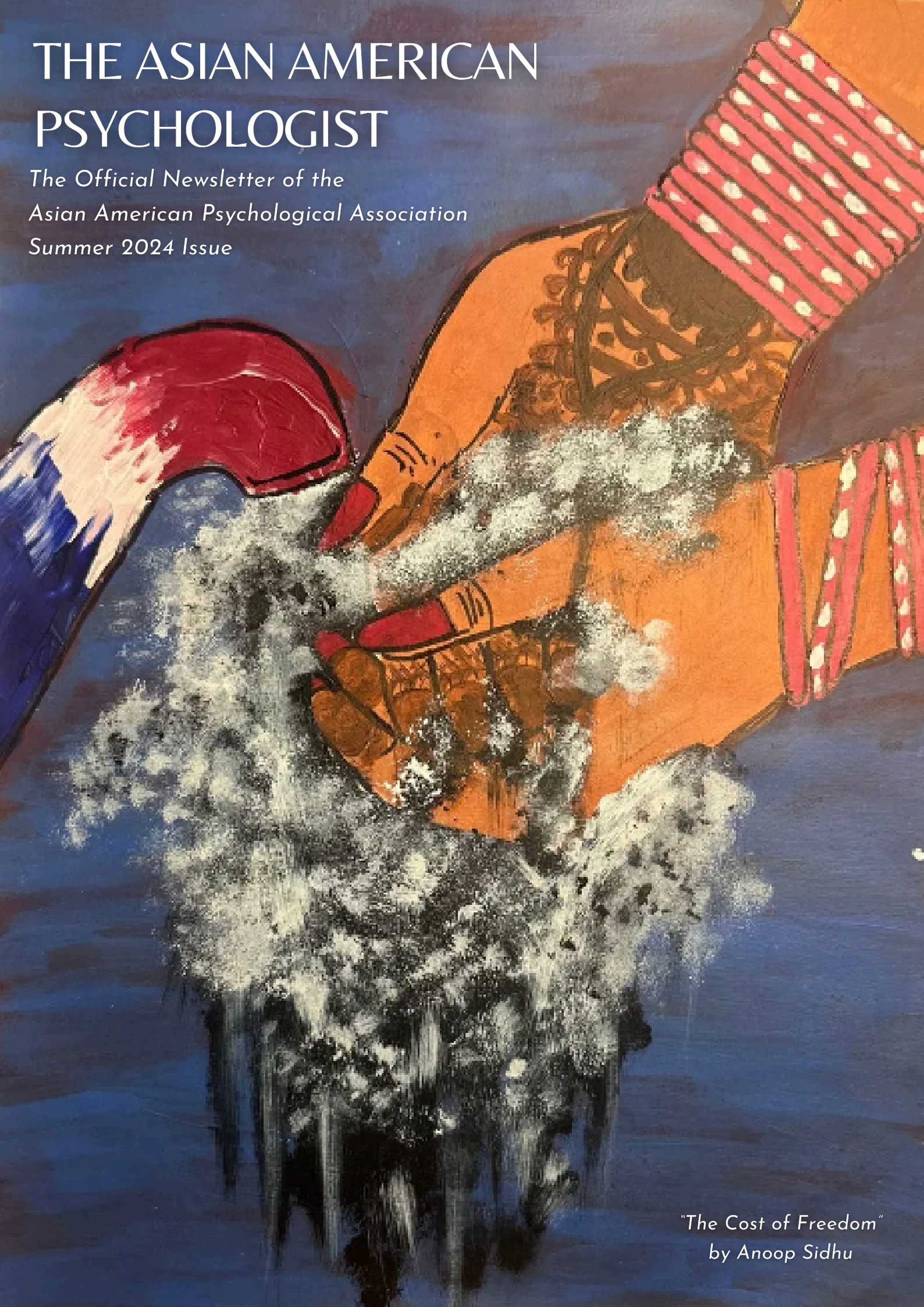


# THE ASIAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST

*The Official Newsletter of the  
Asian American Psychological Association  
Summer 2024 Issue*



*"The Cost of Freedom"  
by Anoop Sidhu*

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Asian American  
Psychological Association  
Education & Training Council

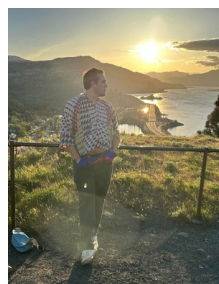
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Summer 2024

## THE ASIAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST

*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.*

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](mailto:newsletter@aapaonline.org).

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## President's Message

Hello AAPA Family,

I'm writing this column in the midst of May, a double celebratory month for our AAPA community as we acknowledge AANHPI Heritage Month and Mental Health Awareness Month. However, I also recognize that it can be difficult to embrace celebration when so much of the world and our community are in despair. AAPA is made up of diverse academic members who teach about social justice and remind us not to repeat the mistakes of history, research members who examine how we have arrived at this moment in history and how we respond to one another, clinical members who are supporting overwhelmed clients and college students in encampments, Muslim and Jewish members who are deeply grieving within their communities, and members from colonized communities who have had their own historical and cultural trauma activated by the current conflicts in Gaza, Asia, and Africa.



In spite of this, I believe our community is incredibly resilient, as we have demonstrated throughout history. I want you all to know that we see you, we support you, we hurt alongside you, and we are taking action to create positive changes in the world in the best way that we can. Some of the recent actions AAPA has taken include:

- Signing on to ceasefire statements from the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA) and the Coalition of National Racial and Ethnic Psychological Associations (CONREPA).
- Holding town halls to learn more about what is happening in Palestine and what our members need from AAPA.
- Encouraging active listserv discussions which share resources and articles to ensure we remain informed.
- Providing educational workshops through our Education and Training Committee (AAPA ETC) about the Gaza conflict.
- Creating an AAPA Social Justice Committee spearheaded by our Vice President Dr. Donna Demanarig, which has recently released a statement addressing the student protests that are happening all over the country. If you would like to join the Social Justice Committee and be part of the change, please email Dr. Demanarig at [vp@aapaonline.org](mailto:vp@aapaonline.org).

I have never been prouder of our Executive Committee and our AAPA membership for the fortitude and passion you have all demonstrated in making “good trouble” and fighting for what is right during this time of extreme humanitarian crisis.

I would like to end this column on a note of gratitude and acknowledgment. I am immensely grateful to Past President Dr. Anjuli Amin and Vice President Dr. Donna Demanarig for their incredible support in navigating this unique time in AAPA history. I am grateful to our amazing Executive Committee for all the support you have shown the Presidential Trio and our membership with your incredible leadership and selflessness in supporting the mission of AAPA. I am incredibly grateful to our hardworking Convention Committee, led by Drs. Teresa Hsu and Daisuke Akiba, for facilitating a way for us to come back together in person and in community for the first time in five years. I am grateful to and inspired by this incredible AAPA community, especially our student members whose protests and voices have demanded a better future for themselves and our community. I am humbled by the support, care, and action you have all demonstrated for our administration's focus on community, connection, healing, and social justice, and I cannot wait to celebrate being a part of this incredible family with you all in October at the Convention. See you in Atlanta, GA!

In solidarity,  
Christine



# A Message from the Co- Editors-in-Chief

*Summer 2024 Issue*



**Sasha Vasilou**



**Caitlyn Suen**

Thank you to all who made the The Asian American Psychologist Spring 2024 issue so beautiful. We are indebted to everyone's support and the continued support of our previous co-editors-in-chief, **Dr. Lauren Yang** and **Uyen Sophie Nguyen**. We've learned so much about the incredible efforts that go into the creation of the newsletter and hope you enjoy our Summer 2024 issue.

We believe many of you have heard the news about **Dr. Stanley Sue**, a pioneering figure in ethnic minority psychology, who passed away on June 6, 2024. For those who haven't had the chance to read his obituary, we have included it on the next page. Dr. Sue's groundbreaking work has profoundly impacted the study of cultural competence in clinical practice and the understanding of mental health within Asian American communities. His dedication to expanding psychological services to underserved populations and his unwavering commitment to social justice have touched countless lives. Dr. Sue's legacy will continue to inspire and guide our AAPA community. Our thoughts are with his family and friends during this difficult time.

You'll also find **Dr. Sue Kim's** breakdown of the upcoming convention! Dr. Kim interviews Convention Co-Chairs, **Dr. Daisuke Akiba and Dr. Teresa Hsu**, to give us the inside scoop on the ways to get involved and the joy of planning the first in-person meeting in five years! They encourage everyone to actively participate, volunteer, and submit proposals. Dr. Kim also highlights exciting features at the convention, such as the Mentor-Mentee event, notes from the Book Sales Committee, and updates from the Media Committee.

**Dr. Jeannie E. Celestial** shares her experiences at the 3rd Annual Filipinx Student Wellbeing Conference, discussing the Buong Loob program and its impact on Filipinx youth mental health and community wellness. **Michael P. Huynh and Leo T. Xia** discuss the transformative impact of curiosity on Asian American men's mental health, reflecting on their journey through support groups and the importance of vulnerability and connection. Our Member Spotlight this month highlights **Rajika Mehra**, a doctoral student at The Wright Institute in Berkeley, CA. Rajika shares her journey of finding community and support through the AAPA, her role in the DoISAP, and her hopes for fostering inclusivity and cultural awareness in mental health.

We also welcome back **Benné Gulick**, whose previous work "Alone In-Between" received a transformation to become "Asian Superstar"! Benné also shares some life-updates and an artistic piece highlighting the many intersecting facets of their identity. We are honored to continue to feature Benné's work and are excited to include a series of pieces in the next few issues of our newsletter.

We continue to feel the impact of the Year of the Dragon calling for transformation both locally and globally as students call for immediate action against complicity in genocide. In this issue you'll find a continuation of the resource list to support Palestinian liberation. We encourage you to share any resources you come across as we will continue this feature in the newsletter for the issues to come. We also note the importance of reflecting on the theme of Coming Home as a form of healing and the importance of creating home for those who are displaced. **Anoop Sidhu's** original artwork, featured on the cover, reflects this notion. In her Artist Statement, Anoop outlines the inspiration for this piece and notes the critical value of creating home not just physically, but also spiritually, emotionally, and socially. As we continue to bear witness to the atrocities in Gaza, we hope that our shared wisdom in valuing the importance of home continues to inform our work.

Sincerely,  
Caitlyn Suen and Sasha Vasilou

## AAPA Statement on the passing of Dr. Stanley Sue, one of the founders of AAPA

We are greatly saddened by the passing of one of AAPA's beloved founders, Dr. Stanley Sue. Dr. Sue, along with his brother, Dr. Derald Wing Sue, led the formation of AAPA in 1972. Bringing together a group of Asian American psychologists and mental health professionals, Dr. Sue created a space for the study, advocacy, and pursuit of Asian American psychology. Dr. Sue and our elders had a profound vision: to create a supportive community for Asian and Asian American mental health professionals. This community empowers us to collaborate and expand the field of psychology for our communities. While many of our current AAPA members may not have had a chance to work directly with him, let's take a moment of silence and express our gratitude for Dr. Sue's enduring legacy.

Dr. Sue's impact on psychology and Asian American psychology, as well as on all of us, will forever be a part of his legacy, as many of us would not be where we are today had we not had AAPA.



We send our deepest condolences to the Sue family, and we hope that you will take the time to read his obituary and leave a heartfelt message about Dr. Sue at this link:

<https://cypresslawn.com/obituaries/name/stanley-sue-obituary/CS-20240607-370864>

Rest in power, Dr. Sue. And thank you for everything.

-Dr. Christine Catipon, AAPA President

If you have any cherished memories or photos with Dr. Stanley Sue, we welcome you to submit them to us to be featured in the Fall newsletter. We hope to honor his great work and create space for those invaluable pieces of history.

[Link to share photos and memories](#)

-AAPA Newsletter Team



In acknowledgment of our rich and storied history, here is a photo of Dr. Sue (can you spot him in the back?) and many of our AAPA elders in the early days, at the National Asian American Psychology Training Conference in 1976 in Long Beach, sponsored by AAPA.





# FINANCE OFFICERS' REPORT

AAPA's Co-Finance Officers (FOs) Cat Bitney, Amanda Breen, Flora Surjadi, and Soyeong Kim are happy to report that AAPA's bank accounts are in good standing. Our total combined balance from E\*trade, Chase, and PayPal is \$644,473.66 as of February 24, 2024. Subtracting fiscal agent accounts and AAPA Division balances, AAPA's main account has \$489,545.86 in working capital.

We are happy to share the following important updates with the AAPA membership:

- **Disbursement of Dues.** We disbursed 2023 division dues to all the divisions. Division Chairs and FOs will see this reflected in their division's ledger.
- **Taxes.** Cat worked with our accountant and AAPA's 2022 taxes were submitted! We will file for an extension on our 2023 taxes.
- **Investing.** We are currently in the process of researching a Chase CD to put AAPA's savings into. We anticipate that this move could yield AAPA approximately \$10,000 over the life of the CD (the 9-month CD is looking like our best option right now with an APY of 4.75%).



# Membership Updates:

## Introduction and Report

Hello AAPA members!

We would like to congratulate our new membership co-chairs, Tania and Lisa!

We have not had consistent membership co-chairs over the past year and a half, and thank you all for your patience during that time with any membership-related issues. If you have any membership-related issues that you haven't received support for, please email us again at [membership@aapaonline.org](mailto:membership@aapaonline.org), so we can provide the needed support.



### Tania Chowdhury, PhD

Tania Chowdhury, Ph.D. is an early-career, licensed clinical psychologist in New York. She currently serves as a staff psychologist in the Montefiore Medical Center School Health Program and as an adjunct professor at William Paterson University and at New York University. Tania also is a former fellow of the APA Minority Fellowship Program (MFP), selected to promote culturally competent behavioral health services and policy for ethnic minority populations.

Broadly, Tania is interested in challenging hegemonic paradigms through serious critical analysis and centering principles of social justice. Her research interests focus on investigating mental health challenges at the intersections of minoritized identities and oppressive systems in Muslim immigrants, asylees, and refugees with the broader goal of translating research into practice, advocacy, and policy.

In her free time, Tania enjoys traveling, gastronomical adventures, arts, and spending quality time with friends and family. Tania is also a community organizer, co-founding a nonprofit organization that seeks to promote and meet the needs of immigrant Bangladeshi women, youth, and families in New Jersey.



## Lisa Liu, Ph.D.

Lisa Liu, Ph.D., is an associate professor and the associate program director of the Clinical Psychology PsyD program at California School of Professional Psychology (CSPP), Alliant International University, Los Angeles. Lisa is a licensed psychologist and received her doctorate in clinical psychology from University of California, Los Angeles. Prior to her position at CSPP, Lisa worked in community mental health and university counseling, specializing in issues related to immigrant and ethnic minority populations. Her research and clinical interests include: ethnic minority mental health, adjustment of immigrant children and families, family and cultural factors related to psychopathology, racial/ethnic socialization, and racial/ethnic identity development.

In her spare time, Lisa enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and two children. She also enjoys tennis, museums, food, and travel.

### Membership Reminders:

- As an AAPA member, you can edit your membership account by logging into your account on [aapaonline.org](http://aapaonline.org). If you cannot remember your password, there is an option to reset it. You can join our wonderful AAPA divisions and update your email address for the listservs through your online account.
- 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.

Currently, AAPA has **1,527** members. Student members continue to comprise the majority of our membership. See the table below for a breakdown of our members by membership category. If you have any questions or concerns regarding AAPA membership, please do not hesitate to contact [membership@aapaonline.org](mailto:membership@aapaonline.org).

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

Best wishes,

AAPA Membership Team

Membership Category	# of Current Members
Student	872
Professional	644
Retiree/Emeritus	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,527</b>

# Reconnecting with Roots:

## A Chat with the Past and Present Co-Chairs of AAPA Education and Training Council



BY DR. LAUREN  
YANG, PSYD

Social media has enabled me to follow the works of other AAPA members and renowned leaders of our field, most of whom I am usually admiring from afar. Recently among them has been **Dr. Gabe Corpus**, a licensed clinical psychologist in Orange County, CA. He is also the co-founder of the Education and Training Council (ETC) of AAPA, alongside **Dr. Kari Tabag**. As I assumed the co-chair position of ETC earlier this year, I have been curious about the history and initiatives of the Council. After first following Dr. Gabe on Instagram and a few message exchanges later, I had the absolute pleasure of chatting with him more about the ETC.

Dr. Gabe Corpus is a second-generation Filipino American who grew up in the East Bay of Northern California. He earned his MA in Mental Health Counseling from Boston College and PhD in Clinical Psychology from Palo Alto University. He completed his predoctoral psychology internship and postdoctoral fellowship at UC Irvine Counseling Center, focusing on suicide prevention and innovative outreach. Currently, he provides telehealth therapy with Sweet Mango Therapy Group. As a Filipino American therapist, he aims to provide culturally sensitive and responsive approaches to all, especially Asian Americans, Filipinx/a/o Americans, and People of Color/Indigenous people. Dr. Gabe also values creativity and education. He provides psychoeducational workshops for Lyra Health, consultation on suicide prevention with Community Connections Psychological Associates, and creates mental health educational content on Instagram and TikTok.



[in/drgabecorpus](#)



[@dr.gabethepsychologist](#)



[@dr.gabethepsychologist](#)



[www.drgabecorpusphd.com](http://www.drgabecorpusphd.com)



## ABOUT THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL

The Education and Training Council (ETC) is an established branch of the AAPA Executive Committee that is dedicated to improving education and training for the AAPI community. We are students and professionals who seek to empower AAPI communities by:

- Increasing access to education and resources
- Reducing mental health stigma that is especially held in our communities
- Raising awareness of cultural factors and systemic issues impacting AAPI mental health
- Training the next generation of psychologists and mental health professionals on culturally informed approaches in their practices with the AAPI community

Towards these ends, the ETC focuses on developing educational materials, conducting online trainings with expert professionals, organizing panel discussions, and providing community outreach. As we continue to identify the goals and initiatives of the AAPA Executive Committee and membership, we openly and eagerly explore different ways to best meet those needs. Learn more: <https://aapaonline.org/about/education-training-council>



# HISTORY OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL

In 2017, then-AAPA president **Dr. Kevin Nadal** organized a call for members to form a committee, as the organization was receiving requests for webinars and workshops on AAPI mental health every two to three weeks. The initial cochairs following this call were AAPA members Dr. Alex Reivera and Dr. Kari Tabag. At the time, Dr. Gabe first joined as a member then became co-chair with Dr. Kari Tabag after some discussion among other committee members. Dr. Gabe was a second-year doctoral student and a student representative for the Division on Filipinx Americans (DoFA). He was just starting to familiarize himself with the history and origins of AAPA, as well as his own identity as a leader.

As Dr. Gabe navigated establishing the ETC, he recalled that Dr. Nadal provided much initial support in clarifying the intent and purpose of the ETC, as well as validating and believing in him to trust his instincts. Although the overall direction had been laid out, Dr. Gabe and Tabag soon learned that its infrastructure had to be developed in its entirety. In other words, serving as founding co-chair lent itself to essentially creating the bylaws and mission statement of the ETC over the next two years. This also involved orienting members to the expectations of commitment and identifying positions of leadership in need.

As the ETC grew in membership, they not only worked on responding to those requests from the community for workshops but also became more self-directed in their activities and initiatives. For example, **Dr. Noriel (Nori) Lim**-another past co-chair of ETC and my immediate predecessor-was intent on advancing pedagogy in the education and training provided to our community. Eventually, they developed their own topics for workshops and sought to collaborate with the Divisions of AAPA.

Dr. Gabe served three years as co-chair until starting his predoctoral internship at UCI Counseling Center. During our chat together, he shared the following reflections from his term.

## CHALLENGES AND AREAS OF GROWTH

As a budding branch of the Executive Committee (EC), the ETC was focused on increasing its visibility, improving sustainability, and maintaining recruitment. Dr. Gabe noted that although having been borne out of a need by the EC, the Council had to remain active in legitimizing its place within the organization during its infancy. He expressed having wanted AAPA membership to be aware of its presence while recognizing its role as distinct from the Divisions of AAPA. Dr. Gabe was also intent on developing a voice for the ETC by having at least one co-chair join EC meetings. Advocating for this was helped by attending an EC retreat as a student representative for DoFA, which further demystified the leadership of AAPA for him.

Sustainability of activities and recruitment for members also became apparent as recurring challenges for the ETC. Dr. Gabe admitted setting more realistic goals would have been an area of improvement, such as conducting one workshop per quarter or limiting the number of workshops provided per year. He also believed fostering more consistent relationships with the Divisions would have been helpful for additional topics and areas of interest. Moreover, he noted that while professionals were well represented on the ETC, there were not as many students back then.

## HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Serving as a student representative for DoFA was the start of Dr. Gabe's leadership journey; becoming co-chair of the ETC propelled him further along. "It helped me navigate being a leader in different spaces and overcome that feeling of imposter syndrome." He recognized that great work was done by the ETC in his time, but he especially valued the meaningful connections and sense of community gained from being on it. "It was great to have that consistent group of diverse individuals in psychology, students and professionals all coming together to talk about their passions in education and training. I loved doing that together, as I didn't have a lot of interfacing with other AAPA members outside of meeting at the Convention and being a part of DoFA." Among his other proudest moments were advocating for the inclusion of ETC in EC meetings, presenting at the AAPA Convention, and supporting Divisions in joint development of their workshops.

## HOPE AND VISIONS FOR THE ETC

More recently, Dr. Gabe has been encouraged to see ETC's presence on the AAPA listserv and believes that there has been growing awareness of it among the membership. He also remains hopeful that ETC is being recognized as a branch of the Executive Committee and that I myself have been able to consistently attend EC meetings as a voice for the ETC.

After a recent change in leadership for the ETC, I am eager to continue upholding the values of education and training while advancing the initiatives as first envisioned by its leaders.

I am also intent on the following goals for the ETC:

1. Rebuilding membership and leadership of the ETC
2. Increasing visibility with EC, AAPA membership, and the broader community
3. Improving sustainability of ETC activities

## JOIN THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL

This is an excellent opportunity to gain leadership and project development experience in meeting the education and training needs of AAPA membership, plus empowering AAPI communities at large.

### **Currently seeking:**

Co-chair/Vice Chair, Chair-elect, Division liaisons, and members.

If interested, please contact Lauren Yang, PsyD at [etc.communication@aapaonline.org](mailto:etc.communication@aapaonline.org) with a brief statement on your current position/affiliation, professional background, and your identified interests in ETC's initiatives.

# AAPA Leadership Membership Survey Summary

By Seint Kokokyi, Ph.D. C.Psych.

The Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA) leadership membership survey was developed as part of Dr. Seint Kokokyi's Leadership Development Institute (LDI) fellowship project. The goal of the survey was to gather information on AAPA members' leadership experience within AAPA, specifically facilitators and barriers to leadership engagement, to better understand how to support members in taking up leadership positions within AAPA. The AAPA Executive Committee (EC), notably Drs. Christine Catipon, Donna Demanarig, and Amy Kobus, provided feedback and support for this project. The survey was open from November to December 2023 for all AAPA members to participate.

Participants who previously held a leadership role in AAPA listed many reasons for taking on these roles—most notably they wanted to give back to the community and they were approached to consider these positions. They noted positive (e.g., networking, rewarding relationships, inspiring others) and negative (e.g., burnout, inequity of workload, lack of clarity, large time commitment, feeling unsupported) experiences. Reported facilitators included having support, community, being able to give back, and good communication. Challenges that participants with past leadership experience included lack of time, lack of communication, and unfavorable team dynamics.

Participants who do not have any past AAPA leadership experience indicated that better communication, more time, opportunities for networking, and more inclusivity could potentially encourage them to step into leadership roles. They noted lack of time, inadequate information about leadership opportunities and discrimination as barriers.



Those in leadership positions within AAPA may want to consider clearer communication with members within the EC and with members at large by using existing platforms such as the AAPA newsletter, social media, and Slack. There also needs to be clear expectations of roles as many expressed uncertainties of what to expect in leadership—this could potentially be addressed with bylaws, role descriptions, and smoother transitions between leadership terms. There were many comments about participants feeling discriminated against and marginalized. It will likely be beneficial for leaders within AAPA to critically reflect on their positionality and biases such that they can work together to create an inclusive space for all. A follow-up survey may be considered to further investigate these concerns.





## Palestinian Liberation

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### Resources gathered by Sasha Vasilou as a continuation of Sara Ahmed's piece

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A continuation of the resource list created in our Spring 2024 issue to help support clients, students, and all those affected by the ongoing crisis in Gaza.

- **Palestine Legal**: Protects the civil and constitutional rights of people in the U.S. who speak out for Palestinian freedom.
- **Ghassan Shamieh, ESQ (Instagram link)**: Palestinian-American lawyer offering legal services for international students.
- **Institute for Development of Human Arts**: Regularly hosts trainings focused on depathologizing resistance movements and protest.
- **Provider application form for Asian Mental Health Collective's Asian Organizer Therapy Fund program**. This Therapy Fund round will provide therapy to Asian students on college campuses who have been impacted by recent events related to student encampments. AMHC will pay a therapist directly for 8 sessions of therapy. We define "Asian" as any person with ancestry from Asia, including West Asia and Palestine. We recognize that the impacts of administrative and law enforcement have been traumatic for many students. This fund is specifically designed to aid student organizers involved in encampments, demonstrations, and/or protests.
- **Continuously updated reading list**
- **Unapologetic: The Third Narrative (podcast hosted by two Palestinian-Israeli activists)**.
- **People's Conference for Palestine**
- **Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS)**. is a Palestinian-led movement for freedom, justice and equality. BDS upholds the simple principle that Palestinians are entitled to the same rights as the rest of humanity." - Palestinian BDS National Committee



2024 AAPA CONVENTION:  
**HOMECOMING**

**OCT 4-5, 2024**

**Atlanta, GA**

“Ang hindi marunong  
lumingon sa pinangalingan  
ay hindi makakarating sa  
paroroonan.”

“Those who do not  
remember their past will  
never reach their  
destination.”

Registration and details to come...







## AAPA 2024 CONVENTION THEME

### ***Homecoming: Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinangalingan ay hindi makakarating sa paroroonan.***

*“Those who do not remember their past will never reach their destination.”*

**A**s we gather for the 2024 Convention, we are embraced by the theme 'Homecoming: *Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinangalingan ay hindi makakarating sa paroroonan,*' a Filipino proverb that gently reminds us of the importance of honoring our roots as a guide to our future. This theme prompts us to reflect deeply on our journey, acknowledging and celebrating our origins not as anchors that hold us to past grievances, but as beacons that illuminate our path forward. It underscores the significance of understanding where we have come from, recognizing how our collective history shapes our quest for knowledge, identity, and advancement as a community.



the tapestry of our histories, with all its dreams, struggles, and triumphs, is not a ledger of old scores to settle but a rich foundation upon which we stand together today.



The concept of 'Homecoming' is deeply woven into the ethos of our diverse and vibrant Asian, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, and Desi (APINHD) communities. It serves as a reminder that the tapestry of our histories, with all its dreams, struggles, and triumphs, is not a ledger of old scores to settle but a rich foundation upon which we stand together today.

Our ancestors navigated through vast waves of challenges—ranging from exclusion and discrimination to the battles for civil rights and recognition. Their resilience and hope are not just legacies of their victories but are also guideposts for us to forge a future that honors their sacrifices by fostering unity and understanding within our diverse community.

The last few years have tested our communities in unprecedented ways. The rise in anti-Asian hate crimes, which unfortunately did not receive sustained mainstream attention despite our efforts, along with the challenges of a global pandemic and the ongoing fight for social justice across all societal spectra, have underscored the urgency of our work. Yet, during these challenges, we have also seen remarkable acts of courage,



unity, and advocacy. Our communities have rallied to support each other, to inform, to heal, and to stand firm against hate, indifference, and injustice. This resilience, perseverance, and solidarity are the very essence of our "Homecoming" theme.

This year, as we convene in the great city of Atlanta, we do so in the spirit of homecoming: a return to the essence of who we are and the legacy of those who came before us. We are reminded that every step we take forward is a step taken on the shoulders of giants. Our convention is a celebration of this legacy, a recommitment to the values of kindness, diligence, peace, justice, and solidarity that guide our work in psychology and beyond.

As we look ahead, the convention will focus on the themes of healing, empowerment, action, peace, and love. We will return to meeting face to face, and in a place whose community wants to reclaim a narrative outside of spa shootings.

We will explore innovative approaches to mental health and well-being, delve into research that advances our understanding of the APINHD experience, celebrate the cultural wealth that defines us, and foster an environment of peace and love that supports our collective well-being. This event will provide spaces for reflection, learning, and connection, building bridges among all of us.

"Homecoming" is an affirmation that our past informs our present and lights the way to our individual and collective future. It is a commitment to carry forward the legacy of our predecessors, to honor their selfless sacrifices by continuing the work of building a more rational, just, and compassionate world.

We invite you to join us on this journey to celebrate our collective heritage and envision a future that is peaceful, compassionate, and productive, guided by the invaluable lessons from our past. Together, let us embark on this path collaboratively, strengthened by the wisdom of our ancestors and uplifted by the promise of new horizons ahead.



**2024 Convention Co-chairs**  
 Daisuke Akiba, PhD (he/him)  
 Teresa Hsu, PhD (she/her)



# Convention Co-Chairs



**Teresa Hsu, PhD**  
(she/her)

tion health in diverse, historically marginalized communities. Her work has been presented nationally and published in peer-reviewed journals.

Dr. Hsu attended Northwestern University, where she received her B.A. in Psychology and Piano Performance. She received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from George Washington University.

## Q&A

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### How did you get involved in supporting the convention?

I received an email from AAPA leadership asking for volunteers to co-chair the convention. I've been involved in the last two virtual conventions (shoutout to the Programs Committee!) and thought it'd be great fun to plan the first in-person meeting in five years!

### What about the upcoming convention excites you?

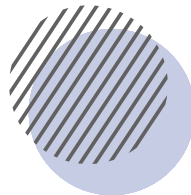
There are too many to name! We'll have some GREAT opening and closing speakers (stay tuned for finalized information), plus you really can't beat an in-person connection again.

### How can people get involved to help support the convention?

Great question. Come check us out if you've never volunteered before and consider being a part of the convention committee for the next convention. We'll also have a call for day-of, on-site volunteers to help with on the ground operations. Of course, submit a proposal and/or buy a ticket for the banquet (get your tickets before they sell out)!

## Introduction

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Teresa Hsu, PhD, is the Founder and Executive Director of S.P.E.A.K., a Supportive Place for Empowering Asian Americans & Kin, which focuses on Asian American mental health and wellness through education, destigmatization, research, and direct services. She is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the former Assistant Director of the Pediatric Behavioral Health Integration Program at Montefiore Medical Center. She works with individuals and families to address race-related stressors, and cultural issues, including cultural dissonance, anxiety, mood disorders, and trauma. Her research focuses on collaborative care, prevention, and popula-

# Convention Co-Chairs



**Daisuke Akiba,**  
**PhD**  
(he/him)

nally inspired by minoritized children's enthusiastic engagement with technology-related media such as games, anime, and cosplay. Currently, he is the Principal Investigator of a large grant examining effective methods for integrating Computing and Digital Literacies into PK-12 education in public schools. His ultimate goal is to empower minoritized children with the foundational knowledge and skills they need, not only to enjoy a wider range of life options but also, if they are so inclined, to thrive as creators in the technology sector, championing a future of inclusivity and innovation.

## Q&A

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### How did you get involved in supporting the convention?

I responded to an email solicitation for convention leaders. I have been an AAPA member but have not been actively involved. So, when I got the solicitation email, I thought it would be a great opportunity to be part of this community.

### What about the upcoming convention excites you?

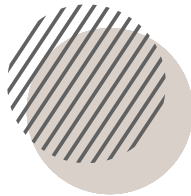
After several years of attending virtual conferences, I will be looking forward to meeting our colleagues in person, and discussing professional and other topics that impact our community and beyond.

### How can people get involved to help support the convention?

First, register early! Submit proposals, and invite your colleagues to submit theirs! I would particularly like to see introverts actively participate in every convention session AND the banquet! We will take good care of you.

## Introduction

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Daisuke Akiba, PhD, was trained in Experimental Psychology at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. He holds a joint appointment at Queens College and City University of New York Graduate Center. Along with his regular academic role, he served in various administrative positions over the past decade, including Department Chair, Associate Dean, and Special Advisor to the President on Institutional Accreditation and Assessment.

Dr. Akiba's research focuses on promoting healthy development and learning in individuals from economically distressed communities, particularly in the context of AI and technological advancements. He was orig-

# MENTOR-MENTEE EVENT

By Sue H. Kim, PhD

Take a second to think about an important person who mentored you sometime during your graduate school experience. What did that person help you with? Without that help, how much harder would your path have been? That's the dynamic potential of mentorship!

One of the unique and powerful offerings at this year's convention will be the return of the in-person Mentor-Mentee Event! During this event, mentees will have the opportunity to meet with volunteer mentors who will be available to answer questions on specific topics. These include applying to graduate school, applying for fellowships/postdocs, tenure and promotion, private practice, being AANHPI at predominantly white institutions, serving on APA governance, and more.

I had the privilege of serving as a volunteer mentor during the 2021 AAPA online convention, and it was fun talking about what I love about doing private practice. Some mentees were just starting a private practice and had specific questions about the process.

My-Linh Luu, a mentee at a previous convention, shared that "The AAPA Convention Mentoring



Session has been one of the most invaluable experiences in my graduate school journey. It has offered me a platform to share experiences, receive guidance, and build meaningful connections within our AANHPI community."

If you are interested in volunteering as a mentee or a mentor for this year's event, please indicate your interest as you complete the registration form for the convention. If you're grateful for someone mentoring you in the past, you can pay it forward by being a mentor at our Mentor-Mentee event! See you there!

Our hard-working Mentoring Committee members include Haeyoon Chung, Cristina Garcia-Corrales, Sue Kim (Chair), My-Linh Luu, Cara Miles, and Shimei Nelapati. If you have any questions about the Mentor-Mentee event, please feel free to reach out to us at [convention.mentoring@aapaonline.org](mailto:convention.mentoring@aapaonline.org).



CONVENTION ACTIVITY:

# Give Your Books a New Lease on Life

*Written by: Sue H. Kim, PhD*

Admit it– you have too many books! However, you love them!! If you want some of your like-new books to be out in the world for others, please consider donating them to the Book Sales Committee for the 2024 AAPA Convention.

The proceeds from the book sales will go toward student travel scholarships. If you, or someone you know, would be willing to donate books on the following topics, we would be so appreciative:

- Asian/Asian American psychology or Asian American studies
- Multicultural psychology
- Children/Teens
- Gender studies
- Social justice
- General psychology
- AANHPI-authored books
- Anything related to the convention theme of “Homecoming”

*To contact our Book Sales Committee to arrange a donation, please reach out to [convention.booksale@aapaonline.org](mailto:convention.booksale@aapaonline.org). One of our dedicated committee members (Annalisa Chu, Kaela Liddle, or Ally Fukada) will get back to you.*

# Coming Home to Myself

Written by: Sue H. Kim, PhD

**A**fter 35 years of psychotherapy (with seven different talented therapists), I felt stuck, going over the same things that persisted no matter what approach was tried. I wanted to finally free the automatic trauma responses that I needed to survive as a child with an intense father and a fun (but carefree) mother.

I decided to add something to my routine. I began sessions with a colleague who channels universal wisdom, and to my surprise, it felt like some of those childhood traumas were on their way to being resolved. After just a few sessions, I was stunned by the levels of deep love, compassion, and forgiveness I was able to extend to myself.

I began noticing a deeper compassion for myself and my clients. I was less critical of my own faults and mistakes. I felt a visceral sense of my healthy core self. I thought, "Wow, I should write about this experience of coming home to my 'self.'" As I began to write, I felt centered and happy.



Then I got a call from an insurance company. They wanted me to speak with a member of the clinical review team about why I was seeing one client twice per week for the past few months. The system had flagged my treatment of her as "questionable" since it might not meet their standards of medical necessity.

Interesting how quickly that "centered and happy" feeling turned into old, familiar "fear, self-doubt, and shame." So much for the expansive "compassion and love for all creatures" feeling.

I tried to remind myself: I have decades of experience doing therapy and seeing people get better with my help; I regularly consult on cases with several talented colleagues and am open to their suggestions, making changes based on

**I was stunned by the levels of deep love, compassion, and forgiveness I was able to extend to myself.**



their feedback; I know this client well and am utilizing evidence-based treatment.

I prepped for the clinical review. I went over my notes, organized the information, and got ideas from colleagues about how to speak about this case in the language insurance reviewers understand.

However, fairly soon into the phone review, my insides just froze when the LPC started speaking harshly to me. "Why is the PCP prescribing her meds - it's 2024, this client can get a telehealth psychiatrist!"

"I'm really concerned about these medications and the dosage!"

"When will the treatment be done?"

my time tables all the way through perfectly in front of my disappointed and angry father. I wanted to cry but couldn't.

I thought, "I'm a terrible therapist - maybe my work isn't even helping this client, and I didn't realize that until now." Then I thought, "What if the work is good, but now I've endangered it by being an idiot on the phone with the clinical reviewer who now thinks I'm incompetent - and won't approve more sessions? Maybe all that confidence I've been feeling in my work with other clients is just in my head, and they are just staying in therapy with me when they could be with someone competent who can REALLY help them?"

“

**All that soul work, healing imagery, and centeredness I had been feeling for weeks felt like it had never happened. I was six or seven years old again, failing to recite my time tables all the way through perfectly in front of my disappointed and angry father. I wanted to cry but couldn't.**

”

Finally, the reviewer said I needed to go through a peer review in order to determine if I was doing medically necessary treatment. She gave me a phone number and warned me that if I didn't call to schedule the peer review in the next 24 hours, sessions would be denied.

All that soul work, healing imagery, and centeredness I had been feeling for weeks felt like it had never happened. I was six or seven years old again, failing to recite

Luckily for "Adult Me," I have an extensive support system - a patient partner who stays calm when I'm mentally shredding myself, dear friends who listen with love and compassion to my self-flagellations, and wonderful colleagues/friends who commiserate (insurance companies trying to save money by finding ways to reduce treatment-ugh!) and offer suggestions...all these supportive people that "Little Girl Me" did not have.

I wish this story had a happy ending. One where I was able to come home to healing without having the old trauma blow everything up again. The good news is that the peer reviewer was more understanding of the situation and not super critical about my treatment approach. He reminded me of the insurance company's guidelines on when it's appropriate to do twice weekly sessions (basically on a short-term basis to keep a suicidal client out of the hospital). Apparently, this standard does not apply when the situation goes on for longer than a certain amount of time.

I got more time to continue treatment (whew!). When I told the client, she cried with relief. I still feel awful about not being able to help her enough and not being able to satisfy the insurance

company's expectations. A lot like that childhood feeling of not being good enough for my dad.

I think I can find it in myself to keep going back to "Little Girl Me" and reminding her that we're not alone anymore. We have people who will help us when things blow up. "Adult Me" keeps trying to be there for her. I want to be what she believes I can be.

Coming home to myself, my true (soul) self, isn't all inspirational, happy, and hopeful, even though I was feeling pretty darn good a few weeks ago. As a hurt human, coming home to myself is going to be a messy, back-and-forth, and at times discouraging experience. Fortunately, I do not have to do this alone, and I have the rest of my human life to keep working on it. Maybe that's my happy ending.

“

**I think I can find it in myself to keep going back to "Little Girl Me" and reminding her that we're not alone anymore. We have people who will help us when things blow up. "Adult Me" keeps trying to be there for her. I want to be what she believes I can be.**

”

## INTERESTED IN SHARING YOUR STORY?

Help us continue to build our AAPA community by sharing about yourself, your experiences, and reflections. To have your story featured in a future newsletter issue, please contact [newsletter@aapaonline.org](mailto:newsletter@aapaonline.org).

# CURIOSITY DIDN'T KILL THE CAT: THE HEALING IMPACT OF CURIOSITY IN ASIAN AMERICAN MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

By Michael P. Huynh & Leo T. Xia

## *What does the community for Asian American men look like?*

Before the pandemic, I came across a social media post about my friend Leo's in-person Asian men's support group, scheduled for June 7, 2019, in Los Angeles, California. Initially, I had no expectations for how this would go because I had never been to a support group session before, nor did I ever think that one tailored to Asian American men existed. During my Master of Public Health program, I was grappling with bouts of self-doubt and isolation. It wasn't until I discussed these feelings with my female friends and listened to their positive experiences in therapy that I found the courage to seek that support for myself.

At the time, there was no Asian male friend in my life with whom I felt comfortable doing that.



*Pictured above: Michael P. Huynh*

However, seeing Leo's post made me curious to experience what it could look like to lean on other Asian men, which was something I wasn't even aware I wanted because I had never experienced it before. I was surprised to come out of the space with a sense of community and belonging. During the pandemic, Leo's sessions evolved to be held virtually, including a weekly men's group. Reflecting on this journey, while I thought that I would start off as a short-term participant in this space, I ended up longing to stay, because I not only found a sense of acceptance and care in this group of supportive men, but I also gained a greater sense of connection and friendship that I still carry with me. My experience has greatly informed the way that I approach my research as a public health student, examining how friendships and informal social networks may impact mental health in Asian American communities.

These years of online community group sessions also culminated in a return of in-person events in Los Angeles starting on March 28, 2024, where 20 Asian men, including myself, gathered to discuss the intersection of their culture and masculinity. We did some breathwork and dance exercises before settling down into an open discussion.

We talked about relationships with our fathers, expectations placed on us as Asian American men, and masks that we carried in order to survive our childhoods and function in our adult lives. At first, I was hesitant about attending this in-person event because I wondered what the benefits of being in-person were, whether it was a priority in my life, and whether I would learn something new. However, a turning point occurred during that week's online session when we all took turns to openly and directly compliment each other, a moment I had never experienced before in a group of men! I felt this session was particularly special because it was an indicator of a powerful sense of connection that we cultivated with each other over time. It left me yearning for more connection and asking, "How do I strengthen this further?" and "What if this in-person session is an avenue for that?"

“

What I personally got out of the session was reflecting on the mask I carry as an Asian American man. For me, that mask was not wanting people to see what bothers me, believing that if I said what actually bothers me, that would either be simply dismissed or misunderstood by others. I realized that it's important and possible to be brave, let down that mask, and communicate my needs and feelings in the right community and space.

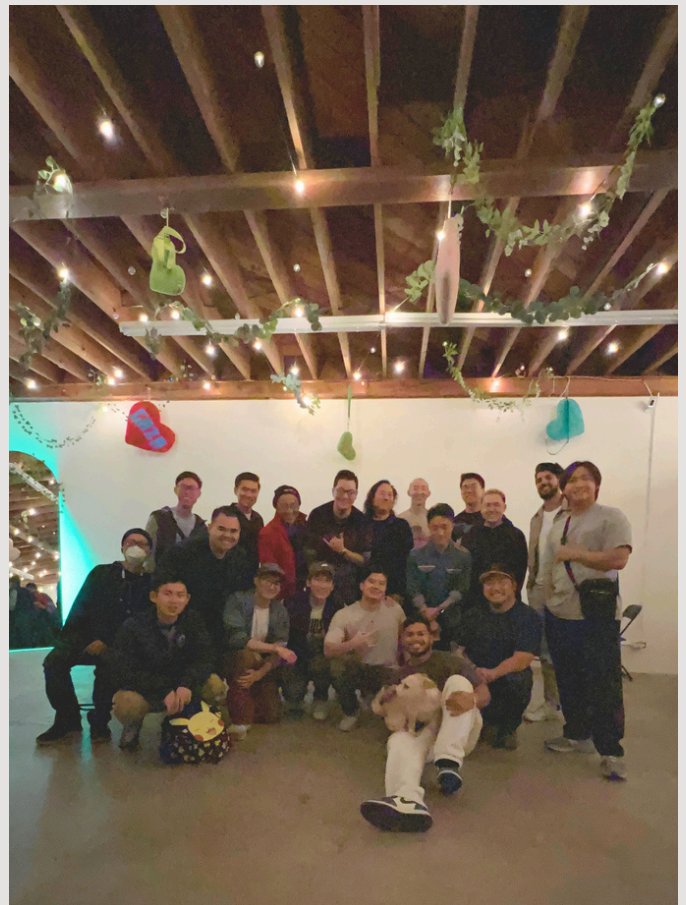
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Even after all these years, I was still experiencing new ways of connecting and learning new insights. My sense of curiosity was stronger than my sense of inconvenience, so I headed to the in-person group. Even after the session ended, there were men who stayed for over an hour to talk more. I was excited to see that these other men were just as willing to take this extra time for greater connection, even after a 3-hour session on a Thursday night.

What I personally got out of the session was reflecting on the mask I carry as an Asian American man. For me, that mask was not wanting people to see what bothers me, believing that if I said what actually bothers me, that would either be simply dismissed or misunderstood by others. I realized that it's important and possible to be brave, let down that mask, and communicate my needs and feelings in the right community and space. Ultimately, attending the event exceeded my expectations.

This enriching experience stemmed from my curiosity and the courage to immerse myself in new possibilities. I look forward to witnessing the growth of this community and how it will positively impact more men. I'm thankful that my curiosity led me to a space where Asian American men connect in ways that I had never witnessed before. I have high hopes that we can create a world where openness and vulnerability empower us to support ourselves and our loved ones.

Leo's support group work for Asian Americans continues to this day with both online and in-person sessions. You can find more information on Instagram @lowhiofficial and @asianmentalhealthproject.



*Pictured above: Asian Men's Support Group*



# Buong Loob: Youth Empowering and Healing Themselves in Community

by Jeannie E. Celestial, Ph.D., M.S.W.

On April 27, 2024, over 75 Filipinx and Filipinx American high school youth and adult allies gathered at San Francisco State University for the 3rd Annual Filipinx Student Wellbeing Conference (FSWC). The conference was sponsored by the Filipino Mental Health Initiative–San Francisco (FMHI-SF), San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) College and Career Readiness, Pin@y Educational Partnerships, and San Francisco State’s



Responsive Education for Access, Community, and Hope (REACH). A contingency of current and former youth interns plan and organize this conference each year. The youth are part of a paid, semester-long internship called Buong Loob (pronounced bū-ong loh-ob); buong loob roughly



translates to “whole inner self” in Tagalog. During the semester, the interns research wellness needs of SFUSD Filipino & Filipina/o/x American high school students and propose strategies to address those needs.

At the conference, the interns curated learning spaces at which courageous dialogues were facilitated by guest speakers. Some topics discussed were cultural values, wellness tools and practices, and how to break mental health stigma. As the conference is designed by and for youth, only a small number of adults were invited to attend as *allies*. The conference offers a unique and innovative approach to addressing the mental health needs of urban youth, as it is culturally responsive to intersectional identities of age, generation, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender expression, spirituality, and others.

As a founding member of FMHI-SF, I was invited to conduct a workshop for adult allies. During my workshop, “Intergenerational Healing in Everyday Life”, I spoke about mental health challenges faced by youth today, such as having survived a pandemic in childhood, difficulty being in the present moment due to the barrage of electronic media, and possible feelings of hopelessness due to climate change, genocide, and the economy. I also shared stories from my own parenting journey, experiences of intergenerational healing in myself, my mother, and my daughter.

To end my workshop, I engaged adult allies in an



intervention of “food as medicine.” That is, I served Filipino sweet rice and corn porridge called Ginataang Mais (Recipe from our bestselling *The Filipino Instant Pot Cookbook*). Attendees were invited to mindfully eat the porridge while reflecting and meditating. I asked participants to allow the flavors, textures, smell, and sensations of the porridge to connect with their ancestors and younger parts of themselves. Porridge is commonly consumed by babies and individuals who are sick or recovering from an illness in various Asian cultures. It is also an economical, comforting, and satisfying meal or snack. After the “eating-meditation”, the



attendees shared what memories or feelings arose. Participants reported positive thoughts and memories of their primary caregivers. Some remembered the resiliency and perseverance of their families through adversity and immigration. My hope was that the adult allies would taste and remember experiences of positive attachment and gain insight into the current youths’ lives—their strengths and emotional needs. The participants expressed surprise at how the porridge unexpectedly touched them viscerally and emotionally. To close, I asked each adult ally to voice one commitment of how they might move toward intergenerational healing and wellness in a concrete way.

Since buong loob is about the holistic self—mind, body, spirit, ancestors, and future generations, this conference integrated many approaches for individual and collective wellness.

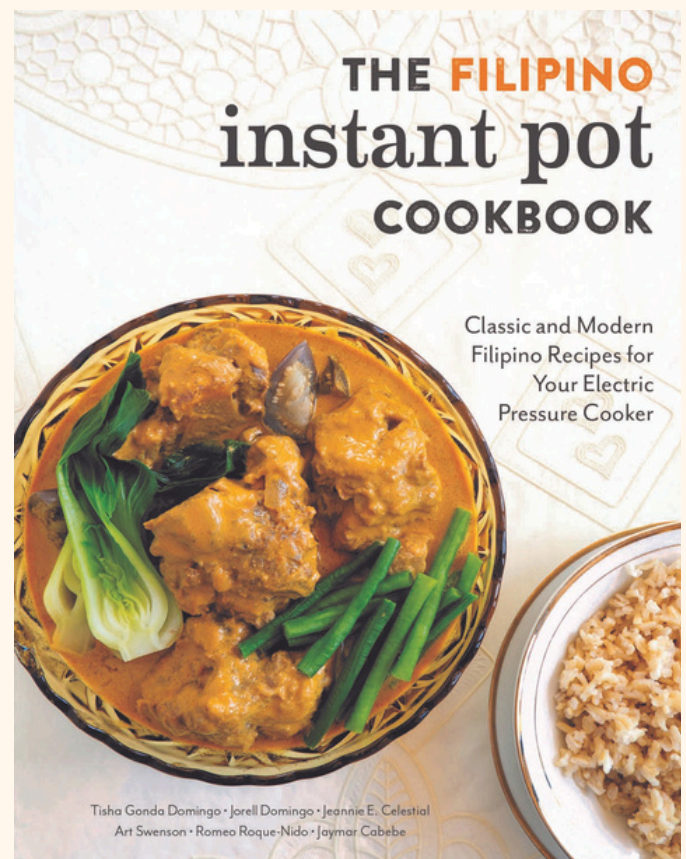
For more information, please check out:  
<https://www.fmhi-sf.org/buongloob.html>  
<https://www.instagram.com/buongloob/>  
[www.drcelestial.com](http://www.drcelestial.com)

## Ginataang Mais

### Sweet Corn Porridge

~ From our bestseller: *“The Filipino Instant Pot Cookbook: Classic and Modern Filipino Recipes for Your Electric Pressure Cooker”*

by Tisha Gonda Domingo, Jorell Domingo, Jeannie E. Celestial, Art Swensen, Romeo Roque-Nido and Jaymar Cabebe (*Rocketships & Wonderment*; \$25)



Serves 4

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Active Time: 2 minutes

Pressure Cook Time: 3 minutes

Release: Natural + Quick

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups water

1 (15 oz) can whole kernel corn with liquid

3/4 cup glutinous rice

1 (14 oz) can coconut milk

1/4 cup white sugar

Sea salt

### Toppings (optional):

Mango

Toasted shredded coconut

Toasted rice crispies

Brown sugar

Condensed milk

Chia seeds

Sesame seeds

Sliced almonds

Ginataang Mais can be served as a snack or as a dessert. It's a simple, sweet rice porridge suffused with coconut milk and corn. Like ginataang bilo-bilo, this dish can be served hot or cold, though my tummy has always enjoyed it warm. You can use fresh, frozen, canned, or roasted corn and experiment with different types of rice or toppings based on your available preparation time. - *Jeannie*

1. In the inner pot, place water and corn with liquid.
2. In a small strainer, rinse the rice under the kitchen faucet. Do not soak the rice.
3. Add the rice immediately to the inner pot. Stir gently until all ingredients are combined.
4. Turn and lock the lid into place, making sure the steam-release valve is in a sealed position. Select Manual and program for 3 minutes on High Pressure. When cooking is complete, release pressure naturally for 10 minutes then manually



release remaining pressure.

5. Unlock and carefully remove the lid. Add coconut milk and sugar. Select Sauté and stir constantly for 2 minutes as porridge thickens. Turn off Instant Pot.

6. Serve in small bowls and add toppings as you desire. Sprinkle it with sea salt to taste.

### Tips:

1. You may grill 2-3 cobs of corn or use a torch to char the kernels. Carefully cut the kernels off the cob and add in Step 1 along with 2/3 cup of water. The corn will cook thoroughly in the Instant Pot, so there's no need to fully cook it on the grill. The charred kernels will add a roasted flavor to the dish.
2. We cut the sugar amount to 50% of traditional recipes, so add more sugar to your taste.



# MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT



## *Rajika Mehra*

### What is your cultural background and identities?

I am an Indian citizen and my pronouns are she/her/hers. As a woman of color, I identify as brown and embrace the richness of my cultural background.

### What do you cherish from your cultures?

The feeling of belongingness and the sense of community. Also, Indian food!

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

Transitioning to a new country as an international student can be an intimidating experience, especially when faced with the challenge of building a social network from scratch. When a peer and fellow international student recommended connecting with the Division on International Students and Professionals (DoISAP), I eagerly embraced the opportunity, even before fully understanding what AAPA was.

Since my initial involvement as a volunteer in DoISAP, I've steadily increased my engagement within the organization. From taking on the role of membership chair within the division to actively participating in their many endeavors, I've become deeply invested in the AAPA community. Currently, I'm excited to contribute to the planning of the AAPA convention in Atlanta, GA this year as a part of the sessions committee, further solidifying my commitment to this supportive community.

#### Membership Level

Student

#### Division Membership

Division on South Asian Americans  
Division on International Students and  
Professionals (DoISAP)

#### Affiliation

Doctoral student;  
The Wright Institute, Berkeley, CA

#### Contact

[rmehra@wi.edu](mailto:rmehra@wi.edu)

#### Social Media Handle

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rajikamehra>

**“I've become deeply invested in the AAPA community.”**

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

One of the most cherished memories from my journey with AAPA centers around my initial involvement as a volunteer in the DoISAP. Expecting indifference to my concerns, I was pleasantly surprised by the warm reception I received during my very first session. My ideas were not only acknowledged but actively discussed, instilling in me a sense of belonging and empowerment that I've carried with me ever since.

Engaging with AAPA's community of professionals has provided me with a profound sense of understanding and validation for my experiences and emotions. This association has evolved into a sanctuary of comfort, support, and encouragement, connecting me with individuals who share similar cultural backgrounds and journeys. As the membership chair of DoISAP, I aspire to extend this same level of acceptance to all members, fostering a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued.

My discovery of DoISAP was a transformative moment in my life as an international student from India. Through my role as membership chair, I've been entrusted with the privilege of nurturing connections and cultivating a sense of belonging among fellow international students and professionals. It brings me immense joy to be a part of this transformative process, knowing that I'm contributing to a community where everyone's voice is heard and respected.

## How can members best take advantage of their AAPA membership?

To truly maximize the benefits of their AAPA membership, I believe that members should embrace vulnerability as a strength, not a weakness. In our demanding roles, it's easy to feel like we must have all the answers and always be on top of our game. However, it takes courage to admit when we need help or support. I encourage every member to lean into this vulnerability, knowing that within the AAPA

community, they'll find unwavering support and understanding.

AAPA offers more than just professional resources; it provides a nurturing environment where members can share their struggles and triumphs openly. I urge each member to reach out, build meaningful connections, and seek mentorship and guidance from those who have walked similar paths. Together, we can uplift and empower one another, fostering a culture of compassion and growth.

**“Engaging with AAPA's community of professionals has provided me with a profound sense of understanding and validation for my experiences and emotions.”**

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

In essence, AAPA has played a crucial role in shaping both my personal and professional journey, guiding me towards increased confidence, resilience, and empathy. Within this supportive community, I've not only found unwavering encouragement but also discovered the strength to advocate for others facing similar hurdles. I'm deeply grateful for the ongoing opportunities AAPA offers, and I'm eager to continue contributing to its mission of empowerment and support.

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

Over the course of my doctoral training in clinical psychology, I've undergone significant personal and professional growth. When I first

embarked on this journey, I was navigating the complexities of a new culture and country while honing my therapeutic skills. In my initial year, I delved into addiction and recovery work, followed by immersing myself in psychodynamic individual and couples therapy in the subsequent year. Currently, I'm expanding my expertise by learning to conduct assessments with children and families using a therapeutic collaborative model.

These varied experiences have not only deepened my understanding of clinical psychology but have also clarified my professional preferences. I've discovered a strong inclination towards working in community mental health settings, particularly those focused on trauma-intensive care. This realization has provided me with a clear direction for my future career path.

**“Every step we take holds value, no matter how small it may seem at the time. Trust in the process and have faith that this journey is truly worthwhile.”**

Moreover, amidst the demands of academic and clinical pursuits, I've learned the importance of prioritizing self-care. Transitioning from a working professional in India to a student and practicum trainee in the US brought forth the necessity of balancing ambition with self-compassion. I've come to appreciate the significance of taking pauses, acknowledging personal needs, and extending the same level of care to myself as I do to my patients.

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

For those of us who are just starting out in the field, it's crucial to keep in mind that the journey itself is as important as the destination. Despite inevitable moments of uncertainty or frustration, every experience, no matter how challenging, contributes to our growth as mental health clinicians. As we navigate the complexities of the field, it's essential to cultivate patience, forge meaningful relationships, and hone our therapeutic skills.

I'd like to reiterate a valuable insight my supervisor shared with me: Every step we take holds value, no matter how small it may seem at the time. Trust in the process and have faith that this journey is truly worthwhile.

## What are some of your hopes for the future?

I aspire to contribute to a future where cultural awareness and sensitivity are integral to our field. With the advancements in AI and the transformative impact of the pandemic, I believe psychology is undergoing a significant shift. As an early-career psychologist, my hope is to actively participate in shaping a profession that prioritizes diversity, inclusivity, and equality for all individuals. I envision a future where our collective efforts foster a more equitable and compassionate society, and I'm committed to being part of that change.

## INTERESTED IN SHARING YOUR STORY?

Help us continue to build our AAPA community by sharing about yourself, your experience, and reflections. Please complete [this form](#) if you would like to be featured in our ongoing Membership Spotlight series.



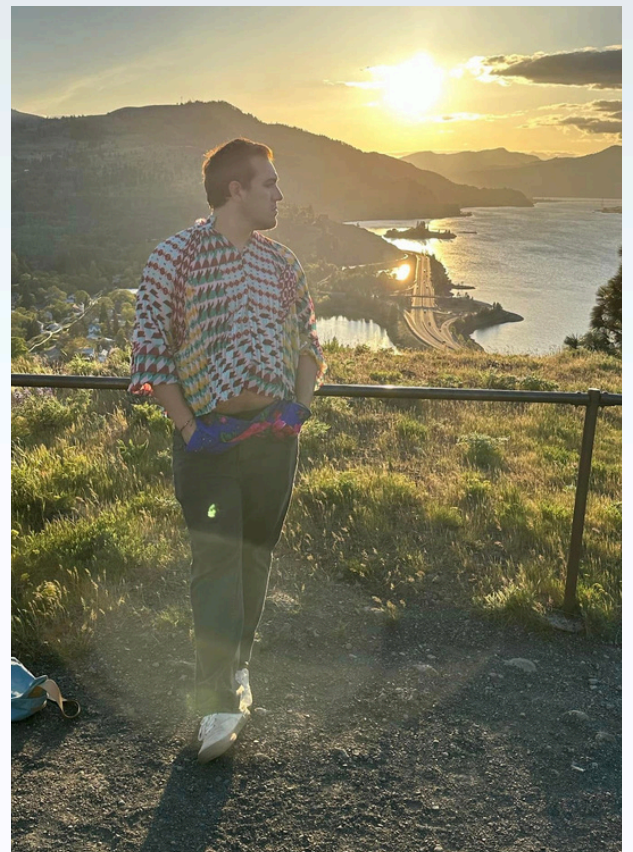
This piece is part of a continuing evolution starting with "Alone In-Between" published in our Spring 2023 issue. We are honored to continue to include Benné Gulick's works.

## Asian Superstar

I didn't know if I was white or Asian, though I'm both. I'm he and they, but I'm also her. Privileged and oppressed; I'm both. Traumatized and powerful, again both. I'm always learning who I am, and that who I am is all I have. I can be anyone, and now I know who I want to be. I've been everything to everyone, anything to anyone, but never again. Seen a million different ways, but still never as I am. "The one" to be determined.

In a room of white people, I assert my Whiteness and my Asian identity. Pressing the dominance of the room to welcome my differences. In a room of Asian people, I remind myself that I'm Asian enough. Staying centered; holding space for everything at once, though all diametrically opposed.

I'm "in between" in so many ways that there's never a space where I just fit. I have yet to decide if I even want to fit. I am my own model, my own pathway. Getting closer to myself but further from others. I am strong and strong-headed. I am not simple or simply satisfied. I am not a shield, I'm a sword. I am not a victim, I'm a victor. I am not a person, I'm a god. I'm unattached, untethered, and floating in new space - an alien superstar.



Call Me Benné (Ben-ayy, Ben for short)

- 🇺🇸🇯🇵 mixed race White/Asian (Japanese, English, German)
- 🏳️‍🌈🏳️‍⚧️🏳️‍🗍️ queer/gay/trans\*/genderfluid (meaning I view gender as non-binary and fluid; not just man or woman)
- 🧑🏳️‍🌈🧑🏳️‍⚧️👑 He/they/SHE/all
- 👤 35 years old
- ♈️ Aquarius
- 🌿🏠 pacific nw now/midwest raised
- 👤🏳️ spiritual now/raised Catholic
- 👤 manifester
- ✖️ formerly "white"/"straight"/"cis"/"privileged"
- 👤 traumatized/child of alcohol abuse/survivor of parental abuse
- 👤🧠👤👤 independent/strong/smart/funny/emotional
- 👤🎵📖👤👤 movies/music/reading/cooking/nature
- 👤🌌 alien superstar
- 👤 U-N-I-Q-U-E-!

# ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

## *Anoop Sidhu*



*"The Cost of Freedom", Anoop Sidhu (she/her/hers)*

My name is Anoop Sidhu. I am a second-year Psy.D. student at Alliant International University. As a Punjabi Sikh, I am deeply passionate about bicultural issues and cultural preservation. I have been an AAPA member for a few years now and look forward to more involvement with other Asian Americans in our field!

This painting signifies feelings of having to "wash off" your culture and traditions in order to fit in or exist within foreign countries (represented by the faucet).

This artwork emerged from a late-night conversation with my mother. As the world around us slept, we found

### MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

Graduate Student

### AFFILIATION

Alliant International University

ourselves immersed in cherishing warm memories of community in my mother's upbringing. Seated on our couch, time slipped away as she painted a vivid picture of a close-knit village where familiarity with every resident brought a profound sense of security.

With a warm smile, my mother explained her community, where the bonds were so tight that entering and leaving each other's homes felt like second nature. She recounted that in response to children or husbands expressing disdain over leftovers, the women of the village would exchange dishes with their neighbors on a weekly basis. She stated that she craves that feeling at times because no matter how sad she felt, she felt supported and loved by many. Initially, I felt the generosity of her community and even hopeful for what social support could look like.

However, as I walked to my room after we exchanged our "good nights," I felt a rushing sense of grief flood my body. The way her community in Punjab functioned would not be found in the United States. It's almost as if the cost of coming to America is washing away pieces of your heritage or culture. This is signified in the painting as the smeared mendhi on the hands.





Are you interested in contributing to advancing ANHPI psychology?  
 Do you have an idea for a related topic you'd like to write about?  
 Do you have any exciting news or announcements?  
 Do you want to share about your experience at a recent conference?  
 Do you want to connect with others through your art or poetry?

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions above. . .

## ***YOUR NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU***

The AAPA Newsletter Team would love to collaborate with you!

We welcome commentary on **current events, personal reflections, cultural events and celebrations**. etc. We also encourage AAPA members to nominate colleagues and peers to highlight their **accomplishments**. Examples may include but are not limited to AAPA **events, new positions, awards, honors, graduation/commencement, licensure, tenure, publications**, etc.

### **Visual Media and Artwork**

Throughout the year, we invite AAPA members to submit their visual artwork or photography for consideration as the cover of the newsletter or featured in general.

### **Membership Spotlights**

We are also looking to highlight more of our AAPA membership and continue building our community. We all would love to learn more about you, your experiences, and reflections.

For information on how to submit your contributions to the newsletter, please contact [newsletter@aapaonline.org](mailto:newsletter@aapaonline.org).

*The AAPA Newsletter is the space for our membership to learn about, get to know, and celebrate each other. Everyone has a story to tell, and we would love to feature yours. Our Newsletter Team would like to thank you for your valuable submissions. We look forward to receiving your articles and announcements.*



**COVER PAGE**

Artist: Anoop Sidhu  
 Copy Editor: Newsletter Team  
 Layout Design: Jacqy Lopez

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