

The next morning, we met with Governor Hirokazu Nakaima. He entered the room, casually dressed, and created a relaxed atmosphere as he circulated around the room, greeting each delegate with a friendly smile. He spent time discussing his 21st century plan, which included possible solutions to the prefecture's unemployment problems.

The afternoon symposium, titled 'Building New Networks: An Era of Change in Japanese American-Japan Relations,' was organized by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, the Japanese American National Museum, and the Okinawa Prefectural Government. It was well-attended by representatives of Okinawa's government and business sectors as well as by community members. Sadaaki Numata, executive director of the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership and former Japanese ambassador to Canada, opened the symposium with his thoughts on Okinawans and his desire for deeper understanding between Japanese and Japanese Americans. Delegates Dianne Fukami from the San Francisco area and Ken Miyagishima, the Japanese-Mexican mayor of Las Cruces, served as panelists, sharing their personal experiences as Japanese Americans and their connections to Japan. As the only member of the delegation whose roots were in Okinawa, I talked about my Uchinanchu grandparents, my own upbringing in Hawaii, and the present-day efforts of my nephew, Eric Wada, to promote Okinawan culture.

The next day, I excused myself from official delegation duties and took the opportunity to visit the birthplaces of both my paternal and maternal grandparents: Taba, Gushikawa and Bisei-Motobu. A family friend and his wife graciously hosted me for the day. While in Gushikawa, now part of Uruma City, Kawano-san arranged a meeting with Uruma City Mayor Tsuneo Chinen at the government center. Through his interpreter, the mayor proudly told me about his city, its products and attractions, and revealed his curiosity for American products. The meeting ended with the sharing of *omiyage* (offerings of respect and reciprocal appreciation). The afternoon was spent visiting points of interest in Gushikawa and Motobu. The private tour of the two areas afforded me an opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation of my ancestors' way of life.

While I journeyed back to my roots, the other delegates visited the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Museum and learned about the 'Typhoon of Steel,' the three-month-long Battle of Okinawa which began in the spring of 1945. Some 200,000 people died in the battle and much of Okinawa's cultural legacy was destroyed. Most of the delegates had never learned about the Battle of Okinawa before and said they were moved as they learned more about it. They also placed flowers at the memorial to honor all the lives that were lost. As we headed back to Tokyo, we felt privileged to have been able to learn more about

Okinawa and to have experienced the warmth and hospitality of its people.

The trip lasted just 10 days, and it's been about a month since I returned to my present home in Boston. But I think often about what I experienced; it made an indelible impact on me. On a very personal level, it allowed me to connect with the homeland of my grandparents and to have a better sense of where they came from. On a professional level, as a member of the Japanese American Leadership Delegation and as a Nikkei, I now understand fully how person-to-person relationships can promote better understanding between the U.S. and Japan and will seek out opportunities to collaborate with other Japanese Americans in forging and strengthening bonds with our friends in Japan.



Sharing reflections from her JALD trip with students in AsAmSt 228L, February 2009
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)

— Patricia Nakamoto Neilson is the director of the Center for Collaborative Leadership at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She grew up in Kalihi and graduated from Farrington High School. Nakamoto-Neilson earned her bachelor's degree in psychology at Seattle University and her master's degree in public health from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She holds an Ed.D. in higher education administration from UMass Boston. In Fall 2009, she will teach AsAmSt 228L Asian Women in the U.S., a course she is co-teaching currently with Dr. Shirley Tang.

VIET 101/102 at UMB

After many years of advocacy and pilot instruction by the Asian American Studies Program, students finally had the opportunity to study Vietnamese language at UMass Boston in 2008-2009 for full language credit. Developed and taught by Phuong T. M. Nguyen, a current doctoral student in UMB's Higher Education Administration program, over twenty students enrolled in Viet 101 and 102 through the Department of Modern Languages during the fall and spring semesters.



VIET 102 instructor and UMB doctoral student Phuong T. M. Nguyen with students on the last day of class, May 2009
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)

Students responded well to the new opportunity, both in terms of total enrollment and individual reflections. One student commented at the conclusion of VIET 102:

I am most proud at myself for writing essays in Vietnamese. I had a difficult time with it because it was my first time writing a paragraph or essays in Vietnamese. However, I still need a lot more practice on it because I don't feel very confidence with my writing.

Another student added:

Viet 102 has changed me in many different ways. First of all, I know how to use correct words when I talk to my mother and the elderly. Second, I surprised my mother when I remind her about Vietnamese holidays. The most important of all is: lately, I wrote 2 letters to my family in Vietnam instead of phone calls. I surprised all my aunts and uncle. I'm very proud of myself for all of those.

For future curriculum development, another student suggested:

I would love to also have outside activities. We are neighbors to Dorchester, which has a lot of Vietnamese residents. There are many who don't speak English and need help with things from translating to explaining. It would be great if we brought our experiences from the class to the community. That could happen in many forms such as volunteering our time at a

community center, or doing class projects like translating forms and documents into Vietnamese.

Co Phuong will continue to teach and develop VIET language/literature courses while also working on her dissertation plans, focusing on the identities and educational needs of contemporary college-age Southeast Asian American students.

Asian American Community Health Forum

On Saturday, May 9th, roughly 30 community health practitioners, researchers, and advocates, along with UMass Boston Asian American Studies students and faculty gathered in the newly-opened Venture Development Center (VDC) space on campus to share visions, needs, and strategies for improving the health and well-being of local, under-resourced Asian American communities, including Lowell, Quincy, Dorchester Fields Corner, and Boston Chinatown. The gathering was co-sponsored with the Joslin Center's Asian American Diabetes Initiative and the Massachusetts Asian American Commission. Digital stories and reflections about personal, family, and community health issues produced by UMB AsAmSt students served to frame the introduction to the gathering.



Sonith Peou from Lowell Metta Health Center (front) with UMB student Lury Taia (back) and Ramani Sripada from MAP for Health (right) at the May 9th Community Health Forum
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)



AsAmSt students Nhu Nguyen, Lan Nguyen, Lury Taia, and Jessica Tran
(Photo credit: Frances K. Chow)

AsAmSt and K-12 Education in Brookline

In May 2009, twenty-three education professionals from the Brookline Public Schools completed a semester-long graduate-level professional development course offered by the Asian American Studies Program, titled, “Teaching and Learning in Asian American Studies.” Taught by Dr. Nga-Wing Anjela Wong with support from Peter Kiang and Sophia Kim, the course provided invaluable opportunities for teachers and other specialists from schools, grade levels, and subject areas throughout the Brookline system.

Currently a research fellow with UMB’s Institute for Asian American Studies, Anjela is one of the few educators in the country who holds both a B.A. in Asian American Studies (SFSU) and a doctoral degree in education (UWisconsin-Madison). More than a decade ago, she was a high school student activist herself in the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY).

Highlights of the course included guest speakers such as Brookline resident and UMB Professor Andrew Leong and panel discussions by Japanese, Korean, Indian, and Chinese American parents currently in Brookline as well as by Asian American young people who formerly attended Brookline High School. These presenters provided important insider perspectives related to critical educational issues such as family-school engagement and culturally responsive curricula.

The course culminated with an inspiring Heritage Month public exhibition of participants’ final projects on May 11th at Brookline Town Hall — many of which included examples of students’ work from curriculum projects implemented in their own classrooms. Attendees included school board member, Dr. Ira Chan, as well as colleagues and community members.



From left to right: Sophia Cheung and Tracy Tsui (Joslin Center’s AADI), Doug Brugge (Tufts University), George King (Joslin Center and MA AA Commission), Ira Chan (South Cove Community Health Center)
(Photo credit: Frances K. Chow)



From left to right: Sherry Dong (New England Medical Center), Darshan Mehta (MGH), Tracy Tsui (Joslin Center’s AADI), Doug Brugge (Tufts University)
(Photo credit: Frances K. Chow)



From right to left: Jacob Smith Yang (MAP for Health), Tef Day (UMB), Phuong Thanh Nguyen (UMB), Hanh Vinh Tran (MA Department of Mental Health)
(Photo credit: Frances K. Chow)



Brookline elementary school teacher, Alicia Hsu, and school committee member, Ira Chan, at the May 11th final project exhibition
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)



Sample of student work from Brookline teacher, Rhodinne Wong's middle school curriculum unit on the WWII Japanese American internment
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)

With critical assistance from Gene Thompson-Grove, Alicia Hsu, and Deanna Wong of the Brookline Public Schools and funding from the Brookline Education Foundation, the course was a follow-up to a similar graduate AsAmSt education course offered by Peter Kiang and Sophia Kim for the Brookline Public Schools in Spring 2006. This collaboration offers an important model for how Asian American Studies can have greater impact on education at the K-12 level, particularly given that Asian American students comprise the largest population of students of color in the Brookline Public Schools.

Asian American Voices: Engaging, Empowering, Enabling (2009)

On May 14th, AsAmSt faculty and student authors and friends came together at UMB's newly opened Venture Development Center (VDC) to celebrate the National League for Nursing's recent publication of Asian American Voices: Engaging, Empowering, Enabling, edited by Lin Zhan (PhD, Rn, FAAN), former UMB faculty and currently Professor and Dean of Nursing at the MA College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences.



UMB AsAmSt-affiliated chapter authors include: Julie AhnAllen, James Bui, Stephanie Day, Peter Kiang, Grace Kim, Sue Lambe, Nancy Lin, Lusa Lo, Sam Museus, Pat Neilson, Phuong Nguyen, Karen Suyemoto, Shirley Tang, John Tawa, and Janet Vo. Other authors include: Lin Zhan, Khanh Dinh, Ivy Ho, and Winston Langley.

In reviewing the book, Dr. Les Wong, President of Northern Michigan University commented, "...Through the voices of scholar-practitioners, one is brought face to face with the new dynamics of communities little studied and long neglected. One is immediately reminded that traditional models and analytical tools fall short in understanding this new dynamic..." Dr. Michelle Kalis, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, added, "...Using research and personal experiences, the authors of Asian American Voices offer models and strategies to promote positive outcomes for Asian American students within higher education." The book can be ordered via: www.nln.org.



MCPHS Dean Lin Zhan (center) with UMass Lowell faculty, Khanh Dinh (left), and IAAS Director, Paul Watanabe (right)
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)



Janet Vo
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)

Dorchester Initiative for Youth

by Janet Vo

What does it mean to be a Vietnamese American youth living in Dorchester? Why do Vietnamese families live in Dorchester? Why is sharing one's perspective as a Vietnamese American youth important to the development of his/her community? These are the questions that resonate in the learning and production process of the Dorchester Initiative for Youth (DIY) program developed by the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY).

CAPAY launched the first ever DIY program in April 2009 at the Vietnamese American Community Center in Dorchester's Fields Corner neighborhood, home to the 5th largest Vietnamese population in the U.S. Currently, there are seven "interns," four males and three females, selected to organize around Dorchester community issues, build leadership skills, and produce media projects to be disseminated into their community.

What makes this program stand apart from the few others servicing Asian American youth in Dorchester is its focus on potentially "at-risk" Vietnamese American youth, grades 8 through 11. Many Vietnamese American youth are overlooked as "at-risk," lumping them together with other students who perform well in school and have an array of resources and support available to them. In reality, a large number of Vietnamese American youth from Dorchester come from low income, working class immigrant and/or refugee families, many of whom are exposed on a regular basis to street violence, peer pressure, educational inequalities, and more problems, despite "doing well" in school.

The program curriculum was designed and is taught by Tri Quach, coordinator of CAPAY, and me to specifically examine the Dorchester Vietnamese American diaspora and to develop media and digital storytelling skills. By incorporating a curriculum that encourages youth to understand their family, community, and their own identities, we challenge them to seek answers to questions they never thought of as important. For example, lessons include requiring youth to interview parents to research their parents' migration and resettlement experience and understand why they chose to live in Dorchester. One of the benefits of having students research their own family history is to break down the language and communication barriers that many Vietnamese American families face.

None of these students had prior skills in making movies; however, with trainings in Apple Mac's i-Movie software, students learned to put together a simple movie using tools like video, camera, and voice recordings within the first couple of weeks of the program. The storytelling Spring 2009

process requires students to brainstorm, outline, and envision their stories from beginning to end.

Students are required to complete two media projects, including one by the end of the 10-week program workshops. With the skills and issues that they learned during the course of the program, they are required to apply what they learn to independently produce another video that can be additionally used to impact and educate other youth and their community through online social networks, media sites, and community showcases. This first DIY Spring program runs until the end of June 2009, students meet five hours a week on Saturdays and Mondays.

This program is supported through the help of three Vietnamese American peer mentors, Phong Nguyen, Linda Nguyen, and Binh Lam, all of whom live in Dorchester and attend UMass Boston. Viet-AID, Dorchester's Vietnamese American Initiative for Development, has supported the initiative by providing a safe space to house the program in the community. The Merck Family Fund provides funding for this initiative.



*Vietnamese American peer mentors
Phong Nguyen, Binh Lam, and Linda Nguyen
(Photo credit: Frances K. Chow)*

New Faculty

Pinay Power 2009: Welcoming Charisse Gulosino to AsAmSt and UMB



(Photo courtesy of Charisse Gulosino)

We are thrilled to announce the hiring of Dr. Charisse A. Gulosino who will join the Graduate College of Education's Department of Leadership in Education in Fall 2009. Dr. Gulosino is an expert in the applications of geographic information systems (GIS) and other technologies to critical issues of urban school and community development. Within her department, she joins other AsAmSt-affiliated faculty Sam Museus and Wenfan Yan along with NERCHE colleagues John Saltmarsh and Glenn Gabbard. She becomes the first Filipina (Pinay) to hold a tenure-track faculty position at UMB.

In relation to the Asian American Studies Program, she writes, "Of course, I want to be affiliated." Regarding her own background and interests, Dr. Gulosino writes:

Prior to attending Columbia University Teachers College, I worked as Education Policy Research Associate at the Asian Development Bank Institute in Japan and Lead Researcher for a one-year global research project titled, "Private Schools Serving the Educational Needs of the Poor: A case study from the Philippines" under the direction of Professor James Tooley of the University of Newcastle.

Focused on policies affecting students, their families, and communities in K-12 settings in the United States, my research has taken me into many areas including: finance, student achievement, governance, teacher quality, educational choice and charter schools, multi-sectoral partnerships, and geospatial analysis. Given the relevance of my research to policies and practices in urban educational reform and the opportunity to exchange views with leading authorities and

practitioners in the field of education, I have developed the groundwork for conceptualizing innovative approaches to my academic research. The two years as a postdoctoral research associate at Brown University have provided opportunities to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in education and build a publication record. I currently serve as Chair of the Charter School Research and Evaluation (CSRE) special interest group of the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

At UMB, I will reinforce my research through teaching and serving the campus and local communities. My cumulative experience with consulting work, policy-related work experiences, applied research across technical areas, and a working knowledge of urban school systems has prepared me to make an immediate contribution to interdisciplinary programs. While my research career has thus far been grounded in the United States, I hope to expand my work in the field of educational research to include more work with minority and female scholars both here and abroad.



*Sam Museus and Charisse Gulosino
(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)*



*Charisse Gulosino and Patricia Neilson
(Photo credit: Frances K. Chow)*

New Graduate Students

While celebrating the achievements and contributions of graduate students active in Asian American Studies who are currently completing their master's or doctoral degrees in various programs across the campus, we are also looking ahead to opportunities for working with several new students with Asian American Studies interests who will enroll at UMB in Fall 2009.

They include:

Fanny Ng — Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Program

Fanny Ng received a B.A. with a major in psychology and a minor in Studio Art from Stony Brook University in 2007. At Stony Brook, Fanny worked as a research assistant focusing on psychosocial aspects of women's health, served as an Academic Peer advisor, and was active in leadership related to Asian American students and culture on campus. Fanny was selected to exhibit her video and sound installation at Stony Brook, a video that featured the stories of first generation Chinese immigrants to the U.S. and their hopes and dreams for their American-born children. As a result of her activities, Fanny was the recipient of the Golden Key International Society Scholarship for Leadership and Service. Since graduating, Fanny has been a Research Assistant and currently Research Coordinator at the Women's Research Center of the Division on Substance Abuse at New York State Psychiatric Institute, where she has been working on several projects including an assessment of responses to social stressors in women with a family history of alcoholism, women who are moderate drinkers, women with a history of childhood sexual abuse, women with bulimia nervosa, and a study assessing sex differences in stress and impulsivity in individuals using cocaine. Fanny will be working with Dr. Karen Suyemoto focusing on issues of race, ethnicity, and Asian Americans.

Laura Ng — Historical Archaeology M.A. Program

My name is Laura Ng, and I will be entering UMass Boston's Historical Archaeology M.A. program this fall. I grew up in Los Angeles and attended the University of California San Diego where I received my bachelor's degree in Anthropology (concentration in Archaeology) with a minor in Ethnic Studies. I am interested in studying the archaeology of historic Chinese American communities and have worked with archaeological collections from the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. I hope to incorporate Boston's Chinatown as part of my research. I plan on obtaining my Ph.D. in the future, but for now, I am looking forward to attending UMass Boston and meeting everyone in the Asian American Studies Program.

In her graduate admissions essay, Laura wrote:

Historical archaeology can help reclaim Chinese American history and ensure that the legacy of the men and women who lived, labored, and faced adversity in this country survive. In order for Overseas Chinese archaeology to make an impact on both historical archaeology and Chinese American studies, academic-oriented research is needed... As a first-generation college student who has worked to provide disadvantaged students with extra resources to succeed in college, I am well aware of the unique struggles some face in academia. Traditionally underrepresented students can enrich the field of archaeology with their diverse backgrounds and perspectives... I am eager to begin contributing to my field and using archaeology to bring students, scholars, and communities together.



(Photo courtesy of Laura Ng)

Widad Al-Edanie — Learning, Teaching & Transformation (Track A) M.Ed. Program

Pioneering a new chapter in the lives and accomplishments of refugee students at UMB who have been connected to and supported by Asian American Studies, Widad is graduating in May 2009 with her B.A. in English and a program-of-study in Asian American Studies. She will continue at UMB in Fall 2009 as a master's degree student in Education.



(Photo credit: Peter Kiang)

About her own background, Widad writes:

I have lots of energy, and I am the type of person who stays up late at night and gets up early in the morning, and I can be a big help in many different ways in the future. And if the Asian American students need any help, I am always available. Helping other people, regardless of where they came from, is part of my nature... In my prime age, I left my native country Iraq. I was tired of wars, poverty, and the old regime's oppression. I took an independent action (for the first time in my life) and came as a refugee to Canada alone. I moved to the United States in 2000 and started going to school in New Jersey. I lived peacefully in the U.S. for two years, but when the September 11 attack happened, everything changed. I decided to move to Boston to escape the racism I faced in New Jersey and New York. I know it was hard for the families of September 11 victims to lose their beloved ones, but seriously, it was harder for us; the Americans wanted us to pay the price for a thing that we did not do. When I came to Boston, I decided to study at UMass Boston because I heard it is a network of diverse students. Through my study at UMB, I did an internship with the MA Office for Refugees and Immigrants to gain some knowledge of how I can help newcomers to the United States — especially the Iraqi refugees. This internship has not just helped me but also the Iraqi refugees to whom I

dedicated most of my time now to help them stand up in their new country. The Asian American Studies Program also gave me the chance to do further independent study research about the Iraqi refugees in the United States. To me, this research is a great achievement in my life. For the first time, I could create a syllabus, with the help of Dr. Shirley Tang, for a future class about the experience of Iraqi refugees. In sum, enrolling in the program helped me know great things about Asian Americans such as the "model minority" stereotype and the experience of the Japanese Americans in WWI, but also knowing great things about the Iraqi refugees.

Laurence Louie — Teacher Education M.Ed. and/or American Studies M.A. Programs

Growing up in Boston's Chinatown, I remember exploring the office of the Chinese Progressive Association and impatiently sitting through meetings as a child. However, as I matured and made my way through undergraduate studies, I have fallen in love. I have fallen in love with the Asian American community at Rutgers and the community in Boston. With a deep history and a unique experience in America, Asian American has become an identity, a study, and a passion. Hoping to expand this love throughout the community and beyond, I pursue a life in research and education. With the combination of both, I hope to work with the community for a brighter world. I began with my involvement in high school as a summer intern for the Chinese Youth Initiative. Going on to college, I found myself diving into various projects to empower and develop the Asian American community. I am the founding Editor in Chief of Rutgers' first Asian American newspaper, Native Tongue. Here, I found myself learning from and working together with an amazing team of dedicated individuals. I am also involved with the Campaign for Asian American Studies where a collective of student leaders fight their way to relevant education and equal representation. Another project I worked on was the East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU) 2009 conference where I served as one of the workshop chairs. Having invested myself into this community, I have grown as an individual and learned the concept of collective development. With this experience, I only hope to be more involved and work to better the true love of my life: our community!



(Photo courtesy of Laurence Louie)