



Phoenix

New York Asian Women's Center

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Summer - 2013

CONGRATULATIONS TO NYAWC's NEW BOARD CHAIR, KAREN ELIZAGA!



*Newly appointed Board Chair,
Karen Elizaga at NYAWC's
30th Anniversary Gala*

We are giving hearty congratulations to Karen Elizaga, the newly appointed Chair of NYAWC's Board of Directors. She succeeds Jessica Lee who dedicated 8 years of outstanding leadership and governance to the agency.

Karen, who first joined NYAWC's board in 2008, is the Executive Coach/Founder of Forward Options and author of *Find Your Sweet Spot*. She has shown tremendous commitment to NYAWC's mission of empowering women and children to live free from violence. We wish her well in her new role!

CELEBRATE 31 YEARS WITH NYAWC!



NYAWC
New York Asian Women's Center

**31ST
ANNIVERSARY**

Phoenix Awards Gala
Auction, Cocktails, Dinner
Tuesday October 22, 2013
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Edison Ballroom
240 West 47th Street, NYC

www.nyawc.org/gala2013

Contact Annie Lee: 646-595-9009
nyawc@daughterofdesign.com

NYAWC invites you to join us at our **31st Anniversary Benefit Gala**. The gala is a joyous occasion, celebrating the triumphs of the hundreds who found freedom from abuse, slavery and predators.

Our festivity rejoices in the victories of the women and their children, and salutes the successes of our staff, volunteers and supporters.

For us to continue serving victims of violence and abuse, we need your support. Please join us as a protector of justice and compassion.

Tickets: \$250. To purchase tickets, please visit: <http://www.nycharities.org/events/EventLevels.aspx?ETID=6394>

For more information on becoming a sponsor, please contact Annie Lee at 646-595-9009 or nyawc@daughterofdesign.com.

Thank you to our Early Gala 2013 Sponsors: Anonymous; Hunton & Williams, LLP; Jay Huang; Julian Liao & Clara Chae; Karen Elizaga & Jay Ptasek; Kirkland & Ellis, LLP; Linda Lew Woo; and, the Ong Family Foundation.

WE GROW WITH YOUR SUPPORT!

Thank you to our recent friends and supporters:

Foundation/Corporate Granters: Asian American Federation; Help for Children (formerly, Hedge Funds Care); and, the Korean American Community Foundation

New York City Council Awards: Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer; NYC Council's Domestic Violence Empowerment Initiative; NYC Council Members Margaret Chin, Leroy Comrie, Daniel Dromm, Peter Koo; and, the Manhattan Delegation.

Friends of NYAWC:

Jeanne Lee Jackson and the New York Cosmopolitan Lions Club whose generous donation will support outreach efforts on college campuses to educate students on issues of sexual assault.

Tiffany Rogers, NYAWC's Development/Communications Associate, who raised over \$3,000 in celebration of her birthday and in honor of her birth mother who is a survivor of sexual assault. The funds will support NYAWC's sexual assault program, One Again.

Shelley Levine whose friends generously donated in honor of her 60th birthday.

STANDING STRONG IN DENIM

"She was asking for it." Whether the victim was dressed in a short skirt or tight jeans, this phrase should never be used to excuse rapists from their actions.

Denim Day is held during April, Sexual Assault Awareness month, exactly for that reason. Fifteen years ago, the Italian Supreme court decided that the victim's jeans were too tight to be forcibly removed. Thus, she must have consented and assisted her attacker. The outrage that followed this decision echoed across the globe. Denim Day now exists to demonstrate that no one deserves sexual assault as a result of what s/he is wearing.



NYAWC staff standing strong in denim at City Hall

On April 24th, dressed in form-fitting jeans and the color teal, NYAWC staff members and volunteers gathered on the steps of City Hall, while other organizations gathered nationwide in recognition of Denim Day. NYAWC was invited by Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer to join him and other council members for a rally and press conference to raise awareness around sexual violence.

By wearing the color teal, associated with sexual assault awareness, NYAWC's group stood out within the crowd, noted Aditi Bhattacharya, NYAWC's One Again Co-Coordinator. Standing in solidarity to speak out against sexual assault did not simply make a visual impact. NYAWC was also outspoken in its message. Fran Gau, NYAWC's Assistant Director of Client Services, said it best, "Strictly speaking, any type of sexual behavior without the consent from the women is considered rape. We need to raise public awareness that the victims must not be blamed for this crime committed on them."



Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer at NYC Denim Day 2013

WHY RUN FOR TEAM PHOENIX?

We Asked Runner May Ling Lai why she decided to Run for NYAWC...

"Running a marathon seems impossible, just as, for many, leaving a situation of domestic violence or human trafficking seems insurmountable.



NYAWC Team Phoenix Runner, May Ling Lai

While extremely physical, marathon running is actually a sport of mental endurance. You begin the race on the week you start training. You learn about yourself and actual limits versus perceived limits. Your actual limits are meant to help you know if you're doing something wrong or harmful. Your perceived limits are meant to be overcome. During training, you find your great moments of confidence and of extreme self-doubt. Focus on the goal. You will see your progress and get stronger."

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COMMUNITY OFFICES OFFER COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE

Conveniently located close to public transportation and neighborhoods densely populated with Asian immigrants, NYAWC's three community offices offer accessibility, efficiency, and comfort to the communities they serve. "We wanted to be situated in the community where our clients are coming from so that immigrants who are survivors of violence will be offered support within their community instead of leaving their comfort zone," explains Kaori Nagao, Senior Supervisory Counselor Advocate and One Again Co-Coordinator.



NYAWC's Asian Women Empowerment Center (Community Office) in Elmhurst, Queens

With increased accessibility there are also more comprehensive and efficient services through collaboration with other service providers, law enforcement and community organizations. The Sunset Park and Elmhurst community offices also work with local hospitals and police precincts and often receive referrals from law enforcement and medical providers. The proximity to medical providers and law enforcement and relationships that NYAWC has built with their staff enable victims to address complex situations quickly and efficiently.

Through the Safety First Project, Sunset Park staff members have been able to build the capacity of medical providers to screen for intimate partner violence and provide education to patients. "We recognize that the health care system is who victims often turn to first for support, or go to for general checkups. Medical providers have many points of contact, if they start doing screening, they may be able to identify survivors.

One Asian medical provider who started out saying that intimate partner violence doesn't happen is now screening 75% of new patients after our training", says Nagao.

The Asian Women Empowerment (AWE) program at the Elmhurst office provides a safe space for women to receive holistic services, including financial and legal workshops, counseling, support groups, and trauma sensitive yoga and self-defense courses. "This program has been very well received," says Shihomi Tonogawa, Supervisory Counselor Advocate, "Clients like the programming and also enjoy the free lunch we provide. Sharing a meal together allows clients to become comfortable and receive support from one another".

NYAWC staff members at community offices hope that community engagement continues to grow. "Often women are not sure if they are victim or if they qualify for services," says Nagao, "You don't have to know that you are a victim to access our services. If you feel like something is wrong, this is a good place to come in and have a conversation."



The view inside - where NYAWC counselors do their best work for our clients.

SPOTLIGHT ON NYAWC'S SHELTERS: CREATING COMMUNITY, CREATING STRENGTH

In the aftermath of domestic abuse, rebuilding can be a daunting process. NYAWC eases the burden through its residential program, which offers emergency housing to survivors of domestic abuse and their children. The residential managers of Rose House and Peace House, Karyn Comeau and Albert Chan, respectively, agree that creating a sense of community is a key factor for success.

The shared experiences of the survivors allow them to connect with each other and recognize that they are not alone in their recovery. The support system instills the survivors with a strength that empowers them both during and after their time in the shelter. The recent addition of in-house counseling has amplified the supportive network within the shelters. It allows the residential managers, advocates, and other staff members to attend more closely to the residents' needs, offering direct self-sufficiency and community-building resources.



Bedroom in Peace House

For Ms. Comeau and Mr. Chan, the most rewarding aspect of serving as a residential manager comes from witnessing the beneficial impact that the residency program has on those survivors who stay in the shelters. Both note the strength and resilience of the women with whom they work, especially in a time that can be very frightening to them, as a source of inspiration and a reminder of why they do this work. The residents' inner power, compassion, hopefulness, and even sense of humor, fuel the residential managers and helps to heal these residents.



New York Asian Women's Center

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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)

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Support NYAWC!

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 NYAWC
can be mailed to:

NYAWC

**32 Broadway, 10th Floor
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**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 abused women and their children.*