

AA R C C connections

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Kicking off Asian American Awareness Month with George Takei

You might know him as Mr. Sulu from *Star Trek*. Or perhaps you recognize that unmistakable voice from his character as Kaito Nakamura from the popular series, *Heroes*. Either way, whether it is for his television/film work or civil rights activism, George Takei has become known as one of the influential Asian American faces of our time.

During World War II, he and his family were forced to live in U.S. internment camps with other Japanese Americans. After his release he returned to his native California and eventually attended UC Berkeley and UCLA. During his college years he got his first taste of life as an actor when he was hired to redub the Japanese dialogue from the Japanese monster movie classic *Rodan* (1956) into English, voicing eight separate characters. Takei's Hollywood breakthrough came when he made his feature debut in the film *Ice Palace* starring Richard Burton and his TV debut in the anthology drama *Playhouse 90*, during a time Asian faces were rarely seen onscreen.

After coming to the attention of "Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry, who cast him in the original pilot, Takei brought good-humored dignity and dash to a role that encompassed everything from swashbuckling to displaying crazed passion.

After *Star Trek*, Takei continued to appear on film, stage and TV--highlights include his turn as Capt. Nim in John Wayne's *The Green Berets* (1968) and as the voice of the First Ancestor in Disney's animated *Mulan* and *Mulan II*. Takei continued to man the helm in the successful series of six big screen "Trek" adventures and a 1996 episode of the spin-off series *Star Trek: Voyager*. Takei has remained an active presence in "Trek" fan circles. In 1986, he became the first Japanese American actor to be granted a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. In 2005 Takei appeared on shock jock Howard Stern's much-anticipated new Sirius satellite radio show, and has become its semi-regular announcer. His recurring role on *Heroes* allows him to show his versatility and fluency in the Japanese language.

Outside of show business, Takei has been involved in civic affairs and politics. He served on the board of directors of the Southern California Rapid Transit District, and was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the board of the Japan-United States Friendship Commission. He serves as chair of the Council of Governors of East West Players, considered the foremost Asian Pacific American theater in the United States. He is chair emeritus of the board of trustees of the Japanese American National Museum and on the advisory committee of the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program. Having revealed his homosexuality in 2005, Takei is a member of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender political organization, and currently serves as a spokesperson for their "Coming Out Project." In 2006 he embarked on a nationwide "Equality Trek" speaking tour sharing his life as a gay Japanese American, his 18 year relationship with his partner, and *Star Trek*, encouraging others to share their own personal stories.

We are thrilled to have George Takei visit UIC to kickoff Asian American Awareness Month. His unique background as a groundbreaking Asian American actor, civil rights activist, and involved citizen will enrich us all. He will address how *Star Trek*'s cornerstone philosophy embodied in the show's acronym "IDIC" -- "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations" -- remains relevant in today's world.

Hear George Takei in person:

Wednesday, April 4th, 2007 @ 4:00pm

Illinois Room, Student Center East

Talk, Q & A, and Reception Following

Entertainment provided by Midwest Buddhist Temple Taiko Group



Join the Asian American Alumni Network!

By: Joyce Yin

Since its launching in 2006, the Asian American Alumni Network has been dedicated to developing the network between all graduates of the University of Illinois who are committed to raising awareness about Asian American issues. The AAAN is open to members of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, geographical locations, and graduation years. They also sponsor many different activities that bring together alumni from the University of Illinois community. **Natalie Garcia, a 2005 graduate from UIC, is currently the Vice President of the AAAN.** She graciously answered some questions we had about the AAAN and what life has been like after college.

What were you involved with during your time at UIC?

I served as Student Trustee to the University of Illinois Board of Trustees. I was also involved in Undergraduate Student Government, Faculty Senate, Asian American Coalition Committee, Filipinos in Alliance, Asian American Students in Alliance, Political Science Students Association. I graduated with a degrees in Political Science and English.

What have you been involved with since graduation?

I have been working at MB Real Estate as a Market Analyst. I have also been volunteering at Children's Memorial Hospital and working on Naisy Dolar's 50th ward aldermanic campaign.



How and why was the AAAN started?

AAAN originated with some UIUC Asian American alumni who wanted to continue their involvement with the University of Illinois. They officially affiliated with the broader University of Illinois Alumni Association in 2005 and launched the Asian American Alumni Network in 2006. AAAN has already grown to over 300 members worldwide and has opened satellite chapters in multiple cities in the U.S., including San Diego, SF Bay Area, Seattle, and Washington D.C. The mission of AAAN is to strive for the betterment of the University of Illinois as an agency for education, public service, and social progress and to provide a space where interested Asian American alumni can contribute to and become involved with the University of Illinois, other alumni, and the broader Asian American community. Among other activities in 2006, AAAN hosted and co-sponsored business networking events and partnered with the Urbana-Champaign campus to involve alumni in its student mentorship program.

How did you become involved with the AAAN ?

I attended a few summer networking events in 2006 and really enjoyed the opportunity to reconnect to the University of Illinois post-graduation. I applied for the Vice Chair position, and felt that with my experiences as Student Trustee and having visited all three campuses, I would be able to effectively network for the association.



What kind of benefits does the AAAN have to offer?

Being a member of AAAN provides the opportunity to continue work on Asian American related issues from a post-graduate perspective, mentor students, network with other U of I alumni, and provide resources for AA organizations at the three campuses.

What projects is the AAAN currently working on?

AAAN recently hosted a roundtable discussion/lunch at UIUC's 10th Anniversary for the Asian American Studies Program Celebration in early March. We are currently working on membership recruitment, establishing the satellite chapters throughout the country, and planning upcoming networking events for the summer.

For more information on the Asian American Alumni Network and upcoming events, please visit <http://www.uiaaan.org>

2nd Annual ASAM Expo highlights Asian Americans in Education

The 2007 ASAM Expo will be an active exploration of Asian Americans in Education. Research exhibits by students from three different ASAM classes will focus on topics such as: schooling in the Japanese American internment camps, K-12 issues facing Asian American students, suicide among Asian American college students. Students have also developed workshops on Asian American Studies that promise to be fun AND educational: come test your knowledge and expand your mind!

In addition to student research and workshops, Dr. Peter Kiang who has shaped Asian American Studies at UMASS Boston for the past 20 years, will deliver a keynote speech reflecting on the impact of developing Asian American Studies within urban university settings like UIC. Kiang's work in the field has focused on developing resources to empower refugee/immigrant youth and to foster community grassroots leadership for Asian Americans. Following the keynote is a panel of scholars presenting on critical issues for Asian Americans and education.

The ASAM Expo invites you to participate in workshops, meet student researchers, and attend the keynote and panel discussion. All Expo events are open to interested students, staff, faculty, and community members.

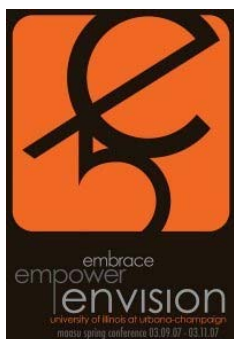
Workshops take place **April 6** and **April 13** from **2-4 p.m. in Taft Hall**.

Exhibits, Keynote, and Panel are in **SSB on April 13th** starting at 10 a.m. (Keynote is at Noon)



MAASU '07: To Embrace. To Empower. To Envision

By: Jenny Tsang



"What is MAASU?" asked two of my friends before I attended the conference. "It sounds like a dish of food." While I thought MAASU would be great as a name for a dish, they were wrong. MAASU stands for the Midwest Asian American Student Union and this year, their Spring 2007 conference was held on March 9-11, 2007. UIC was one of the top ten universities represented at MAASU (over 600 students attended overall), which was hosted at our sister school, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). This meant road trips for all of the Asian American students and organizations from UIC, through which we all got to know each other better and bonded as the conference progressed.

There were a variety of workshops to choose from, including a special movie showing of "Americanese," directed by Eric Byler and based off the novel, "American Knees," written by Shawn Wong. Byler and Wong made special appearances along with their work after the movie showing.

Both movie and novel were groundbreaking in how Asian Americans are portrayed in media.

There were many memorable performances throughout the conference that included iLL-Literacy (spoken word), Isul Kim (band), and South Border (band). Among the workshops, I attended the "Plight of the Asian American Superhero" and a spoken word workshop held by iLL-Literacy. Both were informative and discussed how Asian Americans were unfairly underrepresented in American media.

From the conference, I came away with more motivation to get more involved in Asian American activism and provided me with an excellent opportunity to bond & network with many Asian American students from various universities. Next year the conference will be at the University of Kansas March 28-30, 2008, so mark your calendar!



It's Asian American Awareness Month!

For details, pick up an official calendar at AARCC or check it out online at aarcc.vcaa.uic.edu

Saturday, March 31: UPROOT: A Cultural Showcase Of Our Generation

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Illinois Room, UIC Student Center East; \$5



Wednesday, April 4: George Takei: From Star Trek to Heroes

4:00 p.m.

Illinois Room, UIC Student Center East

Also join a week of Star Trek activities, April 2-6, in 181 BSB, from 12-1:30 p.m., visit <http://www.gbbc.uic.edu>

Friday, April 6: ASAM Expo Workshops

2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Rooms 121, 300, 301, 320, Taft Hall



Monday, April 9: Jin Concert

6:00 p.m.

Inner Circle, UIC Student Center East (Valid i-card required for admission, UIC only)

Wednesday, April 11: Another Kind of Family: Asian American Adoptees and Birth Mother Speak Out

4:00 - 5:00 pm

Room 183, Behavioral Sciences Building (BSB)

Friday, April 13: 2nd Annual ASAM Expo: Asian Americans in Education

Research exhibit 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.; keynote address and panel discussion 12:00 - 1:45 p.m.; workshops 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Exhibit, keynote, and panel: Room B & C, Student Service Building; Workshops: Rooms 121, 300, 301, 320, Taft Hall

Monday, April 16: Chinese Culture Festival

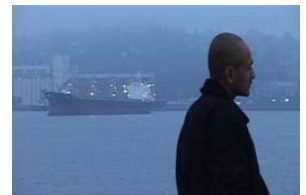
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Room 302, UIC Student Center East

Monday, April 16: Asian American Health Disparities: A Natural History of Hepatitis B in Chicago Chinatown

4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Room 134, College of Pharmacy



Tuesday, April 17: "Sentenced Home" Documentary Screening

4:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Lecture Center A-6

Saturday, April 21: India Night 2007

6:00 p.m.

Paramount Arts Centre in Aurora \$15 advance tickets

Wednesday, April 25: AASIA Cook Off

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Centennial Room, UIC Student Center West

Thursday, April 26: Mr. Asian Sens-Asian

Doors open at 6:00 p.m., Show 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Chicago Room, UIC Student Center West

Friday, April 27: Kriti Festival Keynote: Anita Desai

5:00 p.m. reception, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. talk

Illinois Room, UIC Student Center East



Need a job for the next academic year? Join us at AARCC!



We are looking for motivated, enthusiastic, and organized students to work at AARCC for 2007-2008. AARCC is a great place to work, develop skills, and learn more about Asian American issues—plus we think we’re fun people to hang out with! We have three positions available that will start in the fall semester:

Community Outreach: Responsible for working on programs that connect UIC students to Chicagoland Asian American communities and organizations, including service projects.

Student Outreach: Responsible for outreach to UIC students and campus organizations, and coordinating the Asian American Organizations Council.

Publications Coordinator: Responsible for coordinating AARCC publications such as AARCCConnections, the Asian American Student Resource Book, and event fliers.

Each of these positions will also involve working on publicity, programming, and other tasks related to AARCC activities such as Asian American Awareness Month. We anticipate these positions will be 10-15 hours per week, and welcome students on Work-Study.

More details as well as applications are available in the AARCC Office or on our website and will be due **Friday, April 13th**. Interviews will take place before the end of Spring Semester. Visit AARCC’s website at aarcc.vcaa.uic.edu.

Person on the Street: What did you like best about working at the AARCC this year?

Since this is the last issue of the year, and many of AARCC’s student workers will not be returning the following year, we decided to ask *them* a question this time around....



Rommel Calderwood
Junior, Political Science

"I enjoyed all of our laughs and 'crazy moments' in and out of AARCC, whether it was at Cori's holiday party, with Karen going to MAASU, or Joyce's birthday. Along with AACC, we make a happy Asian family."



Winnie Chan
2nd year Grad. Student,
Psychology

"I like the food at AARCC the most. My most recent favorite is the dried dragon fruit. Working at AARCC gets better when there is a birthday because we ALWAYS have birthday cakes! I LOVE cakes, but not the sushi cupcake invention of Phill :) "



Phillip Ozaki
Sophomore, Sociology

"AARCC staff is nicely awesome!"



Joyce Yin
Sophomore, Gender and
Women’s Studies

"Everything, especially the people! I used to be somewhat intimidated by AARCC but after getting to work with such fantastic people, I’m definitely sad about leaving. It was great to be able to work as a team with them on events/projects and to get to know them better!"

**Asian American Resource
and Cultural Center**

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LEARN ABOUT
AARCC EVENTS
THROUGH OUR
EMAIL LIST, JOIN BY
CONTACTING
AARCC@UIC.EDU

Frequently Asked Questions: The Asian American Resource and Cultural Center

By: Corinne Kodama

Is AARCC just for Asian Americans?

No. AARCC's programs and services are open to ALL members of the UIC community. Anyone interested in learning about Asian American issues is welcome. We have non-Asian Americans involved in most of our programs, including our Advisory Board! We also often co-sponsor events with other campus departments or organizations.

What resources does AARCC have?

- Asian American magazines like AsianWeek, Audrey, Giant Robot, KoreAm, Little India, and several others that are lots of fun to read
- Computer workstations for student use
- Helpful, knowledgeable, and fun professional and student staff
- Resource library with Asian American books and videos
- A small conference room

Why is AARCC important?

- AARCC is important because it is the only UIC office designed specifically to serve Asian American students with full-time staff.
- AARCC is also important because it is a centralized resource for students, staff, and faculty on Asian American issues.