

Alumni Newsletter

SPRING 2017 PAACH

APALI 15th Year Anniversary

By Miru Osuga

The APALI 15th Year Anniversary was a sentimental and invigorating call to community action. Full of sweet moments of tradition—cue the APALI letters, food friend songs, and facilitation circles—the room warmly welcomed alumni back into a community of thoughtful agents of change.

Speakers shaped a mood of inspiration. In the spirit of learning history to combat oppressive erasure, Yen Link Shek, one of the founders of APALI, spoke of the program's founding. "If we don't know our own history, we'll repeat it," she said. As college students, we had the privilege of having a space to organize, she reminded us. We needed to advocate for others and be leaders for society, she said. She moved us to think critically and deeply around why we were here and who was not here. We had that potential to create change; it was our responsibility to push the conversation.

Other speakers moved us as they reminded us about APALI's powerful role today. Dr. Fariha Khan discussed APALI's importance especially given the election. Peter Van Do talked about APALI defining PAACH and how the program promoted leadership, growth, agents of

change, complexity, and Pan-Asian endeavors. He ended with #HaveFun #CheerForEveryoneOn Stage #AAPride #AASudiesNow #ThisIs2016 #BLM #LovesLove. Dr. Dana Nakano also spoke about the politicization of our identities, and the power of claiming "Asian American" and "Person of Color" as our labels.

Kusum also spoke of her experiences at Penn. All the notes I have on my white paper napkin are black streaks of eyeliner, remnants of make-up mixed with tears as I realized the depth of my appreciation and love for her.

I also cried because I remembered how special this space was and still is. As we shared our stories from our own experiences with APALI, I realized that time and place were different, but the spirit of the program was constant. It didn't matter if we'd done the program one semester ago or ten years ago; the level of respect and listening that we gave each other was the same. Being in this inspired space, we felt the energy in the room, the power of a collective consciousness built throughout these last fifteen years manifesting itself today, together.

FROM THE PEOPLE



Serving on the PAACH Board has expanded my involvement as a Penn alum. I am so grateful that PAACH continued to serve as a rich resource and the home of my alumna experiences.

EUGENA OH (C '03)
BOARD OF ADVISORS

Being a part of PAACH taught me how important it is to be there for other minorities and to lend a hand to those going through phases of life you've passed through already.



AFNAAN MOHARRAM (C '14, W '14)
ALUMNI



PAACH is the vibe of a smile put into a space. It has taught me what it means to be welcomed. Beyond Penn, I keep that as a part of me.

MAJID MUBEEN (W '17)

Not only have I made friends of a lifetime, I've learned so much about my identity and been inspired to take my own steps in Penn's Asian community. Drop by sometime!



MICHAEL KWOK (C '19)



I really enjoy working at PAACH because I love meeting new people every day I walk into work.

SUNNY ROY (C '19)



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PAACH

Celebrating Years of PAACH

By Peter Van Do

Welcome to the 12th annual issue of the Pan-Asian American Community House newsletter.

Time flies when you are having fun and working with great, hard-working, and passionate students. I have completed 5 years working at PAACH. PAACH has become a place where we are thriving—we are fortunate to be working with such dynamic student leaders who are working to create tangible change on campus. I am glad to be a part of the PAACH community because it allows me to support and encourage the personal success of AAPI undergraduate and graduate students at Penn.

This year I am proud to announce that we have started a number of new PAACH initiatives on campus, which include a program on black, Latinx, and AAPI intersectionality called Solidarity Series, space for AAPI women named The Spice Collective, and community organization for AAPI first-generation/low-income students called 7/8.

We continue to offer our signature programs. The Asian Pacific American Leadership Initiative (APALI) celebrated 15 years. Due to very generous donations to the PAACH Endowment, the program can continue to grow and provide enhanced programming for the AAPI community. The Promoting Enriching Experiences and Relationships (PEER) mentoring program will celebrate 15 years in the Fall of 2017. Asian Pacific American Heritage Week (APAHW) will celebrate 25 years in the Fall of 2017 as well.

Students can find their niche within any of the 23 groups in APSC. APSC continues to act as a strong voice for the AAPI community.

With the help of the University of Pennsylvania Asian Alumni Network (UPAAN), we raised more than \$15,000 in gifts to the PAACH Endowment Fund in honor of Kusum Soin, an effort that was started by alumni at the PAACH 15 year anniversary. We are grateful to have so many alumni who contributed to this fund. With alumni support, we can build and invest in our home so that programs like APALI, APAHW, ASPIRE, 7/8, The Spice Collective, Solidarity Series and other PAACH initiatives may grow and thrive.

Alumni are an excellent resource when determining what has worked in the past and what has not worked. We invite alums to informally speak with students to discuss career goals, and to talk about ways to work together to improve PAACH. This is why we have started having Career Conversations (AAPI alumni speaker series) in the PAACH Living Room.

If you are ever in town please stop by to visit us—we welcome you back to PAACH, your home away from home, with open arms. As always PAACH is open to our alumni and community partners here at Penn. We invite you to engage with us to let us know how you are doing, and to connect with our current students about professional development, networking, and job opportunities. We also encourage all of you to continue the discussions that you had in PAACH when you were a student within your respective alumni/friend circles wherever you may be.

Finally, let's all come together to support our academic partner, Asian American Studies (ASAM), as they celebrate their 20 year anniversary during Homecoming Weekend 2017.

We will see you soon!

Honoring the Legacy of Kusum Soin



We have reached our \$15,000 goal! Thank you to everyone who has helped to honor the legacy of Kusum Soin and her fifteen dedicated years at PAACH. She has connected, mentored, and inspired so many generations of students who have passed through PAACH's doorways. We've specifically chosen to direct our gifts to the PAACH Endowment so that Kusum's impact will live on in perpetuity, helping students for many more generations. We are still short of our goal to reach 150 individual donors. To donate, visit <http://tinyurl.com/paachmom>

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

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