

E-Newsletter of the Organization of Chinese American Women

June 2024



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501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization

(from Linda Devine, Editor)

My thanks as always to those who contributed material for the e-newsletter. I received over 270 photos and appreciated photographers giving me a variety from which to choose. I published as many as I could, given space limitations, and I particularly appreciate my husband Ed's work on preparing the greater than usual number – over 90.

I continue to encourage OCAW members to write articles or submit information if there is something you think would be of interest to the membership.

Please also feel free to send me any suggestions that you might have for the e-newsletter at: devinefive@comcast.net. Wishing everyone a wonderful summer!

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April 2024 National Board Meeting

(from Maria Yang, National President)

(Editor's Note: The OCAW National Board consists of the national officers and the Presidents of the five chapters. The second quarterly meeting of the year was held via Zoom in April. Below, Maria has provided a summary of the meeting.)

The OCAW National Quarterly Board Meeting, held on Sunday, April 14, 2024, covered a range of topics, including personal experiences, technical issues, chapter updates, and organizational updates. Barbara York, President of the Virginia Chapter, was in charge of and led the meeting. While waiting for all participants to come online, there was informal conversation among the members. Linda Devine, National VP for Communications, shared her family's experience of witnessing the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse in Ohio and Texas, emphasizing the awe-inspiring and unexpected aspects of the event. Jen Tsao, President of the Silicon Valley Chapter, shared her recent trip to Taiwan and upcoming college reunion.

The board meeting formally began with Maria Yang, President of **OCAW National**, providing updates on OCAW National's financials, upcoming events, and collaborations with other associations.

Barbara York, **Virginia Chapter** President, and Cathy Roberts, Treasurer of OCAW-VA and National VP for Membership, discussed the recent activities of the Virginia Chapter, focusing on events, presentations, and member participation.

Sharon Chun, National **Webmaster**, stated that the April national e-newsletter would be sent out to Hawaii Chapter members after the quarterly Hawaii Chapter newsletter was first distributed. Sharon also reported on the updated national website.

Silicon Valley Chapter President Jen Tsao provided a comprehensive update on the chapter's recent and upcoming activities for the organization, highlighting successful events and plans for future engagements, including a tour for AANHPI Heritage Month and a fundraising initiative for the Alzheimer's Association.

Sharlene Chun, President of the **Hawaii Chapter**, provided a comprehensive update on the chapter's recent activities, emphasizing the success of their blanket-making project for care homes and the Mahjong games membership recruitment event.

Pat Ellzey, President of the **New Orleans Chapter**, shared exciting news about a DNA study sponsored by the Louisiana State University Research Department and a local hospital, aiming to gather data on Asians for national research. The "All of Us Research Program" will conduct surveys and collect samples to identify genetic associations with diseases, potentially leading to early disease identification and improved treatments.

Karina Hou, President of the **Maryland Chapter**, shared her travel itinerary and updated activities at the Chinese American Museum DC for the members of OCAW.

The meeting concluded with farewells and expressions of gratitude from the participants.

News from the Maryland Chapter

(Karina Hou, President)

Upcoming Event

The OCAW Maryland Chapter will be hosting a lunch for its members and guests on Saturday, June 15, 2024, at the Q by Peter Chang restaurant in Bethesda, Maryland. The purpose is to get to know one another better, and also to speak briefly about favorite charities that we might want to promote.

We will also be distributing books graciously offered to OCAW members by OCAW Hawaii member and

author Claire Chao, to those members who would like to receive a copy of the memoir written by her and her mother.

News from the Virginia Chapter

(Barbara York, President)

Barbara reports that the Virginia Chapter took a short break this e-newsletter cycle after the flurry of multiple events and activities reported in the April issue.

However, in response to e-newsletter editor Linda Devine's encouragement, Amy Lee and Cathy Roberts gladly contributed more lovely orchid photos to add to the three that were published in the last issue.

Field trip to see 350 orchids

(from Amy Lee)

As reported in the April issue, on Saturday, March 2, 2024, Amy Lee and Cathy and Dick Roberts met to see this magnificent display at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

It received rave reviews, and the photos below show why.



(Photos taken by Amy Lee)



(Photos taken by Cathy Roberts)



(Photos taken by Amy Lee)



(Photo taken by Cathy Roberts)

News from the New Orleans Chapter

(from Patricia Ellzey, President)

Chinese American Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Commemoration Celebration

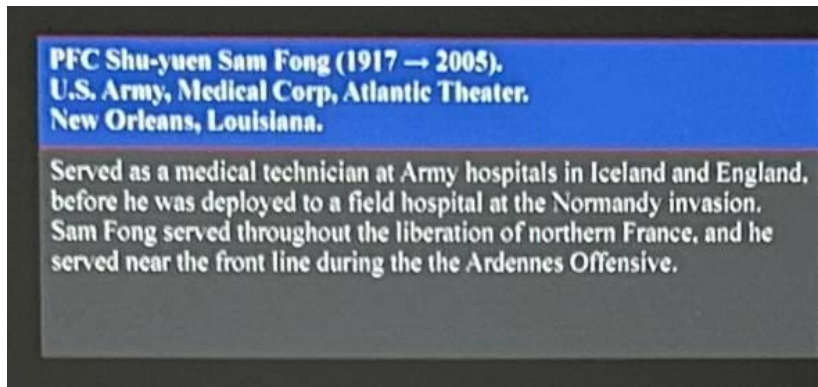
The Chinese American Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Commemoration Celebration was held at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, LA on Saturday, March 9, 2024. After 79 years following the official end of World War II, Chinese American Veterans who fought during the war finally had a celebration honoring their participation in fighting to keep our country and the world free from the dictators of Germany and Japan.

Many Chinese Americans came for the event from all over the U.S. Several of our OCAW members and friends from the Chinese Presbyterian Church had relatives who were some of those honored Chinese Veterans, and they attended the ceremony.





Prior to this celebration, during the COVID period, a couple of these living veterans and several of the relatives of the deceased veterans attended a brief ceremony in various cities in the U.S. to receive these Congressional Gold Medals of Honor. Among those relatives who went to Houston for this occasion in September 2021 included our Secretary Nellie Yip Underwood, President Patricia Hew Ellzey, and member Mayling Gee Hew.



Sam Shu Yuen Fong, one of Pat's uncles who received the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor. He was born in New Orleans in 1908 and served as a medic during WWII. (The birthdate on the plaque inscription is incorrect.)



Wallace S. Yip, father of Nellie Underwood, New Orleans Chapter Secretary. He received the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor.

Several Chinese Americans who fought in WWII attended the Chinese Presbyterian Church while growing up before the war. Winston Ho, the son of OCAW member Tien Ho, produced a memorial plaque which hangs in the church. It is still a work in progress, as some of the photos are missing. But it is a very significant memorial plaque to remember these veterans.



紐奧良華僑二次大戰退伍軍人：紐奧良華僑歷史研究
New Orleans Chinese Veterans of the Second World War:
Researching Chinese American History in New Orleans.

Winston Ho 何峻
Independent Historian

NolaChinese on
Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and Pinterest.
<https://nolachinese.wordpress.com>

<p>TEIC Sun Chai 陳錫 (1907 – 1999) U.S. Army </p>	<p>TEIC Sun Chai 陳錫 (1907 – 1999) U.S. Army </p>	<p>TEIC Sun Chai 陳錫 (1907 – 1999) U.S. Army </p>	<p>TEIC Sun Chai 陳錫 (1907 – 1999) U.S. Army </p>
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Introduction

A flourishing Chinese American community had existed in New Orleans for over sixty years, when the Japanese invasion of China began in 1937. In the first four years of the war in China, the Chinese in New Orleans raised money and donated supplies for civilian refugees, while raising awareness in the United States for the suffering of their families and in China. After the U.S. entered the war in 1941, dozens of young men, many of whom were barred from becoming American citizens because of Chinese Exclusion, joined every branch of the U.S. armed forces and served in every front of the war. Other Chinese, including Chinese from other states, worked in the local shipbuilding and aircraft manufacturing industries. Still other Chinese served as nurses and medical personnel in the U.S. and abroad. Chinese Americans from other cities, and military personnel from China itself, converged on the ports and shores of the Gulf Coast region, where they found comfort and support from the local Chinese Presbyterian Mission. The Second World War unified and united the Chinese in New Orleans in a way never seen before or since, and New Orleans was only one of many overseas Chinese communities across the American South and around the world that were similarly mobilized.

Local Chinese Americans, especially among the youth and immigrant-born generation, raised awareness for the war in China and contributed to the war effort.

Chinese Americans from other states and military personnel from China itself, converged on the ports and shores of the Gulf Coast region, where they found comfort and support from the local Chinese Presbyterian Mission.

Chinese Americans, such as Lin the son of the local shipbuilder, also raised money and gathered and donated supplies for civilian refugees in China.

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凱
Victory

群力起來
United in Strength, We Overcome

All of Us Research Program: DNA testing

This month our chapter was especially busy starting our participation in a national health research study called “All of Us Research Program.” It is sponsored locally by the Louisiana State University Health Department and is a large research program whose goal is to help researchers understand more about why people get sick or stay healthy. This is an outreach program whose aim is to get everyone, especially Asians and other people of color, to participate so that the whole spectrum of the American population is included. (Editor’s Note: Details of this study were reported in the April OCAW e-newsletter.)

This is the fifth year of a 10-year study, and it hopes to include a million people from all over the country of various social, economic, and education areas. The study included many surveys that needed to be completed that represented all aspects of an individual’s life, along with data recording each person’s height, weight, and blood pressure, and lab specimens of blood and urine.

**THE FUTURE OF
HEALTH BEGINS
WITH YOU.**

**FRIDAY, MAY 10TH
11:00 AM TO 6:30 PM**

**CHINESE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2901 W ESPLANADE AVE,
KENNER, LA 70065**

**SECURE YOUR SPOT AND PARTICIPATE
IN THIS PIVOTAL RESEARCH PROGRAM BY
COMPLETING YOUR REGISTRATION TODAY.**

**All
of Us
RESEARCH PROGRAM**

- The study takes approximately 30 minutes, and all participants will receive a \$25 gift card upon completion. Open to adults 18+.
- Remember to bring a photo ID and complete your registration in advance. The registration takes about 30 minutes to complete.
- Please arrive 45 min-1 hour before your scheduled appointment time to make sure that your registration paperwork is correct and complete

**REGISTER ONLINE
TO PARTICIPATE**
Joinallofus.org/lsu

A personal DNA genetic profile will be sent to each participant upon completion that will reveal many genetic traits, especially in the areas of potential serious diseases. Also, a Certificate of Appreciation and a debit card for \$25 was given to each participant.





Tien Ho (*right*), with LSU staff members. Tien was the first OCAW member to complete the registration and all of the lab work for the “All of Us Research Program.”



There were 33 OCAW members and members of our local community who participated in this study on Friday, May 10, 2024. The LSU staff told us that we hold the record for the most participants at one time in our area. Good job, everyone!

Asian Heritage Festival

The annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Festival sponsored by the local Asian Pacific American Society and the French Market District was held in New Orleans' French Quarter on Saturday, May 18, 2024. Several Asian and Pacific ethnicities presented their cultural heritage in song and dance as well as served traditional dishes.



As usual, our OCAW members were among those participating, by performing many traditional Chinese dances and in singing. They also performed in a Chinese Qipao fashion show presentation. The ladies were very lovely in their many colorful and beautiful costumes while displaying their art forms.





This is not only a time of celebration of our heritage but it is also an opportunity to educate the general public more about our language, art, and culture.

Visiting

On a personal note, I would like to inform everyone that I will be visiting Hawaii for a couple of weeks in June, and I look forward to meeting and getting to know some of our OCAW Hawaii “sisters.” It is great to meet other members from all over the country, and I know it will be a joyous occasion.

I also want to invite any of our “sisters” who might visit New Orleans in the future to let us know of your plans so that we can get to know y’all better, too. So be sure to notify us if you visit anytime.

Seafood Boils

Upon closing this report, I would like you to know that we have picnics and barbecues as the rest of the country does, but we also have something we call “seafood boils.” This is a time when we meet and eat tasty boiled crabs, shrimp, and crawfish, along with small red potatoes, corn, sausage, and peanuts in an onion, garlic, and spicy seasoned soup. When the food is cooked, it is drained out of the seasoned soup, and we eat the seafood with French bread.

If you ever come here, you should try it. For those of you who aren’t familiar with crawfish, see the photo below.



Local seasonal favorite – boiled yummy spicy crawfish

A local favorite New Orleans pastime is going to a seafood boil, especially a crawfish boil in the spring and early summer. Since these boils are seasonal, you need to come then to enjoy them!

Praying all of you are healthy and happy.

News from the Silicon Valley Chapter

(Jen Tsao, President)

OCAW-SVC Partners with Chinese Health Initiative to Enhance Community Health Outreach

(from Anne Hu, Communications)

In March 2024, the OCAW Silicon Valley Chapter proudly announced a partnership with the Chinese Health Initiative (CHI), an organization dedicated to addressing the unique health needs of the Chinese community. This collaboration aims to support El Camino Health's mission of promoting culturally sensitive care through CHI's specialized programs, which raise awareness and provide prevention strategies for health conditions prevalent in the Chinese population.

CHI stands out as the first program in the region specifically designed to cater to the Chinese community's health needs. The initiative is guided by a board of advisors composed of community and business leaders, as well as doctors, who offer insights into the distinct healthcare requirements of individuals of Chinese descent. The services and programs provided by CHI include:

Health Education and Screenings: Offering hypertension and diabetes screenings, along with a Diabetes Prevention series to promote early detection and management.

Culturally Competent Health Information: Ensuring access to care and resources tailored to the cultural context of the Chinese community.

Well-Being Programs: Initiatives such as “Ask a Dietitian” and Qigong classes aimed at improving overall health.

Emotional Well-Being Resources: Providing support and resources to help manage and maintain emotional health.

The current President of OCAW-SVC, Jen Tsao, has been instrumental in forging this partnership. “CHI is a nonprofit organization offering free resources to Chinese residents in the Bay Area. We are excited to collaborate with CHI to extend our outreach and introduce these valuable resources to our members, their friends, and families,” said Jen.

OCAW-SVC and CHI will jointly offer monthly educational programs, seminars, and energy healing classes, available both in-person and online. These initiatives are made possible through the generous contributions of corporate and private donors in the Bay Area. Volunteers are also welcome to join and support these efforts.

This partnership promises to enhance the health and well-being of the Chinese community, providing essential services, and fostering a greater understanding of culturally specific health needs. Please browse their website: <https://www.elcaminohealth.org/community/chinese-health-initiative>

OCAW-SVC Membership Social Event Mixer

(from Cynthia Chang, event organizer)

We had a membership social event mixer on Sunday, March 10, 2024 at Florentine Trattoria Saratoga from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

This gathering was a fantastic opportunity for our members to come together, share experiences, and enjoy a delightful afternoon in a cozy setting.

For this special event, the restaurant arranged a sumptuous dining experience that included a choice from one of five casseroles, accompanied by a refreshing beverage and its signature breadsticks – all for \$30 per person. It was the perfect backdrop to foster new friendships, catch up with old ones, and indulge in some delicious Italian cuisine.

Additionally, the book, *Remembering Shanghai*, written by OCAW Hawaii Chapter member Claire Chao and generously donated to OCAW members, was given to every guest and the friendly restaurant manager.



Cynthia Chang, event organizer, and Jen Tsao, SVC President







We also invited Jean Yu, Manager of the Chinese Health Initiative, associated with El Camino Health, as a speaker at this event. Jean gave everyone a booklet titled *Health Resource Guide for Chinese Seniors in Santa Clara Valley*.



In addition, she provided the following resources:

Chinese Speaking Physician Network

A network of 126 primary care physicians and specialists. All physicians are affiliated with El Camino Health and speak at least one Chinese dialect.

www.elcaminohealth.org/services/chinese-health-initiative/find-chinese-speaking-physician

Chinese Health Initiative Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/chinesehealthinitiative/>

Bilingual Health Resource Guide for Chinese Seniors

This 100-page guide includes health information and resources such as healthcare basics and facilities, community resources, common Chinese senior health concerns, and health insurance.

www.elcaminohealth.org/CHIseniorguide

Classes and Events

www.elcaminohealth.org/chi-events

YouTube Channel

www.elcaminohealth.org/chivideo

Jean was very impressed with our organization and joined us that day as a permanent member!



(Photos taken by Michelle Huang)

Mental Health Counseling ABC Talk

(from Maggie Tsai, presenter)

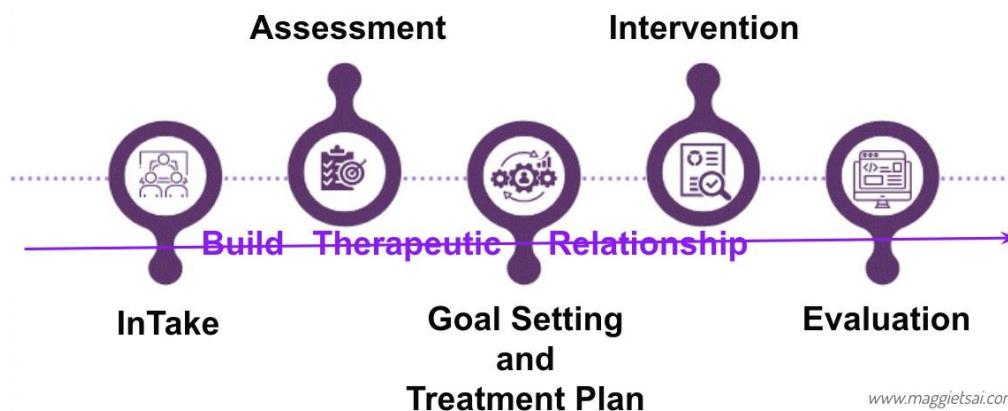
On Sunday, April 7, 2024, OCAW-SVC hosted a talk on Mental Health ABC. California mental health counselor and new OCAW member Maggie Tsai used a virtual case to illustrate the typical process of mental health counseling, shared foundational knowledge, and answered questions. Around 20 members attended the talk, conducted in Mandarin Chinese via Zoom. Cynthia Chang chaired the event.



Maggie Tsai

Whenever cases of depression or suicide occur, the importance of mental health counseling comes to the forefront. However, most people are unfamiliar with what mental health counseling entails, when to seek a counselor, and the general procedures involved. The talk covered the five major stages of counseling: intake, assessment, treatment plan, intervention, and evaluation, and shared important information related to each stage.

Treatment: Usual Process



(Screenshots by Maggie Tsai)

Temple of the Five Gods Visit

(from Jen Tsao)

To celebrate Asian Pacific, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, OCAW-SVC members and friends visited the Temple of the Five Gods (Ng Shing Gung) in San Jose, California on Saturday, May 18, 2024.



The original temple was built in 1888. Its ground floor functioned as a community center with a Chinese calligraphy and literature classroom for children. It also served as a hostel for travelers who did not belong to any of the local family associations. An elaborately carved and gilded altar stood on the second floor.

The five statues in the temple represent Choi Sun, God of Wealth; Kwan Gung, God of War and Justice; Kwan Yin, Goddess of Mercy; Tien Hou, Queen of Heaven; and Cheng Hung, God of Canton City.

The original temple was dismantled in 1949. Ng Shing Gung was replicated and dedicated to the community by the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project on September 29, 1991.

Today, the temple serves as the Chinese American Historical Museum with exhibits depicting the history and culture of Chinese and Chinese Americans in the Santa Clara Valley.

We walked through the temple on a guided tour.



Our docent was very informative.













(Photo courtesy of Sophia Yang)



(Photo courtesy of Sophia Yang)

(Photos in this article taken by Jen Tsao, unless specifically noted otherwise)

Youth Achievement Award

(from Jen Tsao)

The Scholarship Committee of the OCAW Silicon Valley Chapter is pleased to announce that the application form for the 2024 Youth Achievement Award is available on our website: www.ocaw-svc.org. The scholarship application deadline is June 28, 2024. Please encourage your or your friends' sons or daughters to apply if they are current high school seniors or will be a junior/senior in fall 2024. The only requirement is that the applicant's mom is a member of OCAW-SVC, and a new member's child's application is welcome!

News from the Hawaii Chapter

(Sharlene Chun, President)

Second General Membership Meeting

(from Edwina Lee, Membership Chair)

OCAW Hawaii had their second general membership meeting on Sunday, May 19, 2024 at King Restaurant in Honolulu. It was attended by 28 members and guests. President Sharlene Chun called the meeting to order and introduced our guest speaker, Nicole Coglietta from CareSift.



Kimberly Chun Hoi, Secretary; Sharlene Chun, President; and Nicole Coglietta, Guest Speaker

Nicole Coglietta is a co-founder of an organization called CareSift for Seniors. It is a free, long-term care support group for seniors and their families. The benefits of CareSift are that they give free care coordination, free ongoing education on long-term care, free placement support, and ongoing follow-up and support as needed.

Many of our members have or are going through that stage in life, where assistance is needed in daily living – for aging parents, spouse, or self. CareSift is a nonprofit group that can help guide those who have this situation, through the maze of senior care services.



The invocation was given on the spur of the moment by Kathleen Wong, one of our newest members who was reinstated. This was her first general membership meeting since she rejoined. *(See note below)*

While we were waiting for lunch to be served, we had members introduce their guests. Edwina Lee, Membership Chair, also introduced the new members and had them each say a little about themselves.

Lunch was a delicious 7-course Chinese meal.





After lunch, Sharlene excused the guests, and she conducted the business meeting.

(Photos taken by Sharlene Chun and Kimberly Chun Hoi)

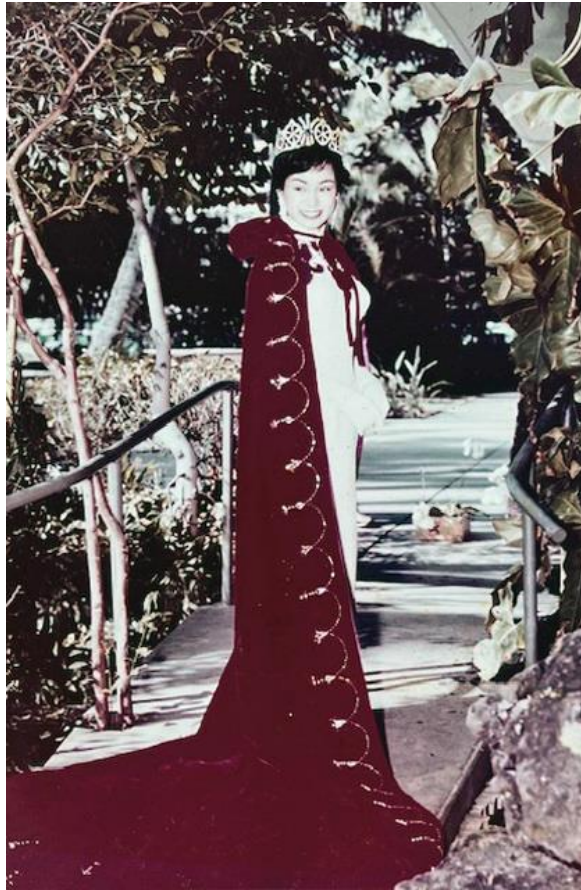
A further word on Kathleen Kong Wong...

(from Queenie Chee, Chapter Event Chair)

The Hawaii Chapter is elated to welcome back a member from the past: Mrs. Kathleen Kwai Lin Kong Wong. Kathy was crowned Hawaii's Narcissus Festival Queen in 1963 while earning her college degree at the University of Hawaii. She travelled the world, first as a Queen representing the Hawaii Chinese community, and later as an individual exploring with her sisters and good friends.

Her husband is Dr. Terry Wong, a well-respected endocrinologist from Hawaii, and an amateur magician – truly a “Renaissance man.” Kathy and Terry lived a busy life and helped to make our community vibrant and better. He did magic tricks at the drop of a hat, with little gimmicks in his pockets to make his patients smile. He was also a photographer extraordinaire, once holding a one-man exhibit on the East Coast, and additionally was recognized as a poet. Of their four successful children, one followed in endocrinology, another went into IT, one is an M.D., and one is an ophthalmologist and surgeon.

OCAW Hawaii submitted Kathy's name to the United Chinese Society as a candidate for Chinese Model Mother of the Year in 2012, and she was selected for that honor. (Two other recipients of this award who are OCAW Hawaii Chapter members are Sharlene Chun (2016), current chapter President, and Dr. Roberta Wong Leung (2018), former President.)



Kathy as Hawaii's Narcissus Festival Queen

(Photo taken by Tit Kin Young)

From and About Our Members

About Karina Hou, Maryland Chapter President

(from Karina Hou and Anny Lai, Maryland Chapter Secretary)

OCAW-MD President Karina Hou has continued to be busy with many events and activities. Below are some of these.

On Friday, March 8, 2024, represented the Chinese American Museum DC and the Universal Peace Federation as a Peace Ambassador and spoke as a guest at The Ven on Embassy Row in Washington, D.C. for International Women's Day.

This event celebrated local and international woman-owned small businesses, featuring inspiring speakers, entrepreneurs, and creators in the nation's capital. International Women's Day included paintings by Mentwab Easwaran, an award-winning, D.C.-based artist; empowering talks by inspirational women; and a raffle prize drawing with gifts. Source: www.thenationalherald.com



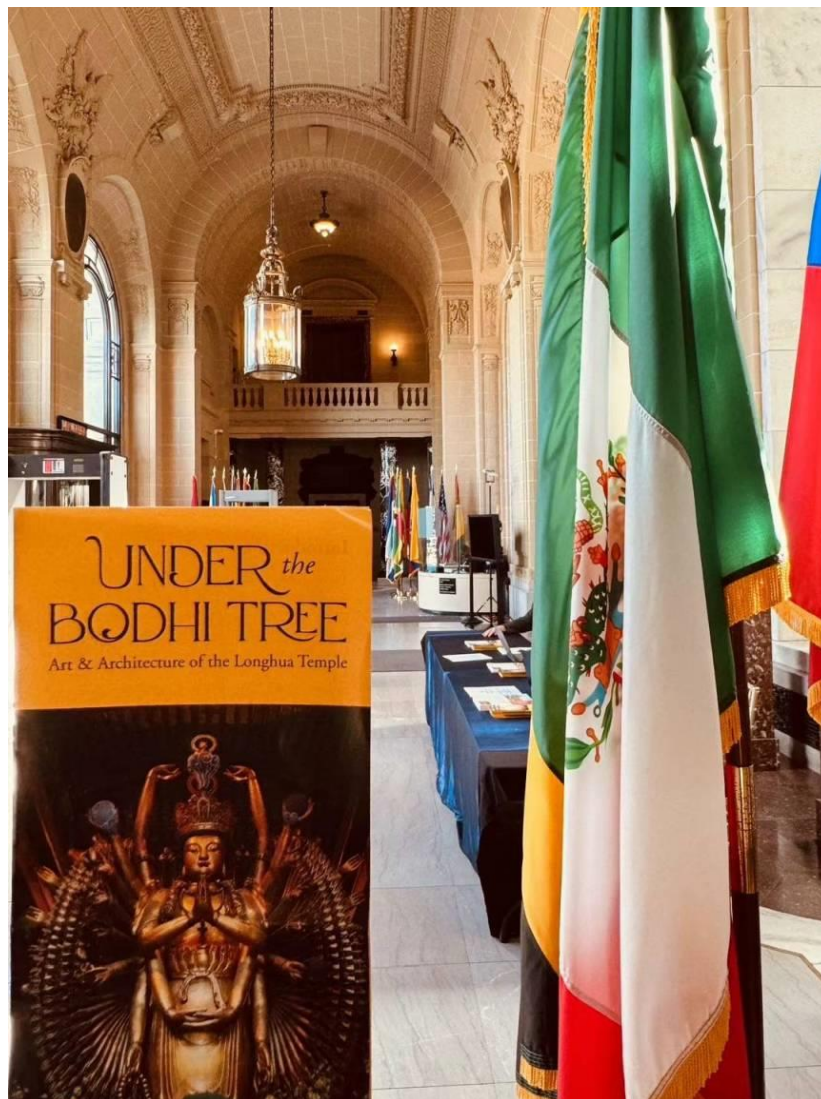
On Friday, March 15, 2024, invited to attend the CSW68 World Women's Conference – WAKSAW Archaeological Alliance meeting at the Harvard Club in New York.

The 68th annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68), the United Nations' largest annual gathering on gender equality and women's empowerment, took place under the priority theme, "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective." At CSW68, governments, civil society organizations, experts, and activists from across the world came together to agree on actions and investments that can end women's poverty and advance gender equality. Source: unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women



On Sunday, March 24, 2024, hosted the “Under the Bodhi Tree: Art and Architecture of the Longhua Temple” Exhibition in Washington, D.C.

As the President of OCAW Maryland, Karina wanted to help organize something that promoted Chinese American groups in the D.C.-Maryland-Virginia area, especially ones that were founded by women. In collaboration with Jenny Liu, Executive Director of the Chinese American Museum DC, Karina assisted in organizing an opening reception for one of CAMDC’s newest exhibits. “Under the Bodhi Tree: Art and Architecture of the Longhua Temple” features sculptures and images illustrating Buddhism, its cultural practices, and Buddhist art in modern society. The opening reception was held at the Organization of American States and received many attendees, including international guest Abbot Zhao Cheng from Shanghai.





On Monday, March 25, 2024, invited to attend the United Nations Women in Science and Technology Symposium, co-hosted by The Catholic University of America and UNESCO, in Washington D.C.

The United Nations Women in Science and Technology Symposium aimed at promoting equality in science, technology, and innovation for socio-economic sustainable development. UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated, “Women and girls belong in science. It is time to recognize that inclusion fosters innovation, and let every woman and girl fulfill her true potential.” Significant progress has been achieved in elementary and secondary schools across the United States. Source: <https://www.un.org/en/information-center-washington/women-and-girls-science>



AANHPI Heritage Month, and Councilmember Kristin Mink

(from Pat Fenn, Maryland Chapter Life member)

Montgomery County, Maryland, which is on the northern border of Washington, D.C. and hosts the largest population of Asian Americans (Chinese), issued an annual proclamation on the advent of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, an act of Congress initiated by Jeanie Jew from Fairfax County, VA.

The proclamation cited its theme, “Advancing Leaders Through Innovation.” The commemoration includes a video documenting AAPI leadership making a difference in the county through technology, education, and entrepreneurship.

Since December 2022, Kristin Mink, a first-generation Chinese American born and raised in Montgomery County, has proudly represented District 5 on the Montgomery County Council. She is serving in her first four-year term.

Prior to serving on the Council, Kristin worked as a teacher in Montgomery County Public Schools and most recently as the Senior Legislative Organizer at the Center for Popular Democracy, a nationwide nonprofit fighting for justice at the local, state, and federal levels.

Councilmember Mink serves on the County Council’s Public Safety Committee and the Education and Culture Committee where she is the Council’s Lead for Libraries.

She made history as the first Asian elected to serve on the Montgomery County Council, marking an important milestone for the legislative body.

2024 Total Solar Eclipse

(from Linda Devine)

Our family had thoroughly enjoyed viewing the last total solar eclipse in the U.S. in 2017, having taken a trip to South Carolina to see it. Thrilled on that occasion, we wanted to experience the 2024 eclipse if weather allowed. The event was scheduled for April 8.

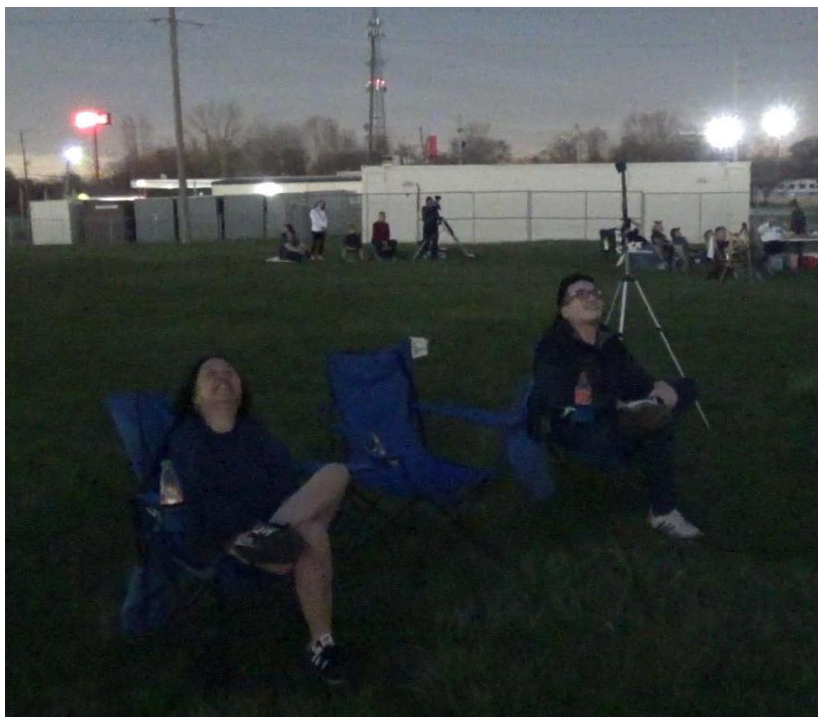
My daughter Amanda arranged a trip to Texas for herself, her husband, my son Tommy, and three other friends. Unfortunately, the weather in the southern U.S. was iffy, and clouds obscured their view for most of the eclipse time, but they were able to see it for a short while at the beginning. For four of them, it was their first total solar eclipse, and they were bowled over!

My husband Ed, my son Jeremy, and I drove to the northern shore of Ohio (the town of Sandusky) to hopefully view it. Although the weather was problematic there as well, we lucked out and saw totality for the entire 3-1/2 minutes.

If you haven’t seen a total solar eclipse, it truly is worth the experience. Day becomes night. The moon obscures the sun and appears as a solid black circle, and the sun’s bright corona (the halo around the black moon) is magnificent! Even the best photos that you might see cannot compare to viewing the event in person. It was well worth us driving the 400 miles to witness one of nature’s dramatic phenomena!



Linda, Ed, and Jeremy Devine. Right before totality begins.
Special eclipse glasses are needed to view the eclipse so that one's eyes are not damaged.



During totality. In Ohio, 3:14 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.
The sun can be viewed directly; special glasses are no longer needed.



Totality

(Videocaptures taken by Ed Devine)

AANHPI Heritage Month Event and Khadro Crystal Rinpoche Presentations

by Maria Yang

(Editor's Note: Maria is OCAW National President.)

We were thrilled to support the Library of Congress Asian American Association in celebrating Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month on Friday, May 24, 2024, at 2 p.m. The event featured a cultural concert at the grand and historic Coolidge Auditorium in the Thomas Jefferson Building in Washington, D.C. The keynote speaker was Khadro Crystal Rinpoche, and the topic of her presentation was “How to Cultivate Inner Peace and Strength in Leadership.” The event received enthusiastic applause and excellent feedback from many attendees.

We also invited Khadro Crystal Rinpoche to the Maryland area to deliver two Chinese presentations about improving mental health. These were held on Saturday, May 25, at Montgomery College in Rockville, MD, and Sunday, May 26, at the Taiwan Culture Center in Derwood, MD. The topic was “Training Our Minds Not to Be Disturbed by External Turmoils.”

To reach and help first-generation Chinese and Taiwanese immigrants, OCAW National cooperated with two local Chinese organizations: the Taiwan Benevolent Association and the Greater Washington Taiwanese Association. We think it is important that OCAW connect first-generation immigrants with those who were born in the U.S. All attendees enjoyed excellent lectures and received free books.

Khadro Crystal Rinpoche has been a cherished friend of the OCAW Virginia Chapter and has presented to us many times before. Her lectures have greatly benefited many of our members and friends. She is a spiritual educator, Feng Shui master, writer, and lecturer.

As many people know, Khadro Rinpoche published a Chinese book, *Deep Inner Transformation and Spiritual Practice*, which was published in Taipei in December 2023 and ranked among the top bestsellers at Eslite Bookstore and Books.com.tw for two consecutive months. It is a highly recommended work that enhances our inner peace and spirituality.

Accumulating her insights from thirty years of spiritual practice, Khadro stated that the book mainly explores the spiritual realm and spiritual consciousness, providing guidance and spiritual direction for inner transformation, spiritual practice, settling the body and mind, and enhancing life. The contents integrate HH Grandmaster Lin Yun's Theory of Ch'i and Theory of Ling Particle (the universal consciousness), Chinese philosophy, and Khadro's insights on the interior dimension, consciousness, and spiritual practice.

We were deeply grateful for the opportunity to welcome Khadro Crystal Rinpoche to the Greater Washington area for her three insightful lectures, one in English and two in Chinese. Through her teachings, we have learned how to cultivate inner peace and resilience, train our minds to remain undisturbed by external turmoil, and follow her recommended readings. I hope all chapter members and friends of OCAW will have the chance to meet her, read her book, and benefit from her wisdom.

Library of Congress Asian American Association event









(left) Chang Xiang, Coordinator of the event from the Asian American Association
at the Library of Congress

(middle) Khadro Crystal Rinpoche, Keynote speaker

(right) Edward Jablonski, Chief Operating Officer at the Library of Congress

Montgomery College event





Taiwan Culture Center event



(Photos taken by Maria Yang)

Resilience in the Face of Adversity: My Journey Through Health Challenges

by Anne Hu

(Editor's Note: Anne is Communications Chair for the Silicon Valley Chapter, as well as Immediate Past President.)

Last year marked one of the most challenging periods of my life, both physically and mentally. It felt as though my world was crumbling, and I struggled to find my breath. This was not just metaphorical; in 2023 alone, I underwent a total hysterectomy in March followed by two heart-related surgeries in May and August. The physical toll was immense, and the mental strain was equally taxing.

Thankfully, my employer showed incredible understanding, allowing me to work from home and providing ample time off for surgery and recovery. As I reflect on this period, I am amazed at the resilience I discovered within myself, bolstered by the unwavering support of friends and family who helped me regain my footing.

As I shared my personal story, I was surprised to learn how many women around me had also undergone hysterectomies. It seems more common than I had realized. Due to the large size of my fibroid, an incision replaced a less invasive laparoscopic surgery, necessitating a longer recovery period and longer time for bed rest. Prior to my medical procedure, lots of blood loss prompted the return of my atrial fibrillation (AFIB), leading to another scheduled cardioversion in May and catheter ablation in August. Over the course of the year, Stanford Hospital became my second home.

Throughout these medical traumas, my faith and the support I received from my family and circle of friends were invaluable in easing my fears and anxieties. Initially, I was in denial – how could this be happening to me in my 50s? Starting in November 2020, what began as an outpatient procedure spiraled into a life-and-death situation, culminating in a cardiac arrest, an ICU stay, and the implantation of a permanent pacemaker. The shock of experiencing such severe health issues during the COVID-19 pandemic, when stress levels were already high, was overwhelming.

Numerous medications, including a newly FDA-approved drug meant to alleviate my heart symptoms but potentially cause heart failure, became part of my daily routine. Additionally, over the past four years, I have found great relief in acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which have complemented my conventional medical treatments.

Reflecting on my journey, I realize that my resilience was cultivated gradually as I recovered. Although I am still in the process of healing, cardiac therapy has become essential in maintaining my exercise regimen and overall health.

The silver lining of my encounter on a positive note, Stanford Hospital provided an exceptional environment for recovery. The state-of-the-art facilities, compassionate care team, and surprisingly good food made my stay more bearable. Each room was equipped with an iPad loaded with Netflix, Hulu, and Spotify, allowing for video consultations with my healthcare team and access to a variety of dietary options, including kosher, vegetarian, and ethnic foods.

In hindsight, I see that I had overlooked the warning signs my body had been sending. Work-related stress exacerbated my heart issues, and in part they could be hereditary. My hope for my OCAW sisters is that none of you have to endure what I did. It is crucial to find a balance between work and personal life and to develop effective strategies for managing stress. I wish you all good health and happiness for many years to come!

(Editor's Note: Thank you, Anne, for your willingness and courage to share such a very personal story. Hopefully readers will benefit from your experiences and heed your sage advice.)

Taiwan has an Alishan

by Jen Tsao

(Editor's Note: Jen is Silicon Valley Chapter President.)

Taiwan has an Alishan, which is a mountain. If you were to fly to Taiwan, you would see a full display of “Taiwan Welcomes You” and “Alishan Welcomes You” greetings on the walls in the international airport. Everyone in Taiwan knows that there is an Alishan Mountain located on the island. Its location is in southern Taiwan and nearby the city of Chia-Yi.

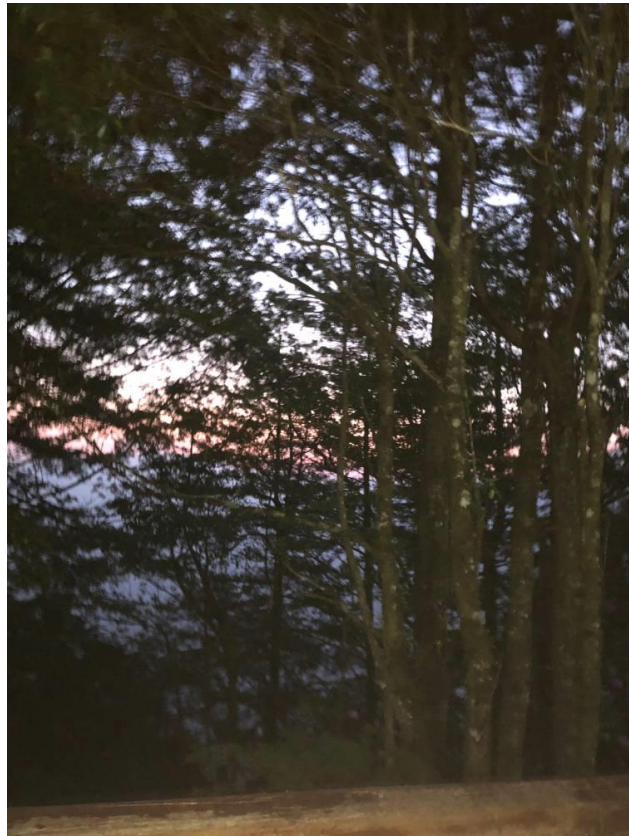
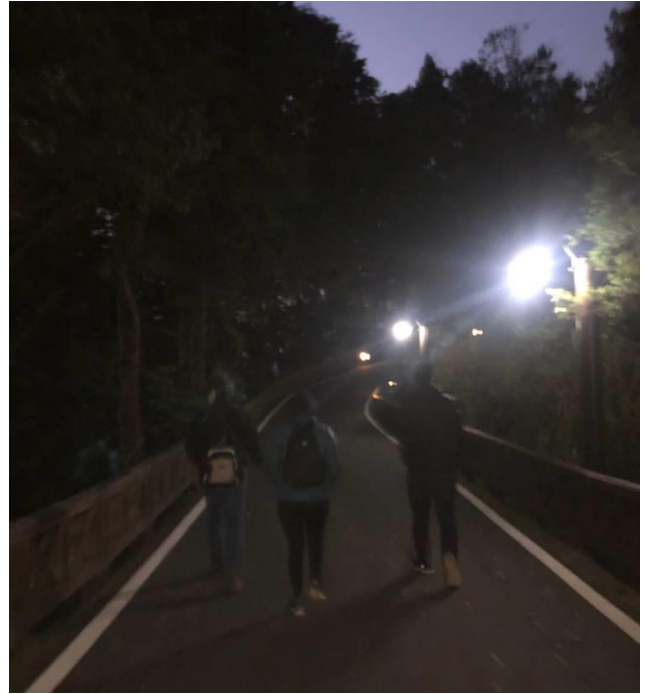
“The mountain is high and green; the stream is blue. Girls in Alishan are as beautiful as the stream, the young men in Alishan are as strong as the mountain...” These are the lyrics of a very popular song we sang and danced to during the school day when we were younger.

This April, we flew from California to Taiwan, and we were excited to visit Alishan National Forest Recreation Area for its beauty and its famous sunrise.

We traveled 3 hours on the small, historical Alishan train from Chia-Yi City and then on a one-hour shuttle from the crossroad train station to the Alishan Hotel on that first day. The next day, we got up before 4 a.m., took the small train again to Zhu Mountain, and then walked 20 minutes to the top of the hill, patiently waiting for the sunrise.







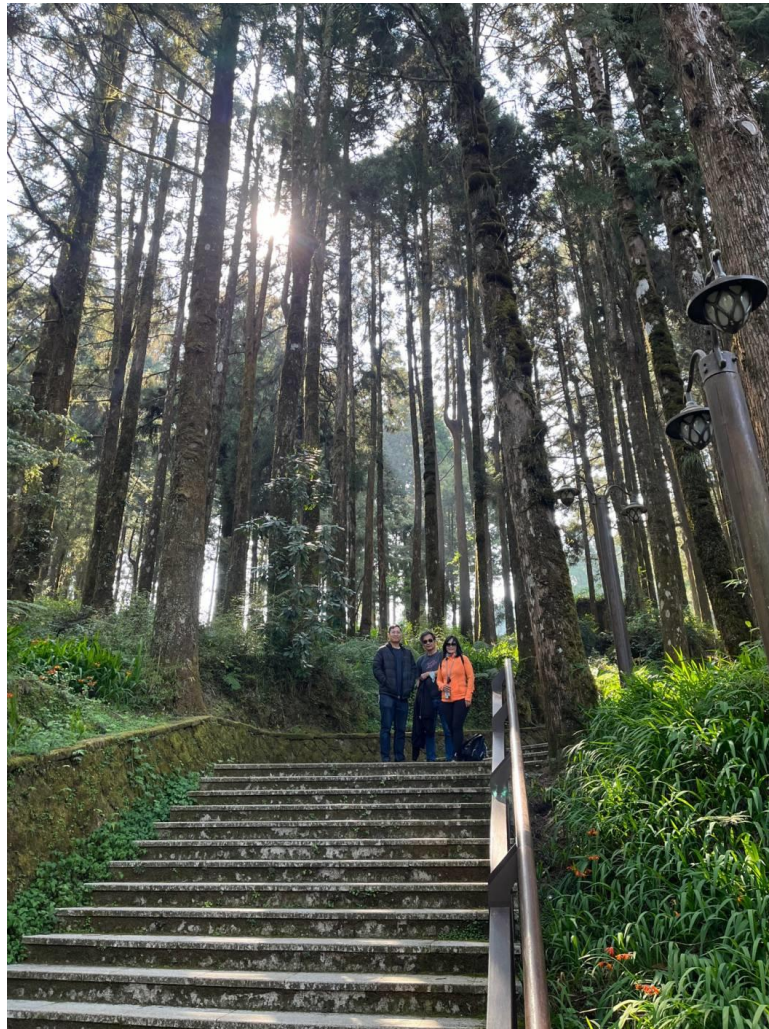




All the waiting was worthwhile. While we were staring at the beautiful hilly mountains, my son's fiancée asked, "Which mountain is Alishan?"

All of sudden, I stuttered. I asked the question to the good student in my house, my husband. We grew up in Taiwan, we all know Taiwan has an Alishan Mountain, but we didn't know which mountain it was!

According to Wikipedia, Alishan is one of the five mountain ranges in Taiwan. The Alishan range includes over 20 mountains with a height of more than 2000 meters. There is no specific mountain called Alishan. We learned so much just from this wonderful trip!





(Photos taken by Jen Tsao and Alex Tsao)