



Phoenix

New York Asian Women's Center

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Autumn 2009

27TH ANNIVERSARY BENEFIT AND PHOENIX AWARDS: A TIME FOR PEACE

On Thursday, October 1, the New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC) celebrated its 27th year of service with a reception and awards ceremony at the Broad Street Ballroom. Over 150 people attended the *27th Anniversary Benefit & Phoenix Awards: A Time for Peace*, an event that raised nearly \$60,000 through sponsorships, ticket sales, a silent auction, and a raffle. Proceeds from this event will go toward NYAWC's mission of protecting and supporting survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking.

Andrew Prozes, the CEO of LexisNexis Group, was honored with the 2009 Phoenix Award for his leadership and advocacy on behalf of victims of human trafficking. LexisNexis, under Mr. Prozes's guidance, offers financial, legal, and technical support to organizations working to eradicate human trafficking. It also promotes human rights through its work at the LexisNexis Rule of Law Resource Center.

"We named the event *A Time for Peace* both to commemorate the opening of Peace House, our new shelter space, and also to celebrate our commitment to peace," said Benefit Chair Audrey S. Lee. "It has been a turbulent year, full of economic hardships and marred by so much violence. So on the 27th anniversary, we wanted to focus instead on the good work NYAWC does, on the hope it gives to clients—and the hope it gives to us."

Guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, and performances by Ms. Lee, Broadway actress Hazel Anne Raymundo, and musician Chris Milletari. Liz Cho, co-anchor of WABC Eyewitness News, and David Henry Hwang, a celebrated playwright and screenwriter, served as masters of ceremonies. The event encouraged guests, staff members, and volunteers to meet and socialize, fostering a sense of community among attendees. "It wasn't just about raising funds. It was also an opportunity to thank supporters, and a chance for all of us to celebrate our shared values and to endorse a message of peace," said Ms. Lee. *(continued on page 3)*



LexisNexis CEO Andrew Prozes accepts the 2009 Phoenix Award.

PEACE HOUSE COMMUNITY DINNER RAISES \$30,000



On Thursday, August 27, NYAWC hosted a community dinner at the Sheraton LaGuardia East Hotel in Flushing, Queens, to benefit Peace House, NYAWC's newest emergency residence. Over 150 members of the Queens community attended to support the organization's work in this area.

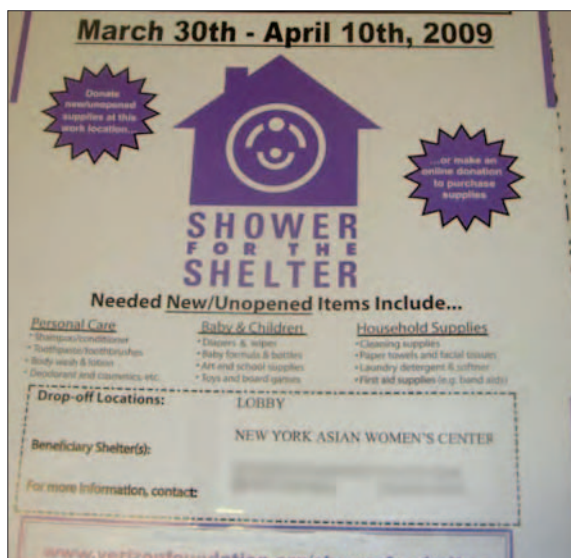
Flushing is both a vibrant, diverse community and a major hub of human trafficking. Each year, thousands of Queens residents call NYAWC's 24/7 hotline for victims of domestic abuse and trafficking. The dinner celebrated the heritage of Queen's Asian immigrant community while also raising awareness of the cultural and language barriers facing immigrant victims of abuse. *(continued on page 3)*

NYAWC Receives Three New Grants

Wonderful news! NYAWC has received a two-year, \$300,000 federal grant to help Lutheran Medical Center better identify and serve Asian women survivors of domestic violence. The Center has also received \$50,000 from the Avon Foundation to help its children's lawyers learn to be more culturally aware. The Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies has also provid-

ed a generous \$20,000 grant, which will enable NYAWC to hire a part-time South Asian-language-speaking counselor for children. These grants will provide invaluable benefits to NYAWC's clients. More information on these projects, and these generous grant providers, will appear in upcoming issues of NYAWC's newsletter.

SHOWER FOR THE SHELTER AIDS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS



This year, the Verizon Foundation sponsored its third annual "Shower for the Shelter" collection drive, in which the National Network to End Domestic Violence paired Verizon offices around the country with local domestic violence shelters. Donated goods—including toiletries, canned foods, books, and new toys—were collected at Verizon offices and delivered to partner shelters.

This year's donations to NYAWC were made possible by the generosity of employees at five Verizon offices, as well as their friends and families. Thanks also to the Verizon campaign site coordinators and the NYAWC volunteers who managed the donation process.



NYAWC PARTICIPATES IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING PANEL

On Thursday, September 24, the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence hosted an expert panel on human trafficking, with special emphasis on the impact of human trafficking on New York City. Human trafficking victims are not only subject to degrading and slave-like conditions, but they are also often overlooked by the institutions meant to protect them. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 enables the federal government to issue T-visas to victims of trafficking, but in practice few such visas are issued. Of the estimated

17,000 people trafficked into the United States each year, the number trafficked from Asia is unknown due to underreporting.

Participating in the panel was Haemy Lee, manager of Project Free, NYAWC's human trafficking special initiative. Ms. Lee spoke about the impact of trafficking on New York's Asian community. Victims of this crime face multiple threats, including abuse by traffickers and deportation by immigration officials. Many survivors experience language and cultural barriers, and are unaware of the

rights they retain regardless of their immigration status. They may also fear for the safety of their families in their home countries. Human trafficking takes many forms, including prostitution and servile marriage, crimes that pose unique challenges to both victims and the legal system.

Ms. Lee also discussed programs and services available for trafficking survivors. These programs include Project Free, which provides advocacy, culturally sensitive services, and residential services to victims of human trafficking in New York City.

SAVE THE DATE! MEI HUA SOCIETY'S ANNUAL BANQUET TO BENEFIT NYAWC: FEBRUARY 17, 2010

NYAWC is extremely grateful that it has been chosen, for the second year in a row, to be the beneficiary of the Mei Hua Society's annual Chinese New Year banquet. Funds raised at this banquet will support much-needed repairs and renovations in NYAWC's two emergency residences, which provide a safe haven for over 70 women and 130 children every year.

In February 2009, the Mei Hua Society generously donated \$10,000 to NYAWC's Community Outreach and Education Program, supporting efforts to reach women in need and efforts to teach the Asian communities and broader society about the realities of domestic violence and human trafficking.

The Mei Hua Society banquet will take place on February 17, 2010, at Golden Unicorn Restaurant, 18 East Broadway, New York City. Tickets will be available for purchase starting December 2009. For more information, please visit www.nyawc.org/events/upcoming.html or call Florence Mui at (212)732-0054 x105.

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Peace House Community Dinner Raises \$30,000

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The evening featured traditional music and dance performances, and community leaders spoke about the importance of instituting protections for immigrant victims. The evening also featured a discussion on Asian poverty with My9 News reporter Ti-Hua Chang and Howard Shih from the Asian American Federation. WNBC news anchor DeMarco Morgan served as the evening's master of ceremonies. The evening concluded with a raffle and silent auction.

The event raised \$30,000. NYAWC is very grateful to all attendees, and gives special thanks to the dinner's sponsors: WAC Lighting, Starside Drugs and Peter Koo, Stevenson Printing, Ber-Yuh Yang Medical Practice, Cathay Bank, the Chinese American Women's Commerce Association, Fanimation, the Flushing Chinese American Community Association, Lutron Electronics Co., Inc., Mid-County Mechanical Inc., the Rotary Club of Flushing and President Anthony J. Civitano, and the West Hempstead Rotary Club. NYAWC also extends thanks to the benefit committee and all the volunteers who made the event possible.

27TH ANNIVERSARY BENEFIT AND PHOENIX AWARDS: A TIME FOR PEACE

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For NYAWC, the anniversary benefit was an auspicious start to another year of service. In spite of the recession, donations from sponsors and proceeds from the silent auction exceeded those from previous years, a testament to the importance of the organization's work and to the generosity of its supporters. In addition, Joshua Goldfein, who won the raffle's grand prize of \$715, generously donated his winnings back to the organization.

NYAWC extends its heartfelt thanks to the supporters of the event, especially: The Grace and Mercy Foundation; the CBS Corporation; Avon Products, Inc.; Kirkland & Ellis LLP/Jay Ptashek & Karen Elizaga; LexisNexis Group; the Estee Lauder Companies, Inc.; Active International; Audrey S. Lee; Julian Liao & Clara Chae; Linda Lew Woo; Starside Drugs; WAC Lighting; and WABC-TV. The organization also thanks its board of directors, the benefit committee, the event coordinator, and the staff members and 31 volunteers whose tireless efforts made the 27th Anniversary Benefit and Phoenix Awards a reality.

SPOTLIGHT ON A STAFF MEMBER: KAORI NAGAO



Victims of domestic violence and human trafficking have a friend in Kaori Nagao, who has served as a supervisory counselor for the New York Asian Women's Center for the past three years. Ms. Nagao was born and raised in Japan but says that her commitment to social justice stems from her childhood travels in South and Southeast Asia. Ms. Nagao lived in Indonesia, Vietnam and, most recently, Bangladesh, where her eyes were opened to the realities of life in the

developing world. Her family's domestic helper was illiterate and did not know his own birth date, and people picked through the family's garbage each day. Beggars everywhere cried out for "bak-sheesh" (money), and even toddlers approached Ms. Nagao to ask for money. Though she was initially interested in a career in fashion, Bangladesh created in Ms. Nagao a change of mind and heart.

When she came to New York as an exchange student, Ms. Nagao discovered art therapy, a field that merged her dual interests: psychotherapy and the arts. After working for several years in Japan, she pursued a graduate degree in art therapy at New York University. A challenging 1.5 year internship at St. Vincent's inpatient psychiatric unit convinced her that she could make a real contribution to society and to women as a therapist and advocate. After graduating from NYU, Ms. Nagao began work at NYAWC as a counselor.

Ms. Nagao also raises awareness about the issue of domestic violence in a column she writes for a Japanese publication, in presentations she gives to New York's Japanese community, and through her participation in the Japanese Medical Assistance Network, hosted by Consulate General of Japan in New York. Ms. Nagao says she feels greatly rewarded by her work, and that it gives her sustenance.

NYAWC Speaks at Flushing Rotary Luncheon



NYAWC Board Member Shelley Wang served as a guest speaker at a Flushing Rotary Club luncheon on Thursday, September 3. Ms. Wang spoke to around 20 Rotary Club members about the unique role NYAWC plays in New York's Asian communities and about the services the Center provides to vulnerable immigrant women. She emphasized the need for community support in identifying victims of abuse, providing assistance to survivors, and raising awareness about the issues of domestic violence and human trafficking.

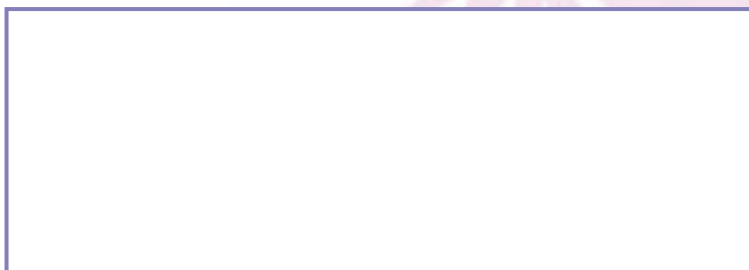
The discussion gave voice to victims who are too often invisible, and emphasized the role that both organizations and individuals can play in stopping violence against women. The event was part of NYAWC's neighborhood outreach and fundraising efforts, intended to motivate local communities to recognize and address the needs of abuse victims.



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What is the significance of the phoenix?

The phoenix is a mythological bird reborn from fire and ashes. The New York Asian Women's Center chose the phoenix as its logo to symbolize the strength of the women who have overcome domestic violence.

☐ **Yes!** I want to help women and children live a life free of abuse.
Please add me to the **NYAWC** mailing list.



Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ E-Mail: _____

☐ I am enclosing a check in the amount of \$ _____

☐ I am including my credit card information to make a tax-deductible donation.

Name on card: _____

☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ American Express (check one)

Card Number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

Expiration Date: ____/____/____ Donation Amount: \$ _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Volunteer!

Join our dedicated group of volunteers to enrich the lives of women and children. For more info visit www.nyawc.org.

Donate!

Checks payable to the NYAWC can be mailed to:

NYAWC
39 Bowery, PMB 375
New York, NY 10002

**Attn: Development
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Your contributions will help provide emergency shelter, counseling, advocacy, and other crucial services to battered women and their children.