



# Horizon

*A Quarterly newsletter from the  
Greater Washington, DC Chapter  
of the Organization of Chinese Americans*

Winter 2005



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2004 was a busy year. With our planned six months of voter registration efforts initiatives, from May through November, we made a significant contribution to the greater DC area's APIAVote drive. The highlight of the year's events was our annual scholarship banquet held in October. We honored Montgomery County's new Chief of Police Thomas Manger with our Outstanding Leadership in Community and Public Service Award. Before coming to Montgomery County, Chief Manger served as Chief of Police in Fairfax County, Virginia, where he had a reputation of setting the highest standards of ethics for his law enforcement officers, and where he encouraged community outreach. As Chief of Police in Montgomery County, Chief Manger has been actively outreaching into the Asian Pacific American community to establish ongoing dialogues to improve communications and trust, and to attract young Asian Americans to consider law enforcement as a potential career. In November, the chapter sponsored a well-attended Young-OCA/Asian American Student Union workshop that dealt with the college experience. To wrap up the year and to celebrate the spirit of the holiday season, our chapter again participated in the Gifts for the Needy program.

With the proposed changes to the chapter bylaws adopted, the structure of the board is more flexible to accommodate individuals who wish to serve on the board. Members can choose to serve as an At-Large member or a named position depending on their level of experience and time commitment to board service. With the establishment of the OCA-DC Advisory Board, we can tap into the wellspring of experience of the chapter past presidents and advisory supporters.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the 2004 Board for their hard work and dedication. For those who are leaving the board, Steve Smith, Patricia Smith, Nathan Fong, and Lydia Chang, I wish express my gratitude for their volunteerism to serve our community. I also wish to especially thank Acihin Lim for helping out when the "going was tough", and to Lydia Chang, our longtime VP Records for her loyal and efficient service to the chapter. We will certainly miss all of them. The 2005 OCA-DC Board consists of myself, as well as Executive Vice President Lisa Lee, Senior Vice President Lily Qi, VP Treasurer Gerald Lo, VP Records Jenny Lin, VP Communications Cindy Lau, VP Public Affairs Beth Wong, VP Culture & Education Charlet Wang, VP Membership Gale Awaya, VP Community Service Jim McCallum, VP At-Large Francis Ng, VP At-Large Carol Lau, VP At-Large Asuntha Chiang-Smith, Webmaster David Eng, Chinese Editor Tom Tsai, and Young OCA Representative Tracy.

The board is currently planning on a number of upcoming events that we hope will serve our community's needs as well as raise the profile of OCA-DC. Together with our sister OCA-Nova chapter, we are planning to hold an Economic and Career Symposium, where speakers organized in different workshops will discuss various topics relating to how individuals can determine their career choices, as well as improve their chances of a having a successful career. To promote our Chinese culture, we are looking to arrange the showing of classic Chinese films made in the 1920s and 1930s. To celebrate the 600th anniversary of the Ming Dynasty Chinese admiral Zheng He, our chapter is a co-sponsor in an essay contest that focuses on the legacy of Zheng He and his voyages. There will be other events that OCA-DC will organize during the year, and we will keep you posted. In the meantime, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions and suggestions regarding the chapter. My email address is <dyocadc@hotmail.com>. On behalf of the Board, I wish you all a happy and prosperous Chinese New Year.☺

David

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## APA GROUPS MEETING WITH EEOC COMMISSIONERS

By Asuntha Chiang-Smith

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Stuart Ishimaru and Acting District Director, Marie Tomasso, met with community group representatives in the EEOC Baltimore office on December 9, 2004 to discuss issues the EEOC is investigating and to receive input from the local community. Members of the African American and Latino communities, as well as women and AIDS advocates joined the OCA-DC representative in a candid discussion of what concerns different communities are facing. EEOC staff members were on hand as well to discuss specific cases and incidents.

Among race-based cases the EEOC traditionally handles, Commissioner Ishimaru also mentioned that they are receiving more and more questions and cases based on caregiver status. As families raise children and provide for older relatives, these caregiver duties to the family may sometimes conflict with work schedules. What is at issue is whether an employer can refuse to hire someone based on perceived family obligations. A number of complaints/questions have come from expecting women or women returning from maternity leave, who have been denied promotions or raises. The EEOC is looking closely at these complaints to see what kind of evidence is necessary to make such cases and how to proceed.

Another issue that the EEOC was asked to monitor is Congressional legislation that limits and targets new immigrants. As the Homeland Security budget was passed in December, Congressional members made public promises to look at ways to tighten immigration laws. Concerns from the community are not only in restricting the access of new immigrants but discrimination based on fears that someone "looks like" a terrorist.

Both Commissioner Ishimaru and Director Tomasso continue to be interested in general trends different communities are experiencing and welcome both questions and specific cases. Some of the advocates present brought up the fact that some of their community members may not fully understand what constitutes an EEOC case and may not feel comfortable approaching a government agency. The role of community advocates in these instances is extremely important in linking constituencies with needs to the EEOC without fear of retribution. It also was suggested that getting articles about EEOC policy and successful cases in

## TRIBUTE TO IRIS CHANG

By Lisa Lee

OCA-DC joined several community organizations in sponsoring a tribute and memorial service for the accomplished Chinese-American author Iris Chang in late November. Washingtonian leaders and friends reflected on the many memories and contributions Iris made during her lifetime. She was a beloved friend to OCA-DC and the Washington DC community. Iris made many friends during the research phase of writing the books *Rape of Nanking* and the *Chinese in America*, when she spent many months in the D.C. area researching at the National Archives and Library of Congress. She also visited the Washington D.C. area several times during book tours for her best-selling books. We saw her last, almost two years ago, when OCA-DC had the honor to co-sponsor a welcome reception for Iris to the Washington metropolitan area during the book tour of her last book, the *Chinese in America*.

Iris Chang was not only a bright and promising author, but a shining star who touched many lives with her eloquent voice and passion to her Asian heritage. Her contributions to the Asian American community



Commissioner Stuart Ishimaru and Acting District Director Marie Tomasso meeting with representatives of local Latino, African American and Asian American groups.

ethnic publications would be helpful, so that different community members could understand in their own languages what the EEOC can do.

The EEOC Baltimore District Office services Maryland and is located at 10 South Howard Street, Baltimore, MD

## OCA-DC 2004 GALA DINNER

By David Yao

OCA-DC held our 31st Annual Scholarship and Awards Gala Banquet on Sunday, October 17, 2004 at the New Fortune Restaurant in Gaithersburg, Maryland. During the event, we awarded scholarship prizes to high school students who were selected as County Science Fair winners. We also awarded the Outstanding Community Service Award to Tracy Li for her dedication to community service.

We selected the theme of the dinner to be "Empowerment Through Participation" to highlight the importance of participation by individuals in our community in all aspects of life in order to fully integrate ourselves into the American tapestry. Our Master of Ceremony was Mr. Julian Nieh, a very popular radio show host of the WIHT-Hot 99.5FM's "Hot Freak" show. Part of the reason we selected Julian as the MC was due to his appeal to young people. But another reason why we selected him was to demonstrate to our community that individuals can achieve success in a variety of careers that may be seen as non-traditional in the Asian American community.

The honoree at the gala was Montgomery County's new Chief of Police Thomas Manger. Chief Manger came to Montgomery County after serving as the Chief of Police of Fairfax County, Virginia, where he was recognized for having the highest ethical standards for policing, and his efforts in outreaching to minority communities. In his speech, Chief Manger laid out clearly the challenges of law enforcement in a community such as Montgomery County, and urged Asian Americans to consider law enforcement as a career path in order to help build better bridges of understanding and trust between county authorities and the community.

During the dinner, Ginny Gong, OCA's new National President gave a brief presentation of her views and vision of the role of OCA. Mr. Michael Lin, Past National President, then gave a pitch for the OCA National Building Fund, and a game was played at the end of the dinner to also help raise money for the building fund. However, a serendipitous event occurred later as a few days after the dinner, we were informed that after hearing of the plea for the building fund, Dr. and Mrs. Chi Wang of McLean, Virginia, made a pledge of \$100,000 for the naming opportunity of the soon to be new building's library! We were truly glad that we invited Dr. and Mrs. Wang to our dinner. O@



*Montgomery County Chief of Police Thomas Manger spoke of the need for Asian Americans to consider law enforcement as a career.*



*Master of Ceremony Julian Nieh receiving the OCA-DC Pioneer Award.*



*Tracy Li receiving the Outstanding Community Service Award from VP Community Service Gale Awaya and Senior VP Lily Qi.*

## OCA-DC SPREADS HOLIDAY CHEER

By Lisa Lee

For the second year, OCA-DC participated in the Germantown HELP holiday giving program in December. The Chapter sponsored four deserving families (which included seven adults and ten children) from northern Montgomery County. Germantown HELP, a non-profit organization which offers a variety of emergency services to needy residents in Montgomery County, coordinates the holiday giving program during Thanksgiving and Christmas each year. Families in the holiday program are referred by schools, churches, and social service agencies.

OCA-DC board members generously gave of their time and donations to this worthy project. Each of the four families sponsored received a grocery store gift card, a lovely gift basket filled with home-made goodies and treats, and lots of wonderful gifts for each boy and girl. Board members also took time out of their busy holiday schedule to buy gifts, wrap the presents, and personally deliver the gifts to each family. The experience was truly heart warming and uplifting to see the gratitude and appreciation on the faces of each family as we delivered the gifts. The D.C. Chapter was proud to be a supporter of the program for the second year and hopes to expand its support in the following years. O@

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## SIGN OF Q IN BOOK READING

By Jennifer Chang

As we walked into the cozy little bookstore that was packed with every kind of childrens books and toys, we immediately noticed a clearing amid the jumble. In the center of the clearing was a black backdrop with a small table in front, on which displayed a large bouquet of red roses and the a copy of the book *Sign of the Qin*, written by L.G. Bass. Representatives from First Book were there to greet us and were able to talk to us a little about their organization in general, as well as the book and its author.

Author L.G. Bass arrived at the bookstore promptly. She welcomed the audience and talked a little about how her lifelong love for Chinese legends and mythology was a great source of motivation for her to write this book. She poured more than 3 years of her thoughts into *Sign of the Qin*. She also explained the

## AASU COLLEGE WORKSHOP

By Tracy Li

On Saturday, November 27, 2004 the Asian American Students Union (AASU), a coalition of high school Asian American Clubs, hosted its second College Conference. The AASU hosts this event every two years in order to promote academic excellence and awareness among area Asian American youth. With student speakers from Georgetown, University of Pennsylvania, M.I.T., Cornell and Duke, as well as an admissions officer from Georgetown, this year's program proved a great success. More than 100 people attended to hear about each speaker's personal experiences and strategies for success in the college admissions process. According to feedback from students and parents, the attendees found the program to be quite helpful in developing and pursuing their post-high school plans.

The next college conference is scheduled for November 2006. Until then, the AASU plans to organize a variety of other events, including leadership trainings, scholarships, social events and service learning projects. For more information about future events or AASU, please contact Tracy Li at TracyLi103@yahoo.com. O@



Tracy Li introducing speakers on the panel.

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unique artwork that is displayed on the cover, the back of a Chinese monk covered with symbols. After answering a few questions from the audience, Ms. Bass proceeded to read aloud a section from her book. The words flowed gracefully one after another and we were soon lifted away from the little bookstore and into a world of snow-capped mountains and fiery volcanoes. As First Book handed L.G. Bass her award, they also announced as well a grant for \$10,000 towards free copies of *Sign of the Qin* to children, which we received shortly after. All of us from AASU thank First Book for their generosity and give out best wishes to Ms. Bass and her new book. O@

## OCA-DC PARTICIPATES IN ASIAN FORTUNE TSUNAMI RELIEF BENEFIT

By Gerald Lo

The unimaginable tsunami disaster that occurred in S E Asia has prompted many local non-profit organizations and community groups to raise money for the millions of unfortunate victims. OCA-DC decided to throw our support behind the fund raising effort of the local newspaper "Asian Fortune". One such event was held at the Community Activities Center of Fort Myer, Virginia on Saturday, January 15, 2005. It was well attended by local dignitaries and citizens from practically all walks of life in the metropolitan area. There were performers and entertainers from the Irish, the Indian, the Filipino, the Indonesian, the Malaysian, the Middle East, the Turkish, the Panamanian, the Chinese and the Vietnamese communities, among others. The lunch treat was donated by no less than 12 well known local restaurants and there were also numerous corporate donors and silent auctions at the event. Many high school students provided the logistical support to set up the event and to clean up afterwards. Odd as it may seem, it was truly a local international relief effort when many communities are coming together to help. One gets the feeling that we have witnessed a small sample of the large worldwide international relief effort now underway.

A number of OCA-DC members participated in the event. In addition to the on-site and off-site donations that the OCA-DC members generously made, OCA-DC contributed the ribbons and the candles for the



*OCA-DC Members Lisa Lee, David Yao, Charlet Wang and Gerald Lo with Virginia Congressman Jim Moran at the Asian Fortune Tsunami Relief event.*

Ribbon Tying Dedications and the Tea Lighting Ceremony. Congressman Bobby Scott led off the Ribbon Tying Dedication, and Congressman Jim Moran the Tea Lighting Ceremony. Many other participants and donors also participated. It was indeed most touching to see even little children using their "piggy bank" money to contribute to the tying of the ribbons and the lighting of the candles. We are pleased to report that OCA-DC raised about \$50 from these two small endeavors alone in a relatively short period of time. The money raised at the event was given to the American Red Cross International Response Fund.

As a non-profit Chinese American organization, OCA-DC is supporting local tsunami fund raising efforts. To that end, OCA-DC urges its members to contribute as much as possible towards the tsunami

Renew your OCA-DC 2005 membership

NOW!!! ...Don't Delay!

Easy as 1-2-3!

- 1) Fill in the form at the back of this newsletter
- 2) Write a check
- 3) Send it in!

Don't wait!

## OCA-DC Membership Form

(2005)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse (if Family Membership): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Office Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

- Please Check One:       New                                       Renewal
- Fee Schedule:         Regular (\$25)                       Family (\$40)                       Capital Club (\$100)
- Presidential Club (\$250)         Senior (\$15)                       Student (\$15)
- Contribution \$
- Check here if you would like to join the *Young Professional* sub-chapter

Mail your completed form and check to: OCA-DC, P.O.Box 34943, Bethesda, MD 20827



**Organization of Chinese Americans**  
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P. O. Box 34943  
Bethesda, Maryland 20827  
[www.ocadc.org](http://www.ocadc.org)

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