



SPOTLIGHT

News and events from OCA Westchester-Hudson Valley



A season of change and opportunity

As the days grow shorter, OCA-Westchester-Hudson Valley turns up the heat! We have a full calendar of AAPI cultural and advocacy activities planned (page 2), wellness events (page 4), events for and by youth (page 8), service opportunities and awards, not to mention our gala at a beautiful new venue on November 16!

At the gala we will celebrate the 2024 OCA-WHV Student Award winners. Our award winners were chosen from the best and brightest high school students in Westchester and the Hudson Valley, outstanding for their service and leadership as well

as academic and extracurricular achievements.

Please visit page 10 to see these remarkable youth, and visit our website to read more about their accomplishments.

Whether you want to support important Asian American issues, or you're just interested in festivals, culture, and making new friends, OCA will bring new connections and joy to your life.

Check out our calendar, follow us on social, and subscribe to our email list.

Join OCA-WHV today!

You're Invited
 ... to the **2024 Annual OCA-WHV Gala**
 Nov 16, 2024, 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
 Surf Club on the Sound
 280 Davenport Ave, New Rochelle, NY 10805

Please scan our QR Code for details on purchasing a ticket.

OCA: Who We Are

The Westchester-Hudson Valley chapter of OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates (OCA-WHV) is one of the oldest ethnic advocacy organizations of the tristate region. Our core mission is social advocacy on behalf of all Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI), local and nationwide.

We work tirelessly to eliminate hate and promote caring, to lobby for safety, immigration and criminal justice reform, and advocate for recognition of AAPI history and contributions.

We are constantly at work to develop new outreach programs in the large and growing Asian immigrant population in the region. Our thriving youth program (Young OCA) supports gifted student leaders as well as talented youth facing hardship or need. We continue to build strong coalitions with sister organizations.

GET INVOLVED!
JOIN OCA!

SCAN HERE
TO LEARN
MORE AT
OCA-WHV.ORG



OCAWHV



OCA-WHV



Calendar of Upcoming Asian-American Events

October 13, November 17, 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM: Youth Group Art Therapy

October 19, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM: Chinese Movie Matinee - Ping Pong: The Triumph (2023)

October 20, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: OCA-WHV Annual Meet the Candidates 2024

October 7, October 21, November 4, November 18, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM: 免费艺术疗愈减压系列课程 (Senior Art Therapy)

October 26, November 16, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Dealing with Conflict Workshop

November 5: Election Day (last day to register is 10/26)

November 9, December 14, 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM: New Bridges Craft Circle at Intown Towers

November 10, November 15, November 17, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM: NBCZ Youth meetups at the movies, Urban League, and Puzzle Parlour

November 16, 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM: 2024 Annual OCA-WHV Dynamic Achievers Award Gala

November 30, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM: Chinese Movie Matinee - Changan

Dec 6, 11:30 AM - 3:00 PM: Bob Chao Induction to the Senior Hall of Fame

Jan 11, 2025, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM: Japanese Movie Matinee - The Cats of Mirikitani (2006), Zoom with director Linda Hattendorf

Scan the QR code on this page to visit our website oca-whv.org for more details, to RSVP, and sign up for our email newsletter.



MACQUARIE

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to our sponsors!**



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2024 OCA-WHV Board of Directors

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Bhavana Pahwa

Co-Executive VP: Eric Cheng, Jane Li, Dan Lewis

VP of Education/Cultural Affairs: Li Lin

Secretary: Jane Li

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VP of Diversity and Inclusion: Meow Yee



Project Committee Chairs

Asian Heritage Festival: Vincent Young

Board member nomination: Dan Lewis

DAA nomination: Li Lin

Endowment: Howard Chen

Gala: Eric Cheng

Meet the Candidates: Gary Guo

Mental Health Access Project: Dan Lewis

Mid-Autumn Festival: Rose Tan Kaung

New Bridges Coalition: Jeanhee Chung

Retreat: Meow Yee

Youth Leadership Awards:
Edward Lam/Jean Chang

Interns: Kaya Sasaki and Allegra Kong



ADVOCACY

OCA National Convention 2024

Ten adult and three teen OCA -WHV members attended the 2024 OCA National Convention in Philadelphia, PA. July 11-14. This is an annual, memorable and impactful event that celebrates and empowers the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community. Through participation in a community fair, an evening concert, a presidential town hall with Vice President Kamala Harris, and breakout sessions with guest speakers and fellow attendees, we examined the importance of Asian American civic engagement and solidarity in a critical election year.

Meet the Candidates Forum

On October 20th, 2024, the annual Meet the Candidates Forum was hosted at Edgemont Jr/Sr High School. Organized by OCA-WHV, seven candidates and County Legislator **David Imamura** spoke to over 60 families, with a great Q&A session led by **Dr. Johnson Qian** between each speech. The student emcees were **Sophie Xie**, YOCA Vice President and Meet the Candidates Coordinator, and **James Qian**, a senior at Edgemont High School. We had Shelly Mayer, Peter Harckham, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, David Imamura, Maryjane Shimsky, Amy Paulin, Tricia Lindsay, and George Latimer speak to an enthusiastic audience, and received great feedback from the community!



AANHPI Curriculum Bill: What you can do

Despite its passage by the NY State Senate, the AAPI curriculum bill did not come up for a vote in the NY House in the 2023 legislative session. We must contact Speaker Carl Heastie and Governor Hochul and urge them to pass this bill! We should also thank NY Senate Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Education Chair Senator Shelley Mayer for passing the Senate bill last year, and ask them to introduce and pass it again this year. [OCA-WHV co-endorsed the Make Us Visible NY letter urging the legislature to pass this important bill.](#) We also endorsed [a letter of support for the new National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture](#) on the National Mall. **Here's what you can do:** Asian Americans in New York are urged to recruit other families, and together reach out to their local school district's teachers, administration, and their Boards of Education, asking for AAPI curriculum. Resources for teachers and families may be found at TAAF's www.aapihistoryhub.org. Asian American history is American history!

How to report Anti Asian Hate

Many of us are concerned about a possible [resurgence in anti-Asian hate](#). If you experience or witness a hate incident, even if it is not a crime, please fill out the Westchester Human Rights Commission form. The data may be helpful in identifying and preventing hate crimes. <https://humanrights.westchestergov.com/report-a-hate-incident>



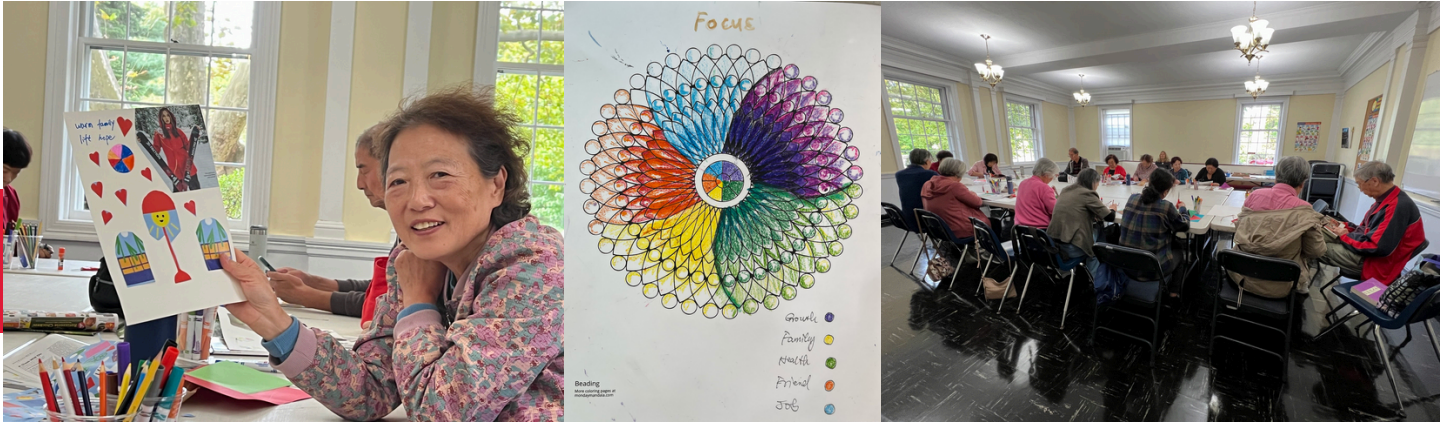
Corky Lee Book Talk

As part of our ongoing support for preserving Corky Lee's legacy, OCA-WHV along with the Scarsdale Library and the Corky Lee Estate, hosted a book talk about Corky Lee's works and life on Sunday, June 23rd. Chee Wang Ng, one of the editors of the beautiful book, *Corky Lee's Asian America*, showed and talked about many of Corky's most iconic photos and described how he used his camera as a sword against injustice. Accompanying Chee was Virgo Lee, a representative of the estate.

Asian Language Media Literacy volunteers needed

APIA Vote, a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to engaging, educating, and empowering AAPI communities, is looking for bilingual volunteers in many Asian languages to help monitor disinformation and misinformation. Training provided! Learn more at <https://apiavote.org/volunteer>

Mental Health Initiative: Teen & Seniors



Part 1: The Art De-Stress Program

Everyone has experienced stress & stressful times. Sponsored by the Asian American Federation, the Art De-Stress Program aims to help seniors and teens with their families (during separate sessions) to develop Art-Based Techniques to enhance calm, insight, creativity, joy and connection, building on members' strengths for sustainable wellness benefits.

We are lucky to have **Lauren Zeltzer, ATR-BC, LCAT**, a professional art therapist who is passionate about democratizing the wellness benefits of art. In addition to her training and experience, an important strength is her cultural competence, warmth and deep caring about people and ability to put people at ease.

The Art De-Stress Program has two series for different wellness groups, one is a 3-week series for groups of teens with their families, and the other is a 6-week series for seniors, offering a different material and "wellness benefit" each week. The two-hour-long weekly art-based session takes various forms as facilitated art-making with an open-art-studio approach. After, Lauren opens the group for discussion and sharing (always optional) for the last half hour. Members can continue to work on their art during discussion and sharing time. The upcoming sessions will be held at the India Center of Westchester.

In September 2024, we organized 1 session for teens (18 attendees) and two sessions for seniors (21 attendees). All were enjoyed by the participants and received positive feedback. We give thanks to our wonderful young volunteers from YOCA, **Cindy Wang** and **Sophie Xie**, who come up with the ideas, reach out for resources, and prepare for the execution. **OCA-WHV President Jaclyn Liu** stands with our volunteers all the way from the scratch to the stage. This program will be impossible without everyone's contribution and the love of our community!

Part 2: Understanding and Preventing Alzheimers

We work with the [Alzheimer's Association, Hudson Valley Chapter](#), and are going to present three Alzheimer Informative Seminars in the community, two in Chinese and one in English, monthly in the 4th quarter of 2024. Learning about Alzheimer's offers significant benefits for the families to prevent the disease and help person diagnosed and their loved ones. Anyone interested in the brain health is welcomed to join in the seminars to learn more how to reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

Part 3: Outreach to the Korean American Community

Extending the AAPI mental health outreach program we began in 2023, OCA-WHV is also developing talks on mental health for teens and seniors in Korean and English for the 4th quarter of 2024. Please contact us at info@oca-whv.org if you are interested in bringing these talks to your community!

We welcome anyone who has interest in these programs to participate before the end of 2024. Please register before the day your sessions starts.

Sign up forms are available on the front page of the OCA-WHV website, oca-whv.org

Ongoing and Upcoming Programs

Westchester Asian Film Alliance (WAFA)

The Westchester Asian Film Alliance (WAFA), founded by **Jayden Cao**, employs the creative medium of film to promote awareness of Asian culture. Every month, films that reflect Asian traditions and cultural elements are screened in a growing network of Westchester public libraries.

WAFA believes in the power of movies to bring communities together in a culturally diverse environment. For Asian Americans, WAFA provides a familiar opportunity to reconnect with their language and culture. For members of all other ethnicities, WAFA offers a creative platform for cultural exchange and engaging learning.

To preserve originality, WAFA screens movies in their native language. English subtitles are accordingly provided to accommodate all viewers. Each WAFA always begins with an introduction and discussion of the film, which fosters understanding and cultural competency. To learn more, visit <https://www.oca-whv.org/asian-film>



Showcased Films in 2024:

- *Shaolin Soccer (2001)*
- *Mulan (2020)*
- *Farewell (2019)*
- *The Karate Kid (2010)*
- *Hero (2002)*
- *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings (2021)*



Presidential Volunteer Service Awards

OCA-WHV is now a Certifying Organization for President's Volunteer Service Awards (PVSA), signed by the President of United States. Volunteers as young as ages 5 and up to adults 26+ may participate in the program which offers recognition for dedicated service. To apply, visit [oca-whv.org/presidential-volunteer-service-awards](https://www.oca-whv.org/presidential-volunteer-service-awards).



Sign up now for New Bridges Youth events

The New Bridges Coalition, a project of OCA and six sister nonprofits, proudly announces our new group for teens!

Local students are exploring how Generation Z of different backgrounds can work together to create bridges between our communities.


Please sign up at tinyurl.com/NBCyouth or scan the QR code to find service, advocacy, leadership, fun, and friendship with people who don't look like you.




DEALING WITH CONFLICT *Workshop*

Join OCA-WHV and the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) New York for a powerful and engaging workshop (offered on two dates) designed to build community, communication, and cooperation skills. Focusing on conflict resolution and addressing Asian hate through nonviolent approaches, participants will engage in discussions, explore new methods for handling conflicts, and leave with a toolbox of strategies for promoting peace and understanding.

Workshop details:

 2 Saturdays
Oct 26, 2024 or
Nov 16, 2024
10.00AM –12.00 PM

 GREENBURGH LIBRARY
300 TARRYTOWN ROAD, ELMSFORD



Interested? Scan the QR code or fill out this registration [form](#). Limited spots open for older teens and adults.



AAPI Events in the Hudson Valley: June 2024

Asian Heritage Festival

June 1 was a scorcher of a day, but that didn't stop the throngs of festivalgoers bent on enjoying themselves at the Westchester County Annual Asian Heritage Festival at Kensico Dam in Valhalla, now in its 27th year of being organized by OCA-WHV. A full schedule of traditional and modern Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander American performances played to a joyful crowd under the big tent from noon to 5. The crowd also enjoyed visiting booths and food trucks, many of which were new this year. **David Imamura**, the first AAPI legislator to be elected in Westchester County, spoke briefly in honor of the event, as did **County Executive George Latimer**, **Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins**, and **NY State Senator Shelley Mayer**.

Many thanks to all the board members and volunteers who contributed to this jubilant day! So many contributed that the full list is placed on the [Event recap on our website](#). These photos taken by award winning photographer **James Cao** give just a small sampling of the color and variety of the day:



AAPI Events in the Hudson Valley: June-Sept 2024



Annual CAA & 4 OCA Chapter Picnic

The OCA/CAA picnic on Sat. Sept. 7th was a great success with about 100 attendees from CAA & OCA chapters in the NY area (NY, NJ, WHV, LI, & Fairfield). Thank you for coming and sharing your favorite food. There were crafts and games for the children, and a happy buzz of OCA members from different chapters chatting with old friends and new!

We'd like to give a heartfelt thank you to our distinguished guests Westchester County Executive George Latimer and Westchester and first Asian American County Legislator David Imamura for joining us at the picnic and their invaluable support for the AANHPI community.

New Bridges Coalition: Reaching Out

Over the summer, OCA-WHV shared their outreach tables with the New Bridges Coalition at the Westchester County African-American, Asian-American, and Heritage of India Festivals at Kensico Dam in Valhalla, as well as the Sikh and Punjabi festival in Ridge Road Park. Many thanks to those who staffed the tables, including **Eric Cheng, Lilian Wu, Siddhartha Basu, Mayo Bartlett, Jeanhee Chung, Koji Sato, Daniel and Emily Lewis, Munish Kapur, Cindy Wang, Ann Chao, Bill Kaung, Kasama Star** and **Jaclyn Liu**. Everyone had a great time making new connections and participating in the festivals.

Jeanhee Chung also organized three more Seniors' Craft Circles to bring together the largely Asian- and African- American seniors in Mt. Vernon, with volunteers from our new youth group, NBCZ. NBCZ inaugurated their first in-person meetup at the movies, and will be working on volunteer projects for the Urban League and Lois Bronz Children's Center, and bonding as they battle an Escape Room challenge! Visit newbridgescoalition.org to see our upcoming events, join our mailing list and view our newsletter. Many thanks to UPS for their grant support!



Mooncake Night Market

The 2024 Mooncake Night Market on September 21, organized jointly with ArtsWestchester, was a huge success. Families of all backgrounds were excited to try hands-on workshops in Chinese calligraphy, lantern-making, mooncake stamping, decorative knotting, origami and more. They sampled mooncakes, bubble tea, bao, banh mi, and other delicacies, while marveling at a full program of live performances. Special thanks to **Rose and Bill Kaung** for their help organizing this lovely event, and to the Evergreens Club with **President Rosalan Cheng**!





YOUNG OCA Taking initiative

Under the able direction of **Michelle Cai**, our Director of Youth Programs, the high school students in Young OCA (YOCA) have developed and expanded programs such as the Westchester Asian Film Alliance, the Youth Reading Group, YOCA Podcast, and Book Donation



Association. Please contact our VP of Youth Programs, **Dr. Bing Dang** at bdang@oca-whv.org if you have a teen interested in joining this group of outstanding and motivated youth!



The Book Donation Association

The Book Donation Association, developed by YOCA member **Shawn Qiu**, is a community-driven organization dedicated to gathering and distributing books to those in need, such as homeless shelters, under-resourced schools, and other vulnerable populations. Our mission is to bridge the gap in access to educational resources and promote literacy by hosting book drives within local communities. To date, we've helped over 8,000 books find their readers and counting! Learn about how you can help on the OCA website.

YOCA AAPI Podcast

Let's hear what YOCA podcasters **Max Wang**, **Ryan Li**, **Sid Karthik**, and **Lain Mackenzie** have to say about the third season of their well-received series:

"This year's OCA Youth Podcast covered a variety of topics ranging from mental health topics to cultural representation. Our eight podcast discussions featured a balance of relaxed discussion and AANHPI insight.

Specifically, our conversations on stress, anxiety, and the experiences we face as Asian Americans helped to shape new viewpoints and share new experiences. We hope viewers continue to enjoy tuning into the podcast as we bring on our next guest speaker: Dr. Teresa Hsu."



Check out the 2024 season on YouTube or at <https://www.oca-whv.org/podcast>

Max Wang and Ryan Li are also spearheading OCA-WHV's collaboration with Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) New York on a workshop. See poster on page 5 for more info on joining this worthy program!

Pepsi Youth Career Fair

OCA-WHV ran a very successful Pepsi and OCA-WHV AAPI Youth career day on Tuesday, 7/2. The event brought 20+ high school students across 15 different schools in the NYC area to spend a day in our Purchase office. The students were able to learn about PepsiCo, careers, business acumen and some fun making their own sodas. An amazing event made by the PAN NY team and OCA's partnership.

Thank you all for marketing and recruiting the students from all local communities, which enable us to reach out so many high schools. Especially, thanks to the young OCA team lead by **Michelle Cai** and **Bing Dang**. They made this event possible with endless work on designing the recruiting, handling registration, screening the candidates, providing fresh ideas of event content as well as designing the beautiful PAN-OCA T-shirts!



2024 AAPI Kids Diversity & Inclusion Summer Reading

This ongoing program, where high school interns offer fun readings and sing-a-longs to children ages 4-7, continues to gain young fans! **Sherry Liu** is the project coordinator, and she has helped with the project since 2022. Eight high school students conducted story time at the Greenburgh library for six Wednesdays in the summer. The readings help give the children confidence to embrace their unique identities as well as learn about other cultures and heritages in America

Dealing with Conflicts Workshop

Dealing with Conflicts is a joint OCA, AVP, and GPL workshop that features interactive discussions, scenario simulations, and community building games that focus on nonviolence and conflict resolution. The first workshop on October 26th took place at the Greenburgh Public Library with a diverse group of ages and ethnicities. Participants had fun playing color sorting simulations while gaining personal insight by reflecting on the story of a girl who reached out to help an excluded classmate. We hope that you can join us at the next workshop on November 16!



Congratulations 2024 OCA-WHV Student Award Winners!



Jayden Cao

The Robert Chao Award

Chappaqua CSD



Jake Fellner

Student Leadership Award

Pelham UFSD



Amy Feng

The Koo Family Community Engagement Award

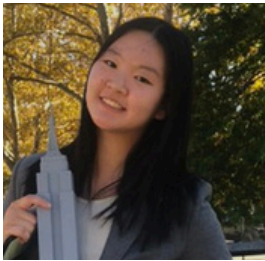
Horace Greeley High School



Kaya Ito

Student Leadership Award

Harrison CSD



Chloe Lee

The Koo Family Community Engagement Award

Scarsdale UFSD



Olivia Liu

Student Leadership Award

Irvington Unified School District



James Qian

Student Leadership Award

Edgemont School District



Kaya Sasaki

The Robert Chao Award

Scarsdale UFSD



Victoria Shen

Student Leadership Award

Riverdale Country School



Emily Tian

Student Leadership Award

Blind Brook UFSD



Kevin Xu

Student Leadership Award

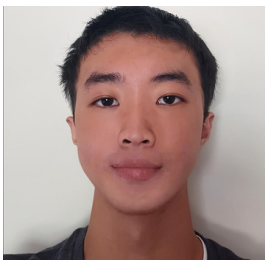
Edgemont School District



Meadow Zhang

Student Leadership Award

Chappaqua CSD



Louis Zhou

Student Leadership Award

Edgemont School District



Isabelle Zhu

Student Leadership Award

Scarsdale UFSD



Sophie Xie

Outstanding YOCA Volunteer Award

Edgemont High School



Max Wang

Outstanding YOCA Volunteer Award

Edgemont High School

Profile of an Asian American Champion: Robert "Bob" Shyun-Jing Chao

In recognition of his contributions to the communities of Westchester, Robert "Bob" Shyun-Jing Chao was nominated and approved to be inducted posthumously into the Westchester County Senior Hall of Fame on Friday December 6, 2024, at the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services awards gala.

Bob Chao was a passionate, tireless advocate for Asian Americans, a community activist, a past president of OCA Westchester and Hudson Valley (OCA WHV) and a role model for the entire OCA WHV board.

Bob, the recipient of multiple awards including the prestigious OCA National Unsung Hero Award in 2021, dedicated his life to his family, OCA, and other organizations that worked to bring people together, especially people of different races and beliefs.

He was a doer, not someone who just had good ideas. He took the best of his ideas, convinced everyone that they were important, and implemented them by leading the way.



Bob was a co-founder of the New Bridges Coalition, a group that is currently supported by seven organizations: the African American Men of Westchester, India Center of Westchester, Japanese American Association of New York, NAACP of White Plains/Greenburgh, OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates (Westchester and Hudson Valley Chapter), The Urban League of Westchester and the Westchester Human Rights Commission.

Bob was one of the main organizers of the New Bridges Coalition Diversity and Inclusion Event in 2021, which brought people together from many of these groups and got them to see that they all have pretty much the same wants, needs, and goals. Many people made new friends that day who "didn't look like them." He was also a member of the New Castle Council on Race and Equity.

Bob was active on the OCA board until the day of his passing in 2022. He strongly believed that bringing different Asian American groups together would allow them all to gain equality.

Bob was also well known by government officials and used his connections to advocate for Asian Americans. He represented OCA at press conferences and in TV interviews, was a speaker at anti-Asian Hate rallies, supported Black Lives Matter and advocated for seniors of Asian American and other groups.

Any group that was not being treated equally was a group that Bob wanted to support. He won the respect and admiration of virtually everyone he met and worked with. With his gentle demeanor coupled with his vast intellect, he was always willing to share his advice on how to make things better.

We miss him greatly and will continue to work in honor of his legacy, which his wife, Ann Chao, and his family carry on.



Greetings from the President

Dear Members,

Our Chapter Board and volunteers diligently organized plenty activities and events, and I want to take a moment to recognize their hard work:

- Mental Health Program: **Sherry Liu**
- Asian Movies: **Jayden Cao**
- Summer Reading, Meet the Candidates: **Sophie Xie**
- Youth Podcasting: **Max Wang**
- Website and Newsletters: **Kaya Sasaki** and **Allegra Kong**

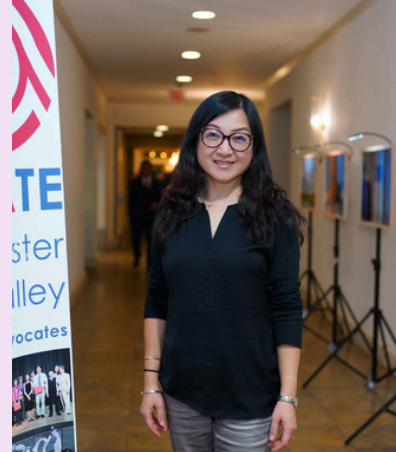
We are excited to invite you to our upcoming Dynamic Achiever Award Gala on November 16, 2024, at the Surf Club. Join us for an evening filled with inspiring speeches, delicious food, and an awards ceremony! We'll also highlight our Annual Scholarship Program that's designed to nurture future AAPI leaders.

We look forward to seeing you at our events!

Best regards,

Jaclyn Liu

OCA-WHV President



Join OCA-WHV.
The organization that advOCAtes
for all AAPIs.

Family Membership:	\$50 for one year, \$90 for 2 years, or \$180 for 5 years
Individual Membership:	\$40 for one year, \$70 for 2 years, or \$140 for 5 years
Senior Membership (age 65+):	\$20 for one year, \$30 for 2 years, or \$60 for 5 years
Youth/Student Membership:	\$10 per year
Lifetime Membership:	\$1000 (individual) or \$1500 (family)

Scan the QR code above or go to our website <http://oca-whv.org> to find our membership application form, or contact us by mail at:

OCA-WHV, P.O. Box 541, White Plains, NY 10600

or, contact us by email at: info@oca-whv.org

Donate now to help OCA to continue our programs and advocacy!

- o Mail a check payable to OCA-WHV and send it to us at P.O. Box 541, White Plains, NY 10602
- o Pay via paypal@oca-whv.org or [PayPal.me/ocawhv](https://www.paypal.com/ocawhv)
- o or Zelle us at ZelleCiti@oca-whv.org

Please consider a donation to the **President's Circle Initiative**: a \$1000 donation (by an individual or by a team) would make our chapter eligible for additional funding from OCA National. See our website for details. OCA-WHV is a state chapter of OCA National, a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.