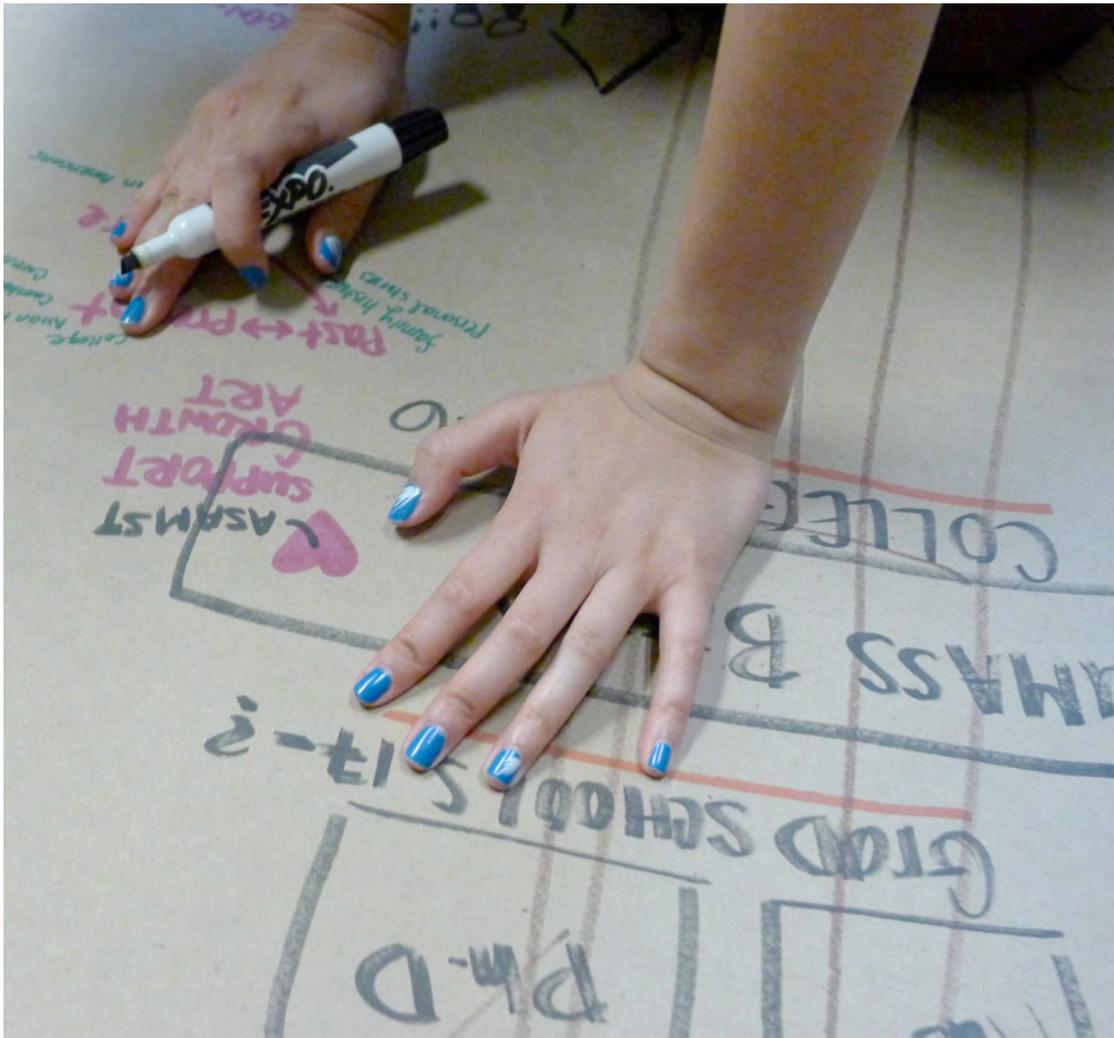


University of Massachusetts Boston
Asian American Studies Program



Graduation Celebration
2013-2014

22 May 2014

Asian American Studies Program Affiliated Faculty (expected for Fall 2014)

Ping-Ann Addo, Associate Professor, Anthropology

Michael Ahn, Assistant Professor, Public Policy & Public Affairs

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, 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

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, Professor, Psychology and Asian American Studies (on sabbatical)

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 2013-2014 Graduates in Asian American Studies

We are proud to recognize Kim Soun Ty, our sixteenth undergraduate to complete an individual major in Asian American Studies or comparative Ethnic Studies, along with 14 outstanding AsAmSt program-of-study undergraduate students from Fall 2013 and Spring/Summer 2014 — our largest graduating group ever, including: Linda Cheng, Thuan Duc Hien, Henry Ho (何浩山), Lubna Begum Khan, Rith Nou Maldonado, Joey Nguyen, Komal Patel, vi tri quach, Victor Heap Sok, Linda Thiem, Julie N. Trần, Linh Thi Tran, Sidney Yau, and Allyson Marie Yee.

In addition, we recognize Leadership in Urban Schools Ed.D. student, Wesley P.S. Manaday, Family Therapy M.Ed. student and AASSP staff, Douglas Alan Jew, and Historical Archaeology M.A. student and former AsAmSt/IAAS teaching/research assistant, Laura Wai Ng. We also congratulate all of our graduating students who are not formally acknowledged here, but who have taken multiple Asian American Studies courses with us.

We thank the Asian American Student Success Program, the Office for Diversity & Inclusion, and the enterprise of 2012 alumnus Phil Le for generously supporting our 2014 celebration.

Many thanks to our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners this year!



Prof. Elora Chowdhury's AsAmSt 226 Becoming South Asians course during their community field trip in Waltham's Moody Street business district in May 2014 (photo: Alok Kapoor).

Individual Major in Asian American Studies

Kim Soun Ty

I am a second generation Khmer American woman of refugee parents from a low-income background. I was born in Nashville, TN—the first child in my entire family (nuclear and extended) to be born in the U.S. I spent my childhood in Lynn, MA and my adolescence in Dorchester, MA. I am also a first-generation college student.

I think it's impossible to describe how the Asian American Studies Program has impacted my growth and development. I first took Southeast Asians in the U.S. with Shirley Tang in my sophomore year. Beyond learning about the Vietnam War, I was finally able to take a deeper look at my own family history and where my family fell into the political, social, and historical context. I started to see the intersections between my family history and the bigger picture. From then on, I knew I wanted to know more about myself, my family, my community, and my people, so I had to declare an individual major in Asian American Studies. This opened up so many doors of opportunity for me. I received amazing mentorship from the one and only Dr. Shirley Tang. Many other professors and staff from the program also looked out for me to make sure I was continuously growing. I became connected to the local communities and was able to build deep relationships with members of these communities, my communities. I received scholarships to research issues that I cared about, to help me pay for school, and to go present at national and international conferences. But most of all, this program helped transform me from a troubled youth failing school into a more courageous, more *whole* young woman who cares.

When I was younger, I said I wanted to be a doctor, a singer, a fashion designer, a novelist, a painter, and the list goes on. But one thing I did say I would never become was a teacher. I went through so many terrible teachers in high school that I thought teaching was the one thing I would never do. Three years after being a part of the Asian American Studies Program, I now aspire to become an Asian American Studies professor. I learned in Asian American Studies that there are too many missing puzzle pieces to history. The voices of people who lived through these times are stifled, while the voices of those who did not live through the experiences of Asian Americans are somehow raised up. I want my voice and my community's voice to be empowered, to be raised up and heard. I want these voices to be embedded into U.S. history books. I want these voices to be heard in the K-12 classrooms. I want these voices to be heard in every field and discipline. I want these voices to be at the decision-making table. I want these voices to be integrated into institutions and policies. I want these voices to be loud and clear and never forgotten. I want to be a part of the movement of teachers who are *inspirating* (creds to ST!) students to move into different spaces to claim their rights to their voices and stories. This is what I have learned through the Asian American Studies Program at UMass Boston and what I hope to carry with me as I move on to graduate school and my teaching career. I am blessed to say that I have seen, met, and worked with so many amazing professors through this program who have inspired me. They have each touched a part of my life and left a footprint in my heart that will ripple across many more lives.



Program-of-Study in Asian American Studies

Linda Cheng

I am Cambodian American.

My family is from Cambodia, and came to the U.S. because of the war.

I am the oldest out of my two sisters, and I am the first one to graduate from college.

I chose Asian American Studies as my minor because I wanted to know more about my life and my identity. I wanted to learn about my family. I also wanted to know the history about my country. Asian American Studies has impacted my life as a student here at UMB because I had the opportunity to go to Cambodia for the first time through a special AsAmSt summer research/service opportunity with Prof. Haeok Lee. I had never been out of country before. It was culture shocking and I never really knew how hard it was for my family to live over there. I also learned directly about the killing fields there, which my own family had experienced before coming to America.

AsAmSt changed my life with their involvement because I did not know anything about myself. I finally could connect my identity with my studies, and they became my family. I did not know anyone in school and was not focused at the time. AsAmSt changed my life because I didn't give up, thanks to the support I had from them. Moreover, I was engaged in school activities which made me take advantage of things that are offered on campus. Some of the classes I took were interesting because I never knew what the Asian American communities have been through and I felt like their experience is what I am going through right now. I feel like I can relate to these issues and learn from these experiences when taking AsAmSt classes.

I want to work with youth around my city in Revere because I was a in a program myself called Youth Art in Action. That program connected me to school and became a family to me when I did not have guidance. Growing up in a tough neighborhood, I can go in the wrong direction with my life, but instead was inspired to stay in school and help other youth stay connected to their community and make a difference. There, I met Shirley Tang and Peter Kiang who also made me want to go to college after high school, and here I am now graduating from UMass Boston.

I was surprised in myself because I did not think I can do a project like a digital story on my own, but AsAmSt made my talents come out and gave me the opportunity to learn about communities and to make a difference through some projects that I made for these classes to show others that they are not alone. I became more aware with issues that relate to the Cambodian communities in my city and other communities, too. My connections/learning in AsAmSt are useful to me because I have a say in what I want to do in life. With their resources and guidance, I know I can make a difference on my own.



Thuan Duc Hien



Ethnically Vietnamese/Chinese and born in Cambodia during my mother's escape from the communist regime in Viet Nam, we managed to get refuge in the United States through sponsorship by my uncle. We hopped around a few cities in the greater Boston area but basically I've been raised here my whole life. My interest in Asian American Studies began in high school when I was introduced through some friends to the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY). CAPAY was based in the Asian American Studies Program at UMB, so I had access to a great resource of anything APA at an early age.

Asian American Studies was an opportunity for me to actually connect with the subject matter that we are studying. The biggest impact or revelation is how Asian American youth thirst for this knowledge. In every AsAmSt class I've attended, every one was invested in what was taught. I think we all in some way want to substantiate what it means to be Asian American. The connections and knowledge I have acquired in Asian American Studies have definitely shifted my outlook on life. When I meet another APA, not only can I connect with them because we are the same race but I understand a collective history that is shared between us and our similar experiences of growing up Asian Pacific American. It helps me a little bit in understanding how integral that history is in defining and shaping our identity. Although I do not see myself being directly involved in anything specifically Asian American related in the near future, I am constantly driven to spread the knowledge I learned in class with other people who do not have the resources to learn about the Asian American experience.

Henry Ho (何浩山)



I am a second generation Chinese American, born and raised in Brighton. Being raised in a Chinese household, my upbringing is very traditional. But I never knew how American I was until I visited China in 2002. I was having dim sum with my family; my mom gave me the card to venture around to seek savory goodies. I approached a cart lady and asked what she was serving. She pointed at the sign in the front of the cart. Being born in America, I never learned how to read and write Chinese. The cart lady cursed me out. She said I was messing with her and that I was illiterate and stupid being this old and is not able read Chinese. I then realized how Americanized I have become. Now I feel torn between two worlds. I am not Chinese enough to order food, and I am not American enough to fit in with society.

When I came to UMass Boston as a transfer student, I initially chose an Asian American Studies course because I had an extra time slot to fill and it helps with my requirements. As an Asian American student, I thought that I will have an edge in the class and can relate. But I found much more that shaped my college experience. Some major accomplishments that I have with the Asian American Studies Program include entering a digital story product into the Boston Asian American Film Festival: Short Waves, and presenting it publicly in the Paramount Theater. Then, I participated in the Provost's Undergraduate

Research Scholars Program in becoming one of its first undergraduate research assistants. We presented our AsAmSt findings at conferences. I was also able to complete two Asian American community internships, one as an ESL facilitator for new immigrants in a Chinatown non-profit and the other as an IT Specialist creating an AsAmSt alumni database. But my biggest responsibility was being selected to represent the program with two other AsAmSt students and faculty members for an international conference in Hong Kong on service learning. All of these opportunities impacted me as a student because my intent when I transferred here was just to take classes and leave. This program enriched my college experience in ways I would never dream of achieving. Although I am leaving the Asian American Studies Program as an undergrad, my bond with this program will not stop. I will come back through the alumni and continue my future goals with the Asian American Studies knowledge I have gained. My future plans are not determined yet, but I will continue to work towards our future.

Lubna Begum Khan

I am from Pakistan. I am the only girl to be graduating from college in the family.

To be honest, at first, I had no idea about any of the Asian American classes; I took one class as an elective with Patricia Neilson and I really enjoyed that class a lot. It was her class that got my interest in Asian American Studies courses. Therefore, I registered for classes with two professors, Shirley Tang and Peter Kiang, without knowing anything about them. Their classes got me extremely interested in Asian American Studies and I decided to add the AsAmSt program-of-study. In AsAmSt classes, I felt a sense of community. I had never had any classes in the past that I enjoyed to this extent.

I might forget my college experience some day, but I will remember the Asian American Studies classes for the rest of my life. I began to respect every Asian American just because of obtaining the knowledge from these classes and learning the fact that no one is different than the other. We are all one and we should always stay as one. In these classes, I felt respected like all of the other students, and felt comfortable sharing my ideas. I have learned a lot in these classes and I feel proud of it. I think I will definitely use that knowledge to help others and help myself in many ways. I realized that anyone who takes these classes will be extremely happy and they will actually learn a lot. No one can come out of the classes without actually learning something important. I recommend these classes to anyone; whether or not they are Asian. It doesn't matter who they are and where they are from. They will feel respected and enjoy learning in these classes. I am confident that they will never regret taking any Asian American Studies courses. Instead, it might get them interested in doing either a major or program of study.

My major is sociology, but completing the Asian American Studies program-of-study is a plus point. It adds up a lot of knowledge that I can use to help others. I always wanted to do something where I can be of help to anyone, and that was the reason I chose sociology. Now that I have done Asian American Studies as well, I feel very strong in this field, so I can be either a sociologist or involved in a kind of job where I will be helping people and helping communities.



Rith Nou Maldonado



I am a proud Asian American, second generation Cambodian. I speak fluent Khmer, English, and Spanish. My parents are survivors of the Killing Fields. I was born in Thailand at a refugee camp, I was one year old, when we stepped foot in the U.S. I have been a banker for over 10+ years now and currently work for Eastern Bank. I recently got married to the love of my life in June of 2013. I also started my own floral business that I'd like to open shop for one day called Petals to Perfection (floral for all occasions). I want these few paragraphs about my life and experience to inspire the future generations of Asian Americans who are taking their time to read my brief summary.

Fun Facts about me: I love dancing to international music such as Zumba (fusion Spanish/hip hop), the Cambodian coconut dance (dance with ROCA), and especially to Indian music (UMass Boston Bhangra team), I've performed at the Halfshell for the MIT Bhangra team. I feel that music connects us all. You'll find me all over Boston doing various dance performances. I have a great foundation around me with my diverse group of friends and a very supportive family.

After 10 years, I am the first in my family to graduate from college and obtain a bachelor's degree. My word of advice: don't give up, keep chasing your dreams, and perseverance. It's never too late. Remember family first; dysfunctional or not, for they will be the only one by your corner through everything. Never lose faith in love and believe in karma.

The reason why I included my focus in Asian American Studies Program is very simple. I wanted to know more about the Asian American culture, community, and resources here so I can help others. Growing up with parents who spoke no English, with nothing but the clothes on our backs, we were poor and depended on government assistance. Without the help of some of the resources, I wouldn't be here now. I want to be able to give back. As the eldest child, I had to grow up fast, and assimilate to the American culture which was a struggle. I went through a phase of an identity crisis (with battles about religion, who I am, what I stand for) when I started college, I felt that nobody understood me. I was alone. But I met AsAmSt professors and other students through the program to help identify what I believe and stand for.

Although my parents had other plans for me, but I chose to continue my education here at UMass Boston. With the help of Peter Kiang, I was able to start the Cambodian Club here and also got involved with CAPAY. I was ambitious, and within a year I was a Secretary of the Indian club, and an active member of the Black Student Center and Casa Latina. I've learned more than I bargained for and gained more meaningful friendships since then. I also want to say thank you to *bong* (older sister) Kunthary Thai-Johnson for always keeping me connected and supporting me throughout my career.

How will I stay connected? This is definitely one way. I love meeting new people. I feel that we are connected somehow for us to cross paths. Whenever you guys need me, I'm an email, Facebook, or phone call away. Google me! I am currently involved with the Asian American club at my bank and we are active in the community to help empower young professionals.

The knowledge I've taken from Asian American Studies will now allow me to aid, assist, and play my role to give back. I want to see a growth in young professionals and be a good role model to the future generations. As a banker, I help assist people in their finances in mortgages, investments, and banking needs every day.

My Motto in Life: Knowledge is power, educate yourself, and surround yourself with people who will help you progress.

Joey Nguyen



I was born and raised in Dorchester, and attended Boston Public Schools, including Boston Latin School. My mother manages a fast food restaurant in Egleston Square, where I spent a large portion of my youth helping her run the business that has been going 20 years strong. Growing up in the Dorchester/Roxbury neighborhoods in my teens, I was not so interested or exposed to my own cultures. But through my best friend, I learned and adopted a Latino American identity, and focused my passions on enhancing community relationships with and for Latino youths. It was not until UMass Boston and AsAmSt did I re-culture myself in my own Southeast Asian heritage. My experiences have enabled me to participate within several different communities, and hopefully one day, I will represent them all effectively.

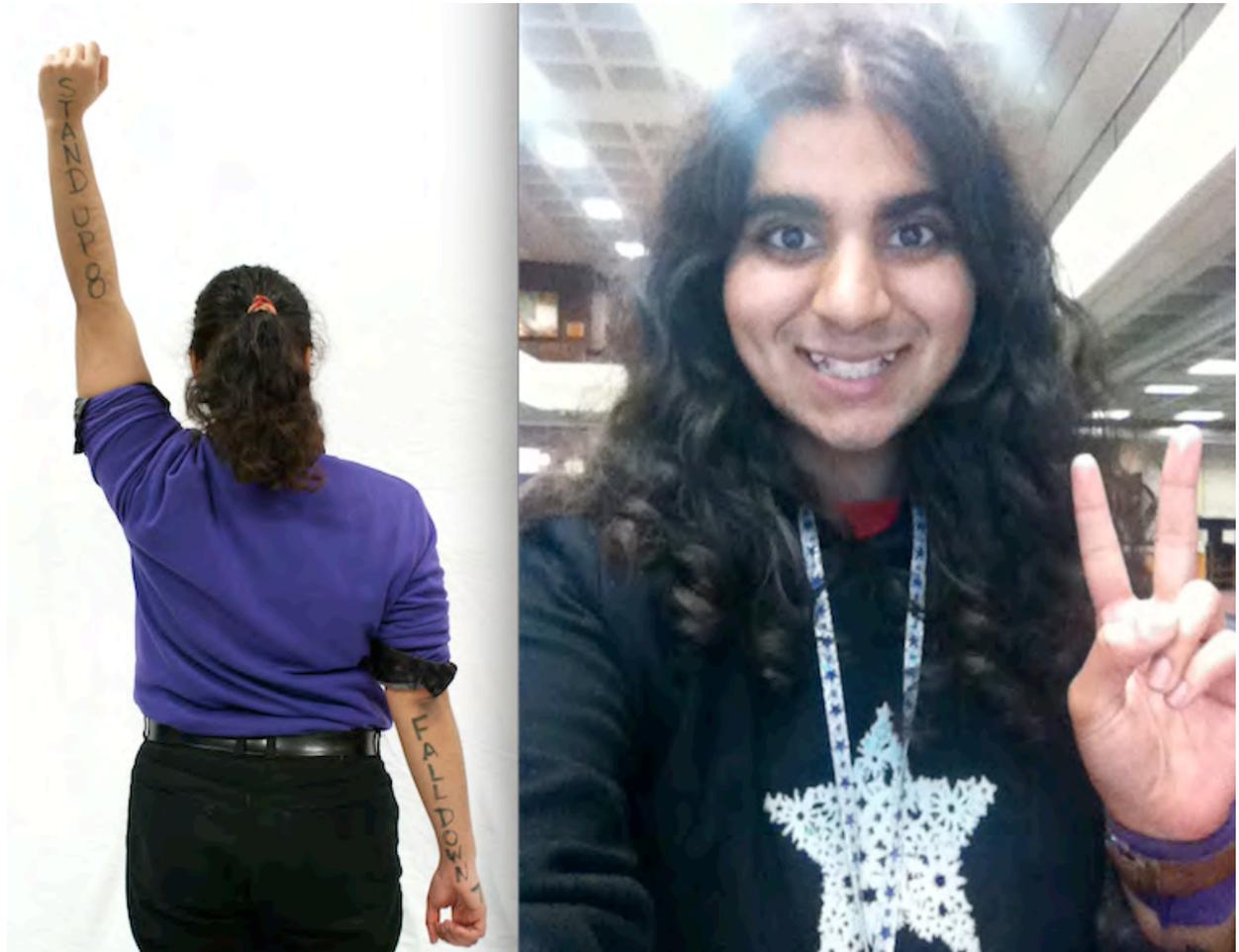
A focus in Asian American Studies has done a multitude of things for me. Like many others who have completed the program-of-study, I was blown away by my first few classes. They unlocked so many questions about my parents' cultural heritages, the sacrifices they had to make, and their multiple near-death experiences which they kept away from my siblings and me for such a long time. Now that I have completed my courses, I am far more aware, knowledgeable, and understanding of Asian American experiences, especially those of under-represented sub-groups. There are harsh realities that different Asian Americans face, and as long as I work hard to be aware of their experiences and issues, I can help change the dominant, ethnocentric views we have in our communities, cities, and society.

How Asian American Studies enveloped the change within me shows the program's sheer academic brute force and their years of perfecting the pedagogy. It was the dedication and hard work of all the staff who squeezed every last waking moment to make sure that our education is not just for show, but to ingrain real knowledge within our character. They empower us, whether we identify as Asian Americans or not.

The entire AsAmSt experience has required learning through my heart, not just my head. Asian American Studies has been my gateway to address the lack of representation and the continual marginalization of our lives and experiences. The most recent inspiration that AsAmSt provided me is the opportunity to realize that I want to pursue a career in Higher Education, ultimately at the administrative level. There is a huge deficit in representation of Asian Americans in university administrative levels, and we need to have more voices in the decision-making process. Not only have I found my own current goals and focus, but I also have the knowledge and preparation to achieve them, and a vast community that will always be supportive of me, as I find my place in contributing to the issues and perceptions we face.

AsAmSt will always be an essential part of my approaches to help serve my communities and society. Built into the program are infinite numbers of opportunities to collaborate and cross paths, no matter where I take my own.

Komal Patel



I am a very low income, second-generation South Asian (Desi) American, born in Boston and raised for most of my life in Medford. I currently reside in Waltham with my parents. I am graduating with a Bachelors of Arts in Criminal Justice. I recently completed my internship at Boston Municipal Court Dorchester Division and am interested in looking for more internship opportunities to explore my potential in criminal justice with law enforcement agencies.

I was raised in a middle class majority white town, while living under the poverty line. I am a former special ed student who worked very hard, tried my very best, and never gave up to get all of my classes into mainstream by the time I began 11th grade at Medford High School. I originally started college at Newbury College, but felt really isolated there which is why I transferred to UMass Boston and then had my very first teacher from a similar background/culture as me: an Indian professor for my Intro to Biological Anthropology class.

Despite my struggles, it doesn't mean that I have given up; it means I am going to exceed my limits. I was going to quit before I started my senior year at UMass Boston due to financial hardships in my family, but a friend tried to convince me to stay. From last semester, I found a part of myself to be proud of, being Desi American and to not be ashamed. This has helped me greatly to integrate some parts of my past and for me to be strong as a person and to believe in myself, no matter what the opinions are of others. One thing I got from Peter Kiang's AsAmSt 498 Teaching & Learning in Asian American Studies course that can describe a lot of my life is: *fall down 7, stand up 8* – a Japanese proverb.

From Asian American Studies, I have learned more about reading between the lines and looking for hidden, deep connections and underlying base foundation contexts that connect a lot of things together or on parallel levels, like the competition between so many different groups pitted against each other for resources in society. Even though we all have a voice and we need to try to speak up, not every single one of us is going to be represented. So, what I want to do is find a way to make that possible. I mean, just look at me, out of my whole criminal justice internship class and anyone majoring in criminal justice that I have seen so far, I am the only 2nd generation Indian (Gujarati) American female in the whole demographic.

AsAmSt helped to bring out issues that are similar to what my family and I have been through, especially in the course designated to delve deeper into that (AsAmSt 226 - Becoming South Asians) which really helped me understand not only my own roots better, but also the problems and contexts of cultural differences and how these can be problematic when they clash with the laws here or reflect stereotypes. Having different kinds of people in class learn about something that I would be like, "hey I know that!" really makes me glad that there is a somewhat vibrant and visible community and culture of South Asians, even though it is not that prominent specifically for my ethnicity being a Gujarati. This has definitely helped parts of my identity with my parents' culture and my roots and heritage. This will be a developing process throughout my life. For now, I want to show people how to say some words in Gujarati and talk about the culture, enjoy some funny stuff, unlike before when I would be afraid and dare not share anything due to the fear of others' thinking it's weird or making it more awkward than it already is for me just being in their presence.

I have no clue how I will stay active in the Asian American Studies work, but I want to try to integrate process, contexts, themes, and ideas across all races for equality. What I have learned from my criminal justice and sociological classes, especially on race, the criminal justice system, and cross cultural relations will help me better understand the underlying issues that will remain hidden unless I am able to connect the dots. These issues are parallel and very much can interconnect. I want to improve the criminal justice system and the treatment of all races, ethnicities, cultures, backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, etc, in order to have a more equal and freer world for everyone, especially when America makes a bold statement about equality, but in fact it does the exact opposite.

vi tri quach

born in vietnam.

there was this war thing going on.

got on a boat.

then there was this refugee camp thing.

and shipped to a church in America thing.

then came to boston because there was no other person of color in the town thing.

along the way, there was the drawing santa claus in school thing

that led to drawing comics at home thing

that led to making art with purpose thing.

somewhere in there, there was also a finding community thing,

struggle for justice thing

and trying to live a life of purpose thing.

Asian American Studies is an inseparable part of my art, my voice and who I am.

AsAmSt informs what I have to say.

I could not imagine having something of value to contribute without the learning I have received from AsAmSt.

I have plans to pursue an MFA.

As in my undergrad education, my political and social understanding of the Asian American experience will contribute greatly to my work.

I hope to raise the level of my art to the same quality as that of the AsAmSt Program at UMass Boston.



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Victor Heap Sok



I am a first generation Cambodian American who chose to pursue a degree in art, while constantly being reminded of what my parents went through while they were growing up in a war torn country. I am fortunate they have given me an opportunity to grow up choosing how to define my own future.

I chose to focus on Asian American Studies while studying at UMass Boston because I wanted to learn about what immigrants and refugees were going through when they were being relocated to America. AsAmSt was able to get me more involved with school activities, especially the opportunity to participate in helping create a mural for the program. I have been able to use the knowledge learned in AsAmSt and apply it to my artwork to portray what my parents experienced while growing up in Cambodia, including all the stories they would always tell me as I grew up.

Linda Thiem



I identify as Khmer American, daughter of refugee parents. I came to UMass Boston after struggling to finish my degree at many other colleges in the greater Boston area. Completing my degree in Economics at UMass Boston was one of the most critical points of my life. Not only am I the first in my immediate and extended family to complete my bachelor's degree, but I am also the first to enter graduate school. I feel that I owe a lot of my success to the Asian American Studies Program at UMB. As a Khmer American woman pursuing higher education, I know that this representation is rare. I have dealt with many hardships leading up to this point, but through the Asian American Studies courses, I have learned that these hardships are shared, especially among my Khmer American community.

I initially took a few courses in Asian American Studies to fulfill diversity requirements, but I found myself being extremely invested and wanting more. To be able to connect with what I'm studying academically and emotionally, for the first time in my life, education was exciting to me. I have used what I learned to guide myself to become a leader, to help me reconnect with my roots, to help me help others. The program served as my community on campus, which is something I believe is crucial to my retention here at UMB. I felt a sense of belonging, I felt fulfilled and rewarded. With my background knowledge from these courses, I was able to play leadership roles in student organizations on campus, go into community sites to contribute, and serve as a mentor to many other Asian American students. Most importantly learning about my history and roots, something that was missing in my K-12 education, has helped me mend my relationship with my broken family -- something that I never thought was possible. I have met many amazing professors, staff, and peers through the program, and it has truly shaped who I am today.

Asian American Studies has exposed me to many different opportunities and experiences. I always knew that I wanted to contribute to society, but never knew how. I only knew of traditional jobs: doctor, accountant, teacher, etc. However, learning about Asian Americans, particularly the mental instability within the Khmer community, ideally I'd like to work within the Asian American community. My dream would be to break the stigma that many Asian American families have about mental health, but for now I'd like to continue learning how to help the Asian American population in the greater Boston area.

I am now continuing my education at UMass Boston by pursuing a Masters degree in Education. I hope that I will play a role in representing underserved and underrepresented voices within the educational system. I can openly admit that I do not have concrete future plans, but I know that Asian American Studies has provided me with a clearer vision as to what my future could involve. As an alumna of Asian American Studies, I feel very prepared to continue strongly and passionately in whatever I choose to do.

Julie N. Trần



My father is originally from a district called Nha Be which is in the eastern part of Sai Gon, Viet Nam. There was a river that separated Sai Gon from another district called Nhon Trach, which is located in a province called Dong Nai. My father used to cross the river by boat to land in a port in Phuoc Khanh. Then, by traveling on the dirt filled roads, he would somehow arrive in Ong Dong to visit his family. My mother was from Ong Dong and it just so happens that her neighbors were my dad's relatives. When people told my mother that they predicted that she and my father were going to get married in the future, my mother thought that it was the funniest joke that she ever heard. But after getting married, leaving Viet Nam, having three daughters, and settling in the metro-Boston area, my parents are still married to this day. And I am a proud 2.0 generation Vietnamese American.

I decided to have a focus on Asian American Studies during my first semester at UMass Boston. I took Southeast Asians in the US (AsAmSt 225L) and Resources for Vietnamese Americans (AsAmSt 294) simultaneously which resulted in my wanting Asian American Studies as a Program-of-Study. Through these classes, I had the desire to build the Vietnamese Student Association at UMass Boston. With our high population of Vietnamese and Vietnamese Americans, I wondered why is there no Vietnamese Student Association at this school? With some paperwork, a couple of people, and a journey of obstacles and accomplishments, the Vietnamese Student Association of UMass Boston is back and better than ever.

By participating in school activities, I realized that I want to inspire people to be leaders. From being president of an organization to volunteering in a small event, people have the potential to be leaders. For me, being a leader is not a title, but enabling and inspiring others so that changes can be made someday.

Also, taking Asian American Studies made me realize that the experiences that I have encountered as an Asian American or even as a Vietnamese American are parallel to some of the experiences that my peers have faced. Our stories together are a history that is written in the making. Although I will be graduating this year with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry, my heart is with something else. I have the desire to work with the Vietnamese American community, whether in Fields Corner or elsewhere. However, my ultimate goal is to go back to Viet Nam to help the younger generation there that is in need.

I was privileged enough to be able to travel to Viet Nam every three to four years. Last year, I traveled to Viet Nam for the seventh time! This commemorates the 20th year anniversary from when I first came to Viet Nam. Being in Vietnam is different than being in America because I will always be branded as a Viet Kieu (Overseas Vietnamese). There's something about being a Viet Kieu that makes the native Vietnamese people to envy you but it also harms you at the same time. I want to use my experiences in Viet Nam to break down the barrier between the Viet Kieu and the native Vietnamese so that there is no tension. By helping out the Vietnamese younger generation, I want to give back to the Vietnamese community to show that just because I was American-born and raised, at the end of the day, I am filled with Vietnamese blood.

Linh Thi Tran

Hello Everyone! My name is Linh My ("Mei") Thi Tran. I identify as Khmer, Vietnamese, Chinese, Pilipino, and French. I was born in Baatan Murong, Philippines in a refugee center. My family was sponsored to come to the U.S. by my Granduncle and Grand aunt. My Grand aunt, Ang Prum is also a UMass Boston alumni who graduated in the 2000. I was raised in both East Boston and Lynn, MA. I attended Patrick Kennedy Elementary School (E. Boston), Cobbet K-8 (Lynn), Fecteau-Leary Middle School (Lynn) and Lynn Classical High. I will be the first in my immediate family having a college degree. I am graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Program of Study in Asian American Studies. I enjoy traveling outside of the country, going to museums, reading history books and watching documentaries.

I honestly did not know what I was getting myself into when I first decided to take AsAmSt 223L (Asians in the US) with Dr. Peter Kiang in 2010. I took this class out of curiosity. I wanted to understand my parents, their decision to come here, and what they have gone through but did not want to speak of. It took me awhile to get involved in Asian American Studies due to hectic class and work schedules, but I managed to take more classes from the Program during my junior and senior years.

AsAmSt did not just offer classes but a network to other programs such as the Asian American Student Success Program, the Institute for Asian American Studies and Asian American community sites/programs. I was able to go on a trip to Seattle, WA for a national Asian American Studies

conference, went to career workshops and worked temporarily at a non-profit organization. These experiences are once in a lifetime and broadened my thinking about how important it is to give back to the community and to become a leader.



After graduation, I will stay in the Boston area, and take some time to go back to Asia to visit family and tourist sites. I will also continue to work or volunteer at community sites. What I have learned from Asian American Studies has helped me better my relationship with my mother, cope with dual identities, and know the importance of my participation in my field as well as in politics to represent myself and others.

Sidney Yau



I am a second generation Chinese American, born in Boston. Having lived in the diverse suburban town of Malden my whole life, culture shocks and racism have never really been a direct issue to me. I've known people of all ethnicities, all of whom have gotten along well with me. As for my own identity, I call myself

Chinese American, but if asked in depth, I've always considered myself to be Chinese first and American second. My family has roots from China and Hong Kong and I was the first child of my immediate family born in the United States. My final semester during Fall 2013 yielded me a Bachelor's degree in English after four and a half years of work.

Initially, Asian American Studies was not part of my college plans at UMass Boston. I was not even aware of such a program until my sophomore year when my advisor, Sade Johnson, suggested that I take a course she thought would interest me. I thank her for that one suggestion because as it turns out, she could not have been closer to the truth. From the first day I stepped into professor Shirley Tang's Asian American Media Literacy class, otherwise known as the "370" class, I felt a change in atmosphere from other courses. Despite Shirley warning us that the "370" course was not recommended for new Asian American Studies students, I ultimately decided to stay. That one class had me delving deeper into my own personal thoughts than anything else I had taken so far, and instilled in me a newfound desire for more, to go deeper and find out just what Asian American Studies was all about. As a result, I connected with more people than I ever expected, and befriended many while becoming familiar with the faculty and staff, particularly those I saw in the Asian American Studies program office in Wheatley. I even had the chance to be a peer mentor for the very same AsAmSt 370 class two years later.

At the moment, my future may still be a bit of a blur. If there is anything I've learned over the past couple of years, it's that plans don't always go accordingly. Things change, people change, and plans change. However, the two foremost goals I have in mind right now are to become a journalist or a novelist. The Asian American Studies courses I took connected me to some fine people and there are many whom I respect greatly. One of these people was the teaching assistant of a few of Shirley Tang's classes that I took, who recognized my own talents in writing as something special. It is because of him that I now work as a critical reading and writing facilitator in the Asian American Student Success Program (AASSP), tutoring Asian American students in their writing and lending my skills to help these students improve. Since I was recruited by Pratna Kem, I've not only had the chance to work on improving my social skills, but also to put myself to the test as an educator now that I've completed my role as a student. I feel that the role I have now will help prepare me to fulfill the ambitions I currently have of becoming a journalist, a novelist, or maybe even both. I believe that either of these occupations, journalism in particular, would provide many opportunities for me to write about topics relevant to what I've learned in Asian American Studies. Perhaps then, I will be able to truly give back to that which has taught me so much.

Before I became a part of the Asian American Studies family, I wasn't sure where I was going with my college life. Even in high school, I was never really an overachiever and popularity wasn't one of my attributes. However, we've all lived through our past and still have our futures ahead of us. You can't change what's already happened, but you can change what's going to happen, change yourself and change the world around you. For this fact, I look towards my future and all the changes that I can make. I feel that, only then, can I find my true purpose.

Allyson Marie Yee



I am a second and third generation Chinese American born in Boston, and moved to Needham after residing in Allston for 12 years. Transitioning from an urban community to the suburbs was not very easy. Throughout high school, I had a hard time figuring out who I was and where I fit in, and it wasn't until my fourth year of being at UMass Boston that I started to discover a sense of belonging. The AsAmSt Program has definitely changed my life. Coming into UMass Boston, not once did I think about having a focus in Asian American Studies. Nor did I have any knowledge of the Program even existing. It wasn't until I took Asian American Media Literacy as my first Asian American Studies course, that I took interest in the subject. I had attended two previous AsAmSt digital storytelling events which inspired me to take the course during of my fourth year at UMB (it fulfilled a Chinese minor requirement). I didn't think I could even be part of the Program. I just wanted to get into that class and graduate on time. Luckily, I had extra credits, so I took advantage of it and then took all Asian American Studies courses during my final semester of my undergrad career (what was I thinking...).

Asian American Media Literacy not only allowed me to tell my story in class, but I was also able to get involved with the Program and make many connections to the Asian American community on campus. If I never took that course, I would not be where I am today. Before, I thought of myself as hopefully becoming a set designer in the theatre industry, but after taking AsAmSt courses, I have been inspired to become a high school teacher. Whether or not that happens, of course, is up to me. Hopefully next year, I can return to UMB to continue learning and to earn my Masters in Education.

Recognizing Graduate Student Contributions

Wesley P.S. Manaday, Ed.D., Leadership in Urban Schools



Being born and raised in Hawai'i, I was influenced by many cultures growing up as a child and as a young adult. My father's father was an immigrant Filipino field laborer in the sugar plantations from the late 1920s until he retired. Additionally, my mother shared with me that my grandmother was part Chinese and was very industrious in raising a family of eight as a single parent after my grandfather died at an early age. In the sugar plantation housing camps, many ethnic groups worked and lived side by side including Portuguese, Puerto Ricans, Koreans, Japanese, Filipinos, and Chinese, along with the native Hawaiians. Many of the cultural influences crossed between families. Both of my parents were born and raised in Hawai'i and are second-generation Asian Americans. They assimilated well into the Hawaiian U.S. Territory culture and went on to become an instrumentation engineer and nurse respectively.

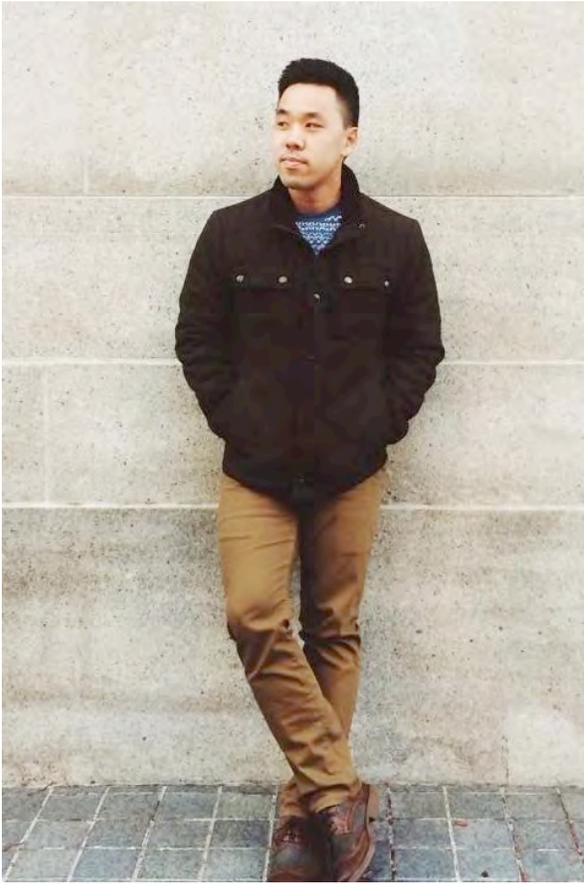
One of four children, I entered and attended grade school in the 60's and through the 70's. I thought nothing about cultural differences or being Asian American until I went off to Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA. There, my awareness was heightened as I had to assimilate into the predominantly European white culture of the school community. I spent my Junior Year abroad in Florence, Italy where that culture of people was not aware of the existence of American minorities. I gained acceptance as I learned to speak the Italian language with the Toscani people of the Tuscany region. After graduation, I moved to San Francisco, CA to teach elementary school until I was recruited as a teacher by the Boston Public Schools in 1987.

I taught third grade at the William Blackstone Elementary School in the South End until 1995 when I completed a Masters in Education and obtained my Principal's Certification at UMass Boston. I was appointed by then superintendent of schools, Dr. Thomas Payzant, to central administration as a comprehensive school planning specialist. The year following, I was appointed as principal for the John Eliot Elementary School in the historic North End where many Italian families lived for generations but had sent their children to private schools outside of the neighborhood. My task was to build up the school community and bring the families back.

As a new principal, I was assigned a mentor principal named Bak Fun Wong, then principal for the Josiah Quincy Elementary School in Chinatown. I was always impressed with how wise he seemed in his decision-making and how he had managed to maintain a highly performing school in terms of student achievement. In 2001, a new federal law title No Child Left Behind (NCLB), was passed in Congress. It was the re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 to bring equity in education to students of low-income families by making extra federal funding available. As this law was implemented, it placed more accountability on the shoulders of principals. I was always and still remain impressed with how my fellow Asian American principal colleagues namely Suzanne Lee (retired), Simon Ho, Grace Madsen-Lee (retired), along with Bak Fun Wong, navigated through the mandates of this law.

From 2006 to the present, I have served as a principal in the Norwood Public Schools at the John P. Oldham Elementary School. We have a very diverse ethnic population of students, many who moved from Boston. Putting into action the best practices I have learned from my esteemed colleagues, our school has achieved a Level One Status, the highest rating from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and have maintained this level for two consecutive years. With this background, I chose as my doctoral dissertation topic to explore how principals in Massachusetts have responded to the challenges of the No Child Left Behind Federal Law in terms of their leadership, decision-making, and practices, with a special focus on those principals who are Asian American. Their examples, in particular, deserve to be studied by researchers and policy-makers as well as other practitioners.

Douglas Alan Jew, M.Ed., Family Therapy



I am a Texas-born Chinese American and second-son to immigrants from Hong Kong. I grew up in Amarillo, Texas and attended college at the University of Texas where I majored in sociology with a minor in biology. From there, I continued my education to the University of Massachusetts, Boston for Family Therapy. This May, I finish my three year journey towards my Masters degree and will be staying in Boston to work as a family therapist.

As an undergrad, I got involved in the Asian American community by volunteering for the Asian Culture Center on campus. I also was a counselor for a Chinese culture camp put on by Families with Chinese Children, and active in numerous Asian-focused clubs. When I came to UMass Boston, Peter Kiang connected me to the Asian American Student Success Program and I began working for them as a Graduate Assistant, helping create events and running new pilot programs. AASSP has offered me opportunities to grow as a leader and as a follower, as well as to meet inspirational people who affect change through passion and fresh ideas. My work with the students of UMass Boston has enlightened me about the unique barriers and circumstances of both immigrants and 2nd generation students. With this new lens, I hope to further pursue my career in family therapy with more knowledge and curiosity about the cultural experiences of diverse Boston residents.

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 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 they left behind; my research is specifically focused on the Asian American past. I have always been interested in archaeology and 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 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 is Asian American history 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 teaching and research assistantships with the Asian American Studies Program and the Institute for Asian American Studies (IAAS). 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 AsAmSt, 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 IAAS on a project titled, "From Confinement to College: Video Oral Histories of Japanese American Students in World War II." In addition, I was Vice President and Treasurer of PAASSAGE (Pacific/Asian American Students & Studies Association in Graduate Education). Because of these opportunities, I gained tremendous financial, intellectual, and emotional support during my graduate education, for which I will always be grateful.

The site of my historical archaeology master's thesis research (and the first UMB AsAmSt field trip I took) is a WWII Japanese American incarceration camp called Manzanar. I will soon 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.

AsAmSt Student/Faculty/Staff/Alumni Achievements



Kim Soun Ty received ECAASU's Trailblazer Award in DC, February 2014



Rajini Srikanth with all presidents of the Association for Asian American Studies in SF, Apr 2014



Paul Watanabe's portrait unveiling by Chancellor Motley with artist Don West, October 2013



L-R: AAAS Lifetime Achievement Awardee, Peter Kiang; Beacon Undergraduate Leadership Awardee, Julie Tran; American Psychological Association Minority Fellow, Fanny Ng



L-R: Pat Neilson with 2014 UMB APIASF Scholarship Award hosts; Henry Ho, 2014 Anthony Chan Awardee; AsAmSt Alumni Elaine Ng and Giles Li as old/new BCNC Executive Directors



Loan Dao's AsAmSt 200 students' public exhibition of community projects, Spring 2014



Karen Suyemoto's AsAmSt 391 students contributed over 2000 hours in community internships.



Haekok Lee's AsAmSt 345 students presented on diabetes, depression, and gambling addiction



Shirley Tang's AsAmSt 370 digital story presenters at the Boston Asian American Film Festival



Peter Kiang's AsAmSt 498 student panelists at the APAHE 2014 national conference in SF

Students in Chinese Community Service (SCCS) 2013-2014



With a fourth year of continuing investment in Asian American Studies student/community engagement at UMass Boston by Mr. Stanley Chen and family, selected UMB AsAmSt students again contributed hundreds of hours of community service as interns in both campus and community sites such as the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC). Current and former SCCS participants graduating in 2013-2014 include Henry Ho, vi tri quach, and Allyson Marie Yee. We express continuing appreciation both to the SCCS alumni family and to other UMB AsAmSt alumni who provide critical staffing and facilitation roles at our partner community sites. Thank you to the Chen family for their warm generosity.



Alumni Matt Seto and Maryganne Chow with Mr. Stanley Chen, BCNC's 2014 New Year honoree.

Co-Establishing the M.S./Ph.D. Graduate Programs in Transnational, Cultural and Community Studies (TCCS)

After initiating a campus process in 2007 to recognize UMass Boston's ethnic studies research institutes and academic programs collectively as strategic assets for the university under the heading of Transnational, Cultural and Community Studies (TCCS), many core and affiliated AsAmSt faculty have worked intensively with ethnic studies colleagues since 2010 to develop new transdisciplinary graduate programs in TCCS which received official approval from the MA Board of Higher Education in May 2014. The new master's program will launch in Fall 2015, followed by the first cohort of TCCS doctoral students in Fall 2017.



External Reviewers Elaine Kim from UC Berkeley and Don Nakanishi from UCLA met with potential TCCS students as part of their formal campus assessment in November, 2013.



Appreciating Dean Zong-guo Xia



As Dean of Graduate Studies and Intercollegial Programs, Dr. Zong-guo Xia has served heroically as the reporting Dean for the Asian American Studies Program since January 2012. We have greatly benefited from his clarity, leadership, and protection, and will continue to work closely together from our new homeplace as a unit of UMB's School of Global Inclusion and Social Development.

Dean Xia's praxis is simple and effective: identify critical gaps and institutional inequities; develop shared visions; problem-solve details; work passionately to produce positive change; reflect on impact; continue building together. His style and substance deeply reflect his cultural values and commitments as well as his life experience as a US immigrant of color from a peasant family background in rural China. Dr. Xia's parents and extended family had little formal education, and he was one of the first of his village to attend college. As an early measure of his capacity, maturity, and hard-labor discipline, he was selected at the age of 20 to become Principal of a rural elementary/middle school in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution. From these humble roots to his current oversight of the entire research and graduate studies enterprise of our urban, public, AANAPISI research university, we could not have had a more supportive or engaged Dean in our corner during the past three critical years. Thank you always, Dean Xia!

The Asian American Studies Program recognizes with appreciation:

- Kim Soun Ty, recipient of the East Coast Asian American Student Union's 2014 Trailblazer Award, the American Educational Research Association's Undergraduate Education Research Training Award, and the Sociology Department's T. Scott Miyakawa Award; Henry Ho, 2014 Anthony Chan Awardee from the Institute for Asian American Studies; Julie Tran, UMB Beacons Undergraduate Leadership Awardee; Joey Nguyen, President-elect of UMB's Graduate Student Assembly; and Fanny Ng, 2014 Minority Fellow of the American Psychological Association.
- AsAmSt student applicants and recipients of internal and external awards, including scholarships from the Asian Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF), travel opportunities through the Tomodachi Inouye Scholars Program, and the Short Waves finalist competition of the Boston Asian American Film Festival.
- Affiliated faculty, Kiran Arora, and co-Director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, Glenn Gabbard, each of whom has left UMB for new positions in 2014. Meanwhile, Kunthary Thai-Johnson and Miwa Tanabe are returning to UMB to take fresh staff leadership roles. We also welcome Dr. Tomoko Tokunaga, our 2014 AsAmSt Visiting Scholar from Tokyo and Dr. Denise Khor who will teach Asian American history through the American Studies department in Fall 2014.
- AsAmSt core and affiliated faculty and graduate students, including Loan Dao, Shirley Tang, Haeok Lee, Paul Watanabe, and Karen Suyemoto with Shruti Mukkamala, who each received competitive external and internal grant awards.
- Rajini Srikanth, appointed as founding Dean of UMB's Honors College; Lisa Buenaventura, appointed as Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; Ping-Ann Addo, author of *Creating a Nation with Cloth: Women, Wealth, and Tradition in the Tongan Diaspora*; and Peter Kiang, recipient of the 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award of the national Association for Asian American Studies.
- all who participated in UMB's Asian American Student Success Program (AASSP)'s successful fourth 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 UMB's Asian American Studies Program at www.umb.edu/asamst and the Asian American Student Success Program at <http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/aassp>.