



OCA San Mateo's Asian American Achievement Awards Gala Honored Those Who Are "Limitless in Vision and Steadfast in Performance"

by Wade Loo

On September 26, 1998, The Organization of Chinese Americans - San Mateo County Chapter held its 11th Anniversary Dinner and Asian American Achievement Awards Gala at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Burlingame.



1998 Awards recipients and MC (L to R): Ivan K. Fong, Lynette Lee, Jan Yanehiro, Cynthia Gouw, and Dr. Chang-Lin Tien. Not pictured: John S. Chen.

Five distinguished individuals were honored for their high achievements in the arts, sciences, business, or community service. This year's honorees were: Chang-Lin Tien, Ph.D. – NEC Distinguished Professor of Engineering and Former Chancellor of University of California at Berkeley; John S. Chen – President & CEO of Sybase; Ivan K. Fong – Vice Chair of the Stanford University Board of Trustees and presently Deputy Associate Attorney General of the United States; Lynette Lee – Executor Director, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation; and Jan Yanehiru – celebrated Bay Area media personality.

Approximately 300 people attended the Gala and listened to speeches by John Chen and Dr. Tien; saw a slide show about EBALDC by Lynette Lee; heard Michael Lin, OCA–National President, introduce Ivan Fong (a transcript of Mr. Fong's speech is included in this newsletter); and saw Jan Yanehiro's children and Jackie Speier introduce Ms. Yanehiro.



Hayden and Faith Lee enjoy the gala.

These honorees have certainly proven themselves to be "Limitless in Vision and Steadfast in Performance", which was the theme of the Gala. The Mistress of Ceremonies was Cynthia Gouw, reporter for Channel 5, KPIX, who beautifully and gracefully moved the event along to finish before 10 pm.



OCA San Mateo President Karen Lee with Louise and Phil Wang

RSVP now!
OCA Chinese New Year Banquet

RSVP to Wade @ 341-6036
February 20, 1999, 5:30pm
Lucky Jade's Restaurant
\$25/person

President's Message: Tooting Our Horn!

By Karen Lee, Chapter President

Even though you don't want to, sometimes you just have to toot your own horn. We in the OCA Peninsula Chapter of San Mateo County must sometimes do that. A lot of our members and friends--not to mention the general community - don't know these things.

Thanks to our many dedicated members, ours is a successful chapter. San Mateo County OCA is now by far the largest OCA chapter in California. We have approximately 180 members--almost twice as large as the next largest chapter in the State. We are also the oldest existing chapter in California now.

Even more critical to our success is the fact that we have a hard-working but congenial membership. Dedicated OCA members like Wade Loo, Hayden Lee, Richard Fung, and Alden Soohoo--all of whom have been actively involved in our Chapter's leadership for 10 years or more--have provided the mainstay of the Chapter. They are not only dedicated, but extremely nice people. As all, it seems, all of our leaders and members.

We all either know of or have heard of organizations and clubs whose members don't really get along, or have internal battles all of the time. Fortunately, our Chapter is far from this. Happy to say, we are all on the same page. This is usually called chemistry, and our Chapter has it good.

In addition to the chemistry of our membership, an important aspect is the direction of our Chapter. Our Chapter, I am glad to say, always seems to be pointed in the right direction. This means that we take care of business, protecting the rights and aspirations of Chinese Americans in San Mateo County. Thanks to wonderful members like Phil and Louise Wang and Monica and Adrian Arima, we now award more than ten scholarships annually to worthy Chinese American students. Our Chapter, over the years and with help from members like Millbrae City Councilwoman Doris Morse, who served on our Board of Directors for many years, and May Gee of Pacifica's North Coast Water District Board, has cultivated good ties to our elected officials in the County. No matter how you look at it, the San Mateo County OCA Chapter has made our community a better place to live.

The Chapter, through all of our active members, has been able to make a difference in other arenas as well. For example, some of our members have

actively participated at the National OCA level, as Wade Loo did for two years serving as a national vice president. We are also constantly working with other community groups, too, like the Japanese American Citizens League and, at this year's picnic, the Chinese American Institute of Engineers and Scientists. We have worked with groups such as Self-Help for the Elderly and the American Heart Association.

You can see the terrific community here in San Mateo County also at our many events. Whether it is the 150 or so people who came to our joint picnic, whether it is the 350-450 attendees at our annual dinners, or whether it is just the 40-50 members and guests who turn up at our mixers--all come to create a sense of Chinese American community in our County.

Other aspects of our success can be found in the small service activities that go on that nobody ever hears about, and in the raising of issues in our community and before the County's leaders.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for letting me toot our horn and for helping OCA to become the effective voice for the Chinese Americans in San Mateo County.

About OCA

OCA is the Organization of Chinese Americans, Inc., a national non-profit organization with headquarters in Washington, D.C. OCA is comprised of 45 chapters around the U.S. and has 5,000 members. This newsletter is published by the Peninsula Chapter of San Mateo County, which was founded in 1987.

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Membership Committee: New and Renewing Members

By Barbara Fung

On behalf of the Board, I want to welcome all new members to our organization and to thank all members who have renewed their membership this year.

Let me introduce to you the new members and those who have come back: County Supervisor Ruben Barrales, Michael Brown, Canyon Chan and Cheryl Lee, Chak Chan, Shu Woon Chan, Yvonne Chen, Seneca and Larry Chew, Vicky Ching, Laura Chiu, Jonathan Chu, Dr. Pamela Fong, John and Aileen Gok, Millbrae City Councilman Marc Hershman, San Mateo City Councilman Jerry Hill, Dr. Chen Chung Ho and Mei Ly Lin, Victor Jew, Greg and Arlene Jung, Randall J. Lee, Jennifer Liu Leonardo, James Lim, Andrew P. and Amy Louie, Daniel Louie, Paul and Emma Woo Louie, Jerry Nightingale, State Assemblyman Louis J. Papan, Elizabeth Tsai, Chia-Li and Linda Wei, Julius and Bendy Wong, Walter and Mary Wong, Ho-Shyuan Wu, Japanese American League Co-President Ted Yamagishi, and Ella B. and Henry Young.

At the last general membership meeting, I announced that we had 156 members and our goal for the next year will be 200. If each of us just brings in one new member, we will meet this goal easily. Let us all try. It is for a worthy cause.

If any of you have any concerns or are interested in getting involved, please call us c/o Wade Loo (650)341-6036. Thanks.

How to contact National OCA:

Organization of Chinese Americans
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 707
Washington, DC 20036
(202)223-5500
fax:(202)296-0540
email: oca@ocanatl.org
<http://www.ocanatl.org>

1999 Events Calendar

by Yvonne Chen

We hope you will all celebrate the year of the Rabbit with us at Lucky Jade's Restaurant in San Bruno on Saturday, February 20 at 5:30 PM.

Historian Judy Yung will present her book, *Unbound Feet*, reclaiming the history of Chinese American Women with a slide presentation. Judy Yung is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She received her B.A. in English Literature and Chinese Language from San Francisco State University and her Masters in Library Science and Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies from University of California, Berkeley. She has worked as a librarian, journalist, and director of two Asian American women book projects. She is the co-author of *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940*, and the author of *Chinese Women of America: A Pictorial History*, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*, and *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (forthcoming).

Tickets are \$25.00 a person. **Please RSVP to Wade Loo at (650) 341-6036 by February 18.**

1999 Events Lineup:

Chinese New Year Banquet

February 20, 1999 at 5:30pm
Lucky Jade's Restaurant
649 San Mateo Ave., San Bruno
\$25/person. RSVP (650) 341-6036

"Meet Your Legislators" Forum

March 20, 1999 at 12noon
Foster City Recreation Center

Scholarship Dinner

May 1999

Annual Picnic

August 1999

Fundraiser Dinner

October 1999

Christmas Luncheon Party

December 1999

Prepared Remarks of Ivan K. Fong

Asian American Achievement Awards Gala
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Burlingame, California
September 26, 1998

Thank you, Michael Lin, for that very generous introduction

Thank you, also, to the San Mateo Chapter of OCA for this award, and especially to Wade Loo, your treasurer and immediate past president, for his hospitality and for his handling of all the logistics associated with my trip here from Washington, DC.

I am extremely honored to receive this award here tonight – and to share the stage with the other distinguished honorees. It is a particularly special honor for me to be receiving this award with Chancellor Tien, whom I have long admired and who is one of my personal heroes – even if he is from that “other school” across the Bay.

I bring you greetings from your Nation’s Capital, a city described, aptly I think, as combining Northern charm and Southern efficiency.

Wade asked me to make some remarks, but I want to be brief, because I am reminded of the story of a schoolchild assigned to write a book report about a book that he read about Socrates. Here’s what he wrote: “Socrates was a famous philosopher He spoke a lot to a lot of people. He was poisoned.”

I’d like to start by saying a few words about why this award is so meaningful to me. It is meaningful because OCA is one of only a few national organizations in this country that is regarded as playing an active, important, and well-respected role in giving the growing numbers of Asian Pacific Americans in the U.S. a “voice.”

While acknowledging the diversity of opinion among Asian Pacific Americans, OCA has taken the lead on issues such as immigration, health care, hate crimes, racial violence, and the census. From responding to offensive caricatures on the cover of the National Review to pushing for high-level appointments of Asian Pacific Americans at all levels and branches of government, Michael Lin, Daphne Kwok, and the OCA national staff have been there, taking the lead and forming essential coalitions. They deserve your support and appreciation, and I ask you to join me in applauding them for all their hard work and dedication.

And, speaking of high-level appointments, let me urge OCA not to rest until the Senate of the United States confirms Bill Lann Lee to be the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

When I asked Wade what I should talk about tonight, he said, “Say something about the secrets of your success.”

Well, I’m not sure I have any. And, talking about being “successful” always makes me uncomfortable and self-conscious, for my sense of how I got to where I am has always seemed to me to have more to do with luck than with anything I ever did or planned on doing.

For instance, I was fortunate to grow up in an environment with two supportive parents who believed in education, in family, and in hard work. I have been blessed with a wonderfully supportive wife, who unfortunately could not be here tonight, but without whom none of what I have done would have been remotely possible, and to whom I will be forever indebted.

The stories of how I ended up switching from engineering to law, how I ended up clerking on the Supreme Court, and how I ended up working at the Justice Department – all have been from being at the right place at the right time.

If you don’t believe me, Wade asked me to share with you the story of how I got on the Stanford Board of Trustees. Now, although I try not to take offense, a lot of people come up to me and ask, “How did *you* get on the Board of Trustees of Stanford University?”

Well, it turns out that the Board has a rule that eight seats on the Board are reserved for alumni, of whom four have to be under 35. It used to be that candidates for these eight seats actually had to *run* for those seats, putting their names on ballots that were sent to all alumni.

Under such a system, I never would have run and certainly never would have won, because although I was moderately active in alumni-related activities, the people who were elected were normally the ones who were presidents of their local alumni clubs and who did a lot of major fundraising for the University

Luckily for me, the year I was about to turn 35, they changed the rule. Apparently, under the old system, very few alumni actually voted, and those who were elected were sometimes so busy that they did not have time to attend all the meetings. So, they adopted a nomination system. One day, out of the blue, I received a postcard, asking if I would be

interested in serving. I sent it back, and they sent me an application form. I filled it out, thinking that I had as good a chance as anyone of getting an interview, but after that it would be pot luck.

Well, here's where I got lucky again. The application form asked for four references – two personal and two professional. For the professional references, I obviously listed one of the partners of the law firm where I had been working. I did not want to list two people from the same firm, so for my second reference, I simply put down my previous employer, who happened to be Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who I knew was also a Stanford graduate.

Wait, there's more. I had no idea of this at the time, but one of Justice O'Connor's sons had also gone to Stanford, and, totally unbeknownst to me, he was one of the members of the Alumni Trustee Nominating Committee. I think he must have thought that anyone who worked for his mother must be pretty good. In any event, that's how chance played a role in my being a Stanford trustee.

But back to Wade's question. After thinking about it, I do have three things that I think I can pass on, based on my short experience in the working world

First, one of the most valuable aspects of being on the Stanford Board or of participating in high-level policy discussions at the Justice Department is the opportunity to observe and learn from people with incredible judgment. Thus, one of the things I have tried to in my own life is to try to *cultivate good judgment*. This means paying close attention to events around you and to those around you - not just going through the motions. It means learning from your experiences, and especially from your mistakes. It means learning to fail, because it is only through failure can we gain the enlightened experience necessary for wisdom and judgment. And it means being open to unplanned experiences and the taking of risks - unplanned detours in life - because breadth of knowledge and exposure to different experiences is essential to good judgment.

Second, I think it is important to *live a life of integrity*. It means being honest with yourself; being authentic and intentional about what you do; and being centered and grounded. One of the best things about my current job is that I have the privilege and opportunity to work with a truly outstanding Attorney General, Janet Reno. She is always asking us to "do the right thing," without regard to the politics,

the spin, and the heat of the moment. It makes my job easier knowing that I will be supported for doing what I think is right.

And third, I believe it is essential to building in time in one's life for *reflection and perspective*. It is too easy in our hectic and harried lives to lose perspective of the important things in life - family, friends, respect, and community. I believe in taking frequent vacations, of having some quiet time - time to step back and see the forest - whether daily, weekly, or on a yearly basis. Without perspective, we end up simply lurching from one crisis to another

Let me close with a challenge to you - to everyone here tonight, but especially to the young people. I challenge you to get more involved in public service. Despite all the negative things you hear coming out of Washington, I still believe public service is an honorable undertaking. When I was growing up, I was raised with the philosophy, "To whom much has been given, much is expected."

And I define public service very broadly. It includes working in your local community, doing volunteer work. The bottom line is for each of you to know that you have made a contribution to society - that you have given something back - and that you have made a difference in the life of another. That is my challenge to each and every one of you.

I can think of no more eloquent way of making this point than by borrowing the words of former Attorney General and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, whose portrait hangs in Attorney General Reno's office. In a speech before a crowd in South Africa, he said:

"Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

I'm honored and pleased to be here tonight to join in your celebration. Thank you again for this very special award and for this opportunity to speak with you tonight.

We Learn What's New at the *Times*

by Wade Loo

On Sept. 6th, Roger Grossman, the publisher of the *San Mateo County Times*, came to our OCA Mixer to give us some insight into the newspaper business. About 40 OCA members attended. His presentation was forthright and held our attention, as he told of how he started in the business, how he came to the *Times*, and how he revived the paper's advertising and subscription sales, due to increased coverage of the local news on the front page of the paper.



Roger Grossman of the *San Mateo County Times*

Grossman believes that newspapers will not disappear – as many had predicted with the arrival of new media such as radio and TV. He commented that TV and radio media give only short sound bites, while newspapers give more details of a covered story.

His talk inspired many questions, such as “Why doesn't the *Times* cover more ethnic stories?” Grossman replied that the *Times* will print more stories with ethnic backgrounds when coverage by the reporters increases and improves, and when ethnic groups like OCA bring it to the editor's attention. This is why he is doing public relations work for The Times with community groups like OCA, in order to foster a solid relationship with the community. He has joined the boards of many community service organizations to cement a bond with the *Times*.

San Mateo Goes to the 1998 OCA National Convention

by Johnny Ng

Highlighted by a visit from Vice President Al Gore, the National OCA Convention in Washington D.C. was an exciting and memorable experience for the San Mateo Chapter members who attended the 25th Anniversary Celebration.

Gore was scheduled to speak for only ten minutes, but his stay stretched for over half an hour. The usually stiff Vice President was loose and joked with the standing-room-only crowd. Gore spoke on affirmative action, the glass ceiling facing minorities, and praised the appointment of Bill Lann Lee as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

The convention in July drew over 1,000 participants from throughout the country, including seven members from OCA San Mateo. Attending the event were Board President Karen Lee, who brought five members of her family, Wade Loo, Hayden Lee, and Phil and Louise Wang.

On the first morning, participants were invited to a morning breakfast on Capital Hill featuring a welcome speech from U.S. Representative Norman Mineta. After the breakfast meeting, they had an opportunity to meet and chat with their local representatives. The same evening, San Mateo members joined others for a beautiful evening tour of Washington DC's sights and monuments in an open-air trolley. The next day, some members also had a private tour of the White House.

At the Pioneer Awards Banquet on Friday evening, six Asian Americans were honored for their achievements. They were March Fong Eu, former U.S. ambassador and long-time California Secretary of State; Dr. T.D. Lee, Nobel Laureate physicist; Ming Cho Lee, set designer; I.M. Pei, architect; Beulah Quo, actress; and Dr. C.N. Yang, Nobel Laureate physicist.

The convention was capped by Saturday's Gala Banquet, featuring keynote speaker Washington Governor Gary Locke. Locke talked about “building bridges” and working together to effect changes. He was followed by Assistant Attorney General Bill Lann Lee, who spoke passionately that Asian Americans have come a long way and have achieved much. But, Lee stressed, much more needs to be done. Past National OCA Presidents were also honored at the Gala Banquet, including our own San Mateo board member, Hayden Lee.



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Your Ad Here!

Your ad in the OCA Peninsula Chapter newsletter will reach our current mailing list of over 500 Chinese American families in San Mateo County. At an average of three people per family, that makes 1,500 Chinese Americans. Also, our mailing list is expected to grow in leaps and bounds! Place your ad today! Call Wade Loo at 341-6036 or Canyon Chan at 312-2066 to place your ad.

The newsletter is published quarterly (4 issues/year). Rates are as follows:

	<u>Per issue</u>	<u>One year (4)</u>
Full page	\$ 125.00	\$ 450.00
Half page	\$ 70.00	\$ 250.00
Quarter page	\$ 45.00	\$ 150.00
Business card	\$ 30.00	\$ 100.00

OCA members receive a 10% discount. Discounts will also apply for multi-issue commitments.

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Email _____ Occupation _____

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Send application to: OCA Peninsula Chapter, P.O. Box 218, San Mateo, CA 94401.

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