

UCLA AASC 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

# MOUNTAIN MOVERS



SINCE 1969

## **CROSS**CURRENTS

Annual Newsmagazine of the **UCLA Asian American Studies Center**

As the newsmagazine of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center, **CrossCurrents** keeps readers informed of Center activities, including academic programs, research projects, student achievements, and relevant university and community issues. **CrossCurrents** also covers important events and projects related to Asian American Studies and communities, but not directly sponsored by the Center. Past issues can be found on the Center's website.

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1) Some of the Center's 2019 and Winter 2020 graduating student assistants and interns: Amanda Tsai, Alexis Recto, Sulmie Tran, Brian Be, Shirley Chieng, and Michelle Murakami; 2) Members of the Association for Hmong Students (AHS) during their meeting in Campbell Hall (UCLA AASC).



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## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Center Director Karen Umemoto speaking at the Southern California Book Launch for *Mountain Movers* at 341 FSN in Little Tokyo. (BR/UCLA AASC)

This past year, we launched our 50th Anniversary activities with a successful two-part symposium on Asylum and Deportation and the book launch of *Mountain Movers*, along with a summer reunion of original founders of the Asian American Studies Center. In the fall, we co-sponsored an exciting two-day conference to renew the ties between town and gown with the “Power to the People” conference that featured 55 speakers over a spread of issues of concern to our communities. Please enjoy recaps of and reflections on these commemorative activities and more within this issue of CrossCurrents.

We will continue the 50th Anniversary celebration this spring 2020 with **IMAGE MOVERS**, a three-weekend film festival in March sponsored in partnership with UCLA Film and Television Archive, Melnitz Movies, and the Center for EthnoCommunications and in collaboration with Visual Communications, Film Quarterly, and UCLA Asian American Studies Department. The aim is to reach a broader audience with thought-provoking films, old and new, that resonate with current issues today. We will also highlight our “50 for 50” fundraising campaign so that we can complete 50 oral histories of Asian American Studies founders by the end of our 50th anniversary celebrations. We hope you can join us in these and other activities.

Over these past two years, I have been inspired by the dedication of staff, the creative energy of students, the collaborative spirit of our faculty and the selfless dedication of community partners, elected officials and supporters with whom we have had the privilege to work alongside. And I am deeply thankful to the generous donors who make our work possible. The Center is not only a legacy institution, but continues to carve new terrain for the field and our future.

We look forward to seeing you as we carry the torch into the next 50 years.

**Karen Umemoto, PhD**

Helen and Morgan Chu Endowed Director’s Chair of the Asian American Studies Center

## MOUNTAIN MOVERS COMMEMORATING 50 YEARS OF ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES AT SF STATE, UC BERKELEY, AND UCLA

*Mountain Movers: Student Activism and the Emergence of Asian American Studies* shares the narratives of nine remarkable students. For each of these Asian Americans, their ethnic heritages and racialized experiences, their family backgrounds, their education, and the social movements of their day intersected so that they became agents of change. They organized and mobilized fellow students and community members to establish and further Asian American Studies (AAS) on their campuses. AAS has since grown, not only offering a relevant curriculum for and about these students, but one that also helps develop and empower their communities. With accounts from San Francisco State University, UC Berkeley, and UCLA, *Mountain Movers* highlights how students changed the course of history.

Edited by Russell Jeung, Karen Umemoto, Harvey Dong, Eric Mar, Lisa Hirai Tsuchitani, and Arnold Pan, this new publication features UCLA alumni Amy Uyematsu, Casimiro Tolentino, and Preeti Sharma sharing their

personal stories and experiences, alongside a history of AAS at UCLA by Jean-Paul deGuzman.

Attendees of the 2019 Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS) Conference in Madison were able to purchase the book, just a year after the idea for the project was born at the last AAAS conference. A reception for *Mountain Movers* was held during AAAS on April 26 and the Center shared previews of an online “storybook” for it on the website, which includes oral history videos, photos and documents, a historic timeline and a curriculum module. The site can be accessed at [ucla.in/2ILk88H](http://ucla.in/2ILk88H). Print copies of the book can also be purchased from AASC Press.

The Center later hosted the Southern California book launch at 341FSN on May 25.

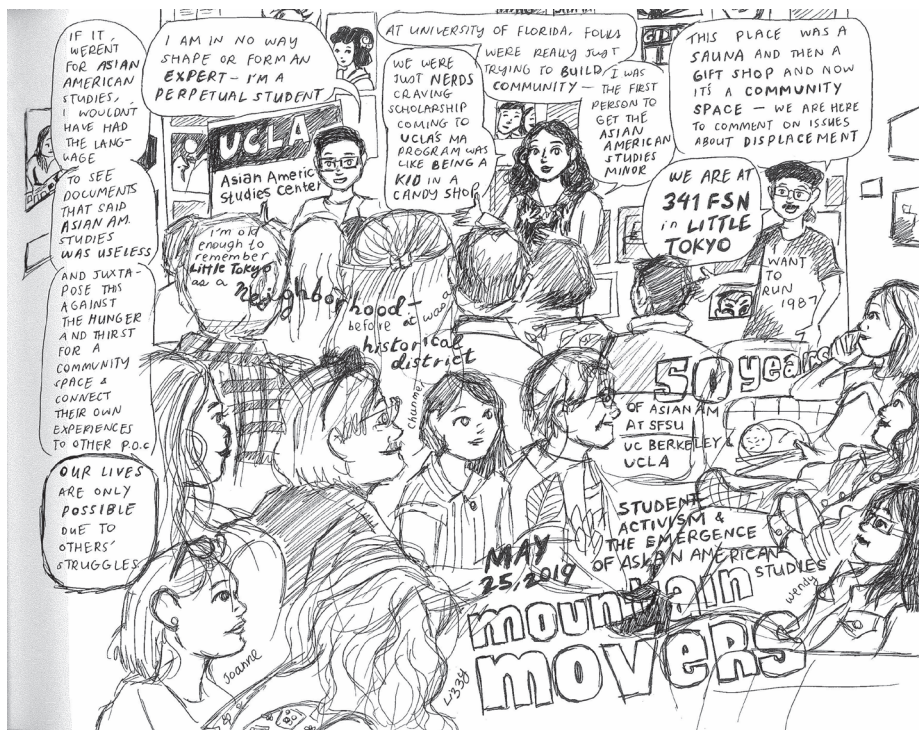
The first part of the day brought together deGuzman and Sharma, who discussed their own journeys with Asian American Studies and the MA program and talked about the future of the field with the audience (See *Angel Trazo’s illustrated notes from their talk on page 4*). In the second part, Uyematsu read her poetry, with musical accompaniment by Taiji Miyagawa, and Tolentino shared his experiences at UCLA, including teaching the first Filipino American experience class.



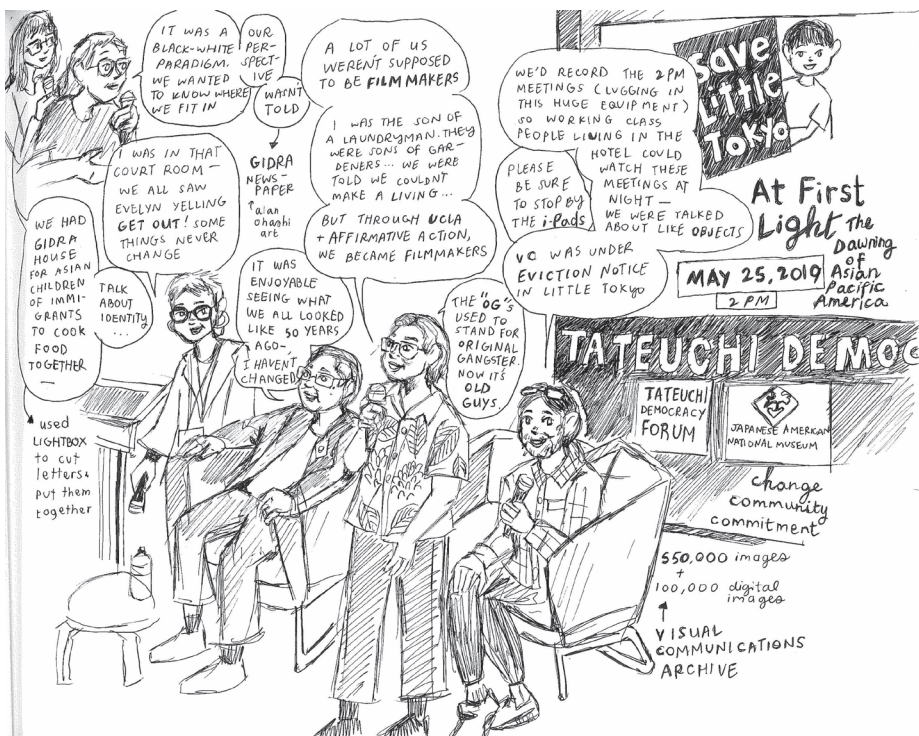
1) Jean-Paul deGuzman and Preeti Sharma; 2) Casimiro Tolentino; 3) Taiji Miyagawa and Amy Uyematsu during the launch at 341FSN. (Abraham Ferrer)

# AN AFTERNOON JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY WITH WORDS AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANGEL TRAZO

On May 25, 2019, in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, I took a journey through the 50-year history of Ethnic Studies. The part of American history, which often remains unknown or untold, is the history of People of Color. In my own experience, it was not until I graduated from Colgate University in 2017 that I learned the field of Asian American Studies even existed. Now I am a student in the Asian American Studies Masters program at UCLA.



Illustrated notes taken by Angel Trazo at the Mountain Movers Book Launch at 341 FSN and at the "At First Light" Opening Day Discussion at the Japanese American National Museum (Angel Trazo).



This year the Asian American Studies Center co-published *Mountain Movers: Student Activism and the Emergence of Asian American Studies*, commemorating the establishment and 50-year legacy of Asian American Studies at UCLA, UC Berkeley, and San Francisco State University. While speaking at the *Mountain Movers Southern California Book Launch* at 341 FSN, contributor, **Preeti Sharma**, shared her own journey into Asian American Studies. Sharma explained that coming into the Asian American Studies Master's program at UCLA felt like "being a kid in a candy shop." Having come to UCLA after fighting to establish an Asian American Studies minor at her undergraduate institution, University of Florida, Sharma illuminated the all-too-common dearth of ethnic studies curriculum in American education. Now a PhD student in Gender Studies at UCLA, Sharma elaborates on sharing leadership and challenging systems in her *Mountain Movers* chapter as a way of ensuring the push for ethnic studies curriculum across the nation continues.

Fellow *Mountain Movers* contributor, historian, and lecturer, **Jean-Paul de Guzman**, told the audience of how Asian American Studies provided him with the language to speak on why such programs and the community spaces they foster matter. de Guzman outlines the founding of the Asian American Studies Center in his contribution, highlighting its creation as a bridge between community and scholarship.

Following the *Mountain Movers* reception, I attended the opening of "At First Light: The Dawning of Asian Pacific America," a recent exhibition at the Japanese American National Museum. The panelists, **Robert Nakamura**, **Duane Kubo**, and **Eddie Wong**, explained the beginnings of **Visual Communications (VC)**, the first Asian Pacific America media organization in the United States. From their telling of VC's founding as a space for students to share their diverse stories in the predominantly-white field of film, to screening archival clips of Japanese Americans speaking out against incarceration in the courtroom to local social justice protests, the panelists brought the legacy of Asian American Studies to life. The multi-media exhibition ran in Little Tokyo from May 25 to October 20, 2019.

Angel Trazo is currently a student in the Asian American Studies MA program at UCLA and the author/illustrator of *We Are Inspiring: The Stories of 32 Inspirational Asian American Women*.



## LAU LECTURE SERIES ON ASYLUM AND DEPORTATION

As part of the Center's 50th Anniversary and Asian Pacific American Heritage Month activities, the Center's **Stanley Kwok Lau and Dora Wong Lau Distinguished Lecture Series** brought different speakers to campus to discuss the important issues of asylum and deportation in conjunction with the multi-campus **Southeast Asian Deportation Awareness Week**.

On May 15th, **Professor Mae Ngai** of Columbia University came to the UCLA Northwest Campus Auditorium to deliver a lecture entitled **"Mother of Exiles" - Refugees in American Myth and History**. She stressed the importance of taking a hard look at immigration restrictions, policies, and their history. Ngai stated, "I feel that what is happening today with refugees and asylum seekers should be important to everybody because what we see happening around the world, it's not just the United States; what we see around the world and on our southern border is a real emergency."

The second part of the series, the **Southeast Asian Deportation Awareness Forum**, took place on May 23 at the UCLA Tom Bradley International Hall. Students, faculty, and community members attended the forum to learn about how deportation is directly affecting the Southeast Asian community here in the United States and about the resilience and activism of Southeast Asian Americans in resisting these unjust policies and advocating for change. Asian American Studies MA student **June Kuoch** shared their experience working on the series in their reflection below.

For the Lau Lecture Series, the Center partnered with the Office of Residential Life, with additional support provided by the UCLA Chancellor's Advisory Council on Immigration Policy, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Asian American Studies Department, Luskin School for Public Affairs, Asian Pacific Coalition, United Khmer Students, and Vietnamese Student Union.



(Above) Students, staff, with Professors Hiroshi Motomura, Mae Ngai, Karen Umemoto and Keith Camacho at the check-in for "Mother of Exiles" (UCLA AASC)  
(Below) June Kuoch, Sheila Sy, Billy Taing, Jenny Srey, Montha Chum, Danny Thongsy, and Lan Nguyen at the Southeast Asian Deportation Awareness Forum (Jason Vu).



### FORUM ORGANIZER REFLECTIONS BY JUNE KUOCH

According to the **Southeast Asia Resource Action Center** (SEARAC), there were more than 17,144 Southeast Asians (SEA) with orders of removal at the end of fiscal year 2018 and subject to deportation at any time. After the election of President Trump in 2016, there has been a drastic increase in the Cambodian deportation quota to about 200 per year or an increase of 279%, due to the reinterpretation of agreements with Vietnam on the detention and deportation of pre-1995 refugees, and the placement of sanctions on Laos in order to force them to receive deportees. These statistics can seem abstract, but they represent the reality in which carceral violence operates within and against Southeast Asian refugee communities.

In August of 2016, eight Khmer men from Minnesota were picked up by I.C.E [U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement]. This was the seed for the grassroots movement, **Release Minnesota 8** (ReleaseMN8). Over a yearlong campaign, ReleaseMN8 had major wins, stopping the deportation of three Cambodian refugees, and uplifting the struggle of Southeast Asians in the United States, yet five of the eight were "sent back" to Cambodia—a place they had never been in their whole lives. I had the pleasure of organizing with ReleaseMN8 throughout my undergraduate career, even hosting the ReleaseMN8 fundraiser before moving to California, and even now at UCLA during my graduate career.

This past May, during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, with the help of many different undergraduate Southeast Asian student organizations and the Asian American Studies Center, I had the opportunity to be a core organizer for the **Stanley Kwok Lau and Dora Wong Lau Distinguished Lecture Series**. One of the featured

events was the **Southeast Asian Deportation Forum**. Undergraduate students had also been given the opportunity to further learn about deportation through a special topics class with **Dr. Thu-Huong Nguyen-Vo**. Through these and other events and activities, we were able to center the voices of those directly impacted by the "crimmigration" system, where the criminal (in)justice system and the immigration system intersect.

Fellow organizer **Lan Nguyen** and I invited our friends from across the United States to speak about the failure of refugee resettlement and deportation. With over 300+ people in attendances, the core speakers of the event were my two good friends, Khmer women and movement family directly impacted by this issue, **Montha Chum and Jenny Srey** from Release MN8. We followed up their lecture with a panel from both community members who have been organizing and have been impacted by deportation: **Sheila Sy** from Khmer Girls in Action, **Somdeng Danny Thongsy** from Asian Prisoner Support Committee, and **Houth Billy Taing** from Asian Pacific Islander Reentry & Inclusion through Support & Empowerment (API RISE) and the Anti-Recidivism Coalition.

The deportation forum was quite an emotional night for myself, as I felt two worlds of mine were colliding. It was the Midwest meets the West Coast. Furthermore, through the forum, those directly impacted by deportation spoke about incarceration, legal strategies, and the love that drives them to continue this work.

June Kuoch is currently a student in the Asian American Studies MA program at UCLA.





From the AASC Founders Reunion (Abraham Ferrer; UCLA AASC).





## COLLECTIVE MEMORIES PROJECT UPDATE

The **Collective Memories Project** continues to document the experiences and history of those involved in the growth of Asian American Studies and the start of the Center. These oral histories reveal the efforts taken to launch courses, spark new research, grow the first collection of publications and gather library, archival and other materials that now serve as major resources for students, scholars and communities. The long-term aim of the project is to continue beyond the UCLA experience to extend to the Asian American Movement more broadly. Led by **Center for EthnoCommunications Assistant Director Janet Chen** and **Center Director Karen Umemoto**, the Collective Memories team has completed more oral histories and shared them online at [aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/](https://aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/).

Currently the site features interviews with the following Center founders:

- **Alan Nishio**, first interim director of the Center
- **Duane Kubo**, co-founder of Visual Communications (VC) and *Gidra* contributor
- **Florante Ibanez**, co-founder of Samahang Pilipino and former AASC staff
- **Mary Uyematsu Kao**, former AASC publications coordinator and photographer who documented community and activist events
- **Carol Mochizuki**, former member of *Gidra* Staff, former Board President of the Asian American Drug Abuse Program
- **Ichiro Mike Murase**, former member of *Gidra* staff and co-founder of Little Tokyo Service Center and Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress
- **Robert Nakamura**, co-founder of VC and the founder of the UCLA Center for EthnoCommunications
- **Brenda Paik Sunoo**, journalist and writer, attended UCLA in late 1960s
- **Merilynne Hamano Quon**, organized conferences such as Sansei Concern, ARE YOU YELLOW, Oriental Concern, former AASC Student and Community Projects coordinator
- **Casimiro U. Tolentino**, assistant editor for *Letters in Exile* and co-founder of Samahang Pilipino
- **Amy Uyematsu**, former AASC staff and co-editor of *Roots: An Asian American Reader*
- **Eddie Wong**, co-founder of VC, worked on *Roots* and *Gidra*

The team is currently working on editing and transcribing the oral histories of others, such as **Kenyon Chan**, **May Chen**, **Rocky Chin**, **Helen Chu**, **Judy Chu**, **Morgan Chu**, **Lowell Chun-Hoon**, **Mike Eng**, **Laura Fineman**, **Alan Kumamoto**, **Vivian Matsushige**, **Franklin Odo**, **Dennis Ogawa**, **Rodney Ogawa**, **Glenn Omatsu**, **Elsie Osajima**, **Jesse Quinsaat**, **Bob Suzuki**, **Paul Suzuki**, **Suzi Wong**, and **Mia Yamamoto**. The Center hopes to complete fifty oral histories by Fall 2020.



Members of the Collective Memories team with interviewees **Mia Yamamoto** and **Mike Eng**.  
1) Gabriela Rodriguez-Gomez, Alma E. Villa Loma, Yamamoto, Susie Ling, and Janet Chen;  
2) Karen Umemoto, Mike Eng, Lian Mae Tualla, Marnie Salvani and Janet Chen.  
(JC/UCLA AASC)

## ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER FOUNDERS REUNION

On Saturday, July 13th, the Center hosted the **Founders Reunion**, inviting people who helped bring the Center to life in its nascent years. Those in attendance were organizers, students, staff, and community supporters in the 60s and 70s. Guests brought their families and came as far as Hawai'i and Massachusetts to join the celebration at the James West Alumni Center.

During the event, guests mingled and reconnected, with games hosted by alumni **Mike Murase**, **Carol Mochizuki**, and **Vivian Matsushige**. Alum and fellow AASC founder **Congresswoman Judy Chu** presented a special commendation to the Center in honor of its 50th anniversary. **Center Director Professor Karen Umemoto** and current staff shared updates on current work, including the **Mountain Movers** storybook site and footage from **Collective Memories**, an oral history project that recounts the founding of Asian American Studies, especially at UCLA, as well as the personal life histories of the ones integral to its beginnings. (*Read more about it in the next article on this page!*)

The Center also announced its **50 for 50** fundraising campaign, with a lead donation and challenge gift by Carol Mochizuki. Former director **Alan Nishio** also spoke, reaffirming the need to support and sustain spaces like AASC, especially in these times of institutional budget cuts and widespread xenophobia, racism, and bias. Funds for the campaign would go towards the Collective Memories project. To join the 50 for 50 campaign, visit [giving.ucla.edu/AASC50for50](https://giving.ucla.edu/AASC50for50).

The event was co-sponsored by the Asian American Studies Department, the Institute of American Cultures, and the UCLA Alumni Association - Diversity Programs. Thank you to everyone who attended and joined the Center in reliving old memories, creating new ones, seeing how far we have come, and imagining how to bring the Center into the future.



# INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN CULTURES CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF ETHNIC STUDIES AT UCLA

As UCLA celebrated its centennial year, the **Institute of American Cultures (IAC)** along with the four ethnic studies research centers also marked their 50th anniversary. It has been 50 years of advancing research for social justice, of fostering students and scholars, and of engaging with community. The centers under IAC - the **Asian American Studies Center (AASC)**, the **American Indian Studies Center (AISC)**, the **Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies (Bunche)** and the **Chicano Studies Research Center (CSCRC)** - have all played integral parts not only in the history and growth of UCLA, but in and for communities of color locally and worldwide.

This year IAC collectively marked this occasion with the **IAC Film Festival** on February 1 at James West Alumni Center and the **IAC 50th Anniversary Gala** on October 27 at the Luskin Conference Center. During the day-long film festival, each center presented works from alumni and the evening ended with a reception and a screening of *Selena*, produced by alum **Moctesuma Esparza**. AASC invited Visual Communications co-founder **Duane Kubo** to show "Cruising J-Town" and Asian American Studies MA and Center for EthnoCommunications alum **Asiroh Cham** to present her film "My Name is Asiroh." After their films were shown, they engaged in a discussion and Q&A with **Center Director Karen Umemoto**.

The IAC Gala in the fall brought together over 300 guests, who were treated to an evening with special performances and the honoring of community partners. AASC chose to recognize **Visual Communications (VC)**, a long-time collaborator of the Center with a shared history as they too celebrate their 50th anniversary. VC was founded in 1970 by



Nobuko Miyamoto performing with Derek Nakamoto at the IAC Gala.  
(UCLA IAC)

four UCLA students and filmmakers, **Robert Nakamura, Eddie Wong, Alan Ohashi, and Duane Kubo**. Executive Director **Francis Cullado** was on hand to accept the award and he thanked AASC for the honor and its work, stating, "Because of the foundation that the Asian American Studies Center has built from the movement, combined with the cultivation of our communities, many of us in several organizations today can trace back our histories to you." To close the night, artist **Nobuko Miyamoto** performed a number of songs, including the classic movement song "We Are the Children" from *A Grain of Sand*, "To All Relations" and a couple of recently released songs. She was accompanied by **Derek Nakamoto** on keyboard.

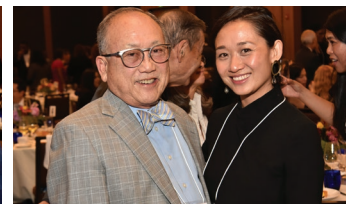
The IAC and the centers were especially honored to celebrate their 50th anniversary with so many founders and supporters from across the decades. It was a night to reflect on how far the centers have come, as well as to strengthen the collective resolve to continue to push ethnic and indigenous studies forward into the next fifty years and beyond.



At the IAC Film Festival: 1) Students and AASC staff with IAC Vice Provost David K. Yoo and featured filmmakers **Asiroh Cham** and **Duane Kubo**; 2) **Lucien** and **Duane Kubo**, Professor **Karen Umemoto**, **Jeff Chop**, and **Abraham Ferrer**. At the IAC Gala 3) **Amy Uyematsu**, **Elsie Osajima**, and **Carol Mochizuki**; 4) Vice Provost **Yoo**, Vice Chancellor **Roger Wakimoto**, and **Jina Wakimoto**; 5) AASC Staff **Aidan Yun** and **Irene Park** tabling for the Center (UCLA IAC).



At the IAC Gala (left) 1) Professor **Karen Umemoto** with VC Executive Director **Francis Cullado** and **Melany de la Cruz-Viesca**; 2) **Philip Law** and Vice Provost **Cindy Fan** with Professor **Tritia Toyota**; 3) The Honorable Judge **Ernest Hiroshige** and **Patricia Nguyen** of UCLA Alumni Diversity Programs; 4) **Barbra Ramos** with **Mary Uyematsu Kao**; 5) Professor **Rachel Lee** with alumni **Steven Wong** and **Leslie Ito** (1,2,3: UCLA IAC; 4: **John Kao**; 5: **BR/UCLA AASC**)







(Right) Taz Ahmed and Jeff Chang at “The In-Betweens” (BR/UCLA AASC)  
(Below) At the Power to the People Conference (Bing Wang).



## ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES 50TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

### POWER TO THE PEOPLE



The Center partnered with the Asian American Studies Department (AASD) and the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council (A3PCON) for a special two-day event that celebrated the Center’s legacy of building research with community. On November 1st, an evening program entitled “**The In-Betweens: Asian American Solidarity in the Era of Resegregation**” was held at the Tateuchi Democracy Forum at the Japanese American National Museum. The event featured Asian American Studies MA alum and author **Jeff Chang** in conversation with Luskin Public Affairs alum and 2019 Activist-in-Residence **Tanzila “Taz” Ahmed**, after a viewing of episodes 3 and 4 from Chang’s docuseries **We Gon’ Be Alright**. A recording of their discussion, which covered topics such as ideas of freedom, the institutionalization and professionalization of Asian American studies, the current dehumanization of marginalized populations like Muslim Americans, and the growing cultural and political consciousness of AAPIs, will be released as part of Ahmed’s podcast project for 18 Million Rising.

On Saturday, November 2nd, the day-long “**Power to the People**” 50 Years of Bridging Research with Community Conference took place at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs. The plenaries and workshops were actively organized to examine important issues for AAPIs and to see how current movements and community organizations can work with researchers and students to further positive change. The opening plenary was on building power and featured A3PCON Executive Director **Manjusha Kulkarni** with Asian American Studies and Political Science **Professor Natalie Masuoka**. After UCLA Law alum **Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi** (District 66-CA) presented a resolution for the 50th anniversary of Asian American Studies at UCLA to AASD Chair **Professor Victor Bascara** and Center Director **Professor Karen Uememoto**, he joined the plenary for “Elevating Voices and Building Solidarity,” which also featured Uememoto along with alumni **Professor Diane Fujino** of UC Santa Barbara and **Chancee Martorell** of Thai Community Development Center. The final plenary of the day brought attendees together to think about “Alternative Imaginaries and Futures.” Organized by API Equality-LA Executive Director **Tracy Zhao**, the panel inspired and revitalized many in attendance and featured **Meenadchi** of Trauma-Informed Nonviolent Communication; **Yvonne Yen Liu**, former UCLA Activist-in-Residence and Founder of Solidarity Research Center; and **Tavae Samuelu** of Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC).

Throughout the day’s 14 workshops, around 300 students, faculty, organizers, community advocates, and alumni engaged in discussions around issues like the environmental justice and the Green New Deal, gentrification, Census 2020, and mental health. To view the full list of workshops, as well to see notes from the sessions and video for the plenaries that will be made available on the Center’s website at a later time, visit [aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/conf19/](https://aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/conf19/).

The conference organizers are grateful to the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, College of Social Sciences, Institute of American Cultures, and Office of Diversity and Inclusion, as well as the Japanese American National Museum for their co-sponsorship and support.

Guest-edited by **OiYan A. Poon** (Colorado State University) and **George Villanueva** (Loyola University Chicago), the latest special topic issue of **AAPI Nexus Journal** (16:1-2) calls for a reenergized agenda for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) university-community research partnerships, demonstrating transformative methodologies, pedagogies, and praxis. It features contributions from **Robert Agres, Jensine Carreon, Ashley E. Cheri, Carolyn Choi, Angie Y. Chung, Elise Dang, Loan Thi Dao, Wei Ming Dariotis, Adrienne Dillard, Kamuela Joseph Nui Enos, Kim Geron, Russell Jeung, Brent Kakesako, B. Puni Kekauoha, Tracy Lai, Emily Le, C. Aujean Lee, Arlene Daus-Magbual, Roderick Daus-Magbual, Eric Mar, Susan Nakaoka, Philip Nguyen, Isabelle Thuy Pelaud, Juily Phun, R. Varisa Patraporn, John Ho Song, Sheila Sy, Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales, Karen Umemoto, Kent Wong, and Jennifer A. Yee.**

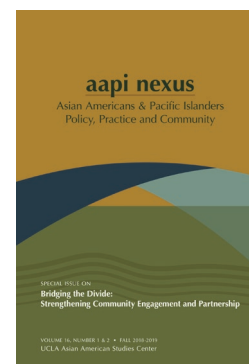
Both of the guest-editors felt it was an honor to work on this issue, emphasizing that *Nexus* is a

critical space for research, policy and practice to come together and that overall more needed to be done to work towards justice.

Co-editor George Villanueva shared, “As an engaged scholar-activist in a university setting today, I really believe that universities and communities of color can mutually benefit each other if ethical community-based research partnerships and bridges are built. I hope that this special issue makes a contribution to maintaining and spurring the collaboration necessary to allow Asian American communities to thrive in both higher education and the everyday neighborhoods in which we build community.”

OiYan Poon, a UCLA Education PhD alum mentored by the late **Don Nakanishi**, reflected that “When I was a college student affairs professional advocating for the federal creation of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs), I saw in my daily work the need for such a federal program and funding, but did not feel like AAPI educational interests were well reflected in research. There was, and still is, a need for more researchers to be in continual conversation with practitioners, community and policy leaders. My hope is that this special issue will continue building and adding to research-policy-practice coalitions for a more just world.”

This is the first issue released as open access on the newly revamped site for the journal. Check out the issue, as well as all previous issues by registering for free at [aapinexus.org](http://aapinexus.org).



#### Program Spotlight | NATIVE JUSTICE: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN GUAM



(Kelly Zhao)

“During my time there, it wasn’t just about research—it was about building trust, respect, and solidarity with the community members we were working with through the projects our cohort developed with grassroots organizations. I was really thankful that our mentor **Frankie Casil** always helped us navigate through cultural protocol and taught us phrases in Chamoru whenever we engaged with other community members both in and outside of our research project with **Chief Hurao Academy**. Our mentor’s guidance also allowed us to connect with various community members and grassroots organizers, centering on their voices and perspectives during our time on the island. As an Asian American Studies major, I always hear about doing community-based research. However, actually going into the field—especially into a community that I was not apart of—really challenged my own expectations of what community-based research could be like through a collaborative, meaningful, and community-centered empowerment approach. I learned a lot about Chamoru history and culture but also found myself reflecting constantly on what conducting community-based research really meant to me and what a privilege it was to be welcomed into the Chamoru community, building long-lasting relationships with folk that extended beyond the academic scope of the program. The weekly field trips and group dinners we had with elders in the community also broadened my perspective on how important it was to recognize that we were not just there as student researchers, but also as guests and visitors in the land.” - **Kelly Zhao**

#### GUAM TRAVEL STUDY

This past summer, the second ever cohort (*pictured*) participated in the **UCLA Guam Travel Study** program, led once again by **Professor Keith Camacho** with assistance of Asian American Studies and Public Health Masters student **Paul Mendoza**. Students reflected back on their activities and shared their thoughts and experiences with us.

“After embarking on the most rewarding and fascinating travel study program to the beautiful Pacific Island of Guam, it reminded me of my homeland of Jamaica. In Guam, I did not feel like a stranger, because I was welcomed by both Pacific Islander students, faculty and staff at the **University of Guam**. The indigenous Chamorro people have displayed lots of respect and appreciation to my UCLA cohort and, as a result, this has created an indelible space in my heart. My group did research about the “Suicide Epidemic,” in Guam with the **Haya Foundation**. I admire the Haya staff for their volunteer services, dedication to community, and providing a safe and dignified space to help establish reconnection through traditional holistic healing. My experience has caused me to think critically about the ways to help my community and the significance of social justice activism.” - **Carlene Francis**

“My travel study experience in Guåhan (Guam) was one of cultural enrichment and relation-making. As an Indigenous student of the Americas with a passion for Native sovereignty and self determination (especially dealing with, but not limited to, land rights), my outlook while searching for a study abroad program was to find one that honored the community it worked with both culturally and politically. Native Justice: Social Movements in Guam was the program for me. I spent 4 weeks on the island working with a community organization named **Guam Preservation Trust** to establish the first cultural heritage preserve on Guam. This would be a space where community members could visit and maintain their cultural practices as families in an area that supported them. I felt incredibly grateful to have been apart of this process as an intern and learned a tremendous amount of skill in regards to handling the repatriation of ancient sites with a sensitivity to contemporary cultural protocol and community input. The skills I learned while working with the Guam Preservation Trust will last me a lifetime in my endeavors with law school and with my obligations to my communities as a land protector.” - **Tecpatl T. Kuauhtzin**



# HONORING BRUINS COMMITTED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH UCLA: OUR STORIES OUR IMPACT

**UCLA: Our Stories, Our Impact** is a multimedia traveling art exhibit illuminating the role of UCLA and its alumni in advancing equity and equality. Part of UCLA's yearlong **Centennial Celebration**, the exhibit debuted at UCLA's Kerckhoff Art Gallery on October 3 and is anchored by the portraits and stories of Bruins who have advanced and shaped social movements. Featured Asian American alumni include **Chancee Martorell** of Thai Community Development Center, labor organizer **John Delloro**, and undocumented student activist **Tam Tran**, with **Bill Watanabe**, **Kristina Wong**, and **Steward Kwoh** among those profiled online. Other Bruins highlighted are **Patrisse Cullors**, **Martha Gonzales of Quetzal**, and **Natalie Site Means**. Visit [ourstoriesourimpact.irle.edu](http://ourstoriesourimpact.irle.edu) to learn more about all those featured and to find out where the exhibit will be on view during its run.

At a reception for the exhibit on Saturday, October 5th, Kristina Wong shared how heartening it was to be among this group even though "we don't get into social justice to be honored." Bill Watanabe spoke on getting into the School of Social Welfare and how this recognition was a validation of that decision by the school fifty years ago to make sure their students looked like the diverse populations they would be serving. Chancee Martorell, who taught the first Thai American experience course at UCLA, emphasized that it takes a great deal of sacrifice to do social justice work, thanking her family, as well as her own staff and interns. She was especially proud of the latter, because "they are committed, dedicated individuals who are future change agents" and encouraged people to continue to support this next generation with mentorship in order to sustain the difficult work of social justice. The exhibit truly highlighted the impact that Bruins have made across different generations and into today.



At the UCLA: Our Stories, Our Impact Exhibit Reception (left) 1) Bill and Ruth Watanabe; 2) AASC's Marji Lee and Melany de la Cruz-Viesca with John Delloro's family members, Susan Suh and Mina Delloro-Suh, in front of a portrait of John Delloro; 3) Kristina Wong sharing her thanks; and (above) 4) Chancee Martorell in front of her portrait. (UCLA IRLE).

This project was led by the UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, the Labor Center, and the Chancellor's Advisory Council on Immigration Policy, in partnership with the Institute of American Cultures, the American Indian Studies Center, the Asian American Studies Center, the Bunche Center for African American Studies, and the Chicano Studies Research Center.

## CENTER RECEIVES KEY FUNDING FOR YURI KOCHIYAMA PROJECT

The Center is pleased to announce major support from the **California Civil Liberties Public Education Program (CCLPEP)**, the **National Park Service's Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) grants**, and the **California Wellness Foundation** for a new project featuring activist **Yuri Kochiyama** and other curriculum development.

The educational project builds upon the Center's past work and relationships with Yuri Kochiyama and her family. The Center was honored to host Kochiyama when she was a scholar-in-residence in 1998 and has continued to share her legacy with her memoir **Passing It On**, published by AASC Press in 2004, and the housing of a collection of her papers related to the Asian American movement.

**Center Director Karen Umemoto** shared, "Yuri Kochiyama was deeply dedicated to human rights and civil liberties. Her compassion for the cause of justice was overflowing. We are grateful to be awarded this grant to share the civil rights story of Yuri Kochiyama and make a selection of her civil rights and human rights collection digitally available to the public so all can learn and be inspired by her and the social movements of which she was a part."

With this support, the Center will create an open access online digital exhibition and accompanying high school curriculum on the work of civil rights icon Yuri Kochiyama. The exhibition will follow her life story told in **Passing It On** and will highlight her lifetime of work

UCLA students, staff and faculty with Yuri Kochiyama for a Brown Bag Lunch during her 1998 residency. Pictured are (seated): Marjorie Lee, Shingly Lee, Yuri Kochiyama, Leslie Ito; (leaning in) Cathy Castor, Don Nakanishi; (standing, from left) Ellen Wu, Glenn Omatsu, Meg Thornton, Edward Dormitorio, Raul Ebio, Judy Soo Hoo, Richard Bis, Nancy Kim, Bob Nakamura, and John Esaki (UCLA AASC).



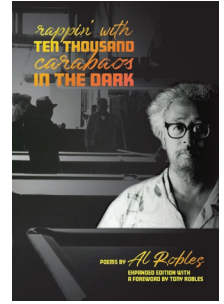
following incarceration in Jerome, Arkansas, including her cross-racial social justice organizing. The curriculum will be incorporated into teacher training workshops with the **UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences's Center X** and publicized through conferences and networks to educators in California.

CCLPEP provides grants for educational projects that address civil liberties and include information and comparisons to the forced exclusion and incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII. The JACS grant program's mission is to teach future generations about the injustice of the World War II confinement of Japanese Americans and to inspire commitment to equal justice under the law.

## NEW UCLA AASC PRESS PUBLICATIONS

### RAPPIN' WITH TEN THOUSAND CARABAOS IN THE DARK BY AL ROBLES

Originally published in 1996, *Rappin' With Ten Thousand Carabaos in the Dark* is a collection of poetry by the late **Al Robles**, the quintessential Pilipino American poet, storyteller, and co-founder of the Kearny Street Workshop in San Francisco. In this new expanded edition that also commemorates UCLA AASC's 50th anniversary, the book includes a forward by **Tony Robles**, as well as a classic essay by Al Robles from *Amerasia Journal*. Described by **Ishmael Reed** as "a journey into the heart of Pilipino soul," Robles's poetry reflected his power as a storyteller and his own activism. It includes glimpses into the lives of the elderly Pilipino Manongs, whose stories and lives he documented. The book will be available for purchase via the Center's website starting in December 2019 and a special launch event will take place in 2020.



**Mixed Race Student Politics: A Rising "Third Wave" Movement at UCLA**, edited by **Professor Robert Chao Romero** with UCLA alumni **James Ong**, **Chelsea Guillermo-Wann** and **Jennifer Logia**, was born from a 2014 undergraduate seminar taught by Professor Romero, entitled "Being Mixed Race at UCLA." He and his students recognized the need to address the racial climate concerns of mixed race students. The book features sixteen graduate and undergraduate student essays, windows into the diverse experiences of being a mixed race university student in America and at UCLA, a leading edge of mixed race student organizing, particularly with the Mixed Student Union. The book highlights this "third wave" of a mixed race movement along with the rise of mixed race politics, including calling for the creation of a multiethnic studies center at UCLA and a related degree. It is currently available on [lulu.com](http://lulu.com). There will be a reception for the book in 2020.

### MIXED RACE STUDENT POLITICS

#### Alumni Spotlight



(Anna Alves)

### ANNA ALVES ON HER FULBRIGHT EXPERIENCE

*Anna Alves was a part of the 2018-2019 Fulbright cohort in the Philippines, studying transpacific literary relations, culture and aesthetics between the Philippines and United States.*

The ways Filipino America is imagined not just in the Americas but in and by Filipinos writing in English in the Philippines is what most interests me, both as someone who analyses literature

and writes fiction. The history of American Empire is often obscured, even willfully ignored, in the US. Living abroad in Manila for nine months during the 2018-2019 academic year was a transformative experience. Being immersed, first-hand, in the social milieus within which literary imaginations by Filipino writers are created, in daily life and across so many arenas such as holidays, elections, religion, even food, really illuminated the long-lasting legacy and continuing consequence of US imperialism, as well as the way things have been/are Filipinized or localized. Observing how US culture is both embedded and resisted, in expansive interactions, in exposure to contemporary Philippine arts and culture, in talking one-on-one with other Philippine writer-scholars, transformed any initial assumptions I might have had, even if unknowing. What surprised me was the way the regional elements of the Philippines as an archipelagic nation are constantly and intentionally grappled with, and how that impacts literary languages across the country. It's not just about English vs. Tagalog, but also Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon and any of the other roughly 187 languages of the Philippines. Each of those regions has a distinct culture as well.

The Fulbright experience at this point of my life was the culmination of a lifetime of work as well as a fresh return. I started studying Philippine Literature in English, and the larger context of US/Philippine literary relations, as an undergrad and grad student at UCLA over two decades ago. As a writer, scholar, and cultural worker since, I've followed my passions around culture, aesthetics, and community development, both in academia and outside of it, and I've traveled extensively across the US and abroad.

Returning to school later in my life to get my MFA and then PhD made me more appreciative and cognizant of how being outside of your comfort zone, and "in the field" as it were, is both singular and invaluable. Going out into the "global field" felt like an organic extension of all of my prior interests and work.

During my Fulbright time, I learned that you never stop learning - about yourself, your field, and the world around you. Living abroad for that length of time, and the opportunities for cultural exchange and expanding your own world-views, require a more expansive immersion, outside of yourself and your work. In the end, I believe my time in the Philippines showed me that my capacity for discovery is both boundless and bountiful, and that intellectual resiliency will inform my academic and creative work in fresh ways, moving forward.

My immediate plans include finishing my dissertation manuscript to earn my PhD. I'm also returning to the Philippines in January 2020 to teach a Fiction Workshop at the Fine Arts Department at Ateneo de Manila University. The new academic and artistic colleagues I've connected with in the Philippines are already emerging a transpacific network for future collaborations and arenas of shared ideas. I am also cultivating some archival preservation projects between the US and Manila, especially around the **N.V.M. Gonzalez Archives Collection** housed at the University of the Philippines at Diliman, and I am looking for ways to more regularly source transpacific Filipino/American creative writing exchange workshops. A potential project close to my heart involves developing a follow-up to a book of oral interviews of multi-generational Filipino writers in English that Fulbright alum **Roger Bresnahan** published in the 1980s, *Conversations with Filipino Writers*. I'd like to develop a follow up entitled, "Transpacific Conversations with Filipino Writer," that collects oral interviews with contemporary Filipino writers in English in the US and the Philippines.

Anna Alves is currently a lecturer with the UCLA Asian American Studies Department and is a doctoral candidate in the American Studies Program at Rutgers University-Newark. She is a UCLA Asian American Studies MA alum ('99/Coursework from 1992-1995) and earned her BA in English and History at UCLA in 1992.



## MIKE HOA NGUYEN AND DANIEL LUU RECOGNIZED WITH DON T. NAKANISHI AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP



Congratulations to Mike Hoa Nguyen and Daniel Luu, the 2018-2019 recipients of the Nakanishi Award for Outstanding Engaged Scholarship in Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies at UCLA!

**Daniel Luu** graduated this June 2019 with a B.A. in Asian American Studies and a minor in Urban & Regional Studies from UCLA. This Fall, he will begin a Master's degree program in Urban Planning at UCLA. Those who nominated Luu as an undergraduate underscored his qualities as an incredible scholar, able to fuse research and artistry with

community engagement. He worked with the **Missing Piece Project**, a public art project that calls for a collective dedication of objects by Southeast Asian refugee community members at the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington DC on each April 30 (the anniversary of the "end" of the war, and the beginning of many refugee journeys), and created a documentary short around it, bringing visibility to community voices. As a research assistant for the **UCLA Center for Neighborhood Knowledge**, he worked with a professor, staff researchers and students to examine the impacts of gentrification on the Cambodian community in Long Beach and created videos around them. Daniel continually demonstrated community service and leadership through working with several student and non-profit organizations, such as **UCLA United Khmer Students** for Cambodian Culture Night and **VietUnity** and other organizations in Long Beach.

Through the generosity of UCLA faculty, students, staff, and alumni as well as community leaders, an endowment for this award was established that honors the late **Professor Emeritus Don T. Nakanishi**, who served on the UCLA faculty for thirty-five years and who ably directed the Asian American Studies Center from 1990 to 2010. Among his invaluable contributions to Asian American Studies, Professor Nakanishi co-founded two, national publications: **Amerasia Journal** and **AAPI Nexus**. Professor Nakanishi published widely in the areas of Asian American politics and education, mentored thousands of students, and provided professional and community-based service locally, nationally, and internationally. The Nakanishi Award includes a five thousand dollar award. The award rotates annually between faculty and students. The faculty award will be given near the end of the 2019-20 academic year.

Faculty that nominated **Mike Hoa Nguyen** for the graduate award highly regarded him for his deep commitment to community through research, teaching, and activism. As one professor noted, "He embodies the spirit of Don [Nakanishi] through his scholarship and political engagement. As with Don, his work consistently bridges academic scholarship with the most underserved Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and populations."

He has published extensively on the impact of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) and his scholarship is enriched by his experience working in government. His work has documented the role that AANAPISIs play in empowering the most underserved students to transform their institutions and communities, while advancing a more positive, just, and democratic society. Since coming to UCLA, Nguyen has published four peer-reviewed journal articles, three book chapters, and a dozen other reports and briefs that focus on Asian American and Pacific Islander populations. His service to communities has earned him Certificates of Recognition and Commendations from **U.S. Congressman Mike Honda and California State Assembly Members Paul Fong, Joe Coto, and Ash Kalra**. "Mike's expertise and perspective has been immensely helpful in our own work focused on expanding educational opportunities for AAPIS... his research helped create factsheets and resources related to the Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard lawsuit," said a community leader.

Nguyen received his B.A. in American Studies with a minor in Asian American Studies from UC Berkeley. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Education from UCLA. In Fall 2019, he joined the University of Denver, Department of Higher Education as a tenure-track Assistant Professor.

### ALUMNI & STUDENT NEWS



• The late **Dawn Bohulano Mabalon** was honored at a special tribute in Ackerman Ballroom on January 26, and in the exhibit "Growing Up Dawn," (pictured left, with some of her family, friends) at Kerckhoff Art Gallery. She was recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS) Conference and honored at the UCLA Pilipino Alumni Association's Scholarship brunch.

- Asian American Studies (AAS) alumni **Randall Park** and **Ali Wong** starred in and co-wrote with fellow UCLA alum **Michael Golamco** the film *Always Be My Maybe*, released in theaters and on Netflix this past May. The film will be featured in the Center's upcoming **IMAGE MOVERS** film festival in March 2020.
- AAS MA alum **Jeff Chang** released the digital series *We Gon' Be Alright*, based on his book of essays of the same name. Fellow UCLA alum **Sarah Nguyen** served as a co-producer with director and producer **Bao Nguyen**.
- 2017-2018 IAC-AASC Visiting Scholar **Crystal Mun-hye Baik** published *Reencounters: On the Korean War and Diasporic Memory Critique* (Temple University Press).

- Double alum and APIAHiP Executive Director **Michelle Magalong** joined the University of Maryland as the Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow.
- Alum and 2017 Activist-in-Residence **Lisa Hasegawa** became the Regional Vice President, Western Region for NeighborWorks America.
- Education PhD alum **OiYan Poon** received tenure at Colorado State University. She was also recognized for Outstanding Contribution to Research and Scholarship by the NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education Asian Pacific Islander Knowledge Community and with the Engaged Scholar Award at this year's AAS Conference.
- *Rethinking Ethnic Studies* featured chapters co-authored by UCLA Education alumni such as **Tracy Lachica Buenavista**, **Edward R. Curammeng**, and **Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales**.
- *Love, Robot* by 2014-15 IAC-AASC Visiting Scholar **Margaret Rhee** won the 2019 Book Award from AAAS in the Creative Writing (Poetry) category.
- Double Bruin alum **Stewart Kwoh** was the keynote speaker for the 2019 UCLA Asian American Studies Department Graduation Ceremony.
- Undergraduate **Leann Thuy-Huong Pham** and graduate student **Edward Nadurata** were chosen as the student speakers for the 2019 AASD Graduation Ceremony.

Artists and writers were at the core of the early AIDS movement in the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities in Los Angeles. So when **Irene Suico Soriano** asked me to collaborate on an event as part of **Lambda LitFest**, a weeklong series of readings by Lambda Literary, I jumped at the chance and suggested a panel of API AIDS activists/writers from that era, that would eventually become “**I Get So Emotional, Baby: Queer Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Writing in the Time of AIDS**” at the Pilipino Workers Center on September 22.

Before Irene was a staff at the Asian American Studies Center, she was a treatment advocate at the **Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team (APAIT)** in the 90s. A poet in her own right, she has dedicated her life to nurturing other writers. While at APAIT, Irene got a grant to organize a reading series called “**Wrestling Tigers**” at the Japanese American National Museum. Many fresh-faced queer API writers, including myself, had shared our first words in public at Irene’s readings. In Irene, not only did I find the perfect conspirator to organize the LitFest panel, but I also locked in the first panelist!

Next we recruited **Napoleon Lustre** and **Diep Tran**. Napoleon was a superstar in AIDS outreach, going to spaces to find the hard-to-reach at-risk populations that most feared to tread. He became HIV-positive while he was an undergrad at UC Irvine in the late 80s and bravely spoke about his experience. Most people know Diep as a pioneering restaurateur, but before her culinary career, she had been a published poet and her first job out of college was at APAIT in mid-90s. Still preferring “dyke” to the more polite term “lesbian”, Diep was drawn to APAIT as one of the very few explicitly radical and queer API spaces in Southern California.

We rounded out the panel with **Joël Barraquiel Tan**, one of the APAIT co-founders in 1992 who now makes his home in Hawai‘i. At the panel, Joël, a poet and performance artist, explained the confluence of factors that drew so many artists to the movement. AIDS hit the creative community hard, and there weren’t many other people beating down the door of AIDS service organizations for a job in those days. They needed foot soldiers to hit the pavement and educate the community who continued to turn a blind eye to the unfolding epidemic. AIDS gave many artists a steady gig to do something for the community, while leaving plenty of flexibility to hone their craft.

They not only provided the sweat equity, especially at a time when our government was ignoring the epidemic, but more importantly, their creativity and radical joyfulness was also the heart and soul of the movement, said Joël. You had to be creative to do AIDS work in immigrant communities that were supposedly averse to talking about death and sex (not just any sex, but gay sex.) Early APAIT social marketing campaigns, like “Love Your Asian Body”, were brainchildren of these artists. The portrayal of same-sex intimacy between APIs would still be considered provocative almost thirty years later. It put the up-and-coming agency on the map. At the panel, Diep shared a hilarious story involving a trunk full of dildos, nipple clamps and other restraints being stolen from her car, expensive gear that she used regularly to entice queer women to talk about safer sex practices. If AIDS had taken sex away from us in the 80s, these activists were bringing sexy back and making it fun again.

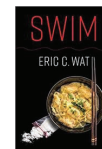
Literature was also a means for community building, be it writers’ groups or poetry readings. To secure sponsorship with JANM, Irene had promised big-name writers like **Jessica Hagedorn**, which she delivered. But she also sneaked in **James Sakakura** (APAIT staff who died of AIDS in 1996) and other writers/activists. On a regular basis, queer words and queer bodies occupied heteronormative spaces. Napoleon remembered performing for a Hollywood fundraiser for APAIT, where he not only smoked on stage, but also burned his arm with the cigarette. Even as AIDS became a cause for celebrities, Napoleon and other AIDS activists wouldn’t let the crowd be complacent about how the virus was wreaking havoc on people with HIV on a daily basis. It was the kind of radicalism that had attracted young queer APIs, like Diep, to the movement. She’s carried these progressive values with her to this day. Diep remains one of very few chef/restaurant owners to advocate so publicly against the pay inequities of restaurant workers.

Even in the face of so many gruesome casualties from the plague war, AIDS energized a generation of queer API activists/writers in the 90s. Now, as I compile a history of that time, I hope these stories can spark a spirit of creativity, playfulness, and experimentation among progressive warriors in our current dark times.

## BRINGING QUEER API ACTIVISTS AND WRITERS TOGETHER FOR “I GET SO EMOTIONAL, BABY”

BY ERIC C. WAT

Eric C. Wat is the author of *The Making of a Gay Asian Community* (2002) and the recently published novel, *SWIM* (2019). An alum of UCLA, he’s currently working on a community memoir of the AIDS movement entitled “Sex Positive.”



Featured writers  
Irene Suico Soriano,  
Joël Barraquiel Tan,  
Napoleon Lustre,  
Diep Tran, and  
Eric C. Wat  
at the reading  
(Irene Soriano).



### Spotlight | IMAGES FROM 2019 EVENTS



1) Zachary Frial, Barbra Ramos, Jeff Chang, Anna Alves, and Meg Thornton at the UCLA Graduate Student Resource Fair in September (Anna Alves); 2) Sayu Bhojwani with Natalie Masuoka at the boo talk for Bhojwani’s *People Like Us* (BR/UCLA AASC); 3) Gina Masequesmay, Edward Nadurata, Tiffany Tran, Irving Ling, and James Huynh at the Association for Asian American Studies Conference in Madison, WI (Florante Ibanez); 4) Ada Tseng, Grace Lee, Tess Paras, Kristina Wong, and Fawzia Mirza at Dawn of the New Day: Asian American Women Who are Changing Media (Les Dunseith/UCLA Luskin).



## EDITOR JUDY TZU-CHUN WU ON JOINING *AMERASIA JOURNAL*

It is a tremendous honor to serve as the editor of *Amerasia Journal*, given the central role the publication has played in establishing the field of Asian American Studies. I deeply appreciate the intellectual vision of previous editors, most notably **Keith Camacho**, who has pushed the journal to substantively and imaginatively engage with Pacific Islander Studies. I also want to acknowledge **Karen Umemoto** for bringing *Amerasia Journal* into the digital age. Now published by Routledge Press, the journal will be accessible through the Taylor & Francis online database (visit [www.tandfonline.com/RAMJ](http://www.tandfonline.com/RAMJ)).

I begin my editorship reflecting on the heightened intensity of border, racial, and gender violence and in anticipation of 2020, a presidential election year, a census year, and the 100th anniversary of U.S. women's suffrage. To foster collective intellectual, artistic, and political engagement with these topics, **Monisha Das Gupta** and **Lynn Fujiwara** are guest co-editing a special issue on "Law and Life: Immigrant and Refugee Acts Amid White Nationalism," to be published in spring 2020. For fall 2020, **Genevieve Clutario** and **Rana Jaleel** will be co-editing a special issue on "Rethinking Gendered Citizenship: Intimacy, Sovereignty, and Empire." I am also planning future special issue topics on "Critical Refugee Studies," "The Unresolved Cold War," and "Oceans and Archipelagos."

Joining the faculty in the University of California (UC) system has enabled me to engage in cross-campus collaborations, like editing *Amerasia Journal*. With funding support provided by the UC Humanities Research Institute, the UCI Humanities Center, and Routledge Press, we will be able to host in-person publication workshops for the authors selected for the 2020 special issues and hopefully for future issues as well. We also plan to feature *Amerasia* at national conferences, like for the Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS), American Studies Association (ASA), and National Women's Studies Association (NWSA).

I'm looking forward to embarking on this exciting journey with the support of Associate Editor **Arnold Pan** and Marketing Manager **Barbra Ramos** (pictured below tabling at AAAS 2019 in Madison, Wisconsin). We have urgent work ahead in this difficult political era, but we also have a tradition of collective intellectual and creative activism to motivate and guide us.



(Florante Ibanez)



Judy Tzu-Chun Wu is Professor of Asian American Studies and Director of the Humanities Center at the University of California, Irvine.

Professor Wu received her Ph.D. in U.S. History from Stanford University in 1998 and previously taught at Ohio State University before joining the faculty at UC Irvine. She authored *Dr. Mom Chung of the Fair-Haired Bastards: the Life of a Wartime Celebrity* (University of California Press, 2005) and *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Vietnam Era* (Cornell University Press, 2013). Her current book project, a collaboration with political scientist Gwendolyn Mink, explores the political career of Patsy Takemoto Mink, the first woman of color U.S. congressional representative and the namesake for Title IX. Wu co-edited *Women's America: Refocusing the Past, 8th Edition* (Oxford 2015), *Gendering the Trans-Pacific World* (Brill 2017), and *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* (2012-2017). She currently co-edits *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000* (Alexander Street Press).

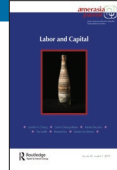
## LATEST ISSUES FROM *AMERASIA JOURNAL*

### OPEN ISSUE (44:3)



The 2019 open issue features the 2017-2018 **Lucie Cheng Prize** winner and forums on **Pearl Buck** and **Lisa Yoneyama's Cold War Ruins**, as well as tributes to **David Wong Louie** and **Dawn Bohulano Mabalon**.

### LABOR AND CAPITAL (45:1)



Guest editor: **Gordon Chang** (Stanford University)

This issue commemorates the 150th anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad, with its dependence on Chinese labor, and the 50th anniversary of Asian American studies, by looking at labor provided by Asians in the Americas, especially in a time shaped by U.S. imperialist expansion.

### ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER ACTIVISM (45:2)



Guest editors: **Diane Fujino** (University of California, Santa Barbara) and **Robyn Rodriguez** (University of California, Davis)

This special issue marks the founding of Asian American studies with articles addressing the meanings and forms of Asian American activism, both historically and currently.

## 50 YEARS OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER

### DID YOU KNOW?

*Amerasia Journal* was founded at Yale in 1971 by **Don Nakanishi** and the inaugural editor **Lowell Chun-Hoon** (pictured celebrating the 45th anniversary of *Amerasia* together), as a publication of the **Yale Asian American Student Association**, and that same year, it became a joint publication with, and soon after a publication solely by, the **UCLA Asian American Studies Center**. **Megumi Dick Osumi**, **Caroline Yee**, **Russell Leong**, **David K. Yoo**, **Keith Camacho**, and **Karen Umemoto** would all later serve in the capacity of editor before the current editor **Judy Wu**.



## PROFESSOR GILBERT GEE ●●● RECOGNIZED WITH HOSHIDE TEACHING PRIZE

Professor Gee received his bachelors degree in neuroscience from Oberlin College, his doctorate in Health Policy and Management from the Johns Hopkins University, and post-doctoral training in sociology from Indiana University. His research focuses on the social determinants of health inequities of racial, ethnic, and immigrant minority populations using a multi-level and life course perspective. A primary line of his work focuses on conceptualizing and measuring racism discrimination, and in understanding how discrimination may be related to illness and he has also published broadly on the topics of stress, neighborhoods, immigration, environmental exposures, occupational health, and on Asian American populations. Dr. Gee was the past Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* and has been a guest editor for *Child Development*, *AAPJ Nexus Journal* published by AASC Press, and the *Asian American Journal of Psychology*.



Congratulations to the 2018-2019 C. Doris and Toshio Hoshide Distinguished Teaching Prize in Asian American Studies awardee, Professor Gilbert Gee of Community Health Sciences (CHS) at the Fielding School of Public Health!

His research in the fields of Public Health and Asian American Studies has been honored with a group Merit Award from the National Institutes of Health for the development of multicultural measures of discrimination for health surveys. In addition, he received two Scientific and Technical Achievement Awards from the Environmental Protection Agency for development of the Stress-Exposure-Disease Framework. This year, Dr. Gee shared the Delta Omega Award for Innovative Public Health Curriculum with student leaders from the CHS Grads for Racial Justice: **Amelia Fay-Berquist, Elida Ledesma, Ashley Lewis, Sarah Jane Smith, and Marisol Torres**. He also was appointed to the Committee on Informing the Selection of Leading Health Indicators for Healthy People 2020 with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

Students that nominated Dr. Gee described how they benefitted tremendously from his generous mentorship and inspirational teaching. One student wrote how courses such as the Influence of the Social and Physical Environment on Racial Health Disparities and Writing for Publication in Public Health fundamentally changed the way she thought and engaged with research. "Dr. Gee played a central role in demystifying the research process, and gave me a voice to be a part of a world that I was never meant to be a part of, making research accessible through his teaching and mentorship," said one student. "Education and mentorship for Dr. Gee is not about pushing 'facts' or creating more hierarchies, it is about learning to be more human, utilizing the tools of research and education to develop greater compassion and care for one another," said another student.

The late **C. Doris Hoshide**, Class of 1934, of Rockville, MD established the teaching prize to recognize an outstanding professor in Asian American Studies. She was a longtime supporter of Asian American Studies at her alma mater. The Hoshide Prize includes a one thousand dollar award.

### FACULTY & STAFF NEWS



• **Professor Ninez Ponce** (pictured left) received one of the highest awards in public health—the **Health Services Research Impact Award 2019** by AcademyHealth. She was also honored by **Asian Health Services**, a community health center based in Oakland Chinatown, and recognized as one of the **100 Most Influential Filipinas in the World** by Filipino Women's Network.

- **Professor Randall Akee** was appointed Editor-in-Chief for the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, published by the UCLA American Indian Studies Center and named to the **UC President's Native American Advisory Council**.
- **Professor Keith Camacho** was honored with the 2018-2019 Graduate Student Appreciation Award at the Asian American Studies Department (AASD) Commencement Ceremony.
- **Professor Kyeyoung Park** published *LA Rising: Korean Relations with Blacks and Latinos after Civil Unrest* (Lexington Books).
- **Professor Benjamin Woo** was recognized as a Distinguished Fellow by the **American Psychiatric Association**.
- **Professor Grace Hong** was appointed the Associate Director of the **Center for the Study of Women**.
- **Professor Rachel Lee** published "Metabolic Aesthetics: On the Feminist Scentscapes of Anicka Yi" in *Food, Culture, and Society* 22.4 (Fall 2019). She also co-lead a Seminar for faculty and graduate students on Health Humanities for the **UCLA Humanities EPIC** (Excellence in Pedagogy and Innovative Classrooms) project and wrapped up a three-year term as book review editor for *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience*.
- **Professor King-Kok Cheung** published *Chinese American Literature without Borders* (Palgrave Macmillan), as well as contributed the afterword for *Pangs of Love and Other Writings* (University of Washington Press) by **David Wong Louie**. She also participated in the **David Wong Louie Memorial Conference** on November 15.
- **Professor Emeritus Snehenhu Kar** published *Empowerment of Women for Promoting Global Health and Quality of life* (Oxford University Press).
- **Professor Paul Ong** co-published *Uneven Urbanscape: Spatial Structures and Ethnoracial Inequality* (Cambridge University Press) with **Silvia Gonzalez**.
- **Professor Margaret Shih** was appointed Associate Vice Chancellor, Bruin X.



- The Center welcomed three new faculty members (pictured right) whose work are connected to AAPI communities: **Cindy Sangalang** of Cal State Los Angeles, **Lee Ann Wang** of the University of Washington, and **Evyn Lê Espiritu Ghandi** of UC Berkeley. Professors Sangalang and Wang have joint appointments in Social Welfare and Asian American Studies. Professor Lê Espiritu Ghandi is a part of the growing Asian American Studies Department.
- **Professor Sean Metzger** co-edited the special issue "Expressions of Asian Caribbeanness" of the journal *Asian Diasporic Visual Cultures and the Americas* 5.1-2 (2019) and published articles for *Critical Stages/Scènes Critiques*, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature*, and *Thinking Through Theatre and Performance*.
- Community Health Sciences **Professor May Sudhinaraset** was awarded funding by the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) to conduct a study on the social networks of undocumented API students attending or recently graduating from UCs, CSUs, and Community Colleges.
- A retrospective of film works by **Professor Gina Kim** of Television, Film and Theater was shown in Munich, Germany this past March.
- Asian American Studies lecturer **Dr. Kim Tran** received a professional development award from UCLA Academic Personnel Office.
- Fellow Asian American Studies lecturer **Dr. Lily Anne Welty Tamai** was installed as the new Ventura County JACL Chapter President this year.
- The Institute of American Cultures (IAC) welcomed **Christopher Soto**, as Assistant Director of Development for IAC and the four ethnic studies research centers.
- AASD wished student affairs officer (SAO) **Kristine Espinoza** (pictured right - center) good luck as she left UCLA and began a doctorate program in higher education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. They also welcomed two new staff members (also pictured right): **Kylin Sakamoto** as the administrative specialist and **Gregory Pancho** as the new SAO.



(UCLA Staff Assembly)



# LITERARY ARTISTS OFFER “REFLECTIONS/REFRACTIONS” IN J-TOWN SHOWCASE

Event Spotlight

BY ABRAHAM  
FERRER

UCLA APA Bruin alumni and current staffers, including Irene Suico Soriano, Amy Uyematsu, Eric C. Wat, and Stan Yogi, made themselves known as part of the special “At First Light” public program “REFLECTIONS/REFRACTIONS: 10 Works Inspired by ‘At First Light’” on September 19 at the Japanese American National Museum’s Tateuchi Democracy Forum in Los Angeles’s Little Tokyo.

The program consisted of ten artists—and two musicians—who were invited to select an image from the current “At First Light” exhibit that inspired them to create an original written work to perform in front of a live audience (sadly, one of the ten artists, Koji Sakai, was called away due to a family emergency and could not participate). From poetry to short fiction, and from diaristic journal entry to memory-piece, the artists brought to the gathering exceptional works that, when paired with the equally evocative images they were inspired to write about, offered a tantalizing glimpse into the ways through which still images inspire other forms of artistic expression.

The literary artists chosen to participate in “REFLECTIONS/REFRACTIONS” represented a “new guard” of Asian American literary talents. From “old hand” Amy Uyematsu, whose letter to renowned poet Lawson Inada, “Dear Lawson” (as read by stand-in Taiji Miyagawa) provided a stunning yet intimate overview of a movement as related from one friend to another, to Teresa Mei Chuc’s succinct and touching “On the other side of the ocean,” the evening accommodated a wide range of voices and perspectives. Taiji Miyagawa’s moody, bluesy upright bass workout suitably framed his selection, a portrait of elderly activist Mrs. Ishibashi (whose husband gave name to the vanguard Little Tokyo Peoples’ Rights Organization), while Eric C. Wat broke from the activist tenor of many of the photographic selections to ponder the isolating effects of suburbanization and displacement in his selection of a boy flying a kite along his Marmion Way neighborhood, accompanying “A Boy Named Sue,” excerpted from his forthcoming novel *Swim*.

Other literary artists presented works that spanned the wide spectrum of both activism and community-building, from Miya Iwataki’s ode to the Asian American Movement, “Spirit of the 1960s and ‘70s: A Snapshot,” to Kenji Liu’s power-of-place offering, “Letter to San Pedro at First St., 1972.” Novelist Naomi Hirahara examined community displacement and empowerment in her piece, “Super 8: An Ode to the Alan Hotel,” while Irene Suico Soriano and Stan Yogi observed multiple generations as an agent of community legacies in their respective works, “Variations of Living” and “Hakujin Equals American, Oriental Equals Us.”

Traci Kato-Kiriyama’s “To The (Old)(post-) Young(Future) Bloods (before I die without telling you)” gained its inspiration from an image of former VC Executive Director Linda Mabalot. And to close the program, Dom Magwili (for many years the acting adviser and director of UCLA’s annual Pilipino Cultural Nights) leveraged “FSN 1972,” filmmaker Tadashi Nakamura’s massive reimagining of VC co-founder Alan Ohashi’s panoramic street-level portrait of Little Tokyo’s most famous thoroughfare, to drive home the themes of “home” and “place” in his banjo-driven piece, “Young Forever.”

As the third of four public programs complementing the “At First Light” exhibit, Visual Communications has rightfully cast the spotlight on the power of the still images contained within VC’s Asian Pacific American Photographic Archive to capture a moment in time, and to inspire action. It has been a good time to remind one and all of the power of those images and artifacts. And thankfully, this next-gen set of Asian American literary masters proved more than up to the challenge.

The literary program “REFLECTIONS/REFRACTIONS” was organized by Visual Communications as a program of the VC Founders’ photographic exhibit “At First Light: The Dawning of Asian Pacific America,” that ran from May 25 through October 20, 2019, and was presented by Visual Communications and the Japanese American National Museum. A special “thank you” to the VC and JANM staffs, to Eddie Wong and Amy Uyematsu for their inspiration in conceiving this literary event, and finally to all the artists whose written works and still images were showcased in this program.

Abraham Ferrer is the Archives and Distribution Manager for Visual Communications and a UCLA alum.



Featured program participants at the “Reflections/Refractions” event (Abraham Ferrer).

## Poetry | EXCERPT OF “VARIATIONS OF LIVING” BY IRENE SUICO SORIANO

II.

Pedro was hired part-time when the county museum opened its newest building. There were throngs of people and he would always look through the crowd searching for faces of Filipinos that looked like they might be visiting from the Philippines. It was a glorious year; he had a small ‘84 Olympics poster he hung on the wall beside his transistor radio. The week the Mexican workers finished putting up the paintings that had been shipped all the way from France, Pedro came to work earlier than usual so he could walk through the empty exhibition halls and look at these works of art. He liked the vibrant colors for they reminded him of the field and canyons he remembers growing up in the southwest portion of Cebu. He stood there and stared, self-soothed every time pangs of regret from his youth would take over. The buzzer that would signal all guards to stand by their posts would bring him back and he would bustle to his corner. Tata Pedro was proud of his station.

Month after month of looking and looking and more looking he noticed how the Filipino faces he searched out and would occasionally find, never bothered to acknowledge him. He would look them in the eye and smile to initiate perhaps a greeting, but they would take one look at him and at once turn the other way or hurry through his section. He never quite understood why.

III.

One evening  
jumping out  
from the black and white crackle  
of his little television screen  
was a figure of a man,  
brown like him  
his same age  
disconsolate,  
disclosing painful memories  
“I drowned my sorrows in alcohol  
but my sorrows learned how to swim”  
A truth presented so simply  
Pedro wept for hours until he fell asleep.



## REFLECTIONS FROM 2018-2019 IAC-AASC VISITING SCHOLAR

### JOSEN MASANGKAY DIAZ

I have long admired the work of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center – from its commitment to Asian American studies as an interdisciplinary project to its to community-engaged scholarship – and it was a special honor to spend the year at the center as the Institute of American Cultures Visiting Research Scholar.

A highlight of my time with the center was meeting and spending time with **Karen Umemoto, Melany de la Cruz-Viesca, Marjorie Lee, Irene Suico Soriano, Barbra Ramos, Arnold Pan, and Tam Nguyen.** I took note of the ways that each of them contributes to the daily operations of the center and its function within and outside of campus. Yet, I appreciated the ways that they collectively highlight individual work in an effort to build with each other from within the center itself. It was also a pleasure to meet undergraduate and graduate students at various events, many of whom count their time with the center as one of the most meaningful experiences of their time at UCLA.

I enjoyed my time collaborating with Karen and Melany, in particular. We often discussed the histories of anti-martial law activism in Los Angeles, focusing especially on the ways that these legacies directly shaped Filipino American community organizing in Los Angeles. Karen's and Melany's work on youth and community justice informed these conversations: I learned a great deal from them, and I am looking forward to the ways that they will continue to support research around anti-martial law activism for scholars and activists.

Likewise, it was a privilege to work with **Victor Bascara** and **Lucy Burns.** As my faculty sponsor, Victor inquired about my work often, engaged it thoughtfully, and kept his door open for me. Lucy encouraged every step of the manuscript process, offered guidance for the highs and lows of it, checked in, and lent wisdom around the complexities of martial law. I also acknowledge **David Yoo** and **Sophia Fischer** at the Institute of American Cultures for their warm welcome and support and to co-IAC scholar **Roy Perez** for their camaraderie.

Josen Diaz with Professor Victor Bascara at the IAC Fall Forum.  
(UCLA IAC)

The year afforded to me the time and resources I needed to spend time on research and to reflect upon my work and those of others. I aimed to complete my book manuscript during this year, and my focus was, naturally, on completing the writing. But the year with the center reminded me of the importance of thoughtful engagement with material, with big and small ideas, with conversations with people who know more than I do about all kinds of things. In many ways, this became just as important as the words per day that I aimed to write. In the end, I finished the first complete draft of my manuscript, **"Postcolonial Configurations: Dictatorship, the U.S.-Philippine Cold War, and the Making of Filipino America"** (contracted with Duke University Press). The manuscript points to Filipino America as a configuration that reveals the ways that authoritarianism under the Ferdinand Marcos regime collaborated with the liberal policies and reforms of the U.S. government during the Cold War period. More importantly, it tries to reimagine Filipino American beyond these totalizing determinations of Filipino life in order to center the myriad ways that Filipinos articulate and express themselves in the world. This past year with the center was instrumental for getting this project closer to its finished form.

I have been fortunate to be part of dynamic academic departments, but my time with the center is the only time that I have been part of an Asian American studies center. In this way, my year with the AASC was especially important. It was a reminder of the challenges, promises, and legacies of Asian American studies. It helped illuminate Asian American studies as a kind of praxis, an example of critical and generative work.

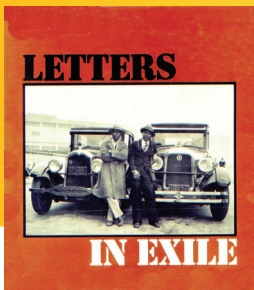
Josen Diaz is currently an Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies at University of San Diego.



## 50 YEARS OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER

### DID YOU KNOW?

An introductory reader on the history of Pilipinos in America, **Letters in Exile** was the first anthology published on the then little-known history of Pilipinos in this country and was the second book published by the Center. Materials selected for this book were chosen by students belonging to the **Pilipino American Anthology Project** to shed light on key areas in Pilipino history.



## THE CENTER WELCOMES VISITING SCHOLAR ERIN KHUÊ NINH FOR 2019-2020

For the 2019-2020 academic year, the Center welcomes IAC-AASC Visiting Scholar **erin Khuê Ninh.** Ninh is an Associate Professor in the Department of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, with affiliate appointments in Feminist Studies and Comparative Literature. Ninh completed both her BA and PhD degrees in English at Berkeley and previously was at UCLA as a UC President's Postdoctoral Fellow in the English department.

Her research and teaching explore the subtleties of power, harm, and subject formation, whether in the contexts of terror and war, of family and immigration, or of girlhood and beauty. She is currently working on a book project, tentatively entitled, "Perfect Lies: Passing for the Model Minority."





## CENTER FOR ETHNOCOMMUNICATIONS UPDATES FROM BEHIND THE LENS

### STUDENT FILMS



(JC/UCLA Center for EthnoCommunications)

In the **Creating Community Media** course series, students (pictured above) worked on media pieces that tell our histories and the stories of our communities. The following films from Asian American Studies 142C were screened at UCLA:

- **"80 Years Young: Finding Your Happy"** | Dir: Lisa Chiya  
80 year old rock climber, George Takaki finds his happy.
- **"Cambodia Town: Not for Sale"** | Dirs: Brandon Soun and Lan Nguyen  
Cambodian residents in Long Beach mobilize to stop the gentrification of businesses in their community.
- **"Campbell Hall: A Brief History"** | Dir: Calena Ang  
Discover the history of Campbell Hall, a home for mentorship and empowerment for UCLA students of color.
- **"Daga"** | Dir: Lian Mae Tualla  
A resourceful immigrant Filipino grandfather practices sustainability.
- **"Step In"** | Dirs: Jeana Cho, Jasmin Han and Jenny Tan  
Step into Asian American college dance group communities.
- **"Tiếng Của Tổ Tiên/Ancessor's Language"** | Dir: Yen Dinh  
Yen and their immigrant parents use the Vietnamese language to preserve their ethnic identities despite intergenerational differences

Three student films produced in the Creating Community Media courses premiered publicly at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival (LAAPFF) 2019:

- **"Finding Mauritius"** | Dir: Sandra Lucille Carbonell-Kiamtia
- **"Lights Up: Asian American Theater at UCLA"** | Dir: Arielle Bagood
- **"The Missing Piece Project"** | Dir: Daniel Luu

The Asian American Studies Center also co-sponsored the world premiere of **Fighting for Family**, a film about family separation caused by deportation, by EthnoCommunications alum **Lan Nguyen** at UCLA on November 21.

Over 100 films can be checked out for educational or community screening use. For more information, please contact [jchen@aasc.ucla.edu](mailto:jchen@aasc.ucla.edu). Follow the Center for EthnoCommunications online at [facebook.com/ethnocommunications](https://facebook.com/ethnocommunications).



(Abraham Ferrer)

The Center for EthnoCommunications, led by **Director Renee Tajima-Peña** and **Assistant Director Janet Chen**, worked on several events and projects this year. EthnoCommunications held three events at 341 FSN, a community space in Little Tokyo sponsored by Visual Communications. At **Monday Nite VC: Rewind** a series curated and moderated by frequent Ethno guest editor **Walt Louie**, Professor Tajima-Peña was a featured guest and she discussed her background and her career as a filmmaker,

activist and educator. For the **Creating Community Media Bootcamp** (pictured left), Janet Chen, **Tadashi Nakamura**, **Victoria Chalk** and advanced students and alum from Ethno classes trained storytellers, ranging from educators, students and community members, on how to use digital video filmmaking techniques to tell stories from diverse and marginalized cultures, peoples and histories. Chen also organized the

**Building History 3.0 Project Workshop**, based on Tajima-Peña's project that uses a collection of educational technology resources, including a graphic timeline, short documentaries, lesson plans and interactive activities in Minecraft to teach about the WWII Japanese American incarceration camps.

EthnoCommunications has played a major role in the Center's 50th Anniversary activities. As the producer and lead filmmaker for **Collective Memories**, Chen heads a team of student workers/interns (including those pictured to the right) to film and edit the oral histories of those involved with the founding of AASC and the Asian American Studies movement.



(UCLA AASC)

Chen, her team, and interviewers **Professor Karen Umemoto**, **Professor Valerie Matsumoto**, **Professor Susie Ling**, **Dr. Karen Ishizuka** and **Meg Thornton** plan to reach fifty interviews by Fall 2020.

EthnoCommunications is a key part of the programming for **IMAGE MOVERS: Asian American Studies Center 50th Anniversary Film Festival**. Chen and consultant **Lindy Leong** are the main organizers. AASC (Karen Umemoto, Sean Metzger, Barbra Ramos, Meg Thornton) is partnering with UCLA EthnoCommunications (Renee Tajima-Peña, Janet Chen), UCLA Film & Television Archive (Paul Malcolm, KJ Relth), UCLA Melnitz Movies, Film Quarterly (B. Ruby Rich, Rebecca Prime) and Visual Communications (Francis Cullado, Abe Ferrer, Lindy Leong). Taking place over three weekends in March 2020, IMAGE MOVERS will showcase Asian American Pacific Islander themes/topics through films and interactive discussions with scholars, writers, community members, filmmakers, students and the public. Screenings will be at the UCLA James Bridges Theater, Northwest Campus Auditorium, and the Hammer Museum's Billy Wilder Theater. Learn more about the festival at [aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/film/](https://aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/film/).

EthnoCommunications also continues to provide institutional support to the **Asian American Documentary Network (A-Doc)**, a national network that works to increase the visibility and support of Asian Americans in the documentary field that was co-founded by Renee along with **Grace Lee** and **Leo Chiang**. Both Chen and Professor Tajima-Peña now serve as core members.

EthnoCommunications is currently developing a new website that can be viewed at [aasc.ucla.edu/ethno/](https://aasc.ucla.edu/ethno/). It should be finalized in Spring 2020.

### Project Spotlight | 'ASIAN AMERICANS' ON PBS



Academy Award®-nominated filmmaker, **Professor Renee Tajima-Peña** (*Who Killed Vincent Chin?*, *No Más Bebés*) is currently completing **ASIAN AMERICANS**, a groundbreaking five-episode docu-series that will air in May 2020 on PBS. Told through individual lives and personal histories, it explores the impact of this group on the country's past, present, and future and examines the significant role of Asian Americans in shaping American history and identity. As the series producer, Tajima-Peña has led several teams, with many UCLA faculty, alumni, and students—such as **Vice Provost David Yoo** and alumni **Eurie Chung**, **Justin Martin**, **Gena Hamamoto**, **Alex Margolin**, and **Grace Lee** (to name just a few)—also serving as integral parts to the production of the series. Grace Lee's episode on the Asian American movement will premiere at the **IMAGE MOVERS Film Festival**.

# 2019-2020 UCLA ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER AWARDS, GRANTS,

## ARATANI COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT RESEARCH ENDOWMENT (C.A.R.E.) AWARDEES

### GARDENA PIONEER PROJECT

PROJECT: Gardena Pioneer Project Luncheon

### GARDENA VALLEY JAPANESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

PROJECT: CVJCI Day of Remembrance 2019

### GRATEFUL CRANE ENSEMBLE

PROJECT: Bridging the Gap

### JAPANESE AMERICAN CULTURAL & COMMUNITY CENTER

PROJECT: Fiesta Matsuri 2019

### JAPANESE COMMUNITY YOUTH COUNCIL

PROJECT: Project 9066

### KIZUNA LITTLE TOKYO, INC - STEPHANIE NITAHARA

PROJECT: Developing the Next Generation of Japanese Americans

### KIZUNA LITTLE TOKYO, INC - TAYLOR WEIK

PROJECT: Nikkei Community Internship

### KOREISHA

PROJECT: Needs Assessment for Japanese American Senior Facilities

### MARY UYEMATSU KAO

PROJECT: Facing the Asian Movement: A 1970s Narrative

### NICHI BEI FOUNDATION

PROJECT: 2019 Films of Remembrance

### NIKKEI STUDENT UNION ODORI

PROJECT: 33rd Annual Nikkei Student Union Cultural Night

### RISING STARS YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

PROJECT: Rising Stars College Life 101

### UCLA NIKKEI STUDENT UNION

PROJECT: 33rd Annual Nikkei Student Union Cultural Night

### VIGILANT LOVE

PROJECT: Vigilant Love Solidarity Arts Fellowship

## 2019 ACTIVIST-IN-RESIDENCE

### TANZILA "TAZ" AHMED

Campaign Strategist - 18MillionRising



Taz speaking at "The In-Betweens" at the Tateuchi Democracy Forum (Abraham Ferrer).

"The fellowship provided an opportunity to step into a space of reflection and thinking — an opportunity as a rapid response organizer I rarely get. I was able to have engaging conversations with both students and activists and I am looking forward to building out a narrative to share based on these conversations."

## FACULTY & VISITING SCHOLARS/ RESEARCHERS AWARDEES

### C. Doris & Toshio Hoshide Distinguished Teaching Prize in Asian American Studies at UCLA

#### GILBERT GEE

Professor Community Health Sciences, Fielding School  
of Public Health

### Institute of American Cultures (IAC)/AASC Faculty Research Grants

#### JACQUELINE KIM

Professor Psychology  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Supportive Care Needs in Korean American Patients with  
Metastatic Cancer

#### NORMA MENDOZA-DENTON

Professor Anthropology  
RESEARCH PROJECT: LA Speaks: Mapping Linguistic Boundaries of the Greater  
Los Angeles Area

### IAC/AASC Visiting Scholar/Researcher Fellowship

#### ERIN KHUÊ NINH

Associate Professor Asian American Studies (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Perfect Lies: Passing for the Model Minority

## GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDEES

### IAC/AASC Graduate Student Research Grants

#### RISHI GUNÉ

MA Student Asian American Studies  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Fragments of National Inclusion: Indian American Women/Trans  
Diasporic Communities and the State

#### HARLEEN KAUR

PhD Student Sociology  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Surviving Stigma: How Sikhs Navigate Racialized Violence and Trauma  
in the US and Canada

#### JUNE KUOCH

MA Student Asian American Studies  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Southeast Asian Deportation: Abolitionist Models of Justice through a  
Queer/Trans Feminist Praxis

#### ANGEL TRAZO

MA Student Asian American Studies  
RESEARCH PROJECT: What's the Tea?: The Bond Between Boba and Asian American Youth  
Culture in California

### Don T. Nakanishi Award for Outstanding Engaged Scholarship in Asian American & Pacific Islander Studies

#### MIKE HOA NGUYEN

PhD Education - Public Policy

### Martha Ogata Research Grant to Study Domestic Violence and Abuse in Asian Pacific American Communities

#### JUNE KUOCH

MA Student Asian American Studies  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Southeast Asian Deportation: Abolitionist Models of Justice through a  
Queer/Trans Feminist Praxis

### Partick and Lily Okura Research Grant on Asian Pacific American Mental Health

#### MICHELE J. WONG

PhD Student Social Welfare  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Invisible Bodies: Asian American Women at the Intersection of Racism

### George & Sakaye Aratani Graduate Fellowship

#### ELYSE IZUMI

MA Student Asian American Studies  
Research Project: Power and Grace: Hula and Eisaa as Resistance  
PROJECT SITES: Okinawan Association of America & Hālau Hula a Kawika lāua 'o Leinani

### Rose Eng Chin & Helen Wong Eng Fellowship Professor Harry H. L. Kitano Fellowship

#### RISHI GUNÉ

MA Student Asian American Studies  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Fragments of the State: Indian American Women/Trans Communities  
and the False Promise of National Inclusion

### Tritia Toyota Graduate Fellowship

#### LAUREN HIGA

MA/MSW Student Asian American Studies and Social Welfare  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Uchinaanchu Cram School: Transformative Pedagogies in Okinawan-  
American Communities

### Pearl Wang Fellowship

#### ZHEYU LIANG

MFA Student Film & Television  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Documentary Proposal: Life in the Cracks

#### JIANCHAO LAI

PhD Student Social Welfare  
RESEARCH PROJECT: Transcending the Model Minority: Asian Americans and  
Their Access to Child Welfare Services



# ACADEMIC PRIZES, FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND INTERNSHIPS



Last year's undergraduate awardees at the Lunar New Year Awards Reception in February with AASC staff **Meg Thornton, Melany de la Cruz-Viesca, and Professor Karen Umemoto** (IP/UCLA AASC).

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARDEES

### *Don T. Nakanishi Award for Outstanding Engaged Scholarship in Asian American & Pacific Islander Studies*

**DANIEL LUU**

MAJOR: Asian American Studies

### *Morgan & Helen Chu Outstanding Scholar Award*

**VY VY LU**

MAJOR: Molecular, Cell and Developmental Biology

### *Nhat H. Tran, M.D. Scholarship*

**THIEN-TRUC JESSICA NGOC PHAM**

MAJOR: Psychobiology

MINORS: Asian American Studies and Global Health

PAPER TITLE: Do I Have Dyslexia?

### *21st Century Internship*

**NAOMI YUNG**

MAJOR: Asian American Literature & Culture

MINOR: Film, Television, & Digital Media

RESEARCH PROJECT: Asian American Studies Center's Collective Memories Project

INTERNSHIP SITE: UCLA Asian American Studies Center

### *George and Sakaye Aratani Community Internship*

**MICHELLE MURAKAMI**

MAJOR: Asian American Literature & Culture

INTERNSHIP SITE: Little Tokyo Service Center

### *Yuen Fong and Lew Oy Toy Family Internship in Chinese American Studies*

**ANGELA LI**

MAJORS: Asian American Studies and Political Science

INTERNSHIP SITE: Chinese Historical Society of Southern California

### *Rose Eng Chin & Helen Wong Eng Prize*

**ERIN MIN**

MAJOR: Gender Studies

MINOR: Asian American Studies

PAPER TITLE: Kisaeng and Shamans: Formations of Gender in the Joseon Dynasty

### *Ben & Alice Hirano Academic Prize*

**JASON VU**

MAJORS: Global Studies and Applied Linguistics

MINOR: Asian American Studies

PAPER TITLE: Phan Doi!: Homeland Politics and Transnational Resistance in the Vietnamese Diaspora

### *Professor Harry H.L. Kitano Undergraduate Prize*

**ANGELA LI**

MAJORS: Asian American Studies and Political Science

PAPER TITLE: Justice Should Not Be Blind to Prejudice: An Analysis of Anti-Asian Racial Violence in the United States

### *Tsugio & Miyoko Nakanishi Prize in Asian American Literature & Culture*

**JASON VU**

MAJORS: Global Studies and Applied Linguistics

MINOR: Asian American Studies

PAPER TITLE: Nhớ Quê Dấu Yêu: Memory Formation in the Vietnamese Catholic Refugee Community

### *21st Century Graduate Internship*

**ALMA E. VILLA LOMA**

MA Student Urban Planning

RESEARCH PROJECT: Asian American Studies Center's Collective Memories Project

INTERNSHIP SITE: UCLA Asian American Studies Center and Center for EthnoCommunications

### *Dr. Sanbo & Kazuko Sakaguchi Graduate Internship*

**LAUREN HIGA**

MA/MSW Student Asian American Studies and Social Welfare

RESEARCH PROJECT: "Power to the People": 50 Years of Bridging Research with Community Conference

INTERNSHIP SITE: UCLA Asian American Studies Center and Department

### *Hiram Wheeler Edwards Prize for the Study of WWII Internment Camps and Japanese Americans*

**ELYSE IZUMI**

MA Asian American Studies

PAPER TITLE: Whispers in the Archives: Finding Okinawan American Voices in the Japanese Concentration Camps

### *Rose Eng Chin & Helen Wong Eng Prize*

**JUNE KUOCH**

MA Student Asian American Studies

PAPER TITLE: Cyber Fantasies: Rina Sawayama, Asian Feminism, and Techno-Orientalism in the Age of Neoliberalism

### *Ben & Alice Hirano Academic Prize*

**KATHLEEN CORPUZ**

MA/MPH Student Asian American Studies and Public Health

PAPER TITLE: Living in Kalihi: Remembering Stories of Struggle and Resistance

### *Professor Harry H.L. Kitano Graduate Prize*

**RISHI GUNÉ**

MA Student Asian American Studies

PAPER TITLE: Purvi Patel as "Figuration": Indiana, the State and the Politics of Criminalization

### *Tsugio & Miyoko Nakanishi Prize in Asian American Literature & Culture*

**ANGEL TRAZO**

MA Student Asian American Studies

PAPER TITLE: Drawing Asian Americans: Asian American Youth Characterization and Graphic Illustration in Ms. Marvel and Ichiro

## Internship Spotlight | MICHELLE MURAKAMI

### ARATANI COMMUNITY INTERNSHIP WITH LITTLE TOKYO SERVICE CENTER



(Michelle Murakami)

"The Aratani Internship has provided me with the opportunity to engage myself with and deepen my knowledge for the growing Japanese American culture. The LTSC staff have been incredibly kind and generous during my time as an intern. It did not feel like the typical internship - it was like I was just a new part of the team. From working on projects to helping order massive amounts of furniture and amenities, the Budokan team never failed to make me smile and laugh. I realized that with this internship my purpose was to educate and provide service to the community around me.

The stories and wisdom passed down by generations before have exposed me to the possibilities of challenges that can be overcome. It is by telling stories like theirs— at times understated, nostalgic, and emotional— where we have epitomized and proven that passion and dreams can be explained through any medium and we can effect change in others."

# CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN SUPPORTERS OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER



1) Dr. Nhat Tran with scholarship awardee Jennifer Phung at the Lunar New Year Awards Reception; 2) Jennifer Chai, Lynn Kitano, Elsie Osajima, Mike Murase, and Professor Dennis Ogawa at the Founders Reunion; 3) Morgan and Helen Chu at the IAC Gala; 4) James Hosoda, Dr. Kanji Sahara, and Professor Karen Umemoto at the Lunar New Year Awards Reception 5) Brian Niya, Glen Kitayama, Chiaee Byun-Kitayama and Vice Provost David K. Yoo at the IAC Gala (1,2,4: UCLA AASC; 3,5: UCLA IAC)

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1) Janet Chen, Tammy Borrero, and Susan Soohoo at Dawn of a New Day. | At the Founders Reunion 2) Carol Mochizuki and Vivian Matsushige leading a game; 3) Irene Park and Irene Soriano making sure attendees enjoy dessert; 4) Betty Leung and Christopher Soto at the registration table; and 5) Rocky Chin after winning a prize from one of the games (1, 2, 5: Abraham Ferrer; 3, 4: UCLA AASC).

# UCLA ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER

## IMAGES FROM 2019



1) UC Regent John Perez after speaking with students from AAPI groups on campus (UCLA CSRC); 2) SAADA symposium "History from Different Angles: South Asian American Stories in California" (SAADA); 3) Youth Studies in Oceania Symposium organized by Professor Keith Camacho (Keith Camacho); 4) Center for Southeast Asian Studies Assistant Director Nguyet Tong and AASC Marketing Manager Barbra Ramos tabling at the SEA-Normous Activities Fair at UCLA (UCLA Vietnamese Student Union); 5) Asian Am MA students with alum Dean Saranillio after his book talk for *Unsustainable Empire* (BR/UCLA AASC); 6) Center Director Professor Karen Umemoto with other featured speakers at the Scholar-Activist Conference at UC Santa Barbara (UCSB Asian American Studies).

## The UCLA Asian American Studies Center was founded in 1969.

AASC, along with the three other ethnic studies centers and the Institute of American Cultures, have been celebrating our 50th anniversaries during 2019 and 2020. These celebrations coincide with UCLA's centennial year.

We've come a long way since 1969—from teaching the first Asian American studies courses at UCLA, producing two of the pre-eminent journals in our field, leading the Interdepartmental masters, major and minor programs, launching the Asian American Studies Department, supporting the Center for EthnoCommunications, processing important collections, fostering AAPI researchers and scholars, and so much more. Many people have been with us on this journey—whether as students, faculty, staff, organizational partners or community members—and we thank you for all you have done to help us reach this milestone.

We invite you to connect—or reconnect—with the Center and to join us for our slate of special programming and events that not only mark how far we've come and the accomplishments we've made, but also look forward to the future of Asian American Studies.

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## UPCOMING 50TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

2020

### WINTER

IMAGE MOVERS: ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES  
CENTER 50TH ANNIVERSARY FILM FESTIVAL

WEEKEND 1: March 6-8

WEEKEND 2: March 13-15

WEEKEND 3: March 20-21

In partnership with the UCLA Film and Television Archive, Melnitz Movies, and the Center for EthnoCommunications, AASC will present a series of films related to Asian American and Pacific Islander histories, issues, and experiences. Learn more at [aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/film/](http://aasc.ucla.edu/aasc50/film/).



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To stay up to date, sign up at [bit.ly/AASC50](https://bit.ly/AASC50)