



Strengthening and Advocating for
Asian American Native Hawai'ian/ Pacific Islander Communities



CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON
ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER
AMERICAN AFFAIRS

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

**GOVERNOR EDMUND G. BROWN, JR., MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE,
AND THE PEOPLE OF THE GREAT STATE OF CALIFORNIA:**



On behalf of the dedicated citizens who serve on the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs, I am honored to present to you this report of the Commission's 2012 activities.

Since our establishment in 2002, our goal has been to give voice to California's vibrant, highly diverse, and continually-growing Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities. We bring public officials together with community-based and civic organizations that devote their mission and programs to the needs of their APIA constituents.

The highlights in this report provide a summary of the breadth of the Commission's activities. This year's report also includes an historical review of the issues that the Commission has focused on over the years, since our inception a decade ago. We also pay tribute to the past appointed commissioners who served during the years since operations began in 2004.

Last year was a period of change as we acknowledged the great public service of Assemblymember Warren Furutani, who retired from office. During his tenure as a state legislator, he was a moving force for the Commission and our goal to strengthen APIA communities. There was a change in Commission membership as well, with Tami Bui, Courtni Pugh, Alice Wong, and Bill Wong stepping down. We welcomed three vital new members: Judi Ki, Steven Ma, and Chiem-Seng Yaangh.

The distinguished members of the California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus have been essential to our work. We are extremely grateful to Assemblymembers Paul Fong and Das Williams, Caucus chair and vice chair, respectively; Assemblymembers Mike Eng, Paul Fong, Warren Furutani, Mary Hayashi, Ted Lieu, Fiona Ma, Alberto Torrico, and Mariko Yamada; Senators Leland Yee and Carol Liu; and honorary members Controller John Chiang and Board of Equalization member Betty Yee. In 2012, we welcomed new APIA legislators in the State Assembly: Rob Bonta, Al Muratsuchi, Ed Chau, and Phil Ting.

Andrew Medina provided support for the Commission in 2012, and Diane Ujjiye, past founding commissioner and executive director of APIs/CAN, continues to guide us with her expertise, resources, and insight. Special Services for Groups serves as our fiscal sponsor. We are grateful for the stability and continuity they bring to the Commission.

And importantly, we thank former Assemblymember George Nakano, who authored Assembly Bill 116, the legislation that created our Commission in 2002. His vision a decade ago enabled APIA affairs to be heard on a statewide policy level.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Blong Xiong', written over a light blue background.

Commissioner Blong Xiong, Chair

MISSION

The mission of the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs is to elevate the political, economic, and social issues of Asians and Pacific Islanders by contributing to and strengthening how state government addresses the needs, issues, and concerns of the diverse and complex Asian and Pacific Islander American communities in California.

ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

The role of the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs is to:

- Advise the Governor and Legislature on how to respond most effectively to the views, needs, and concerns of the state's Asian and Pacific Islander American communities.
- Serve as an effective liaison for Asian and Pacific Islander American communities with the Governor's Office and the California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus.
- Examine issues of access and cultural language sensitivity by state agencies, departments, and commissions.
- Provide assistance to policy makers and state agencies in identifying Asian and Pacific Islander American communities' needs and issues and develop appropriate responses and programs.
- Educate the public about hate crimes against Asian and Pacific Islander American communities.

2012 ACTIVITIES: HIGHLIGHTS

2012 IU-MIEN NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

There are approximately 50,000 Mien in the U.S., with 15,000 Mien living in Sacramento, making this city home to the largest population of Mien refugees in the U.S. It is



Commissioner Chiem-Seng Yaangh (l) and Mayor Kevin Johnson at the lu-Mien New Year Celebration in Sacramento. (photo: immien.com)

no wonder that the lu Mien New Year event in Sacramento hosted by the United lu-Mien Community, Inc. drew a crowd of more than 800 celebrants on February 25. Commissioner Chiem-Seng

Yaangh was an honored guest, representing both the Commission and his position as United lu-Mien Community's board president. In attendance were APIA leaders and public officials, including Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson. Dr. Yaangh welcomed the attendees and spoke about the importance of a united Mien community as acculturation in American society takes place at a rapid rate.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE L.A. RIOTS

Events were held on Sunday, April 29, throughout the Los Angeles region to remember the 1992 riots that engulfed Los Angeles after four police officers were acquitted of the beating of Rodney King, a black motorist, at the end of a car chase. A nearby resident captured the 1991 beating on video and when it aired on the nightly news, the footage transfixed a nation. Nearly 13 months later, on April 29, 1992, rioters took over the streets for three days, with more than 50 people dead, scores hospitalized, and hundreds of businesses and homes destroyed. Commissioner Mimi Song attended the commemoration sponsored by Korean Churches for Community Development. Speakers included Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Controller John Chiang, environmental activist Van Jones, and actor Edward James Olmos.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR CONGRESSIONAL STUDIES (APAICS) NATIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

In conjunction with the National Asian Pacific American Caucus of State Legislators and the Asian Pacific American Municipal Officials, the APAICS National Leadership Academy was held May 6-7 in Washington, DC. Commissioner Chiem-Yeng Yaangh became the first lu-Mien American participant, attending as an APIA commissioner. The two-day academy provides APIA elected and appointed officials with intensive nonpartisan training to excel in their field, both in their current office and in preparation for opportunities to advance into higher office. The program includes specialized training sessions, networking opportunities, and meetings with

national political campaign committees and members of Congress. Since its inception in 1999, more than 90 APIA elected officials have participated in the academy.

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMISSION ON ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS



At the invitation of Daphne Kwok, chair of the national President's Advisory Commission on AAPIs, Commissioners Tana Lepule and Dianne Yamashiro-Omi attended the first convening of state and local APIA commissioners throughout

the country at the White House on May 9. Kiran Ahuja, executive director of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, orchestrated a full day of briefings and updates on key policy issues towards the goal of coordinating federal efforts with state and local work. Commissioners took the opportunity to share their histories and current challenges, discussing grassroots efforts to serve APIA communities. Commissioner Lepule was instrumental in organizing representatives from the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community. At the convening, he and Richard Calvin Chang, board member of Empowering Pacific Islander Communities, offered the "Policy Platform Blueprint for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States" to set the foundation for a national advocacy effort for NHPIs in the U.S.



NHPI leaders presented the "Policy Platform Blueprint for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the U.S." at the convening. Commissioner Tana Lepule is in the lower right.

API SUMMIT, SACRAMENTO (DIANE UJIYE)

Text forthcoming for 2012 API Summit in Sacramento on April 30 and May 1.

2012 ACTIVITIES: HIGHLIGHTS

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF VINCENT CHIN HATE CRIME INCIDENT

With the advent of the 30th anniversary of Vincent Chin's murder, the Commission voted unanimously to support the events commemorating a dark passage in Asian American history.

Vincent Chin 30: Standing Up Then and Now

Commissioner Noel Alunit represented the Commission at the June 23 viewing of "Vincent Chin 30: Standing



Vincent Chin 30 coordinator Curtis Chin (no relation) with Commissioner Noel Alunit.

Up Then and Now" at the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy (Japanese American National Museum) in Los Angeles. Among the panelists for the afternoon were Congressman Judy Chu, chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus; Council on American-Islamic Relations-SF executive director Zahra Billoo; OCA executive director Tom Hayashi; and Asian American Justice Center executive director Mee Moua. Angry Asian Man Blogger Phil Yu moderated. In 1982, Vincent Chin was the victim of a hate crime murder in Detroit. Thirty years later, APIAs continue to face discrimination and bullying. In light of recent tragedies like the extreme hazing and subsequent death of Pvt. Danny Chen and the continuing effects of 9/11, APIAs are seeking ways to stand up against racism and discrimination.

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Google Hangout

On June 30, Asian Pacific Americans for Progress presented a nationwide "google hangout," an event where cities from across the country tuned in online to participate in a national discussion on hate crimes against Asian Americans. "Vincent Chin's death made an impression on



me many years ago," said Commissioner Alunit. "I wondered, if this could happen to Vincent Chin, could this happen to me?"

2012 CANDIDATES FORUM, SAN DIEGO

Commissioner Judy Ki moderated the 2012 Candidates Forum sponsored by Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association's San Diego Chapter (APA-PA-CDC) and Civic Education and Policy Advocacy Network (CEPA NET). CEPA NET is a project spearheaded by the Council of Philippine American Organizations (COPAO) and the Southwest Center of Asian Pacific American Law (SCAPAL) built on the success in redistricting at the state level. At the On September 8 event, Congressional, state, and San Diego mayoral candidates discussed the issues and their positions to a crowd of interested citizens.



Commissioner Judy Ki moderating a candidates forum in San Diego.

NINTH ANNUAL ASIAN HERITAGE AWARDS

Community, business, and government leaders from throughout Southern California celebrated APIA achievements at the 9th annual Asian Heritage Awards on



(l-r) Commissioner Judy Ki, Controller John Chiang, and Linda Tu, president of the San Diego Alliance of APIA

September 15 in San Diego. The annual event recognized achievements in 14 categories, honoring the best and the brightest in community service and humanitarian endeavors. With Commissioner Judy

Ki in attendance, APIAs receiving recognition included California controller John Chiang as special honoree and Michael Vu, assistant Registrar of Voters, garnering the government award.

RECEPTION OF THE NEWLY PUBLISHED IU-MIENH ENGLISH DICTIONARY

The Center for Lao Studies and Silkworm Books held an official book launch in San Francisco on December 15 for *An Iu-Mienh-English Dictionary*, the groundbreaking compendium by Dr. Herbert C. Purnell. Commissioner Chiem-Seng Yaang had the honor to introduce Dr.



Purnell, an American missionary and linguist who spoke of his 26-year journey to compile the

Dr. Herbert C. Purnell at a reception for *An Iu-Mienh-English Dictionary*.

2012 ACTIVITIES: HIGHLIGHTS

comprehensive Mien-English dictionary. At over 800 pages with more than 5,600 words, 28,000 phrases, and 2,100 cultural notes laced with myths, poetry, and ceremonies, the new dictionary preserves the fading Mien language and culture. Commissioner Yaangh is one of several Mien scholars who helped Dr. Purnell compile the dictionary, explaining, "It's one piece of the puzzle to preserve the Mien language worldwide."

On February 16, 2013, the book and its author were honored at a reception in Sacramento that drew more than 200 people from the Iu Mien community.

■ Hmong Dual Language Immersion Program

Commissioner Catherine 'Ofa Mann reported on the success of the Hmong dual language immersion program at Susan B. Anthony Elementary School in the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD). Begun in the fall of 2011, the program offers the only Hmong dual language immersion program in California, in which students are taught literacy and content in both Hmong and English.



Hmong dual language immersion class at Susan B. Anthony Elementary in Sacramento.

Credentialed Hmong bilingual teachers are in each of the classrooms so that the program teaches a second language to all students. In an ever-shrinking world, students

who grow up immersed in language and culture have a competitive edge," remarked SCUSD

Superintendent Jonathan Raymond. Commissioner 'Ofa Mann has been working closely with school principal Lee Yang over the past eight years on the API Advisory for the SCUSD and represents the Commission on the multiple steering committees on which she sits for the school district.

THE IU MIEN IN CALIFORNIA: SPECIAL REPORT

Excerpt from **A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF IU-MIEN AMERICAN EDUCATION** by Chiem-Seng Yaangh, Ph.D.

Iu-Mien have always had a love for knowledge and literacy. According to the legend of Crossing the Sea, the Mien did have a written language, but they lost it when they crossed the sea. In addition, some Mien elders believe that the original Mien written language is the Chinese writing. Whether the Mien had another writing system or that of the Chinese, everyone would agree that there were traces of Mien written language in ancient times. Crystal & Sae-pharn (1992) states, "the Mien are a people of the mountains, and yet at the same time they are a people of the book; they were villagers with a tradition of literacy, unlike their neighboring villagers" (p. 333). What is most remarkable is Iu-Mien people have been able to maintain the Chinese written language while living in the remote mountain ranges for hundreds of years...

In the United States, the Mien are afforded many opportunities for education, but many have dropped out of school and those who do graduate usually do not attend college. Among those who do attend college, many are not academically prepared for college (Yaangh, 2003). Meanwhile, most Iu-Mien children use English as their dominant language and speak only limited Mien. Most children are not learning to speak Mien. Most parents are



at loss as to what to do because their children refuse to speak Mien at home.

Nevertheless, some Iu-Mien have become economically successful and have assimilated into the white middle class like other immigrants who came before them... Unfortunately, many of these individuals do not give back to the community, where the vast majority of Mien are living a mired existence where

high crime and poverty prevails. These Iu-Mien families may be on public assistance due to disabilities, being unemployed without marketable skills, or employed with only entry-level manual labor jobs. Fortunately, some of Iu-Mien are economically successful and are involved in advocacy and community development on behalf of their people. These immigrants are few in numbers, but they are most influential in helping their community.

Regrettably, Iu-Mien ethnic identity, culture, and language are endangered, especially in the United States. The Mien community is attempting to maintain its ethnic identity, but lacks education, leadership, and skills to do so. Our hope lies in the younger generation Iu-Mien who are well acculturated and educated to take the leadership in community development efforts that promote and preserve Iu-Mien ethnic identity, culture and language.

HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION: A DECADE

The concept for a state Commission to address issues closely identified with Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities originated from strong grassroots support and advocacy. The Commission's creation was an historic recognition of the accomplishments and needs of California's growing, vibrant, and diverse APIA populations.

Former Assemblymember George Nakano (Torrance) authored AB 116 in 2002 to establish the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs. Members of the California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus co-authored the bill. Although established by statute, the Commission receives no public funding; support comes entirely from private funds and donations.



The Commission consists of 13 members appointed by the Governor and the Legislature. As a citizens board, members come from different vocations, backgrounds, and regions of the state. Public meetings convene four times a year, seeking to make California's government more responsive to the voices of APIA communities that express and identify their own needs. The goal is to guide policy and the work of state and local agencies, departments, and other commissions to improve service delivery to APIA communities.



2004 Commissioners (l-r): Fritz Friedman, Charles Woo, Alexis Wong, Francisco Hsieh, Luisa Blue, Albert Seto, Diane Ujiye, David Kim, Norman Hui, Philip Ting, Paul Osaki; not pictured: Akemi Arakaki, Ann Nguyen.

In 2004, its inaugural year of operations, the Commission adopted language access, hate crimes, and Hmong refugee resettlement as priority issues. On November 16, 2004, it held its first statewide hearing at the State Capitol, addressing the issue of resettling Hmong refugees in California. Providing strong support and attendance were members of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus and Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

Also in its first year, the Commission co-sponsored the first Asian Pacific Islander (API) Policy Summit in Sacramento, taking place in the spring of 2004. The annual summit remains a major Commission activity, bringing together leaders from throughout the state to convene on leadership, advocacy, and organizing for APIA communities.

Through 2005, the Commission continued to advise then Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger,

members of the State Legislature, and state departments on matters pertaining to the more than 4.5 million APIAs in California. Focus remained on language access and hate crimes while broadening the concerns of Hmongs to the broader Southeast Asian community in the Central Valley. The Commission also identified the complex problem of pathological gambling as a priority, helping to form the Asian Pacific Islander Problem Gambling Task Force.



Commissioners Blong Xiong, Diane Ujiye, Nitasha Sawhney, Assemblymember Warren Furutani, Board of Equalization member Judy Chu, and API Legislative Caucus chair Ted Lieu at the foreclosure crisis hearing in 2008.

In 2008, as the recession began to rear its ugly head, the Commission addressed the foreclosure crisis, particularly its impact on lower income communities of color.

By 2009, the Commission had added to its agenda health care access, education, housing and community development, and employment and economic development as these issues affect APIA communities, all primary



Commissioners in 2009 (l-r) with Assemblymember Ted Lieu (c): Dianne Yamashiro-Omi, Blong Xiong, Nitasha Sawhney, Kim-Yen Huynh, Diane Ujiye, Charlie Woo, Mimi Song, Andrew Wong, Dr. Norman Hui, and Catherine 'Ofa Mann. (Melissa Ramoso, courtesy Hon. Lieu's office)

topics at the API Policy Summit. Voting rights, environmental justice, mental health, and older adults were also addressed, as well as the empowering of APIA business women in an increasingly global economy.

The focus in 2010 turned to the U.S. Census as individual commissioners took up leadership roles in their respective regions to organize APIAs to participate and be counted. Their individual efforts set



Commissioner Kim-Yen Huynh (c) rallying neighbors in Orange County to take part in the 2010 Census.

HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION: A DECADE

the stage for the Commission's model of statewide representation enabling coverage of all regions of California on a specific issue.

Responding to advocacy by Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) leaders at the 2010 API Summit, the Commission became active in presenting NHPI needs to the State Legislature. By 2011 and with the guidance of Commissioner Tana Lepule, Assemblymember Warren Furutani had sponsored Assembly Concurrent Resolution 67, recognizing the cultural and social contributions of NHPIs to America.



At the 2010 joint hearing on Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Communities (l-r), Assemblymember Mike Eng, Assemblymember Warren Furutani, and Commissioner Diane Ujiye heard community presentations.

In the field of education, the Commission endorsed the principles of the Los Angeles Preschool Advocacy Initiative in a show of solidarity for increasing access to high quality preschool education in underserved communities.

In 2011, the commissioners brought together members from the wide spectrum of APIA communities with state and local public officials in a number of activities. From the organizing of Pacific Islander Fitness Day and the 8th Annual California API Policy Summit to public hearings on topics of deep concern to our communities, the commis-



Congressman Eni Faleomavaega (American Samoa) and Assemblymember Warren Furutani attended Pacific Islander Fitness Day in 2011.



Assemblymember Paul Fong and Congressman Mike Honda with Commissioner Nitasha Sawhney at the press conference for the post-9/11 Bay Area hearing in 2011.

sioners actively served as liaison between APIA voices and California policy makers. Issues addressed included the impact of 9/11 on the rights and liberties of Muslim, Sikh, South Asian, and Arab Americans, ten years after the devastating attack on our nation; place-based and regional approaches to funding, which often results in excluding rather than including APIA needs that are hidden within aggregated data; and the state of Cambodian American youth, giving voice to policy recommenda-



(l-r) Jonathan Tran of Southeast Asian Resource Action Center, Commissioner Noel Alunit, and Lian Cheun of Khmer Girls in Action at the 2011 informational hearing on the state of Cambodian American youth.

tions on education, health, community safety, and immigration for this fragile population. Addressing civil rights, the Commission voted its support for API Equality-LA's approach to the FAIR Education Act, compelling the inclusion of the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons in educational textbooks and social studies curricula in California's public schools.

It has been an active decade since the Commission was authorized in 2002. The current commissioners remain strong advocates for their APIA constituents. They also pay homage to the commissioners who came before them and who gave voice to the complex and pressing issues that are specific to APIA communities.

PAST COMMISSIONERS

The current commissioners wish to pay homage to the past appointed commissioners:

Akemi Arakaki
Luisa Blue
Tami Bui
Fritz Friedman
Francisco Hsieh
Norman Hui (founding chair)
David Kim
Ann Nguyen
Paul Osaki
Courtney Pugh
Albert Seto
Philip Ting
Alexis Wong
Bill Wong
Charles Woo

ABOUT THE COMMISSIONERS

Blong Xiong, Chair



Mr. Xiong is a councilmember for the city of Fresno. He is an outspoken advocate on issues ranging from education, youth, and civic participation to community and economic development. He is the first Asian American to hold a council position in Fresno and the first Hmong elected to a city council in California. Mr. Xiong also sits on the California Volunteers Commission, by appointment of the Governor.

Dianne Yamashiro-Omi, Vice Chair



Ms. Yamashiro-Omi served as program manager for Equity and Diversity for The California Endowment before her retirement in 2012. With 25 years of experience in philanthropy, she has a long history of activism and dedication to improving socioeconomic conditions for all underserved communities. Her career runs the breadth of executive director, consultant, board member, advisor, and volunteer for nonprofits and philanthropies in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Steven Ma, Secretary



Mr. Ma founded Think-Tank Learning in 2002, growing it into a multi-service education firm providing academic tutoring, test prep, and college consulting services with offices in the Bay Area and China. Actively involved in education issues and advocacy, Mr. Ma served as chair of the International Leadership Foundation. In 2011, he and ThinkTank Learning received special recognition at the 7th Annual Greater China Economic Excellence Awards ceremony held in 2012 in Beijing.

Noel Alunit, Treasurer



Mr. Alunit has worked in the HIV/AIDS field for over 20 years, most of them with the APAIT Health Center. He is a founding member of the Los Angeles HIV Prevention Planning Committee and sits on the steering committee for API Equality-LA. He also sits on the advisory boards for the Young Men's Study at Children's Hospital and the Art/Global Health Center at UCLA. Mr. Alunit is the *LA Times* best selling author of *Talking to the Moon* and *Letters to Montgomery Clift*.

Kim-Yen Huynh



Ms. Huynh is a leader in Orange County's business community, promoting collaboration among ethnic businesses and working tirelessly on issues related to community improvement. She serves as chair of the Organizing Committee for the Asian American Business Women Leadership Conference and was chair of the 2010 U.S. Census Vietnamese Complete Count Committee. Ms. Huynh is an executive manager with financial institutions.

Judy Ki



Ms. Ki has dedicated her career to public education, spending three decades teaching middle school science in San Diego. She is a founding board member and chair of the Asian Pacific American Ocean Harmony Alliance and serves as a state councilmember for the Humane Society of the U.S.-California. Since retiring, Ms. Ki is active with the Civic Engagement and Policy Advocacy Network in San Diego in AAPI voter registration drives and candidates support.

Tana Lepule



Mr. Lepule is the Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander community liaison for the cancer disparities projects at CSU Fullerton and UC San Diego. He is executive director of Empowering Pacific Islander Communities and serves on the California Council on Multicultural Health, San Diego Police Chief's Advisory Board, APIA Vote, and Pacific Islander Festival Association. He worked on ACR 67, which recognizes the contributions of NHPs in California.

Catherine 'Ofa Mann



As founder and president of TOFA of Sacramento, Ms. 'Ofa Mann spearheads the effort to support the growing numbers of Pacific Islanders in the greater Sacramento area. Her leadership roles include numerous community nonprofits as well as the Sacramento City Unified School District. She is the first Pacific Islander named to a California commission. In 2010, the California State Assembly presented Ms. 'Ofa Mann with the API Heritage Award for Excellence in Public Service.

Nitasha Sawhney



Ms. Sawhney is a partner in the Los Angeles and Bay Area offices of GCR, LLP, where she specializes in education, labor, and employment law. She serves as legal advisor to The Sikh Coalition and Policy Task Force of South Asian Americans Leading Together. She is a spokesperson on harassment and discrimination prevention, hate crimes, and bullying. Ms. Sawhney was honored as a 2011 API Heritage Award recipient by the California API Legislative Caucus.

Mimi Song



Ms. Song is founder of Mimi Song Company, a commercial real estate brokerage firm with offices in Southern California. For more than 20 years, she has been involved with economic ventures, cultural organizations, and philanthropic and nonprofit groups, all devoted to bridging cultures and developing leadership in a global economy. Ms. Song is a co-founder of Global Leadership Development Foundation that trains future leaders in positive endeavors.

Andrew Wong



Mr. Wong is a partner with Dechert LLP, representing domestic and international companies in the financial, technology, manufacturing and transportation industries. His affiliations include the Pomona Unified School District as a governing board member, Diamond Bar Community Foundation as a board member, Dental Hygiene Committee of California, the Diamond Bar Community Foundation, and Sports Educators of America.

Chiem-Seng Yaangh, Ph.D.



Dr. Yaangh has over 20 years of experience working in public institutions and private organizations. Devoted to education, he has provided direct services to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. Among his community affiliations, he is board president of United Lu-Mien Community, Inc. and founding chair and current member of Hmong, Mien, and Lao Community Action Network. Dr. Yaangh oversees the state's charter schools for the California Department of Education.