



Phoenix

New York Asian Women's Center

Admin: 212-732-0054 Hotline: 1-888-888-7702 Website: www.nyawc.org

Summer
2006

Donna H. Lee Named New Chair of the Board of Directors of the New York Asian Women's Center

Donna H. Lee first became involved at the NYAWC in the early 1990s after being introduced by a fellow student at NYU Law School. She originally joined as a volunteer, teaching English as a Second Language and taking shifts on the Center's hotline. She also worked on a case for the NYAWC during her third-year law clinic.

Donna joined the Board of Directors in 2001 and has served as General Counsel and as a member of the Nominating and Fundraising Committees of the Board. In 2003, when a small group of neighbors protested the opening of our Rose House shelter, Donna took a strong leadership role, providing legal advice and participating in the Community Advisory Board created to work with the neighborhood and local leaders. Most recently, Donna served as Vice Chair of the Center since 2005.

When asked why she enjoys working with the Center, Donna said, "It is an honor to be affiliated with an organiza-

tion that has such terrifically dedicated staff and that does such important work. When I started teaching in the Battered Women's Rights Clinic at CUNY Law two years ago, I was fortunate to have my professional life intersect with my involvement with the Center."

One of Donna's favorite memories of working with the Center so far was during the Rose House controversy. Board members and staff stayed at the shelter for a week before it opened to ensure a smooth transition into the neighborhood. "After all of the difficulties and controversy that arose around Rose House, it was reaffirming to stay in a 'shelter' that felt like a home. There was new bedding and furniture. There was food in the pantry. Everything was clean and seemed well cared for. It was proof positive that Rose House was worth fighting for!"

Donna is currently an Associate Professor at CUNY Law School. She received a J.D. from NYU School of Law,



Board Chair, Donna Lee

where she was President of the Black, Latino, Asian Pacific American Law Alumni Association. A graduate of Brown University, she also studied at the Yonsei Graduate School of International Studies in Seoul, Korea. After clerking for judges in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, she worked at the Civil Appeals and Law Reform Unit of the Legal Aid Society, and then was staff counsel at the National Prison Project of the ACLU Foundation in Washington, D.C. She previously taught lawyering skills and legal research at NYU and at Brooklyn Law School.

**NYAWC Announces
Our New and Improved
Website...**

www.NYAWC.org



**Thanks to the Taproot Foundation
and to the generous volunteers who worked on the
project: William Lyon, Kaya Kimoto, Rishi Pande,
Amy Reed & Nadia Wechsler!**



Save The Date! Fall Gala Benefit

When:
Thursday, October 12, 2006

Where:
Prince George Ballroom
15 East 27th Street
New York, NY 10016

Join us to raise funds for the NYAWC
and honor former Chair, Kyung Yoon, for her years
of service to the Center!

For more information visit www.nyawc.org

New York Asian Women's Center

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The Immigration Debate and Its Effect on Survivors of Domestic Violence

Immigration policy reform is currently the focus of media and government attention. Proposed immigration reforms threaten to criminalize undocumented immigrants and increase the vulnerability of immigrants already facing language, cultural, and economic barriers. Thousands of undocumented immigrants and supporters held massive marches and demonstrations to demand better policies and illustrate the vital role they play in our society.

Immigrant survivors of domestic violence are even more vulnerable to changes in policy. Many immigrant women arrive in the U.S. as spouses with no legal rights to work. This creates financial dependency on their partners, a dangerous scenario when the partner is abusive. Women may believe that their immigration status is dependent on staying with their batterer.

Batterers often use these factors to create power and control. Policies criminalizing undocumented immigrants will only strengthen this dynamic as women feel that they have no other choice but to remain with their abusive husbands.

Language barriers also create obstacles for domestic violence survivors who want to seek help but are unable to communicate with mainstream agencies. That is why community based and language accessible services, such as those offered by the NYAWC, are so important. The need for these services has increased in the current political climate where immigrants may be less likely to reach out for help outside of their communities for fear of deportation and interrogation. However, some of the proposed policies that criminalize undocumented immigrants also criminalize those who provide services to them, including agencies such as the NYAWC. We believe that women have the right to live their lives free from violence and the right to obtain services that help them do so, regardless of their immigration status.

Reported by Sharmeen Ahmed

NYAWC Supports the Adoption of an Anti-Human Trafficking Law in New York State

During the most recent session of the New York State legislature, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz and Senator Frank Padavan, along with numerous other legislators and advocates, strongly supported the passing of anti-human trafficking legislation in New York State. While human trafficking is illegal on the federal level, there is currently no protection for victims or appropriate mechanism for the prosecution of traffickers on the state level.

The New York Asian Women's Center strongly supports the passing of a law to establish crimes and penalties relating to human trafficking. Such a law must include a comprehensive definition of human trafficking to ensure identification and equal rights for all victims. Provisions must be made for the training of law enforcement and service providers. In addition, a model law must ensure culturally- and linguistically-appropriate legal and social services for victims, regardless of immigration status, cooperation with law enforcement, or the prosecution/conviction of their traffickers.

Sponsors and supporters of a state law worked tirelessly to draft a bill which would meet the above criteria. Despite their efforts, no law was passed this session. However, NYAWC remains hopeful that a law will be passed quickly and with all required provisions next year. In order to ensure that this happens, state agencies and lawmakers must understand the importance of this issue and must be willing to earmark funds for the provision of services to victims.

**We encourage you to contact your
State Senator and Assembly
Member to ask them to fight for a
law that truly benefits victims of
this heinous crime!**

Spotlight on Volunteers

NYAWC's volunteer corps is over 100 strong and vital to our mission. Learn more about the individuals whose dedication makes our work possible!

Justine Chao

Reported by Lisa Thomas, Volunteer

Born in Hong Kong and educated in Switzerland and Japan, Justine Chao draws inspiration for her commitment to service from her mother, who "emphasized the importance of education and its ability to empower individuals." Not just your typical volunteer, Justine has tutored ESL one-on-one and has spent years developing a special volunteer project that provides ESL support for women while their children are being mentored by university students. "Every woman that I have had the privilege of interacting with through the ESL classes has really inspired me with their courage, resilience and perseverance," she said of her volunteer experiences.

Over the past year, Justine has fostered her passion for education by interning at UNICEF's education division, while completing her Master's at Columbia's School of Social Work. "I firmly believe that sharing the education and skills that I have been blessed with is the best way I can help others," said Justine. She has certainly blessed NYAWC with her dedication, enthusiasm and generosity.

Alex Ong

Reported by Mari Watanabe, Volunteer

Born in Germany and raised in Amsterdam and Scottsdale, Arizona, volunteer Alex Ong moved to New York City in 2001 to help with September 11th recovery efforts through the American Red Cross. Initially culture shocked by the fast pace of the city, Alex has come to love his adopted home.

Alex was introduced to the NYAWC through a friend and has been a dedicated volunteer ever since. Multi-talented and generous with his time, Alex's volunteering for the Center has ranged from babysitting to teaching computer classes to helping out at annual events. When

asked why he enjoys working with the NYAWC Alex says, "The staff is great. Tuhina has a wonderful way of working with people. Her lead pervades throughout the organization in a very positive and effective manner. I also greatly appreciate the staff's appreciation." With amazing volunteers like Alex it's hard not to be thankful!

Volunteer-Client Success Story

Mark Lanzana

Reported by Serena Fong, Volunteer

Mark Lanzana began volunteering for NYAWC seven months ago, working as an English conversation partner and reading comprehension tutor for a client who is studying for a certified nursing assistant (CNA) exam.

Initially, he and the client worked together to determine her main needs so that he could best help her. The client wanted to improve her conversation skills and test-taking abilities, so Mark researched ESL and CNA resources to develop a tailored plan for their tutoring sessions.

Mark saw strong improvement in the client's test-taking ability. Originally, he was concerned because of the amount of time it would take for her to answer a question, but eventually, through their hard work, she became much more skilled and confident.

Mark feels that his tutoring experience has been a good one. He says, "The most important components of a successful tutoring relationship are energy and a positive attitude, as opposed to [just] finding the perfect material to work on." The client is scheduled to take the test in the coming months and Mark believes she has a good chance of passing it. We send congratulations to both members of the volunteer-client match for their hard work and far-reaching achievements!

Annual Holiday Party 2005

A winter time celebration of grand proportions was held in December 2005, when over 200 clients, staff and volunteers gathered for a festive day of food, fun, music and cheer. The annual event was held at the Loft @ 47 West Street, with the space and set-up generously donated by Sam Sabine of Great American Catering. We cannot thank Sam enough for the elegant, beautiful space with magnificent views of the West Side and room for all of our busy activities!

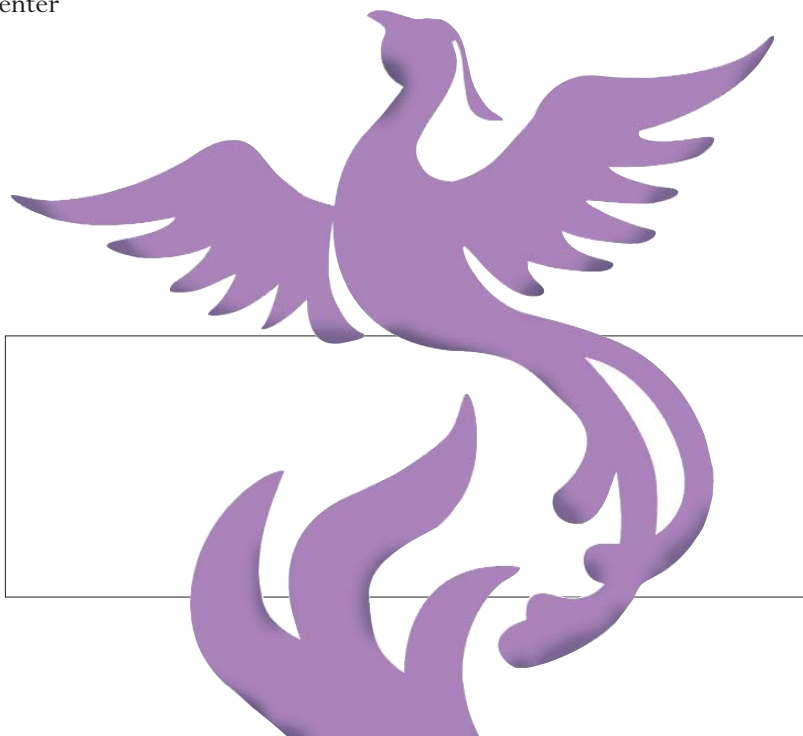
Children who attended the party were showered with candy, crafts, gifts and fun! The gifts were made possible by the generosity of the New York Cares' Secret Santa Program, Shirley Ku, and the SALT Ministry. Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF) Action Council volunteers dazzled all of us with their endless enthusiasm and fabulously creative craft projects. A holiday gathering isn't complete until Santa arrives, and a jolly (but maybe a bit slender) Santa made a red carpet appearance, giving children a seasonal photo opportunity. Women enjoyed an afternoon-long match of Bingo, with pampering personal care products as prizes. And of course, how can we forget the food? Delicious, scrumptious, yummy food was lovingly prepared, delivered and served by a host of staff and volunteers, without whose help the annual Holiday Party would not be possible!

A heartfelt thanks to all who helped with this wonderful event!

Special Thanks to:

CACF Action Council
Great American Catering & Sam Sabine
New York Cares
SALT Ministry
Shirley Ku

New York Asian Women's Center
39 Bowery, PMB 375
New York, NY 10002



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 experienced abuse at home.

☐ **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: _____

Support the NYAWC!

Volunteer!

Enrich the lives of women and children with our dedicated group of volunteers. 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 Manager

Or donate online at www.nyawc.org

Join our mailing list:

Fill out the form on the left and mail it to the above address.

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