggy Saika, a founding member of JCC, played a key role in the movement that K.W. wrote about. She headed up a study to determine the needs of the Asian community. After eight months of research, it was published on November 27, 1972. It identified housing, healthcare, and independent living for the elderly as key needs of the community, a vision that ACC has since actualized and continues today.

On December 2, 2023, Peggy and K.W., now 95, met at ACC Maple Tree Village to talk about old times. "This was my chance to pay homage to a man who accomplished so much in his life," says Peggy.

K.W. Lee has been described as the "Godfather of Korean American Journalism" in a recent book, Saigu, Lessons from the 1992 Los Angeles Civil Unrest. In it, we see threads of the type of reporting that K.W. has pursued over his lifetime. It starts with identifying glaring community challenges that give our leaders no choice but to step forward, come together, and create change. K.W. never shrinks away from tough topics. In the 1960s, he

reported on the civil rights issues in the South, vote-buying in West Virginia, and the plight of Appalachian coal miners. In 1973, Peggy and several community leaders were involved in promoting legislation to restore lost Social Security wage credits for Japanese Issei who were denied U.S. citizenship prior to WWII. K.W. covered the story in The Sacramento Union, describing sansei's as wanting to "right the wrongs against their grandparents." During that same time, K.W. also wrote about the potential closure of inner-city schools, the lack of programs that served Asian seniors, and gaps in providing health and legal services to our community.

In 1977, K.W. and Jay Yoo, a law student at U.C. Davis, got involved in the case of a young Korean American, Chol Soo Lee, who was imprisoned near Stockton. Chol Soo Lee was wrongfully convicted for the 1973 murder of a San Francisco Chinatown gang member. K.W. wrote a series of investigative articles that spawned a coalition of grassroots activists to come to Lee's defense and fight to overturn his conviction. Peggy was involved with the effort that began in Sacramento and then started the New York Committee to Free Chol Soo Lee when she moved there in 1978. This national effort mobilized the Korean-American community and other AAPI groups across the country. Chol Soo Lee was freed in 1983.

Peggy's reunion with K.W. Lee at Maple Tree Village was remarkable. Her sister Gloria Imagire, Derrick Lim, and I were there to enjoy their lively exchange. He got animated and fiery on certain social topics. K.W. is still the outspoken journalist that cemented his reputation. He also has a good sense of humor. During our visit, he expressed several times how grateful he was to live comfortably in such a nice place as Maple Tree Village and to be with people of his generation. He asked us to "interview all of them so history will not be lost!"

One idea that emerged is to host a film about Chol Soo Lee and have a discussion with K.W. about his determination to use his writing skills to inform the public and seek justice.

For the ACC community, it an honor to have K.W. Lee residing at Maple Tree Village and benefit from the fruits of his labor. From the time he first reported on ACC more than 50 years ago, he has come full circle to back to ACC.

Welcome to your new home, K.W. Lee.



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Did you Ching Ming this spring?

Ching Ming (Qingming) Festival (清明节) is one of the most important traditional festivals in China. In 2024, Ching Ming Festival fell on April 4th, when most Chinese people in China enjoyed a public holiday to remember and honor ancestors by visiting their gravesites. Ching Ming can be celebrated 10 days before and 10 days after the official day. Ching Ming Festival is also called Tomb Sweeping Day as it is the time for Chinese people to show respect to their ancestors by cleaning their ancestors’ tombs and placing offerings.

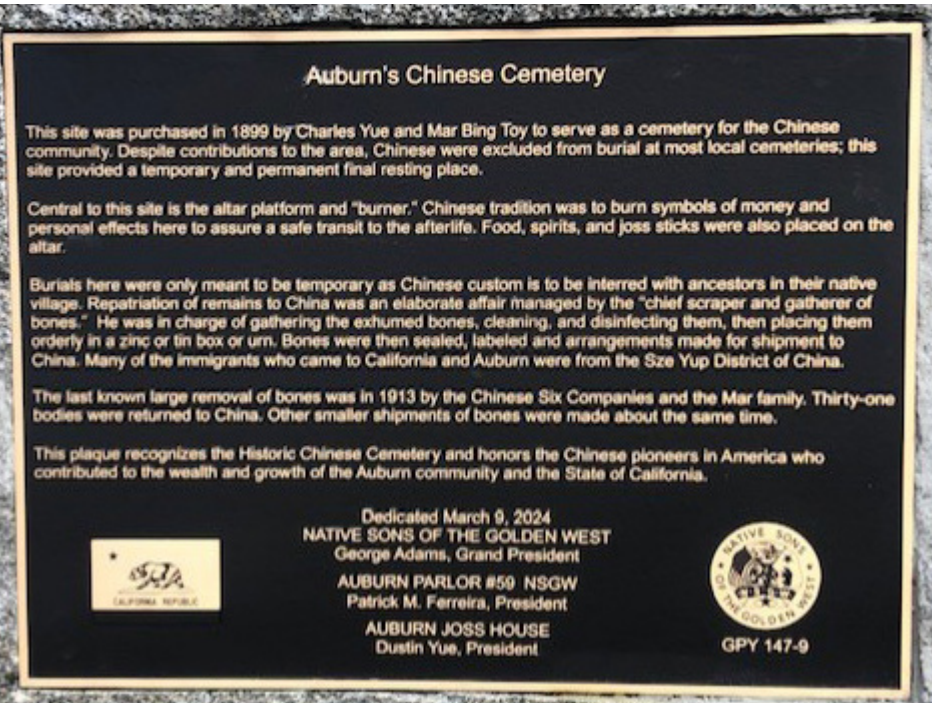
Ching Ming (清明) in Chinese mean ‘clearness’ and ‘brightness’. It is the fifth of the 24 solar terms of the traditional Chinese solar calendar, marking the start of the warm weather of spring and the beginning of farm work.

On April 6th, the Auburn Chinese Cemetery held a Ching Ming Festival, probably the first time in 100 years at the historic cemetery which is located on the east side of State Highway 49, south of Edgewood Road.

How do you celebrate Ching Ming?

1. Walk the cemetery and make big noise with fire crackers, gongs, bugles, rattles to scare off bad spirits
2. Sweep debris, pluck weeds, repair and tidy up the grave site. Decorate with flowers
2. Light incense in sets of 3. The incense smoke carries messages and offerings to the deceased while also purifying the air with a fragrance pleasing to the ancestors.
3. Place willows branches on the gate or front door to ward off wandering evil spirits.
4. Offer food, tea, wine including a whole roasted pig (comfort food), a whole white boiled chicken (represents happiness, health, purity, wholeness, completeness, family unity), oranges (sounds and looks like gold) in clusters of 3. Decorate the alter with red.
5. Show respect with a kowtow, bowing 3 times at the grave site
6. Burn joss paper representing money, Buddhist prayers, images of luxuries (clothing, cellphones, cars) that the ancestors need in the afterlife. Special cut papers capture the evil spirits before being burnt. Use a cemetery funerary burner, large pot, pit, burn drum to send these offerings airborne to the heavens.
7. Fly a kite because Ching Ming is also called Taqing Festival (spring outing) when people should enjoy spring blossoms. Flying kites is for relaxation and to get rid of misfortune.
8. And then feast with family and friends on the pig, chicken, and sweets.

Auburn Chinese Cemetery Plaque Dedicated
March 9, 2024



Auburn Joss House Museum

Opens on Saturday June 1st for the summer season. The current Joss House was built in 1920 by Charlie Yue to replace the original building, which was destroyed by fire in the late 1800's. Auburn had become a bustling town since the Gold Rush, and many Chinese immigrants flocked here and built a rich community. [The word “joss” is not of Chinese origin. It comes from the Portuguese word deos “God”, which was derived from Latin “deus.”]

The Joss House was built to educate children, provide a place of worship for those who practiced Buddhism and Confucianism, and even serve as a hostel for travelers who were new to town and needed a place to stay temporarily, or for those who were passing through town on a longer journey. There is a large kitchen, much larger than you’d find in any person’s home (especially for the era when the Joss House was built), indicating the house regularly hosted community meals. There are several rooms on the main floor that were rented out to new arrivals, visitors, or other travelers. Guests would stay in the rooms for anywhere from a few days to a few months. The Joss House is at 200 Sacramento Street, Auburn. Open Saturdays 1030am-2:30pm



Sacramento Asian Peace Officers Association

Save the Date

*29th Annual Community
Awards Banquet
Fundraiser*

*New Happy Garden
5731 Stockton Bl
Thursday, June 6th, 2024
5:30 - 8:00 pm*



For questions and ticket purchase, please contact
Rick Fong at (916)213-0638 or rhfong1@comcast.net

sacapoa.org

Yolo County WWII anti Japanese hate statements

Yolo County facts related to the forced evacuation of Japanese Americans during WWII. [Editor: This is all considered “Critical Race Theory,” that is, racism embodied into government acts.]

May 18, 1915 Winters Town Council passed Ordinance No. 126 which restricted “Orientals” to living and doing business to a downtown area described as Block 4 and made it a misdemeanor to violate this zoning ordinance. Ordinance No. 126 was later revoked by Ordinance No. 206 on February 6, 1940 when a private citizen represented by a Woodland attorney told the Town Council that Ordinance No. 126 was unconstitutional and unenforceable (Murray, Moore, Gale, Culson. Absent-Ireland)

February 2, 1942 California Attorney General Earl Warren directed all northern California district attorneys to take a census of Japanese in their counties - how many acres and what crops they were working, whether they owned or leased the land, names/ages of all persons on those farms including all children. Warren immediately provided this “alien land law compliance” survey data and maps to the federal government.

February 16, 1942 Winters American Legion Post No. 242 and Winters Service Club adopted resolutions stating “at the present time thousands of enemy aliens being allowed to roam the State with very little supervision ... who could at a moment’s notice commit destructive acts of sabotage and espionage” and requesting that all Japanese Americans be placed in concentration camps and their land and property to be seized and put under government supervision. [Executive Order 9066 signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942 authorized the military to define military zones for evacuation during the war which resulted in 120,000 Japanese Americans being forced into WWII camps.]

February 17, 1942 Winters Town Council (Gale, Ireland, Murray, Moore, Culton) passed

announcement made the day before. Tipped off that the court would rule in favor of Endo, Roosevelt announced the camps would be closed.

In her book, Tyler wrote that an internal court memorandum suggests that the court intentionally delayed the announcement of their decision to give the government more time to prepare a response.

It would take another year before the camps would be shuttered. And even though many Japanese Americans were allowed to return to the communities where they lived before they were interned, many still faced hostility.

Endo would never return to California. Instead, she settled in Chicago, where she got a job working for the Mayor’s Commission on Human Rights. She married Kenneth Tsutsumi, whom she met in camp, and raised three children.

Though Hirabayashi and Yasui lost their early legal challenges against the president’s executive order, Tyler thinks their cases helped

a resolution at the bidding of the American Legion, “to protect the American citizens and to maintain law and order ... many of these aliens are residing in strategic locations in and around the Town of Winters where they could on a moment’s notice commit very destructive acts of sabotage and espionage ... (Winters) demand that immediate steps be taken ... to see that all such enemy aliens be placed in concentration camps and the land and/or property owned or operated by such aliens be placed under government supervision for the duration of the war ... (and) all school taught in enemy Axis language be immediately closed.”

June 10, 1943, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors passed its anti-Japanese resolution which said “it is the general feeling of the residents of this County that said Japanese because of their inborn native untrustworthiness should not be permitted to leave such relocation centers and again infiltrate into the various sections of the United States” ... and “protest the granting of permission to any Japanese the right to come within any area of the United States within two hundred miles of any coast line.” On February 27, 2024 the Yolo County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution 24-25 revoking the 1943 resolution with an apology “particularly for supporting the continued baseless and unjust wartime evacuation and internment of Japanese residents) (Frerichs, Sandy, Provenza, Barajas, Villegas)

June 21, 1943 Woodland City Council adopted its anti-Japanese resolution on the urging of the American Legion “because other cities had taken similar stands and Woodland should too.” The resolution stated that it was the general attitude of their constituencies that Japanese were not wanted in Yolo County and should not be allowed to return to the West Coast at all. These 1943 resolutions were spurred by “news” that the Japanese were enjoying life and their vacations in the “camps” which had beauty salons, theaters, plenty of fresh vegetables and were allowed to leave camp to attend college in the Midwest or East Coast. In the meanwhile,

chip away at the government’s arguments for rounding up Japanese Americans. She noted that while Korematsu lost, his case was not a unanimous decision like the cases of Hirabayashi and Yasui. And Endo prevailed.

“I just think her story is so remarkable,” Tyler said. “Particularly now in the times in which we live to read about people who stood up for what was the right thing, who stood up and fought for the Constitution, represent really the best of what our Constitution is about.”

Endo’s willingness to challenge the government during wartime was even more remarkable because she was so very private, Tateishi said.

“To me there is this really heroic quality to her because it was so painful for her to [be public],” he said. “But in her case, the legal process worked as it should have.”

[Also see Opinion by Cliff Sloan, Washington Post, December 18, 2023, *Biden should honor the woman who stood up to Japanese American incarceration.*]

due to chronic farm laborer shortages, students, prisoners and Mexicans were brought in to do farm work; beet crops were plowed under because there was no one to harvest, people were tired of food, tire, and fuel rationing and the loss of lives in the battle field fueled their resentment. Governor Olson’s proposal to have Japanese return to work in the fields was rejected.

June 21, 1943 Davis City Council at the urging of Mayor C.A. Covell adopted a resolution stating that “... it is for the best interest of the State of California that said evacuees be prohibited from returning to the State of California during the continuation of hostilities ... (we) commend the action of said Military Authorities in evacuating said Japanese Nationals and hereby urge such legislation ... as will prevent the return of said evacuees after cessation of hostilities (Davies, Donnell, McDonald, Covell. Absent-Madson). This 1943 resolution was discovered by UCD Law Professor Madhavi Sunder during the Korematsu Elementary School naming hearings and was retracted on February 7, 2006 by the Davis City Council (Greenwald, Puntillo, Saylor, Souza, Asmundson) finding that revocation is “a step towards reconciliation and healing of past discrimination that has no place in a democratic society today.”

Yolo County Evacuation Days - May 20, May 21, June 5, 1942. According to the Woodland Democrat newspaper, on May 20, 1943, 438 Japanese Americans were evacuated from northern Yolo County on a special train bound for the Merced Assembly Center for later transport to Amache (Granada), Colorado. On May 21, 1942, 418 more were taken away from the Woodland Train Depot (Total 858). On June 5, 1942, 650 additional Japanese Americans were removed from south Yolo County (south of Highway 40, i.e. West Sacramento, Clarksburg for transport directly to Tule Lake.

Today’s hate rhetoric

“Although wolves are revered by many Native American cultures, they’re reviled by most ranchers and face hatred so visceral and irrational that it feels racial. Highly politicized in America’s culture wars, wolves have been put on and taken off the endangered species list in different regions. Wherever and whenever wolves lose the ESA’s protection, the traps and guns come out, and wolves quickly tumble. The ESA is the only thing that can stand between wolves and a hail of bullets.” *From Zero to Fifty, A personal celebration of the Endangered Species Act*, by Carl Safina, *Sierra*, Winter 2023 (a Sierra Club publication)

“--. political rhetoric criminalizes and it demonizes immigrants,” Eddie Carmona (Sacramento Area Congregations Together) said. “That’s why immigration and immigrants have been used as political pawns since as long as I can remember.” In March 2024 John Bolton, Trump’s former national security adviser told Newsweek he’s worried terrorists may come across the border, and that the current handling of the border makes it too easy to possibly smuggle chemical and biological weapons into the country. Carmona says “There are no political points to be scored to say that immigrants have contributed to this country and have built this country to what it is today. There’s more political points to be scored by creating the sense of fear.” *Rhetoric* article by Rosalio Ahumada, Sacramento Bee, April 14, 2024.

Endo should get Medal of Freedom Continued from Page 2



Chinese American WWII Recognition Project

Honoring Chinese American WWII veterans who served the country with a history of wrongs towards the Chinese American community... a form of reconciliation.

The Chinese American WWII Recognition Project is a program of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance and National Chinese American Citizens Alliance Community Involvement Fund. It is a national campaign to identify, honor and recognize the efforts and accomplishments of all Chinese Americans who served in the US Armed Services in World War II from December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946.

Public Law 115-337, 115th Congress “Chinese-American World War II Veteran Congressional Gold Medal Act” is the authorization to award these Congressional Medals. It was signed into law in December 2018 by President Trump. The preamble of PL 115-337 recites America’s history of anti-Chinese laws:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

- (1) Chinese Americans served the United States in every conflict since the Civil War, and distinguished themselves in World War II, serving in every theater of war and every branch of service, earning citations for their heroism and honorable service, including the Medal of Honor;
- (2) Chinese nationals and Chinese Americans faced institutional discrimination in the United States since before World War II, limiting the size of their population and their ability to build thriving communities in the United States;
- (3) the Act entitled “An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese”, approved May 6, 1882 (commonly known as the “Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882”) (22 Stat. 58, chapter 126), was the first Federal law that broadly restricted immigration and a specific nationality, making it illegal for Chinese laborers to immigrate to the United States and limiting the Chinese population in the United States for over 60 years;
- (4) major court decisions such as the decisions in *Lum v. Rice*, 275 U.S. 78 (1927), and *People v. Hall*, 4 Cal. 399 (1854), found “yellow” races to be equal to African Americans with regard to “separate but equal” school facilities, and prohibited Chinese Americans, along with “Black, mulatto, or Indian” persons, from testifying against White men;
- (5) Chinese Americans were harassed, beaten, and murdered because of their ethnicity, including the Chinese Massacre of 1871, where 17 Chinese immigrants in Los Angeles, California, were tortured and murdered, the Rock Springs Massacre of 1885 where White rioters killed 28 Chinese miners and burned 75 of their homes in Rock Springs, Wyoming, and the Hells Canyon Massacre of 1887 where 34 Chinese gold miners were

ambushed and murdered in Hells Canyon, Oregon;

- (6) there were only 78,000 Chinese Americans living on the United States mainland, with 29,000 living in Hawaii, at the start of World War II as result of Federal and State legislation and judicial decisions;
- (7) despite the anti-Chinese discrimination at the time, as many as 20,000 Chinese Americans served in the Armed Forces during World War II, of whom, approximately 40 percent were not United States citizens due to the laws that denied citizenship to persons of Chinese descent;
- (8) Chinese Americans, although small in numbers, made important contributions to the World War II effort;
- (9) of the total Chinese Americans serving, approximately 25 percent served in the United States Army Air Force, with some sent to the China-Burma-India Theater with the 14th Air Service Group;
- (10) the remainder of Chinese Americans who served in World War II served in all branches of the Armed Forces in all 4 theaters of war;
- (11) the first all Chinese-American group was the 14th Air Service Group in the China-Burma-India Theater which enabled extensive and effective operations against the Japanese military in China;
- (12) Chinese Americans are widely acknowledged for their role in the 14th Air Force, widely known as the Flying Tigers;
- (13) Chinese Americans assigned to the China-Burma-India Theater made transoceanic journeys through hostile territories and were subject to enemy attack while at sea and in the air;
- (14) in the Pacific Theater, Chinese Americans were in ground, air, and ocean combat and support roles throughout the Pacific including New Guinea, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Philippines, Mariana Islands, and Aleutian Islands;
- (15) throughout the Pacific and China-Burma-India theaters, Chinese Americans performed vital functions in translating, coordinating Nationalist Chinese and United States combat operations, servicing and repairing aircraft and armaments, training Nationalist Chinese troops and sailors, delivering medical care, providing signal and communication support, gathering and analyzing intelligence, participating in ground and air combat, and securing and delivering supplies;
- (16) Chinese Americans also served in combat and support roles in the European and African theaters, serving in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, the Normandy D-Day invasion, which liberated Western Europe, and the Battle of the Bulge, occupying Western Germany while helping to liberate Central Europe;
- (17) Chinese Americans flew bomber missions, served in infantry units and combat ships in the Battle of the Atlantic, including aboard Merchant Marines convoys vulnerable to submarine and air attacks;
- (18) many Chinese-American women served in the Women’s Army Corps, the Army Air Forces, and the United States Naval Reserve Women’s Reserve, and some became pilots, air traffic controllers, flight trainers, weather forecasters, occupational therapists, and nurses;
- (19) Captain Francis B. Wai is the only Chinese American who served in World War II to have been awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest military award given by the United States
- (20) Chinese Americans also earned Combat Infantry Badges, Purple Hearts, Bronze Stars, Silver Stars, Distinguished Service Cross, and Distinguished Flying Cross;
- (21) units of the Armed Forces with Chinese Americans were also awarded unit citations for valor and bravery;
- (22) the United States remains forever indebted to the bravery, valor, and dedication that the Chinese-American Veterans of World War II displayed; and
- (23) the commitment and sacrifice of Chinese Americans demonstrates a highly uncommon and commendable sense of patriotism and honor in the face of discrimination.

Those veterans who applied before January 2024 and were approved to receive the Congressional Gold Medal are listed on the registry posted on www.caww2.org

AAPI historic role against racial covenants

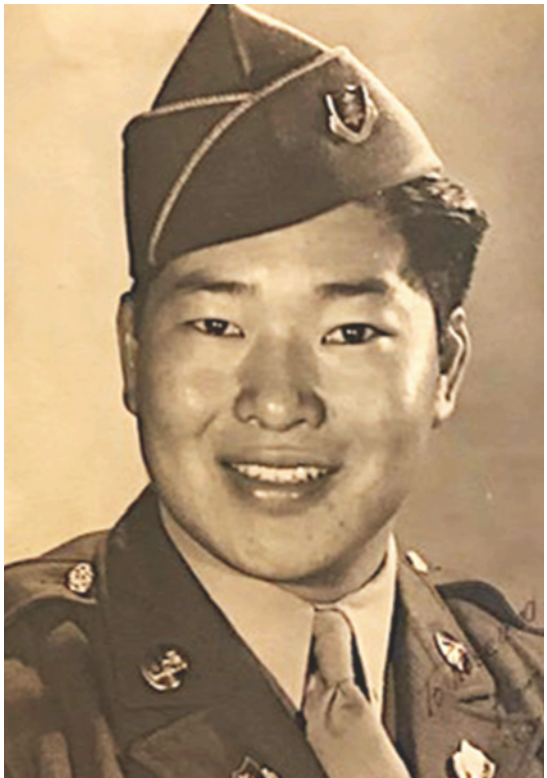
Excerpt from Mary Szto, “From Exclusion to Exclusivity: Chinese American Property Ownership and Discrimination in Historical Perspective,” 25 Journal of Transnational Law and Policy (2015-2016)

Szeto’s early remarks: I conclude with observations about why the history of property discrimination against Chinese Americans has been almost forgotten. Amnesia perpetuates an assimilated model minority myth which pits US minority groups against each other, and masks continuing discrimination. Therefore we must excavate the past. We must be vigilant to not repeat past US property discrimination against the Chinese, and instead use today’s high rate of Chinese real estate investment and Chinese American homeownership to achieve property access for all, including other minorities. This includes attention to China’s revived maritime silk road, announced by President Xi Jinping in 2013, and how ethnoburbs and sinoburbs can be healing communities.

During World War II, the Soviet Union criticized US democracy for racism. Among other recommendations, President Truman’s Committee on Civil Rights responded by recommending the end of residential segregation. The 1950s marked US military engagement in Asia to fight Communism; US soldiers fought in the Korean War and the US provided aid to anti-Communist regimes including Taiwan, the Philippines and Japan. In 1949, the Communist Party defeated the Nationalist government in China. After the Communist takeover, several thousand Chinese students were allowed to stay in the US.

They populated universities and bought homes in the suburbs. From 1949 to 1952, the State Department gave grants to refugee Chinese students to complete their studies in the US. While some Chinese in America received refuge, their relatives in China did not fare well. Many American Chinese had sent money to their ancestral villages in China; relatives in China had invested in real property, which was confiscated by the Communists, and these landowners were publicly humiliated and executed. After the Communist takeover Chinese Americans thus lost contact with their relatives; US China trade was halted. In 1952, racial restrictions on US citizenship were finally lifted. One no longer had to be “white” or “black” to be a citizen.

Congress enacted programs so that Chinese scholars in the US and other refugees could become citizens; these included professionals and former diplomats. I will now discuss the little known 1948 Tom Amer case and the 1952 Sing Sheng incident. These incidents illustrate the shift from portraying Chinese as unassimilable, excludible, and segregated persons, to welcome residents of white suburbs. They also illustrate how the history of property discrimination against Chinese is little known. While *Shelley v. Kraemer* is oft-discussed as the case that eliminated racial restrictive covenants for Blacks, the *Tom Amer* case, which involved Chinese plaintiffs, is almost never mentioned. Also, the 1952 Sing Sheng incident involving a Chinese family who desired to move into a white neighborhood in California, is almost entirely forgotten as well.



A. The 1948 Tom Amer Case

Shelley v. Kraemer involved black homeowners and racial restrictive covenants. However, it is little known that Asians also fought such covenants in court, too. The *Tom D. Amer* and *Jin Kim* cases were brought to the US Supreme Court at the same time as the *Shelley* case by a coalition so that the Court would rule that racial covenants against Asians were also unenforceable.

Tom Amer was a Chinese American combat photographer during World War II who had received the Purple Heart. Amer was born in the United States and therefore was a citizen. Amer had served in the special Chinese Infantry Unit of the US Army. Jin Kim was a Korean American dentist and veteran as well. Both were part of the Los Angeles Committee against Restrictive Covenants, which also included black and Japanese families. Amer, along with Robert and Emma Kong, purchased a house at 127 West 56th Street in South Los Angeles but was met with an injunction from his white neighbors. They alleged that their property values would be reduced and the character of the neighborhood destroyed. Aided by the All People’s Christian Church and Community Center in South Los Angeles, and the ACLU, Amer fought the injunction. Southern California ACLU counsel A.L. Wirin persuaded national ACLU leaders that racial covenants against Asian Americans should also be challenged because a ruling in favor of Blacks was insufficient. Wirin and Loren Miller represented Tom D. Amer. Wirin was also Japanese Citizens League Counsel; Miller and Thurgood Marshall argued the *Shelley* case. Wirin also fought the alien land laws.

After the *Shelley* case, the US Supreme Court remanded the *Amer* and *Kim* cases to the California Supreme Court to reconsider in light of *Shelley*. After the *Shelley* case, Asian Americans pioneered many white neighborhoods that eventually Blacks could then safely move into.

B. The 1952 Sing Sheng Neighborhood Vote

The 1952 Sing Sheng incident marked a turning point for widespread acceptance of Chinese Americans into white suburbs.

Although now almost all forgotten, at the time, national and local media publicized the fight of Sing Sheng to live in a white neighborhood. In 1952, Sing Sheng and his family sought to live in the Southwood suburb of San Francisco (now South SF). Shen was originally from China, his wife Grace was an American born Chinese, and so was their two-and-a-half year old son, Richard. Sheng had fought for the Chinese Nationalist army, finished college in the US, and worked as a mechanic for Pan American Airlines. When Southwood residents opposed Sheng’s move because it would lower their property values, Sheng asked residents to take a vote and in a letter to them wrote, “The present world conflict is ... between Communism and Democracy ... We have forsaken all our beloved China and have come to this country seeking the same basic rights. Do not make us the victims of false Democracy. Please vote in favor of us.”

Despite newspapers calling this vote a “test of democracy,” residents voted against Sheng 174 to 28. However, a public outcry ensued against the Southwood residents. The San Francisco Chronicle published an editorial that mourned this “deseccration of democracy” and stated, “We cannot sell freedom to Asia unless we can deliver freedom at home.” Similar sympathetic coverage appeared in newspapers and media outlets across the country including the New York Times and Chicago Tribune. Alas, even public officials spoke out in favor of the Shengs, including “the San Francisco City Council, the city attorney, the mayor, California governor Earl Warren, U.S. senators, the national Committee for Free Asia, and local church groups.” One of the few public voices against the Shengs was the American Homes Development Company of Burlingame, which issued a statement in favor of racial covenants. Ironically, the town of Burlingame had been named after Anson Burlingame, the author of the 1868 Burlingame Treaty (the US and China treaty establishing friendly relations, granting China most favored nation trade status, and lifting restrictions on Chinese immigration.)

The concerns of the Southwood residents about their property values were outweighed by the rhetoric about the sacrifices of the American military for Asian lives overseas. The Shin Sheng incident did not end property discrimination



against Chinese Americans, however, but framed it in terms of US foreign policy.

In 1954, the first Chinese American Stanford Law graduate and later judge, Delbert Wong, was told by a real estate agent in 1954 that he could not buy a home in Silver Lake because he was Chinese. Silver Lake is a community near Los Angeles. Fortunately, the owner agreed to sell to Wong anyway. During those years, many Chinese used white friends to purchase property for them, who then transferred the deeds to the Chinese.

AAPI historic role against racial covenants

Continued from Page 8

Tom Do Amer’s niece Donna Sang Tom Byler and Tony Byler documented racial bias while researching family history and found that Amer (“Uncle Tommy”) received a lot of press coverage during the war as an Army bugler and photographer:

- In 1954 my family moved to Degnan Blvd in Lemert Park, Los Angeles. Ah Bach and Ah Moe looked from property nearby. They found an apartment complex and were told they could buy the apartments but couldn’t live in them (this was prior the Supreme Court decision ruling racial covenants unconstitutional).

Professor Cindy I-Fen Cheng interviewed Tom D. Amer in August 2000 and wrote in her book, Citizens of Asian America (2013):

- Amer remembered how the previous owner had hinted to him that his white neighbors would not go after him since they were mainly concerned with ridding the neighborhood of the two black families that had moved in. But as he learned, whites-only restriction that worked to prohibit his black neighbors from living in the Fifth Main Street Boulevard Track had applied to him, a Chinese American, as well. Following his receipt of court papers, Amer embarked on a two-year legal battle to reside in his home in South Los Angeles. Later he recalled in an interview that his campaign against residential segregation was born not out of it desire to fight for equal rights but out of an imposed necessity to do so, as he was unable to find housing elsewhere and was unsure if he could recover financially from the loss of his home. What Amer did not foresee was that his case would be among the seven lawsuits admitted for review by the U.S. Supreme Court that resulted in the 1948 landmark ruling against state enforcement of racial restrictive covenants.
- What Uncle Tommy recalled as his motivations in the year 2000 do not quite jibe with what was reported concerning him in the mid-1940s. Here are samples:

Confucius said: “The superior man is dignified but does not wrangle.”

Tommy Amer said yesterday: “I don’t get it.” What the chubby 24 year old Chinese veteran of Burma fighting with General Joseph W. Stilwell didn’t get was a petition levied at him by neighbors demanding his eviction from his home . . . because he’s not Caucasian .

Although Tommy may not be Caucasian, he has a record as a combat photographer which, is quite reasonable to assume, would be hard to equal among his neighbors.

- Confucius said: “A man can command his principles; principles do not master the man”

Tommy Amer said: “If they put me out I can put someone else in here and live here as a servant. It says so in this here book.”

- . . . (Tommy) lives across the street from a Negro family in whose front yard Sunday a

flaming cross was lit.

Confucius said: “Thought, unassisted by learning, is perilous.”

Tommy Amer said: “We’re expecting a flaming cross any day now. But meanwhile we’re going to fight hell out of them.”

An article entitled “Youth Hold Anti-Klan Rally; Launch Campaign Calling on Mayor to End KKK Terrorism” reported that the rally included a stop at Uncle Tommy’s home:

“Tommy Amer, young Chinese-American veteran who wears the Purple Heart, told the crowd assembled in front of his home of the attempt of fascist-inspired men to drive him out of his own home.

“When we knocked out Japan and Germany I thought fascism was dead” he declared, “but it still lives right here in America.”

Dongs donate \$5 million, an act of thanks

In 1939, the Dongs found themselves unable to rent a house in Coronado where racially restrictive housing laws favored white buyers and renters. Emma and Gus Thompson (Gus was born into slavery in Kentucky) gave the Dong family a start with the land.

Lloyd Dong Sr was a Central Valley farmer and moved to Coronado to become a gardener. He worked 6 days/week and on the 7th day he did extra work to pay for his kids’ education, plant their careers and invest in real estate. In 1939, Gus and Emma Thompson gave the Dong family a place to stay and a promise to sell them the property. Coronado was a resort city - an opulent hotel, white sand beaches. At the time, Gus Thompson’s boarding house was the upper level of their barn and one of the rare places where minorities and immigrants could stay. Gus had travelled from Kentucky to California to work at the Hotel Del Coronado and built the house and barn on C Ave in 1895, before the city’s racial housing covenants took effect. He later converted his barn into a boarding house.

In 1955 Emma Thompson sold the 832 C Street Coronado home and barn next door to the Dongs, the first Chinese Americans to purchase real estate in Coronado. In 1957 the Dongs replaced the barn with a 8-unit apartment complex. The two properties may be worth \$8 million.

The Dong boys - Lloyd Jr (81) a jack of many trades/tax preparer and Ron (86) a retired teacher - both moved away but managed the properties from afar. They have decided to sell the properties and donate the majority of the proceeds to San Diego State University’s Black Resource Center and asked the campus to name the Center after Emma and Gus. “Without them (Emma and Gus), we would not have the education and everything else.” The Thompsons gave the Dong family a start with the land, and for the Dong boys it is time for them to do the same for others to pave the way for education.



Gus Thompson owned and operated a livery stable and boarding house on the property. Courtesy Kevin Ashley

Bruce’s Beach returned

California’s Bruce’s Beach was improperly seized 100 years ago and in 2023 was returned to the family.

In 1912 when Willa and Charles Bruce moved from New Mexico with their son, they bought a parcel of sparsely populated coastline south of LA, on what would later be known as Manhattan Beach. They opened a small beachside resort “Bruce’s Beach Front” where guests could swim, eat, listen to music and dance. The Bruces, just one generation removed from slavery, were offering a rare recreational enclave for Black families who were not welcome at most state beaches.

Within a week of opening their doors, white neighbors harassed the Bruces and their patrons. Bruce’s Beach thrived for more than a decade. Then in 1924, on the racist outcry of aggrieved white residents, Manhattan Beach city officials condemned 30 lots, including Bruce’s Beach and four other lots owned by Black families, seizing them under the legal guise of eminent domain. The city claimed they needed the land for a public park which was not built for decades. The Bruces unsuccessfully sought legal recourse, finally receiving \$14,500 from the city (about \$224,603 in 2023) and left town.

In 2007, Bruce family descendants and former mayor Mitch Ward (first Black elected official in Manhatan Bech history) renamed the beach “Bruce’s Beach”. For the Juneteenth celebration in 2020, black Manhattan Beach resident Kavon Ward and other black mothers organized a picnic on Bruce’s Beach and declared that they wanted the land returned to the Bruce family. They organized a group, Justice for Bruce’s Beach. In 2020, the city created a task force to study the issue and make recommendations which were shunned by the City Council. An anonymous group even bought a newspaper ad calling the task force a race-fueled power grab. The task force’s 2021 report did uncovered a critical detail - the land was actually under LA county’s control.

The group lobbied the LA County Board of Supervisors and Supervisor Janice Hahn. They reached out to Senator Steven Bradford to sponsor SB796 which Govenor Newsom singed in 2021 returning the property to the Bruce family..

With the land restored, the cumulative loss of oppounirities for Black families cannot be fully calculated or the losses by the Bruce family cannot be fully repaid. It is not just a land theft, but a theft of opportunity, dreams, capital to buy more land, start businesses, sending kids to college.

Letters to the editor

The 2024 Currents (Winter/January 2024) article by Angie Eng described current conditions of Locke. The piece triggered many responses. This editor disapproves of personal attacks on persons expressing their own viewpoints, but nothing has been edited to avoid any claim of bias. It is noted that in Stuart Walthall's Locke history feature (Currents, Fall/October 2023), he described the historic Chinese town similarly: "As Locke's Chinese population declined, so did its structures. Buildings shifted. Floors sagged. Walls and windows fell into disrepair. Sacramento County helped by upgrading many buildings' electrical systems and removing many propane tanks and heaters to reduce fire hazards. Fire suppressant was sprayed on to building exteriors, then upgraded to a water-fed fire suppression system attached to all buildings in the Historic District. But Locke was decomposing." Walthall's comments did not attract the same harsh criticism. Editor

DEAR EDITOR: I WAS SURPRISED to see so much mistaken information in the recent article published in Currents, The Key to Locke, by Angie Eng. I have lived in Locke for nearly 20 years. My partner has owned our home since 1976. We know Locke. My partner, Russell Ooms, having lived in Locke on and off since 1976, lived with the Chinese community and loved them, establishing many close bonds and relationships. I was introduced by then Locke matriarch, Connie King, to her entire family as her 'adopted sister' when I moved to Locke in the early 2000's. Ms. Eng has lived in Locke for two months.

The most alarming statement in this article was that our 'fire suppression system is failing'. It is not failing at all. This is false and will create needless fear in our community. In fact, its effectiveness was proven several years ago when a raging fire broke out on the second floor of a Main Street building. Many can attest that the system worked and prevented adjacent buildings from catching fire. A call to the Walnut Grove fire commissioner, Warren Teteak, would confirm this. But for reasons best known to Eng, she did not speak with him in order to be completely informed.

Secondly, Chinese American history is hardly 'fading into the background' as Eng claims. On the contrary, had she consulted with the Locke Foundation, a 501 C-3, whose sole purpose and dedication has been historic preservation since it's inception in 2004, she would have learned that in 2023 alone they conducted 34 Locke history tours. Only 3 authorized 'ghost tours' took place in 2023, sponsored by Clarence Chu. The Locke Foundation conducts an Asian Pacific Spring Festival on Main street and A Chinese New Year's Celebration also, bringing attention to the history of Locke to the general public annually. Additionally, the LF publishes a quarterly newsletter, operates the Locke Boarding House Museum which is a member of Sacramento Area Museums (SAM), has an ongoing LF Locke History Project and the LF Artifact & Archival Program. It's web site is <http://www.locke-foundation.org>. The Chinese history of Locke is very much the main attraction in Locke.

Additionally, Eng's claims regarding the involvement of SHRA are incorrect. A quick google search and she would have learned directly from the SHRA website



at <https://archives.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/cdbg30/ca/sacramentocounty/>, that SHRA provided public funds to save the town because of its failing sewer system. From SHRA website:

The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA), working with the local community, coordinated efforts to acquire the land, thereby qualifying for USDA, EDI and CDBG funding to install a new sewer system. SHRA also used CDBG funds to stabilize many of the buildings, subdivide the land into individual lots, work with the building owners on a disposition plan, and establish a nonprofit entity to own and manage the town's common areas.

Our infrastructure is sound, especially since SHRA and Sacramento County has invested over \$3.2 million and most recently \$100,000 more into the town of Locke. There are no missing road signs, there are at least 59 full time residents and only 7 of the 32 owners do not live in town (this is hardly a majority as Eng claims). Locke is not dying! It is safe and very much alive with a vibrant history that is front and center and universally respected.

Kindly print my letter to the editor to correct this misinformation.

Thank You, Deborah Mendel, Locke resident & property owner, Member of the Locke Management Corporation (a mutual benefit nonprofit corporation)

DEAR EDITOR, THIS LETTER IS ON RESPONSE to the Currents article recently published and authored by recent Locke resident Angie Eng.

Rather than attempting to address and clarify the numerous negative claims Eng stated in her article about the town of Locke, I would like to state a few positive things happening in my community of Locke.

Recent Locke activities, projects and accomplishments include: upgraded fire suppression system; new \$100,000 wooden walkways; free bottled water to all Locke residents (until Locke antiquated water

system gets hooked up to the Walnut Grove's system); new gravel roads and pothole repairs; economically responsible payments of all utilities, insurance policies, town maintenance, bookkeeping services, tree cutting; fire alarm warning system and legal services.

Also, the staging of well attended and financially successful Locke Chinese New Year Celebration and Locke Asian Pacific Spring Festivals, sponsored by the Locke Foundation.

Other Locke Foundation activities include: The Locke Oral History Project - capturing the stories of Locke's current and past residents; the Locke Artifact and Archival Program – collecting, preserving, cataloging and displaying Locke's precious artifacts; Docent-led historic tours of Locke (37 tours in 2023), the operation of the Locke Boarding House Museum (7000 visitors in 2023); The Locke Chinese Demonstration Garden (80 yards of premium organic soil recently donated by the Foundation for the Locke community gardens and the Chinese Demonstration Garden); the Locke Scholarship Program- awarding scholarships to local high school seniors; publication of the Locke Foundation Newsletter; maintenance of the Locke Foundation website- the go-to website for Locke activities, historical articles, interviews, photos – a valuable resource for scholastic institutions, media, authors and the general public.

Locke is a diverse low-income community with a population of 70. The town has many of the modern-day challenges facing rural communities. Locke struggles economically while attempting to preserve and celebrate its historic and cultural legacy. Locke is the largest, most complete example of a rural agricultural Chinese American community in the United States (National Park Service). Locke is unique. Locke is diverse. Locke is significant.

However, Locke is NOT the crime ridden ghetto that Ms. Eng has portrayed in her article.

Thank You. Stuart Walthall, 40-year Locke Resident, immediate past president of the Locke Management Corporation (aka LMA). Con't on11

Letters to the editor

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HI: MY NAME IS ALFREDO MONTALVO, I’VE been living in Locke for the past 14 years, and 5 in Walnut Grove.

I’m an Architect, cabinet maker, and furniture designer, I have my woodshop and studio house in town. Since arriving at Locke, I have been restoring and improving some houses in the back of town.

I know this town needs help, but not from the LMA, we need some serious help to fix this beautiful historic landmark for posterity, but some people in town don’t want change, they want to keep things the way they are so they can keep the control and power like they have been doing it for the last 30+ years. This is a small group of elderly white persons, very well known in town for their capacity for lying and causing division, they will do and say whatever to keep it this way. I have known them for 17 years.

I don’t like politics, lies, and corruption, this town has all of them.

I read Angie’s article, she is right in everything she wrote. She has the look of an outsider on what is the real situation, without the influence of long-time homeowners.

Mendel’s letter is an illusion, she wants to paint everything as ok in town so they can keep control until they die.

As I said, Locke needs help from real professionals and people who know how to govern, not this group of clowns.

Thank you for your time. Have a nice day.
Alfredo Montalvo

MY NAME IS DOUGLAS HSIA. I AM A CHINESE descendant and lived in Locke from 2015 to 2016 on the Main Street. I have been a board member of Locke Foundation since 2018 and I was the chairman of Locke Management Corp between Feb 2021 and Nov 2022. I was pulled out of the board contentiously though I was reelected as the chair in July 2022. The motive behind was to remove anyone who spoke for underserved’s voices.

When I moved into the town in 2015, everybody was questioning whether the fire suppression was working but nobody ever cared to find out. On July 3, 2016, a fire broke out on the upstairs of the building, the fire suppression system kicked in and prevented the fire from spreading. May I say it is random good luck. Now 8 years later, I don’t think anyone has done enough to certify the system though the subject has been discussed again and again over the years at the Locke Management Corp meeting.

Russell Ooms came as early as 1976 and subsequently a group of countercultures joined him. They found the utopia for their commune. The Chinese population at the time were mostly aging bachelors who labored their entire life in the Delta without the proficiency of English. They were too poor to go back to China and they learned to tolerate everything. Presence of the countercultures were not welcomed yet

they were tolerated. The counter cultures were young, resourceful, and charming when they wanted to, soon they ruled the town. Whether it was a good thing depends on individual’s perspective. On one hand, the town became more organized but on the other hand, dictatorship governing is always more effective.

In 2004 SHRA’s subdivision was designed to help those Chinese who were not able to own the land under the structure they owned, incidentally the countercultures were the biggest group of beneficiaries.

The countercultures always take pride in their relationship with Locke matriarch Connie King. Like all the colonial governments, they always hold a few local elitists close so that they can show the world they have a good relationship with the locals but in fact, the few elitists do not represent the entire population.

To say the infrastructure is sound is a blatant overstatement, anyone comes to the town can tell you how dilapidating, structurally unsound the building of the town are.

So far, the countercultures have shown the towns people they are all mighty. They won a major lawsuit against Martha Esch resulting she had to sell a property to pay for the legal fees. They have ousted yours truly from the LMC board and they have driven Joy Kuo out of the town.

I standby the content of the letter and I am willing to take any questions. Yours truly,
Douglas Hsia

I’D LIKE TO MAKE 3 CLARIFICATIONS:
-Correction: There are roughly 80 residents. 10 owners live in Locke of the 31 owners. That leaves 21 who do not live in Locke. A few residents come seasonally on the weekends. Thus the majority of owners do not live in Locke. Most residents are renters not owners. Nearly 60 residents are renters; of those renters roughly 40 are of Mexican descent. There are 7 Chinese American residents and an additional 5 part time residents. The rest are Caucasian. In 2 months I met and spoke to 70 residents, probably more than anybody in town even those who have lived there for 20-30 years.

-To write this article I spoke with the Fire Marshall Warren Teteak in depth in December 2023. In December I spoke with Meg DeCourcy the previous County Code officer overseeing Locke for 10 years and Sean De Courcy the Head Planner for Historic Preservation of the City of Sacramento who visited Locke in December to give his opinion on Locke. I spoke with Jeff Wetzel of the Water Board multiple times to expedite the delivery of the drinking water to come sooner than June 2024. Stuart Walthall informed me of the water crisis and the fire suppression being out of compliance in the late summer 2023. He was the one who forwarded the letters from the Fire Marshall and the Water Board before I moved to Locke in August and

September of 2023.

- I have lived in Locke only 5 months, however my parents Alex Eng and Joyce Eng were heavily involved in Locke since 1999 and thus I’ve been aware of its progress and decline in the past 25 years. My great grandmother Chan Miu Shee Yim , and great grandfather, Yee Kwong Yim and grandfather Frank Dai Mun Yim lived in Locke in the early 1920’s-1930’s. Angie Eng

EDITOR’S FACT CHECKING:

- **Fire suppression system:** In October 2023, the Locke Management Corporation (LMC, aka LMA) notified residents that the Walnut Grove Fire Dept. had mandated that the Locke fire suppression system be certified. In order to be certified, vegetation had to be cleared; the system must be free to ropes, wires, flags; pedestrian easements, alleys and boardwalks must be free of debris; 200 sprinkler heads must be replaced; pipes must be secured, pressure meters and alarms installed with an estimate cost of \$25,000-30,000. A November 2023 inspection resulted in the LMC receiving a letter of noncompliance for the sprinkler heads, overgrown vegetation and obstructed fire lanes. The LMC November 13, 2023 meeting packet show that its assets were \$43,625.41 (excluding accounts receivables, i.e. money owed.) At the March 11, 2024 LMC board meeting, it was reported that Phase I (of 5) was completed (brackets fixed, some sprinkler heads replaced).

At the November 13, 2023 meeting the LMC board discussed how the Frontier Communication’s landline connection to the pump house has become unreliable and the Certifier monitoring system has been sending daily notices that contact between the pump house, the water system, the relay system, the fire suppression system, and the fire department had failed. The board discussed other options - radio, cellular - which appeared no better.

The July 3, 2016 fire (Sunday afternoon) destroyed a second-story apartment but did not spread to other buildings. Responding fire departments (from Walnut Grove - 26 volunteers, Clarksburg and Elk Grove) attributed the fire being limited to one structure because its exterior sprinkler system worked and quick action by neighbors before fire equipment and personnel arrived. Locke Main Street structures are closely packed wooden buildings and only 4 buildings have interior fire suppressing sprinkler systems.

- **Arsenic in the drinking water:** Locke Water Works Co. supplies drinking water. According to the Environmental Working Group (EWG), a nonprofit research group analyzing toxic chemicals in everyday products, from April 2019 to March 2021 LWW did not comply with health-based drinking water standards and had 12 quarters in violation of any federal drinking water standard. The tap water (groundwater) was in “serious violation of federal health-based drinking water standards” with arsenic measured

Letters to the editor

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Contaminants Detected



- at 27.3 ppb compared to the legal limit of 10 ppb. EWG says reverse osmosis or ion exchange systems can reduce this contamination. Sometime in January 2024, Locke residents began receiving free drinking water.
- First Right of Refusal:** When Locke was established in 1915, California’s Alien Land Law (1913-1952) prevented Chinese who were not citizens from owning land in California. The land on which Locke was built had been leased from George Locke. In 1977, the Locke family sold the property - the entire town and hundreds of surrounding acres - to Clarence Chu. In 2002 the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment agency bought 10 acres including the town from Chu, subdivided it and sold the land to homeowners and business property owners with CCRs (Covenants, conditions, and restrictions) and bylaws stating that the LMC has the first right (or can assign that right) to purchase any property coming onto the market. The LMC bylaws and CCR differ in that the bylaws say that prior residents/descendants/ascendants and interested parties should be notified and asked if they want to buy the property. The unwritten expectation is that Locke property could be owned by former Chinese residents (or their families) and thereby have greater interest in preserving Locke’s history and culture.
- At the July 2023 LMC board meeting there were apologies for the LMC’s failure to notify prior residents et al of 11 real estate transactions. At the March 2024 LMC board meeting there was an unresolved argument between the Locke Prior Residents Descendants and Ascendants Association (Locke PRDA) and the LMC board over who was responsible for this notification, whose contact list should be used and who will pay the expense for that outreach.
- Locke PRDA is a private foundation nonprofit located in Walnut Grove with Corliss Suen Lee, Carol Lee and Douglas Hsia serving as trustees. Locke PRDA with the Locke Foundation-Oral History Project are producing a documentary file, “Voices: Chinese Women of the Delta.” Locke PRDA’s mission is to preserve the past and educate the future generations, advocate for the interests of Locke residents, preserve and educate about Locke’s Chinese historic significance and encourage fellowship

between its members and supporters.

- Property prices.** The question has been raised that a person exercising the First Right of Refusal could be faced with an asking price not supported by the current market. Currently (March 2024) three properties are on the market - 1265 Levee St (\$299,000 for 2 BR, 2 BA, 1600 sq.ft. residence), 1258 Levee St (\$410,000 for 2 units each with 2 BR, 1 BA, 2000 sq.ft), Locke Garden Chinese Restaurant 13967 River Rd (\$275,000 for 3964 sq.ft., 2 BA). The 2011 price for the 1265 Levee St property was “\$21,000,” a suspiciously low price (and it later sold for \$150,000). All properties will likely require cash sales because banks may not want to accept the risk of financing these aging, combustible historic landmark properties. Insurance companies may also be steering clear of these properties.
- Viability of the LMC** - At the March 11, 2024 meeting, board elections was on the agenda, but there were no nominations for the chairperson, secretary and treasurer positions which remain unfilled. Only vice chairperson Honey Lum remains on the executive board. LMC meetings are contentious. New and younger enthusiasm and diversity is needed to keep Locke moving forward.
- Other disputes** - Street lighting for safety has been opposed by some residents who want the dark skies for star gazing and argue that the public parking lot used by visitors and residents alike should remain dark. Property owners’ efforts to make improvements (foundation work, levee road repairs, disputes over what is common versus private property) have been sabotaged by other residents. Only one street is owned by Sacramento County; all other roads must be maintained by LMC and whether the fire truck access is sufficient is questionable.
- Financial viability.** LMC’s income comes from property owner dues of \$120/month for commercial properties and \$60/month for residential properties and some rental income which has not been audited - is that sufficient to sustain and improve Locke? Locke is currently recruiting a part time (10 hrs/week) Town Manager whose work has been done by the LMC Board and residents over the recent pandemic years. Are grants from Sacramento County and maybe the Delta Conservancy being pursued aggressively enough?
- Safety issues:** At the January 8, 2024 LMC board meeting, residents and board members discussed burglaries, prostitution in the bathroom , drug dealing in the parking lot, transients, people living on Locke Ranch, tire/car vandalism, catalytic converter theft, unlicensed contractors, slowing down traffic and reducing car collisions on River Road, reporting the sex offender, seeking soft period lighting instead of SMUD-type lighting, and Isleton having similar problems with their public bathroom.

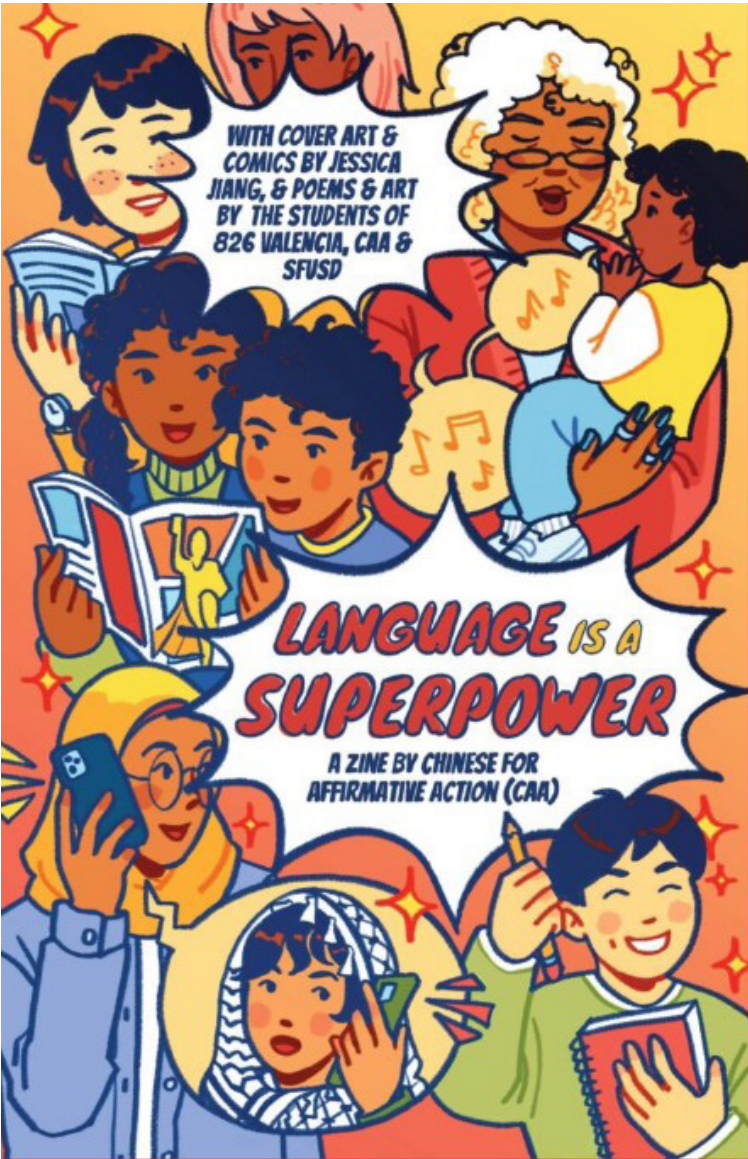
NOTE: As a public entity “a common interest development” of Sacramento County, all LMC meetings are available for viewing on Youtube. Likewise their agendas and minutes are posted

on the Sacramento County website.

MORE NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

EDITOR: I WANT TO THANK YOU for the article on the Asian American Heritage Park in Isleton. I just had the opportunity to read the entire Currents. Hats off to you for doing such a great job. Jean Yokotobi

VICTORY FAVORS THE PREPARED. KEEP UP the good work! Thx! Happy New Year. Bill Wong



Language is a Superpower!

A new zine from Chinese for Affirmative Action commemorates the 50th anniversary of Lau v. Nichols, the landmark Supreme Court case which decided that English-only instruction to Chinese-speaking students was national origin discrimination in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964).

The zine includes comics illustrated by local historian Jessica Jiang with poems and art of students of 826 Valencia, CAA and SFUSD. This illustrated narrative shows what Chinatown was like in the 1960s, how teacher activists fought for their students’ rights and how the fight for a bilingual education continues today. The cultures and languages of English, Chinese, Spanish, Mam (Guatemalan) and Samoan are represented. In bilingual education, students are taught in both English and their home language providing immediate access to education while helping students not to fall behind. Download the zine for free at <https://caasf.org>

APSEA/ACSED Workshop, March 13, 2024:

Empower to Lead by Mona Pasquil Rogers

Mona Pasquil Rogers is now the Director of California Public Policy for Meta (a Facebook lobbyist). Her political credentials including serving as appointments secretary for Governors Gavin Newsom and Edmund G. Brown Jr, Chief of Staff for Lt. Governor John Garamendi, political director for Governor Gray Davis, and as western political director under President Bill Clinton. In the private sector, she has also worked for IBM and the California American Water Board. To mentor AAPI youth civic involvement, she helped found the Asian Pacific Youth Leadership Project in California.

Pasquil Rogers presented the “Empower to Lead: Navigating the Path to Career Excellence” workshop on March 13th, part of APSEA/ACSED’s Career Development Lunchtime series. Her message was that the collective efforts of a team with a leader who empowers others to act and grow professionally is the secret ingredient for organizational success.

Pasquil Rogers’s presentation (edited):

I’m a former APSEA member and I grew up and learned so much from not only my mentor Maeley Tom, but Jean Chong, Andy Ah Po, Dean Lan who opened up a lot of doors and were always there to give encouragement.

But one of the things that I’ve learned along the way is that you got to have a plan. So in everything that you do, you’ve got to have a plan. You’ve got to be passionate about it. Get some goals. Dream. Believe. But in every step of the way, you have to remember you’re part of a team and everybody’s got to go together and hopefully you and your legacy will mean a lot more when you watch those that you have brought to the dance go past you and do more. So, welcome, I just wanted to get that in.

I’ll first talk about my plan. When I was a young kid, I told my mom and dad I want to be the first Filipina assemblymember by the time I’m 30, and I want to have six kids and I want to do all these things. And my parents who most probably at that time looked at me like yeah sure, they didn’t question, they encouraged. They said, you know what, girl, if you have your plan, you know you’ve got to see it through and we’re here for you.

One of the best lessons my father taught me is that he says, Mo, when you have your plan and you’re going towards it, keep your eyes open to all opportunity. Look at all sides because sometimes where you need to be and an experience that you need to have has been walking with you and going with you all along. Don’t ignore it, try it. So have your plan.

Keep your eyes open to all opportunities.

I’ll tell you that my plan always included being in policy, being among policy makers and leaders and why? It’s because when I was in fifth grade I went to the Capitol. We went to visit our state



senator at the time John Garamendi, and he took us to the floor. I asked him do you have a picture of all the people that work here on the floor? I didn’t see anybody that looked like me. I remember there was one woman and I thought how can that be? At that young age I knew, listening to my kind of unfiltered self - there needs to be a change here. I want to come here someday and I want to be part of that change, right. But that’s the young girls stuff, but that was still a mark that I made. And, at any age we should be doing that. When we sit with ourselves, we look around - at meetings, in our own departments or agencies or anywhere, we go into a neighborhood. If you have in your gut a feeling that says something’s missing or maybe I should do this or maybe I can help or I would really like to help, mark that moment. You know mark that moment to think about how can I make things better.

Why is that important? When I was in elementary school, my father went to grad school back east. There were two kids of color at Green Street Elementary and I was the only Asian. I remember every day being followed home after school and having my book bag taken and everything thrown away. Everybody, the guys, the boys making fun of me and calling me names. I had rushed home and I said to my mom - you know they hate me. I’m not one of them. She would, of course as in those days, say well wait until your father gets home and we’ll talk about it.

When he came home he said, tell them who you are, tell them that you’re Filipino, okay? When you’re in first grade you are not doing that in my mind. I worshipped my father. I was like. Okay, and in my mind there’s no possible way I’m gonna do that because they’re gonna kill me. The next day - I went back and I said like I’m Filipino. That was the first part of him and

my mother teaching me that you have to know the story of you. You have the story of your family. You have to know who you are. You want to make friends with people. You want to make change at your school. You want to do things with different kids in the school.

What’s your story? How do you understand who you are first and believe it or not I still do that in my job today - Who am I, what’s my story. I’ve been around, all you have to do is Google me and you know how old I am. I’m at a company where there are a lot of young people. I’m probably the same age as their parents, right! So every

day I have to adjust. Every day I have to figure out this plan that I have, and how is it working. It’s working because I’m super passionate about what I’m doing.

Here’s one of those funny moments. Years ago when I had just started with Jerry Brown. I met a young man whom I had worked with in DC in the Senate. He was working for Facebook and he said I really think you need to come here. I said, not yet. I have things to do. He said what? I said, well I just started this job with Governor Brown and I think I can make some real change. He said, put a mark in it. I’ll come back to you when you are done. That moment and that opportunity happened because of Maeley and another woman named Nancy McFadden.

So prior to the governor getting elected, I had just gotten married and I was going to start my own consulting business. One night Maeley called me. We’re in Hawaii. We were preparing for the wedding. She said, well Jerry won and what are you going to do. What’s your plan? I said, Well, I’m getting married and I’m not paying attention to politics. She said, well that’s fine for you to think that, but you know what, we’ve invested a lot in you. We expect a lot of you. And I thought, well, so does my new husband. She said just think about it, we’re putting in your name. I didn’t really think about it beyond that because like I said I got married, went on a honeymoon, we had family with us.

Fast forward 3 weeks, 10 o’clock at night. I’m one of those crazy people who sleeps with my phone. You know, on the nightstand, and the phone rings, it was 10 o’clock and I saw that it was Nancy McFadden. I’m like, oh my God it’s (I was sleeping) it’s the governor’s chief of staff. I’ve gotta pick up. I’ve gotta actually act like I

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know what I’m talking about. So I picked up the phone and I tried to sound awake. I said, hey man, how are you. She said, hey Mona. How are you? What are you doing? I said, Well, I just got married again. I am super happy. I just started my own business. I just submitted my paperwork to the Secretary of State. She said, well have you ever thought about service in the governor’s administration? I flashed back to that conversation I had with Maeley. I remembered at that very moment I didn’t plan for a call from Nancy. I said, well I would love to be considered. It’s an honor to be considered. So let’s have a conversation. She says, great, can you come to the office first thing tomorrow morning? So I did. I hung up the phone and my husband said, who is that, it’s 10 o’clock. I said, that was Nancy McFadden the governor’s chief of staff. He said, oh, what would she want? I said, well, she’s asking about appointments and asked if I’d be interested. I said to her that I would come into the office tomorrow. If anyone has been in the Army and you know my man was an infantry man for 20 years, this is him when he’s happy, this is him when he’s sad. This is it. So I looked at him and I said I want to just go in and talk. He said, didn’t you really just submit your \$800 to Secretary of State’s office? I said, yeah yeah yeah.

So the next day I went and while I was waiting I was thinking, in my mind, if she’s really serious about appointments what would it be? Is it to be the director? The secretary? Is it to be one of the deputy secretaries? What is it? In my mind I said, well I’m doing this if it’s the secretary. She came in all of a sudden and says, Mona, come on over. Here’s Jerry. You know Jerry. Jerry, you know Mona. He looked at me like only Jerry Brown could. He said, we are so behind. We’ve got people that need to be appointed up and down the state! Then he walked away. I looked at Nancy and said is that a job offer? She said, we have a lot to do. So sometimes you know your plan.

I share this funny story because any plan that you might have, it may come as a gift from others. Sometimes you don’t have a lot of time to plan to say yes or no. So I go home. I know you’re wondering. I said to my husband, well, they offered me the job and he said I thought you were starting your company. I said, well, I remember in the 70s being a young

... young women who felt invisible at the workplace. That’s not acceptable.

kid watching my uncles and my dad prepare for interviews because the governor at that time was promoting more people of color and women to management positions and the bench. That governor was Jerry Brown. I have to do this. I know that I made all these plans with you. I know that I told you that I would have my own business so we could travel. But I have to do this because the energy that they felt left a lasting impression on my heart and

Do you really have to be the one that has all the answers? Could you kick it to someone and set them up for success? The best teams are when we pivot and we let others shine.

to this day none of those men today are with us. But I still carry the hope and the drive that they had. They had only one of them be appointed by Governor Brown at the time, but all of them celebrated because they each had a part in that one uncle getting the appointment. That, my brothers and sisters, is the gift that if you think about it - if you think about the hope of others and how you empower others and how you move people forward, then that’s the example. That’s something that I hope all of us have within us - that hope to love what we’re doing today. That hope to do more and what else could it be to do more. Sometimes tough decisions and tough things happen. Maybe we all support each other. Maybe just one or maybe two get the appointment. What do you do then?

Well, you pivot and you plan because, guess what, that is what we do. And when we get appointments or when we get opportunities we’re not interested in, then what do we do? We help each other and recommend each other. That’s the other thing - share your passion but also when you see someone else who is interested in being around the table, help them know that while your dream could be something else, you help others achieve their dream. That’s the best gift you can give.

Helping people prepare for interviews is another gift all of us can give. I remember Andy Ah Po helping me become a staff service manager one. He gave me a binder of questions and answers and scenarios. I read it cover to cover and then I sat down and I said, thank you and help me role play. As busy as he was he helped me. We met for coffee and he asked me tough questions. When I didn’t answer the questions the best that I could, he helped make them better. Not by saying “that’s wrong” but, by saying you might want to think about this or that.

Think about being a mentor. If you don’t have a mentor, get one. Sometimes it’s easy. For me, it’s funny, I found my very first mentor in my professional life because my mother told me to go to her office and ask her to be my mentor. That was Maeley Tom.

Maeley can tell you a funny story later when you see her, but I was that dumb college kid or the kid that just graduated from college who literally just walked over to her office in the Assembly and asked her assistant for five minutes because I had to ask her a question. I needed her to be my mentor because my mother told me to get her to be my mentor. We still talk almost every day. I won’t tell you how many years it’s been. But you Google us we’ve been around a little bit. One of the things that I would say that has carried me through my entire career is the foundation of my family and my friends with

mentors like Maeley Tom and Georgette Imura who took every call of happiness, fearfulness, crying, everything, you name it, I didn’t get the job, or I got the job.

So I would encourage everyone to think about this because we are better when we have people in our corner. We are better when we know that we have prepared, we are better when we have people who will give us the real deal, and the real deal I’m telling you is Maeley because she’ll tell you the good, bad, ugly. And we should all have the grace and power and strength to hear what they have to say, and you’ll make your own decision, but listen. Right? So that’s a big one, believe me.

When I was in the governor’s office I interviewed thousands of people and one of the things that always struck me was when someone would come to me, they would want an appointment and they would go first to, well I might not be the most qualified, there may be somebody else. I will tell you right now if you remember anything, please remember to start with positive. Do not make an excuse. You know you can be afraid, but do not think you are not worthy of the job that you want. You start with knowing what you want. If you’re the right fit, fabulous. If you’re not then you’re meant for something else. But don’t start with that (devaluing oneself) because it hurts me whenever I hear people say things like that. I would stop them in the interview. I’m like - let’s start over because we’re not going to do that today. So do that for yourself.

I’ll share with you a little secret my mom has - she’s 90 - she told us when we were kids that if you feel worried, you feel sad, go into the bathroom, look in the mirror, tell the mirror all your problems, tell the mirror how you feel, and then leave and shut the door and leave all of that there. As a kid I remember telling my mom, people are going to beat me up if I tell them that story. But, now I share it. If you have any fears whether you’re going into an interview, if you’re going into your first staff meeting where you have to make a presentation and you don’t feel great about it, go to look at the mirror, tell the mirror, shut the door and walk out with power. I think that it’s always good to have humble pie. You know we are not alone in fearing or doing new experiences or moving up or being in uncomfortable situations. That’s cool and actually makes us stronger, You have to be believe and if you’ve got to believe in this.

I also ran into a few young girls over the years, young women who felt invisible at the workplace. That’s not acceptable. So number one, you should not feel that way. But number two, if a colleague does, the best way that you can maintain your colleague in your department, on your floor better, is by helping them to feel like they are visible by making them visible.

When you do that to people, when you do that to a team member, when you know you have the answer, but you know somebody else has the answer to a question that might be asked in

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a team meeting, take a moment. Do you really have to be the one that has all the answers? Could you kick it to someone and set them up for success? The best teams are when we pivot and we let others shine. This is really really important that I've learned that over the years.

Listen I'm the oldest of five. I think I grew up feeling I was right for everything just because I was the fearless leader of five and I was the sergeant in our family. You know when life happens and you have to build teams around you and not just work teams, but in your friendship circles, in a book club, sometimes it's wonderful to sit back and be quiet. Observe, figure out who needs a moment to shine and be that person. I know that we're gonna have a lot of people with questions, so I'm going to just end with this.

Family and mentors and people in your corner are always the most important thing but also taking care of yourself and being honest with yourself about your path that you want. Sacrifices will always have to be made but, brothers and sisters, good things happen when you work really hard, when you help your team grow. When you're quiet and let them shine. Thank you so much.

Questions and answers:

Q: While navigating the path of career excellence how do you prioritize self-care and take care of the road blocks?

A: I honestly need to say and give my husband pats - he's not political at all but when I told him about how driven I was. He turned to me and he said well when you're asked to serve there's never any question. Well I took the job. Part of self-care is by surrounding yourself with people who support you. I will tell you honestly I have failed self-care for probably a good half of my life. Especially when I was at the White House, I worked so hard because I had a little bit of impostor syndrome. I felt like I had to be the first in and the last out so that I could be prepared. I didn't feel as polished as everyone else and so I really wanted to prepare if I had to have something for the President, Vice President, First Lady and Tipper.

So my health kind of sucked. I've had a few doctors in my life who said you know you're going to have a heart attack or a stroke before you're 40. Of course, I came back with was well I hear you but I just need a few months to do a few more things and then I will do it. I would say as a 61 year old today, I have learned over the last few years to think about my health. If I'm not good for me how can I be good for others and sometimes when you're not as healthy as you can be - not just eating well - but when you have balance and time to give away and time for yourself, you don't make really good decision. In Governor Brown's office I found my secret and that is my husband built all of these garden boxes and I literally from now till probably November I spend two hours every morning in the garden and I don't talk to anybody with the exception of one six a.m. call

that I have three days a week and I'll listen to it. I prioritize that and when you're centered and you have that time, it helps roadblocks, through a lot of them and I go back to my foundation of my family. I called my parents every day when I was in DC for every good thing, bad thing, or the ugly. I also called Maeley and I think she and Ron will tell you I accidentally called them at 6 a.m. a couple times but you know you have to have people in your corner.

Q: How do you overcome the imposter syndrome? I read somewhere that when a male applies for a job we have to feel like we're 60% qualified for a job and when females apply for a job we have to feel like we're 100% qualified.

A: So you know, I have a great group of friends and family and I often call my brothers or Joe my cousin when I needed a little pep talk. They would say ,Mo, you got this. I knew they meant it. But you know that imposter syndrome is real. I really saw it when I was doing appointments. I could line up five men and five women and four out of the five women would say well I going to take this class, I'm not really sure I am one. And they're all equally qualified for the job. All five guys are like I'm your guy. So that really that got me thinking of why am I doubting myself all the time. Why do so many other women doubt themselves? What am I doing to change it? So when I would see it, I would stop it. I'll tell you that even today sometimes I feel a little insecure about what I know and what I don't know. You know my nieces and nephews will say, Oh my God, you work in a tech company. So they know you don't really understand tech like they do. You acknowledge where your shortcomings are and you figure out how do I learn it, how do I figure out I'm supposed to talk about AI in small business - how do I do it.

So I call a lot of folks, I ask a lot of questions, and there are always some people that I can ask really confidential questions to and they will always keep it to themselves because there's part of us when we're not sure the worst thing is to confide in someone or to have someone coach you who doesn't have your best at heart. So you want to know that there's trust there, you've gotta really search out people who will help you. I'll tell you at the end of the day each of one of us can change the impostor syndrome by stepping forward and when we recognize it, stop it for others.

Q: How do you ask someone to be a mentor? Can you have more than one?

A: I think about someone that I have either looked up to in that area or someone who has really exemplified an amazing career and amazing background. I'll oftentimes tell people to reach out to them, call them. Not everybody can have a mentor like Maeley who you talk to every day for years.

There are some people who are mentored that you may only need for one thing. In fact when I was giving a speech at USC, a young girl came up to me and she says I want to follow up with you and I want you to be my mentor but I only

have one thing. She wanted to run for student government. So she called and we talked about different things that she could do. She says I want to thank you, that's all I needed.

You have to be ready for people to say no, I can't, I don't have enough time. That's fine, do they know somebody else who might be able to help you, ask them, maybe they can recommend someone.

I had people from every background - one of my greatest bosses and still a mentor today is Mignon Moore. I worked for her at the Democratic National Committee and then I worked for her at the White House and she was political director for Clinton. She is a strong African American woman who taught me how to find my voice and to this day she is such a mentor and a friend. She still recommends me for things. She'll call me one day and she'll say, Hey I think we need a voice, you ought to think about this. Well maybe somebody else. I'll still call her when I go to Washington DC I call her. Donna Brazile, Tina Flournoy who worked for Kamala Harris, Craig Smith who was one of Clinton's political guys. He's still someone that I turn to and I talk to a lot. There were others along the way but they're from every background, every age, a few young people younger than me.

Q: Can you talk a little bit about your community work.

A: I'll tell you as a kid we lived in Walnut Grove surrounded by a lot of the manongs, the old Filipino men who had worked in the fields and they did not have families. They were all single men that lived up in these apartments and we lived downstairs. My mom took them whenever they had to go to the doctors, whenever they got their social security check and we needed to go cash it at the bank. Whenever one of them had passed, my mom took care of all of the arrangements. So as a child I grew up watching my parents and my grandparents take care of the community, take care of each other, and I just thought that everybody did that. I think my siblings and I were like - doesn't everybody do that? So growing up, that was really part of my foundation and who I am.

So when I've gotten older I've really focused on more women running for office, getting hired, getting promotions because that was where I really saw the most need. Now I just help anybody but there was a time when I really saw that there were not faces that look like me or other people of color.

Then I started talking to more people and realized wow we have to help our youth. Then came in the Asian Pacific Youth Leadership Project. When I worked with APSEA, we did a lot of community work and I learned a lot. To this day I still am on some boards. I'm on a foster youth board and I try to do my best there. I feel like if you can, if you have that time to help strengthen the community, we are all better for it.

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Q: If you are blessed with multiple opportunities what are some of the filters you use to weigh the pros and cons to choose a path and what makes you feel confident that you made the right choice?

A: I have made so many mistakes that I had to get jump back on the path a few times. I'll give you an example of when I made my move from being here in the state to going more national. I had actually hadn't thought about it because when you're the oldest, you're single, and with a Filipino household, the last thing your parents and your family is going to really recommend is that you move across the country alone, where you don't know anybody. My parents who are always very supportive, I knew what they were thinking - they were like, oh my God, but they were positive and they said well if you want to do this, you know we'll support you. We'll be a little worried. I said you know I won't know anybody.

There were some life things that had happened to me at the time. I felt like this was a gift to kind of do something different - to move to another area and learn. I had said no to this position in Washington DC and I was working for Delaine Eastin and I was at the same time taking care of my best friend's mom who was in hospice. One day I went to her and I was taking care of her and she said, you know, Mo, I hear you said no to that position in Washington DC. I said yeah I just feel like I need to be home and I feel like I don't know anybody there. I'm not the daughter of a big politico who knows the minute I go there I'll be connected. I said I'd really like to I'd like to learn but I just don't think it's the right time.

So the next day when I went for my shift, she grabbed my hand and she said I'm telling you to go. You need to have a new experience and you can do it. If it doesn't work, you can come home but you will never know until you try it. I said, but I'm here taking care of you and she says just go. So literally you know I get chicken skin when I think about this because when I left, the day that I flew to DC and just flying over Colorado I had just this weird gut feeling and my skin just didn't feel right and when we landed, her daughter had called me and said mom passed. I said can you tell me when and it was about the same time that I had gone over Colorado.

I'll tell you it's like it moments like that I wouldn't have picked because I think I had probably more fear than confidence. But because someone who I trusted encouraged me and said just try and then reassured me that if it didn't work I could come home, I felt okay. But here's something really interesting about that experience. I didn't work on presidential campaigns or anything prior to this and in my first meeting I sat down with a group of people. Someone said something about POTUS, POTUS is going to do this. So of course I raised my hand, what is POTUS and they all looked at me; they're like why are you even here you don't even know POTUS and I said, I don't, that's why I

asked. People looked down and this one person really made me feel small in this meeting. I thought okay I'm at this point so do I go home or suck it up? In my mind before the end of that meeting that is the last time that you're going to make me feel stupid enough in a meeting and I'm going to stay here and I'm going to learn every darn acronym I'm gonna meet. I'm gonna call everybody and learn and I'm going to do this and so yeah it was interesting but that kept me there to learn more, to do more, it was almost like this challenge - why are you here? I know why I'm here - I'm here because I want to be here. But you've got to figure out what you are made of and how strong you really are.

Q: How do you stay so grounded?

A: When I was in the White House and I'd come home for a holiday, my brother said to me, hey Mo we don't care where you work, it's your turn to do the dishes. You know I think that I come from a very humble background in our family, who work really hard. My dad had thirty jobs to put five kids through college. I cleaned houses from 12 years old to have extra money for the family or if I wanted like a real pair 501 jeans and not the knockoffs like my dad said I could get if he was buying it right now.

When I was working for Kathy Brown, my Lola, my grandmother - if you had an older first generation grandparent - I said to her I'm working for Kathy Brown, she's the treasurer, she's going to run for governor. My Lola would think, ha, I don't believe it, I need to see a picture. Are you kidding, you need to see a picture? She was a farm laborer she cooked for the crew and then she went out into the fields. She cooked and cleaned and went out to the fields and raised six kids.

When they left the Philippines, she left all of her family and I said why do you have to work so hard. She said, so you could have an education. That is very humbling when you think about. I still have the pictures of the farmhouse, the laborers, and the housing that they had. I still have fresh in my mind the stories growing up when they all lived in a one room house. They worked hard to make the path of my siblings and those who come after us paved with a little bit less rocks, sharp rocks, and a little bit of smooth soil. That grounds me very much knowing that someone who didn't know me but wished for me. My grandmother was raising my mom and wanted so much for me.

I took her to an event with Kathy Brown and she told Kathleen of a story that when she was working in the fields it was the governor who came. It was her father. When you think about those stories of sacrifice that the people undergone just for us. There's a lot to be remembered but a lot to do. We need to do more just like they did for us. So that's what I like to do, as much as I can, to help people move up, figure out their dreams and help them achieve them.

Can I tell you a really funny story about my dad?

My grandfather worked as a Philippine scout, he was recruited by the Army and stationed in Fort Riley. So my father has always been a supporter of the Filipino soldiers and vets. When I was working for Clinton it was a time when my dad was not happy that the president had not done more for Filipino veterans, he felt like he could more. So on my dad's birthday I had him fly out and I called Betty Curry and said can I bring him over to the West Wing to say Hi to the president for my dad's birthday. So they come over to the office and I said dad you have to be nice okay, don't talk about Filipino vets. Don't be mad at him and my father was like, he hasn't done enough. I looked at Mom and please tell dad to behave. She's like, I can't tell him, that's what he feels. I said, oh my God this is going to be the worst day ever.

So we get in there and Clinton comes right up to my dad like corny happy birthday and I'm not even breathing thinking oh my God he's gonna say something horrible. He says thank you Mr. President. Thank you for everything you've done. I look at my mom like what just happened to Dad. We walk, we took a picture and then as we're walking out, dad looked at me and he said you do have a real job. Then Curry nearly fell over, laughing so hard, she had tears in her eyes and she's like what does he mean by that? I said oh that's Filipino for I'm proud of you. Oh, do I deserve this, what is happening? I thought for sure he gonna do that to the president, I was going to get fired from my job.

Q: How does a supervisor maintain lines of authority while empowering staff to lead?

A: I've had this situation like this. You have to be careful about how you let someone speak and you step back. You also have to know that you can't boost them up so fast that they're (feeling) like, I'm the boss now. There has to be lessons in there so while you're letting someone speak or you let them make a presentation, you also help them realize that there are situations that they're not quite ready for - It's almost like humble pie. You don't give so many props straight away, they come in bits and it's also learning for your team. I made this mistake once of saying, oh I'll Stand Back and guys can do everything and then they stopped coming to me or letting me know what they were doing. My manager was like, what's going on? We had to have a team conversation about it - listen, I really support you but the rules of the game are this - I have to know what's going on, I have to approve that because I also have people north of me. So while I'm helping you and I want to do that because I want to see you succeed, you have to work with me and we have to work with each other to make sure that other departments, agencies or the people north of us are comfortable.

NOTE: APSEA members can watch this workshop and others from the apsea.org website for free!

Currents on affirmative action

UC Davis found alternative to achieve diversity

US News in 2023 ranked the “Most Diverse Medical Schools” as being #1 Howard University (Washington DC), #2 Florida International University (Wertheim, Miami), **#3 UC Davis**, #4 University of New Mexico (Albuquerque), **#5 (tie) Kaiser Permanente (Tyson, Pasadena)**, **#5 (tie) UC Riverside**, #5 (tie) University of Vermont (Larner, Burlington), #6 Temple University (Katz, Philadelphia), **#9 UC San Francisco**, #10 Emory University (Atlanta) [California schools highlighted in bold.]

With End of Affirmative Action, a Push for a New Tool: Adversity Scores

To build a diverse class of students, the medical school at U.C. Davis ranks applicants by the disadvantages they have faced. Can it work nationally?

By Stephanie Saul, NY Times July 2, 2023

For the head of admissions at a medical school, Dr. Mark Henderson is pretty blunt when sizing up the profession.

“Mostly rich kids get to go to medical school,” he said.

In his role at the medical school at the University of California, Davis, Dr. Henderson has tried to change that, developing an unorthodox tool to evaluate applicants: the socioeconomic disadvantage scale, or S.E.D.

The scale rates every applicant from zero to 99, taking into account their life circumstances, such as family income and parental education. Admissions decisions are based on that score, combined with the usual portfolio of grades, test scores, recommendations, essays and interviews.

The disadvantage scale has helped turn U.C. Davis into one of the most diverse medical schools in the country — notable in a state that voted in 1996 to ban affirmative action.

With the Supreme Court’s ruling last week against race-conscious admissions, the medical school offers a glimpse of how selective schools across the country might overhaul their admissions policies, as they look for alternative ways to achieve diversity without running afoul of the new law.

Last week, President Biden called adversity scores a “new standard” for achieving diversity.

Word has gotten out about the U.C. Davis scale. Dr. Henderson said that about 20 schools had recently requested more information. And there are other socioeconomic measurements, including Landscape, released in 2019 from the College Board, the nonprofit that administers the SATs. That tool allows

undergraduate admissions offices to assess the socioeconomic backgrounds of individual students.

But skeptics question whether such rankings — or any kind of socioeconomic affirmative action — will be enough to replace race-conscious affirmative action. And schools that use adversity scales may also find themselves wandering into legal quagmires, with conservative groups promising to fight programs that are simply stand-ins for race.

Over the years, medical schools have made some progress in diversifying their student bodies, with numbers ticking up. But just like undergraduate admissions, wealth and connections continue to play a determining role in who is accepted. More than half of medical students come from families in the top 20 percent of income, while only 4 percent come from those in the bottom 20 percent, according to data from the Association of American Medical Colleges.

There is also a family dynamic. Children of doctors are 24 times more likely to become doctors than their peers, according to the American Medical Association. It’s hard to know why the profession passes down from generation to generation, but the statistic drove the association to adopt a policy opposing legacy preferences in admissions.

“That’s a staggering economic gap between medical students and the general public,” said Dr. Henderson, who comes from a working-class upbringing and now serves as associate dean of admissions.

As a consequence, the number of Black doctors remains stubbornly low: About 6 percent of practicing doctors in the United States are Black, compared with 13.6 percent of the American population who identify as Black.

With the Supreme Court decision, “that number is likely to go down,” said Dr. James E.K. Hildreth, the president of Meharry Medical College, formed in 1876 in Nashville to train Black health care providers.

Leaders in medicine say training more Black and Hispanic doctors could help bridge the vast divides in American health care. Research shows that doctors from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups are more likely to work in primary care or in locales where doctors are scarce.

And patients have better outcomes when treated by doctors from similar backgrounds, said Dr. Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, president of the American Medical Association.

The U.C. Davis scale has drawn attention because of its ability to bring in diverse students using what the schools says are “race-neutral” socioeconomic models.

In its most recent entering class of 133 students, 14 percent were Black and 30 percent were Hispanic. Nationally, 10 percent of medical school students were Black and 12 percent were Hispanic. A vast majority of the U.C. Davis class — 84 percent — comes from disadvantaged backgrounds, and 42 percent are the first in their family to go to college.

The overall acceptance rate has been less than 2 percent.

In the Davis scale, first used in 2012, eight categories establish an adversity score for each candidate. Factors include family income, whether applicants come from an underserved area, whether they help support their nuclear families and whether their parents went to college.

The higher an applicant rates on the disadvantage scale, the bigger the boost.

There is no set formula on how to balance the scale with the academic record, Dr. Henderson said, but a simulation of the system revealed that students from underrepresented groups grew to 15.3 percent from 10.7 percent. And the share of economically disadvantaged students tripled, to 14.5 percent of the class from 4.6 percent.

At the same time, scores from the MCAT, the standardized test for medical school applications, dropped only marginally.

Still, it’s not easy to persuade medical schools to upend admissions standards, particularly anything that undermines the value of test scores and grades. Dr. Henderson said he had received pushback from his own colleagues.

“Doctors say their kids got into medical school elsewhere, and they didn’t get in here,” he said.

As the children of doctors, he said, those applicants earned an S.E.D. score of zero.

A number of scholars, including Richard D. Kahlenberg, have promoted using class-conscious preferences, which they say could address racial inequities in education without fostering the resentment often prompted by racially based diversity plans.

And President Biden said on Thursday that his administration would develop a “new standard for colleges taking into account the adversity a student has overcome.”

“The kid who faced tougher challenges has demonstrated more grit, more determination,” Mr. Biden told reporters at the White House, “and that should be a factor that colleges should take into account in admissions.”

He might be talking about someone like Eleanor Adams, a member of the Choctaw

UC Davis found alternative to achieve diversity

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Nation, who said that she did not think medical school was an option for her.

“I didn’t grow up with a lot of money,” she said.

But she found mentors who encouraged her, and today she is in her third year of medical school at U.C. Davis, which is in Sacramento. She plans to become an Indian Health Service doctor in Oklahoma — fulfilling one of the school’s goals, Dr. Henderson said, which is to train doctors who will return to their communities.

At schools in other states without affirmative action, such as the University of Michigan, admissions officials have complained that enrolling more socioeconomically disadvantaged students has not significantly increased the share of Black, Hispanic and Native American students.

“Those tools certainly have utility, but they fall short of accomplishing what a race-conscious admission practice does,” said Dr. Ehrenfeld of the American Medical Association.

The socioeconomic rankings could also be legally challenged. Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., in his majority opinion on affirmative action, wrote that colleges could consider how race had affected an applicant’s life. But he also warned against using proxies for race.

The Pacific Legal Foundation, a libertarian activist group, has already sued a selective school, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Alexandria, Va., for using economic factors as stand-ins for race in admissions.

Joshua P. Thompson, a lawyer for the foundation, said the legal questions surrounding these disadvantage indexes were complex.

“I think the devil is going to be in the details,” Mr. Thompson said. “The Supreme Court was pretty clear that what can’t be done directly can’t be done indirectly.”

Should it come to that, Dr. Henderson said that his school’s disadvantage scale would be defensible in court.

“Am I worried about it? Yes,” Dr. Henderson said of a lawsuit. “Is it going to stop me? No.”

Shishimai is the Japanese lion dance, a traditional performing art in Japan. The dancer wears the lion head and costume and imitates the movement of lions accompanied by traditional festival music. When the lion bites your head, you become happy and wise because the lion is eating evil spirits. The lion costume consists of a wooden head, a hairy mane, a kemanmom or makigemon patterned textile body. The eyes and teeth are usually gilded in gold and the ears move too. This shishimai appeared at the Crocker Museum ArtMix: Wakuwaku event on April 11th.

West Point can use race, but decision is limited

In February, the US Supreme Court ruled against Edward Blum/Students for Fair Admission’s request to immediately prevent West Point from considering race as a factor in the selection of future Army officers for their class of 2028. The US Supreme Court noted that the arguments for an emergency ruling were under developed, the academy needs to be a party to the lawsuit, and the propriety of using a race based admission factor in military academies needs to be decided first by a lower court. Blum hoped that the momentum of the US Supreme Court’s June 2023 decisions against Harvard and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill’s affirmative action programs would automatically torpedo US military academies’ admissions processes. Not so...

The US government argued that the West Point admission process - August through May - takes race and ethnicity into account to help ensure future officers reflect the diversity of the nation and the enlisted forces they will lead. Blum argued that affirmative action is unconstitutional and unneeded for military services that rely on soldiers following orders regardless of the skin color of their superiors. In addition to West Point (Army), the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy and Coast Guard Academy all consider race in admissions.

Currents faces, places

“Top 20 AAPI Change Makers” named by the Sacramento Bee in January to include: Elaine Abelaye-Mateo, Vince Andrade-Sales, Bernadette Austin, Rejie Marie Baloyos, Christopher Cabaldon, Pat Fong Kushida, Dr. Primo “Lucky” Lara Jr., Jennifer Lee, Nan Lin, Debra Oto-Kent, Frances Losana Palu, Richard Pan MD, Jasjit Singh, Madhulika Singh, Bonnie Singh-Allen, Jim Tabuchi, Stephanie Tom, Bill Wong, Nancy Xiong, Priscilla Yeung.

Dung Ngo received the third annual 2024 Tapping Potential Diversity-focused brewing scholarship, sponsored by UC Davis Continuing and Professional Education. The scholarship is a crowdfunded award providing a full-ride scholarship to the online UC Davis Master Brewers Certificate Program. Dung has been professionally brewing since 2017, has a degree in Food Technology from Hanoi University



of Science and Technology. She is currently employed at Pilot, a Vietnamese brewery, running a 500 liter brewing system.

UCD Professor Joanna Chiu who also serves as chair of the UCD Dept of Entomology and Nematology received the 2024 Distinction in Student Mentoring Award from the Entomological Society of America - Pacific Branch. He received the 2022 UCD Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching and Mentoring Award and the 2023 Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Mentoring Undergraduate Research. Former mentee Katie Freitas says “Beyond teaching me practical research skills, Dr. Chiu helped to spark the most important thing a person needs to be successful scientist: pure joy in the pursuit of knowledge.”

Fred Toyosaburo Korematsu, the WWII Japanese American EO 9066 dissident-civil-rights hero now shares his name with a new genus of California trapdoor spiders as the result of work of the Jason Bond laboratory at UCD Dept of Entomology and Nematology. The naming of “Euctenizidae: Promyrmekiaphila korematsui sp. nov.” was announced in the paper “Microgeographic Population Structuring in a Genus of California Trapdoor Spiders and Discovery of an Enigmatic New Species” in the journal Ecology and Evolution by UCD Prof. Jason Bond, James Starrett, Xavier Zahnle, Emma Jochim and Iris Quayle.

Claire Inouye, a 2019 Davis High graduate and a UC Davis fresh water research ecologist, is now the reigning queen of the Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival, the largest cheery blossom festival in the US. An all-region softball and field hockey standout as a Blue Devil (Davis High) athlete, Inouye will travelling to represent the Japanese American community in events including LA and Hawaii. Inouye says that the role of festival royalty is evolving to be more about women’s development and leadership and cultural Japanese American heritage. Other women in her yearlong court include Julianne Aiko Ho, Aimee Sumire Kanadjian, Kami Chieko Kodama and Kelly Midori Toma.

Davis’s Thong Hy Huynh awards presented in May went to Aggie House (Community Group), Annie Louise Temple, Pattie Fong (18+over), CJ Millican (under 18). The city honors community members whose actions exemplify the goals of diversity, community, social justice and equal rts.

Sean Tran, a 19 yo UCD freshman and Irvine native, landed in the emergency room from initiation hazing of Alpha Kappa Psi, a co-ed professional business fraternity. UCD has launched its own investigation. The pledging process cost Tran \$190 as the recruitment fee and initially he enjoyed the comradery. But on April 10th, for three hours, fraternity members grilled the pledges in a dark public park, shining flashlights in their faces, and whenever any pledges made a mistake reciting the Greek alphabet and Founding Fathers, they were subjected to focused yelling and demeaning comments from the fraternity brothers. The onslaught caused Trans to experience crippling anxiety, a panic attack, an asthma attack, hyperventilating, dry heaving, spasms and other symptoms and pins/needles throughout his limbs - he was diagnosed with anxiety disorder. The fraternity debated before taking him to Sutter Davis Hospital emergency on April 11th, 1:41am and he was taken away before seeing a doctor there. Tran was later taken to

Currents faces, places

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another health care facility, Davis Urgent Care, at 5pm. Tran is worried about retaliation and the fraternity brothers wanted everyone to keep the event between themselves, removed his identifying fraternity pin before he went into the ER, and were anxious over if Tran was going to report the incident. He feels that their intention to dehumanize and humiliate deserves an apology and wants his medical bills paid and some assurance that this does not happen to someone else. Tran did have a history of anxiety attacks but never as bad.

Ella Mayor, a senior at Santa Susana High in Simi Valley, won the \$25,000 2024 National Honors Society Scholarship from a pool of nearly 17,000 applicants. Her parents immigrated from the Philippines and she was born in the US. Her commitment is to community health. “For me, I’ve always had that innate drive and passion to help underserved communities because of my background as being a Filipino, first generation Filipino American,” Mayor said. “I want other people to also harness that same idea. If they have an inclination towards helping people in a specific field, they should follow that passion and never let anything else get in the way of that.”

Helene An “Mother of Fusion Cuisine” joined former Assembly Speaker/SF mayor Willie Brown Jr, Vinton Cerf, Ava DuVernay, The Go-Go’s, Thelton Henderson, Los Lobos, Cheryl Miller, Leon Panetta and Brenda Way as inductees in January into California Hall of Fame, which was established in 2006 to honor California trailblazers.

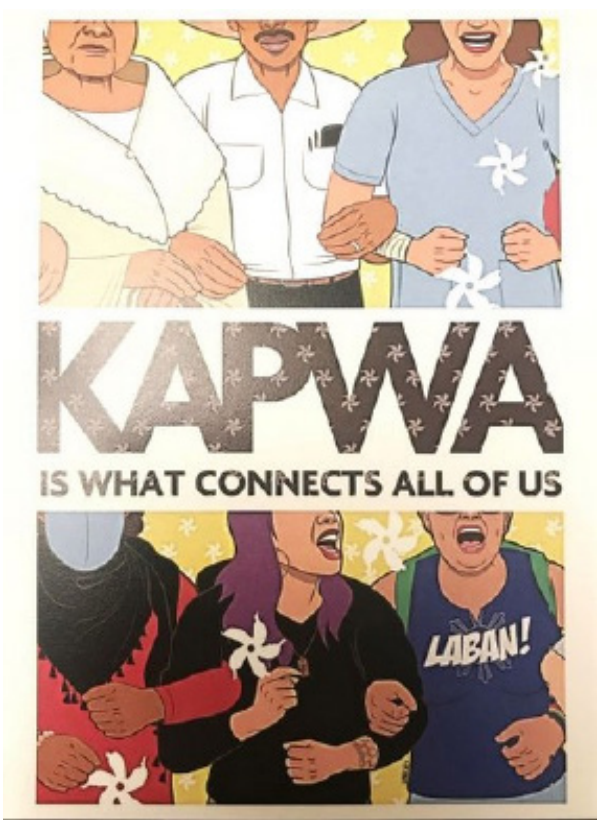
APSEA/APSEA Foundation honored **Joy Gonzales-Cabatic** (APSEA Membership Award), **Folsom Vice Mayor Y.K. Chalamcherla** (APSEA President’s Award) and **Assemblymember Evan Low** (APSEA Foundation Community Leadership Award) at its April 25th dinner. This year’s scholarship recipients are: Nicholas Lee, Kaelie Nguyen, Erica Pham, Kai Nakaoka, and Zachary Gee.

Chicago Café has been deemed to be the oldest Chinese restaurant in California according to UCD law professor Gabriel “Jack” Chin who leads the university’s Asian Exclusion Research Project which is digging into AAPI tales of prejudice and perseverance. Solid evidence shows Chicago Café operating since 1910 at 411 Main St in Woodland, though owners Paul and Nancy Fong use a 1903 date. Chicago Café outshadows Sam Wo Restaurant in SF Chinatown (1908) and Pekin Noodle Parlor in Butte Montana (1909 or 1911).

Wide Open Walls, a nonprofit which employees artists to create murals across Sacramento, was roundly criticized in February for failing to engage AAPI artists for and the cultural accuracy of the Lunar New Year mural installed on the Well Space Building in Sacramento’s Little Saigon. Wide Open Walls claims that they “issued a call” for AAPI artists and the artist selected was determined by the project requirements and artist availability. AAPI critics says the inclusion of a Kalinga warrior (Filipino indigenous mountain group) is misplaced in a Lunar New Year mural in Little Saigon. The collection of AAPI ethnic groups in one mural perpetuates the “one in the same” stereotype. Since 2016, Wide Open Walls has facilitated

more than 180 murals. The organization has also been criticized for under paying the artists and thereby reducing the market value for their art.

Laban Groupi’s 2024 Filipino artist campaign, a group of eight artists, received a state Asian and Pacific Islander Equity Budget grant to combat anti-AAPI hate through an ad campaign. The first launch is by LeRoid David, a digital illustration of six people linked arm-in-arm to



display “kapwa” which means fellowship or togetherness. Each month a different artists’ work will be released.

May S. Lee State Office Complex honors a legendary state worker. The four building \$1.03 billion, 1.25 million sq.ft. complex was dedicated April 24th in the River District (Richards Blvd, N.7th St, Sac). Lee “retired” in 1990, but continued to work as a retired annuitant and unpaid volunteer, with 79 years of state service as an accountant. She died in 2023 at 103.

Jean Cooper, an APSEA member, was promoted to Deputy Director of Operations at the California Lottery in April. Congatulations!

Currents Films

The Tiger’s Apprentice by Lawrence Yep was published in 2003. The story inserts ancient Chinese mythology into modern SF life. The boy Tom becomes the magical apprentice of the tiger Mr. Hu. Their job is to protect the ancient phoenix from Vatten and the Clan of Nine who wish to use its powers for evil. The story explores themes of kindness, loyalty, duty and bravery. The Tiger’s Apprentice is now an animated fantasy film released in February and streaming on Paramount+. The film stars the voices of Brandon Soo Hoo, Henry Golding, Lucy Liu, Sandra Oh and Michelle Yeoh.

Free Chol Soo Lee documentary by Julie Ha and Eugene Yi premiered in April 2023. Sentenced to life for a 1973 SF murder, Korean immigrant Chol Soo Lee was set free after a pan-Asian solidarity movement, which included Korean, Japanese, and Chinese Americans, helped to overturn his conviction. After 10 years of fighting for his life

inside California state prisons, Lee found himself in a new fight to rise to the expectations of the people who believed in him. [Rotten Tomatoes 4+ stars] The February 29th event at UCD King Hall, sponsored by the law school and Asian American Studies, feted 90+ year old K.W. Lee, the award winning Sacramento Union journalist whose investigation which brought justice to Lee.

ABC7 Originals Documentary: California’s Case for Reparations - officially aired in April 6 and is very worthwhile viewing. America’s economy was built on the backs of free labor provided over 400 years by black slaves and people need to recognize that. On January 16, 1865, Union General William Tecumseh Sherman issued a Special Field Orders No. 15 promising each freed family 40 acres and a mule, but that promise fell to pieces with the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Any land turned over to former slaves was returned to white landowners when Lincoln’s successor President Andrew Jackson reversed and annulled Sherman’s proclamation.

More than a dozen bills have been introduced in the California legislature to implement recommendations of the California Reparations Task Force and notably missing is any proposal for cash payments. With the economic, social, psychological, political harms centuries long in the making, the legislators proposing reparations realize it will be an equally slow and long term implementation to adjust the generational wealth and opportunity imbalance in this country. Even if there were to be a 5 year strategy, is there political will to do a lot of work? Especially when naysayers are already chanting, “It was so long ago, get over it ...”

Don Tamaki, the only non Black person on the task force noted that while the civil war ended enslavement, the bias and hatred morphed into other kinds of exclusion that certainly put a target on the backs of Black Americans, and other minority groups including the Japanese Americans ended up in the cross hairs as well from time to time. “There are many people who feel as strongly as I do about this, viscerally so, we are not black but we understand a little bit of what happened from our own history.”

Public education through a public awareness campaign is key to developing a critical mass of the public to stand behind andlift up sentiment for reparations. Assemblyman Reginald Jones-Sawyer says reparations is not just a check. He says positivity from this movement is going to come out of the non cash reparations. Senator Steven Bradford and Assemblymember Joan Sawyer have introduced legislation in the form of promoting black homeownership with down payment assistance and property tax relief, compensation for displacement coming from racially motivated land taking like eminent domain and other tactics. The legislation also proposes to expand access to technical career education, higher education financial aid for red lined community, prohibit involuntary servitude and restrict solitary confinement in prisons, expand access to healthy food access in under-resourced/vulnerable neighborhoods, and formal apologies are also be expected.

Calendar

Thru May 1 **Links to Law Enforcement.** 5 week outreach workshops to promote diversity in law enforcement to Asian Pacific Islanders (ARI, 6270 Elder Creek Rd, Sac), Latino/Hispanics (La Familia, 3301 37th Ave, Sac), Black/African Americans (Greater Sacramento Urban League, 3725 Marysville Blvd, Sac.)

May 1 Wed **PACT Webinar: Adolescent Brain Development: Understanding Adopted Tweens & Teens.** 11am-1230pm. \$38.50 with 205 discount for PACT members. Register at www.pactadopt.org

May 2 Thu **Asian Resources Inc: Donate, Dine and Design, Day of Giving.** 5-7pm at ARI (6270 Elder Creek Rd, Sac). \$175/dinner for two. Info/RSVP: Jackie.Y@AsianResources.org

May 3 Fri **US Small Business Administration Award Luncheon will honor Asian Resources Inc (ARI)** as SBA’s 2024 Non Profit of the Year. Noon-2pm at Doubletree Hotel (Sac)

May 4 Sat **Winters Japantown Monument Dedication Ceremony** sponsored by the Historical Society of Winters.. 2pm at Rotary Park (201 E. Main St, Winters.)

May 7 Tue **APAPA Asian Heritage Month Celebration.** Community Service honoree: ARI. 5pm reception, 6pm banquet/program at APAPA headquarters (4000 Truxel Rd, Sac). Info: info@apapa.org

May 7 Tue **Davis City Council recognition ceremony for Thong Hy Huynh, Golden Heart and Environmntal Recognition Awards.** 530pm at Davis Chambers (23 Russell Blvd, Davis)

May 9-19 **CAAMFEST 2024.** Opening night/May 9 - *Admissions Granted*, 630pm at Palace of Fine Arts (SF); 930pm Gala at Asian Art Museum. See schedule/tickets at www.caamfest.com.

May 11 Sat **Locke Foundation: Asian Pacific Spring Festival.** 11am-5pm on Main Street, Locke. Dragon and lion dance, martial arts, taiko drums, dance, music, brush painting, arts and crafts, food and more. Free admission, free parking. Info: 916/776-1684, 916/776-1828, www.locke-foundation.org

May 15 **Sacramento JACL Scholarship** deadline. Info: Roger Fujii, rfujii727@gmail.com

May 15 Wed **PACT Webinar: Adoptees of Color in Same Race Adoptions.** 11am-1230pm. \$38.50 with 205 discount for PACT members. Register: www.pactadopt.org

May 15 Wed **APSEA/ACSED Career Development Program: Creating a Culture of Care: Mental Health in the Workplace.** Speaker: Toby Ewing, Executive Director, Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission. Free for APSEA, ACSED members, CA Dept of Rehabilitation employees. Register at www.acsedonline.org

May 16 Thu **US Attorney’s Sacramento and Fresno Hate Crime Task Forces Joint Meeting.** 10-1130am on WebEx. Agenda: Update from CA AG Rob Bonta. Contact Sean Vassar, sean.vassar@usdoj.gov

May 19 Sun **Sacramento Asian Pacific Cultural Village: Asian Pacific Culture Fest.** 2pm-close at District56 (8230 Civic Center Dr, Elk Grove). 120+ vendors, performances, artists and community organizations.

May 20 Mon **SASF Golf Tournament** - SOLD OUT. Valley Hi Country Club (Sac) To get on the waiting list, go to www.sasfevents.org/golf

May 20 Mon **CAPITAL and ARI: Peace and Violence Prevention Poster Contest** deadline. See display ad in this newspaper.

May 21 Tue **Woodland City Council meeting,** 6pm at Council Chambers, Woodland City Hall (300 First St, Woodland). The City Council is expected to rescind its 1943 resolution calling for retaining Japanese Americans in WWII prisons and not allowing them to return to the West Coast at all.

May 23 Thu **Organization of Chinese Americans: Dragon Boat Fest.** Doubletree Hotel (Sac)

May 30 Thu **My Sister’s House - Stars of Hope Gala.** 5pm at The Grand Ballroom (1215 J St, Sac). Honoring Quirina Orozco, Christopher Cabaldon, Fiona Ma and Phoong Law. Ticket and sponsorship info: Caolyn.Galvante@cgalvante@my-sisters-house.org

May 31 Fri **Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce: AAPI Night Market,** celebrating AAPI Heritage Month. 5-10pm on Capitol Mall (between 3th and 6th Sts, downtown Sac). Evening of food, drinks, music and fun! Entertainment by Tokimonsta, P-Lo, Honor Kung Fu Academy, Koyasan Spirit of Children Taiko Drumming. General admission: \$25, student/senior: \$20. Info: aapinightmarketsac.eventbrite.com

June 1 **Strive for Strength** (affiliated with SASF). Community wide event by high schoolers for high schoolers (with adult advisors) to destigmatize and dismantle the negative stigma surrounding mental health. Afternoon at location TBA. Info: www.sasf.org

June 1 Sat **Auburn Joss House Museum** opens for the summer season. 200 Sacramento St, Auburn. Saturdays 1030am-230pm.

June 6 Thu **Sacramento Asian Peace Officers Assn - 29th Annual Community Awards Banquet Fundraiser.** Bingo Night theme, raffles. 530-8pm at Happy Garden restaurant. Info: sacapoa.org

June 7 Fri **Chinese for Affirmative Action Celebration of Justice.** 630pm at Palace Hotel (2 New Montgomery St, SF.) \$350/ person, sponsorships available. Honoring the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus for their steadfast leadership in blocking the reinstatement of the China Initiative and addressing the root causes of xenophobia and racism; and Initiate Justice working to expand access to democracy and voting rights for incarcerated and formerly-incarcerated individuals and innovative approaches to community safety. Special tribute to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Lau v Nichols (access to bilingual education). Tickets: coj@caasf.org.

June 8 Sat **APSEA Summer Picnic - Third Annual.** 1130am at William Land Park. Free for APSEA members. RSVP: www.apsea.org

June 9 Sun **Sacramento JACL Scholarship Luau.** 1130am social, 1230pm luncheon, 130pm award ceeremony at Nisei Hall (1515 4th St, Sac.) \$20/ member, \$23/non-members. Info: sacjaclinfo@yahoo.com

June 19, 1982 Vincent Chin was beaten to death with a baseball bat in Detroit by Ronald Ebens and Michael Nitz, laid off autoworkers blaming Asians for their unemployment. They entered manslaughter pleas with probation, \$3,700 fines and no jail time was ordered by the judge who felt these consequences appropriate given their “backgrounds;” the AAPI community disagreed.

June 21-21 **KAAN2024 (Korean Adoptee Adoptive Family Network) Conference: Representation & Visibility.** Westin O’Hare (Rosemont IL). Info: www.wearekaan.org/conference

June 23 Sun **Parkview Presbyterian Church Summerfest fundraiser.** 430pm fellowship, 5pm program, 530pm dinner at Lucky Jade Restaurant (7007 South Land Park Dr, Sac). 9 course banquet, entertainment, silent auction. \$65/adult, \$25/9-15yo. Sponsors welcome. Info: www.parkviewpc.org, maurine_estelle@yahoo.com

June 28-Aug 2 **Sacramento Asian Sports Foundation’s K-3 Co-Ed Division Summer League hoops.** Fee refundable if your child is not ready to participate. Register: www.sasf.org

June 30 Sun **Showing of Kintsukuroi with panel discussion.** 130pm at The Sofia (2700 Capitol, Sac). This Ikeibi Film by Kerwin Berk follows the lives of the Ito family from SF Japantown to concentration camps, battlefields, and picking up the pieces of their shattered lives. Kintsukuroi is broken pottery mended with gold and cherished for its streghth and beauty. Ticket info: ABAS Law Foundation website.

Aug 11-17 **KAAN Camp Naru**, a summer camp for Korean American youth ages 9-16. Info: info@wearekaan.org

Aug 21 Wed **PACT Webinar: Deat White People: Antiracist Adoptive Parenting.** 11am-1230pm. \$38.50 with 20% discount for PACT members. Register at www.pactadopt.org

Thanks for your donations:
Much appreciation goes to Bill Wong and Sylvia Tang, and Matsuo and Hasuko S. Fujitani for donations to defray Currents’ printing and postage expenses!

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Sacramento Japantown Mural Fundraiser

The proposed mural for the 4th and Capitol Mall site, space made available by the Shingle Springs Bank of Miwok Indians which recently purchased the site, is the exact site of historic Sacramento Japantown. Donors of \$1000 or more will be acknowledged on the mural. Tax deductible donations can be made at <http://bit.ly/3QeVRry> or mailing a check to “Florin JACL Japantown Mural” to Florin JACL at PO Box 292634, Sacramento 95829.