

U.Va. Alumni: By the Numbers

Asian and Asian Pacific American alumni: 8,007

Class of 2004 A/APA alumni: 996

State with highest number of A/APA alumni:
Virginia, with 3,697

Country outside U.S. with highest number of
A/APA alumni: China, with 134

AAPAAN Fundraising Initiatives

With a growing population of Asian and Asian Pacific American students and alumni, AAPAAN can serve as an important facilitator in connecting alumni with one another and with on-Grounds issues and programs. AAPAAN has received important administrative and financial support from the Alumni Association. In order to meet our goals, however, AAPAAN must develop its own funding sources.

Over the course of the next five years, AAPAAN will undertake a \$250,000 capital campaign, which will fund three primary areas:

- Jack T. Chen Memorial Scholarship
- General Operating Fund
- On-Grounds Program Support

Jack T. Chen Memorial Scholarship

Jack was a member of the University's Class of 2004. He died in a car accident November 16, 2002. Jack's family is working with AAPAAN to establish a scholarship in his honor. A \$2,500 scholarship would be awarded to one student each year. (*Read more about Jack on p. 5.*)

General Operating Fund

This fund will provide financial resources to provide for projects such as chapter development, mailings, annual meetings, and career development/networking.

On-Grounds Program Support

The University is in the midst of a decades-long set of changing circumstances that represent an increasingly diverse community and global education. AAPAAN will be able to provide financial backing for programs to help meet the University's goal of creating a community of understanding and respect.

A gift card is included with this newsletter. AAPAAN will distribute additional information to alumni over the coming year. We look forward to your involvement and support in reaching our goals.

Greetings from AAPAAN Chair Diana Sun ('75)

Thank you for your interest in AAPAAN! I am honored to have been elected AAPAAN chair for a two-year term. I am joined by talented and dedicated Executive Committee members and committee chairs. We are excited – and a bit awed – by the incredible opportunity and responsibility that we all face.



Diana Sun

*"A nation, as a society,
forms a moral person,
and every member of it
is personally responsible
for his society."*

Thomas Jefferson, 1792

APA students are the largest minority group on Grounds today. Currently, more than 8,000 'Hoo alumni self-identify as Asian American – within 15 years we will be the largest minority alumni population. Our efforts to

build a strong alumni network will benefit not only students on Grounds and alumni everywhere, but also the future of APAs at the University.

AAPAAN Committees

Seventeen alumni council members comprise the AAPAAN Board. All Council members serve on at least one committee. Much of our substantive work will be accomplished in committees, which will be the backbone of AAPAAN as we build our organization. Committee work is critical to our collective success, and I encourage you to participate. (See page 3 to learn about the Board members and committees.)

Join us

It's an exciting time to be part of AAPAAN. I thank you for your continued commitment, and look forward to seeing how you bring your excitement and energy to this important organization.

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CAC to ASU and Beyond

Susan Pan (SEAS '91) delivered the following remarks at the closing ceremonies of the Asian Student Union's celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in April 2002. We thank her for allowing us to share her remarks with alumni.

In 1987 I walked the University Grounds as a first-year engineer, struggling through calculus and chemistry, not knowing what the next four years had in store. I was away from the ever-watchful eyes of my parents for the first time, glad finally to be free to live life by my own rules, if only I could figure out what those rules were.



Amidst this confusion, I was fortunate enough to have found a group of friends in a 30-student organization called the Committee on Asian Cultures (CAC), which was the precursor to the Asian Student Union (ASU). In that small group, we bonded, but not because we shared a similar outlook on life. In fact, my recollection is that we differed remarkably in our views on religion, politics, and affirmative action. Rather, we grew close because we knew at some level we shared common experiences. Some were as mundane as the type of food we ate; probably more significant were the identity crises that we faced to varying degrees growing up as invisible or model minorities in our American elementary and high schools.

The group benefited from our collection of common backgrounds but also largely from a feeling of inclusiveness for people of all backgrounds despite the "Asian" connotation of the organization's name. This feeling of inclusion was fostered by the group's then-president, Nelson Chow, whose leadership I would best characterize as completely selfless and untiring.

What I recall of the CAC programs during that first year is that we were a social organization for Asian students, holding an ice-cream social, dances, picnics, and other outings. We also provided the occasional source of diversity or multiculturalism to a predominantly Caucasian student body. We did this by staging a fashion show of native Asian costumes and preparing ethnic food for international festivals over the course of the school year. I also remember the CAC as a place where great and lasting friendships were forged.

Susan Pan, continued on page 7

Asian Student Union: 2003-2004 Highlights

By Huong Huynh, ASU President (CLAS '05)

As graduates of U.Va. returned to the University this past September for Homecoming, one conversation could be heard over and over: This place is exactly the same! Ask any random sampling of Asian and Asian Pacific American alumni about the state of the University, however, and you are liable to hear something different, something *more*. A/APA alumni by and large agree that U.Va. has undergone drastic changes, and they see that Asian American students are agents of these changes. We are on the Lawn, we are chairing Honor, we are Greeks, we are editing the Cavalier Daily, and we lead 35 APA student organizations. We are, in short, a part of the University.

Since its inception, the Asian Student Union has promoted multiculturalism, represented the interests of its members to the University, and served as a network for Asian/Asian American student organizations. In 2003-2004, ASU took its goals of educational and social programming to their fullest definitions. Following are some highlights of the year:

Asian Pacific American Leadership Training Institute
In its fifth year, APALTI provided first-, second-, and third-year students the opportunity to explore their leadership styles and skills through a multicultural lens.

East Coast Asian American Student Union Conference
Culminating a multi-year planning effort, U.Va. for the first time hosted the annual ECAASU conference. More than 150 U.Va. student organizers and volunteers hosted 800 students from schools as far away as New York and Florida. Conference participants heard from distinguished speakers such as attorney Angela Oh and former NFL player Esera Tualo. They also attended workshops on Asian American identity, political involvement, homophobia, and the integration of South Asians and East Asians. Leadership workshops addressed networking, management, and institutional memory.

DiAPAson
DiAPAson, first held in spring 2002, brings together newly elected leaders of the 30+ Asian American student organizations at U.Va.

The 2004 DiAPAson included 45 student leaders, who reconvened this fall to reconnect with one another and establish goals for the year.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
Celebrated on Grounds for the fifth year, APAHM5 brought to U.Va. such empowering speakers as Vickie Nam and Yellow Rage, cultural festivities such as Barrio Fiesta, and creative co-sponsorships such as the APAHM-themed dinner at O-Hill and a reception for incoming first years during Days on the Lawn.

Peer Advising and Family Network
PAFN is the largest pan-Asian program on Grounds, with participation from 36 student advisors and 60-75 advisees. Two advisors and three or four incoming first-year or transfer students create a "family." The objective of PAFN is to provide support, advising, and guidance to first-year and transfer students.

Co-sponsorship of Kundiman
The Office of Student Life co-sponsored a retreat for Asian American emerging poets retreat during August 2004.

AAPAAN Alumni Council

Executive Committee

Diana Sun Solymossy ('75)
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Chair
Nominating Committee

Yen Ling Shek ('99)
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Vice-Chair
Nominating Committee
Assessment Committee
Fundraising Committee

Andrea Young ('00)
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Secretary
Communications Committee
Chapter Dev't./Membership Committee

Vishal Patel ('04)
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Treasurer
Chapter Dev't./Membership Committee
Fundraising Committee

Alumni Hall Staff

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Director of Alumni Activities

Dawn Martin
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Alumni Interest Group Exec. Director

Angela Raker
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Alumni Interest Group Admin. Asst.

Committees

Assessment – Milton Hsieh, Chair

In order to best serve Asian/Asian Pacific American alumni, this committee will assess their demographics, needs, and interests, as well as the effectiveness of AAPAAN programs and initiatives, on an on-going basis.

Chapter Development/Membership – John Kang, Chair

The Chapter Development/Membership committee focuses on membership recruitment and regional outreach to alumni. For the next two years, we will focus on providing programs and networking opportunities in the greater Washington DC area and New York City. The committee is looking for members in those locales to help plan events.

Communications – Andrea Young, Chair

The Communications Committee is responsible for maintaining and promoting all pertinent information directed towards the Asian and Asian Pacific American Alumni at the University of Virginia and the interested public. The Committee will promote events and other topics using AAPAAN's website and email list, newsletters, and other necessary means of communication.

Council Members

Ray Caro ('02)
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Communications Committee

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Fundraising Committee

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Nominating Committee

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Programs Committee

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Fundraising Committee
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Student Members

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Fundraising Committee

Maritel Sanidad ('05)
maritel@virginia.edu

University Representative

Daisy Rodriguez
rodriguez@virginia.edu
Assistant Dean
Office of the Dean of Students

If you are interested in participating in one of these committees, or in serving on the Alumni Council, please email a council member or contact us at uva_aapaan@yahoo.com.

Fundraising – Vishal Patel, Chair

The Fundraising Committee seeks to raise money to support AAPAAN's mission, which includes organizational development as well as on-Grounds student support. In addition, it seeks to provide the financial resources necessary for the Jack T. Chen Memorial Scholarship.

Nominating – Yen Ling Shek, Chair

The Nominating Committee, comprised of current and past AAPAAN chairs, is responsible for recruiting Alumni Council members to be elected each term. The committee is in the process of contacting nominees to be brought to vote by the current Council.

Programs – Jennifer Na, Chair

This committee will plan programs and events to help APA alumni network with one another, work toward their professional development goals, serve their community, and re-connect with the University of Virginia community.

“Dean Daisy” Rodriguez supports APA students and alumni

By Stephanie Nixon (CLAS '97)

Assistant Dean of Students Daisy Rodriguez – or “Dean Daisy,” as she is known around Grounds – developed her taste for new places and experiences early in her life. “Understanding students and their stories is a part of what excites me about my work,” she said. Daisy is entering her second year at U.Va., and, never one to rest easy, has plans to expand on the accomplishments of her first year (see “2003-2004 Academic Year Highlights,” p. 2, and inset below).



Daisy’s father served in the United States Navy for over 30 years, which involved several moves while she was growing up. She was born in Taiwan and lived in California, Hawaii, and Japan, where she attended high school. While in high school, Daisy taught English language classes to Japanese elementary school students.

She ventured off the Naval base to experience and try to learn as much about Japan and its culture as she could, rather than isolating herself to activities on the base as did many of her peers.

As an undergraduate student at San Francisco State University, Daisy changed her major five times and found herself unsure about what she would do after graduating. She had lived in residence halls for four years and was involved with programming in a residence hall coffee house. The coffee house advisor, whom Daisy considers her first professional mentor, asked Daisy if she had considered entering student affairs.

That question started Daisy down a professional path that has taken her to New York University and Indiana University, Bloomington, for graduate school. She also worked at Weber State University in Utah from 1996 to 1999, an experience that she said, “broadened my perspective and definition of diversity. I witnessed religious discrimination on many levels, which reinforced that diversity is not based only on race and ethnicity.”

Daisy Rodriguez

Education

San Francisco State University, B.A. 1994
New York University, M.A. 1996
Indiana University, Bloomington, Ph.D. 2003

Career

- Baruch College, Graduate Assistant, Student Activities
- Weber State University, Student Activities and Residence Life
- Indiana University, Bloomington, Residence Life and Commission on Multicultural Understanding
- University of Virginia, Assistant Dean of Students

Hobbies: rubber stamping; playing mahjong, poker, and spades; traveling; spending time with her nieces

Favorite summer read: *The Twentieth Wife* by Indu Sundaresan

Favorite summer movie: *13 Going on 30*

With this broader perspective, Daisy enrolled in the Higher Education Administration doctoral program at IU, Bloomington. For three years there, she was a graduate assistant with the Community Education Program, a residence life program that involved mentoring ten undergraduate students with whom she planned diversity education programs in the residence halls. During Daisy’s final year at IU, she was asked to serve on the Commission on Multicultural Understanding, an opportunity which allowed her to engage in a campus-wide effort to address issues of multiculturalism among students, faculty, and staff.

As the only Asian American in her doctoral cohort, Daisy often found herself being asked to serve as a spokesperson for issues related to diversity or Asian American culture. “I felt compelled to correct misrepresentations of APA issues, or they would be overlooked,” she described. She sought out Asian American graduate students enrolled in other programs as a support network.

Daisy’s first year at U.Va. as an Assistant Dean of Students brought its own challenges, including adjusting to the culture and political climate, learning how to balance student self-governance and student development, and finding out effective ways to offer both support and critical direction to students she advised. Daisy is beginning her second year feeling more acclimated to the area and the University.

Upcoming initiatives and programs

Day of Dialogue on Race

Bring together student leaders of varying backgrounds to develop relationships with other student leaders and address issues of race

Asian American Studies Minor Reception

Launch the University’s Asian American Studies minor program, which is being reviewed by the Faculty Senate

Building Bridges: Connecting Faculty, Staff, Graduate Students

Connect A/APA faculty, staff, and graduate and professional students in a colloquium setting

Assessment Efforts

Assess programs, services, and visibility; climate for A/APA students; and representation of A/APA students by ethnicity

“Dean Daisy,”
continued on page 6

Creating a Scholarship Program for Jack

By James Tsai (SEAS '01)

My family has strong ties to the University. I am one of four brothers, three of whom attended U.Va. The bucolic mountains and slow pace of the Blue Ridge have left deep impressions on who I am today.

My younger brother, Jack T. Chen, loved the University. He passed away in a car accident in his third year in November 2002. He was in the Engineering School and was fascinated with his study of electrical engineering and his minor in biomedical engineering.

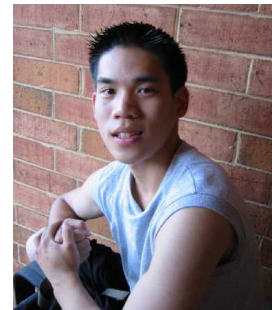
Jack worked hard but still had time to listen to his friends and engage in some of his favorite pastimes.

His friends recall him with fondness, telling me stories of his generosity, the sense of fun and gentleness that he showed to everyone. He was active in his Asian fraternity, Lambda Phi Epsilon, his Bible study group, and the University community at large. His death was a tragic loss to not only his family, but also to the world he left behind.

Jack's family and AAPAAN are working together to memorialize Jack by providing financial support for Asian American students or students interested in Asian American issues. The scholarship committee would have as its guide the following description, reminiscent of Jack:

Someone who has a passion for giving, who would meet the inevitable hurdles head on, who really understands and appreciates the "little things" in life – someone who can continue the never-finished work that Jack was intended to do.

Jack worked hard but still had time to listen to his friends and engage in some of his favorite pastimes. He liked going to the gym – "to get big," as he always said with a grin. He learned to play the guitar on his own, particularly enjoying the music of the praise groups to which he belonged. He was spiritual and sought understanding with God on his own, but he never was disdainful of other backgrounds and always maintained respect and a willingness to listen and understand.



Jack T. Chen

The scholarship program will create what planners have affectionately named "Jack Scholars," of which there will be one for each undergraduate year at the University. The \$2,500 award will allow students to pursue actively their "little things" in life.

The scholarship is part of a larger plan for the future of AAPAAN. In addition to memorializing Jack, it also will enrich the Asian American community at the University and, ultimately, the real world.

For information about the Jack T. Chen Memorial Scholarship, please contact James Tsai or Vishal Patel at uva_aapaan@yahoo.com.

If you are interested in making a gift to the scholarship fund, please return the enclosed contribution card.

“Dean Daisy,” continued from page 4

Her goals for this year include assessing the success of the programs she oversees. She hopes to maintain existing programs and to incorporate new aspects.

Daisy plans to send two students to the first National Asian American Student Conference, to be held in November at the University of Southern California. She also hopes to send student leaders to other regional and national conferences, saying, “The networking that happens at conferences allows students to experience how others, regionally and nationwide, are working towards increasing awareness and activism.”

In terms of her work with alumni, “establishing an Asian American Studies Program at U.Va. is a priority for many of our current APA students, as well as alumni. With the addition of two new Asian American teaching faculty this year, many of us are encouraged,” Daisy described. She will continue her work to support students and alumni efforts toward fulfilling this longer-term goal by continuing to lay the groundwork for forming a department.

Another goal which will involve working with alumni and AAPAAN is to develop a text that highlights U.Va. alumni of Asian and Asian Pacific Islander heritage.

Keep in touch with AAPAAN!

www.uvaclubs.com/aapaan

Find out about events, meetings, and initiatives
Make contributions
Subscribe to our email listserv
Contact alumni

Coming soon . . .

*AAPAAN
Alumni &
Student
Mentoring
Program*

REUNIONS WEEKEND 2005

Join us for the sixth annual
AAPAAN Reception
during Reunions Weekend 2005
June 3 – 5, 2005

Visit the Reunions website
(www.alumni.virginia.edu/reunions)
for details.

The CAC itself also had great friends in the University administration and faculty, especially at the Dean of Students Office in Associate Dean Ronald Stump.

Dean Stump's support of the CAC was important to the organization's growth, as well the personal growth of many of its members, including my own. I am happy to hear that the ASU continues to have good friends and supporters at the University, such as Vice President Patricia Lampkin and Dean Edward Ayers.

Eventually, rather than being a mere porthole through which the University occasionally caught a glimpse of Asian culture, the CAC gained a political voice, offering input on the present and future of student life at the University. By my third year, the CAC quintupled its membership and had clearly outgrown its moniker as a "committee" on Asian cultures. We renamed ourselves the Asian Student Union.

By then, we were organizing large-scale programs, such as a regional conference of Asian students from area schools such as Georgetown, GWU, William and Mary, James Madison, Maryland, and Virginia Tech. We located Asian American professionals to lead discussions on Asian American literature, careers in law, discrimination against Asians, and other topics.

When possible, we also organized events to bring together the University as a whole. My third year was marked by the one-year anniversary of the Tiananmen Square tragedy – the government suppression of a student pro-democracy movement in Beijing, which was marked by bloodshed and loss of life. The ASU organized a candlelight vigil at the University Chapel attended by students, faculty and administrators of all backgrounds, with a show of support throughout Grounds by people wearing white commemorative ribbons. Despite the solemnity and sadness of the event, we were buoyed by the fact that some feelings and sentiments – such as mourning the loss of young lives and the commemoration of a struggle for basic freedoms – transcended divisions of race.

Another significant event during my tenure in the ASU was the launch of the first prospective students day for admitted students of Asian descent. This stands out as significant in my mind because I am informed that the Asian student population now stands at 11%, which represents

a 40% increase compared with when I was a student at the University. Significant benefits accrue to the University when Asian students accept their invitations to attend – in particular a diversity of viewpoints, combined with talents for creativity, leadership, analysis, and entrepreneurialship. I hope to see the upward trend continue.

I commend the ASU and its network of supporters in continuing the simple traditions such as the Garden ice-cream social while broadening its outreach by co-sponsoring its monthly meetings with other student organizations.

Since leaving the University, I confess that I have given less thought to my ethnicity than I once did. I suppose one gets caught up in building a future, hopefully one that obviates the concerns of one's past. Nonetheless, my experiences being part of the ASU at this University are critical to who I am today in almost every dimension.

Professionally, I am a patent attorney, a profession that might not exist but for Jefferson's creation of the U.S. patent system. I am the first partner of color in a law firm of over 100 attorneys and am hopefully in a better situation to change the current demographics of legal practice. My clients include large Asian technology companies. Personally, I am married to a man who rolled out dough for Chinese scallion pancakes at a CAC meeting. I am the mother of a daughter named Virginia and a son named Jefferson. My long-time friends jokingly inquire whether their middle names are "Wahoowa." (They're not).

I mention all this because, as that confused first-year engineering student, I never would have envisioned any of this. It was a collection of seemingly insignificant events that brought me to the present day. I am confident that the ASU will have many causes to celebrate, along with many future challenges to pursue.

Even during my tenure as ASU President, we attempted to have the University establish an Asian-American Studies Program. With the prevalence of Asia in the headlines and the continued contributions of Asian Americans to the American fabric, one would have thought that an Asian American Studies Program would be in place at the nation's top public university. Still, it is important that in the past decade, this idea from my generation of the ASU has not been lost, even though the progress has not been by leaps and bounds.

When Maha Abehuela (2002-2003 ASU president) is invited to return to the University in 2012 to make comments such as those I am making here today, I hope her remarks include excerpts that refer to the University Grounds as a forum where students of all backgrounds feel welcome and where they freely exchange ideas, against the backdrop and beauty of the nation's number one public university. Thank you and best of luck.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an Asian and Asian Pacific American alumni network that builds and supports connections with the University of Virginia community.

OBJECTIVES

- To foster an Asian and Asian Pacific American alumni community by recruiting alumni as members of the Network
- To provide a social network for alumni and current University students
- To provide a career network for alumni and current University students
- To aid in recruitment and retention of Asian and Asian Pacific American students
- To provide a fundraising vehicle for scholarships for Asian and Asian Pacific American students
- To mentor current students and enhance their experiences
- To increase Asian and Asian Pacific American presence at the University and exert influence on University policies and practices as appropriate
- To develop and maintain a sound financial structure for the Network



AAPAAN Alumni Council members gather at their most recent meeting in Charlottesville.

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**Asian and Asian Pacific American
Alumni Network at the University of Virginia**

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