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### **1. Manhattan Borough President's Office Honors NYAWC**

On Tuesday, May 19, the Office of the Manhattan Borough President celebrated Asian Pacific American Heritage Month by honoring the New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC), and two of its very own, President Donna Lee and Executive Director Larry Lee.

It was the fourth annual event of its kind, with awards presented to several honorees for "distinguished leadership in the community" in the presence of about 100 attendees. The festivities included a reception with drinks and hors d'oeuvres, as well as a poetry reading and dance performance.

Mr. Lee, who has served as NYAWC's executive director for almost two years, cited the event as a significant step in acknowledging the issue of domestic violence. "The fact that [the Office of the Manhattan Borough President] honored our organization is a sign that they are singling out the issue because people usually don't talk about it," said Mr. Lee. "Domestic violence is not a family issue; it's a public health issue, and it's not acceptable."



Mr. Lee noted that this year's cultural celebration and awards ceremony is the second time the Office of the Manhattan Borough President has recognized the NYAWC. In March 2008, in celebration of Women's History Month, the Office had included the NYAWC on a map of places in New York City important for women. According to Mr. Lee, both tributes are signs that the issue of domestic violence is, at the least, on the city government's map.

### **2. Family Art Therapy Sessions Offered at the Shelter**

Children exposed to domestic violence are often unable to communicate their feelings, even to their mothers. They often feel torn, fearing the abuser but still loving him as a father or family figure. These complex feelings—sorrow, anger, fear, and guilt—can lead children to aggression or depression. To help them work through these emotions, NYAWC's Children's Program provides children in the Center's emergency shelters with a variety of counseling and mentoring programs, as well as an innovative art therapy program.

Art therapy, a form of psychotherapy, helps children convey their feelings through art. "Instead of talking, you use art as a medium," explained Jennifer Chen, a child counselor with a master's degree in clinical art therapy. Children may lack the vocabulary or skills to identify and express their feelings. In art therapy, however, children express themselves through action. Artwork becomes a raw and rich projection of their emotions. Children are often better at verbal expression when describing or explaining their creations—and the art becomes a way to discuss their feelings and empowerment.

For example, Chen initiated a project in which children listened to a story titled *Hands Are Not for Hitting*, and discussed both the good and bad ways hands are used. They were then instructed to draw and decorate pictures of hands. The resulting artwork showed hands as tools that help rather than hurt. Such an activity allows children to process their emotions both verbally and visually.

Most recently, children participated in a family therapy session in which they made flowers for Mother's Day, while also discussing their feelings about moving to the shelter. "Most children complained that Mom is busy even after life changes were made," said Chen. They were prompted to explore why their mothers had become busier, such as her need to search for an apartment or job, and they ultimately learned to empathize with their mothers. "This is a good way for them to discuss about Mom, to validate their feelings, and to learn how to help Mom," Chen explained.

What is the most rewarding thing about the program? "I have seen children fight problems emotionally and socially," said Chen, "but after a while, they pull themselves together and gradually grow."

### **3. Four Upcoming Events**

#### ***NYAWC Summer Mixer, 6/25/09, Bennett Media Studios***

Join NYAWC for an evening of music, wine and friendship! The mixer will feature the premiere of singer May Ling's evocative music video for her song "Someday." "Someday" speaks of hope for domestic violence survivors, and its video was filmed at NYAWC's Peace House. The mixer is graciously sponsored by Bun Soho and Bennett Media Studio.

Date/Time: Thursday, June 25, 2009, 6:30-8:30 pm

Place: Bennett Media Studios (the SoHo loft of Ed Bennett, founder and former CEO of VH1)  
725 Washington St., New York, NY 10014

Ticket sales and donations benefit NYAWC's work against domestic violence and human trafficking. Contact [audreyslee@yahoo.com](mailto:audreyslee@yahoo.com) for more information.

#### ***Asian American International Film Festival, 7/23/09 to 7/26/09, Clearview Chelsea Cinemas and the Museum of Chinese in America***

NYAWC is proud to be a sponsor of the Asian American International Film Festival again this year! AAIFF is the first and longest-running festival in the country devoted to showcasing films created by artists of Asian descent and films about the Asian community. The festival will feature panels, workshops, and film receptions, and will present the works of over 50 filmmakers.

Mention NYAWC to receive a discount on tickets to NYAWC-sponsored screenings. Please check [AAIFF.org](http://AAIFF.org) to see which films are eligible for the discount.

#### ***Save the Date! NYAWC Queens Community Banquet, 8/27/09, LaGuardia Sheraton, Queens***

This festive banquet will give residents, especially those from Queens, the opportunity to socialize while supporting NYAWC's efforts to ensure fairness and justice for women. NYAWC has a close relationship with the Queens community. Their 24/7 hotline for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking receives thousands of calls from Queens residents every year, and Flushing, Queens, is a major hub for human trafficking. For more information and sponsorship opportunities, contact Shelley Wang at 646-322-8580 or [shelleyw@waclighting.com](mailto:shelleyw@waclighting.com).

#### ***Save the Date! NYAWC Annual Fall Benefit Gala 10/1/09, Broad Street Ballroom, Manhattan***

Join us at a gala celebrating NYAWC's 27th year of helping women and children live safe and healthy lives. For more information about this uplifting event, sponsorship, and silent auction opportunities, contact Benefit Coordinator Vicki Shu Smolin at 646-263-6044 or [vicki@vsplanningllc.com](mailto:vicki@vsplanningllc.com).



#### 4. McGraw Hill Volunteers Give the Center Office a Makeover

Eight volunteers from the McGraw Hill Companies beautified the NYAWC office on May 12, their annual Global Volunteer Day. A grant to purchase supplies and furniture accompanied the employees' participation.

The volunteer team, under the leadership of Li Wah Lai and Rose Yung and with guidance from NYAWC's administrative staff, created a reception area in the lobby and organized a storage room. The white walls were repainted light purple. One wall was also decorated with the Center's purple logo—the phoenix, stenciled by Rose Yung—conveying a feeling of hope and optimism to a staff that provides help to clients everyday. The volunteers also constructed three magnetic bulletin walls, assembled new furniture, and arranged tall, decorative plants.

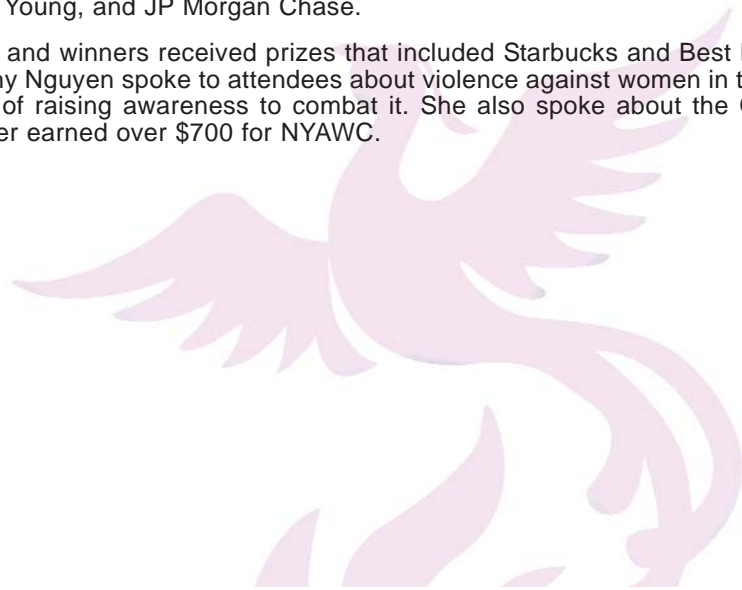
The efforts of the volunteers have created an inviting ambiance in the NYAWC office, making it a friendlier and more functional place. Employees find the area relaxing. Larry Lee,

the executive director, joked, "With the plants and the furniture, the staff may not want to go home." He thanked the team for doing a professional job. The volunteer coordinator, Xue Yi Zhen, echoed his thoughts, appreciating that the office now bears a visible symbol of the work they do everyday.

#### 5. Accenture Holds Fundraiser to Benefit NYAWC

On May 1, the global management and consulting business Accenture sponsored a happy hour fundraiser at Elevate Club in New York City, with proceeds supporting NYAWC and its mission to assist victims of domestic violence and human trafficking in New York's Asian communities. Participating firms included American Express, Bank of America, Citigroup, Deutsche Bank, Ernst and Young, and JP Morgan Chase.

Raffle tickets were sold at the event, and winners received prizes that included Starbucks and Best Buy gift cards. NYAWC Outreach Coordinator Fronthy Nguyen spoke to attendees about violence against women in the Asian communities, and about the importance of raising awareness to combat it. She also spoke about the Center and its much-needed services. The fundraiser earned over \$700 for NYAWC.



#### How can you help?

*Volunteer!* NYAWC's volunteers find fulfillment and enjoyment by enriching the lives of women and children.

*Donate!* Your tax-deductible donation will help to provide emergency shelter, counseling, advocacy, and other crucial services to battered women and their children.

For more information on how you can get involved, visit [www.nyawc.org](http://www.nyawc.org), or contact [xzhen@nyawc.org](mailto:xzhen@nyawc.org) to volunteer your services or [fmui@nyawc.org](mailto:fmui@nyawc.org) to make a donation.

To unsubscribe to NYAWC's email list, please respond to this email with "REMOVE" as the subject line.