

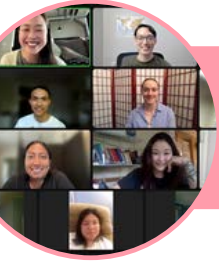


THE ASIAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST

The Official Newsletter of the Asian American Psychological Association

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President & Vice President's Message

by Anjuli Amin, PhD & Christine Catipon, PsyD



Joined by Society of Indian Psychology (SIP) leadership, American Psychological Association (APA) leadership, and members of the APA Indigenous Apology Work Group, APA President Dr. Thema Bryant offering on behalf of the APA, the apology to First Peoples in the United States. SIP Annual Convention in Logan, Utah on June 26th, 2023.

Greetings Members!

It's hard to believe we are already in the midst of the summer season and inching our way towards the last part of 2023. While so much continues to occur in all sectors of life and across many of our communities here in the States and across the world, I hope that all of you have been able to find moments to connect with the things that bring you joy. Finding balance amidst what can sometimes feel like an endless supply of demands, expectations, life and world events can be a delicate and challenging process.

Christine and I have had many conversations about the ways in which the concept of finding balance has shifted and changed with the events of the last few years, particularly with the COVID-19 pandemic. In reflecting on the way the pandemic has and continues to impact the well-being of our AANHPI communities, we are also beginning to see its long-term impact for us in the mental health field. As we identified in our presidential initiatives, it is important for us to continue these conversations with all of you in order to support your own self-care and healing.

One of the spaces in which we were able to bring ourselves into this conversation of self-care and healing was at the annual convention of the **Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP)**, which Christine and I were fortunate to be able to attend in June. We were also lucky to have our own past AAPA president **Helen Hsu** in attendance with us. While there, we witnessed the historic [offer of apology from APA leadership to First Peoples of the U.S.](#) This was a moving and profound event, which left us feeling cautiously optimistic about the future of psychology for our own communities. Most importantly, learning about the work of our colleagues in SIP reinforced to us the power of ancestral wisdom in keeping one balanced and grounded, as well as the ways in which culture contributes to our healing, interconnectedness, and resiliency.

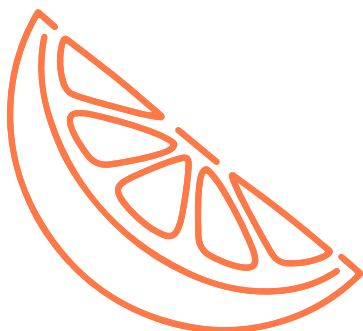
We would like to express our appreciation to the leadership of SIP for hosting and welcoming us into their professional home. It was an honor to be able to be present with this amazing community.



Past and current AAPA leadership at the SIP Annual Convention. From left to right, Drs. Christine Catipon, Anjuli Amin, Debra Kawahara, and Helen Hsu.



SIP President Drs. Bŷ Boyd (left) and past SIP President Iva Greywolf (right) presenting AAPA leadership with traditional blankets as a token of welcome and appreciation. The blanket contains a butterfly design that is often found on painted tipis and in the beadwork of the Blackfeet people. For the Blackfeet, the butterfly is the bringer of good dreams. The blanket was designed by Blackfeet/Piikani artist and Inspired Natives™ Collaborator John Isaiah Pepion.



On another note, the Executive Committee has spent much of the past few months working to fill and onboard folks into several of the currently open leadership positions, and prepare for those that will be vacated at the end of this year. We were blown away by the response we received from our call to serve and reminded once again of the amazing spirit of our AAPA community.

We would like to welcome the following individuals into their new roles and express our gratitude for their interest and willingness to serve:

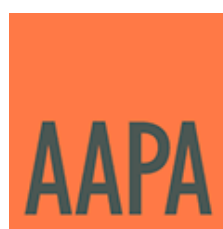
- Convention Co-Chairs: [Teresa Hsu-Walklet, Ph.D.](#) and [Daisuke Akiba, Ph.D.](#)
- Finance Chair: [Florensia F. Surjadi, Ph.D.](#)
- Awards and Recognition Committee Chair: [Shruti Mukkamala, Ph.D.](#)
- Council of Division Representatives Chair: [Tania Chowdhury, Ph.D.](#)

Christine and I would like to continue to encourage folks to reach out to us if you have an interest in learning more about leadership within AAPA. As we move towards the final quarter of the year, we will be looking to fill the following positions starting in 2024:

- Membership Co-Chair (2 positions available)
- Finance Officer
- Board of Directors (2 positions available)
- APA Council Representative

As a final thought, it is important and necessary for me to bring attention to the Supreme Court's recent decision on affirmative action in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*. It is one of many in which I have felt profoundly disappointed, but also one that involves and impacts our AANHPI communities in several ways.

To start, I want to thank the [National Council of Asian Pacific Americans \(NCAPA\)](#) for always advocating for our communities and for seamlessly bringing AAPA into this work as a member organization. A special thanks to Asian Americans Advancing Justice ([AAJC](#)), who compiled and graciously shared much of the information related to this decision below.



On Affirmative Action:

Affirmative action is a necessary component to ensuring equal opportunity. This specific decision by the court, one which continues to dismantle the legacy and critical work of civil rights activists, makes it challenging for colleges and universities to treat race as a plus factor in admissions. It strips away guidelines that provide equitable access for students of color.

Regarding this specific case, it is important to make clear that there is no evidence of discrimination against Asian Americans at Harvard, or that Asian Americans had lower admissions because of affirmative action. Even though the Supreme Court's majority opinion discusses Asian Americans, it speculates and cites findings that were overturned. The lower courts found no evidence of discrimination.

With affirmative action, Asian Americans rose from 3% of the Harvard class of 1980 to 27.6% of the class of 2026.

Our histories and our lived experiences make clear that Asian Americans as a whole are denied equality. It is vital for us to raise awareness of the discrimination, harassment, and stereotyping that Asian American students are subject to, both in and outside of the classroom. These issues unfairly limit opportunities for Asian American students, and race-conscious admissions are a way to level the playing field for hardworking students.

The majority of Asian Americans support affirmative action. And we will not be used to deny Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian and other communities of color our rights and freedoms.

We will never stop pushing to advance racial justice for all of our communities. AAPA will continue to stand up to white supremacy and work to end the multi-generational harms of anti-Black racism in our country. We will continue to focus on expanding our multiracial solidarity in the movement for justice.

I am incredibly grateful to our AAPA community, our elders and past leaders in particular, who have and continue to fight tirelessly to combat such harms for us and all communities. Christine and I are committed to continuing this legacy and ensuring that AAPA remains an advocate for all. For those who are interested in learning more about how to address and advocate for affirmative action, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are always open to hearing your ideas and thoughts, as well as finding ways to facilitate action.

In solidarity,

Anjuli
president@aapaonline.org

SUMMER 2023



Lauren Yang, PsyD



Uyen Sophie Nguyen, MA



Lydia Lui, JD

The Asian American Psychologist

A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

We proudly present to you the Summer 2023 issue of our official newsletter, The Asian American Psychologist! To start off, it was invigorating and inspiring to read the powerful message from President **Dr. Anjuli Amin**. We are thrilled to share the exciting announcements and updates from our Divisions including Division on Practice, Division on Students, Division on Multiracial and Adopted Asian Americans, Division on South Asian Americans, and Division on International Students and Professionals. Additionally, our reporter **Dr. Sue H. Kim** covered a recent interview with **Dr. Nellie Tran** as part of the Division on Women's Digital HerStory Project, which highlighted Dr. Tran's process of discovering and using her voice. We are also pleased to continue spotlighting our membership, among which we feature **Wonyoung Cho** and **Alexandra (Sasha) Mieko Vasilou** in this issue. Moreover, **Jeffery S. Mio** proudly announced the publication of *Multicultural Psychology: Understanding Our Diverse Communities*, 6th edition.

In reflecting on this past season, we would be remiss if we didn't mention that May was recognized as both Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month and Mental Health Awareness Month. In honor of these, our copywriter **Nicole R. Benquechea** contributed a double feature on the unique challenges of the Native Hawaiian population and the wisdom of **Dr. Keoki Kīkaha Pai Baclayon** on Native Hawaiian cultural practices and principles from which we can learn. We also would like to highlight that guest contributors **Molly Sawdy** and **Angela Chang** shared their thoughtful perspectives on empowering Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) graduate students in clinical psychology, along with their personal experiences. Finally, we are honored to include a wonderful comic by **Dr. Theresa Tan** that poignantly reflects her experiences as an Asian American amidst a Predominantly White Institute in a Michigan suburb. Considering these contributions altogether, we warmly consider the theme of the Summer 2023 issue as **spirit** and **advocacy**.

With only one more issue left of our term as co-Editors-in-Chief, we remain immensely grateful to our hardworking and dedicated newsletter team. As we wind down with the year, we will soon be recruiting any new members from our AAPA community who may be interested, so please be on the lookout for our official application call to join the newsletter team. Last but not least, it has also been my distinct pleasure to have our copy editor turned summer intern **Lydia Lui**, who has been phenomenal at the helm with me in producing this newsletter issue while Sophie has been on leave. Please let us know if you have any questions, comments, or feedback at newsletter@aapaonline.org. Happy reading!

Summer 2023

THE ASIAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST

The Asian American Psychologist is the official newsletter of the Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA) and is published three times annually. The newsletter serves to share perspectives of members and inform the AAPA community of relevant news and events.

For submissions and questions, please email newsletter@aapaonline.org.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this issue are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the AAPA or the newsletter editorial leadership team.

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Benjamin Conner
Vera Karlotta Heffner



Finance Officers' Report



AAPA Co-Finance Officers (FOs) Cat Bitney and Amanda Breen are happy to report that AAPA's bank accounts are in good standing. Our total combined balance from E*Trade, Chase, and PayPal is \$508,888.81 as of June 6, 2023. Subtracting fiscal agent accounts and AAPA Division balances, AAPA's main account has \$366,580.74 in working capital.

The FOs are pleased to share the following updates with the AAPA membership:

A Big Welcome to Flora Surjadi. Flora has graciously agreed to serve as one of the co-FOs for the next 2 years. Cat, Michelle, and Amanda will be onboarding her this summer.

So much gratitude for Michelle Madore. Thank you for your diligent service to AAPA as one of the co-finance officers for the past 2 years, Michelle! We will miss you!

2023 Budget. The EC voted on and approved the 2023 budget in May.

E*Trade Account Closing. This process has been more difficult than we originally anticipated. While we haven't been able to close the account completely, we have transferred the majority of AAPA's funds to the Chase account and are no longer actively using E*Trade. Much gratitude for Cat for all of their work on this issue.

Reminder: Chase Bank Credit Card. Cat currently has a debit card and a credit card. If there are expenses that division representatives or others need paid with the credit card, please contact us at finance@aapaonline.org

Reminder: New Process for reimbursements and payments. We have set up a new process for reimbursements and payments in order to increase fiscal oversight and security. Going forward, only AAPA leadership will have access to the new reimbursement/payment link. If you are in a leadership position and have not yet gotten the new link, please contact us at finance@aapaonline.org.



Hello AAPA Members!

Updates from the Membership Team

We are excited to announce our new AAPA Membership Officers, Kamille La Rosa and Minnah Farook!

Currently, AAPA has a total membership count of **1,442** members. Student members continue to comprise the majority of our membership. See the table below for a breakdown of our membership by membership category.

As an AAPA member, you can edit your membership account by logging into your account on aapaonline.org. If you cannot remember your password, there is an option to reset it. By logging in online, you can join our wonderful AAPA divisions and update your email address for the listservs.

Your AAPA membership lasts for a year from the date you signed up, and will automatically be renewed after the year is complete. Please email us if you would like to opt out of having your membership automatically renewed.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding AAPA membership, please do not hesitate to contact our membership team at membership@aapaonline.org.

Thank you for your continued support of AAPA! We are thankful for this community.

Best wishes,

AAPA Membership Team
Kamille and Minnah

Membership Category	# of Members
Student	834
Professional	599
Retiree/Emeritus	9
Total	1442



Note: This report is re-published from the Spring 2023 issue

Join and Share the AAPA Provider Directory

By Susan Han and Judy Huang

AAPA PROVIDER DIRECTORY

Sponsored by the Asian American Psychological Association

Help us connect

AAPI with

culturally-aware

providers

Sign up today!



Provider
Directory



Please continue to amplify the AAPA Provider Directory to your networks (via social media and emails to your various listservs). In order to best promote comprehensive access to our AANHPI communities, we would like to encourage as many providers as possible to sign up. Thank you in advance!

Division on Students

Event Roundup

We are delighted to share the incredible achievements and remarkable events hosted by the AAPA DoS (Asian American Psychological Association Division on Students) that aimed to support and connect students in the field of psychology. We are thrilled to witness such genuine and empowering connections unfolding within our vibrant community.

Our 2023 grants and awards program received numerous submissions that exceeded expectations, and we will soon announce the outstanding winners. We take great pride in representing hardworking students and community members who have played a pivotal role in advancing our research on AAPI individuals. These resources will help students excel in their academic and professional journeys, as we continue our mission of providing support.

One of the cornerstones of our community is the continuing tradition of **Courageous Conversations**. This platform was tailored for our students to openly discuss the challenges we face as minoritized individuals in our unique and yet overlapping pursuits within the field. These thought-provoking discussions allowed participants to unravel the multifaceted layers of their identities as students and aspiring mental health professionals.

To further foster a sense of community, we introduced a casual monthly chat called **Sip & Soothe**, where individuals could connect beyond the boundaries of their professional roles. Our first event centered around fostering healthy relationships, our second event evoked a nostalgic sense of home and family, and our third event was centered on AAPI LGBTQIA+ pride!

We have also launched the **AAPA DoS Mentorship Program**, matching mentors with mentees based on their needs. Looking ahead, we plan to organize an **Early Career Advice Panel**, creating awards to recognize mentors who have served us, and collaborate with universities to expand our reach. Community forums, Slack, and social media platforms have been instrumental in connecting and engaging with one another. If you are interested in hearing more, please do not hesitate to reach out to our executive board members about membership and accessing these resources!

We extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of these events. Your active participation has made the AAPA DoS community flourish, and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve you.



Division on Students

Mentorship Office Hours Program

Dear AAPA Family,

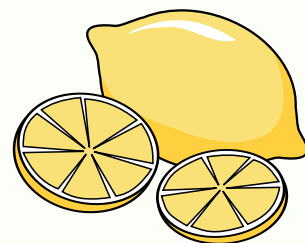
The Division on Students (DoS) was thrilled to have had the chance to provide the Mentorship Office Hours Program again this year. We had **25** incredible mentors ranging from graduate-level to late-career stage, representing nine different subfields of psychology and based in five different time zones. The aim of this initiative was to provide additional support and a sense of community to our AAPA members during these unprecedented times, which included the global COVID-19 pandemic, political uncertainties, racial reckoning, and increasingly visible anti-Asian hate crimes. In sum, we sought to strengthen our community across the country by creating a platform where members could establish meaningful connections. The insightful contributions of our dedicated mentors in terms of their selfless commitment, invaluable wisdom, and unwavering support have been instrumental in making this program a reality!

We would like to express our utmost gratitude and appreciation to our esteemed mentors of the 2023 DoS Mentorship Office Hours Program.

Anjuli Amin	Diana Hu	Grace Kim	Kavita Pallod Sekhsaria	Richelle Concepcion
Annabelle Atkin	Elisha-Rio Apilado	Jennifer Hsia	Krista Chronister	Richard Chang
Ben Gulick	Eui Kyung Kim	Jocelyn Buhain	Lauren Yang	Soeun Park
Brandon Yoo	Geetanjali Deole	Julie Kittleman	Michelle Madore	Sukanya Ray
Brian TaeHyuk Keum	Gitika Talwar	Karen Suyemoto	Nellie Tran	Yun Garrison

Warmly,

The DoS Mentorship Team
Molly Sawdy, Diana Ho, Amal Soomro





DMAA UPCOMING EVENT

Division on Multiracial and Adopted Asian Americans is hosting a meet-up at the Dacha Beer Garden (Shaw) in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, August 2nd from 4pm-6pm. Stop by to enjoy company and appetizers before the annual APA convention! Kids and dogs are welcome to join!

Address: 1600 7th St. NW,
Washington, D.C. 20001

Feel free to send questions to
dmaa.communication@aapaonline.org

We hope to see you there!



DoSAA Advanced Clinical Consultation Group

Saturday, July 8th, 10:00am - 11:30am (Pacific Time)

Saturday, September 9th, 10:00am - 11:30am (Pacific Time)

Saturday, November 11th, 10:00am - 11:30am (Pacific Time)

****via Zoom****

Led by **Dr. Nida Mirza** & **Sonia Bajwa, LCSW**

Occurs every other month on the second Saturday of the month

This free and reoccurring virtual group will focus on:

- Consultation for clinicians of South Asian descent who work with clients of South Asian descent
- Consultation related to professional issues
- Stories and themes related to South Asian and South Asian American culture, immigration, and experiences


Who can participate?

- Licensed clinicians of South Asian descent
- Postgraduate licensed interns of South Asian descent
- Students and unlicensed interns are not eligible to join

Attendance at every meeting is not required, but you must register to attend.

It is recommended that you are a DoSAA member as our dues allow events like these to be offered for free.

[RSVP HERE](#)



Division on International Students & Professionals

Membership Updates:

The Division on International Students and Professionals (DoISAP) is pleased to announce that membership was officially opened to fellow AAPA members on March 8, 2023. As of May 31, 2023, a total of 35 individuals have become members of DoISAP. Among them, 23 members were students, reflecting the majority, while the remaining members consisted of professionals within the field. We are delighted to see such positive engagement and diverse representation within our division. As we enter the new year, we eagerly look forward to welcoming new members and fostering an even more vibrant and inclusive community within DoISAP.

We are excited to also announce our intention for this coming year-to organize multiple events specifically designed to address the unique yet shared needs of international students and professionals within our division. These events will serve as valuable opportunities for networking, professional development, and fostering a sense of community. Additionally, we are in the process of gathering socio-demographic data for our membership through a newly developed membership needs survey.

Your division membership will be automatically renewed every year. After you have signed up to be a division member, you will be receiving our division updates and announcements periodically. If you have any questions, please contact Rajika Mehra at doisap.membership@aapaonline.org.

DoISAP is happy to share that we have been involved in the following projects:

1. Annual Membership Survey (open to DoISAP members only)
2. Psychology Practicum and Internship Site Directory for International Students and Professionals ([Click here for survey open to public](#)).
3. Virtual panel discussion on the experiences of Asian International Students and Professionals in Psychology
4. APA-initiated writing group for clinical and counseling psychology Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code petition for STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT) Extension

Panel Discussion Update

On May 22, 2023, at 1600 Pacific Time, DoISAP hosted our first virtual event - *Experiences of Asian International Students and Professionals in Psychology* - in collaboration with the Asian American and Pacific Islander subcommittee of the Multicultural Affairs Committee of the National Association of School Psychologists. The intention of the panel was to create a shared virtual space to facilitate connection-making and visibilize the experiences of Asian international students and professionals in psychology.

In addition to the moderators and panelists, approximately 12 attendees joined us for the panel. Guided by questions posed by registrants and attendees, we engaged in conversations pertaining to the panelists' experiences of navigating their Ph.D. program applications, practicums and internships, immigration status, academic careers, and linguistic racism. Panelists also generously shared specific strategies that helped them in their journeys, validated our shared experiences of adversities, and reminded us of our strengths and resilience. Within the span of an hour, many important topics were thoughtfully discussed and issues were critically raised. However, there were many more questions and concerns that remained. DoISAP hopes to host more virtual events, both independently and collaboratively, to gradually address these questions and concerns.

DoISAP would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the organizing team and panelists for their labor and care in cultivating this panel, as well as fellow attendees and community members for engaging with the panel.

Organizing Team:

Lamia Bagasrawala, Fei Bi Chan, Sunny Ho, Sneha Prashant Pimpalkhute, and Sruthi Swami

Panelists:

Elaine Hua Luo, Sam Lim, Dr. Tara Kulkarni, and Dr. Yun Garrison

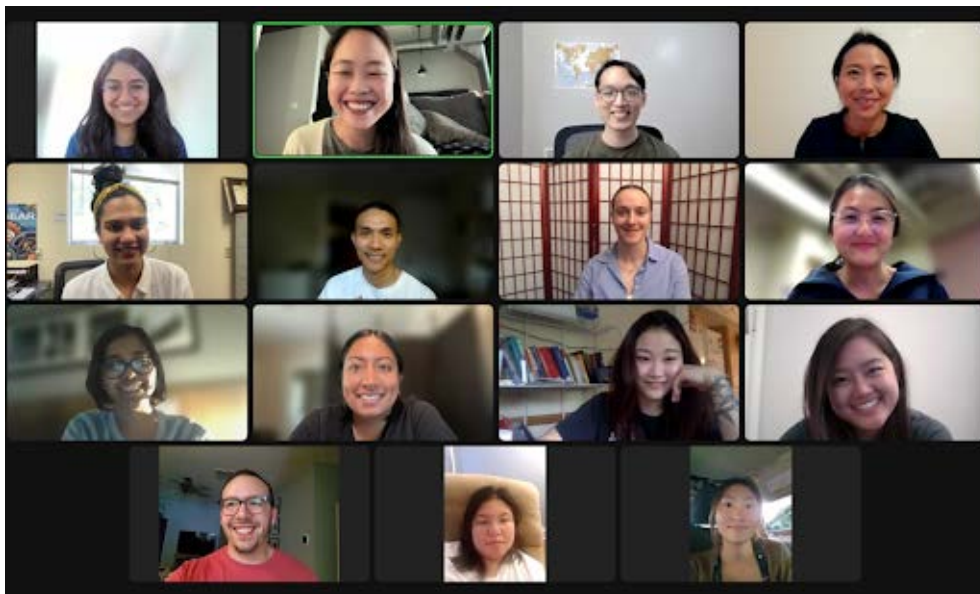


Image description (bottom). A screenshot of the (smiling) panelists, moderators, and attendees taken at the end of the panel discussion *Experiences of Asian International Students and Professionals in Psychology*. Panelist Elaine Hua Luo was not captured in the screenshot due to technical difficulties.

DoISAP Panel Discussion Flyers

PANEL DISCUSSION

EXPERIENCES OF ASIAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS IN PSYCHOLOGY

with Elaine Hua Luo, Sam Lim, Dr. Tara Kulkarni, & Dr. Yun Garrison

MAY 22, 2023 (Monday)

4-5pm PT | 6-7pm CT | 7-8PM ET

RSVP [here](#) for Zoom Link

a collaboration project
 Division on International Students and Professionals
 (Asian American Psychological Association)
 Asian American and Pacific Islander subcommittee of the Multicultural Affairs Committee
 (National Association of School Psychologists)

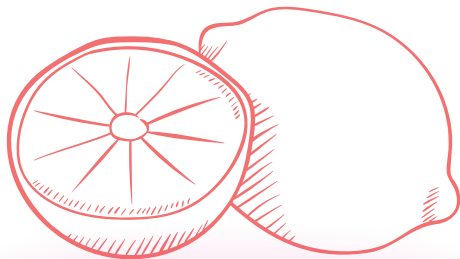
Elaine Hua Luo 罗画, MEd

I am currently a PhD candidate in the School Psychology program at UC Berkeley. Prior to studying at Berkeley, I received my Master in Education degree in Human Development and Psychology from Harvard Graduate School of Education and my Bachelor of Arts in Education Sciences degree from UC Irvine. I grew up in the southern part of China and have several places that I consider my hometowns. After moving to the United States for my undergraduate studies, I continued to move between the East and West coasts seeking diverse cultural and educational experiences. My primary research interests focus on adolescents' identity development and mental health well-being under the influence of their socio-ecological system entities.



Sam Lim 林宗宪, MA

I am a rising 4th year health psychology track PhD student in the Clinical Psychology program at Bowling Green State University. I was born and raised in Southern Malaysia and moved to the US to finish my undergraduate degree in Psychology at University of Minnesota. Navigating undergraduate and graduate school as an ESL first generation college student has been a mixed bag of challenges and rewards. My identity and appearance were at the center of some of those challenges and I couldn't have overcome them without the unwavering support of amazing friends and mentors. To me, being an international student means constantly empowering and reminding myself and others that our lived experiences are strengths and not burdens. My research interests revolve around psychophysiology of stress, psychological flexibility, and health.



Tara Kulkarni, PhD, NCSP

I am an educational and school psychologist by training. I grew up in India and moved to the United States for my doctoral studies. Primarily, I study health disparities/inequities in education using critical quantitative frameworks. Specific interests are special education disproportionality, emergent bilingual assessment, and implementing multi-tiered systems of support. I find teaching measurement and best practices in school psychology the most rewarding parts of my job. I also have several years of independent mental health service provision to children and adolescents in schools and outpatient settings across India and the United States. Other training includes masters degrees in counseling and clinical psychology that I completed in India and the UK respectively.

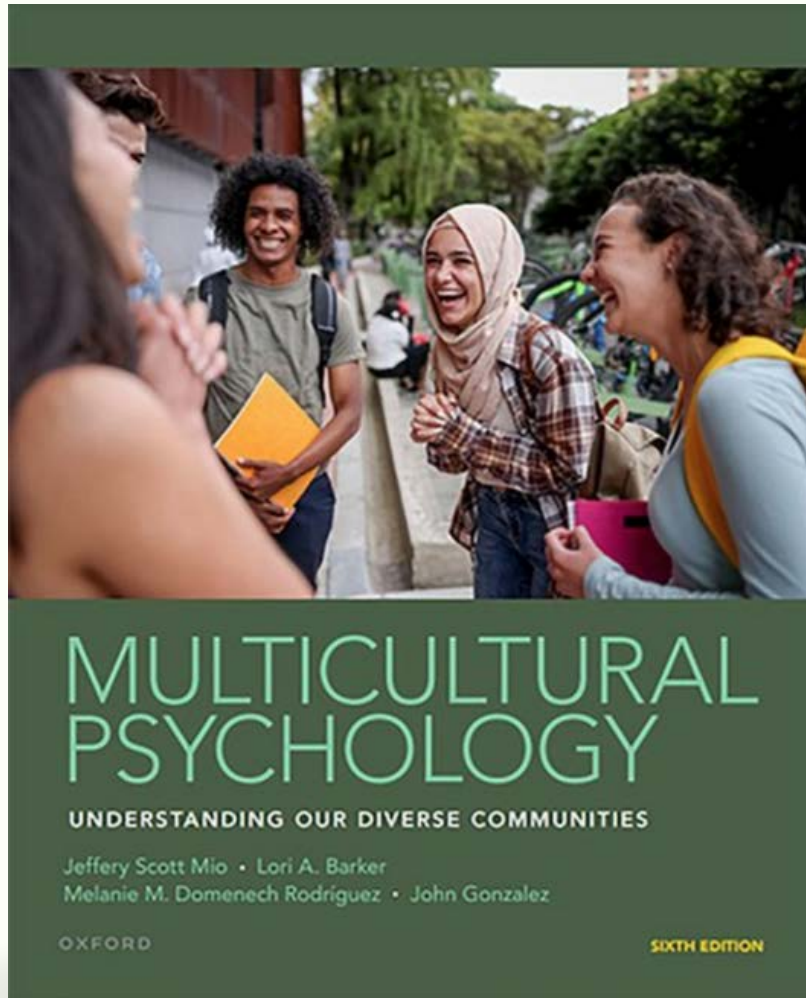
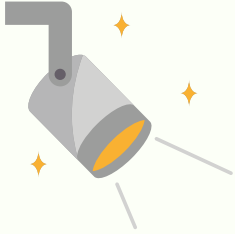


Yun Garrison, PhD

Being a professor is my third career after working in the energy industry and higher education sector in South Korea. I received Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Iowa and Master's degree in Educational Measurement and Statistics from the same institution. My identity as an Asian international student played a large role in my experience in graduate school, including taking a required TA English language performance test, encountering daily racial microaggressions, and developing friendship and allyship. I am a licensed psychologist in Maine, and I love what I do. In my everyday life, I have the privilege of serving multiple roles as a researcher, professor, psychotherapist, consultant, community participant, and choir member. As a professor, my primary work is situated in academia at Bates College, yet I challenge myself to work with people in communities. Therefore, I pursue community-engaged scholarships, pedagogy, and practice primarily working with people of color in Maine, including African refugees. Working with local communities has informed my research topics, such as multilingualism, immigration, gender identity, racial identity, social class worldviews, and racism, and the myth of meritocracy.



Announcing the 6th Edition of *Multicultural Psychology*



I am pleased to announce the 6th edition of *Multicultural Psychology: Understanding Our Diverse Communities*, published by Oxford University Press. This book has been used by many AAPA members for their undergraduate courses, and I have donated copies of it for the AAPA book sale over the years. A major feature of this book is highlighting student reactions and narratives to support research and concepts of multicultural psychology.

Jeffery S. Mio

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Wonyoung Cho

SHE/HER/HERS



What is your cultural background and identities?

Korean/American.

How did you come to find and become involved with AAPA?

Dr. Nellie Tran

Please share a fond or meaningful memory of your experience in AAPA.


It took a lot of patience and effort to break into the community, despite Dr. Nellie's efforts to connect me to the organization. I volunteered and joined leadership, which helped with the building of community within AAPA. I straddle the professional world as both a practitioner and an academic, and I am noticing a "disparity" of sorts in terms of AAPA spaces for practitioners in the related and applied fields of Psychology. I am still working to build a more friendly and inclusive space for practitioners in hopes that AAPA will recognize how integral and important practitioners are to our work as well as academics and educators.

What advice do you have for someone new in the field?

Do not do this work alone -- whether it be academic, applied practice, or activism in highly visible platforms. None of this is meant to be done alone.

How have you changed from the beginning of your career to now?

Many things have changed in such a short period of time, largely due to the pandemic and the escalating crises in all layers of our societies - - and I think of myself still at the beginning of my career in terms of being an academic and faculty member. Even in this iteration of my career, I am active and intentional in trying to stay connected to my roots as a practitioner and a 1.5 generation bilingual Korean-American. I am working hard to stay connected to the practical needs of our communities and our colleagues who are working tirelessly in the front lines as mental health professionals.



How can members best take advantage of their AAPA membership?

Do your best to jump into the action – that is the best way to get connected and meet folk who can push and pull you in the work.

What do you cherish from your culture?

I cherish the depth of history and the many iterations of how "culture" manifests. In that way, it is not just the Korean culture but the American culture, the Korean-American culture and the Asian-American culture as well. I think it's important to see culture as always moving and evolving. I don't think it's a static thing.

"Do not do this work alone -- whether it be academic, applied practice, or activism in highly visible platforms. None of this is meant to be done alone."

Which Divisions are you a member of?

Division on Practice.

Social Media Handles

@wonyoung.lmft, @wylcho



Alexandra (Sasha) Mieko Vasilou

SHE/HER/HERS —————

What is your cultural background and identities?

Mixed-race, Japanese, Greek, and Irish; 4th generation US immigrants on all sides

How did you come to find and become involved with AAPA?

I was looking for an organization that could support my understanding of myself as a therapist raised by an Asian American mother with values that may differ from expectations. I was struck by many of the events organized by the AAPA, and the deep ways our understanding of identity is encouraged by open discussions

Please share a fond or meaningful memory of your experience in AAPA.

I was very lucky to have the honor of giving my first professional presentation ever at the AAPA 2022 Convention. I felt a unique sense of being able to communicate/perform/ behave as my true self in the welcoming environment of the Convention.

I was able to connect with folks deeply and look forward to the next convention. I am very grateful to all the audience members who generously engaged with my presentation and activities. It was an honor to share my work and connect with thoughtful AAPA members.

What advice do you have for someone new in the field?

As a newbie myself, the only advice I have is to connect with anyone who makes you feel supported, encouraged, and inspired. What I've been able to achieve thus far is only because of the supportive figures I've been lucky to meet. I am grateful for their openness to my uncertainty and thoughtful attention to elements of my potential that often feel invisible to me.



How have you changed from the beginning of your career to now?

I am still very much in the beginning of my career, but I feel that I develop a richer perspective every week, with the week of the AAPA convention certainly being a significantly transformational one. I look forward to continuing to find my footing in this work and understanding how I may fit in this field as a mixed-race individual.

How can members best take advantage of their AAPA membership?

Members can join one or more divisions and attend meetings and the convention. They can also connect with others to build genuine community.

What do you cherish from your culture?

I cherish the various forms of resilience and collective support inherited through each of my ethnicities. I also cherish the unique type of self-reflection that comes out of experiences of being a multiracial/mixed-race individual growing up in America. Having mostly been raised amongst my Japanese American family, I am grateful for the fortitude we've developed out of the oppressive and unjust incarceration during WWII. I cherish the hybrid cultural creations that have come from that experience: my grandmother's chili with rice, spam musubi, and a never-ending love of enka. As part of my process towards developing a rich wellness system for myself so that I may be an effective and consistent therapist, I've also been grateful for the rituals and meditative practices built into Japanese culture that I've been learning. Bridging the gap between a culture created for my body in my family's homeland while maintaining the hybridized means of self-care

developed in the US is all a part of my larger journey towards self-discovery.

What are some of your hopes for the future?

I hope to continue to find my place in this field. I am excited to continue to feel inspired and develop nourishing relationships with others.

"It is in some ways a bittersweet artifact, but I welcome both sides of its representation of my inclusion in this community for which I am grateful."

Which Divisions are you a member of?

Division on Students, Division on Multiracial and Adopted Asian Americans

Social Media Handles

[linkedin.com/in/sasha-vasilou-669467145](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sasha-vasilou-669467145)

What is your affiliation (e.g. program name, workplace)?

Northwestern University, Catalyst Clinical Group



Anything else you would like to add about your AAPA experience?

It has been very validating. Recently, I received my first professional journal when I got the AAPA Journal September Issue in the mail. Reading the contents, which included several publications about the oppressive impacts of racism and stigma as experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and seeing the experiences documented and legitimized in this format, helped me feel part of a community that can be seen and whose fight for justice cannot be denied. It is in some ways a bittersweet artifact, but I welcome both sides of its representation of my inclusion in this community for which I am grateful.

Anything else you would like to add about your personal, professional self, and experiences?

I recently completed the yearlong Minority Fellowship Program administered by The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), and I am always excited to connect with any folks who might find commonality in my experience either as a mixed-race person, a Japanese American, an Asian American, a student, an excited newbie, a city rat, or any other identity we may share!



DIVISION ON WOMEN'S DIGITAL HERSTORY PROJECT



Interview with Dr. Nellie Tran

SHE/HER/HERS

BY SUE H. KIM, PHD

It's fascinating to me how we Asian Americans found our way into the profession of psychology since it is not necessarily something our parents pushed us into. Dr. Nellie Tran's journey began while she was at community college and working a hotel job that required her to inform people that the place was overbooked. She was intrigued by how some people were "angry and treated me as subhuman" while others "went with the flow." Fortunately, she was taking a psychology class where she could consider the questions of how we become who we are.

After transferring to UCLA, Dr. Tran wanted to pursue Women's Studies - thinking "it would be easy because I'm a woman!" At that time, she was still "self-hating and socialized [into] anti-Asian sentiments" that blocked her from taking Asian American Studies classes. During her studies, she was "shocked" to discover "people [had] lied to me my whole life!"

Learning how she had been "miseducated" started to fuel a fire inside her.

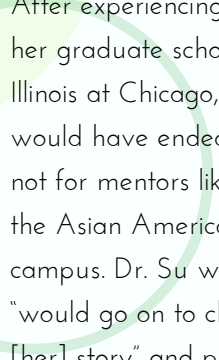
While at UCLA, Dr. Tran discovered that she "had a voice and started playing with it." Her father, who built the boat that allowed her parents to leave Vietnam, taught her to be "radical...[and] that systems were made to be manipulated and played." But then, when she wanted to protest the Iraq War, he discouraged her, warning: "don't call me if you get arrested!"

Instead, when she "laid on the streets of Wilshire Avenue at rush hour," protesting the war, she carried the phone number of her supportive boss tucked in her pocket. And now, she tells her own students to put her number in their cell phones - so if they get arrested, she can "come take care of it." She knows this support is empowering the next generation of activists.



Dr. Nellie Tran, on the left in black dress pants and a top sits opposite Dr. Michi Fu in a black dress, who is reading an interview question off her cell phone



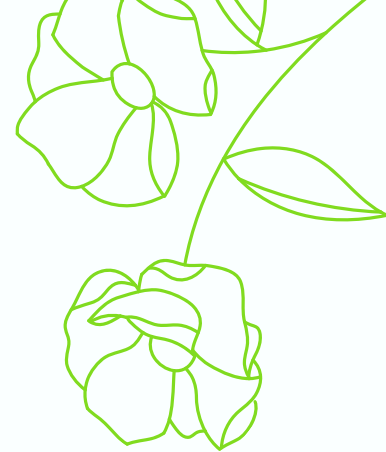


After experiencing some “awful things” during her graduate school years at the University of Illinois at Chicago, she almost quit. “My career would have ended there,” she shared, were it not for mentors like Dr. Karen Su, the Director of the Asian American Resource Center on campus. Dr. Su was able to see that Dr. Tran “would go on to change the field” so Dr. Su “held [her] story” and protected her with savvy advice on navigating microaggressions and racism.

Not all mentors were helpful. Some people, sensing she “could do great things...wanted to own me and my story,” rather than helping her grow. Dr. Tran was hurt by those “toxic mentoring relationships” and having to walk away from them. She learned that the best mentors were those who were “interested in me as a whole person” and helped her meet her goals, not theirs.

Now as a Full Professor at San Diego State, Dr. Tran teaches masters level students, having intentionally chosen not to do service delivery and wanting instead to do bigger systems-level change. “I’m delusional enough to think I can do it!”

“She learned that the best mentors were those who were “interested in me as a whole person” and helped her meet her goals, not theirs..”



Although most of her leadership experience has been at AAPA, she was “a hard fast no” when first approached to run as VP with Dr. Richelle Concepcion as President. “I don’t like being the face of something...I’m the kind of leader nudging people from behind...I like to complain, not to be nice.” Initially, those skills came in handy as Dr. Tran said that Dr. Concepcion “knew when people needed to be shamed, and I could do that...[so] she sent me in.”

Dr. Tran was happy to discover that she, Dr. Concepcion, and Dr. Helen Hsu “worked flawlessly together” as a leadership team. For example, Dr. Hsu stepped up for Dr. Tran when she was out having a baby, and Dr. Concepcion was a calm, steady force for AAPA as the COVID pandemic hit and anti-Asian hate escalated. Then one year into the pandemic, Dr. Concepcion had a health emergency and had to step back. Despite not wanting to be “the face” of the organization, suddenly, that’s exactly what Dr. Tran was. She knew that AAPA needed her to be a President who could be out in front, utilizing her visibility to focus attention on our issues and speaking up about the needs of our communities.



"This is about the only way it would have happened [for me to be President] - no convincing would have worked...but if you needed me to show up, I would."

What does Dr. Tran wish someone had told her years ago? Instead of being told what skills she needed to be successful, she would have preferred being told "however I come will be fine." When she tried to write like other people, it didn't sound right. She didn't fight the same way other people did either, but "that's what helped me stand out...[being] a little bit different." And the people who tried to change her "were doing me a disservice."

Finally, Dr. Tran, who was labeled with selective mutism as a child and struggled to project her voice, now embraces her anger and speaks her mind. "People are really uncomfortable with it," but the women in her family are "fierce, vocal, [and] angry" which has been key to their survival. She sees the power of "being mean to the dominant white men in the room who don't love people of color." And she has learned that "to fiercely love your community, you HAVE to be mean" sometimes.

It's scary to me that the field of psychology could have missed out on Dr. Nellie Tran. Simply by chance, she discovered classes in psychology and women's studies, which started her on the path to a successful career in community psychology. By her own admission, Dr. Tran is fierce and mean - and that's what makes her so effective, amazing, and incredible. She has come a long way from those tearful and confusing moments being verbally abused by entitled hotel guests.



(HYPER/IN)VISIBILITY

HOW DO WE EMPOWER ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER DESI AMERICAN (APIDA) GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE FIELD OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY?

By Molly Sawdy & Angela Chang

According to the 2017 Graduate Study in Psychology Summary Report (Cope et al., 2016, p. 6), only 7.9% of the total psychology graduate student body identify as Asian/Pacific Islander. This statistic points to the lack of representation of Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) graduate students in the psychology field. Moreover, there is a certain level of irony this statistic reflects in using "Asian/Pacific Islander" because the term aggregates the many racial and ethnic identities of individuals of Asian descent, thus making certain identities invisible. This rings true for the graduate program that we attend and reflects the phenomenon of (in)visibility, which refers to the degree that someone is fully regarded and recognized by others (Brighenti, 2007; Simpson & Lewis, 2005). Related to the phenomenon of (in)visibility is the experience of hypervisibility, or the scrutiny based on perceived difference that is typically viewed as deviance (Ryland, 2013, p. 2222). In sharing our personal experiences around (hyper/in)visibility specifically as Asian American women in the clinical psychology field, we hope that others who are facing similar experiences know they are not alone.

As clinical psychology doctoral graduate students, we are required to navigate a number of settings that include the classroom as both student and teacher, research laboratory teams, and psychology practicum training sites amongst other professional and personal settings.

A stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995)

that shapes how we navigate these settings is related to stereotypical expectations about Asian American women: They are quiet and submissive, not seen as leaders, and perceived as invisible.

"Growing up, I was comfortable with the idea of keeping my head down and "doing my own thing," something that my parents had taught me as their method of getting through things when they first immigrated here. It wasn't until graduate school began that I realized I had to actually speak and engage in class - as such, I went from feeling invisible (keeping my head down, not speaking up or going to office hours, etc.) to feeling hypervisible (actively trying to engage in discussions, "fit in" to conversations, and wondering if I was saying the "right" thing or not in class). The feeling of invisibility slowly became hypervisibility, as I could see that I was the only Asian American woman in the class, and beyond that, I was a quiet kid trying to become the opposite of that."

Part of the complexity of (hyper/in)visibility that we experience as Asian American women in the clinical psychology field is the tendency to have low visibility until a challenge or tension relating to our racial identity occurs in our training environment that shines the spotlight of hypervisibility on our following actions.



"Upon taking a moment to reflect on how (hyper/in)visibility has shown up in my training environments, a couple reflections come up. I believe it is due to being consistently mistaken for a client or nursing staff, as opposed to being assumed that I was a practicum trainee like my White counterparts, that I began to wear similar sets of outfits in hopes of decreasing such misidentifications. I am unsure of the extent to which I was conscious of that decision at the time. However, I realize now that that was an action I decided to take to combat being treated as invisible due to the lack of racial representation within clinical psychology trainee cohorts. In thinking about grappling with the stereotype threat of not being seen as a leader, I have noticed that I have felt like I needed to excel in order to be even considered for a leadership position."



THE FEELING OF INVISIBILITY SLOWLY BECAME HYPERVISIBILITY

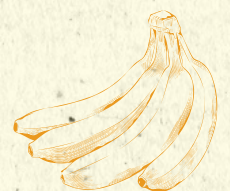


With the best leaders not necessarily being the most skilled players, the most vocal students, or the lab members that take up the most space, it can be tough to balance demonstrating society-approved leadership qualities and a more personal style of leadership if the system is set up to support the former to be considered a leader and not the latter. A challenging aspect to experiencing (hyper/in)visibility as Asian American women is not only the extreme swing of the pendulum of going from invisible to hypervisible, but also the suddenness in which the swing occurs.

Despite feelings of invisibility and hypervisibility, our strengths are our ability to represent our community, be assertive and engaging when needed, and continue to challenge ourselves to step out of our comfort zone even in times of challenges. This is an utmost skill that really drives action. The first step to dismantle the stereotype threats that we face as Asian American women in the clinical psychology field is to recognize how they show up for us in our training environments. The next step is to identify and lean on community members who will help cultivate empowerment within the training environment. Different definitions of empowerment exist, although the one that has stuck with me the most refers to empowerment as "the development of a voice to represent oneself and one's interests and the participation in practices that challenge any form of oppression" (Hernandez, 2008). Engaging in empowerment for oneself does not diminish the extent to which others may empower themselves; instead, everyone benefits from this collective empowerment.



The invisibility of APIDA-identifying psychology graduate students sets the stage for experiencing hypervisibility. This lack of representation makes it inevitable that we will constantly feel like we are in the spotlight while navigating the dichotomy of (hyper/in)visibility. Part of paving the way for more APIDA-identifying students to enter the field of clinical psychology is to continue sharing our stories so that incoming graduate students can be empowered in this field.



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING WITHIN THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN POPULATION

THE POWER THAT COMES FROM UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECTING CULTURAL HISTORY AND INDIGENOUS PRACTICES

by *Nicole R. Benquechea, MA & Sue H. Kim, PhD*

The last several years have been challenging for us all. We felt proud and joyful during the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month in May, celebrating many accomplishments and diverse cultures. In June 1977, U.S. Representatives Frank Horton (New York) and Norman Mineta (California) proposed a resolution that would declare the first 10 days of May as Asian-Pacific Heritage Week. President Jimmy Carter signed into law the resolution establishing the annual celebration the following year, and the inaugural event took place in May 1979. The celebration gradually expanded to include the entire month and a more expansive definition. In 2021, President Joe Biden was the first president to use AANHPI instead of AAPI when making his monthly proclamation. Therefore, we are highlighting the mental health and well-being of the Native Hawaiian community.

According to the U.S. Census, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders (NHPI) are descendants of the original inhabitants of Hawai'i, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. Native Hawaiians specifically are defined as having any amount of ancestral Hawaiian blood and whose indigenous Hawaiian ancestry predates initial Western contact in 1778. Dr. Shawn Malia Kana'iaupuni has been publishing research since the early 1990s, advocating for a strengths-based approach when examining the educational, psychosocial, health, and socioeconomic concerns within the Native Hawaiian population. She advocates using a Native Hawaiian worldview to design interventions such as the Hawaiian Indigenous Education Rubric (HIER) developed with Native Hawaiian culture at the forefront to improve teaching strategies.

*Photo: Native Hawaiian Māhū Activist
Hinaleimoana Kōwai Kong Wong-Kalu.
Photographed by JOSIAH PATTERSON*



Few studies are available on the mental, emotional, and overall health and well-being of the Native Hawaiian population since most available research instead focuses on their multiple challenges, describing less-than-optimal conditions for many of the indigenous people of Hawai'i. Census data show that most Native Hawaiians (55%) live in Hawai'i. Compared to other major ethnic groups within Hawai'i, Native Hawaiians reported the highest rates of mental illness, according to a 2006 study by Carlton and colleagues. In comparing a community-based sample of Native Hawaiian adolescents against previously published epidemiological studies, Andrade and colleagues in 2006 found Native Hawaiian youths in general, and Native Hawaiian females in particular, to be at higher risk for any mental health diagnosis when compared with non-Native Hawaiian adolescents. Despite psychologists' increasing interest in ethnic identity and mental health over several decades, Native Hawaiians remain understudied.

Honoring and preserving Native Hawaiian history and culture are critical to celebrating resilience in the face of colonial oppression and ongoing discrimination. To learn more about mental health representation for the Native Hawaiian community, people will need to become educated about some remarkable leaders in the community and their lived experiences. In recent news, former Office of Hawaiian Affairs Chair and longtime trustee Colette Machado passed away in May 2022. Her unyielding support and advocacy for the advancement of Native Hawaiians are evident in her work with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, State Land Use Commission, Moloka'i Burial Council, and Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, to name a few organizations she was a part of within the community. She was an active member of state boards and commissions and is remembered as a great leader for the Native Hawaiian community demonstrating resilience and strength. Another excellent role model for the Native Hawaiian community is Hinaleimoana Kwai Kong Wong-Kalu, known affectionately as "Kumu Hina," a Native Hawaiian *māhū* - a traditional third gender person who occupies "a place in the middle" between male and female, as well as a modern transgender woman. She is known for her work as a kumu hula, a filmmaker, and as a community leader in Kanaka Maoli language and cultural preservation. She teaches Native Hawaiian philosophy and traditions while promoting cross-cultural alliances throughout the Pacific Islands. These qualities make a great leader and inspiration; therefore, they will be necessary for students to instill while they continue to learn to become well-rounded researchers and mental health advocates for underserved communities.



Picture of Former OHA Trustee Colette Machado. Photo courtesy of OHA.

These role models are the legacy for future generations. Because of its multitude of cultures, Hawai'i has regularly churned out leaders and advocates that are distinctly its own. Individuals interested in becoming more inclusive in their research and social advocacy can follow the news and become updated on more topics like this in the Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA). This is a significant step forward for future scholars and psychologists to learn and boost their understanding of Native Hawaiians and the people of Hawai'i.

Resources	Descriptions
<u>Kamakako'i</u>	A cutting-edge tool that leverages technology to engage, inform, activate, and rally the Hawaiian community.
<u>Ka Wai Ola</u>	Ka Wai Ola is a monthly newspaper with rich content geared toward captivating the Hawaiian community.
<u>Papa Ola Lokahi</u>	News about Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems.
<u>Scholarships</u>	Funding for higher education.



FOUNDATIONAL APPROACHES TO HEALTH: NATIVE HAWAIIAN STUDIES & KNOWLEDGE

By Nicole R. Benquechea, MA
(she/her)

A journey always starts with a good intention.

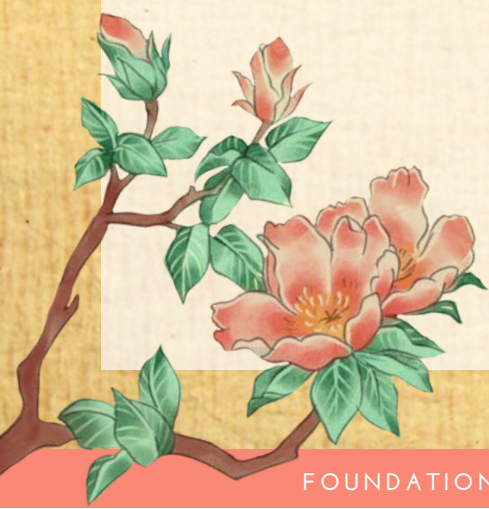
- Dr. Keoki Kīkaha Pai Baclayon


Meet Dr. Keoki Kīkaha Pai Baclayon (he/him), a proud Kāuāi native who shares the insightful teachings of lā'au lapa'au (Hawaiian Medicine) at the Kamakākūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies in the Waimānalo Health Center at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Dr. Baclayon's journey to becoming an AKUMU, the Native Hawaiian term for an instructor, was fueled by diverse life experiences, including serving in the Marine Corps in the U.S. military and playing a role in the operation of Iraqi Freedom. His unwavering passion for exploring the foundational principles of traditional Native Hawaiian beliefs and healing paradigms is genuinely inspiring. Through his teachings, he advocates for preserving and innovating Native Hawaiian medicinal practices, honoring the rich cultural heritage of his roots.

Traditional Laws of Olakino (Health)

- 'ai pono (proper consumption of all things, e.g., mentally, physically, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually)
- moe pono (sound quality sleep)
- ho'oiikaika kino (exercise and movement)
- ho'oma'ema'e (ceremonial cleanses for the individual internally and externally)
- no'ono'o pono (proper meditation)
- mana'ona'o pono (pondering)
- pule (prayer)
- pilina (evaluations of relationships)
- kumumole i ke ola (knowing one's purpose in life)

"I grew up on the island of Kowai and returned to Ko Yi; I was from the mainland to visit my family in 2006, and I came across an uncle with whom I had grown up. His name is Luban High, and one O High was the instructor at the time of traditional medicine at Horn Studies. And that was the pit of a pivotal meeting that led me back to going to college and mentoring under him. I was his apprentice, and eventually, after his passing, I took over all his traditional medicine courses at the U-H University of Hawaii Systems in Hawaii. So going from warrior to healer was quite the journey, and you can imagine, psychologically, mentally, and emotionally, and it was part of transforming from a warrior to becoming a healer." - Dr. Baclayon





The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted everyone's ability to adapt and cope in a post-pandemic world. Dr. Baclayon highlights the lasting effects on families, emphasizing the importance of mental health and encouraging those in need to prioritize their overall wellness. Individuals with existing illnesses, such as diabetes or cancer, may find it challenging to manage their health in light of the pandemic. Fortunately, medicinal plants can be a natural remedy to combat various illnesses, having parts that work together to fight off sickness.

"In traditional medicine, it's 80 to 90% mental, emotional, and spiritual effort, and the remainder is the actual plants in traditional oral medicine here in Hawaii. Mental health is a priority if I label these things. Without your mind and knowing your life purpose, it's challenging to get through such a problematic situation... Also, healers are in every family. And so, if something were going on mentally, behaviorally, and spiritually, we would have these gatherings together, which would be with whoever is concerned and talking out. The healer in the home would be able to identify and help people to work with that individual and/or their families." - Dr. Baclayon

Dr. Baclayon also emphasizes the significance of protecting and restoring the native ecosystem as a method of healing Native Hawaiians' historical loss of land and culture. Such healing is seen as an essential step toward helping individuals and their families. Currently, a protest is taking place on Hawaii's Big Island, where Native Hawaiians are demonstrating against constructing a \$1.4 billion observatory to be known as the "Thirty Meter Telescope" on Mauna Kea. This mountain holds sacred value to Native Hawaiians and is considered blessed for multiple reasons because it is believed to be the home of Wākea, the sky god, and Papahānaumoku, the earth goddess. The protesters, who refer to themselves as kia'i or "protectors," argue that the telescope's construction will further desecrate Mauna Kea, which already has about a dozen telescopes.

"If you're a [Native] Hawaiian, you're seen as a protester, anti-government, or anti-military."

- Dr. Baclayon

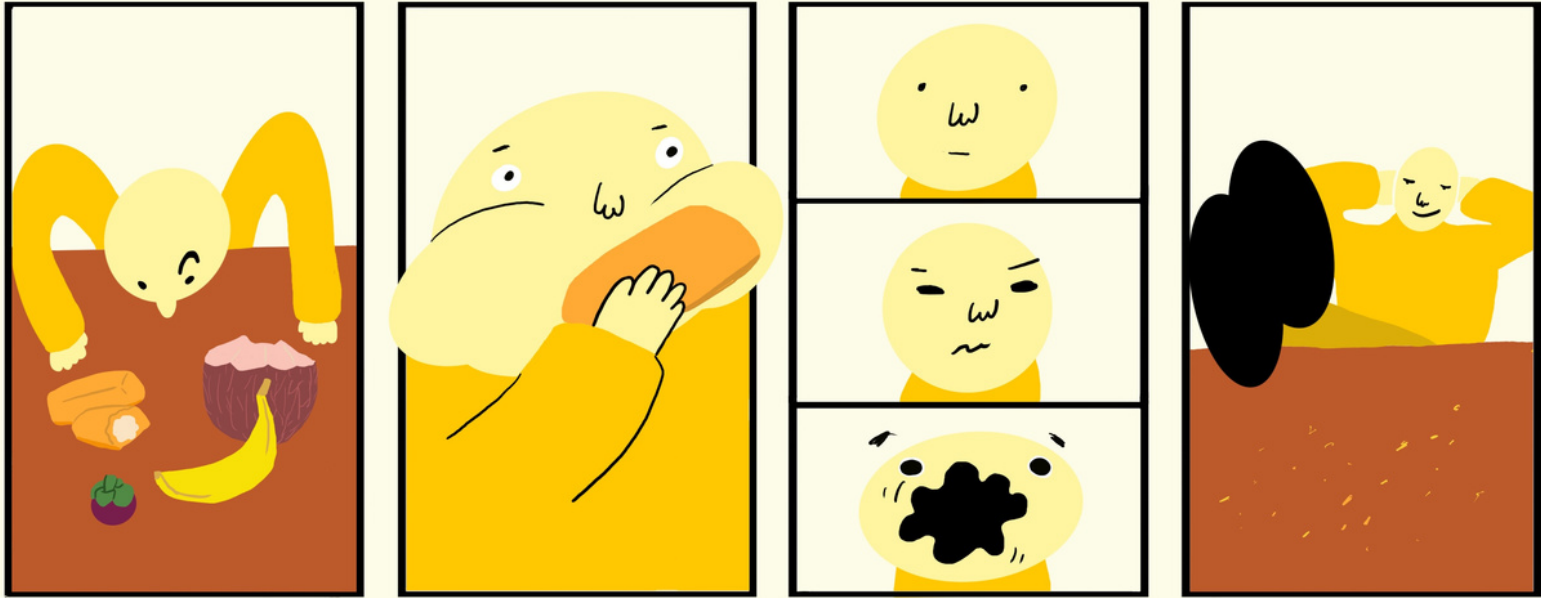
According to Dr. Baclayon, historical events did not hinder his decision to join the U.S. military. He has since pursued a career in traditional medicine, emphasizing the importance of understanding the cause and origin of infections rather than just treating the symptoms. He stresses that each individual can represent their entire community. Sharing this message with our AAPA members who work with underserved communities is a valuable takeaway we can learn from Dr. Baclayon.

Dr. Baclayon also notes generational differences in the teachings of the Native Hawaiian community. While the older generation may not always agree with expressing "aloha, aloha, love, and compassion," the younger generation is more action-oriented.

"I share the same information, teachings, and words with medical students. Do you know why you're doing what you're doing? What's your purpose behind studying to be a doctor, healer, or traditional healer? What's your goal? Because it doesn't matter how much you know as a doctor, healer, or traditional healer. What matters is why you have spent the time and energy accumulating all of that knowledge and knowing who you are and what your purpose is. Stay close to your spiritual source." - Dr. Baclayon

As healers, we must remember to take care of ourselves, knowing that our role profoundly impacts our mental health and that of our community. As readers of AAPA, let us be inspired to prioritize self-care and recognize the importance of our work.

Labels: A quick response



Artwork by

Theresa Tan

SHE/HER/HERS

Description of artwork and your art process:

I haven't drawn a comic since I was a kid, but when I thought about contributing an art piece to AAPA, story images immediately came to mind. I wanted to show a short progression of my mental and emotional experience of how it was for me to grow up as an Asian American amidst a Predominantly White Institute in a Michigan suburb. Growing up, I hated the idea of being called "White" in any way—because that's not who I am—even if I was/am influenced by White culture. And being called White implied I was less Asian, which felt/feels shameful. What surprised me is how spontaneous and quick the process of conceptualizing and creating this comic was for me.

What inspired you to create this piece:

I wanted to express myself through visuals rather than words. I appreciated the chance to try a different format, as visuals come more naturally to me than words.



About the artist:

Theresa Tan, Psy.D., M.Ed. is a licensed clinical psychologist who serves children, adults, and families. She received her doctorate from The Wright Institute, her master's degree from Arizona State University, and her bachelor's degree from Cornell University. Her approach is primarily psychodynamic, and she is passionate about play and sand tray therapy. Before becoming a psychologist, she was a kindergarten teacher. Recently, she wrote, illustrated, and published her first children's book, "[The Yet Pet](#)," which is based on her experience with young children.