

Center for Asian Pacific American Students (CAPAS)

10 Year Commemoration Book



CAPAS Mission Statement

The Center for Asian Pacific American Students seeks to enrich and develop social, intellectual and personal growth in our students by providing Asian American resources as well as a welcoming, supportive environment. The Center serves as an advocate for the Asian American and Pacific Islander community and promotes an educational dialogue that embraces the unique experiences of ethnic communities, the cultural fabric of our institution.

About the Mural (front and back cover): The mural on the front cover was designed by Pitzer alumnus Charlie Mok '06. Visitors can view this large mural located near the rear entrance to the center. "The two dragons intertwine above the waters to spell out the word 'CAPAS' and the choice of colors are based on the Chinese elements of water and wood, which symbolize value ethics, a cooperative and generous nature and silent and constant influences upon others' thoughts. And those are the characteristics and philosophy that [we] want our students and our center to stand for."

-Charlie Mok '06

Welcome from Director

It is an honor and privilege to celebrate CAPAS' tenth year through this special commemorative booklet. In preparation for this milestone, I am humbled by the history of activism that preceded our physical space and admire the collaborative efforts by students, staff and faculty with whom I had the opportunity to work to make this physical space a permanent one.

Although this commemorative book cannot begin to encapsulate the many contributions within our center's history, it is my hope that it would serve as a timepiece in the preservation of our highlights from the past ten years. It is also an expression of gratitude towards those who were a part of our legacy: from student activists, Pitzer faculty, supportive administrators and staff as well as the many alumni who participated in the self-study and review and finally to the greater Claremont College community who supported CAPAS through meaningful collaborations.

Last but not least, to our AAPI students, the future of our center belongs to you. In the words of a Pilipino proverb, "Ang di lumilingón sa pinanggalingan, di makararating sa paroroonan." (He who does not (know how to) look back at his past (where he came from) will not reach his destination.)

-Stephanie Velasco Poserio, CAPAS Director



Remarks from Pitzer College Administration

Congratulations to the Center for Asian Pacific American Students (CAPAS) for its first remarkable decade. Founded at Pitzer College in 2001, CAPAS plays a vital role in campus life, contributing to the College's social engagement and diversity. Some of its accomplishments in its ten years include receiving funding from the Irvine Foundation, raising money for tsunami relief, establishing the annual Pilipino American History Month celebration and being named a 'Top Ten Best College for Asian American Pacific Islander Student Activism.' On behalf of the entire Pitzer community, I thank CAPAS for its many contributions—those from the last ten years and those to come.

Laura Skandera Trombley, President

Congratulations to CAPAS and all of the students, faculty and staff that have been instrumental in the Center's sustained success for the past decade. Since its inception ten years ago, CAPAS has been a leader in providing relevant cultural, social and educational programs for the entire Pitzer community and support for every student that passed through the Center's door. Pitzer College is fortunate and the campus community is stronger due to the contributions and presence of CAPAS on campus. Best wishes for many more decades to come.

Jim Marchant, Vice President for Student Affairs



The CAPAS Logo

“The crane has so many positive meanings: peace, love, longevity, etc. I also used the circle to represent the moon. The moon is ever changing but always returns to a full moon, whole, complete. After I drew it, someone mentioned that it also looked like a [Pitzer] orange [with a stem]. I’m so glad and honored that I was able to be a part of CAPAS and that the logo is still used.” -**Chelsey Kadota '04, Designer, CAPAS Logo**



Artist original conception



Formal CAPAS logo



CAPAS 10 Year Logo (design by Charlie Mok '06)





History of CAPAS Timeline

2001: In the fall, the Center for Asian Pacific American Students (CAPAS) was formed as a space with work-study students in Mead Hall, Y Tower. Pitzer alumna Laura Tamashiro was a driving force in the creation of a center. With the help of students, a proposal for the center was drafted by Pitzer staff.

2002: CAPAS received seed money from the Irvine Diversity Grant to fund one full-time coordinator and support programming over the next two years. The grant was managed by Pitzer Professor and Associate Dean of Faculty Linus Yamane. Stephanie Velasco was hired as the inaugural staff person.

2003: CAPAS hosted a focus group and launched its Website and *Voices from the Margin* newsletter. Programs such as Open House, Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Pilipino American History Month and the Asian Pacific American Alumni and Senior Recognition Dinner were established.

In the spring, a group of intoxicated students entered the CAPAS patio and disturbed, intimidated and harassed four students inside the center, yelling insensitive comments related to Asian ethnicity. An identified individual was held accountable and is no longer a member of the Pitzer community.

2004: CAPAS was relocated by a majority vote to a more central and visible space in Mead Hall, Little X Tower. Students and staff felt it was important to include amenities similar to the last space. The center and programs were developed and staffed by over thirty interns and volunteers from all the Claremont Colleges.

A series of hate crimes took place throughout the Claremont Colleges, including a staged car vandalism by CMC Professor Kerri Dunn. Students and staff at CAPAS held discussions and issued a formal statement regarding these incidents.



2005: Following the Irvine Diversity Grant, CAPAS received Pitzer funding for one year. To be considered for full funding, CAPAS was placed under review. As a result of the evaluation process, which included a 100+ page self-study and other data, the review team recommended that “CAPAS continue to operate at Pitzer,” stating that “CAPAS not only provides a tremendous benefit to Pitzer’s Asian American students, but to the entire Pitzer community.”

In March, CAPAS was successfully institutionalized.

The Coordinator position held by Stephanie Velasco was converted to a director position and a program assistant position was created. Ka Yee Chiu, a CGU student, was hired for two years. The program assistant position was discontinued in 2009 due to budget cuts.

In the winter, CAPAS partnered with World Vision to help raise funds for victims of the December 26 tsunami in Southeast Asia. The center also partnered with Kid Works International and the American Red Cross to help raise

over \$25k for survivors. An article was featured in the Claremont *Courier*.

In the spring, alumnus Charlie Mok installed a CAPAS mural on the outside wall of the center during Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage month. The artwork features two dragons that spell out “CAPAS.”

2006: CAPAS hosted a discussion for an Asian Pacific Student Union. Members of BSU and LSU and OSA were invited to share about their existing organizations and students discussed the possibility of an Asian American Student Union. APAC, the Asian Pacific American Coalition, is later formed in 2009.

2007: In the fall, students voted to combine the staff and steering committees into one based on the participation levels of students, faculty and staff. A list serve of active faculty and staff was sustained.

In spring, CAPAS and OSA hosted a Strategic Planning Workshop open to the community. Participants, led by a consultant, developed a shared Visioning Document for the future.



On the campus of Virginia Tech, Asian American student Seung-Hui Cho, killed and wounded many before committing suicide. CAPAS co-signed a written collective response to 5C presidents and deans with other Asian American entities on campus over concern for Asian Pacific American backlash.

2008: CAPAS hosted “Fil-I-Am: Filipino Americans in Hip Hop” featuring Asian American artists in mainstream media and the “B-Box Project,” where donations of clothing, educational materials and toiletries were collected and sent to needy families in the Philippines through a non-profit organization.

CAPAS staff voted to restructure its unlimited positions to five student internships and the center goes “green.”

In the spring, CAPAS was vandalized by unidentified persons. A door leading to CAPAS was unlocked and the incident was investigated. The dean of students issued an email stating that the act was “harmful and disrespectful to the Center, the students who utilize this space and our entire campus community.”

In the summer, alumna Cindy Pujayana painted a CAPAS mural on the inside wall of the center. The artwork features bamboo to reflect the space. She also designed an Asian garden for the patio.

2009: CAPAS hosted an open forum to discuss current issues such as programs, funding and community.

CAPAS partnered with over 25 Claremont College organizations and community-based organization Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA) to host the second “Fil-I-Am” as a benefit showcase for typhoon survivors in Southeast Asia. The event helped raise over \$2K for the Philippine Red Cross.

Pitzer College was named one of the “Top Ten Best Colleges for Asian American Pacific Islander Students” in a national search by Asian Pacific Americans for Progress and Angry Asian Man. The article lauded CAPAS for building community programs on and off campus and mentioned how students “benefit from the services and resources offered by [the center].”

A Legacy of Activism

The Walker Wall Incident

In 1991, the Claremont Colleges received a Ford Foundation grant to create Asian American Studies at Pitzer. The courses were taught by Professors Joe Parker, Jack Ling and Linus Yamane. Following the availability of these courses, students painted the words "Asian American Studies Now!" on Walker Wall. The following day, letters were crossed out to read "Asian Americans Die

Now!" Members of the community became outraged and a barricade was formed. A formal protest occurred at Alexander Hall at Pomona College the following year.

The student call for action eventually led to the creation of an Asian American Resource Center at Pomona College, Intercollegiate Department of Asian American Studies and the Center for Asian Pacific American Students at Pitzer College.

Hate Crimes at the Claremont Colleges

In 2004, a series of hate crimes took place throughout the Claremont Colleges. Among them, four students burned an 11-foot cross and others wrote a racial slur over the picture of black agricultural scientist George Washington Carver. Most appalling, however, was the puzzling vandalism of Professor Kerri Dunn, a CMC professor whose car was vandalized and spray-painted with racial slurs. After one week, the Claremont police found that Dunn had allegedly staged her own hate crime.

Students and staff at CAPAS held discussions, organized themselves and issued a formal statement regarding these incidents.

Virginia Tech Tragedy

In 2007, Asian American Seung-Hui Cho massacred thirty-two people and wounded many before committing suicide on the campus of Virginia Tech. Many colleges and universities responded to the incident.

CAPAS co-signed a written collective response to 5C presidents and deans with other Asian American entities on campus over concern for Asian Pacific American backlash.



Student Voices

"If there hadn't been this [CAPAS] space...living here [at Pitzer] would've been that much harder."

"I feel that CAPAS is a comfortable space, CAPAS always has someone to listen if a student was going through an experience."

- **"Testimonios 2004": Campus Climate at Pitzer College**

"Of course [having CAPAS at Pitzer] is important. There are lifelong friendships to be made. There is a community to support. There are paths still left to be forged. Aren't there?"

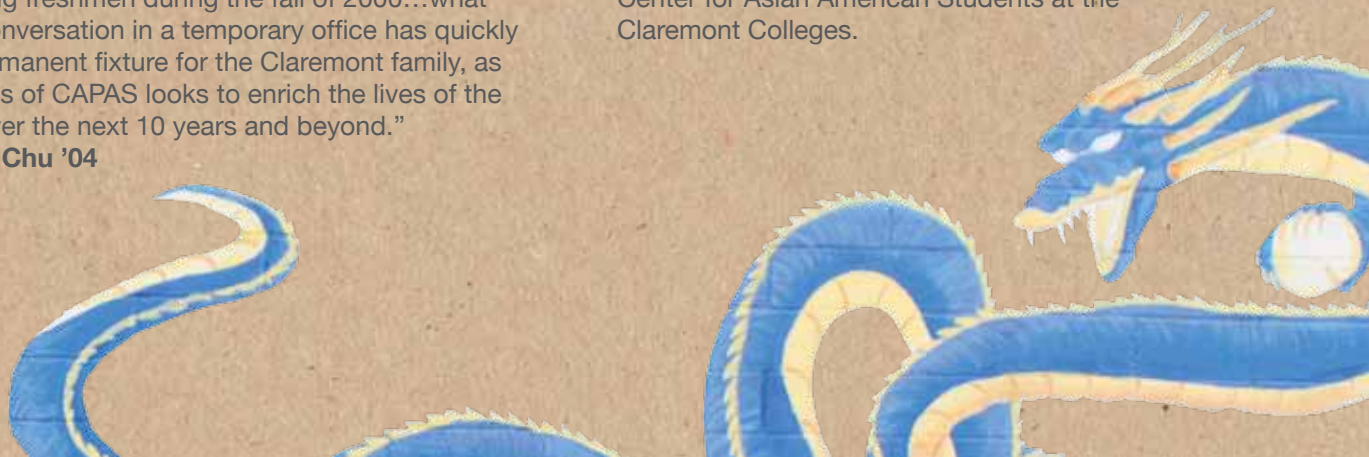
-**Laura Hisano Tamashiro '01**

"I remember discussing the idea of CAPAS with a few of the incoming freshmen during the fall of 2000...what began as a conversation in a temporary office has quickly become a permanent fixture for the Claremont family, as the core values of CAPAS looks to enrich the lives of the community over the next 10 years and beyond."

-**Christopher Chu '04**

CAPAS Fun Facts

- One of the names considered for the center was APASC (Asian Pacific American Student Center).
- During CAPAS' first year, the APA population was 12.86 percent. Percentages do not reflect students without "Asian surnames," multiracial students, adopted Asian Americans and Filipino students with Latino surnames. International students are included.
- The Mandarin Café, a former student-run eatery in Gold Student Center that offered food like noodles and boba drinks, was conceptualized with the help of CAPAS and AASP.
- CAPAS representatives sit on the following committees: Academic Standards, Diversity Committee, 5C Asian American Advisory Board and Intercollegiate Department of Asian American Studies.
- CAPAS was once approached to become a 5C Center for Asian American Students at the Claremont Colleges.



Programs

CAPAS Open House

Since 2001, CAPAS has hosted its open house at the beginning of each academic year. Faculty, staff, students and the Claremont community are welcome to visit the space and enjoy free food and entertainment. In the past, the center co-hosted this event with the Intercollegiate Department of Asian American Studies and more recently as a joint open house with Career Services and the Writing Center.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (APAHM) is traditionally celebrated in May to commemorate the contributions of people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent in the United States and was first commemorated at Pitzer in 2003. CAPAS celebrates APA Heritage Month in April due to a shorter academic year. Among many of its notable events, CAPAS once hosted a screening of MTV's "Better Luck Tomorrow" with actors Parry Shen and Roger Fan, theatre groups such as Here and Now and Cold Tofu, comedians

Rex Navarette, the Furious Four Comedy Tour hosted by PK, speakers such as Asian American activist and author Helen Zia and many more.

In 2005, CAPAS partnered with humanitarian organization World Vision and the American Red Cross to help raise over \$25,000 for victims of the December tsunami in Southeast Asia. The fundraising efforts helped distribute "family survival kits" to those affected.

Pilipino American History Month

In 2003, CAPAS launched the first celebration of Pilipino American History Month in October at the Claremont Colleges. Among the many activities events, CAPAS began hosting "Fil-I-Am," a local event with a global cause.

In 2008, CAPAS hosted an event titled "Fil-I-Am: Filipino Americans in Hip Hop," with outreach to the surrounding Inland Empire and Los Angeles community. The event featured prominent leaders in American mainstream media as well as popular artists Kaba Modern and Team Millennia from MTV's America's Best Dance Crew, Culture Shock LA



and DJ Icy Ice. The Fil-I-Am included a philanthropic cause known as the “B-Box Project” where donations of clothing, educational materials and toiletries were collected and sent to needy families in the Philippines through a non-profit organization.

In 2009, CAPAS partnered with more than 25 organizations and a community-based organization Search to Involve Pilipino Americans to host the second Fil-I-Am as a benefit showcase for typhoon survivors in Southeast Asia. The event drew a large crowd of both student and community members to the outdoor grounds where the audience enjoyed a live concert featuring Claremont Legacy Martial Arts, 5C dance company, UCLA Samahang Modern, award winning violinist Paul Dateh with guitarist Ken Belcher and the Quest Crew (season three winners of MTV’s America’s Best Dance Crew). The event helped raise over \$2000 and proceeds were given to survivors through the Philippine Red Cross.

APA Alumni & Senior Recognition Dinner

At the end of each year, CAPAS hosts its own Asian Pacific American and Senior Recognition Dinner to honor the graduating APA seniors and to welcome back its alumni. The center invites alumni as featured keynote speakers, to share about their journey from Pitzer and offer words of advice to future alums.

The event also features a unique stole ceremony where students receive a first-of-its-kind graduation stole, designed by Pitzer alumna Chelsea Kadota, to wear on commencement day. Each stole features the CAPAS logo and graduation year and is hand made by Pitzer alumna and staff Kathy Kile. The stole ceremony is followed by a senior speaker, chosen by each graduating class.

Notable alumni speakers have included Debra Yang, first Asian American US Attorney, actor Bruce Locke and film director Cellin Gluck. In 2009, the center chose Professor Rick Tsujimoto as their keynote speaker in honor of his retirement and commitment to the Asian American community.



Pitzer Named in Top Ten Best Colleges for AAPI Students

Description

In 2009, Pitzer College was featured as one of the “Top Ten Best Colleges and Universities for AAPI Students” in a nationwide search sponsored by Asian Pacific Americans for Progress, a national network of Progressive Asian Americans and Allies for Action and Change and popular blog Angry Asian Man. The article collectively highlights the contributions of CAPAS, AASP, APAC and IDAAS.

The top ten schools (in no particular order) were: Dartmouth, UCLA, USC, Oberlin College, University of Massachusetts, Boston, University of Pennsylvania, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Loyola Marymount University, Columbia University and Pitzer!

Special recognition goes to Pitzer student Yasi Razvan '10, for her collaboration and submission of this application.

Article

“I truly believe in Pitzer’s commitment to intercultural understanding and diversity. I chose to come to Pitzer because of these values and I have been nothing but impressed with how the college, already a leader in student activism, continues to grow and build on its foundations. I have had the privilege of working with several AAPI groups throughout the Claremont Colleges.”

– **Yasi Razvan '10, Nominator**

Pitzer College is a place that strives to enrich and develop social, intellectual and personal growth among its students by providing a welcoming and supportive environment. Students there can take advantage of the resources offered at all five of the Claremont Colleges, including the Intercollegiate Department of Asian American Studies (IDAAS). They also benefit from the services and resources offered by the Center for Asian Pacific American Students (CAPAS).

Pitzer students and CAPAS regularly work with other organizations that support the experiences of AAPI communities at the Claremont Colleges, empowering students to seek partnerships and build larger coalitions for community events. On the Pitzer campus, the student leaders of CAPAS coordinate the Asian American Sponsor Program (AASP), which is a mentorship program matching older Pitzer students with first-year students to help the new students transition to college life. AASP coordinates AAPI-themed events to educate and bring together all students. New this year to Pitzer is the Asian Pacific American Coalition (APAC), which serves as an umbrella organization for AAPI student organizations and addresses the greater needs of the community.

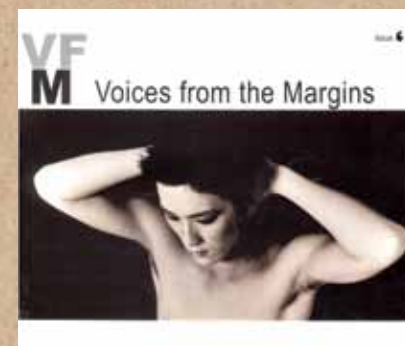
Aside from cultivating activism within Pitzer's campus and the greater Claremont Colleges Consortium, students often turn its eye to the AAPI community off campus. The previous fall semester, CAPAS hosted an event titled "Fil-I-Am: Filipino Americans in Hip Hop," with outreach to the surrounding Inland Empire and Los Angeles community. The event was successful in moving beyond the college-student audience and engaging a diverse group of people in a discussion of the recent emergence of Filipinos in American mainstream media. Fil-I-Am included a philanthropic cause where donations were collected and sent to needy families in the Philippines.

CAPAS, AASP, APAC and the IDAAS all create an environment at Pitzer for students to create a strong AAPI community. The very presence of these groups on campus is a testament to the commitment of Pitzer's students into creating an environment that truly embraces the school's intercultural and interdisciplinary values.

Additional Resources (from CAPAS website)

Articles and Publications

- "To Sow, To Water, To Grow," Pitzer Participant Fall 2003 http://www.pitzer.edu/participant_online/pdf/2003_fall.pdf
- "Supporting a Once 'Model Minority' Community" http://www.pitzer.edu/participant_online/pdf/2003_spring.pdf
- "Pitzer reaches out to Tsunamis Victims" http://www.pitzer.edu/participant_online/pdf/2005_winter.pdf
- "Claremont Courier newspaper - "Claremont responds to tsunami disaster" article & photo - January 5, 2005
- Student Life "Fil.i.am showcases Asian-American Performers" <http://tsl.pomona.edu/new/pdfarchive/pdf/2009-11-13.pdf>
- "Top Ten Best Colleges for AAPI Students" <http://www.apaforprogress.org/best-colleges-aapi-students-pitzer-college>
- Press Release "Top Ten" http://www.pitzer.edu/offices/public_relations/press_releases/09-10/2009_09_25_aapi_capas.asp



Videos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0lbtHcy4ZE&feature=related>

Description: Kaba Modern from MTV's America's Best Dance Crew Season 1 at Fil-I-Am event 2008 sponsored by CAPAS in honor of Pilipino American History Month at Pitzer College.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9wZr-WPjXs&feature=channel>

Description: Team Millennia at Fil-I-Am event 2008 sponsored by CAPAS in honor of Pilipino American History Month at Pitzer College.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JWybXvQzc0>

Description: Culture Shock LA at Fil-I-Am event 2008 sponsored by CAPAS in honor of Pilipino American History Month at Pitzer College.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9u5gS4ZkLU>

Description: UCLA Samahang Modern at Fil-I-Am Benefit Showcase 2009 sponsored by CAPAS in honor of Pilipino American History Month at Pitzer College.

<http://vimeo.com/7417786>

Description: Claremont 5C Dance Company at Fil-I-Am Benefit Showcase 2009 sponsored by CAPAS in honor of Pilipino American History Month at Pitzer College.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5qJSsWGAGE&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYdlRW1fA7k&feature=related>

Description: Quest Crew, MTV's Best Dance Crew Season 3 Winners, at Fil-I-Am Benefit Showcase 2009 sponsored by CAPAS in honor of Pilipino American History Month at Pitzer College.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/PitzerCollege#p/u/14/DcfVQbPgNLI>

Description: Stephanie Velasco Poserio, director of the Center for Asian Pacific American Students (CAPAS) talks about the Fil-I-Am event, held on October 29, 2009, to raise money for typhoon relief in the Philippines.

The CAPAS Anniversary Video

Featuring interviews from faculty, staff, students and alumni and highlights from 2001-2011. Produced by Albee Yap, (former Current TV film producer), Production Assistant Jonathan Soon (staff) and Assistant Director Leora Aquino '11. Narrated by Gene Su '10.

Visit our website www.pitzer.edu/capas or visit us at (CAPAS Pitzer) on Facebook.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the students, faculty, staff, alumni and community of the Claremont Colleges whose activism and dedication helped to sow, water and grow the seeds of our center and in memory of Elaine Wu.

Thank you

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Campus Life Committee

CAPAS is dedicated to diversity by involving all members of the community in its programs and activities.

The booklet is made from recycled paper.

Pitzer College encourages the use of recyclable and renewable materials.





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