

# THE ASIAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST



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The Official Newsletter of the  
Asian American Psychological Association  
Lunar New Year 2025 Issue

Artist: Alicia Geng

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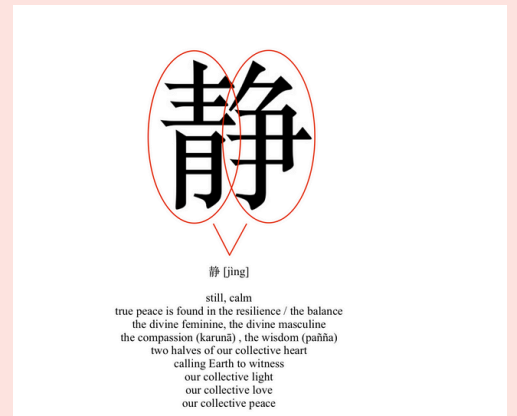
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# New Year 2025

## 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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# LUNAR NEW YEAR NEWSLETTER

## *President's Column*

DEAR AAPA FAMILY,



I am writing this first President's column of 2025 to you following the tumultuous events of the last quarter of the year, during which we have likely experienced the wide spectrum of all emotions possible. The one-year anniversary of the attacks

in the Middle East informed us that we are still fighting to support those impacted by genocide not just in Gaza, but also in Sudan and other areas of the world. We have been reminded of the impact of genocide and colonialism in our own communities and empathize with the pain and grief our siblings around the world are experiencing.

I am grateful for the founding of the Social Justice Committee this year to help AAPA create powerful statements of awareness and support while inviting us all to consider the ways our privilege and platforms can be used to effect change in the world. We were also able to celebrate with one another at our first in-person AAPA Convention in five years, and it was a joy for the attendees to meet and connect with all those present. I was heartened by the positive feedback received on how welcome and connected our members felt with one another, thanks to the incredible efforts of our Convention Co-Chairs, Drs. Daisuke Akiba and Teresa Hsu. From the thoughtful conversations around social justice; to the touching way Dr. Derald Wing Sue honored the memory of his brother, AAPA ancestor Dr. Stanley Sue, when presenting the newly named AAPA Stanley Sue Lifetime Achievement Award to his friend, Dr. Jeffrey Mio; to the amazing karaoke performances by everyone at the banquet; and to the opportunities to feel closer to one another in community, the AAPA Convention was an incredibly uplifting experience that I hope shored us up for what would happen one month later.





The result of the presidential election has created pain and hurt for many members of our community. Almost all my therapy clients (most of whom identify as POCs and/or queer) have expressed anger, confusion, disbelief, outrage, and mostly fear at what will happen to them and their family members for just existing or trying to have a better life than they had in the countries they had left. But this is not happening just to the students and clients we work with; we ourselves may be holding the same pain while attempting to find some way to be present for those we serve. Now, more than ever, we need to rely on this community and come together like never before. How can we build bridges rather than tear them down? How can we affirm our shared humanity in this post-election reality? How can we support and serve our Asian and Asian American communities, as well as other communities nationally and globally?

I don't know the answers yet, but I am calling on our members to help us figure it out. I invite our members to more actively engage with AAPA and with one another to foster community so that we can get through the next four years and beyond. To that end, please know that we plan to hold virtual quarterly town hall meetings in the coming year to hear from all of you about how AAPA can support you during this time and create more opportunities for healing, connection, and activism through being in community. The AAPA Convention shed light on how powerful, brilliant, creative, and inspiring our AAPA members are, and we encourage you to share your strengths and your ideas with us at these town halls so we can continue being the change we want to see in the world. These town halls can also be a place to be in community while sharing our sorrow and anger and grief, so that we may support and take solace in one another. I hope everyone has had a warm and restful holiday season with your loved ones, and I look forward to being with you all in community during the upcoming year.

Fondly,  
Christine



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




**Sasha Vasilou**



**Caitlyn Suen**

As we welcome the Year of the Snake in 2025, we're excited to share some highlights and updates from our AAPA Newsletter. The "Snake" is known for its wisdom, intuition, and transformation. We hope these traits will guide and inspire us throughout the year, both in our field and in our communities.


We've been fortunate to feature insightful pieces from some of our incredible members. We'd like to highlight the message from our AAPA president, Dr. Christine Catipon, who shared a heartfelt reminder about the importance of caring for our world and standing with those who are suffering. She also emphasizes that together, as a community, we can find strength in supporting one another and turning our shared grief and anger into meaningful action to create the change we hope to see. We would also like to highlight the conference in Atlanta, Georgia, in October 2024. This conference was particularly special as it marked our first in-person gathering since the pandemic. Pa Her, Scarlett Yang, and Thanh Nguyen wrote a lovely article about the conference and shared some of their pictures.



We're also excited to share Dr. Helen Hsu's journey of writing her book; she encourages more authors from our community to step forward and share their unique insights. We believe that everyone has a story and expertise worth sharing, and these voices are more important now than ever. Moreover, Dr. Darcy Ing wrote a heartfelt and supportive message to our Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris, even though Harris has faced a setback in this year's campaign. However, Harris has demonstrated unwavering dedication, strength, and leadership throughout her tenure. We are also honored to share Alicia's thoughtful interpretation of the Chinese character 靜 (jìng), which we used for the cover page of this issue. Alicia has beautifully captured the essence of this character in her accompanying poems, which reflect the peaceful and calm nature it symbolizes—emphasizing the importance of stillness and tranquility in our busy lives.

There are definitely many more wonderful writings shared in this newsletter by our members, each offering unique perspectives and insights. We are always excited to present a diverse range of voices to our community. We hope these pieces resonate with you and encourage continued conversations about the topics that matter most to us all.

Another important announcement is that we are adjusting our newsletter's publication schedule for the upcoming year. We will be moving to publishing two issues per year rather than three. Our future newsletters will come out around the early year and mid-year. Each issue will give us a chance to reflect on the past, share exciting updates, and look ahead to what's coming next. We're committed to making sure everyone's voice is heard, so we'll continue reaching out for article contributions and making sure all our members have the opportunity to share their stories and ideas.



# Congratulations

## Newly Elected Executive Committee Members

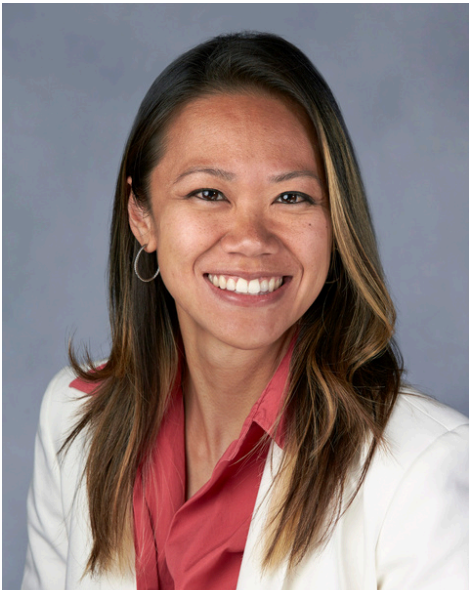
“

I'm honored to continue the work I began as Vice President while introducing new initiatives during my presidency. My leadership style is collaborative and supportive, focused on fostering an environment where every voice is valued and empowered. I am excited and deeply committed to this next chapter as your President in 2026 and look forward to working with our community to advance AAPA's mission together.



**PRESIDENT-ELECT:  
DONNA DEMANARIG**

”



**VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT:  
GLORIA WONG-PADOONGPATT**

“

Gloria Wong-Padoongpatt here and I am very much looking forward to being your Vice President-Elect. I am a social psychologist and a tenure-track faculty at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. My research programs examine the impact of microaggressions and behavioral addictions among marginalized people. I have held MANY hats in AAPA over the past 16 years but my favorite ones were 2016-2017 Convention Co-Chair, 2018-2020 Secretary/Historian, and 2020-2021 Communications Officer. I am also the current Associate Editor for the Asian American Journal of Psychology. Looking forward to jumping back into the AAPA EC and doing some WORK! More specifically, elevating the Presidential initiatives of the President-elect, Dr. Donna Demanarig, and supporting convention planning.

”





# Newly Elected Executive Committee Members

“ I am a licensed counseling psychologist and oversee clinical operations at Valley Oaks Health, an outpatient community mental health center based in Lafayette, Indiana. I am also the site training director for our APA-accredited internship which is through the National Psychology Training Consortium (happy to talk to any students who are looking for a CMHC internship or may be geographically limited to the midwest as I was when I was a student). I have served in numerous roles within AAPA over the past decade, including DoSAA leadership from 2010-2014, 2014-2015 Convention Co-Chair, and Council of Division Representatives Chair from 2016-2018. Navigating parenthood with a full-time career drove me to step back from service to AAPA the past 6 years, but I am so excited to be back in service of the organization that’s given me so much. We need this community now more than ever - and those who’ve not found us yet need us, too. ”



**SECRETARY:  
MONIQUE SHAH KULKARNI**



**COUNCIL OF DIVISION  
REPRESENTATIVES CHAIR:  
NIDA MIRZA**

“ I am Nida Mirza, PsyD, a licensed clinical psychologist in virtual private practice in California and New York. Alongside my practice, I serve as adjunct clinical faculty at Stanford’s Department of Psychiatry and a consultant for healthcare startups in Silicon Valley. Within AAPA, I participate in the Social Justice Committee (SJC) and serve as an ad hoc reviewer for the Asian American Journal for Psychology (AAJP). I’m thrilled to be joining the AAPA board as Council of Division Representatives Chair and intend to use my six years of experience on the DoSAA board to better strengthen connections and collaborations between AAPA and the Divisions. I’m looking forward to connecting with folks all across the Divisions very soon! ”

# Newly Elected Executive Committee Members



**BOARD MEMBER (PROFESSIONAL):  
CHANDNI SHAH**

“

I hope to work with others to transform ideas into practical bites of action and strengthen connections between individuals, divisions, and other orgs to keep our momentum going at a time when many of our members and leaders are feeling burnt out. During critical moments of our generation I hope to collaborate with our communities, whether to be in solidarity with anti genocide movements, taking a critical self reflection of our own biases and hierarchies within our own communities, or connecting to our historical roots to strengthen our leadership, research, and healing spaces for ourselves.

”



**APA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:  
NORMAN KIM**



**BOARD MEMBER (STUDENT):  
ROHAN ARCOT**

# FINANCE OFFICERS' REPORT

**AAPA FINANCE OFFICER UPDATES FOR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP - FALL QUARTER 2024**



AAPA's Co-Finance Officers (FOs) Soyeong Kim and Flora Surjadi, and Executive Assistant Melissa Aguirre, are happy to report that AAPA's bank accounts are in good standing. Our total combined balance from E\*trade, Chase and PayPal is \$749,635.52 as of October 31, 2024.

We have the following news to share this quarter:

- **Looking for a new Finance Officer.** Cat Bitney and Amanda Breen have transitioned out of their role as Finance Officers. Flora Surjadi will complete her term in 2025. We are currently seeking an additional FO to join Flora and Soyeong. If you are interested in exploring this role, please reach out to the FO team at [finance@aapaonline.org](mailto:finance@aapaonline.org).
- **Expressing Gratitude.** We sincerely thank Dr. Bitney and Dr. Breen for their dedicated service as co-FOs over the past several years. They will certainly be missed!
- **2023 Taxes.** 2023 taxes were submitted on the extension deadline in November. Going forward, Soyeong and Melissa will work with our accountant to get taxes filed on time. Bringing on Melissa will help AAPA file taxes on time every year.
- **Chase Bank Ownership.** Soyeong Kim now has ownership of the Chase bank account and holds the AAPA debit and credit cards. If there are expenses that need to be paid with a credit card, please contact us.
- **AAPA Status as Charitable Organization.** We recently completed the annual registration to maintain AAPA's 501(c)3 non-profit organization status.
- **Investing.** The Chase CD will be maturing on December 28, 2024, generating \$9,254.01 in interest revenue. Unless we are offered a better APR, we will likely renew the current CD for another 9-12 months.

# Membership Updates

## 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

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

Note: This report is republished from the Fall 2024 issue.

# AAPA 2023 and 2024 Awards Winners

SUBMITTED BY AMY KOBUS, PHD & MINSUN LEE, PHD, AAPA AWARDS CO-CHAIRS

## 2023 AWARDEES



**DR. GRACE KIM**

Dr. Kim is a Clinical Professor and the Chair of the Counseling Psychology & Applied Human Development Department at Boston University, Wheelock College of Education & Human Development.



**DR. CIXIN WANG**

Dr. Wang is an Associate Professor and the Program Director for School Psychology in the College of Education at the University of Maryland, College Park.



**DR. GLORIA  
WONG-PADOONGPATT**

Dr. Wong-Padoongpatt is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Las Vegas, Nevada.



**SHUO "COCO" WANG**

Shuo "Coco" Wang is a Ph.D. Candidate in Counseling Psychology at New Mexico State University.



**SYLVIE WONG**

Sylvie Wong is a Doctoral Candidate in the Counseling Psychology program at Teachers College, Columbia University.



**DR. JOEL WONG**

Dr. Wong is a Professor of Counseling Psychology at Indiana University.



**DR. THOMAS LE**

Dr. Le is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Bryn Mawr College.

## 2024 AWARDEES

**DR. JEFFERY MIO**

Dr. Mio is an Emeritus Professor of the Psychology Department at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

**DR. JEANNIE CELESTIAL**

Dr. Celestial is a licensed clinical psychologist, author, and consultant, specializing in trauma recovery and leadership development among Filipina, Asian American, and Pacific Islander women.

**DR. HELEN HSU**

Dr. Hsu is the Director of Outreach for Stanford University Counseling and Psychological Services.

**DR. MICHI FU**

Dr. Fu is Distinguished Professor of Clinical Psychology at Alliant International University and a Visiting Professor at National Taiwan University.

**DR. GLORIA  
WONG-PADOONGPATT**

Dr. Wong-Padoongpatt is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Las Vegas, Nevada.

**DR. THOMAS LE**

Dr. Le is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Bryn Mawr College and a licensed psychologist in the state of Pennsylvania.

2024 DISSERTATION RESEARCH GRANT



**MANASA SWAMINATHAN**

Manasa Swaminathan is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Clinical Psychology program at the University of Indianapolis.

2024 STEPHEN C. ROSE SCHOLARSHIP FOR PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH ON ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH



**SINHYE LEE**

Sinhye Lee is a Ph.D. Candidate in Counseling Psychology at the University of Georgia.

2024 AAJP BEST PAPER PRIZE



**DR. FREDERICK LEONG**

Dr. Leong is a retired Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at Michigan State University.

2024 AAJP BEST STUDENT PAPER PRIZE



**KALPANA BALARAMAN**

Kalpana K. Balaraman is a first-year medical student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

2024 AAJP BEST STUDENT PAPER PRIZE



**SHOZEN DAN**

Shozen Dan is a Ph.D. student in the StatML program jointly organized by Imperial College London and the University of Oxford.

2024 AAJP BEST STUDENT PAPER PRIZE



**NICK ORTEGA**

Nick Ortega is Senior Data Analyst in the retail industry and is pursuing a Master of Science in Data Science from Eastern University.



# With Hope & Gratitude: A Reflection on the AAPA Conference from the DoSEAA EC

BY: PA HER, SCARLETT YANG, & THANH NGUYEN



Image: (left to right) Pa Her, DoSEAA Secretary/Finance; Thanh Nguyen, DoSEAA Chair; and Scarlett Yang, DoSEAA Chair-Elect.

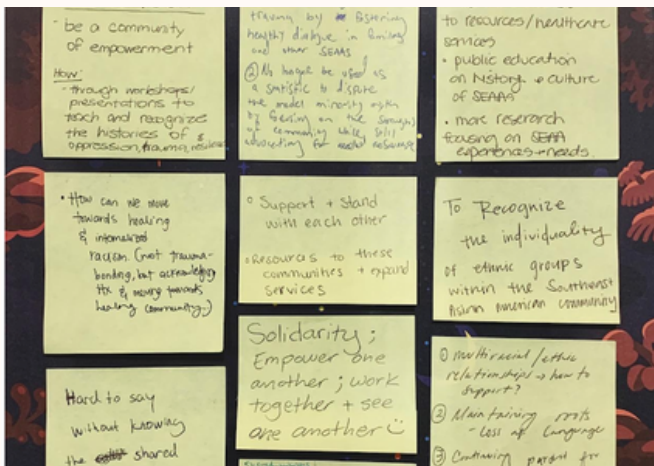


Image: Reflections from attendees at the DoSEAA courageous conversation session on "What does it mean to be Southeast Asian Americans?"

"After attending the conference, I felt inspired to continue advancing my work as a scholar and practitioner and to meet the needs of our communities. I was particularly moved by the conference's focus on addressing mental health issues nationally and globally. It was amazing to see our members come together in solidarity with Palestine. As a Southeast Asian refugee from war-torn conflicts, the situation in Palestine has heightened my awareness and sensitivity towards issues of displacement and refugee crises globally. However, I have also witnessed how this conflict has contributed to a more polarized environment, leading to heightened scrutiny and discrimination against some Southeast Asian communities due to their perceived association with broader geopolitical tensions. I hope that DoSEAA can be a space for individuals to continue to have discussions focusing on these conflicts."

Pa Her, DoSEAA Secretary/Finance

It was a privilege to attend and meet so many wonderful people at the recent Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA) conference in Atlanta, Georgia this October. This conference was particularly special as it marked our first in-person gathering since the pandemic. It was amazing to put faces to names and meet people in person with whom we have collaborated and worked so closely for the past four to five years. We appreciate the efforts put forth by the amazing conference team to make this happen. Thank you!

"I am super grateful to have attended the AAPA conference this year. As it was my first in-person AAPA conference, it was fulfilling to see so many colleagues, students, and members sharing their passionate work. It was such a memorable experience connecting with mentors and mentees, putting names to faces, and meeting leaders who continue to be an inspiration for me. It was encouraging and restorative to see the community's efforts to build a safe space and witness folks who feel a sense of safety and connectedness engage in deep, intriguing, and occasionally distressing conversations. This experience has taught me much about myself and reminded me why I am in this field and with AAPA and DoSEAA. I want to extend my gratitude to those who showed up for themselves and others. I also want to thank the powerful & influential ancestors/leaders in this field who have paved the way for us. I hope that DoSEAA can be a safe space for folks to share, connect, and be in community."

Scarlett Yang, DoSEAA Chair-Elect

“I felt so rejuvenated and grateful to have had the opportunity to be in community with other like-minded colleagues at the conference. I want to personally thank my fellow SEAs who showed up, shared your stories, and contributed to a meaningful courageous conversation on “What does it mean to be Southeast Asian Americans?” To me, your bravery to be present, authentic, and vulnerable throughout our conversation was such a precious gift. Thank you. Our SEAA community is vibrantly diverse and resilient. I am hopeful that we can continue to show up for one another and co-create an empowering space within AAPA that we can proudly call our professional ‘home’.”

Thanh Nguyen, DoSEAA Chair

For the three of us, the conference was an enriching experience, filled with insightful presentations, engaging discussions, and a strong sense of community. It was inspiring to see so many dedicated professionals, students, and scholars come together, fostering a sense of belonging and unity to advance the field of psychology, particularly in addressing the unique challenges and strengths within the Asian American community. Additionally, connecting with fellow attendees, sharing experiences, and learning from each other reinforced the essential collaborative spirit in our field, mainly when there are so few of us.

Being able to mentor and have discussions with students about their future careers or the challenges they faced in their academic problems has been so impactful. It reminded us of the importance of staying connected and building relationships as we move through the field. We are hopeful that those who attended and connected with us at the convention experienced similar feelings. As early career psychologists and students, we hope you will find DoSEAA to be a professional home for you, too. The conversations with members at the conference have inspired us to continue advancing DoSEAA's mission to envision DoSEAA as a professional home for all of us.



Image: DoSEAA lunch social at the AAPA Conference, Atlanta, GA, with two of our student members, Jenna Nguyen (far left) and Chi Pham (far right).

Based on the interests and collaborations with our DoSEAA members, we have been able to foster two meaningful and on-going virtual meet-up spaces thus far: the DoSEAA Community Processing Space and the Viet Student/Mental Health Provider Meet-up Group. We have also hosted informal virtual town hall meetings, where we have the opportunity to connect directly with our members and hear their input/suggestions.

We are excited to continue building this space within our organization and look forward to future collaboration and the positive changes we can bring about. As our Division continues to grow, we are excited to meet and learn more about our members! Please feel free to contact us with any questions, suggestions, or ideas about what our division can do as your DoSEAA professional home.

DoSEAA Chair: [doseaa.chair@aapaonline.org](mailto:doseaa.chair@aapaonline.org)

DoSEAA Chair-Elect: [doseaa.chairelect@aapaonline.org](mailto:doseaa.chairelect@aapaonline.org)

DoSEAA Secretary/Finance: [doseaa.secretaryfinnce@aapaonline.org](mailto:doseaa.secretaryfinnce@aapaonline.org)

### CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

DoISAP created a spotlight to showcase the outstanding work of international students and professionals who presented at the AAPA convention in October 2024. Please take a moment to celebrate their achievements through [this spotlight!](#)

### FOCUS GROUPS ON IMMIGRATION NEEDS

In March 2024, DoISAP conducted two focus group sessions to explore the needs of international students and early career professionals regarding immigration issues. The sessions, attended by 11 participants and facilitated by DoISAP members, used a semi-structured format to discuss challenges, barriers, and resources that are relevant to the participants' experiences. Insights from these discussions will inform future DoISAP programming efforts. More information about the focus group can be found [HERE](#).

### COLLABORATION WITH THE DIVISION ON STUDENTS

On October 27, 2024, DoISAP collaborated with DoS for their Sip & Soothe series. This collaboration focused on guiding students through the process of applying to graduate programs in psychology and related fields. More information about this event can be found [HERE](#).



# DOISAP NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT

DOISAP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2022-2024

As we reflect on the past year, the Division on International Students and Professionals (DoISAP) is thrilled to share updates and celebrate the contributions of our members to the AAPA community. Your engagement, dedication, and support have been the driving force behind our initiatives, and we are excited to highlight a few key moments from 2024.

### UNIQUE IDEA

DoISAP is energized by the progress we've made and the connections we've built this year. As we look to 2025 and beyond, we remain committed to fostering a supportive and welcoming space for international students and professionals. Your involvement makes this work possible, and we look forward to continuing to serve and collaborate with our growing community.

### FIRST BIENNIAL NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Between October and December 2024, DoISAP conducted its first biennial nominations and elections process since establishing its inaugural executive committee. We are deeply grateful for the nominations, engagement, and support from our members during this process. We are excited to welcome the leadership of the 2025-2027 Executive Committee, who will continue to build on DoISAP's mission of supporting and empowering international students and professionals in psychology.



## Palestinian Solidarity Resources



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Psychologists for Justice in Palestine

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The Institute for the Understanding of Anti-Palestinian Racism

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Research on the Impact of Anti-Palestinian Racism

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Research and Resources

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Student Activism as Interpretation by Jyoti M. Rao

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Palestine Legal

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# Authors Among Us (yes, YOU!)

Helen Hsu, Psy.D.

The majority of my career has been in community-based health clinics, where devoted staff worked small miracles on the daily. Our teams provided home visits, hospital support, family therapy, school-based therapy, community-circles, and healing activities—all infused with creativity and cultural relevance—and all of it on a shoestring budget. One of my (many) peeves was that the people on the ground, in the streets, and providing life-changing care, never had the time nor funding to write journal articles or books to share their wisdom. Even when we won and implemented small grants, we never had the resources to adequately disseminate or publish.

In 2020, isolated for two weeks of quarantine lockdown in a Taipei hotel room—I finally completed a book proposal. For more than a decade I had dreamed of a DIY, culturally-informed, layperson-friendly, jargon-free, and affirming healing trauma book focused on Asian Americans. I kept waiting for someone else to write one, before realizing I should probably do it myself. Understanding that many in our communities cannot or will not access professional mental health services, I sought to create an accessible guide. New Harbinger Publications accepted my proposal and offered me a contract, and my *Healing Trauma Workbook for Asian Americans* publication date was set: July 2024.

Then, to my initial dismay, I learned that two other Asian American therapists were co-publishing a book on recovering from trauma—in February 2024!



Helen Hsu, Psy.D.

I didn't know anything about the authors, Soo Jin Lee and Linda Yoon. As a rule, I don't see my professional colleagues as competition per se; there's obviously more than enough work for all of us! Yet, I was obviously concerned about how this could potentially impact my book launch. Imagine my surprise when I received an email from them inviting me to gather with other Asian American authors and authors-in-progress. From that instant of first contact, Soo Jin and Linda have been beyond welcoming. They model communitarian values, and I am reminded of the wonderful ways we are all within a community of inclusiveness and collaboration.

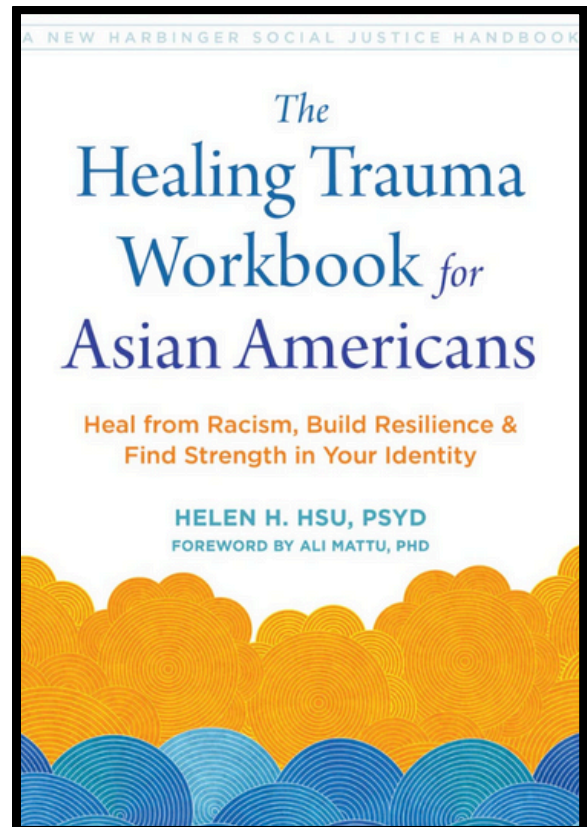


Continued...

Soo Jin and Linda were appreciative of Dr. Jeannie Celestial (already an accomplished author), who beautifully facilitated a book event at Book Passage in San Francisco, California. After the book event, Soo Jin and Linda brought together two long tables full of writers, thinkers, and activists to commune and connect. Months later, they invited me and Ellie Yang Camp to appear on a book event panel at On Waverly (cutest store in all of SF Chinatown, for real). Neither Ellie's nor my own book were even published yet! Extending this invitation to us was such an act of solidarity from Soo Jin and Linda. We had a packed audience that evening and a lively empowering conversation facilitated by Angela Tang, President and CEO of RAMS, Inc.

Since publishing my book, I have been on a drive to prod wise colleagues and community members to write. To write for your careers yes, but more importantly, to write for our communities.

The feedback thus far has meant the most to me, hearing things like, "I have never seen a Vietnamese name in a story like this before," or "I felt like my experiences were seen," and "I am adapting this to my own community." I am satisfied with the book I wrote, but I will be the first person to say that we need MORE culturally informed mental health books for our families and our communities. Many of our esteemed mentors and colleagues have authored foundational Asian American mental health books for academia, but there exists a burning need for our collective expertise to be in a user-friendly format for wider impact. Therapist authors Jenny Wang, Linda Yoon, Soo Jin Lee and I are all cisgender women of East Asian ancestry. I am excited and yearning to see books written by more diverse community members.



We need the insights and stories from more Queer, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Multiple Heritage, Disabled, Adoptee, and allied experts. We have space for you to be an author and share your perspectives and expertise. Take that creative writing course (that's how I deprogrammed myself from APA style and regained my creative voice), create that writing group, join that writing retreat, begin that book proposal, and know that you do have an audience of readers and a community of supporters. I can't wait to learn from the next generation of Asian American communitarian authors and experts.

[To learn more about Where I Belong: Dr. Hsu interview Linda Yoon and Soo Jin Lee](#)

[To learn more about the Healing Trauma Workbook for Asian Americans](#)

# Thoughts on the 2024 Election



*Personal Reflections from:  
Darcy S. F. Ing, PsyD*

**L**ike many others after November 5, I was sad and disappointed. However, I was not shocked. Though I knew the outcome was uncertain, I remained hopeful. Yet, victory for either side was not assured.

I know that many people feel confusion, grief, anger, or are demoralized. I don't blame them. It's difficult to be hopeful and inspired, to defend our rights and those of others, and to save our system of governance...and have it taken away by forces beyond our control. Psychologist Dr. Gail Post reminded us that not knowing what will happen, the loss of control, creates anxiety. We might get angry, worry, and question our own assumptions of how the world works.

In addition, she said, "The vicious commentary, racist/sexist/prejudicial remarks, and some blatant lies from several politicians and pundits can evoke disturbing memories of past experiences, including:

- betrayal, bullying, or injustice
- victimization or violence due to prejudice or racial/cultural/gender bias
- vulnerability and fear
- times when your 'truth,' your identity, and your sense of self was ignored or devalued
- the effects of intergenerational trauma if your loved ones were victims of oppression or violence."

She adds, "Recognize that your reactions to the election may be amplified by prior traumatic experiences. You might feel panic, bodily distress, or have difficulty sleeping. You might be actively planning an escape clause and imagine relocating (as your immigrant relatives had done during times of oppression). If your distress persists, consider contacting a licensed mental health professional for support." Stay grounded, and seek support.

He continued, "When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how'." We always have a choice to live by our values and to do the right thing. Frankl writes, "Our answer must consist, not in talk and meditation, but in right action and in right conduct. Life ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual." We always have a choice to live by our values, to choose to do the right thing. That cannot be taken away from us.

“

We always have a choice to live by our values, to choose to do the right thing. That cannot be taken away from us.

”

Most of us know that difficult times are coming, for us and for the rest of the world. We can choose to surrender to our fate. Alternatively, we can remember Viktor Frankl, the Austrian psychologist who survived the concentration camp Auschwitz. Frankl wrote: "We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

Does anyone remember *Mr. Rogers*? He was a Presbyterian minister who had a television show aimed at young children. Mr. Rogers (born Fred Rodgers) recalled being a child himself and seeing various scary things on the news. This upset young Fred very much. However, he added, "My mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.' To this day, especially in times of disaster, I remember my mother's words, and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in this world."




Many of us went into this profession because we want to understand and help others. I received a meme from a friend of mine during the pandemic. It thanked therapists for helping people through a global pandemic, economic crisis, a politically polarizing election, a racial justice movement, and chronic uncertainty, anxiety, and depression. With no special preparation or training. All while going through the same thing themselves. We still are.

Psychologists and others in the helping professions will be going through difficult times along with everyone else. Yet we are also called to help others. We don't know when this period will end, but we do know that someday it will. Perhaps we can learn not to depend on our institutions, courts, politicians, or leaders. Maybe it's time to take action ourselves, to remember our interdependence, and to work together to create something better.

Mother Teresa said, "Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love." It's unlikely that one of us will change the world, but we can help to change the world for one person. And throughout, remember to take care of yourself. Use coping strategies that help rather than harm your mind, body, relationships, or bank account. Find support, practice mindfulness, seek guidance, and take care of your mind and your body.

Show compassion to yourself so that you may show compassion to others. This too shall pass.



### 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).



## Thank you, Vice President Harris!

By Darcy S. F. Ing PsyD

In August 2024, shortly after President Joe Biden announced his withdrawal from candidacy for president, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) approved a plan to nominate Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates by virtual vote just before the Democratic convention in Chicago. Vice President Kamala Harris secured the Democratic presidential nomination with 99 percent of delegate votes. On August 6, her nomination was certified by the DNC.

Vice President Harris became the first Black woman and first Asian American from a major political party to receive that honor. She faced the Republican nominee, Donald J. Trump, in the 2024 Presidential election, inspiring and giving hope to many in the three short months of her candidacy.

Kamala Harris' father Donald J. Harris was from Jamaica, and her mother Shyamala Gopalan was from India. They met at the University of California at Berkeley, and Kamala was their oldest child. Growing up, Kamala maintained contact with her Indian family abroad. She also studied political science and economics at Howard University, a historically Black college. She earned a law degree in 1989 and worked as deputy district attorney in Oakland, later becoming district attorney in 2004. She was elected Attorney General of California in 2010. Harris continued to be a rising star in the Democratic Party. In 2016, she campaigned for and won the U.S. Senate seat previously held by Barbara Boxer.

## Thank you, Vice President Harris! (continued)

Harris is just one of those from Asian and Pacific Islander backgrounds who have entered politics. Most are from the Democratic party. From Hawaii, George Ariyoshi, the first Asian American governor; Hiram Fong, the first Asian American senator; Patsy Mink, the first woman of color and first Asian American in the House; eventually followed by Daniel K. Inouye, Daniel Akaka, John Waihe'e, Tulsi Gabbard, and Mazie Hirono. In addition to those from Hawaii, other Asian Democrats included S.I. Hayakawa, Norman Mineta, and Tammy Duckworth. From the Republican Party, Hiram Fong, Bobby Jindal, and Nikki Haley. Of course, there are many more, including those from smaller independent parties. Vice President Harris has some esteemed company.

I wish to congratulate Vice President Harris on her nomination and historic candidacy. We thank the Vice President and her running mate, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, for their service, leadership, credibility, warmth and authenticity, and for inspiring and giving us hope.

During her concession speech, Harris said, “. . .we owe loyalty not to a president or party but to the Constitution, our conscience, and our God. . .while I concede this election, I do not concede the fight that fueled this campaign. The fight—the fight for freedom, for opportunity, for fairness, and the dignity of all people, a fight for the ideals at the heart of our nation, the ideals that reflect America at our best. That is a fight I will never give up.

I will never give up the fight for a future where Americans can pursue their dreams, ambitions, and aspirations, where the women of America have the freedom to make decisions about their own body and not have their government telling them what to do. . . We will never give up the fight to protect our schools and our streets from gun violence. And, America, we will never give up the fight for our democracy, for the rule of law, for equal justice, and for the sacred idea that every one of us, no matter who we are or where we start out, has certain fundamental rights and freedoms that must be respected and upheld.

And we will continue to wage this fight in the voting booth, in the courts, and in the public square. And we will also wage it in quieter ways, in how we live our lives, by treating one another with kindness and respect, by looking in the face of a stranger and seeing a neighbor, by always using our strength to lift people up, to fight for the dignity that all people deserve.”

Thank you Vice President Harris, for giving us the courage, inspiration, and hope to continue the good fight.



## MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

*Elayne Zhou***What is your cultural background and identities?**

I identify as a 2nd generation, Chinese-American, cisgender, bisexual female.

**What do you cherish from your cultures?**

The way we make stories come alive and how much unspoken connection and care exists between us.

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

Google search originally! I wanted to find a home within psychology where there was not only space to be my authentic self but also encouragement to do so.

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

I attended my first AAPA conference early on in my career, when I was just starting to think about racial/ethnic health disparities. During the mentorship hour, I connected with a mentor who spoke passionately about the field's tendency towards a deficits-based

rather than strengths-based approach to understanding gaps in health outcomes. This conversation was a pivotal moment in shaping my career trajectory and current research interests in advancing health equity via equitable research methods (community based participatory research) and defaulting to asking "what is going right?" for underrepresented communities.

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

I am just so grateful to have AAPA as a professional home that I can always return to as I grow and change. It's an incredibly accepting place and I'm so proud to be a member!

**Membership Level**

Student

**Division Membership**

Division on Students

**Affiliation**

3rd year Clinical Psychology PhD student at the University of Southern California

**Contact**

elaynezh@usc.edu



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

Network and join divisions. Attend the AAPA conference, especially the mentorship hour, and connect with people. When they say they are willing to be contacted, actually do it! I have gotten such great advice from folks and learned about different career paths that way.

*"I am just so grateful to have AAPA as a professional home that I can always return to as I grow and change. It's an incredibly accepting place and I'm so proud to be a member!"*

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

I have built a lot of skills in self-advocacy which I use every single day in my graduate career, whether it be small or big needs. Thanks to some really incredible and encouraging mentors, I have followed every thread that has made me grow and I am really grateful looking back to see how far I've come. I am also learning that carving out regular time to do deep self-reflection and stay in touch with my values is just as important as the time I set aside to do the work of graduate school.

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

Celebrate every single accomplishment! I have a running list per semester/term of everything I achieve both in school and in my personal life. This practice is super helpful when it comes time to update CVs or apply for grants, but more importantly it reminds you of how far you've come. Graduate school and academia in general often does not come with much immediate validation, so you have to create those opportunities for yourself to celebrate small wins. It also helps to have both lists to compare because if your personal life list is getting a little too short, it might be a good time to check yourself and add in some fun things that make your day more delightful.

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

I hope that communities that have been underserved in the field of psychology can be safe and healthy, with access to support and care that is responsive to their identities and experiences, and that promotes the flourishing of many generations to come.

### 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.



# Dissection of Stillness

by Alicia Geng

生 [shēng]

we use the same character for “life” and “raw”  
to see Life is to see the Raw: what is at the Core,  
what is Authentic, what is Powerful, what is True  
only in the truth, we start to find peace

elephant in the room — the missing brush stroke  
why was it omitted? where is it?  
we must accept the unknown, the insoluble, the incomplete  
our unfulfilled dreams, our erstwhile lovers,  
the ones that got away  
slipped through our fingers by the mere stroke of \_\_\_\_\_

fill in the blank:

- a) luck
- b) misfortune



月 [yuè]

the moon, the luna, the feminine  
the undercurrent of intuition, nurture, renewal  
this celestial gravitational pull so powerful even  
the mighty ocean surrenders its tides  
a soft padding beneath the weight of life  
(生 above)

waxing and waning as we undergo the perpetual  
cycle of birth, death, rebirth  
“who am I?” we ask from one moment to the next  
stay curious, my friends  
to know thyself is to be blessed



青 [qīng]

fresh, young

we also use this character to describe the medley of colours on a bruise

have you ever been fascinated by its transformation?

the mosaic of black, purple, midnight blue  
our flesh, a canvas for the  
shifting, blending, fading hues

life is suffering

full of contusions to the soul

but if we can take a step back and observe  
the beauty in the healing, the flux of existing  
we can find clarity in what makes us whole\*

\*us whole (a soul)

this radical has no meaning on its own  
but it shares the same radical as the character for  
鱼 [yǔ]  
fish

the spirit of a fish is a resilient one  
relentless perseverance against the pulse of the river  
it does not wonder if the gods know of its struggle  
it does not wonder what karma of its past life has  
condemned it to a constant upstream battle  
only a human would ask  
what is the purpose? what did I do to deserve this?

争 [zhēng]

to fight, to strive for

fight to be heard, to be seen  
to use others as a mirror  
to show us that we matter  
exhausting

but we are also The Mirror  
I can show you that you are love  
and you are light  
because I am love  
and I am light  
boundless



re: life is suffering  
also remember the third noble truth:  
there is an end to suffering  
the eightfold path  
striving

静 [jìng]

still, calm

true peace is found in the resilience / the balance  
the divine feminine, the divine masculine  
the compassion (karunā), the wisdom (pañña)  
two halves of our collective heart  
calling Earth to witness  
our collective light  
our collective love  
our collective peace



*ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST*

# Alicia Geng

I'm Alicia Geng, a PhD student at UC Santa Barbara studying School Psychology. I have been a student member of AAPA since working briefly with the revered Dr. Nolan Zane. Now I am currently a graduate student member with involvement on the newsletter editing team. Academically, I am looking into the intersection between school connectedness and student well-being within the AANHPI population. I have been trying to balance my academic career and following my interests in yoga and Zen philosophies, finding community in both. Being out in nature and connecting with people is what brings me the most joy and purpose!

**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL**

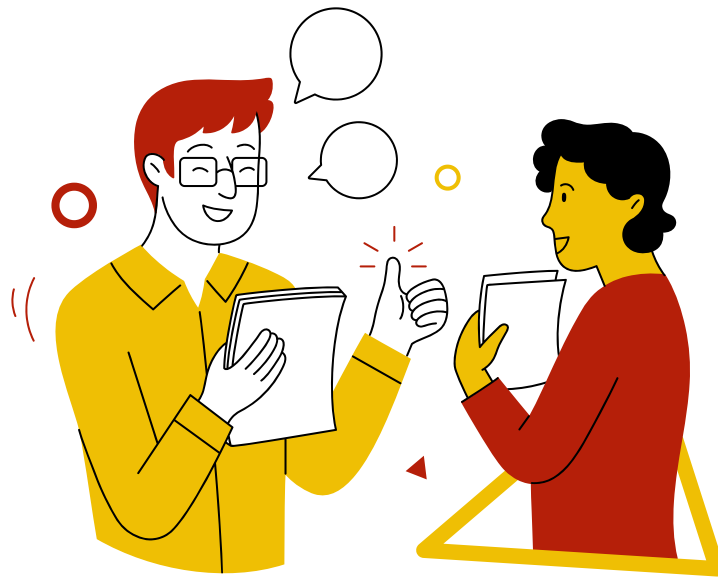
Graduate Student  
(Doctorate)

AFFILIATION  
UC Santa Barbara

My piece is a series of visual, short poems and meditations dissecting the Chinese character for stillness. The process was spontaneous and intuitive, speaking from the heart and the soul, not being bound by the inflexible standards of academic writing.

Most of my literature intake and output in the last few years has been standardized academic writing, not allowing for creative expression. In the summer, I took a month off all things research related and went home to Hong Kong, where I spent a lot of time on public transport and being present with family. I was introspecting on finding peace and joy in life, making sense of our humanity through a lens inspired by yogic philosophy. The inspiration is inexplicable, but I believe much is because I had cleared my headspace of scholarly jargon and had the freedom to think and reflect deeply again. I had this character tattooed on my sternum years ago and writing this series of poems gave it new meaning, a new depth that I am grateful for!

# RECRUITING A NEW EDITOR-IN-CHIEF!



From this year onward, we will arrange each EiCs term so that each novice EiC will join for the second year of the previous EiC. The novice EiC will have the opportunity to be mentored by the veteran EiC, and will then be able to do the same for the novice EiC that follows. To begin that process, we invite anyone interested in joining the newsletter team as an EiC to please reach out to us!

**APPLY NOW**

Please see detailed descriptions of all roles here, including Co-Editors-in-Chief, Columnists/Reporters, Copy Editors, and Layout Editors

**SEND YOUR CV TO :**

newsletter@aapaonline.org



Are you interested in contributing to advancing AANHPI 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**

Author: Alicia Geng  
 Copy Editor: Newsletter Team  
 Layout Design: Sasha Vasilou

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