



UCI Humanities

Department of Asian American Studies newsletter

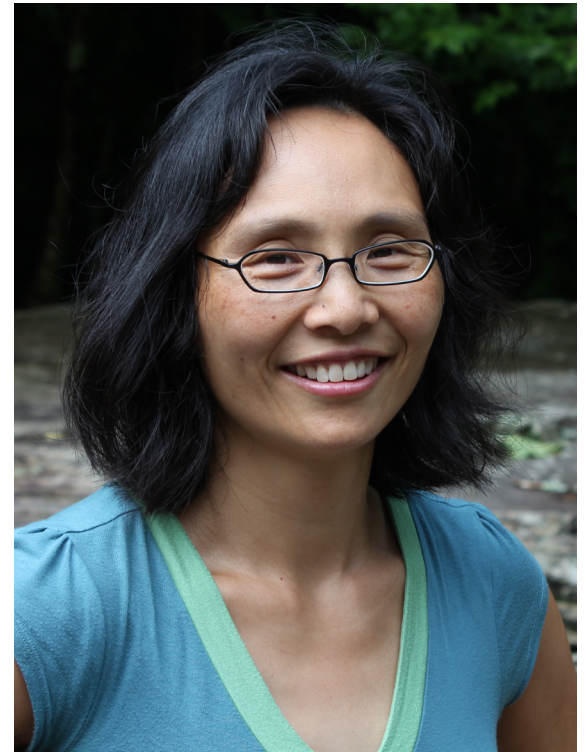
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Anteaters,

Welcome back to UCI! Asian American Studies is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year as well as the 30th anniversary of the Southeast Asian Archive. We are launching a year-long series entitled “Homescapescapes/Warscapes 25/30,” and we hope you will join us for our special events throughout the 2016–2017 academic year. Asian American Studies is also starting a quarterly newsletter to update you about our faculty, students, and staff. We hope you will enjoy our inaugural issue!

I am also personally excited to start my role as chair of the UCI Asian American Studies Department. I first began my involvement in Asian American Studies, when I was an undergraduate student at Stanford University. I was part of a political coalition who lobbied for the appointment of the university’s first Asian American Studies professor. I eventually served on the search committee that appointed the first two Asian American Studies Professors at Stanford. After receiving my Ph.D. in U.S. History (also from Stanford) in 1998, I have taught and built the Asian American Studies Program at the Ohio State University until 2015. I am thrilled to join the UCI community and to learn about the vibrant Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in Southern California. I look forward to developing the UCI Department of Asian American Studies as we reflect on our past achievements and as we look towards the future.

Judy Tzu-Chun Wu



WHY STUDY ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES?

“Asian American Studies is very interdisciplinary. You may study the history of the Korean war one week, then examine the literary reactions of Chinese Jamaicans, then look at Urban Planning or sociological research the next to understand a subject... I’m learning how to read into every aspect of life, of politics.”

Dominique Oei, Asian American Studies Major



September 27: Karen L. Ishizuka
& Tu-Uyen Nguyen

October 4: Naomi Paik

October 13: Gordon Chang,
Theodore Gonzalez

October 14: Jason Weems, ShiPu
Wang, & Amy Lyford

October 27: Kelly Fong

November 7: Kim Park Nelson

November 10: Trinh Mai

November 17: Laureen Hom

December 2: Yong Soon Min &
Viet Le

Visit our website for more details

HOMESCAPES/WARSCAPES²⁵/₃₀

The UCI Department of Asian American Studies (AAS) and the Southeast Asian Archive (SEAA) are both marking important milestones during the 2016–2017 academic year. AAS is turning 25 years old and the SEAA is turning 30. The archive has a remarkable collection of primary sources on the resettlement of Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Vietnamese peoples after the wars in Southeast Asia. This premier institution attracts scholars from around the world and also has an extensive out-

reach program to UCI students and the local Orange County communities.

To commemorate our joint anniversaries, we are sponsoring a year-long celebration entitled "Homescapes/Warscapes 25/30." The concept of "homescapes" highlights how Asian people have been displaced from their "home" countries, either voluntarily or involuntarily, and how they have sought to recreate a sense of "home" in the U.S. We paired "homescapes" with

"warscapes" to foreground how militarism in the Pacific World and across the Asian continent has played a central role in displacement of Asian people from their home countries. Wars destroyed homes, created the need for new ones, and facilitated the formation of hybrid kinship structures and identities. We invite you to reflect on these themes of "homescapes" and "warscapes" by attending a year-long series of special events, many of them featuring UCI Alum!

Did you know?

4 FACTS ABOUT ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

1. Asian Americans are the fastest growing population in the United States, and California is home to the largest Asian American population in the country. Asian Americans include immigrants, refugees, and American-born individuals who trace their ancestry to over 21 countries in East, Southeast, and South Asia.

2. Asian American Studies has 10 faculty who have research, teaching, and creative interests in: labor history, transnational migration, political science, popular music and performance, documentary and film studies, community organizing, archival work, comparative racialization, gender/sexuality studies, medical humanities, literary criticism, and critical theory.

3. Asian American Studies majors, minors, and graduate students enter a variety of professional fields, including medicine, education, finance, non-profit community organizing, the arts, politics, and engineering. Our students often double major to enhance and strengthen their knowledge for future careers.

4. UCI is home to the Southeast Asian Archive (which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year and houses a treasure trove of research materials that attracts scholars from around the world) and the Vietnamese American Oral History Project (which trains students to conduct and archive oral histories).

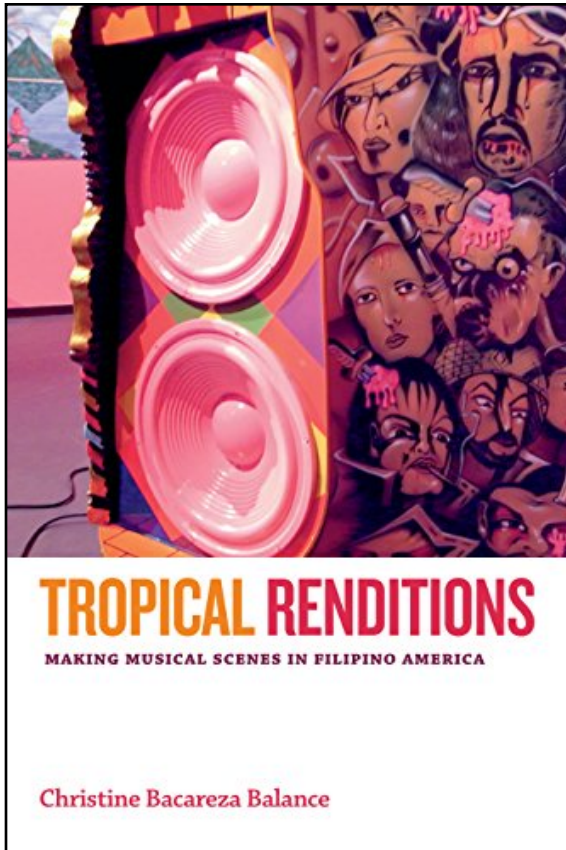
MEET THE DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

What has Professor Christine Bacarezza Balance been up to this summer?



My summer has been a mix of work and relaxation. I spent all of July (and the first two weeks of August) in the Philippines. From July 6-8, I attended and participated in the International Conference on Philippine Studies

(ICOPHIL) at Silliman University in Dumaguete. My paper, "On the Archipelagic Perspective," bridged research from my first book *TROPICAL RENDITIONS: MAKING MUSICAL SCENES IN FILIPINO AMERICA* (on Pinoy indie rock bands and their DIY tours) and ways that I am thinking of approaching my next book project, *THE AFTERLIVES OF MARTIAL LAW*. This next book project looks at how the dictatorial regime of former Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos and his wife Imelda mobilized the "spectacular" and "sensational" in order to obfuscate political corruption, extrajudicial killings and torture, and suspension of the free press, for over two decades. I am also interested in how U.S.- and Philippines-based artists, sites, and events draw our attention to what "remains" after their regime. Under the auspices of a Humanities Commons faculty research grant, I was able to visit the area of Subic Bay, site of the U.S.' former naval base, the second largest military



installation outside of the United States, and now a “freeport zone” of tourism & commerce. I also participated in a scholarly panel celebrating the 25th anniversary of the canonical Asian American work, *ROLLIN’ THE R’s* by R. Zamora Linmark, at Philippine Women’s University (PWU) and was invited to conduct a workshop, “Writing the Popular,” for faculty and graduate students in the PhD Program in Music at the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

For this upcoming school year, I look forward to: continuing the work, both inside and outside the classroom, with my undergraduate and graduate students; taking part in the School of Humanities (SOH) Research Residency titled “Waterways and Worldviews: Rethinking Regions Defined by Oceans and Seas”; serving as the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in Asian American Studies; and planning events to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Asian American Studies at UCI.

COMPETITION ANNOUNCEMENT: AAS NEEDS A NEW LOGO!

Calling all undergraduate and graduate students!

The Department of Asian American Studies is searching for a new logo that will be featured on the department’s website, newsletter, and promotional documents. All logo submissions should be accompanied by a short paragraph explaining how your design represents the role of Asian American Studies at UCI. These logo submissions can be hand-drawn and/or digitally designed, but must be scanned in and submitted by email as a .JPG, .PNG, or .PDF to robledj1@uci.edu.

The deadline to submit is November 15 at noon. Two finalists and one winner will be chosen and announced on the department’s website and newsletter on December 2. The winner will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card and the two finalists will receive \$25 in gift cards.

Good luck!



SUPPORTING UNDOCUMENTED API STUDENTS AT UCI

By Elizabeth Hannah Clark

With all of the recent maddening political rhetoric focused on “building a wall” on the U.S.–Mexico border, it is easy to forget that issues of undocumented immigration in the U.S. are also Asian/Pacific Islander (API) issues. Yet, as the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) reports, since the year 2000, undocumented immigration from Asia has grown at a rate that exceeds that of undocumented immigration from Mexico and Central America. 2009–2013 MPI data indicates that 412,000 undocumented API individuals live in California, comprising approximately 30% of the undocumented API population in the U.S. Asian Americans Advancing Justice Los Angeles estimates that while 52,000 undocumented API immigrants reside in Orange County, some 130,000 live in L.A. County.

The student community here at UC Irvine mirrors the demographic realities of undocumented populations in California. The UCI Office for Institutional Research reports that from 2012–2015 the number of undocumented students on campus rose from 142 to 538. This increase in undocumented student enrollment stems partially from the 2011 passage of AB540 and the California Dream Act, which allow undocumented students who fulfill certain requirements to access in-state tuition at California public universities and colleges as well as campus administered scholarships and state financial aid. Further, the executive relief program announced by the Obama administration in 2012 known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) allows undocumented youth who fulfill other rigid requirements to receive temporary reprieve from the threat of deportation, as well as permission to work legally. As increasing numbers of students who benefit from AB540, the California Dream Act and DACA come into college age, it is expected that numbers of undocumented students on college

campuses in California will continue to grow.

"FROM 2012–2015 THE NUMBER OF UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS ON CAMPUS ROSE FROM 142 TO 538."

One-third of the undocumented student population at UCI consists of API students. Yet according to Ana Miriam Barragan, who is approaching her second year as the UCI Dreamer's Coordinator, only a handful of API students have sought her out for guidance on the difficult process of navigating life as an undocumented university student. Ms. Barragan is not alone in her concern about undocumented API folks not having access to or being reluctant to access resources. API-serving nonprofits in Orange and LA Counties continuously voice concerns about how deep fears regarding the revealing of undocumented status prevent people from seeking support. These fears have deepened with the threat of a Trump presidency as well as the judicial branch's recent dismantling of what would have been more expansive immigration relief programs (known as DAPA and DACA+). Some potential applicants feel that by applying for DACA they are simply putting themselves on a list for a future immigrant-adverse administration to promptly deport them. The numbers of API youth across the U.S. who are eligible for DACA, but who have yet to apply are thus extremely low. As of 2013, while only 35% of eligible beneficiaries of Korean descent applied for the program, a mere 17% of eligible Filipinos and 5% of eligible Chinese youth applied. These numbers fall far behind the general eligible population application rate across all nationalities, which was 52% in 2012.

Here at UCI, the API students involved in on-campus undocumented student rights activism wonder whether other undocumented API students do not seek out on-campus communities due to the perception that such spaces exist primarily for Latinx students. At the 2016 UC Undocumented Student Summit, members of the API Undocumented Student Caucus explained that when students attend on-campus events related to undocumented issues, they primarily see faculty from Chicano/Latino Studies advocating on their behalf. They believe that if more API faculty were to get publicly involved in their struggle, API students would feel more welcome in those activist spaces. The API Undocumented Student Caucus also noted that students who are ineligible for DACA face particular challenges and that many ineligible students are API. They argue that Obama's executive action programs were not designed to accommodate API immigration patterns. DACA requires that applicants were undocumented on the day of President Obama's announcement (June 15, 2012). Given that many API immigrants originally came to the U.S. with some form of a visa, it is often the case that students fell out of status after the announcement. Further, Ms. Barragan notes that an overwhelming majority of scholarship opportunities external to the UC-system that are available to undocumented students exclude API applicants as they require that applicants be of Hispanic or Latino descent.

There are concrete measures that departments can take to ensure that undocumented API voices are heard and supported at UCI. First, faculty and staff can learn about the courageous struggles of the undocumented student activists here at UCI, as well as the university administration's response to student activism. Ms. Barragan will host a public forum on **Thursday, September 29 from 4:00pm to 5:30pm**,

where she will provide information on the recent \$1 million allocation for UCI undocumented student services. Most importantly, staff and faculty are encouraged to participate in an undocumented student ally training. These comprehensive trainings educate participants in the myriad federal and California state laws that both facilitate and constrain access to higher education, the particular sets of challenges that undocumented university students face, and tools for being an effective ally. At the end of the training, participants will receive an Undocu-Ally sticker that may be placed in one's office or classroom to let undocumented students know that they are in a safe

space with an ally who is prepared to guide them towards the resources they need.

"STAFF AND FACULTY ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT ALLY TRAINING."

The next scheduled trainings will take place on Thursday, October 20 from

10:00am to 3:00 pm (lunch included) and Friday October 21. Please RSVP to Ms. Barragan at ambarrag@uci.edu.

Elizabeth Hannah Clark is in the second year of her PhD in the anthropology department and is working on research that examines API/Latinx relations in the immigrant rights movement as well as the specific challenges that confront undocumented API immigrant survivors of family violence.

For questions or comments, please contact Ms. Barragan or the author at ehclark@uci.edu.

WHAT'S COOKING AT THE ARC?

Saengthong Douangdara, Academic Counselor for the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, shares his knowledge of Lao food in the kitchen.



Last spring quarter, I was given the opportunity to host the first Laotian cooking class at UC Irvine in the ARC. The class was part of a global cooking class series that featured several cuisines around the world. I was the chef for the Laotian cooking class where I taught people how to cook dishes like: nam khao taod (deep fried rice), laab gai (chicken salad), khao neaw mak muang (mango sticky rice), and dum mak huang (papaya salad). All my cooking knowledge was passed down from my mother who cooked every day for me and my siblings. My goal in teaching how to cook Lao food was to bring attention to the Lao people, culture, and history. Food is a catalyst I use to shuttle knowledge and information to others in a friendly and community style. I am passionate about sharing knowledge and Lao food because it's important that others learn about a large group that came to the U.S. as refugees. It also creates awareness of the other Southeast Asian communities since there is a large community in Southern California. I hope to host more cooking classes in the near future to show the umami flavors in Lao cuisine and the beautiful culture of the Lao community.

VAOHP FUNDRAISING TO EXPAND PROJECT

By Dr. Linda Trinh Vo and Tram Le



(L-R) Trina Do (her 3 children graduated from UCI), Dr. Linda Trinh Vo, Linh Kochan (UCI alumni and event host), Teresa Sangeeta Mai (sang at event), and Tram Le.

On September 11, 2016 the Vietnamese American Oral History Project (VAOHP) at the University of California, Irvine held the fundraiser “A Summer Affair: Friends, Food & Futures” in Newport Coast at the home of Roman and Linh Kochan, who are wonderful advocates for VAOHP. Their Tuscany-inspired home, which has a magnificent view of the Pacific Ocean, provided the perfect backdrop for a delicious champagne brunch, including music and dance performances by local talent, for close to 150 of their friends and VAOHP supporters. Special guest, 2016 Pulitzer Prize Winner in Fiction for *The Sympathizer*, Dr. Viet Thanh Nguyen, captured the sense of urgency in recording our histories as he reflected on the (mis)perception of Vietnamese Americans, given the limited materials about them in school books and the mainstream media.

VAOHP Director Dr. Linda Trinh Vo and Associate Director Tram Le shared how much the project has grown since its inception in 2011. VAOHP’s website has an average of over 50,000 visits per month, with the oral histories being used by researchers as well as by students in high school and universities across the country and internationally as well. There are currently 160 oral history interviews uploaded which are fully tran-

scribed and translated (from Vietnamese to English), along with photographs and documents from the narrators. With increased funding, the 240 oral histories that have been recorded can be processed and uploaded online. This coming year, Dr. Linda Trinh Vo is teaching an Asian American Communities course with 240 students and a Humanities Core class with almost 1,000 students and they will be using materials from VAOHP. Tram Le will be teaching the Vietnamese American Experience class in which she will have the students collect oral histories that will be donated to VAOHP.

Using materials from the VAOHP collection and the UCI Libraries Orange County and Southeast Asian Archive Center, Dr. Thuy Vo Dang, Archivist for the Center, Dr. Linda Trinh Vo, and Tram Le co-authored a book, *Vietnamese in Orange County* (Arcadia Publishing, 2015). In 2015–2016, the VAOHP Director and VAOHP Associate Director curated an art and history ex-



Dr. Viet Thanh Nguyen, 2016 Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction, speaks on the importance of preserving Vietnamese American stories and history.

hibition, *VIETNAMESE FOCUS: Generations of Stories*, which was on display at the Old Orange County Courthouse Gallery in Santa Ana and the Viewpoint Gallery at UCI. During the event, a special announcement was made that the *VIETNAMESE FOCUS: Generations of Stories* exhibition will be traveling to the Richard Nixon Presidential Library & Museum, which is part of the national archive. For this new space, which underwent a \$10 million renovation, VAOHP will be expanding the exhibition and is seeking artifacts, such as items of clothing, documents, and photographs Vietnamese refugees brought with them on their journey to the U.S.

David Earl, UCI Associate Director of Development for the School of Humanities, along with Jack Toan, UCI alumni and Vice President and Community Affairs Manager at Wells Fargo, wrapped up the afternoon by challenging guests to match a gift of \$5,000 given by Vietnamese In Philanthropy (VIP), a Giving Circle of the Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAPIP). The organizers were pleased that attendees pledged funds to support the ongoing work of VAOHP to collect and preserve the life stories, photographs, and documents of Vietnamese refugees and immigrants in Southern California for future generations of students, researchers and the community. This non-profit project, which was started with an initial gift from the Jao Foundation, relies on private and community donations and the goal is to create a \$2.3 million endowment to sustain this project in perpetuity.

Please contact VAOHP if you have any questions, have items to contribute to the exhibition, would like to participate in an oral history interview, or wish to donate funds at vaohp@uci.edu.

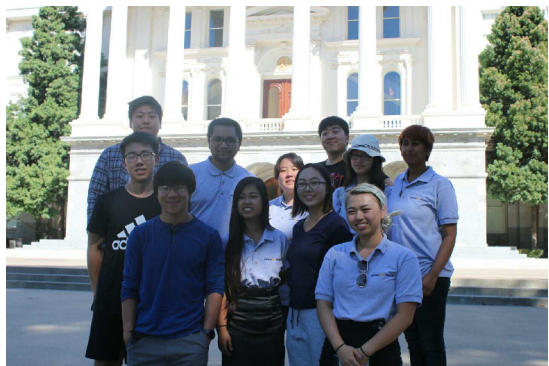
FEATURED STUDENTS

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS



Amy Fan

My project focuses on the verbal narratives of LGBTQ API French students. I will be interviewing French university students while abroad in France to ask them about their life experiences and how being both queer and API affects their experience as a French citizen. With this project, I will be drawing comparisons between their experiences and the experiences of LGBTQ API American students that I have already been able to interview. I hope that interviewing French students from a Catholic country that holds a strong church and state separation policy and has had gay marriage two years longer than the US can shed light on the difference between French API queerness -- and American API queerness. What does it mean to be queer and API in the context of the world?



Cayla Zhang

I never planned to major in Asian American Studies. I never knew that it was a field of study. When I learned that Asian-American Studies was a major, I thought, "if there's something I could read, write, and learn about all day, it would be this." Before I started taking Asian-American Studies classes, I was interested in learning more about the issues we faced, but Asian-American Studies really changed the way I saw the world. It's important to go back to your roots. You can read and write about Asian-American history or Asian-American issues all day, but there's nothing like seeing and experiencing it. And one of the best ways to see this is by actually going into a community organization and participating. I started joining community organizations because I felt that it wasn't enough to write essays on Asian-American issues - why not try to organize on them as well? After all, Asian-American Studies was born out of community organizing - ethnic studies was fought for, rather than simply given. I'm able to learn about our history because of the community, so I want to give back.

FEATURED STUDENTS

GRADUATE STUDENTS



Erica Maria Cheung

Erica is a third year PhD student in the program of Culture & Theory. Her current project investigates the popularity of Asian American male celebrity chefs in the United States' culinary industry and analyzes the ways in which these chefs navigate this majority white, hypermasculine institution through an articulation of "Asian Americanness" in their mediated performances and production of food.

Last year she received a UCI Humanities Commons Collaborate Conference Grant with her colleagues to create the Critical Visual Geographies Collective, an interdisciplinary graduate research collective, and the CVGC Conference, a 3-part guest lecture series. She had the opportunity to be a panelist at the 2016 VietFilmFest and this summer, she participated in USC Annenberg's Summer Doctoral Institute for Difference in Media & Culture. She is currently working on her Master's thesis about Asian American male celebrity chefs and the "food fraternity" and is also the current Graduate Student Assistant Researcher for the Department of Asian American Studies.

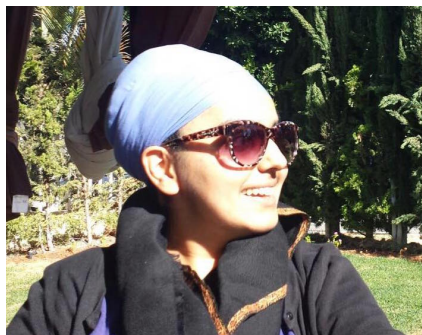


Laureen Hom

Laureen is a PhD candidate in the Department of Planning, Policy & Design with an emphasis in Asian American Studies. She advanced to candidacy in Fall 2015 and has since been conducting fieldwork for her dissertation, which examines how revitalization and redevelopment strategies both respond and contribute to the physical, social, and political shifts in Los Angeles Chinatown since the 1965 Immigration Act.

This past summer, Laureen began conducting in-depth interviews individuals who have been engaged in different forms of community work, both past and present. The interviews have captured the different perspectives about how Chinatown has changed and should change; which community needs are addressed and how they are addressed; and how the neighborhood is positioned within broader city planning practices and development issues. The interviews have supplemented Laureen's ongoing fieldwork at various city and community meetings and archival research examining media, planning documents, and other public records of land use and development issues in Chinatown.

This past academic year, Laureen also presented her work in progress at the Urban Affairs Association and Association of Asian American Studies conferences and received an Honorable Mention for the Ford Foundation Predoctoral Competition.



Tavleen Kaur

Tavleen is a third year PhD student in Visual Studies at UC Irvine. She is researching the role of architectural design and urban planning in the built environment of the South Asian American diaspora. In particular she is looking at how the formation of faith-based architectural identity in the public sphere is a process that happens in tandem with that of the racialization and marginalization of religio-ethnic communities. She is working at the intersections of design, planning, race, and ethnicity.

FEATURED ALUMNI



Andy Le

Andy is a proud UCI alumnus from the Class of 2014. A first-generation college student, Andy received his B.A. in Criminology, Law and Society with a minor in Asian American Studies. One of his memorable Asian American courses is the Vietnamese American Experience 151D, which allowed him to explore his Vietnamese American identity and contribute to the Southeast Asian Archives. As a student, Andy co-founded the Southeast Asian Student Association (SASA) in Fall 2012, to foster a supportive space for Southeast Asian students to continue to tell their parents' refugee and immigrant stories. Andy has returned to the Student Outreach and Retention (SOAR) Center as the Student-Initiated Programs Advisor for Outreach. In his new role, Andy looks forward to inspire and empower student leaders who are passionate about social justice, educational equity, and promoting college access.

Learn more about SOAR at <http://soar.uci.edu/>.



Rex Wang

I decided to major in Asian American Studies because I had taken the lower division courses for the major and I realized that much of the material that we had covered in lectures was all new information for me. I wanted to be able to understand the issues that Asian Americans had faced in order to be a better advocate within our community. As a future educator, I want to be able to bring awareness of these issues to my students so that they have a better understanding of Asian American history. As a recent graduate, community activism has helped me by becoming an intern at a nonprofit organization. Additionally, I have been able to apply the knowledge that I learned as an undergrad to my workplace, where we focus on social issues.

FACULTY UPDATES

Alexander Cho, Postdoctoral Scholar

I'm a cultural anthropologist who focuses on understanding how people use digital media and I'm happy to be here at UCI working at the Digital Media and Learning Hub. I received my Ph.D. last year from the Media Studies program at the University of Texas at Austin where I researched the way that queer youth of color use the social network site Tumblr.com. My Master's thesis investigated how multiracial Asian Americans express their identities on social media. At UT I also taught for the Center for Asian American Studies for several years while completing the doctorate, including their intro class as well as introducing two new seminar classes: "Mixed Race Identities" and "Critical Approaches to Asian American Gender and Sexuality." At UCHRI, I am piloting a digital design project with the goal of creating a tool that will help under-resourced families connect their young learners to meaningful interest-driven educational



opportunities such as after-school programs, arts programs, and tech camps. I'm a SoCal kid born and raised, so I'm happy to be back in the area, exploring the OC beaches and the great food in Irvine.

Beheroze Shroff, Lecturer

My research is focussed on the African descended Sidi community of Gujarat State in India. I have completed five documentaries on Sidis, a new one is a work in progress. I have published eight articles on cultural traditions and spiritual practices of Sidis. Below I list the most recent articles:

"Juje Jackie Siddi: 'Barefoot Entrepreneur' of Haliyal, Uttara Kannada" Journal of African Diaspora, Archaeology and Heritage 4 (1) 2015, 1-24 – (Special Issue on the African Diaspora in Asia)

"Indians of African Descent: Sidis, Bava Gor and Spiritual Practices" African Theatre 15 (UK) Special Issue on links between Africa and Asia – forthcoming Winter 2017)

"My Journey to Sidis—Indians of African descent through film" (forthcoming in Journal of Global Slavery Spring 2017).



Professor Dorothy Fujita-Rony

This summer was a busy and productive one for research and writing, and for thinking about public and private spaces. I had the privilege of giving two talks at a National Endowment for the Humanities Teacher's Institute through the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle about Filipina/o American history and the concept of home. It was inspiring to interact with teachers from across the country! As part of the group, I also got to travel to Bainbridge Island via ferry for a guided tour around the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, along with an accompanying lecture and panel discussion. I am currently finishing up an essay on Asian American labor for an anthology for the National Park Service, which has helped me to think a lot about how we can interpret different sites for public audiences, and especially for younger generations.

FACULTY UPDATES

Professor Julia Lee

I completed and submitted an article titled "China Underwater: Ecological Representations of the Morecambe Bay Tragedy." This essay represents the start of a new research project that examines narratives of environmental crisis in the Transpacific. Professor Josephine Lee (at the University of Minnesota) and I have started the process of co-editing "Asian American Literature in Transition, Volume 1" for Cambridge University Press.



Professor Linda Trinh Vo

This has already proven to be a busy year for me. I completed my two-year term as president of the Association for Asian American Studies and worked with a dedicated team to organize our annual conference for national and international scholars in Miami, Florida from April 27–30, 2016. As Director of the Vietnamese American Oral History Project and Co-Curator with Tram Le of the Vietnamese Focus: Generations of Stories Exhibition, we celebrated the closing of our 8-month exhibition and accompanying 4 events at the Old Orange County Courthouse in Santa Ana in February 2016, which attracted thousands of attendees. We moved parts of the exhibition to the UC Irvine Student Center for the month of March 2016 and held an opening event with alumni and supporters. I was honored to receive the 2016 Public Image Award from Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles, the nation's largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian Americans, with a luncheon held in May and this summer started my term as inaugural Co-Chair of the Community Advisory Council for Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Orange County. Also, my chapter "Transnational Beauty Circuits: Asian American Women, Technology, and Circle Contact Lenses," was published in a co-edited book, *Global Asian American Popular Cultures* (New York University Press, 2016).



Professor Judy Tzu-Chun Wu

This summer has been filled with travel and adventures for me. I visited Japan and South Korea in late June. In Japan, I attended the Asian Studies Conference and also gave talks at Konan University, Kyoto University, and Sophia University. There was a lot of interest of interest in Japan about my current book project, a political biography of Patsy Takemoto Mink, the first woman of color U.S. Congressional Representative and the co-sponsor of Title IX. Patsy was a third generation Japanese American who was also the first Japanese American female lawyers in Hawai'i. Visiting South Korea was a first for me, and I was able to reconnect with Prof. Jim Lee as well as two of my undergraduate students from Ohio State University. One of them is in the Ph.D. program in History at Northwestern, and he is doing research on the racial and sexual politics of U.S. military bases in South Korea as well as the U.S. The other student is planning to apply to graduate school. In July, I visited Washington, D.C. to continue my archival research on Patsy Mink. Her papers (which total more than 2000 boxes) are at the Library of Congress, and I also reconnected with my co-author Gwendolyn Mink, a political scientist and the daughter of Patsy. After so many



weeks away from home, I am excited to be back at UCI and planning for the 25th celebration of Asian American Studies!

Learn more about Asian American Studies at UCI

Interested in majoring, minoring, or joining the Friends of Asian American Studies listserv? Contact Assistant Department Administrator Jasmine Robledo at jasmine.robledo@uci.edu.

Want to pitch a story to this newsletter? Email Graduate Student Assistant Researcher Erica Maria Cheung at ericamc1@uci.edu.



The Asian American Studies undergraduate class of 2016 at last year's Graduation Reception.

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