

University of Massachusetts Boston
Asian American Studies Program



Graduation Celebration
2021-2022

23 May 2022

Asian American Studies Program Affiliated Faculty – May 2022

Ping-Ann Addo, Associate Professor, Anthropology
Pratyush Bharati, Professor, Management Science and Information Systems, College of Management
Elora Chowdhury, Professor and Chair, Women's and Gender Studies
Patrick Clarkin, Associate Professor, Anthropology
Christopher S. Fung, Senior Lecturer, Anthropology
Richard Hung, Associate Professor, School for the Environment
Denise Khor, Assistant Professor, American Studies
Peter Kiang, Professor and Director, Asian American Studies, School for Global Inclusion and Social Development, CEHD
Marlene Kim, Professor, Economics
Haeok Lee, Professor, College of Nursing & Health Sciences
Andrew Leong, Associate Professor, Philosophy and Law
Raymond Liu, Professor and Chair, Marketing, College of Management
Lusa Lo, Associate Professor, Special Education Program, Curriculum & Instruction, CEHD
Rajini Srikanth, Professor, English; Founding Dean, Honors College
Lakshmi Srinivas, Associate Professor, Asian American Studies, School for Global Inclusion and Social Development, CEHD
Karen Suyemoto, Professor, Psychology & Asian American Studies
Shirley Tang, Professor, Asian American Studies, School for Global Inclusion and Social Development, CEHD
Kim Soun Ty, Lecturer, Asian American Studies
Linh-Phuong Vū, Lecturer, Asian American Studies
Ngoc-Tran Vu, Lecturer, Asian American Studies
Leslie Kim Wang, Associate Professor, Sociology
Paul Watanabe, Professor, Political Science and Director, Institute for Asian American Studies
Zong-Guo Xia, Professor, School for the Environment
Wenfan Yan, Professor, Department of Leadership in Education, CEHD

The Program

For thirty-five years, UMass Boston's Asian American Studies Program has offered intellectually-challenging, emotionally-engaging, culturally-responsive, culturally-sustaining instruction in the classroom with holistic, high-impact 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 understandings 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. AANAPISI students from Bunker Hill Community College and those from partnering pre-collegiate and community youth programs are encouraged to access AsAmSt's learning opportunities. Community members and organizations as well as alumni participate in our activities in many short- and long-term ways. Since 2010, UMass Boston has been the primary 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 2021-2022 Graduates in Asian American Studies

After three pandemic semesters of remote instruction, a much-needed return to in-person learning defined the final year for eight undergraduates—Nathan Chul Chun (전철), Dung Do, Juan Carlo Gaspar, Nina Nguyen, Tan Nguyen, Layanie Oscar, Kirsteen Marie Raboy and Yewen Huang (黄晔文)—each of whom has successfully completed six or more AsAmSt courses and all program-of-study requirements in Asian American Studies. A total of 140 students have graduated with AsAmSt concentrations since 2000. Additionally, with great intention, Jessica B. Wong (黄慧美), added four AsAmSt program-of-study courses to complement her master's degree while longtime director/staff of the Asian American Student Success Program (AASSP), Sara Boxell Hoang, finished her PhD in Higher Education with a dissertation on AANAPISI staff identity development. We proudly offer in-person accolades to these ten students and to all 2021-2022 graduating students who have experienced Asian American Studies at UMB, including Celine Voyard, Shanarah Bargan, Alexisia Stewart, and many others.

Remotely and in-person, we offer continuing care and appreciation to all AsAmSt students, faculty, staff, alumni, community partners, and especially to our dedicated donors this year. As racist inequities and pandemic harms still manifest daily, we value the work, both visible and unseen, external and internal, of IAAS, AASSP, SGISD/CEHD, and our AANAPISI allies.

Though necessarily masked, our undergraduate and graduate students from AsAmSt 423 Boston's Asian American Communities (photo below) and elsewhere are clearly ready to show up and do more.



Yet, from our in-person grounding on campus, we also hearken toward the vibrant visions, sublime sounds, and ethereal energies that our imaginations channel across time, place, and generation via the wisdom and lessons of *Hira Makes a Sound*—as featured in the front cover photo and on p. 22. Creating fresh AsAmSt story processes/products are necessary, too. We are all ready to do more.

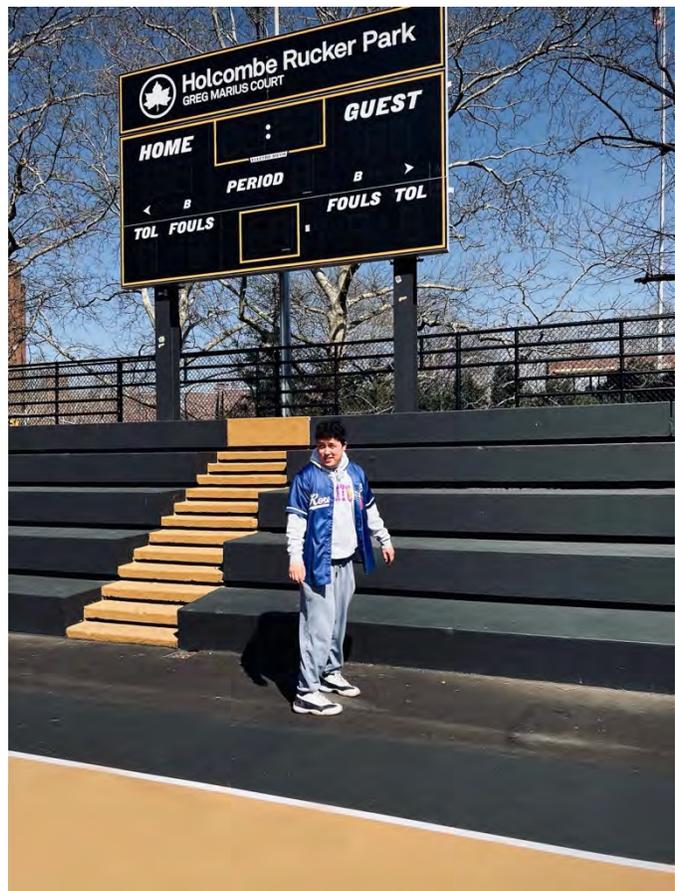
Program-of-Study in Asian American Studies

Nathan Chul Chun (전철)

I am a mixed race Korean American from Cambridge, MA. I grew up the oldest of five siblings in the neighborhood of North Cambridge, where I played little league baseball at Russell Field and basketball at Cedar Street Park with my friends. My mother grew up in St. Louis, Mo., the youngest of three born to my grandpa, a World War II US Army Air Corps pilot, and my grandma, a St. Louis County librarian. My father grew up in the Miri neighborhood of Seoul, Korea, before immigrating as a teenager to the U.S. and settling in Loveland, Oh., with my halmoni and samchon. My halmoni went on to open a successful Chinese restaurant in nearby Dayton. I am very fortunate to have been shaped by my loved ones and the places that we called home through the years.

I decided to declare a focus on Asian American Studies after taking classes with Kim Soun Ty and Linda Thiem. I was going through the motions my first few years at UMass Boston, not feeling as though I had much direction or interest in school. When I took class with Kim and later with Linda, I remember it being the first time I felt any college professor believed in me. Those were also the classrooms where I had the opportunity to feel like I was learning about myself. I did not know what I wanted to do or where I was headed, but Asian American Studies gave me a place I wanted to show up to everyday and a community that made me want to believe in myself.

My future plans are to get master's and doctoral degrees in psychology with a focus on Asian American and other BIPOC lived experiences. The research I hope to conduct as a PhD will ideally be centered around the experiences of under-resourced communities of color. My dream is to work with youth programs and schools in Cambridge and the greater Boston area to help kids learn psychological tools that are helpful in navigating the education system. Asian American Studies showed me the world was bigger than I thought it was. I hope to replicate that feeling with future generations of Asian Americans, even if they don't end up at UMass Boston.



Dung Do

I entered the University of Massachusetts Boston in Fall 1994 semester as a first-year student while I was employed full time. I have been working within the Transportation Services Department at UMass Boston since 1994 and have served as an Assistant Director in the same Department for the past seven years. Regarding my educational career, I have continued to enroll as a part-time student ever since I started working. After 28 years, I will graduate in August 2022 with a BA in Economics and a program of-study in Asian American Studies.



I decided to include a focus on Asian American Studies activities at UMass Boston due to many very important aspects. I have recognized that Asian American Studies has enriched my ability to grow and understand Asian American history in the U.S. Asian American Studies also supported me to understand our present-day issues that we all faced within Asian American communities in Massachusetts and other surrounding communities. Importantly, I have gained many lessons on aspects of our Asian American culture and history, as well as how we can come together to support one another in times of need.

My future plan is to continue the connections and learning in AsAmSt which will provide me with the opportunity to be more knowledgeable and educated about all our Asian American communities, especially in Boston, Dorchester and Quincy, Massachusetts. This background knowledge will be very important for us all to

be able to recognize our spaces and voices during these difficult times. I hope to stay involved with Asian American Studies for research and future study in order to be able to support our second-generation Asian American children.

Juan Carlo Gaspar

I am a Filipino immigrant who moved to Massachusetts at the age of 14 and finished High School in Western Massachusetts (Lenox, MA). In 2008, I began my undergraduate studies at UMass Boston as a Psychology major. As an immigrant, "race" was unfamiliar to me; UMass Boston, specifically, the Asian American Studies Program was the only resource I had, to learn/digest the experience of being non-white in America.

I took several AsAmSt courses with Dr. Peter Kiang where I learned the importance of community engagement, racial inclusivity, and the emphasis on the history of Asians/Asian-Americans in the West. The Asian American Studies Program has had a major impact in my life beyond the classroom/academic setting. Learning about our history as Asians in the United States was a humbling experience as their stories/experiences continue to have impact/relation to our own experiences today as Asian/Asian-



Americans in 2022
America. I left UMass
Boston in 2013
without finishing my
degree and worked
in my field of
interest—
Psychology/Mental
Health. Throughout
my various work
experiences, I carried
with me many lessons
from AsAmSt and
gained deeper
understanding as I
continued to grow as

a person/professional/Filipino immigrant. The AsAmSt Program's approach to learning is also one of the many reasons why it had a great impact on my education/identity formation. The AsAmSt Program promotes the importance of gaining knowledge/insight from our shared experiences. This type of learning, I believe, is what creates the *beyond-the-classroom experience*; lifelong lessons that move with us as we navigate through life. I returned to UMass Boston working as an Employment Specialist at the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) where I help individuals with disabilities gain meaningful employment in the community. While waiting in the lobby for my hiring interview, the first UMB person I saw was Dr. Peter Kiang. His familiar face and words of encouragement were so reaffirming. In Fall 2021, I began taking classes again and officially declared AsAmSt as a program-of-study. Dr. Shirley Tang's Applied Research in Asian American Studies II: Data Story Lab course was transformational for my understanding the importance of representation and the power of storytelling.

This coming Fall '22, I will be starting my Masters in Mental Health Counseling in the Department of Counseling and School Psychology/UMass Boston. It has been a full-circle moment to return to UMass Boston, particularly reconnecting with my AsAmSt family. As I continue to further my career through education, I plan to integrate fervent passion and commitment to the Asian/Asian American community into my work in the Mental Health field, including promoting the importance of representation and advocacy.

Thank You! Maraming Salamat!

Yewen Huang (黄晔文)



I am a first-generation Chinese immigrant who came to the United States in 2016 with my lovely parents. I am graduating with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a program-of-study in Asian American Studies. I was born in Nanjing, Jiangsu, the place where I stayed and studied until 11th grade when we got immigration visa approval after waiting for many years. As my father said: "the inner battle of sacrificing everything we left in China finally nails down to the big resolution." I transferred to Braintree High School as a Junior and rushed to pick up everything I needed to learn to enter the University. Additionally, though I devoted three years to self-studying Cantonese, yet my Cantonese friends still found it hard to understand my words.

Before pursuing the AsAmSt program-of-study, I already had strong connections with Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) and Quincy Asian Resources, Inc (QARI). I had experience being a tutor for ESOL classes and really enjoyed the moment that I can take my strength to contribute to the community. But most of the time living here, I felt a bit lonely, being the only child in our family. The AsAmSt Program provided a sense of belonging to me ever since I stepped into it. It was the first time I was surrounded by other peers in the United States who shared a similar background with me. I felt less alienated and more engaged into the community.

In Spring 2019, I received an AsAmSt internship opportunity to be an ESOL teacher at BCNC. Once again, I had great times teaching students English. Also, I had the honor to be a presenter at the APAHE (Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education) national conference in Oakland, California in 2019 with other bilingual AsAmSt classmates. I really appreciate that AsAmSt has provided excellent opportunities to me.

After graduation, I am planning to find an engineering job in the local Boston area, I will keep in touch with other alumni and friends whom I have met in five years of study. I am expecting to be one who can be comfortable living in plural cultural backgrounds. My learning and thinking shall be kept for my living, as shall my identity.

Nina Nguyen

I am graduating with a bachelor of arts degree in psychology and a program-of-study in Asian American Studies. I am a second-generation Vietnamese American and a first-generation college student. I was born in Boston, but my family and I moved to Maine when I was four. I wanted to be surrounded by people like me after growing up around people who weren't, so I decided to attend college in Boston.

As a first-generation student, I didn't know what I was doing and I still don't. I didn't even know Asian American Studies existed, so I came into college as an Asian studies major thinking I would learn more about myself. After taking my first Asian American Studies class during the second semester of my freshmen year, I realized that Asian American Studies was what I wanted rather than Asian studies. There was no major, so I opted for the program-of-study. At that point, I had already declared psychology as my major after taking an introductory psychology course during my first semester of college. By the end of my freshmen year, I was interested in mental health, particularly among the Asian American population.

I continued to take psychology and Asian American Studies courses throughout my college career. Since UMB has limited options, taking more Asian American Studies courses was one of the main reasons for my exchange year. One of the reasons I chose my exchange university was because of their Asian American Studies Department. I felt very enlightened in those courses because I was able to learn about myself and my identity. Words won't give that feeling I had justice, but it was very empowering to simply put it.

Although I can't pinpoint it exactly, my passion for Asian American Studies and even psychology slowly died, beginning my junior year. I don't know if it was because of the pandemic and online learning or because I felt burnout from taking so many classes that the material seemed repetitive. Looking back, both played a role in my growing disinterest. Even though I still feel this way, I don't regret the path I've taken regarding Asian American Studies.



I don't know what the future has in store for me. Currently, I'm working on building a portfolio for a career in UX design. I can utilize my psychology background and even my Asian American Studies knowledge depending on what I will do. Asian American Studies won't be on the forefront of my future career as I thought it would be, but I'm glad it occurred in my past since it helped me learn and resonated with my identity.

Tan Nguyen

[Note: Tan graduated in Fall 2021 with a B.A. in Sociology and a program-of-study in Asian American Studies. Since late Spring 2022, Tan has been deployed on Active Duty out of state with the 182nd Infantry Regiment of the MA Army National Guard. Tan was unable to submit a photo/ profile statement.

The photo shown here is captured from a short video Tan produced for the Dumpling Challenge assignment in AsAmSt 423 Boston's Asian American Communities during the third pandemic remote semester of Spring 2021. Excerpts from Tan's written work in the same course are also included.]



I am glad that I had a chance in a class to do this activity because it was a very valuable learning experience for me about our cultures and recipes. I could relate to it from the ingredients to the process and the joy from eating it. If I talk about how it is important to me, that is because my mom is a picky eater and gỏi cuốn is among the rare dishes that she eats so it resonates a lot when I make it. The warm bowl of water to soften the rice paper. Slicing the boiled pork into thin slices so the roll does not taste all too meaty. The mints and basil in the mix add the texture as well as fight off the strong taste of the mixed fish sauce to create a balanced meal in every bite. That memory shares the story of how we could connect the soul to the space with the family.

On top of that, this activity was unique because the pandemic has taken over the life that I used to have on campus. Everything before that was so interactive and effective; then came the pandemic, like I did not have school and friends at all. Thanks to this activity, I could connect to my student life and be interactive to a certain extent. I could imagine how fun this could be back in the pre-pandemic days. I am looking backward and forward to the normal life ...

In my math class in the 7th grade, I had to report out loud my test score of how many I got correct, which was 30/30, but because of my accent, saying *thirty* made the teacher confused and people just laughed at me so for the rest of the year, so then I said *twenty nine* because I had no problem saying that. The language barrier in some ways caused me to think that I was an outcast who does not fit into the environment. That had a very bad effect in my mind, how I just wanted to stop being who I am and how proud I should be, and, instead, made me feel low and insignificant.

Throughout the history of Asian Americans, many things changed from the bad to the better. Even so, much of the population is still suffering inequality and violence that reflect the other side of the lives that reside in the Western world, the U.S. There are many people who devote their lifetime to make a better place for Asian American communities and retell their stories to empower and not let them be forgotten.

Thank you [to AsAmSt] for all you did and are doing for the communities and for the better of all! Your work will not be forgotten but will be known by the many. Without the worst, there will be no best, and if I am not there to witness it myself, I am confident that someday, it will happen and we all can live in harmony.

Layanie Oscar



I was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, immigrating to the U.S when I was about five or six years old. I am the eldest and only daughter to my Haitian-born and bred mom and dad. My siblings consist of a younger brother, a 'youngest' brother, and lots of cousins, uncles, and aunts.

For the first 13 years of my life I lived in Broward County, South Florida. If the city is in Broward, I have either lived in it, gone to school in it, or had a field trip in it. I consider Broward County, Florida to be my home. That is where I learned English, where I found my passion for grassroots organizing, debating, and poetry. I learned and grew to love who I am because of Broward. Broward taught me to be strong when facing adversity, empathetic to those not like me, and to love the little things, no matter how small. What Broward didn't teach me, I got to learn here at UMass Boston, with the Asian American Studies Program being one of my studious instructors.

In full transparency, I took my first Asian American Studies course out of curiosity, and with the understanding that I was ignorant to many of the issues that the Asian American community faced. I chose the class based off of an instructor my friend had boasted about many times over, Kim Soun Ty. So, when I was meeting with my guidance counselor, discussing the thing we UMB students love to hate; my audit, I saw her name next to the Asians in the U.S class and enrolled.

May I just say that was one of the greatest things I have done in my college career. The class was personalized for the students. It spoke of rich histories that weren't just in textbooks or in documentaries. These histories were tied to the students in the class, they were tied to the community of Dorchester, Greater Boston, and the larger Asian American community. What I loved most of all, was that the class was structured in a way where I felt my history as a Black, immigrant woman was made visible, something I had yet to experience in a class. It provided this realization that my 'immigrantness' did not have to cripple itself to prove my Blackness. It was also the first class that allowed me to show my creative self; one of many to come from the Asian American Studies Program. I loved that class, so much so, I took another class with the same instructor, Cambodian American Culture and Community, the semester after.

In said class, we built community through history gathering, collecting, and sharing. I also believe that my class had one of the bigger amounts of Khmer students enrolled. I got to learn about my classmates and their families' history, about Kim's, about the larger Khmer population. We spoke about heavy topics like genocide and displacement, generational trauma; but we also spoke of healing, community, culture, love and family. I tried to stave off many tears that semester and many semesters to come. It was in that class where we were all made to lay ourselves vulnerable and confront not only others' history, but our own; where I decided I wanted to take an Asian American Studies Program-of-Study. For that I was the better. I created work that spoke of the importance of history, of representation, of language. I wrote poems and organized with what I learned in class; and there comes times (and I know there are more to come) where the voices of Shirley and Peter's teachings resound in my head. Where the care I received from Ammany and Nia shine through an extraordinary memory. Where laughter rings from snippets of moments I shared with Valazia, Jenny and Jenny, Shanarah, Celine, Kirsteen, Khong Meng, and many others.

These memories, lessons, and advice I have been given, I carry with me as a reminder to be both intentional and reciprocal. I have yet to perfect this, but through shared history with them I stride towards it. For one thing I learned from all these courses and experiences is, if one must struggle than we as a society, as a community, have not done our jobs. If for one of us to win, the other must lose; it isn't a victory worth celebrating. I hope that in my future pursuits, with the many histories embedded in my mind and heart, to be purposeful in whatever I am doing, to represent the communities that I work with in their voices, their own languages, truths, and ideas. That when I speak about the Black community, Haitian community, or immigrant community, it is not mutually exclusive from the Asian American community. To remember that our histories are embedded within each other. That to be for the people, is not to be for one people. To once again, always remember to be intentional and reciprocal.

To Peter, Shirley, Kim, Ammany, and Nia.
Mèsi pou tout

C'est le ciel que je te dois
Parce que tu m'as donné le ciel

Mèsi pou tout

Kirsteen Marie Raboy

I am a proud Filipino woman who took many years of reshaping my outlook to understand my identity as a high importance of praise. There was more shame around it than pride due to the engrained whiteness that I was raised in with spaces that lacked to nourish the students of color and faculty who failed to instill confidence. I was taught that achieving whiteness was my only form of success since I was not in an academic space that valued us students of color, outside of numbers and letters. I was unable to advocate confidently for myself and for the Asian community because I was never given the understanding of why and how.

It was not until I entered UMass Boston, where the first few months of dreading the loneliness that filled the hallways, shortly became a home of embrace, safety and family. Finding the Asian American Studies Program reshaped the entirety of who I am. It catalyzed the wave of passion not only for my Filipino identity, but the intention behind my work. It shifted my outlook on my academics, because it became a need to center the Asian experience. To learn more of the cause and effects of our history to enhance the now. With so much anger to feel, there have been pioneers in the community that influenced me to be kind to myself but also know I am part of the impact.

The overwhelming amount of gratitude the people in the AsAmSt Program hold within me, is beyond what words can describe. I am in deep sadness of departing, but with so much fulfillment from this experience. I am walking away knowing the power I have, because the Program nourished me to be confident. With that, I want to find ways to engage with Asian American-run programs that let all generations of Asians know that they are valued and our lives are worth centering. To not follow whiteness as a blueprint of success as I once did, but to rewrite our own maps and stories our community carries. The way I have been understood in the Program, I want kids of color to be given this opportunity to experience.



Recognizing Graduate Student Contributions

Sara Boxell Hoang, PhD, Higher Education

I came to the U.S. from Pusan, Korea with my twin sister in 1987 as a five-month old infant. Our parents adopted us and brought us to be raised in Andover, an affluent predominately white suburb north of Boston. I had a happy childhood for the most part but growing up in this context as a queer Asian American raised by white parents was difficult at times. I came to believe in the microaggressions and stereotypes I saw and carried a lot of internalized racism and shame. However, it also provided me with many privileges that have allowed me to access and succeed in higher education in ways that I may not have otherwise been able to, including receiving this PhD.



I have been connected to UMass Boston's Asian American Studies Program for over ten years since being introduced to the program as a graduate student pursuing my MA degree in American Studies. Throughout these years, Asian American Studies has provided me with an Asian American community—something that many transracial adoptees never find. Asian American Studies faculty, staff, and students have taught me that, even though my experiences are different than many other Asian Americans, I am a valid and important part of an Asian American community. As much as I educate myself about the histories and experiences of Asian Americans, I will never truly know what it is to carry the struggles, strengths, and cultural wealth that many other Asian Americans at UMass Boston do. However, by welcoming me into the program office and trusting me with roles in various projects—from assisting with a graffiti mural as a part of the *Brick by Brick* project to leading the Asian American Student Success Program, UMass Boston's AANAPISI-funded program—I have learned that I have a role to play in our communities and that people want me here. I am proud to be Asian American and to belong to this wonderful community.

Even after ten years have passed and I have transitioned from a master's degree student to a professional staff member, I continue to learn from Asian American Studies. My experiences in the Program guide me in my professional role as the director of the Asian American Student Success Program. Even though I am no longer a constant presence in the program office, Asian American Studies is an anchor that will always center me and remind me why I do the work that I do.

Jessica B. Wong (黃慧美), MPA, Public Administration

I grew up in Fall River as a second-generation biracial Chinese-Irish American. I am the first in my immediate family to receive a bachelor's degree and now a master's degree in Public Administration with a program-of-study in Asian American Studies. Growing up in a small urban city as a multiracial Asian American presented many challenges with my identity that I had never really confronted. In my late teen years, I developed a deep admiration for Asian history and culture, particularly China, Hong Kong, and Southeast Asia. On May 4, 2015, my Dad took me on our first trip to Hong Kong, which only deepened my love for Asian history and culture. I wanted to learn more about our stories and histories. The journey was just beginning. But three years later on May 4, 2018, my Dad unexpectedly passed away. I lost my one and closest connection to a world that I was finally beginning to consciously explore. I now honor him, his dedication, hard work, and embody his spirit in everything I do. Without my dad, I don't think I would be on the path that I am today to understand my Asian American identity and involve myself in public service work within the Asian American community.



UMass Boston was always my first choice for graduate school, more specifically because I wanted to get involved in the Asian American Studies Program. I heard a lot about the opportunities and growth that one can develop in this program from an alumna, my former colleague and friend, Jenny Chiang. Even though I never needed to take any AsAmSt courses for credits, I took extra AsAmSt courses every semester along with my graduate classes because I craved to learn more about Asian American stories and histories.

I remember hearing about Peter Kiang. The first time I had seen him was when he was giving a keynote speech at the 2017 AAPI Civil Rights Forum in Boston. I was eager to meet him when I had also found out that he was the Director of Asian American Studies Program. He was the first educator that I had ever met with a similar multiracial background and ethnicities of my own. I was finally able to see someone in the same field as me who not only looked like me, but also shared similar experiences and values. Shirley Tang's GISD697: Digital Storytelling Praxis is the first class where I was allowed to research my own multiracial identity in-depth. This is a part of myself that I have always wanted to explore but never had

the right environment or guidance to do so. As a multiracial Chinese American from a small urban city, finding educators such as Peter Kiang, Shirley Tang, Kim Soun Ty, Ngoc-Tran Vu, Linh Phuong Vu, and all of the AsAmSt faculty were hard for me to come by before coming to UMB. I can't thank these educators enough for the mentorship and impact that they have had on my life. My younger self feels supported, loved, seen, and heard. My current self feels an urgency to learn more, with the intention to educate, heal and guide younger generations in the future. UMass Boston's Asian American Studies Program has provided me with a home, a safe space, mentorship, and inspiration.

AsAmSt has inspired me to dive deeper into my Asian American identity, to discover more about my family's history, to decolonize my mind, and to continue creating space for Asian American women and multiracial Asian Americans. Currently, I wear many different hats, as the Program Director for the MA Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission, the AAPI Coordinator for Mass Cultural Council, and Social Media Manager for Asian Task Force Against Violence, all while balancing being a daughter, a sister, a partner, a full-time step-mom, and friend. My next step after graduation is to further my education by pursuing my Ph.D. in the GISD program. UMass Boston's Asian American Studies Program has inspired me to become an educator for undergraduate students in AsAmSt, publish a book on the experiences of multiracial Asian Americans, and to dream even bigger... I would love to open up an Asian American bookstore/cafe/studio and more.

AsAmSt Program Sampling from 2021-2022

2022 JFK Undergraduate Award Winner ~ MG Xiong



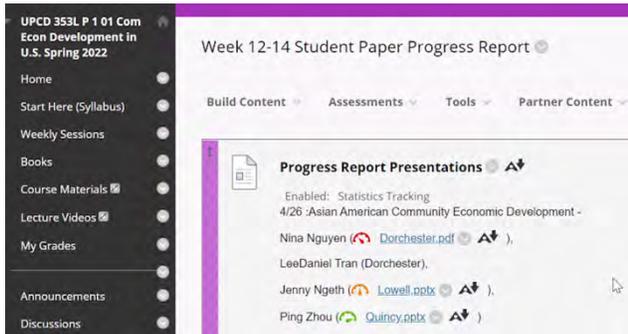
MG Xiong is UMass Boston's recipient of the 2022 John F. Kennedy Award for Academic Excellence. The JFK Award is given to the graduating senior who "best exemplifies academic excellence, commitment to service, and good citizenship." The awardee also presents the commencement speech on behalf of the entire senior class. Originally from Alaska, MG is a Hmong American honors student with a major in Philosophy and Public Policy. They intend to work intersectionally in diversity and equity field, in centering queer and trans communities, issues, and joys. MG led the organizing for UMB's first Transgender Day of Visibility (L/R photos: MG visiting AsAmSt 200; opening the 31 April campus event; and joining Hmong graduate student Khong Meng Her). Since 1977, only three other Asian Americans have received the JFK Award: Najia Afsari (2007), Thao Xuan Do (2010), and Albert Chen (2012).

AANAPISI Research Cluster (ARC) at APAHE – Long Beach



Supervised by CNHS Professor Sun Kim in conjunction with an AANAPISI Research Cluster coordinated by IAAS Director and AANAPISI project co-PI, Paul Watanabe, two advanced nursing students, Jannat Khusbo and Cookie Watriboonruang presented their research, "The Experience of Anti-Asian Hate and Racism among Asian Nursing Students During Clinical Training," at the Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE) national conference in Long Beach, CA in April 2022.

AsAmSt Curriculum Innovation

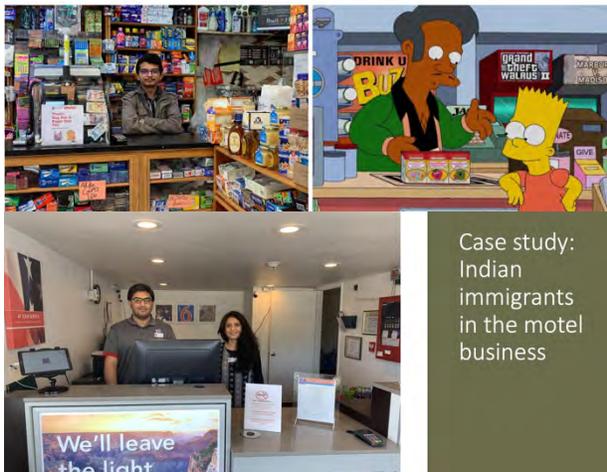


With course development funds from an AANAPISI grant, Prof. Richard Hung launched his new cross-listed course AsAmSt/UPCD 353L Community Economic Development in the US in Spring 2022, and supported several AsAmSt students in researching Asian American economic profiles and COVID-19 impacts in Lowell, Quincy, Dorchester and comparatively in Orange County, CA.

English Prof. Susan Tan revitalized AsAmSt/ENGL 350L Asian American Literary Voices in Spring 2022 to focus on Asian American children's and young adult literature. She is here (photo right) with AsAmSt senior, Arlene Vu—herself a gifted creator of children's story themes and imagery. Susan also plans to re-create and offer AsAmSt/ENGL 221L Introduction to Asian American Writing soon.



Media representations of South Asians



The woman you see here is **Urooj Arshad**. She's not only a Queer Muslim Woman from Pakistan, but she is also Co-founder of the Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity and first retreat for LGBTQ+ Muslims addressing Islamophobia, Homophobia, and Transphobia. She's an inspiration. Just like you are and a great example of embracing who you are and engaging with your community for change!

Resources:
Counseling Center/Quinn, 2nd floor room 617-287-5690 counseling.center@umb.edu 617-287-5507
UMass Boston
Poster developed by Visvava Upara, Stephanie Tsang, Adelaide Battistoni, De'Dimay Gonzalez as part of Asian American Psychology Psychology (PsychWkshp) L238
For questions about this project, contact Karen Suyemoto: karen.suyemoto@umb.edu
Anyone requiring disability related accommodations, including dietary accommodations, should go to www.ada.umb.edu and file a request form.
Photo by Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, <https://queerbo.com/wiki/index.php?title=File:Uroojarshad.jpg>

In Spring 2022, Prof. Lakshmi Srinivas's students in AsAmSt 226 Becoming South Asians produced a range of papers and projects focusing on South Asian community documentation, historical study, and media analysis. Students in Prof. Karen Suyemoto's AsAmSt/PSYCH 238L Asian American Psychology course created a variety of digital and print materials that will be shared more widely with the campus to highlight Asian American mental health issues and resources.

Appreciating AsAmSt Alumni – Campus/Community Connections



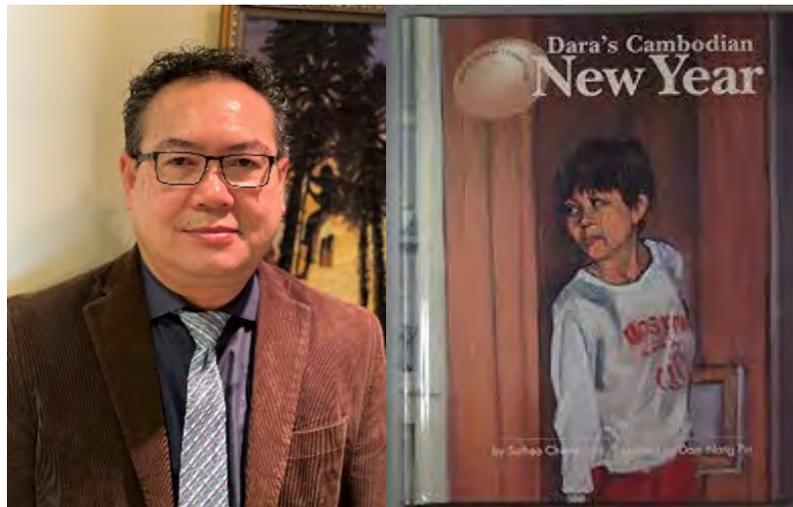
AsAmSt alumnus Matt Seto ('11) visited AsAmSt 423 in October 2021 to share his family's long-overdue receipt of the Congressional Gold Medal to recognize the World War II military service of Chinese American veterans. Matt and fellow AsAmSt alumna, Amy Au ('09)—both former commanders of Boston Chinatown Post 328—also marched with fellow Post members on Veteran's Day 2021 and were joined by history-making, outgoing and incoming Mayors of Boston, Kim Janey and Michelle Wu.



While the historic November 2021 election of Michelle Wu as Boston's first Asian American woman mayor inspired many (left photo with AsAmSt alumna Theresa Tran ('19)), AsAmSt student Tauvari Udomsay (right) similarly campaigned for her uncle, the top vote-getter in Lowell's November 2021 City Council election. Several siblings in Councilor Nuon's Khmer refugee family attended and graduated from UMB.



In January 2022, Sothea Chiemruom was appointed as Executive Director of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA), the largest Khmer community organization in MA. Sothea was one of the earliest Khmer refugees to attend UMB, and, while still a student, Sothea wrote the widely-used 1992 children's book, *Dara's Cambodian New Year*.



In July 2021, lifestyle photographer and AsAmSt alumna, Emily Em ('17) was named one of the Top 25 Entrepreneurs on the Rise by *Phoenix Entrepreneurs Magazine*.

Meanwhile, former student Jesse Ngo aka DJ Jesse Jess visited AsAmSt 423 via Jenny Nguyen to share his entrepreneurial impact in the local nightlife industry, including fresh ventures such as Card Vault at Patriot Place under Big Night Entertainment.



Son Ca Lam ('09), Maryanne Chow ('13), Thomas Nguyen ('13), Van Tran ('15), Ivy Bui ('16), Candace Nguyen ('18), Theresa Tran ('19), Cindy Tao ('20), and other alumni presented in AsAmSt courses, too.

Additionally, at their worksites, Janet Vo ('08), Chu Huang ('09), Sokpagna Chuon ('17), and Tomás Leyton-Nolan ('20) supervised seniors enrolled in AsAmSt 391 Asian American Community Internships. AsAmSt 391 also partnered with Danielle Kim (right) and the Asian Community Fund (ACF) to assess Asian community leadership development needs. ACF's emergence in 2021-2022 under the Boston Foundation is a major step forward for local community capacity-building, advocacy, and philanthropic investment.





Faithfully each fall season, AsAmSt alumnus Ray Chiu ('13) donates a melon from his Quincy family garden for the AsAmSt 423 Story Chef Harvest competition. Ray's 2021 melon was so impressive, it needed restaurant-level handling, courtesy of Just Thai Kitchen (JTK) in Fields Corner, co-owned by AsAmSt senior Lily Horburapa's father. The melon's transformation coincided with the restaurant's first anniversary blessings ceremony as JTK boldly opened in September 2020, just months into the pandemic.



Modeling connections and convergences, Asa Peters shared the children's book, *Clambake*, authored by his great uncle, the beloved Mashpee Wampanoag tribal leader Russell Peters, Sr. (Fast Turtle), with Vietnamese immigrant students in AsAmSt alumna Songkhla Nguyen ('08)'s second-grade classroom at the Mather School in Dorchester. As a graduate student in Critical Ethnic & Community Studies, Asa met Kha during a Fall 2021 AsAmSt 423 Fields Corner community field trip where the idea initially emerged to share indigenous and immigrant histories and cultural practices during the Thanksgiving period.



Deep and strong community-engaged work in AsAmSt continued in many courses, including GISD/AsAmSt PhD student Linh-Phuong Vũ's reclaiming of AsAmSt 294 Resources for Vietnamese American Studies which highlighted bilingual capacities and multiple connections between AsAmSt and community resources and sites such as the recently-recognized Boston Little Saigon (BLS) Cultural District in Fields Corner.

With grace, we note that three community-engaged champions, Profs. John Saltmarsh, Ester Shapiro, and Tim Sieber are each retiring after decades of tearsbloodsweat contributions at UMB. Ester, in particular, has always been among the most clear and creative of colleagues to embrace and reciprocate our AsAmSt pedagogical praxis while John has always conceptualized campus, regional, and national service-learning and community engagement initiatives in ways that align with our principles and models of practice. We will greatly miss their mission-centered leadership and daily presence.



Amidst enormous challenges of the dual pandemics that have affected every aspect of university life, the moments for AsAmSt faculty and students to interact in-person with Chancellor Suárez-Orozco, Provost Berger, and other campus leaders, including Vice Provost Liya Escalera through AsAmSt events and classes, AANAPISI grant coordination, and strategic planning processes during 2021-2022 have been much appreciated.



Hira Makes a Sound—A New Chapter in Narrative Co-Production

Bajei (grandma) lost her spirit trying to protect me! If I didn't yell back, this wouldn't have happened!

Hira Makes a Sound is an original AsAmSt children's storybook about a lively Nepali American girl named Hira and her grandmother, Ratna Bajei. Created in 2021-2022 by the Asian American Studies Program's Digital Storytelling Platform Team (DST) comprised of alumnae Kim Soun Ty, Parmita Gurung, Ammany Ty, Nia Duong, and Executive Producer, Prof. Shirley Tang, the story shows how a Nepali immigrant family deals with the double pandemic of both COVID-19 and anti-Asian hate in



critical ways that rely on elders' "superpowers"—including their intuitive and ancestral knowledge. Through a multilingual, multigenerational story data research and development process with collaboratively-composed original text and dialogue by the team, plus Ammany's lush, full-color illustrations, the story shows cultural-spiritual practices as central to coping within family and community-based contexts. When Hira Gurung learns that Ratna Bajei has lost her spirit following a racist assault on the street, she turns to Nepali spiritual practices and communal care to guide her grandmother home. In the process, Hira also experiences her own moment of spiritual growth and healthy development thanks to the enabling ecologies of her immigrant family, diasporic community, and Gurung ancestors' worldview.



Driving the content creation process, team members gathered and shared relevant stories through native language conversations with Khmer, Nepali, Vietnamese and Chinese women, frontline workers, and elders and triangulated these stories through local and national ethnic media sources. Like Hira in the story, the DST—an all-women-led platform grounded in Asian American Studies praxis—has made its own new sound by co-producing this passionate, purposeful, year-long project. Funded, in part, by the UMB College of Education and Human Development's Racial Justice Fund, multilingual copies of Hira Makes a Sound will be available by Fall 2022 through the AsAmSt Program.

Making Sense of Manzanar Moments



In Spring 2022, Prof. Paul Watanabe led a special field trip to Southern California for students to visit the Manzanar War Relocation Center, one of ten concentration camps where Japanese Americans were incarcerated during WWII. Paul's first trip to Manzanar with students in one of his signature courses took place in Fall 2009 (see left). Due to the pandemic, a planned field trip had been postponed until 2022. Seniors Celine Voyard and Layanie Oscar share some of their haiku poems and photos from the trip below.

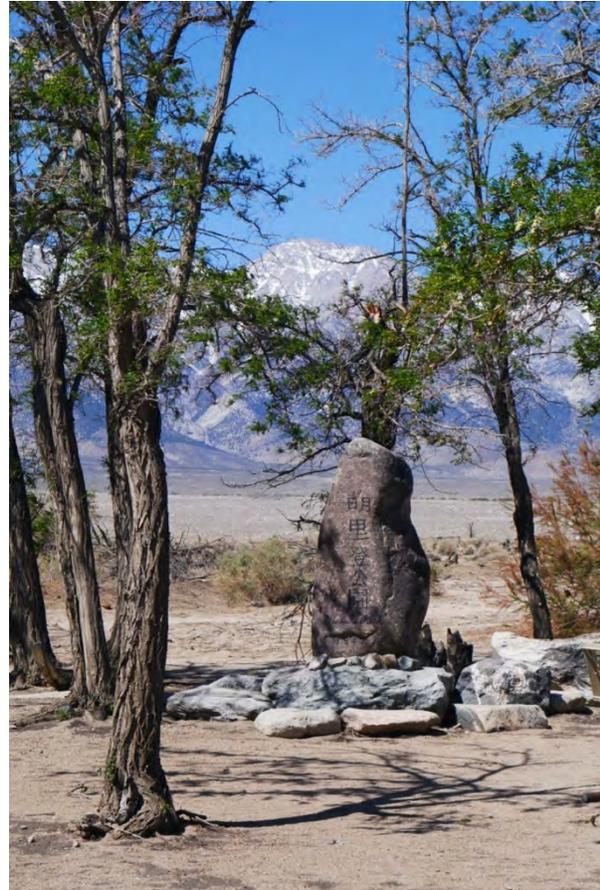
Essence

Manzanar, soft winds
The warmth of our ancestors
Whistling melodies



Remembrance

Bullet holes and trees
Oranges, bowed heads, clapping
Mourning, cranes, sun rays



Presence

Deafening silence
Invisible feet running
Shy laughter tolling

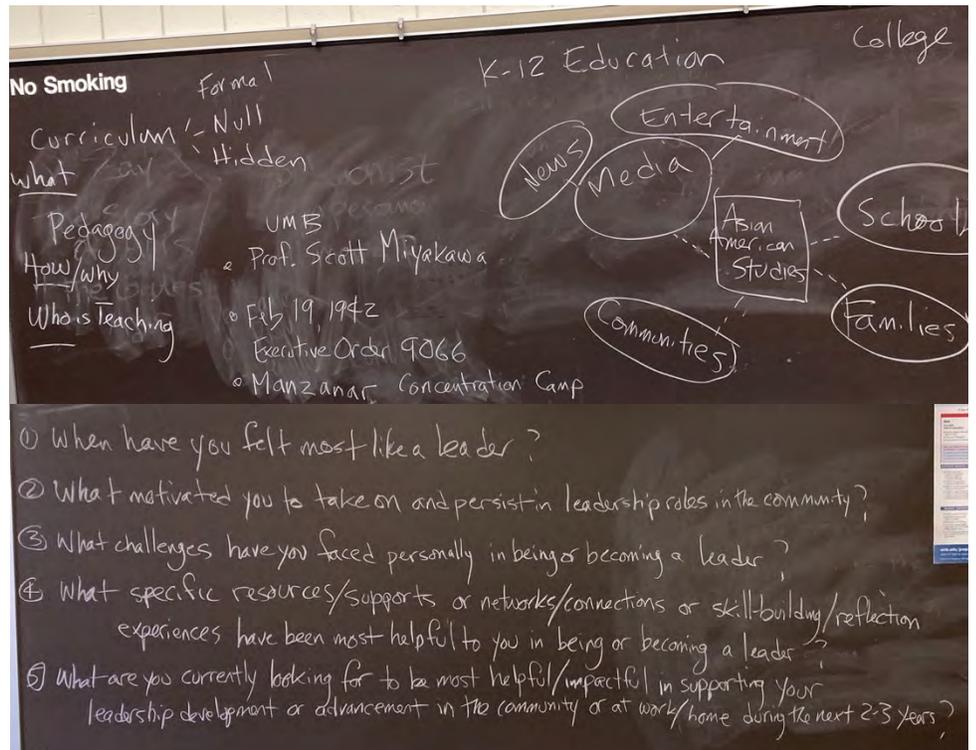


Endurance

Far before us here,
when the land embraced water,
my mother told me...

In-Person Persistence and Impact

In his end-of-semester course reflection in AsAmSt 200 Intro to Asian American Studies, a first-year international student from Kuwait revealed how disappointed he was initially to see the physical condition of UMB due to the construction chaos and other factors. He was especially surprised that we still use chalkboards in our classrooms (Wheatley). But from the interactions and insights he gained through AsAmSt over time, he realized that the treasure to discover at UMB is not infrastructure, but rather people—the rich and rare sharing between students and teachers.



Indeed, in-person classroom lessons in chalk—like those above from AsAmSt courses this year—are erased every day, lost in immediate clouds of dust, rather than saved in remote clouds of digital storage.

Similarly, the photo (left) taken at the end of the Spring 2022 semester shows the degrading of our campus banner. Its integrity will continue to weaken, fray, tear, and release with the wind, inevitably with its still much-needed message being lost.

What persists after the chalkboard is erased and the banner releases? Our graduating students will soon have to answer that challenge for themselves. But as suggested in each of the previous pages here and in the direct, in-person classroom experience of Ibrahim, the Kuwaiti international student or hundreds of others taking AsAmSt courses this year... it is the people.

The Asian American Studies Program recognizes with appreciation:

- all current and former AsAmSt students and their family members as well as all AsAmSt faculty, staff, teaching assistants, enrolled students, and guest presenters, including so many alumni, who have persisted with care, commitment, and clarity through this second pandemic year of viral disease variants and unabated anti-Asian hate.
- all donors—named and anonymous, modest and historic—who have ensured our continuing stability and growth into perpetuity, despite the ongoing period of pandemic loss and insecurity.
- AsAmSt alumna, Marylou Francisco ('19), whose pure generosity as a volunteer TA in donating time, food, and care for students in-person during each week of 2022 has been unprecedented.
- CNHS Prof. Haeok Lee who retired in 2022 after making numerous contributions to research, teaching, and service in addressing Asian American health disparities and health equity issues. Haeok came to UMB as a tenured faculty in 2008, and frequently taught AsAmSt 345 Asian American Cultures and Health Practices, often while mentoring her advanced Nursing PhD students to integrate student- and community-centered Asian American Studies reflexive pedagogy with health sciences content.
- Former CNHS Prof. Lin Zhan who originally developed and taught AsAmSt 345 and who completed her first year as Dean of the School of Nursing at UCLA during 2021-2022.
- Denise Khor who is recommended for tenure in American Studies and Lusa Lo who is recommended for promotion to full professor rank in Curriculum & Instruction.
- Bob Chen, Cedric Woods, Ngai Kwan, and colleagues from the School for the Environment, Institute for New England Native American Studies, Institute for Community Inclusion, and CEHD Racial Justice Fund for fresh and continuing grant partnerships during 2021-2022.
- everyone involved with our core US Department of Education-funded AANAPISI Program activities, including co-PIs Peter Kiang, Paul Watanabe, and Shirley Tang; Vice Provost Liya Escalera, AASSP staff led by Sara Hoang with Frances Chow and Karen Chi, former staff, Pratna Kem and Erica Lam, and our sister AANAPISI leaders at Bunker Hill Community College, including President Pam Eddinger with Profs. María Puente and Aurora Bautista.

Please visit UMB's Asian American Studies Program at www.umb.edu/asamst. For updates of local community news, resources, events, and new content creation, see: <http://www.facebook.com/UMB.AsAmSt> and <https://www.instagram.com/plantjustseeds/> Please consider contributing to the Asian American Studies Program Capacity Fund: <http://www.alumni.umb.edu/AsAmSt30>.