Greetings AAS faculty, students, staff, alumni and friends!

The fall semester is off to a great start and it has been heartwarming to see so many students return to campus. The Department and CSUN community began to transition to campus spring 2022 with department lecturers taking the lead and teaching the on-campus classes for AAS. This includes Allan Aquino, Kimberly Carroll, Marjoeaux Gamboa-Wong, Kristina Garcia, Phillip Hutchison, Song Kim, Lawrence Lam, Daehwan Lee, Sung Ohm, Barbara Pham, David Sung, Derek Tang, and Maria Turnmeyer. We are fully back on campus this academic school year (2022-23) with approximately 70% of AAS classes offered on campus and the remaining 30% being a combination of hybrid, synchronous, and asynchronous classes. While we did have to cancel a number of courses due to low enrollments, freshmen demand created opportunities for additional sections of writing, speech, and an Introduction to Asian American Studies class to be offered which allowed us to accommodate lecturers whose courses had been cancelled. We also welcomed back to the classroom this fall, Glenn Omatsu.

Although year one as the Department chair was challenging for me due to the high learning curve, I am grateful to enter a second year with knowledge and experience I was lacking last year. I now know how to create a schedule of courses, manage financial budgets, hire new lecturers and staff, and attend meetings as a leader and representative of the Department to name a few of the skills I acquired. However, the best part of the job has been the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with AAS majors and minors.

AAS’s Mega Event in the spring consisted of graduation, awards/scholarships, and Distinguished Speakers Series. It provided a wonderful opportunity for us to gather in person for the first time since the COVID shutdown. The event was lovely and well attended. Alumni unable to participate in graduation due to cancellation of events due to COVID were able to join us with their families in a belated graduation celebration on campus at the new Orchard Center.

The Department faculty continue to be active on campus and with their research. Below I highlight some of their work. Please know that these examples are not exhaustive. An oral history project focused on the founding of the Department is being led by Alan Aquino, Edith Chen, Simmy Makhijani, and Teresa Williams Leon. The ultimate goal is to create a video documenting this historical moment in the Department. In addition, Edith Chen is on sabbatical this academic year to complete several manuscripts focused on her research on Asian Americans and diabetes. Tracy Buenavista will also be on sabbatical during Spring 2023 and will promote her forthcoming co-edited book, First-Generation Faculty of Color: Reflections on Research, Teaching, and Service. Clem Lai continues to co-direct CSUN’s Civil Discourse and Social Change campus-wide initiative and Gina Masequesmay is collecting data on anti-Asian hate incidents occurring on campus. The Department continues to be active in the implementation of AB1460, a California law that requires California State University to provide ethnic studies courses at each of its campuses. I serve on the steering committee as chair of the Department; Tracy Buenavista, Department Representative on the steering committee; Teresa Williams Leon, community liaison; and Tomo Hattori, representative for the Ethnic Studies Academic Council.

It is an honor to continue to be chair of the Department. I have appreciated all the support, guidance, and kindness expressed by all of you. It helps as I continue to learn, navigate, and evolve as chair of the Department. Thank you.

Lastly, on a personal note, I will be leaving for the UC Davis campus in a few weeks with my husband as we drop off our daughter at the dorms. She is a first semester college freshman. My heart is excited and anxious for her. She will be missed considerably. She is an only child and the only grandchild for my parents. I am sure we will all be on an emotional roller coaster of highs and lows. Feel free to ask how things are going next time we see each other.

To a great school year for all!
Christina Ayala-Alcantar, Chair of Asian American Studies
christina.ayala-alcantar@csun.edu
Welcome to our Newest, Dr. Simmy Makhijani!

Simmy Makhijani is Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies at California State University, Northridge. As an educator, activist, and scholar her work focuses on the intersections of art, living histories, youth organizing, cross-racial solidarity and movement building (with emphases in Asian American Activism Studies and South Asian American Studies).

At CSUN, Professor Makhijani teaches courses on critical thinking and immigration conceptualized through intersectional frameworks of world-ecology and solidarity. The core of her pedagogy is best described as seeding an imagination (and a building) of a just social universe, because the future is up to us, all of us!

While living in the Bay Area, she was a full-time lecturer at San Francisco State University in the College of Ethnic Studies for six years and prior to that co-founded + co-ran United Roots (a green youth arts and media community center in Oakland) for five years. Over the last two decades she has been involved with numerous community organizing efforts including South Asians for Education Justice Coalition, 4th World Solidarity South Asia, Sr. Asia Solidarity Coalition, Bay Area Solidarity Summer, Alliance of South Asians Taking Action, Narika, Asian Women’s Shelter, South Asian Women’s Creative Collective-SF, and Art in Action.

Professor Makhijani holds a PhD in Social and Cultural Anthropology plus a Masters in Asian and Comparative Studies and continues to share her research/writing with several community, activist, and education projects committed to the work of transformative/healing justice in action.

Given Professor Makhijani is fairly new to CSUN (started Fall 2021 during the pandemic), plus is new to the LA area, she so welcomes ways to build fun and meaningful connections with all things CSUN and Southern California!

Promoted to Full Professor!

Congratulations to Dr. Tomo Hattori and Dr. Clement Lai for receiving promotion to the rank of Full Professor!

Dr. Hattori’s work has appeared in the leading journals Novel and differences, and in groundbreaking anthologies. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on Asian American literature, comics, and critical theory.

Dr. Lai’s work focuses on race and space, on social movements, on politics and public policy issues, and on multiracial racial formation. He currently serves as co-director of the Civil Discourse & Social Change initiative at CSUN.
Jessica graduated in 2021 during the pandemic, but continued to be involved at CSUN through the Asian American Studies Pathways Project and the Autonomy Research Center for STEAMH (ARCS), among other campus and community-based initiatives.

While at CSUN she was chair of diversity and inclusion for Associated Students, and a member of CSUN’s police advisory committee, University Student Union’s LGBTQ advisory board, the Asian American Pacific Islander Strategy Group, and advisory committee for the University Student Union’s RISE Center. For her commitment to justice and equity, she received the Kenyon Chan Outstanding Leadership Award twice in her tenure at CSUN.

Learn more about Jessica in CSUN Today

csunshinetoday.csun.edu/university-news/hard-work-determination-pay-off-for-csuns-class-of-2022/

A LAND OF TIME

By Jeremiah Reyes*

A land of time.
A land from which we never owned.
A land that was home to another.
A land that should never be forgotten.

A land from which we never owned.
"People of the earth" thrived on this land.
An earth that is stretched in time.

A land of time.
Where the Tongva called home.
"People of the earth" where beams of light shined.
Where the face of the sun gleamed for all time.

A land of time.
Where identity was shattered.
Colonial presence at the time.
A land stretched of many people.
Yet, the suffering persisted.

A land of time.
Where slavery was a driving factor in the country.
The inhumanity.
The disregard to life.
The imperfections of history.

A land of time.
Shared across generations.
The first generations.
The lost generations.
The generations found again.

A land of time.
Where fear of the foreign was the norm.
Discrimination in dangerous forms.
Yet, the pursuit of a better life was in their hearts.
Asian Americans became the Heart of this country.

A land of time.
Once cultivated by the Muranaka Family.
A livelihood lost,
To then become a school.

A land of time.
A history of change.
A history of imperfections.
A history to recognize.

A land of time.
A land of history.
A time we should share.
For a land amongst all time.

*Jeremiah shared this land acknowledgement poem to start the 2022 AAS Distinguished Speaker & Student Awards event
By Teresa Williams León & Edith Chen

On April 29, 2022, under the leadership of AAS Department Chair & Chicana/o Studies Department professor, Dr. Christina Ayala-Alcantar, the Asian American Studies Department held its first Mega Event, which combined the annual distinguished lecture & student awards event with AAS graduation, honoring our graduates from 2020, 2021 & 2022. The Mega event was held at the newly-built Orchard Conference Center with over 120 people in attendance.

In order to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Los Angeles Civil Unrest (April 29, 1992) following the acquittal of the four Los Angeles police officers who beat Rodney King in March of 1991, the Asian American Studies department hosted an interethnic conversation on “cultural solidarity, community building and hope.” This event was the AAS Department’s first in-person event held in more than two years. Faculty, students, staff, and community members were excited to be together face-to-face after 2 years of zoom events & celebrations. This year’s distinguished guest speakers were writer-poet-artist-performer, traci kato-kiriyama and civil rights attorney, Do Kim.

Jeremiah Reyes, an Asian American Studies minor and English major, kicked off the event by acknowledging the first peoples of the San Fernando Valley, the Tongva & Tataviam peoples and reciting his original poem, “A Land of Time.” Reyes’ opening poem served to remind us of our land’s origins, our land’s history, and our responsibilities as stewards of the land. Asian American Studies Professor Teresa Williams León followed by recounting her memories that fateful day on Wednesday, April 29, 1992 as she shared that moment in time with her CSUN AAS 340 Asian American women’s evening class as nightfall began and the disbelief and rage felt throughout the city of angels began to unfold.

Our distinguished lecturers, traci kato-kiriyama and Do Kim, shared their inspirational stories and the community work they have dedicated their lives to as the audience, consisting of students, faculty, administrators, and members of the community listened intently. The community work of Kim and kato-kiriyama illustrates the importance of interracial coalition-building & solidarity across communities. The discussion was moderated by AAS professor & academic advisor, Dr. Edith Chen, and Professor Cedric Hackett, Associate Professor of Africana Studies and director of the DuBois-Hamer Institute for Academic Excellence. Artist- Performer, kato-kiriyama, is a member of Nikkei for Civil Rights Redress & Reparations and of the H.R. 40 Coalition. Civil rights attorney, Mr. Do Kim is the president of the K.W. Lee Center for Leadership & member of the Black-Korean Alliance. The event was MC-ed by AAS Professor, Allan Aquino. Interim Dean Jackie Stallcup and EOP Director, Shiva Parsa also made congratulatory remarks to the AAS Department, students, faculty and staff. Asian American Studies faculty, Professors Margeaux Gamboa-Wong, Phil Hutchison, Eunai Shrake, Gina Masequesmay, Glenn Omatsu, Simmy Makhijani, Edith Chen, Tomo Hattori, Teresa Williams León, Tracy Buenavista, and Christina Ayala-Alcantar, paid tribute to our awardees and presented them their awards.
Congratulations to the students who were all recognized by the AAS Department on their promise, achievements, contributions, excellence, and community engagement & who have all endured life under a deadly global pandemic. We are excited for your futures and await further contributions all of you will make to change the world for the better. The following are our awardees & graduates:

**Promising Freshman**
Julieta Rosas, Janneth Escobar, Jasmine Raymundo, Alex Pinwatana, Yahir Nieto, Jason Gutierrez, Ciera Ponce, Christian Loza Franco, Jeiden Cabrales, Jerricho Perez, Ky Duyen Nguyen, Leyna Do, Brandon Torres, Iliona Nahapetyan, Ethan M. Chan, Arianah Aaliyah Mix, Emily Hinako Muir, Richard Arenas, Emily Avalos & David Pedroza

**Promising Sophomores**
Riley Kaneshiro, Daniel Alejandro Mata, Anthony Lopez

**Abarquez-Alcantara Outstanding Essay Award**
Michelle Gillen

**Eunai Shrake Promising Educator Award**
Sophia-Marie Cabacungan

**Laura Uba Academic Achievement Award**
Michelle Gillen

**Enrique Delacruz Social Justice Award**
Mal Alcantar

**Kenyon Chan Outstanding Leadership Award**
Skylar Hall

Congratulations to the Asian American Studies graduates & their families: Mal Alcantar, Liane Bundalian, Skylar Hall, Xiao (Holly) Lin, Kyla Rose Leynes, Catelya Novette Maralit, Alana Mirikitani, Mihrazoon Payani, Monika Mizota, Bellamay Perez, Jason Quan, Tammy Rassamekritttsak, Jeremiah Reyes, and Jessica Steiner

This event was co-sponsored by the Asian American Studies Department, the Africana-Asian Collaboratory for Inclusive Excellence and Educational Opportunities Project, Asian American Studies Pathways Project, College of Humanities Academic Programming Fund, and the Distinguishing Visiting Speaker Program.

The scholarships and awards were made possible by the generous monetary gifts and support of Dr. Kenyon Chan, Dr. Shirley Hune, Dr. Enrique Delacruz, Prosy Delacruz, JD, Dr. Eunai Shrake, and the Asian American Studies Department.

A very special thank you goes out to Ms. Janaki Bowerman, AAS Administrative Coordinator, Ms. Monica Cornejo, Administrative Support Assistant, Department Chair, Dr. Christina Ayala-Alcantar, Professor Edith Chen, Professor Margeaux Gamboa-Wong, Professor Teresa Williams Leon, Professor Tracy Buenavista, Micah Forteza, the AASPP interns, the students from the Africana-Asian Collaboratory for Inclusive Excellence who all laid the groundwork for and volunteered to make our live, in-person Mega Event a huge success!

To keep us with AAS, please visit:
csun.edu/humanities/asian-american-studies
Amidst the global pandemic and height of anti-Asian racism, AAS faculty and students collectively secured almost half a million dollars to support innovative projects dedicated to addressing the needs, experiences, and contributions of People of Color on campus and beyond. The following projects were led by AAS faculty and students:

**AFRICANA-ASIAN COLLABORATORY FOR INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE PROJECT**

Programs and resources that promote deeper understanding of African and Asian American cultures and histories so that the CSUN community can better respond to current affairs concerns both on and off campus.

**ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES PATHWAYS PROJECT**

- **THE APIDA RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE**
- **ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES PEER INVOLVEMENT, RECRUITMENT, AND EDUCATION (AASPIRE) PROGRAM**

Programs and services dedicated to the recruitment, retention, and wellness of APIDA students in higher education.

**CIVIL DISCOURSE & SOCIAL CHANGE**

Campus-wide initiative that combines education, community involvement and sustained activism on issues around social justice and social change.

**CSUN DREAM CENTER**

Provides resources and services to undocumented students, mixed status families, staff, faculty, allies and future undocumented students while fostering a more inclusive campus community.

**NEW BOOK ON “SPEECHIFICATION”**

After many years of teaching introduction to public speaking in the Asian American Studies Department at CSUN, Professors Derek Tang and Maria Turnmeyer have developed unique classroom activities and practicum that address the fundamental skills students need to develop to succeed in the classroom and their future professions. The activities and assignments are designed to be engaging and hands-on. Public speaking is a skill that requires learning the history and theories of rhetoric involved in public speaking. However, along with skill, public speaking requires energy - which begins with developing (writing and researching) the speech or presentation. Focusing on the elements of delivery and design, students have the opportunity to analyze the elements of great public speaking. Another unique feature of this textbook is inclusionary content often missing from public speaking textbooks. Content that celebrates inclusionary teaching and learning practices includes cultural and ethnic rhetoric, American Sign Language, and cognitive diversity. The book will be released by FlatWorld press in 2023. This textbook is a culmination of what the authors have learned from students who provided feedback and support for curriculum development. Thank you, students!
The Asian American Studies Pathways Project (AASPP) is the primary student services programming at CSUN designed to address the unique issues of Asian, Pacific Islander, and Desi American (APIDA)-identified students. The AASPP aims to increase student success and foster a strong ethnic studies culture at CSUN.

AAS Lecturer, Margeaux Gamboa-Wong serves as the faculty coordinator and the interns included Holly Lin, Jessica Steiner, Skylar Hall, Malia Alcantar, Micah Forteza, Anmol Walvekar, Kaley Block, Lina Jeong, and Joana Zhang. In AY 2021-2022, the small but mighty AASPP team led or participated in dozens of APIDA recruitment and retention initiatives with various campus and community partners including the AAS department, AACIEP, Anakbayan LA, Asian Pacific Counseling and Treatment Centers, Associated Students, BADGE Project, Black House, Colored Minds Inc., CSUN Today, MenCARE and Project DATE, Project Rebound, Student Outreach and Recruitment, University Student Union, Women's Research and Resource Center, and the CSUN Young Democratic Socialists of America Club.

In addition to these collaborations, AASPP hosted programming focused on wellness at the Glenn Omatsu House, as well as applied for and received more than $84K in grants to support their programs through the Campus Quality Fee, Diversity & Equity Innovation Grant, College of Humanities Special Projects Fund, and Campus Care Recovery Program.

For more information on how to support or collaborate with AASPP, email aaspathways@gmail.com

Check out the feature on AASPP by Patty Park in CSUN Today: csunshinetoday.csun.edu/education/pathways-project-a-space-for-apida-students-to-belong-thrive-and-succeed/
By Gina Masequesmay

CSUN AAS Alumni Jessica Steiner and Johnny Chan and I, Professor Gina Masequesmay, attended the 10th Anniversary of the Sing Peak Pilgrimage in Yosemite. It was Johnny Chan who first introduced me to the backpacking of this pilgrimage. Despite the fires and smokes that made us changed venues from Wawona to Lee Vining, the participants and organizers celebrated another successful pilgrimage honoring Chinese American workers who helped build the National Parks. Specifically, we honored Mountain Chef Tie Sing who had a peak named after him by the US Geological Survey. In the walking tours and talks, we learned that Sing’s cooking skills was instrumental in inspiring and motivating the Mather’s party to lobby Congress to create the National Park Service (NPS) for preservation of natural resources.

The Chinese Historical Society, along with the NPS Ranger Yenyen Chan and her assistant, Ranger Connie Lau, the National Park Conservation Association (NPCA), and volunteers helped made another memorable 3 days of walking tours, lectures and shared meals. Because of the research and persistence of Ranger Yenyen, the vision of former CA State Park superintendent Jack Chu (now Councilmember of La Mesa City), and the steadfast support of the Chinese Historical Society leader Eugene Moy, and many other volunteers, we now can visit the Chinese Laundry Exhibit in Wawona to learn more about the contributions and lives of Chinese Americans. On Forest Drive, below the Wawona Visitor's Center, you can visit the Chinese Laundry Exhibit in a shed that was the original laundry room where Chinese American workers had toiled in washing and ironing fresh clothes for guests of the Wawona Hotel. For years, this shed was in disrepair and used as a storage space. However, through advocacy work for the past 10 years, we now see more signs and hopefully more places like the Chinese Laundry room that are asserting Asian American stories to the development of our beautiful Yosemite Park. In the future, perhaps we can begin to tell a more integrated and complicated story with indigenous and other people of color voices like the buffalo soldiers.

After the 3 days of talks and walking tours, twenty-two people including myself and Jessica completed a counterclockwise loop backpacking trip, starting from Fernandez Trailhead via Walton Trail to Staniford Lakes to camp, then a cross-country day hike to Sing Peak the second day, and back to the Trailhead via Lilian Lake Trail the third day. We totaled 20 miles with 2800 feet of elevation gain.
Despite threat of a severe rainstorm, we only encountered light rain and rumbling thunder. Blessed by Tie Sing, we faced no smokes from the Washburn and Oak fires. Originally, we had planned on an easier hike from Quartz Mountain but the fire and smoke prevented that. This much harder hike with hours of bouldering reminded us of the hardship that Chinese American workers had in building the Tioga Road and other roads to Yosemite as well as in building their socioeconomic lives amidst white supremacy.

This year’s backpacking involved several new young backpackers, 3 of whom were trained by me and Dennis Arguelles of NPCA months before the trip. In fact, Jessica did her first mountain hike in October 2021. The Chinese Historical Society and the NPCA have been collaborating for many years to retell Asian American stories and to encourage the participation of people of color in our national parks. Part of the trip that Jessica and I partook is subsidized by NPCA, including lending equipment and gear for backpacking and coverage of car gas and meals. If anyone is interested to be trained for backpacking next summer, the NPCA and I will continue to train folks so contact me. Gina.Masequesmay@csun.edu.