

University of Massachusetts Boston Asian American Studies Program



Jeanny Mai — who made history with her sign in 1992 — returns to UMB AsAmSt. 29 April 2013

Graduation Celebration
2012-2013

23 May 2013

Asian American Studies Program Affiliated Faculty (expected for Fall 2013)

Ping-Ann Addo, Associate Professor, Anthropology

Michael Ahn, Assistant Professor, Public Policy & Public Affairs

Kiran Kaur Arora, Assistant Professor, Marriage & Family Therapy Program, Counseling & School Psychology

Pratyush Bharati, Associate Professor, Management Science and Information Systems, College of Management

Lisa Buenaventura, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Co-Curricular Learning & Assessment and Asian American Studies

Connie Chan, Professor and Associate Dean, McCormack Graduate School

Elora Chowdhury, Associate Professor, Women's Studies

Patrick Clarkin, Associate Professor, Anthropology

Loan Dao, Assistant Professor, Asian American Studies

Xiaogang Deng, Associate Professor, Sociology

Christopher S. Fung, Instructor, Anthropology and Asian American Studies

Richard Hung, Associate Professor, Human Services, College of Public & Community Service

Sari Kawana, Assistant Professor, Modern Languages

Peter Kiang, Professor, College of Education & Human Development and Director, Asian American Studies

Marlene Kim, Associate Professor, Economics

Son Ca Lâm, Instructor, Asian American Studies

Haeok Lee, Associate Professor, College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Andrew Leong, Associate Professor, College of Public & Community Service

Raymond Liu, Associate Professor, Marketing, College of Management

Lusa Lo, Associate Professor, Special Education Program, Curriculum & Instruction

Shruti Mukkamala, Instructor, Asian American Studies and Psychology

Patricia Nakamoto Neilson, Director, AANAPISI Asian American Student Success Program

Fanny Ng, Instructor, Asian American Studies and Psychology

Rajini Srikanth, Professor, English; Director, Honors Program; and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs

Lakshmi Srinivas, Assistant Professor, Sociology

Karen Suyemoto, Associate Professor, Psychology and Asian American Studies

Shirley Tang, Associate Professor, Asian American Studies

John Tawa, Instructor, Asian American Studies and Psychology

Leslie Kim Wang, Assistant Professor, Sociology

Paul Watanabe, Associate Professor, Political Science and Director, Institute for Asian American Studies

Zong-guo Xia, Professor, Environmental, Earth & Ocean Sciences, and Dean, Graduate Studies & Intercollegiate Programs

Wenfán Yan, Professor and Chair, Department of Leadership in Education

Mai See Yang, Instructor, Asian American Studies and Gerontology

The Program

UMass Boston's Asian American Studies Program offers intellectually-challenging, emotionally-engaging, culturally-responsive instruction in the classroom with holistic practices of mentoring, community-building, service-learning, and advocacy to address the social and academic needs of students as well as the critical capacity-building needs of local Asian American communities. The program offers the most Asian American Studies courses, faculty, and community linkages of any university in New England. The program's alumni include teachers, social workers, health care providers, business entrepreneurs, and leaders of local Asian American community organizations. By grounding our curriculum, teaching, and applied research in the realities of local Asian American communities and by respecting the knowledge and bilingual/bicultural skills that many UMass Boston students bring to the classroom, the AsAmSt Program creates powerful learning environments for all students to gain critical understanding about the historical experiences, voices, contemporary issues, and contributions of diverse Asian populations in the U.S. Graduate students from any area who have Asian American Studies interests can serve as teaching/research assistants, mentors to undergraduates, and special project developers for the program. High school students in UMass Boston's pre-collegiate programs such as Urban Scholars and those involved with the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY) are encouraged to take advantage of the program's learning opportunities. Community members and organizations as well as alumni participate in our activities in short- and long-term ways. UMass Boston is the only research university in New England designated and funded by the U.S. Department of Education as an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI).

Celebrating our 2012-2013 Graduates in Asian American Studies

From Fall 2012 and Spring/Summer 2013, we are proud to recognize eleven outstanding AsAmSt program-of-study undergraduate students — Robert Chea, Jenny Chiang, Raymond Chiu, Maryanne E.M. Chow, Dao M. Duong, Vincent Huynh, Stanley La, Zhi Liang (梁志生), Thomas Nguyen, Chris Quigley, and Sadip Tamang — together with Clinical Psychology Ph.D. student and AsAmSt instructor, John Tawa, and M.A. graduate student teaching/research assistants, Sara Boxell in American Studies, Sơn Ca Lâm in Applied Linguistics, and Laura Wai Ng in Historical Archaeology.

Many other undergraduate students have taken multiple Asian American Studies courses, though not enough to fulfill requirements for our formal six-course program-of-study. We congratulate Justine Aguilos, Juan Carlo Gaspar, Phuong Hua, Chau Nguyen, Khatima Sadiq, Victor Sok, Megan Wong, and many others not mentioned here.

We thank the Asian American Student Success Program for supporting our 2013 celebration.



Prof. Haeok Lee's AsAmSt 345 Asian American Cultures & Health Practices class visiting the Metta Health Center in Lowell with Director Sonith Peou in May 2013.

Program-of-Study in Asian American Studies

Robert Chea



I am a second generation Cambodian American from Lowell, MA. I majored in Asian Studies because it is important for people to learn about the histories and cultures of the world's largest continent which is playing a more influential role in the world than ever before. I also decided to pursue the Asian American Studies program-of-study because I often wonder about my own Cambodian heritage, even though Cambodia isn't included in what the Asian Studies Department covers in its curriculum. I have to take it upon myself to make an active, conscious effort to develop my awareness.

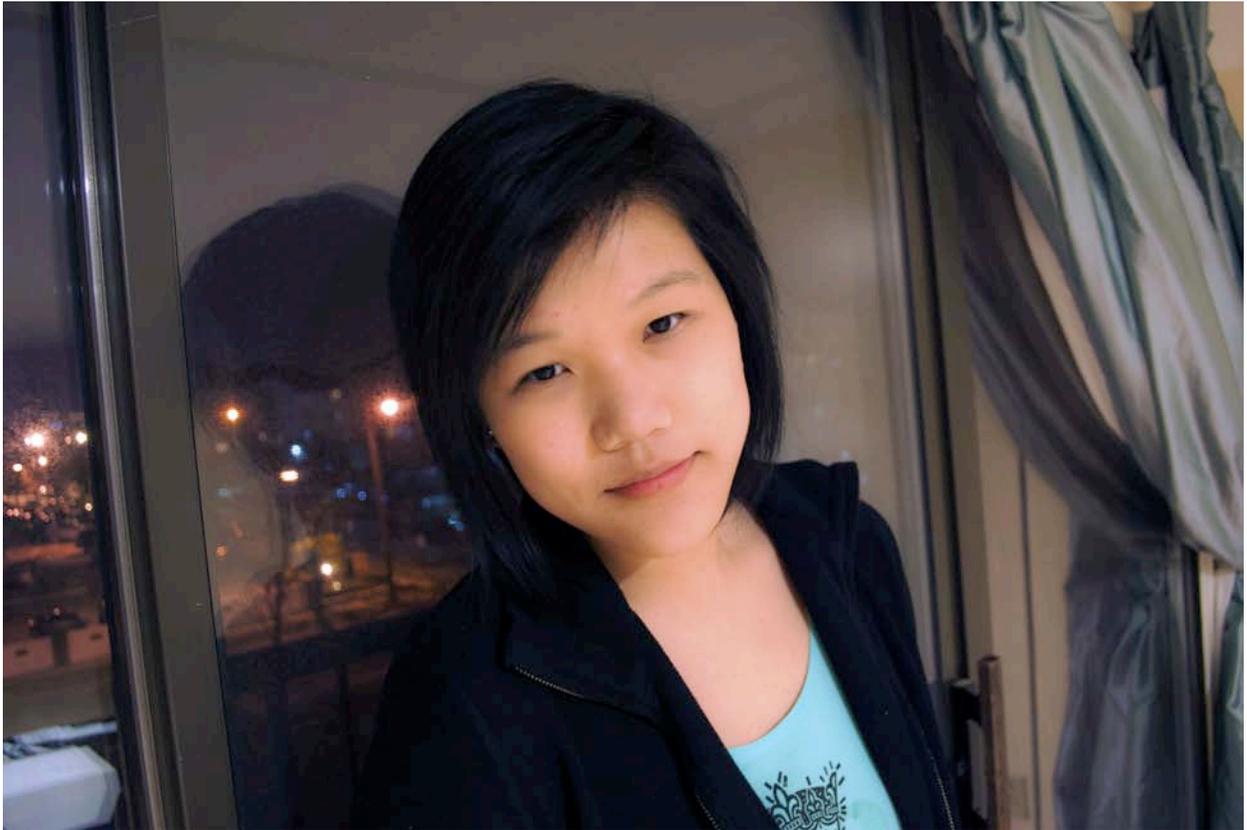
I was raised by a father who taught me to dislike and devalue my Cambodian heritage. This is because, in his very honest opinion, Cambodians should be ashamed of themselves for everything bad that occurred in their history. According to him, it's Cambodians' fault for not thwarting foreign conquest, hegemony and imperialism. It's Cambodians' fault for being enthusiastically misguided supporters of a certain

psychopathic leader. It's Cambodians' fault for their intergenerational poverty and lack of education and for struggling to adapt to life in America. It's Cambodians' fault for not somehow progressively overcoming these social problems. So much negativity! As an impressionable child, I thought he was simply telling me the truth. Despite his adopted internalized racism, my father has ironically always been nostalgic about his birth country and he was keen to share with me his memories of his former life in Cambodia, which includes the dark times when I was a boy. Maybe it was hearing my father's recollection of Cambodia that served as the origin from which my curiosity about the past developed. Beginning in my adolescence, I also developed a curiosity about what's out there in the world, and I wanted to gain a fresh perspective on Cambodia that would make me proud and appreciative of my identity as a Cambodian American. It was at this time when I clearly noticed there was a great deal of distance between myself and other Cambodian Americans. I felt so unnatural being around them and they, for some reason, didn't seem to take notice of me. During my high school years in Lowell, I also began to meet Cambodian expats who were born and raised after the 1970s, but they seemed so uncomfortable talking about themselves and Cambodia, apparently considering such topics to be inappropriate. My inability to get along or identify with either Cambodian Americans or Cambodian expats felt like a kind of double whammy for me personally. As a result, the discontent I had with my Cambodian American identity deepened and I decided to indefinitely turn off my curiosity about Cambodia and its diaspora because all I had were more burning questions and no extinguishing answers. During this time, I was in the process of trying to think carefully about what I should major in. I was vaguely aware of something to do with Asian American Studies at UMB, but I was afraid of taking a path that would have exacerbated my emotional and psychological discomfort. I did not want to (re)develop a pressing curiosity about something only to have no way of adequately satisfying it. Still, I felt I had to do something to face my inner fears or else I would never develop solidly as a person in the inside.

The result was my fateful decision to enroll in a course called *Southeast Asians in the U.S.* (AsAmSt 225L) when I let my curiosity about Cambodia and the Cambodian diaspora gradually reawaken, and where, finally, I was gaining a few new answers. I could easily see how the subject matter directly related to my family, and in addition, I learned about the Laotian and Vietnamese communities in this country. Just this one course was enough to decisively trigger a considerable interest in Asian American Studies that lasted almost continually until the end of my undergraduate career. To be fair, I shouldn't say 100% of Asian American Studies was interesting. Yet, on the whole, it was an enjoyably enlightening and thought-provoking experience, and I regret not taking my first Asian American Studies course earlier.

As someone who tries to prevent myself from worrying, I've never had much interest in making an effort to think about my future. If Asian American Studies really does have a real-world application, I can't at all say what that is. But its purpose served to help me become aware of some things I had wanted to know since childhood that others never provided. If someday I go to Cambodia and stay for a while, I'm sure I'll be in for a massive self-discovery, for better or worse. I am eager to examine my roots in the real world and gain an understanding of what Cambodians are like and why. If and when this ever happens, I know I'll have to get used to three necessary aspects: the high-voltage culture shock, hand-to-mouth standard of living, and oppressive heat, just for starters...

Jenny Chiang



I'm a second generation Asian American with family roots in Taiwan. Though I was born in Boston, I was raised in New Hampshire and was always the only Asian kid in my class. Coming back to Boston for college was a culture shock for me. Being the youngest in the family, I've always struggled to find a way to emerge from my brother's shadows and connect with my immigrant parents. I grew up privileged in the suburbs and never experienced the struggles my parents endured, but always saw my outlook on society as different from and indifferent to others.

UMass Boston was never my first choice, but now I see that it was one of the best decisions of my life. As a Biology major, I never thought Asian American Studies would find a way into my coursework. I took one course out of curiosity and just to fulfill a general requirement. I couldn't believe how much personal impact a single course could have and how different learning could be. The more courses I took, the more I started to learn about my family and myself. Dynamics in my life changed as I discovered new passions and frustrations that helped build a fresh pathway for me.

My future plans are still hazy, but my activism in the Asian American community will always be clear. The program has taught me that while the community has continually developed over the years, there's still much improvement to be made. I've been able to grow in ways no other classes could have offered, and

now it's my turn to share my knowledge with others. I know I will continue my education in graduate school as I try to figure out this thing called life. While my intention for the future had previously been to become some kind of doctor, the Asian American Studies Program has helped me see that there are multiple ways to heal the world.

Raymond Chiu



I am the first Chinese American in my family to be born in the U.S. I stumbled upon Asian American Studies in my first semester at UMB. I wanted to fill up a spot on my schedule, so as I was checking online, I noticed a course called *Asian American Cultures and Health Practices* (AsAmSt 345), and I asked myself, "why not?" I was already interested in the nursing and health fields, and thought this will get me an easy A and boost up my GPA! Well, it turned out that this course really opened my eyes. I had never taken a class like this ever. The topics and discussion were mind-blowing because I felt like I could relate to all of it. I am usually a very shy student and not outspoken in class, but for the first time, I had so many thoughts going through my head that I wanted to speak out and share my stories. Growing up when I was

younger, I was always confused about my identity, culture and family history. Even though curiosity was always lingering around my mind, I never had the incentive to actually sit down and have a talk with my parents. I had always assumed that they wouldn't like to talk about their personal things, but as I was taking an Asian American Studies class, the professor actually forced me to do so. For some projects we had to interview our parents to learn more about our family history or what our name really means in our language. I am really glad I did that because it helped me get closer to my parents and finally know the true meaning of my Chinese name! All the professors in Asian American Studies are great mentors who engage students to express themselves and connect them more with the community. From the networking I have done through Asian American Studies over the years, I have finally found a job just in time before my graduation this semester. Currently, I am providing physical therapy for people with disabilities and elders at the South Shore YMCA in Quincy. With the knowledge and resources that I have from Asian American Studies, I want to expand my program and work more with Asian Americans who have disabilities such as spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, strokes, vision impairments, amputees, etc. This will be an on-going project that I want to create and benefit the Asian American community in the South Shore area and maybe throughout metro Boston. I plan to attend graduate school in the future to become a nurse or physician assistant. As I further my education, I hope I can learn better ways to solve health disparities for the Asian American communities.

Maryanne E.M. Chow

I was born and raised in Boston. Boston is, and always will be, my home. Growing up in a Burmese-Chinese family, I was fortunate to learn and adapt to two different ethnic cultures and languages at home. When I was younger, I was quite comfortable with who I was and what I was given. We lived on the edge of Chinatown, so I faced less discrimination because we shared similar backgrounds with others in our neighborhood community. Chinatown was a safe environment to live in, even though it was very busy and full of people coming in and out. I went to a public elementary school that was quite diverse. I had friends of different nationalities and backgrounds, so I never really understood the meaning of racism, discrimination, and hate until I hit middle school. That school was predominantly Black, White, and Latino, with very few Asians. I felt a major shift in race hierarchy there and realized I was different. This forced me to question and doubt myself about who I was and where I belonged — issues that I continued to struggle with for a long time. However, I started volunteering in the community and joining school clubs that helped me explore myself and what path I would like to lead. Being raised by immigrant parents, I was discouraged to do anything else but study hard and do exceedingly well in school. Communication at home wasn't very good. It was either listen to them or don't even bother talking to them. This was quite frustrating because I felt that my feelings and opinions were not important or valuable. It wasn't until coming to UMass Boston when I stepped into my first Asian American Studies class that I realized how to understand my parents' backgrounds and histories that trace back to their soil roots from their own homelands. I needed to see this larger picture around my personal puzzle.



In my sophomore year, I stumbled upon the Asian American Studies Program by taking my first course, *Asians in the United States* (AsAmSt 223L), just for fun and for a requirement. I wasn't expecting anything other than getting in and getting out, just like any other course. I remember on the first day of class, Peter was very intimidating. With a firm voice, he point-blank said if any of the students are not serious about this class, they should just drop it. He was honest with his tough curriculum and teaching method with us and said if we're not going to be committed in doing the work then we should not waste time and just leave. With that, a few students left, along with a few more afterwards. I was with my best friend and both of us had our eyes bulged out, "Is he serious?" We weren't sure if we should just leave because we both wanted to take an easy class for the semester. However, for some reason, we didn't. We ended up staying and this was the best decision we made at UMB. Ever since then, I've become deeply invested in the program and have taking many more Asian American Studies courses. In every course, I've learned so many amazing real life stories and experiences of Asians/Asian Americans in the United States that have touched my heart deeply. I could relate to these experiences in so many personal ways. From learning about the Japanese Internment and Chinese Exclusion Act to Southeast Asian refugee migrations and more, I became so much better educated and knowledgeable. Because of the program, I was given many great opportunities to interview people about their experiences in settling in the United

States, as well as visiting community organizations, meeting community organizers and members, participating in events and conferences, interning at an Asian American non-profit organization, and becoming great friends with fellow awesome classmates. And now I also understand why Peter was so strict on the first day of class because it's something that shouldn't be taken lightly. This is part of our history and why our society became the way it is today. It is important for our generation and our future generations to understand these roots and think of ways to do bigger and better things for us, our families, and our communities.

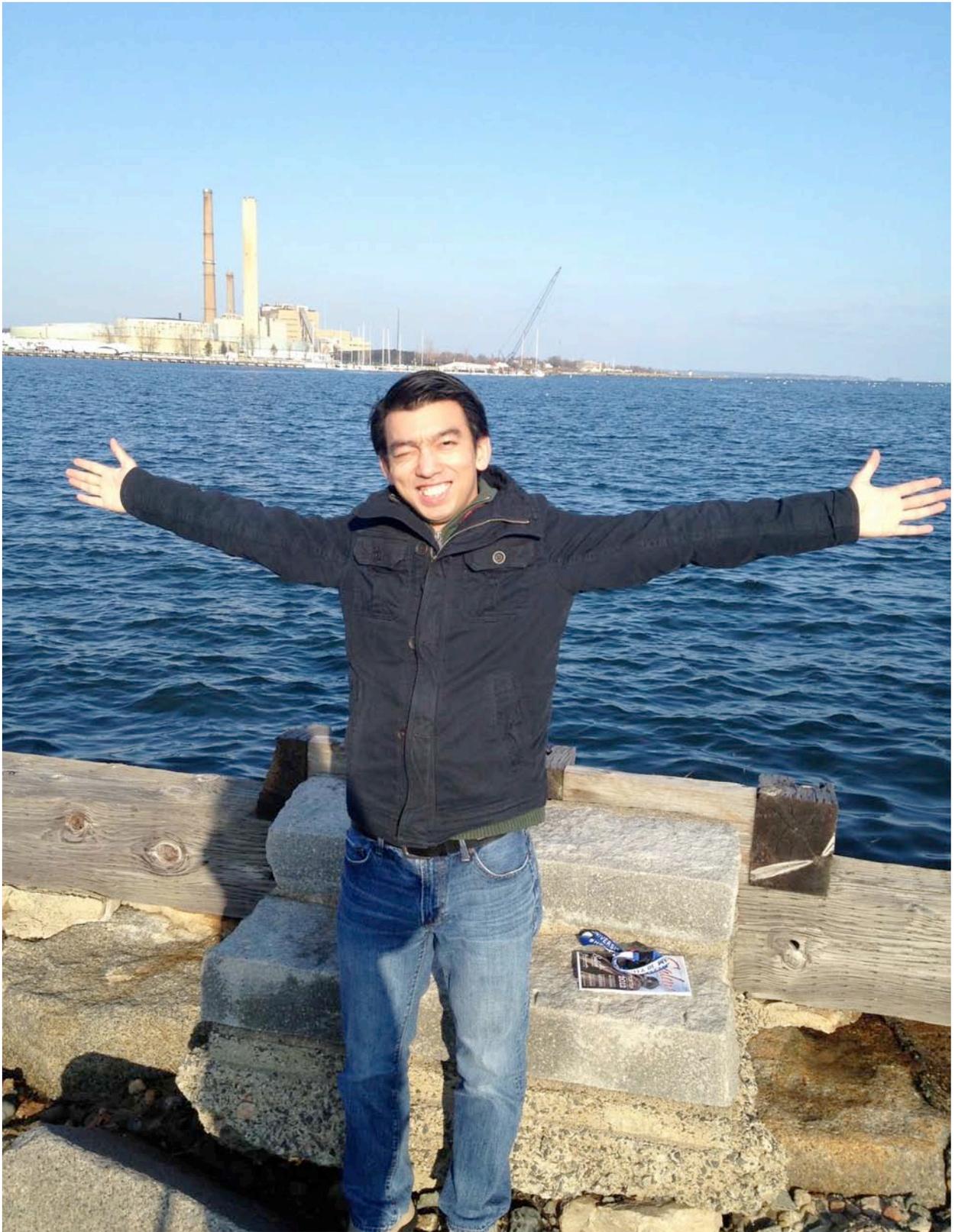
Learning a lot about the history and the current realities of the Asian/Asian American community has also made me learn more about myself. I have always had a passion for working with people and helping others. However, I have also struggled to clarify what I want to do in life. Because of my involvement in the program, it pushes me beyond my comfort zone. I have been able to improve on my leadership skills, critical thinking skills, and organizational skills. I am able to educate others about what I have learned and also set an example. Thus, my life's vision is less foggy now. At the very least, I know my goals and, as long as I don't give up, I will go far! Although it is very sad that my undergraduate years are over and I have to leave the school and the program, I know that my involvement is serious and the meaningful connections that I have developed with each and every one of the professors, students, and staff will be long-lasting. What I have been so fortunate to learn through Asian American Studies is never going to be forgotten, and better yet, it will be passed on and utilized wherever I go.

Dao M. Duong

I am a Vietnamese-American born and raised in the City of Boston. After many, many years as an undergrad, I am finally graduating with a Bachelors' degree in Sociology.

When I transferred over to UMB, I was taking general classes that didn't satisfy me. It wasn't until I took one of Shirley Tang's classes (outside of AsAmSt) that she introduced me to better options. I signed up for them during the following years and I am so happy that I did. I was able to make many new friends and meet exciting people who made me feel like I belonged in a community. Plus, I was able to explore more of my Asian-ness which I felt was lacking. These classes also helped me explore my family's story. While Asian American Studies courses are fun, they were also very educational. Being born in America often made it difficult for me to communicate with my parents about their journey and challenges here. Taking these Asian American Studies courses gave me the boost I needed to talk to my parents and learn.

My future plans are pretty vague at the moment. I'm not sure what I will be doing but, as of right now, I hope to further my education in graduate school with a focus on Information Technology. Anything else that comes along will only be based on impulsive decisions!



Vincent Vũ Huỳnh

Although I am considered Vietnamese, I was born in a refugee camp in Thailand. My birth certificate is in Thai... and I can't read it. My parents each fled from Vietnam and met each other in that camp. Shortly after I was born, my father, the seven-year-POW army doctor who escaped by boat, and my mother, the vendor who fled by land through Cambodia, relocated with me to another refugee camp in the Philippines in order to gain entry into the U.S. The earliest memories I have are those of Massachusetts: of East Boston projects and Fields Corner, Dorchester. I've mostly grown up and hung out with non-Asians. As a result, I have never really explored my heritage or identity... until I took an Asian American Studies class.

At UMass Boston, I chose to be a Philosophy major because I have always wrestled with ideas such as who am I in society, what do I want to do, and what is the meaning of it all. In case you are wondering, yes, I do know what the meaning of life is. Ask me about it sometime, if you wish, and please share your ideas, too! Meanwhile, though I enjoyed Philosophy, it was missing something crucial to my understanding of who I was. Asian American Studies gave that to me. Asian American Studies illuminated my experiences in the grand scale of human interactivity. It showed me why I was here, how I have been taught to see myself, and how society has been taught to see me. From that foundation, I chose to complete the six-course program of study in Asian American Studies during my senior year. Now I have a better understanding of not only myself, but of society as a whole because I can see how everything is intertwined. In that system, Asian American Studies has not only encouraged me but also empowered me to change the system for the sake of social justice. This has been the most important part of Asian American Studies for me personally because it gave me insight and purpose, together with a self-confidence in my identity without which I struggled during my adolescence.

Although I have a much clearer idea of what I want to do now, my path still seems blurry. The only thing I know is that I want to better our society in any way I can, whether it be paid or volunteer, through rallying and organizing for legal equity, teaching our children so they stand a chance, defending immigrants from unfair immigration laws, or building houses so Vietnamese Americans can have a contractor with whom they can speak in their own language. Whatever my future may be, Asian American Studies will help me succeed because it has given me insight to understand that everyone whom I come across is a product of their history. For many Asian American immigrants, their history will be a sad one. Asian American Studies has emphasized the importance of appreciating individual experiences, stories, and contexts. I will choose to treat everyone I come across with respect because I have learned so often about the many experiences that one face may have witnessed and the many meanings that one life may have lived.



Stanley La

I am a second-generation Chinese/Vietnamese Asian American, born and raised in Brockton, MA. Identity has always been a constant battle between me and I. Aimlessly, I searched for what my identity and purpose in life is. Graduating with an associate degree in 2009 did not provide me with an answer. Going to UMass Boston was a chance I took; being able to learn about Asian American Studies was a gift.

Spring 2010 was when I first took an Asian American Studies course (AsAmSt 225 Southeast Asian in the U.S.). I was inspired on the very first day of class when I saw the images projected across the screen. I did not know how the course would impact me at the time, but I knew for certain that it sparked something inside of me. With each additional AsAmSt class I enrolled in, I discovered another piece to my puzzle. The courses provided me with a platform to visualize and think critically today about history and how I perceive identity.

I believe we can plan for the future, but plans are not linear. It is the unplanned events that utilize the essence of the teaching we learn through AsAmSt. How we deal with it, how we learn from it, how we teach it are strengths rooted in ourselves. For me, I see my future out there — somewhere not too far from these roots.



Zhi Liang (梁志生)

I was born in Guangzhou, China and raised by a single-parent family. My father left, or more specifically swam, to Hong Kong before I was born. Both my parents had a strong desire to leave China but for different reasons. My mother was the third of six siblings and she did not get along with her mother. She was independent, strong-minded, and wanted to explore the world. My father left for political reasons.

My great-granddad left his hometown of Maoming, Guangdong at the age of 23 to join Sun Yat-sen's revolution under the *Three Principles of the People* – nationalism, democracy, and welfare of the people. In 1924, a period when the New Republic was dominated by warlords, he enrolled in the legendary Whampoa Military Academy founded by Sun to train revolutionary cadets with a modern concept of honor and loyalty to a unified China. Many future leaders for both the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC) came from Whampoa Military Academy. This list included Academy Commandant and Principal Chiang Kai-shek; Zhou Enlai, a Long March veteran and later PRC Premier; Lin Biao, who later served as the PRC Minister of Defense; and even Ho Chi Minh, who later became President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Whampoa cadets became the backbone of the nation's resistance against imperialism during the War of Resistance (1931-1945) and of the 300 divisions in China's armed forces, half were commanded by its graduates.

Due to the Chinese Civil War and subsequent retreat by the Kuomintang to Taiwan, my grandfather, a college student studying biology, stayed behind in China. As his family was connected with the Kuomintang, he was arrested and sent to labor camp. My parents grew up during the upheavals of Cultural Revolution and as a result of their experiences, were determined to leave China. My father, like many of his generation, swam from Guangdong to Hong Kong. I did not meet him until I came to the United States. We lived in the South End with other Chinese immigrants in a tenement apartment mainly shared by single bachelors. During this time, gentrification was happening and the building we lived in was sold and the tenants were evicted. From there, we moved to Quincy, and later, to the Charlestown Bunker Hill housing projects. These early experiences helped to shape my view of the world.

I enrolled at UMass Boston with the intention of completing a dual major in Asian American Studies and Africana Studies. I had an interest in learning about people, history, culture, and politics. Asian American Studies at the time was groundbreaking because the subject matter of studying the migration and experiences of Asian Americans was not widely offered in other mainstream institutions. I had hoped that one day I could further advance the field of Asian American Studies in other places after graduating.

When Whampoa Military Academy was founded, potential cadets traveled from remote provinces to join the revolution with no assurance that they would be successful or even be able ever to go back home. Many came from limited means and poor backgrounds. My great-granddad passed down a story to the family about a young boy who also came from his hometown of Maoming but failed the academy entrance exam. The boy stayed outside all night and refused to go home, crying that he wanted to join the



revolution. Academy Principal Chiang Kai-shek happened to walk by and, moved by the boy's dedication, accepted him as a cadet. This boy, Liang Huasheng, whom I met in Taipei many years later, participated in many major battles in China during the first half of the 20th-century. The Whampoa story is about ordinary people who achieved extraordinary accomplishments because of their aspirations for a greater good and a better world. They lent their talents and skills to help others, and were guided by principles of sincerity, dexterity, and fraternity. I hope that I, too, can utilize what I have learned at UMass Boston and live up to my family's Whampoa legacy in helping to make the world a better place.

For the past several years, I have worked in Boston's Chinatown as a community planner, while completing my undergraduate degree in CPCS on a part-time basis. Most of the projects I have worked on have had visions to improve the quality of life for the community and its residents. One emerging project is to develop a Chinatown cultural center that will advance the status of Asian Americans in New England through education and cultural exchanges. Given that Chinatown serves as a cultural hub for many Asian Americans in New England and is also a destination for tourists, visitors, and shoppers, a cultural center can serve as a repository of information and resources to share local stories of Asian Americans and their contributions to this nation. I also hope to improve the Rose Kennedy Greenway Chinatown Park and participate in community health planning projects as well as other development projects. I will apply for graduate programs in urban planning in the coming year. In the future, I intend to write a book on my experiences in Chinatown and my reflections on the community's urban planning and development history during the City of Boston's Menino years.

For UMass Boston's Asian American Studies Program, I would like to enhance our alumni network. During the past twenty-something years, many students have gone through the program. A more active alumni network can help to reconnect past students to share resources on how to improve our own communities, while also providing support for current and future AsAmSt students.

Thomas Nguyen

I was born in Boston and raised in Dorchester, MA. I am a Sociology major and have completed the program-of-study in Asian American Studies. I also have an Associate's degree in Automotive Technology from Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology. I love old Hondas. I've owned nine so far...

I came to UMass Boston with the plan of becoming a Business Accounting major and eventually transferring to UMass Amherst. In my first semester at UMass Boston, I took a class called "Introduction to Asian American Writing" (AsAmSt 221L) with Professor Esther Iwanaga. She offered the class a lot of extra-credit opportunities off campus. Let's just say I needed them. Through these extra-credit opportunities, I was exposed to many Asian American issues on campus and in the communities. One specific event was the showing of a documentary film called "A Village Called Versailles." The documentary focused on the social injustices that the Vietnamese community in New Orleans faced after Hurricane Katrina. While at the event, I ran into an old friend whom I knew from years before. We spoke briefly about the Asian American Studies class that he was involved with and how UMass Boston AsAmSt



students had played a role in New Orleans during the filming of the documentary. I expressed interest in taking the same class, so he mentioned that the workload can be heavy at times, but the reward is worth it. I then enrolled in a class called "Asians in the US" (AsAmSt 223L) the next semester, and my friend was definitely not wrong about the workload. He was also right about the rewards.

Through a project in class, I spoke with my half-sister whom I had not talked to deeply, ever. I learned about her history in Vietnam and the pain that she felt post-war because she was biracial. This interview project propelled my interest in taking many more Asian American Studies courses; I have taken at least one AsAmSt course every semester throughout my four-year career here at UMass Boston.

I have learned so many things at UMass Boston that I feel that I have changed tremendously since my first semester here. With the history and skills that I have learned over the years, I feel that my relationships with family and others have grown deeply. The connections and resources that I have gained through the Asian American Studies Program will always be useful to me. I have always wanted to start a youth group in the community so that is one of many possibilities for me to continue being actively engaged. I know that the students, staff, faculty, and alumni whom I have met in Asian American Studies are always willing to help or give me feedback or advice, and I hope I can do the same for them and for others. Something that I will take with me forever is that everyone has a story. Through talking with people, you learn a lot about them and also yourself. #realtalk #asamst

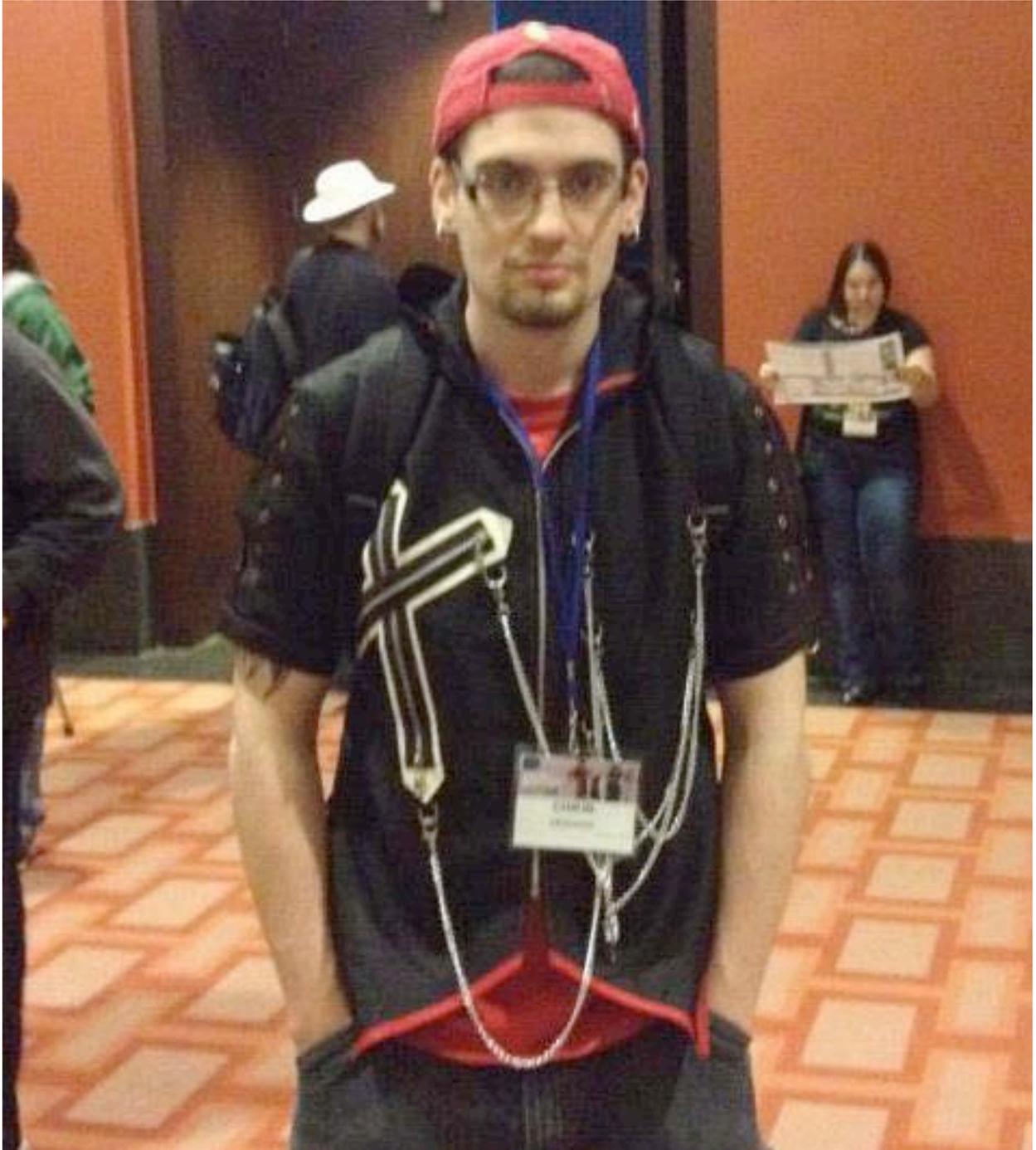
"To live is learn, and to learn is to live. Live. Learn."

Chris Quigley

I don't consider myself to have a background worth speaking of. I was probably twenty years old before I figured out the type of person I was, and before I decided what type of person I wished to become. I still haven't become that person, but I'm working, every day, to do so.

I decided to include a focus on Asian American Studies while attending UMass Boston because the area is closely related to my major (East Asian Studies). I feel that much of the material covered, and much of the knowledge gained, serves to compliment what was covered in the other classes that I did coursework for at UMass Boston. I place a tremendous importance on education, and I feel that learning for the sake of learning is a perfectly acceptable reason to take classes. I think the Asian American Studies Program at UMass Boston has excellent faculty who did a remarkable job of serving as not only instructors of their respective classes, but as guides and mentors who have demonstrated time and time again that they care about their university and the students who attend. A number of months have passed since I graduated in December, and I have had ample time to consider how my life was affected by the time I spent in college. I would describe the experience as being highly positive.

I will be enrolling in a graduate school as soon as certain logistics can be worked out. Given the enormous emphasis I place on my own education, I do not consider being out of school as an option at this moment. I will very likely be relocating, transnationally, later in the year. It would seem to me that what I will experience is likely to be similar, in ways, to the cultural transition of Asian American immigrants. Perhaps in other ways, it will likely be an exact inverse of the transition. Time shall tell.



Sadip Tamang



I was born and raised in Nepal, and immigrated to the U.S. with my sister in 2002. I went to Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School for four years, and had a very hard time adjusting to American culture. In my first two years of high school, I struggled a lot with making new friends. Therefore, I also had a very hard time staying focused in school. However, at the end of tenth grade, one of my high school classmates referred me to an after school/summer program that helped low-income students with school work and prepared them to go to college. That program really helped me organize my life and instilled a very important thing in me. During my high school years, I never fully understood what it was, but now, after finally finishing college, I realize that they gave me hope. Having hope is very important in my life.

I didn't really know anything about the Asian American Studies Program when I came to UMass Boston because I didn't know such classes existed at all in any university. The first time I discovered Asian American Studies was when I was registering for my Spring 2009 courses and my advisor Susan Graham suggested that I take a class called Asian American Media Literacy (AsAmSt 370). At the beginning, I was nervous but excited at the same time because I hadn't taken any such courses before and didn't know what to expect from the class. But after the semester began, I became very interested. That course not only helped me learn about the history of the media's role related to Asian Americans, but it also showed me a lot about myself and the Asian community in the U.S. Making my digital story was challenging, but the process reconnected me emotionally with my memories of Nepal and how much I missed my family there. From that first course, I continued with the AsAmSt Program, and my involvement definitely helped me widen my view in better understanding myself and the society around me.

In the future I am planning to work with immigrant youth in the U.S. As an Asian immigrant, I have struggled a lot and still find myself struggling in adapting to the U.S. culture till today. Therefore, I would like to teach other Asian immigrant youth how to adapt to the U.S. culture without going through all the unnecessary difficulties like me. One of the great ways that I've found throughout my years in college is to educate oneself by learning the history of the people and by becoming very conscious of the surrounding community. So, the Asian American Studies program-of-study courses have taught me a lot that is very important in life. Taking *Asians in the US* (AsAmSt 223L), *Asian Women in the US* (AsAmSt 228L), *Asian American Media Literacy*, and other AsAmSt courses has taught me critical history about Asian immigrant lives in the U.S. and how they faced discrimination differently compared to European immigrant groups in the U.S. due to racism as well as the cultures and heritages that they carried from their homelands. Also, learning about the stereotypes of Asian men and women and how they were emasculated, and also hyper-sexualized at the same time through the U.S. media was very important to me. Sharing this knowledge with the upcoming generation of youth is so important because knowledge is key to breaking the cycle of discrimination and negative stereotypes against the people.

Hope is still very important to share in my life, along with knowledge.

Graduate Student Teaching/Research Assistants and AsAmSt Instructors

Sara Boxell, M.A., American Studies



I identify myself as a queer Asian American adoptee. I was born in Pusan, Korea and raised in Andover, Massachusetts. I graduated in 2010 from Oberlin College with my BA in Comparative American Studies with a focus in Asian American Studies. I am completing my MA in American Studies this spring. My final project focuses on the significance of Korean food and narratives of race, culture, and identity in Korean adoptee-authored memoir.

I owe a huge thank you to Professor Shirley Tang for introducing me to Asian American Studies at UMass Boston. When I first arrived on campus, I knew that I wanted to get involved with the program, but was not quite sure how or where I would fit in as a graduate student coming from American Studies. Then I met Professor Tang one day in the American Studies department. She stopped me and invited me down to the AsAmSt Program office where I was introduced to our wonderful and vibrant Asian American Studies community. I didn't know it that day, but this community would quickly become my home at UMass Boston.

The Asian American Studies faculty, staff, and students have made my time at UMass Boston an incredible experience. When I first came to this school, my end-goal was simply to obtain a graduate degree in American Studies. However, as I finish up my master's program, I will have gained not only a degree, but so much more thanks to the Asian American Studies community. I am so proud of what UMass Boston's Asian American Studies Program accomplishes every single day, and I feel so fortunate to have been given the opportunity to be a part of it.

I hope to continue my future career involved with higher education in some form. I am not sure whether that involvement will be in academia or in student support, but either way I know that I want to continue the work that I began here in Asian American Studies, working to help support the Asian American community and its students.

Son Ca Lâm, M.A., Applied Linguistics

My family came to the U.S. in 1987 as refugees. I am 1.9 generation Vietnamese American, born in the Philippines refugee camp. This is the second time I am writing a graduation bio for Asian American Studies. When I wrote this bio the first time in 2009, I was graduating with a B.A., double majoring in Comparative Ethnic Studies (with a focus in Asian American Studies), and Environmental, Earth, and Oceanic Sciences. I am once again at a transition point in my journey, now completing my M.A. in Applied Linguistics. What's different the second time around? Maybe now, I am more trusting of the path that I am on, as well as the people in it to guide me.



This spring semester, I was the TA for Professor Shirley Tang's AsAmSt 370: Asian American Media Literacy. Witnessing the personal transformation that students underwent in this course helped me understand 370 not only as a process, but also as a practice that binds us. Our stories are no longer only our own; they belong to the collective community who must now hold, protect, and act upon them. I will be teaching my first Asian American Studies course, AsAmSt 223L: Asians in the U.S, this summer, and hope to live up to the teachings of my mentors in the Asian American Studies Program.

Before my involvement in the Asian American Studies Program, I never understood the significance of place. As a daughter of refugees, "roots" used to denote culture, heritage, and a homeland of the past. I remember the moment when Professor Peter Kiang asked us to consider whether voice, rights, or space was most important for Asian American communities to claim. This question blew my mind. I had never even thought about space before. How is space and place relevant to the diaspora of displaced peoples and refugees, as we continue to re/build our communities? How can roots be replanted in new grounds? These are questions that I have been grappling with since I was an undergraduate student. I will further explore them when I begin my PhD program in Geography at Clark University this fall. I hope to return to UMass Boston, and continue to be a part of the legacy and future of the Asian American Studies Program. There are many people and places that have shaped me, but UMB's Asian American Studies Program will always be my "home."

Laura Wai Ng, M.A., Historical Archaeology



I was born in Los Angeles and raised in the working-class Latino and Asian American community of Chinatown/Lincoln Heights. My parents immigrated from Taishan, Guangdong Province, China in the early 1980s and I identify as a second generation Chinese/Asian American. I am a first generation college graduate and have attended public schools all my life. I graduated from Lincoln High School in 2004 and

did my undergraduate work at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) where I received my B.A. in Anthropology (concentration in Archaeology) and minor in Ethnic Studies. At UMass Boston, I will receive my M.A. in Historical Archaeology.

Historical archaeology is the study of how people lived in the recent past through an analysis of the material things that people left behind; my research is specifically focused on the Asian American past. I have always been interested in archaeology and in knowing more about my ancestors in America but an academic path involving Asian American historical archaeology did not become clear to me until I took my first ethnic studies courses at UCSD. In those classes, I learned about the history of communities of color through the context of power relations and different systems of oppression. It was then that I realized how marginalized Asian American history is and the important role that archaeology can play in reclaiming that history through the interpretation of the material record and through the archaeological sites themselves which attest to an Asian American presence where there is often no visible trace.

Because of my interest in Asian American Studies, I was very fortunate to be offered a teaching and research assistantship with the Asian American Studies Program. The best part of TAing for Asians in the U.S. (AsAmSt 223L), Boston's Asian American Communities (AsAmSt 423L), and WWII Japanese American Internment (AsAmSt 265L) were the interactions I had with students and the opportunity to observe exceptional teachers such as Loan Dao, Peter Kiang, and Paul Watanabe. As a research assistant for the Program, I was involved in creating a searchable gravestone database for Boston's historic Mount Hope Cemetery Chinese Burial Grounds and producing a short video on local Asian American immigrant rights activists. I was also a research assistant for the Institute for Asian American Studies on a project titled, "From Confinement to College: Video Oral Histories of Japanese American Students in World War II." In addition to my teaching and research assistantships, I was Vice President and Treasurer of PAASSAGE (Pacific/Asian American Students & Studies Association in Graduate Education). Because of the opportunities provided by the Asian American Studies Program and the Institute for Asian American Studies, I gained tremendous financial, intellectual, and emotional support during my graduate education, for which I will always be grateful.

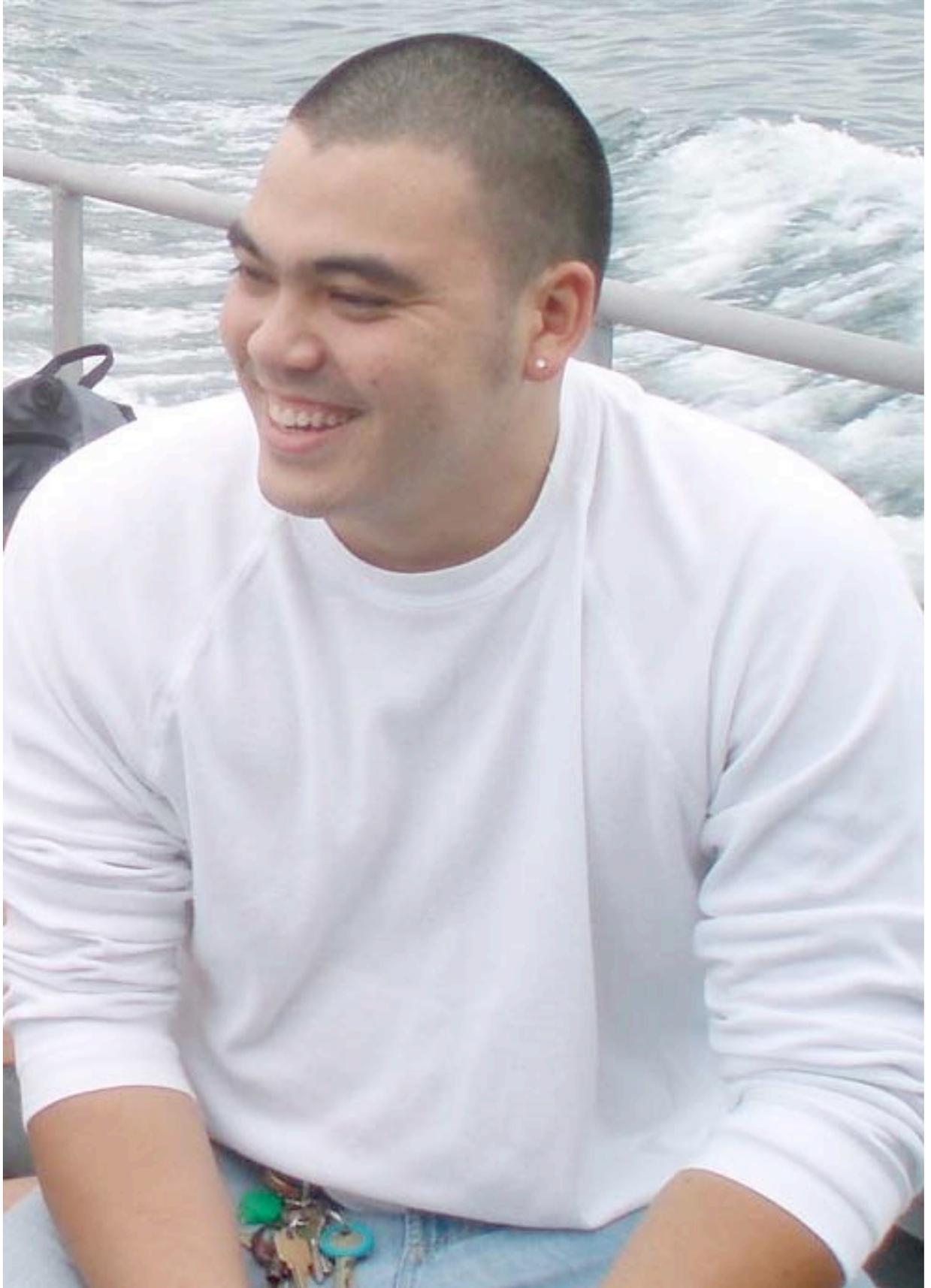
This summer I will be doing archaeology at a WWII Japanese American incarceration camp called Manzanar (the site of my master's thesis research and the first UMB Asian American Studies Program field trip I took) and in the winter, I will be applying to PhD programs in Anthropology to continue doing research on the archaeology of Asian immigrants in the U.S. Gaining a doctorate will put me in a position to contribute to a field that lacks Asian American representation in both scholars and scholarship. With my PhD, I plan to teach courses in anthropology and Asian American Studies—courses that in my own life have helped me develop my critical thinking skills and compelled me to take part in actions that make the world more just. I am fortunate that I can rely on the UMass Boston Asian American Studies community for support in all my future endeavors.

John Tawa, Ph.D., Clinical Psychology

This summer I will teach my final course here at UMass Boston before moving on to a full time faculty job at Salve Regina University in Rhode Island. This will be a big transition for me. I first came to UMass Boston as an undergraduate when I was 22 years old. At that time I was getting ready to become a young father for the first time. My oldest daughter is now turning 12! My children have quite literally grown up here at UMass Boston, and when I think about the person I was when I first came here at 22 — so have I. Like so many students here, I came into college with all kinds of personal challenges, many of which stemmed from my own struggle with understanding who I was as a multiracial Japanese/European American.

In my junior year of college, I took *Asian American Psychology* (AsAmSt 238L). This course would have a profound impact on my life in three major ways. First, it was here that I learned the language that helped me make sense of my identity and enabled me to realize that my struggles were not a result of personal deficit, but rather the consequences of a rigid, racialized, social structure. Second, I met Karen Suyemoto, who would go on to become my undergraduate senior thesis advisor, and then my graduate mentor for the next ten years. Third, it was through this course and with Karen's modeling that I realized what I wanted to be when I "grew up" — a teacher and a researcher in ethnic minority psychology.

I would have never dreamed that within five years time, I would be teaching this very same course — *Asian American Psychology* — right here at UMass Boston. I have since taught this course about half a dozen times. In these classes, I have met so many wonderful students, nearly all of whom have shared with me their own personal challenges and aspirations in their essays, for which I feel so privileged to read and reflect on. I can only hope that I've reached some of my own students in the same way Karen has for me, even if it is only to share the beginnings of an idea or to urge a small change in their thinking that they will then carry with them into their own futures. I bring all of these experiences — my own and those of my students — with me to Salve Regina and beyond. Please know, that wherever I am, I will always be representing UMass Boston and the Asian American Studies Program with strength and pride.



UMB's 2013 Beacon Awards for Undergraduate and Graduate Student Leadership to Helen Ngo and Sara Boxell



Students in Chinese Community Service (SCCS) 2012-2013



With a third year of commitment by Mr. Stanley Chen and family, selected UMB AsAmSt students collectively contributed over 1000 hours of community service as interns in community sites, including the Asian American Civic Association (AACA), Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC), 8centric, and Quincy Asian Resources, Inc. Current and former SCCS participants graduating in 2012-2013 include Jenny Chiang, Raymond Chiu, Maryanne Chow, Stanley La, Kye Liang, and Thomas Nguyen. We express special appreciation both to the SCCS alumni family and to many UMB AsAmSt alumni who provide critical staffing and facilitation roles at our partner community sites. Thank you to all who have participated in this continuing investment in Asian American Studies student/community engagement at UMass Boston.

Thank you to our graduates for their reflections, voices, and visions.

AsAmSt Award-Winning Faculty in 2012-2013

UMB 2013 Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Service Recipient: Paul Watanabe



White House 2013 AAPI Women Leaders - Champion of Change: Karen Suyemoto



UMB Provost's Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentors: Shirley Tang & Loan Dao



The Asian American Studies Program also recognizes with appreciation:

- Jenny Chiang who received the Institute for Asian American Studies 2013 Anthony Chan Award, and both Mary Ouk and Hung Nguyen whose digital stories produced in Professor Shirley Tang's Asian American Media Literacy course (AsAmSt 370) were selected as finalists for the WGBH "Short Waves: Stories Shaping Our Community" film competition of the 2013 Boston Asian American Film Festival. This marks the third consecutive year that two of the four selected finalists are AsAmSt 370 students.
- former AsAmSt-affiliated instructor and advisor, Shiho Shinke, who left the university in Fall 2012 to pursue fresh interests in education and AsAmSt-affiliated Professor Eunsook Hyun who, in Spring 2013, was appointed as Dean of the Charter College of Education at California State University Los Angeles. We also welcome incoming AsAmSt-affiliated Assistant Professor of Sociology, Leslie Wang, whose research focuses on Chinese transnational adoptee experiences.
- AsAmSt faculty Loan Dao and Shirley Tang who each received competitive internal grant awards from the Provost's Undergraduate Research Scholars Program, the Civic Engagement Scholars Initiative (CESI), and the Asian American Student Success Program's Researching Asian American Students in Higher Education Initiative. Their dual efforts enabled new research support for undergraduate students, Julie Tran, Linda Tran, Henry Ho, and Kim Soun Ty.
- Chair of Accounting & Finance, Arindam Bandopadhyaya, recipient of the 2013 Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Teaching; Dean of Graduate Studies and Intercollegial Programs, Zong-Guo Xia, finalist for the 2013 Chang-Lin Tien Education Leadership Award which honors two Asian Americans each year who have the potential to advance to the highest leadership levels in higher education; and Peter Kiang, recipient of the 2013 Distinguished Scholar Award of the American Educational Research Association's Research on the Education of Asian & Pacific Americans – Special Interest Group (AERA REAPA-SIG).
- all who participated in UMB's Asian American Student Success Program (AASSP)'s successful third year of AANAPISI activities, services, and institution-building initiatives led by Dr. Patricia Neilson and funded by the US Department of Education.

For more information, visit the Asian American Studies Program in W-2-097, call 617-287-5658, or see: www.umb.edu/asamst and www.facebook.com/UMB.AsAmSt.