



## HNDC19 Workshop Presenter Bios

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### **Adam Thongsavat**

Adam Thongsavat serves as Deputy Campaign Manager for Public Policy in California, Alaska, and Hawaii for Airbnb. Adam oversees local partnerships, community engagement efforts, and works with policymakers when Cities and Counties weigh regulations. Prior to Airbnb, Adam served in Ohio, California, Arkansas, Texas, and Iowa on presidential, senate, gubernatorial, and congressional campaigns. Outside of work, Adam volunteers his time with Legacies of War, a Washington D.C. based non-profit dedicated to removing unexploded bombs from Laos, and Global Glimpse- an Oakland based education non-profit that provides high school students from all socioeconomic backgrounds an opportunity to learn through travel.

### **AJ Titong**

AJ Titong has an expertise in visual storytelling, social media, brand awareness, and multimedia design. She manages online mobilization campaigns, oversees branding and marketing strategies, and provides strategic communications technical assistance to partnering agencies across the country and in the Pacific Island jurisdictions. She is also a member of the Bay Area Cause Communications group, a former board member of the Daly City Partnership Collaborative and the Liwanag Kultural Center, and has provided communications and design support to local community-based organizations and small businesses.

### **Aleena Inthaly**

Aleena is the program assistant for Legacies of War. Previously, Aleena worked on facilitating international exchange programs while at World Learning, an international nonprofit organization that focuses on international development, education, and exchange programs. Since then, she has spent time around the world including Thailand, Turkey, Moldova, and India. Aleena is also a Washington DC food tour guide and takes groups through the U St. and Shaw neighborhoods discussing the incredible history of the city, its communities, and the amazing places to eat. Aleena graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a B.A. in Political Science concentrating on International Relations.

### **Amy Hang**

Amy Hang is a VISTA/Americorp Member with Hlub Hmong Center in Merced, CA. She has a Human Biology BA and Master in Public Health, being the first of her family to hold an advanced degree. For the past five years, Amy has been working to understand and address disparities in health, educational, and economic outcomes facing Hmong communities. Since

2016, she created and led Hmong Story Cloth, a program that uses the tradition of story cloths to mobilize change in Hmong culture and public institutions. Hmong Story Cloth has been acknowledged regionally and nationally for its innovation.

### **Bao Moua**

Bao Moua has been an educator in Sacramento City Unified District for 21 years. She was a teacher for five years, a Site Instruction Coordinator for one year, an Assistant Principal for nine years, and a Principal for 6 years. She is the oldest of nine, four sisters and four brothers. She is married with five children. Culture and Language is the foundation of her beliefs in education and the key to teaching our scholars to advocate for their success.

### **Bee Yang**

Cher Teng (Bee) Yang is a faculty with the MSW Title IV-E Child Welfare Program in the Department of Social Work Education at California State University, Fresno. His experience includes instruction in Hmong literacy and culture, as field liaison, and in the classroom since 2002. Mr. Yang has extensive experience providing cultural consultation and training for the media, courts, schools, and the county, as well as other service providers in the Central Valley of California, and was appointed as an expert witness on Hmong culture to the Fresno County Superior Court. In 2011 he was invited to conduct a field research about the Hmong culture and history in China. In 1996, he was invited by UC San Francisco's Department of Medical Anthropology to present a Diversity Culturally Appropriate Health Care System at Chiang Mai University, Thailand. He currently hosts a talk show on the Hmong TV Network (32.6) broadcast locally, nationally, and internationally.

### **Bonnie Kwon**

Bonnie is Director of Network Innovation on APIAHF's Policy & Network Innovation team. In her role, she deepens advocacy capacity for community-based organizations and individuals to fight for health equity. As an organizer and strategist, Bonnie utilizes storytelling, cultivates leaders and builds relationships to move hearts and minds. Before APIAHF, Bonnie fought for immigrant and workers' rights and served in the Obama Administration, advising officials on engagement strategies with AA and NHPI communities.

### **Bruce Thao**

Bruce Thao is Founder & CEO of LIT Consulting - Lead. Inspire. Transform. Bruce has over 12 years of experience working with diverse communities, including immigrants/refugees, people of color and LGBTQ. He has worked across sectors, including public policy, philanthropy, academia, government, and non-profit social services. Bruce has graduate degrees in psychology and social work and has been nationally recognized by Vice President Biden as an LGBTQ leader. Bruce is also a 2013 Bush Foundation Fellow, a 2014 White House Champion of Change, and a 2017 Aspen Institute Scholar.

### **Cha Vang**

Cha Vang is the co-founder and Executive Director of Hmong Innovating Politics (HIP), whose mission is to strengthen the power of disenfranchised communities through innovative civic engagement and strategic grassroots mobilization. Founded in 2012, HIP set out to address the lack of representation and voices at the decision-making table. Prior to being the Executive Director of HIP, Cha works tirelessly as a community organizer to improve outcomes for children and families in the Sacramento region. Cha has worked on issues ranging from education to food justice. She has volunteered on multiple local campaigns working toward building political power for underserved communities. Cha has done extensive work in empowering and cultivating leaders amongst her peers and the youth. Cha holds a Bachelor's in Sociology from California State University, Sacramento. Cha was born in the refugee camps of Thailand and raised in South Sacramento. Cha is one of 14 children in her family.

### **Chai Moua**

Chai Moua lives in Stevens Point with her husband Phong Vang and their four children. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services Management and a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership. She holds a Family Development Specialist Certification from the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and the University of Iowa School Social of Work. Chai started off her work in community organizing with one of Madison's most isolated neighborhood. This is where she realized her passion to fight for racial and gender equity. She has over 15 years of extensive experience working with low to no-income communities, especially the Hmong community.

### **Chaleng Lee**

Chaleng Lee is the Community Engagement Administrative Assistant for Hennepin County Libraries. He has a passion for preserving Hmong culture, language and stories and reaching out to elders, children, and the broader community. His accomplishments include archiving the experiences of the elderly Hmong people as part of the "Unfolding the Storycloth" project and organizing a forum to engage childcare centers, educational institutions and parents to empower Hmong parents to take the lead in their children's education.

### **Channapha Khamvongsa**

Channapha Khamvongsa is founder and executive director of Legacies of War , which seeks to address the problem of unexploded ordnance in Laos, to provide space for healing the wounds of war, and to create greater hope for a future of peace. Legacies has successfully advocated for an increase in U.S. funding for bomb clearance, from \$2M in 2008 to \$30M in 2016. In September 2016, President Barack Obama acknowledged Channapha's advocacy efforts in Laos, where he became the first U.S. President to visit the country. Channapha has written and spoken widely about the secret war in Laos and its aftermath and has appeared in the New York Times , Democracy Now! , CNN , ABC , PBS and CBS News. She previously worked at the Ford Foundation. Channapha attended George Mason University and received her Master's in Public Policy from Georgetown University.

### **Chao Danny Vang**

Dr. Chao Vang's myriad of experiences in higher education, the K-12 system and extensive community involvement, have allowed him to conceptualize, develop and implement programs for students to be equipped with the necessary skills, behaviors, and knowledge to be successful in the growing complexity and demands of the 21st-century workforce. He recently authored "Ecological Factors in Hmong American Educational Success" a report that inform practices with Hmong college students. His dissertation also received honors by AERA for excellence in research. Dr. Vang received his Doctorate in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies baccalaureate, teaching credential, and master degree at Sacramento State.

### **chee ia yang**

chee ia yang (she/her/hers) is the fourth of eight children and a proud daughter of refugee parents. As an educator in higher education, she is a fierce advocate supporting the success of marginalized student communities. Grounded in love and justice, chee ia believes in building relationships with people and communities to work towards collective liberation. During her free time, chee ia thoroughly enjoys eating tacos, drinking black coffee, and reading poetry by womxn of color.

### **Cher Teng Yang**

Cher Teng (Bee) Yang is a faculty with the MSW Title IV-E Child Welfare Program in the Department of Social Work Education at California State University, Fresno. His experience includes instruction in Hmong literacy and culture, as field liaison, and in the classroom since 2002. Mr. Yang has extensive experience providing cultural consultation and training for the media, courts, schools, and the county, as well as other service providers in the Central Valley of California, and was appointed as an expert witness on Hmong culture to the Fresno County Superior Court. In 2011 he was invited to conduct a field research about the Hmong culture and history in China. In 1996, he was invited by UC San Francisco's Department of Medical Anthropology to present a Diversity Culturally Appropriate Health Care System at Chiang Mai University, Thailand. He currently hosts a talk show on the Hmong TV Network (32.6) broadcast locally, nationally, and internationally.

### **Chia Thao**

Chia Thao is a doctoral student in Public Health at the University of California, Merced. She currently works as a part-time lecturer at the California State University of Fresno. She holds a BS in Health Science with a minor in Gerontology and a MPH with a concentration in Community Health Promotion. She also earned two distinguished certificates in Health Policy and Nonprofit Management & Leadership at California State University, Fresno. In addition, Chia has more than 10+ years of work experience working with Community Benefit Organizations (CBOs) and coordinating health education and promotion programs in the Central Valley. She is the current Board Chair for a non-profit organization called Elder Abuse Services Inc.

**Chia Xiong**

Chia Xiong is a PhD Candidate in Sociology and UC President's Dissertation fellow at the University of California, Merced. Her dissertation examines the intersections of race, class and gender on refugee migration and experiences. She has taught sociological research methods and served as the Professional Development Chair of the Sociology Graduate Student Committee. She is a coauthor of a forthcoming article entitled, "White Supremacy, Patriarchy, and Global Capitalism in Migration Studies."

**Chong Vang**

Wilson is a Hmong American born in California and raised in Minnesota. He graduated from the University of Minnesota Twin-Cities with a degree in Sociology. His role at AAOP is Data Manager & Elections Organizer.

**Choua Yang**

Choua Yang (Cua Yaaj) is a K-5th Hmong Teacher at Community School of Excellence (CSE). She has been with CSE since 2008. She has earned an Associate degree in Science -- Early Childhood Education in Yuba Community College, California. She has worked with Yer Thao, a CSE Hmong teacher, created Hmong Curriculum books for Kindergarten to 5th grades. Choua currently working on creating Hmong mini books for level 1 using the Hmong single consonants. In the future, Choua will continue to create more Hmong mini books.

**Choua Yang**

Choua Yang (Cua Yaaj) is a K-5th Hmong Teacher at Community School of Excellence (CSE). She has been with CSE since 2008. She has earned an Associate degree in Science -- Early Childhood Education in Yuba Community College, California. She has worked with Yer Thao, a CSE Hmong teacher, created Hmong Curriculum books for Kindergarten to 5th grades. Choua currently working on creating Hmong mini books for level 1 using the Hmong single consonants. In the future, Choua will continue to create more Hmong mini books.

**Christian Yang**

Christian Yang is the Founder of Pure Growth Media. He has helped multiple businesses and brands go from zero to six figures in less than a year time span. He and his team have done so by leveraging the power of Digital Marketing. Christian is also the host of "The Grind" podcast. His podcast features successful individuals that shed light on their grind and hustle that got them where they are today. This is in hopes to help other individuals realize their potential and provide practical steps to reaching their goals.

**Cynthia Yongvang**

Cynthia Yongvang is currently the co-founder and co-chair of Hmong Impact Giving Circle (Hmongimpact.org), a national philanthropic organization by and for Hmong people in the US with the mission to empower the Hmong community by supporting programs that improve the

quality of life for the Hmong and inspiring others to give back. She is also the CEO of CYNTHIA YONGVANG™, a Seattle-based textiles and fashion company inspired by art forms from her Hmong culture and other cultures around the world and the co-owner of Pacific Moon Catering, a catering company specializing in Asian fusion cuisine from the Pacific Rim.

### **Dan Yang**

Dan Yang, a graduate of Columbia College Chicago has been making films for over 7 years. During this time he has produced notable films such as "Oath", "Our Lives" and "Spirits Dawn". As a board member for the first Hmong Film Festival "Qhia Dab Neeg" his experience with Hmong film stems back many years. During this time his exploration into the Hmong Community and Hmong Cinema has lead him on a journey to find avenues for Hmong filmmakers to continue telling Hmong Stories while making an economic impact on the community as well.

### **David Yang**

David currently works at California State University, Fresno as an Academic Counselor for the University Advising Center. He has worked in the higher education field, specifically with undeclared students, for more than five years, with experiences at Moraine Park Technical College, Washington State University, Tri-Cities, University of Nevada, Reno and currently with Fresno State. He earned both his Bachelor's and Master's degree from the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh and has obtained certifications in the MBTI/STRONG, GCDF, and a current member of NACADA.

### **Dee Lee**

Dee is a Hmong American Queer womxn, artist, and organizer. She is an organizer for Building Our Future, on the leadership team of Asian Pacific Islander Queer Sacramento Coalition (APIQSC) and a co-founder of Hmong Queer Suab.

### **Der Vang**

Ms. Vang graduated from California State University, Chico, with her Bachelor of Science in Health Science emphasizing in Health Services Administration. She currently oversees three programs at the Hmong Cultural Center of Butte County; Zoosiab, Hmong Talk-line, and Koomtes Youth Program. She is mostly involved in the Zoosiab Program supporting Hmong elders who have or are at risk of mental health illness. Along with her colleagues, she finds best practices to support the elders to increase their mental well-being and self-confidence and at the same time, reducing their isolation and hopelessness.

### **Der Vang**

Der Vang is an educator and advocate for equity and inclusion in higher education. With her strong public speaking and strategic skills, she has built multiple student success programs that support the retention of students of color. As a change agent, Der holds faculty and staff

accountable for constructing equitable learning environments, and she challenges structures that disadvantage minoritized groups. Der has presented at various national conferences and webinars on: Asian American/Pacific Islander solidarity in the fight for justice, using asset-based approaches to develop successful peer mentoring programs, and navigating a career in higher education as a new professional.

### **Ed Tepporn**

Ed is the Executive Vice President at APIAHF. In this role, he shepherds the organization's strategic thinking, long-term strategy planning, evaluation, innovation, and leadership development efforts. With nearly two decades of service as a nonprofit leader and as a Certified Professional Coach, Ed seeks to help individuals and organizations lean into their internal purpose, values, and vision. Ed is a queer immigrant with roots in Thailand, Texas, Missouri, and California.

### **Elizabeth Yang**

Elizabeth Yang is founder of Hmong Women Take on the World's Live Global Virtual Summit, a global initiative that celebrate Hmong women and girls and fuses emerging technology, product marketing, and social media. Elizabeth is a leader passionate about helping ambitious people and organizations realize their best selves to build tribes that matter online. She is a speaker, trainer, and advisor that has worked with many global leaders, organizations, and brands to get seen, heard, and paid online. She brings over 15 years of experience from top Fortune 500 companies working with executives and teams and also leading emerging technology teams in product launches. She draws from a unique breadth of experience in Research & Development innovation, change transformation, and design thinking.

### **Gaosong V. Heu**

Gaosong V. Heu is a Hmong American performance artist, published writer, scholar and arts administrator with over six years of real-world experience working with businesses and organizations in education, research and development creating programs for students of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds centered around promoting social justice and equity through the arts. Gaosong has twelve years of training in Western classical music, as well as nine years playing the qeej. Most recently, she took on khawv txhiaj in 2017 and looks forward to growing her knowledge of Hmong instruments and music. She is currently a graduate student at Columbia University studying Arts Administration, Class of 2020.

### **Gregg Orton**

Gregg is the National Director of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans where he leads the coalition in developing policy and communications strategy and advancing a joint agenda to address the needs of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities. Gregg joined NCAPA after nearly a decade working on Capitol Hill for Rep. Al Green (D-TX) in various capacities, including Chief of Staff. He has served as a

dedicated advocate for the AAPI community, as well as a mentor for many AAPI staffers in Congress.

### **Gyanesh Lama**

GYANESH LAMA, PhD, is a social doctor -- an applied social scientist who heals social illnesses of the world and promotes social wellbeing through Bodhisatva activities using evidence-based scientific methods. Lama's research focus on mindful social development policies on global poverty and inequality and has received widespread recognition for discovering the "middle class". Lama has advised members of parliament, head of NGOs and publisher of a national magazine in Nepal. In 2015, 2016, and 2017, he delivered keynote speeches at The Indigenous Himalayan Social Development Conferences, Nepal. He earned his BA at St. Xavier's College in Kathmandu, Nepal, and his MSW, Graduate Certificate in New Institutional Social Sciences, and PhD at Washington University in St. Louis.

### **James Oftedal**

James Oftedal has attended eight HND national conferences and has presented at five. He served two years on the HND Fresno field office steering committee and once on the HND national conference advisory committee. He began his career with the USDA Forest Service over 36 years ago. As the Region 5 Outreach, Recruitment & Workforce Diversity (OR&WD) Program Regional Program Manager, he oversees the California Consortium, the Mentoring Program, and Recruitment. He serves as a regional and national advisor regarding cultural transformation, outreach and recruitment, youth engagement, and workforce diversity. James is dedicated to providing leadership and employment opportunities to talented and diverse students, which lead to natural resources related careers. He works to make the Forest Service an employer of choice among diverse communities.

### **Jay Her**

Since 2005, Jay Her has been using Metaphors, Hypnosis, and other Subconscious processing techniques to help individuals reach their highest potential through removing fears and self-doubt.

### **Jenna Cushing-Leubner**

Dr Jenna Cushing-Leubner is an assistant professor of curriculum and instruction at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater. Her work is focused on community-driven curriculum design for school-based heritage language programs and professional development geared towards heritage language teachers. Her work is based in participatory methods and she has spent the last eight years working with heritage language teachers to design linguistically/culturally sustaining and community-based learning opportunities for multilingual youth.

**Jer Xiong**

Jer is a graduate student for the MFA Creative Writing Program at Fresno State. She received her BA in English with minors in Creative Writing & Asian Studies at CSU, Chico. Her genre focus is creative nonfiction, where she preserves but also interrogates culture, history, and heritage. She seeks to understand more of what it means to write Hmong American literature and promote literacy and creative writing in the Hmong community. She has been student editor for Watershed Review and is currently part of the editorial process for The Normal School.

**Johnnie Yaj**

Johnnie Yaj (JAWH-nee-YAH!), is a first-year Ed.M. student in the Higher and Postsecondary Education program. He recently graduated from UCLA Class of 2018 with a BA in World Arts and Cultures and a minor in Visual and Performing Arts Education. At UCLA, he worked extensively on his independent research projects to further understand the role of diversity and community affairs on college campuses. During his free time, he enjoys dancing, swimming, spoken word poetry, reading research articles, and being a source of mentorship to those around him. Aside from working as a Graduate Hall Coordinator at the Manhattan School of Music, extracurricular activities, and academics, Johnnie firstly values his family currently residing in Wisconsin: 2 loving parents from Thailand refugee camps, 5 older siblings, and 16 nieces and nephews.

**Kaleb Hawj**

Kaleb Hawj is a community organizer at Freedom Inc. and an active member of Man Forward. They were born and raised in Madison, Wisconsin, where their Hmong refugee parents settled after their second migration in the United States of America. As a gender non-conforming person, Kaleb strives to increase the visibility of Southeast Asian Queer and Trans leadership. They also work with Hmong masculine boys/bois on ending patriarchy and making sure we live in a world free of violence. They are a two-time PFund Foundation Scholar and was part of organizing the first ever Hmong Womyn's Global Summit that happened in Chiang Mai, Thailand in 2016.

**Kalu Yang**

Kalu Yang was born and raised in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and is currently a second-year student attending St. Catherine University and majoring in Nursing. She aspires to become a pediatric nurse. Kalu loves volunteering in her community and held the title as Miss Hmong Teen International 2016-18. She is also passionate about preserving the Hmong language and volunteers her time teaching young students how to read and write in Hmong. Kalu is the current executive board member of SHE Pab: Voices of Hmong Women as the Secretary.

**Kao Choua Vue**

Kao Choua Vue is currently the community engagement manager at Lava Mae, a nonprofit organization that delivers showers to the unhoused in the Bay Area and L.A. As a documentary filmmaker, she focuses her work on telling the Hmong story and started the Qhia Dab Neeg Film

Festival with In Progress in 2010 and has worked in the nonprofits for more than 10 years. After moving to California, she learned that small donors can make a difference in numbers when they may pool their resources together and co-founded the Hmong Impact Giving Circle with Cynthia Yongvang to give back to the Hmong community.

### **Kao-Ly Yang**

Kao-Ly Yang is a French anthropologist of Hmong origin, specialized in Hmong language, culture and literature. She obtained in 1999, a Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Aix-Provence I, France, and in 1993, a Master of Philosophy in Sciences of Languages, General Linguistics and Didactics of French at the University of Montpellier III, France. From 2000 to 2003, she worked as a post-graduate researcher then assistant researcher at the University of California-San Francisco. Since 2004, she has been teaching Hmong language and culture, first at the University of Wisconsin-Madison before coming to teach at California State University, Fresno and Fresno City College. She currently serves as the coordinator of the Hmong Studies Program at California State University, Fresno, where she contributed to create a Hmong minor in 2016.

### **Kasernyia Thao**

Kasernyia Thao is a first generation Hmong American college student in Merced, California - her hometown. She currently studies Human Biology at UC Merced and aims to become a geriatrician to give back to Hmong elders in the San Joaquin Valley. Kasernyia is a Hmong Youth Leader at the Hlub Hmong Center, where she helped found the first-ever Hmong Policy Workgroup for youth. She currently co-leads the Hmong Youth Mobilization Initiative to create culturally-relevant curriculum on Hmong youth advocacy and leadership development for racial equity in early education.

### **Kau Vue**

Kau Vue is a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at the University of California, Merced. Her research interests lie in American politics, particularly in the areas of local politics and political participation. Her dissertation examines local level group preferences and how these preferences may influence coalition building. Houa Vang is currently in her third year of the Sociology PhD program at UC Merced. Her interests are in education, race, public policy, and social inequality. Her dissertation will examine academic tracking and the ethnic-racial identity formation of Southeast Asian and Latino high school students.

### **Ken Lee**

My career background is in higher education and I love working with college students! I have a B.A. in Sociology and a M.A. in Higher Education & Student Affairs Counseling, both from the University of Colorado Denver. I am currently working as a Pathway (Academic) Advisor at a community college in Colorado and love what community colleges have to offer. Outside of my career, I enjoy being active by participating in sports and outdoor activities.

**Ker Thao**

Ker is a thoughtful designer who is passionate about working with communities. He believes in making small impactful change through collaboration and using design as a tool to engage in conversations and reflection. He has experience conducting rigorous qualitative, design-led field research and has worked with interdisciplinary teams to design capacity-building interventions and workshops for hundreds of students, teachers, and youth leaders across India, Australia, and the United States. Currently, he is a Design Specialist at Women's World Banking where he uses design techniques and methodologies to develop effective and innovative financial inclusion solutions for low-income women around the world.

**Kham Moua**

Kham S. Moua spearheads the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center's immigration policy portfolio through policy analysis, community engagement, and legislative and regulatory advocacy. He also serves as co-chair of the National Council of Asian Pacific American's Immigration Committee on behalf of SEARAC. Kham has spent over a decade community building, organizing, and advocating on a wide range of issues, ranging from education to military justice. His primary areas of expertise are in immigration and internet/technology. Areas of personal interest to him include the intersection of civil rights and technology and the ways videogame communities utilize online platforms.

**Kimiko Vang**

Kimiko Vang is Deputy Director at Merced County Human Services Agency, where she oversees Staff Development and other social services programs, including the Hmong Women's Initiative. Ms. Vang has a Master of Social Work from CSU Stanislaus, and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the state of California.

**Laura Vu**

Laura Vu grew up in Fresno and currently resides, works and organizes in Sacramento. She is a cofounder of Hmong Innovating Politics, an organizer with the Building Our Future Campaign-California, works full-time as a program coordinator at Sacramento State's College of Continuing Education, and practices ThetaHealing. As an ally, she has supported the co-founders to establish Hmong Queer Suab, and continues to provide resources and facilitation for HQS' organizational development as needed.

**Lee Lo**

Lee leads SEARAC's health and mental health policy advocacy to address disparities within the Southeast Asian American community in California. Lee also expands the policy advocacy capacity of SEAA-serving organizations and individuals by coordinating advocacy campaigns, building coalitions, and providing resources and advocacy trainings. Prior to SEARAC, Lee led the UC Davis Student Recruitment and Retention Center department's Southeast Asians

Furthering Education (SAFE) as a Middle School Outreach Coordinator. Lee graduated from the University of California, Davis, with a Bachelor of Arts in political science: public service and a Bachelor of Science in community and regional development with a minor in education.

### **Lee Yang**

Lee Yang is the Superintendent of Urban Charter Schools Collective (UCSC). He has been with UCSC for the past four years and has put systems in place to support both UCSC and Yav Pem Suab Academy. With his leadership, Yav Pem Suab Academy has taken flight with its student achievement results. If you're looking for ideas and strategies, and if you're reading this, you can be sure to walk away with ideas and strategies in this session.

### **Lily Nieves**

As the Outreach, Recruitment & Workforce Diversity (OR&WD) Acting Regional Program Manager and Program Specialist, Lily utilizes best practices to help lead cultural transformation and engage youth and young adults within the agency. Externally, she works to connect the agency with underserved communities, educational partners, and community based organizations. She is most passionate about empowering youth to realize their potential, embrace their roles as good stewards of the land, and enjoy public lands. Lily has worked for the Forest Service for over 16 years and holds a Master's in Public Administration. She enjoys partnering with diverse communities and has participated in several HND conferences with the goal of being a good partner.

### **Linda Xiong**

Linda Xiong is the co-founder and co-director of Hlub Hmong Center, a community-based, Hmong-driven coalition for Hmong equity and prosperity. She has a Masters in Public Health and over 16 years of leadership and advocacy experience to address disparities in health and education.

### **Lue Yang**

Lue Yang currently works with Southeast Asian youths at the Hmong American Women's Association. He loves traveling and enjoys horseback rides on the beach. In his spare time, Lue loves to cross-stitch or paj ntaub. He is also an artist and filmmaker, utilizing visual media to champion Southeast Asian visibility as a way to promote gender equity and community connectedness. Lue is also the most amazing tub nraug nab or Hmong pageant winner, Mr. Hmong Royalty 2018. He uses the Hmong pageant platform to address patriarchy and the rigid gender roles in the Hmong community. During his free time, he helps out his Hmong community performing cultural rituals and ceremonies.

### **Luke Burris**

I am a husband of a remarkable woman and the father of four amazing children. I am an eighth grade world geography teacher of over one hundred incredible learners at the Community School

of Excellence. I am also the assistant advisor of the extraordinary computer club known as the Asian Penguins. My contribution feels so small compared to what our amazing learners and Mr. Keroff are able to accomplish. I am overjoyed to be a part of the Asian Penguins, and I am also excited to be share our story at the HND Conference.

### **Mai Chou Thao**

Mai Chou Thao was born in Laos and currently resides in Fresno, CA. She discovered her love for her community for the first time through joining a Hmong student organization, HmSA. Her involvement led to an internship with the USDA Forest Service. Shortly after she graduated with her Bachelor of Science degree, she became the Budget Officer for the Sierra National Forest. Mai Chou has served as MC for events like HMF, HmongStory40; created the talk show Between Sisters; shares the Hmong language as a radio host on KBIF 900AM; serves as a board member for A Hopeful Encounter.

### **Mai Moua**

Mai Moua is an Occupational Therapist at Hmong College Prep Academy in Roseville, MN. She currently services 60 students grades kindergarten through 12th grade. She has been practicing for three years in Texas and in Minnesota in the clinical and school setting. She has worked with kids who have Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, muscular dystrophy, and developmental delay. Mai has a passion working with kids. She enjoys “globe-trotting,” working out, and spending time with her 24 nieces and nephews.

### **Mayong Vangthor**

Mayong Vangthor has been a teacher for SCUSD for the last 20 years. She is currently the resource teacher supporting the Hmong Dual Language Immersion Program at Susan B. Anthony Elementary School. She graduated from Sac State with a Bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts and a Master’s Degree in Multicultural Education. She is passionate about teaching because she believes that teaching can directly impact and inspire students’ lives. She has finally found her niche in life, which is teaching Hmong students to be bilingual, biliterate, and appreciate their culture in the Hmong Immersion program. She hopes that everyone gets this unique opportunity to learn who they are and share their history and culture with the world.

### **Melissa Vang**

Melissa Vang is a doctoral student in the Joint Doctoral Program in Education at San Diego State University and Claremont Graduate University. She is currently a research associate for the Community College Equity Assessment Lab and the founder of Hmong Students and Professionals in Higher Education. Her research interests focus on access, development, and success on Southeast Asian American students and students of color who are disproportionately impacted in post-secondary education, campus equity, and identity development. She is a recipient of the California State University Chancellor’s Office California Doctoral Initiative Program,

**Michelle Vang**

Michelle Vang works for the State of MN Department of Employment and Economic Development. She is also a Financial Coach and Real Estate Professional. She has taught in various workshops on financial literacy and homebuyer education to youth and adults, as well as emphasizes on one-on-one financial coaching, investing and business planning.

**Neng Now**

Neng Now (Thao) is the producer of Neng Now a travel social media blog where he creates videos of his travels. Neng from Madison is a graduate of Harvard University and fluent in English, Spanish and Hmong.

**Nhia Lo**

Nhia Lo is a Librarian for Hennepin County Libraries. Nhia provides services to adults in information literacy, reference services, collection maintenance, programming and outreach. Nhia has a passion for educating others about Hmong history, arts and culture. She is an advocate for diversity in libraries and library services. She is committed to helping Hennepin County Library anticipate and respond to the changing needs of the community by providing resources and services that help advance opportunity and equity.

**Nkaohnou Moua**

Nkaohnou Moua grew up in a small town in the central valley and is the oldest of 5 children. She graduated at CSU Stanislaus with her bachelors in Liberal Studies and completed her Teaching Credentials at CSU Sacramento. Nkaohnou is in her second year of teaching third grade Hmong Immersion at Susan B. Anthony Elementary School. Nkaohnou hopes to inspire the younger generation to speak and preserve the Hmong language.

**Nkauj Iab Yang**

Nkauj Iab works with Southeast Asian American led and serving organizations throughout California to build a statewide Southeast Asian American equity agenda, identify appropriate strategies, and advocate for local and state policy change. Nkauj Iab spent 11 years in youth organizing and youth development in Sacramento and Oakland. Before coming to SEARAC, Nkauj Iab served as Banteay Srei's program manager, overseeing programs for Southeast Asian American young women impacted by sexual exploitation. Through Banteay Srei, Nkauj Iab led a collaborative to pass the resolution to expand and report disaggregated Asian American and Pacific Islander data at Oakland Unified School District.

**Nou Her**

Nou is a 2nd year graduate student attending CSU, Fresno, studying creative writing in Fiction. She received her BA in English with minor in creative writing at CSU, Fresno. She writes about topics about family, and love, how the layers of who we are, such as culture, gender, age, etc,

affect how we love. At CSU, Fresno, she has been a writing center tutor for four years and ongoing, working primarily with freshman students to find their voices and become comfortable in expressing themselves via their writing. She currently also works as a student editor for The Normal School

### **Nou Yang**

Nou is passionate about fostering opportunities for leadership and engaging community toward action. She has over 15 year's' experience using experimental learning strategies and strengths-based approaches with diverse populations. A Hmong refugee woman, No believes deeply that all people have value and growth happens through reflection, listening and dialogue.

### **Nue Lor Lee**

Nue Lor Lee is a doctoral student in the higher education program at the University of Michigan. As the first in her family to attend college, she graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor's of Science in Family Social Science. Nue's research interests include college access, issues of diversity and equity in higher education, first generation college students, and disability accommodations in higher education.

### **Pa Nhia Vang**

Pa Nhia Vang, an attorney from St. Paul, Minnesota, works as a Law Clerk for a Judge in the U.S. District Courts. Born in a Thai refugee camp, she immigrated to the United States at the age one. She grew up in St. Paul and attended Harding High School where she excelled in academics and athletics. She attended Stanford University on a full need-based scholarship and graduated with a degree in Public Policy in 2012. Pa Nhia graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School in 2017. She is the first person of Hmong descent to graduate from Harvard Law School.

### **Pada Lo**

As a longtime movement builder, Pada Lo has been mobilizing and organizing Hmong Queer & Trans movement work for over 10+ years in the upper Midwest. As the SEA LGBTQ Advocate at Hmong American Women's Association, Pada Lo leads the Hmong/SEA LGBTQ program, Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges (B4) which focuses on empowering individuals and creating leaders to break the stigmas of queer identities in the Southeast Asian communities. One of Pada Lo's major key accomplishment was taking part of organizing the first national Queer Southeast Asian census with organizers throughout the US to identify the needs and issues of Queer Southeast Asians nationally. Pada Lo is also an artist who uses music as an art to uplift individuals and promote self-love and Hmong culture.

### **Palee Moua**

Palee Moua is Special Project Coordinator of the Hmong Women's Initiative at Merced County Human Services Agency. Ms. Moua is a community leader who has over 30 years of experience

working with the Hmong community on health equity projects. She serves as a trainer and Hmong women's support group facilitator.

### **Pang Moua**

Pang Moua is a veteran social worker at Merced County Human Services Agency with over 21 years of experience. She has served as practicum field instructor for many Master Social Worker (MSW) Students for California State University Fresno and Stanislaus. Ms. Moua is a strong advocate for Hmong families. She leads the Hmong women's support group and is a critical part of the Hmong Women's Initiative Program.

### **Pang Yang**

Pang Yang is a graduate of St. Paul Public Schools, a lifelong educator, and a mother of 7 children. Pang works to preserve the Hmong language, culture, and history in her Hmong for Native Speakers World Language courses and in her community. Amplifying student voices through published books is one way to tell authentic stories from the heart. In addition, Pang utilizes Personalized Learning in the classroom to engage all students regardless of literacy levels.

### **Pang Yang**

Pang Yang is an Adult Services Librarian for Hennepin County Library. She provides services to adults in information literacy, in-person and online reference services, collection maintenance, programming and outreach. Pang is an advocate for lifelong learning. She is currently working with the local chapter SCORE Free Small Business Advice to provide patrons with free consultation for business startup and financial literacy. She loves traveling and browsing YouTube to watch panda videos.

### **Pao Thao**

My name is Pao Thao, and I'm a current Junior at Stanford University. I am the eldest son in my family and the first born in American when my family came to the U.S. Hence, my experience growing up has been a journey of finding what it means to be Hmong American and not just Hmong.

### **Pasha Chang**

Pasha is a second-year Nursing student at Saint Catherine University in Saint Paul, Minnesota. She is also the president of SHE Pab: Voices of Hmong Women, the Hmong organization at Saint Catherine University. Pasha is passionate about using her platform as president to empower other Hmong women and be more active in the Hmong community. Ever since young, she has always been passionate about helping the Hmong community. She dreams to become a nurse to serve the Hmong people who lack medical care overseas in Laos and Thailand. Pasha has been able to help within the Hmong community in the Twin Cities by teaching Hmong elementary students about cultural pride, the language, and the customs. She also volunteered with CAPI as a senior companion, in which she spends her free time with the Hmong elderly that live alone,

taking them to the local Hmong markets, to the park for some exercise, and being a friend to them. She also worked at Regions Hospital, an experience she describes as “rewarding and enriching” since she was able to meet and help many Hmong people.

### **Pashie Vang**

Pashie is a second-generation Hmong American woman living in North Minneapolis. She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Science degree in 2016. Pashie first started organizing work with local campaigns in 2012. Through these experiences with different campaigns and issues, she came to develop a passion for organizing in her community. Her role at AAOP is Data Manager & Elections Organizer.

### **Phillip Thao**

Phillip Thao is a Hmong Teacher that teaches Hmong at a charter school in St. Paul, Minnesota call Community School of Excellence. He has been teaching for three school years with this year as his fourth year since 2015. Phillip Thao studied at the University of Minnesota. His area of focus was Asian Language and Literature with a focus on Hmong language. During his time at Community School of Excellence, he created a level one workbook for the students at his school. Phillip Thao is currently working on a project to create materials for future Hmong scholars.

### **Phoua Chang**

Phoua Chang is a passionate educator who has been involved in the community for many years. She has always been interested in the beauty of diverse cultures and languages and focus on learning and teaching the Hmong culture, language, and arts. Her past experiences involves working as a news media highlight person for various Hmong channels, coordinating school culture shows, directing and scripting videos about sensitive topics in hopes to create healthy discussions within the community. Phoua graduated from CSUS with a BA in American Sign Language and Deaf studies with a minor of Multicultural Education. She started her educational background with Sacramento Unified School District assisting students with disabilities. Currently, Phoua is the Sixth grade Hmong immersion teacher at Susan B. Anthony Elementary School. She hopes to continue to learn and grow with her community while inspiring the younger generation to see the beauty of the Hmong culture and language.

### **Renee Ya**

Renee Ya is Hmong American and grew up in Fresno, CA. With over 14 years of experience in the technology and video game industry in the San Francisco Bay Area. Co-founder of Tiger Byte Studios, a full-service technology company actualizing products and games from ideation all the way through to development, live operations, and marketing. A Product Manager by trade and mother to the next feisty generation of women warriors. Follow her on Twitter at @renee\_cya or visit <http://reneeya.com>

**Richard Moua**

Richard Moua is a third year Hmong Immersion teacher at Susan B. Anthony Elementary in Sacramento, California. He comes from a family of ten with four sisters and five brothers. Richard graduated from CSU Sacramento with a Bachelors in Liberal Studies and a minor in history in 2012. He continued on to complete his teaching credentials in the Bilingual Program at CSU Chico in 2015. He was inspired to become a Hmong teacher by the founders of the Hmong Dual Language Immersion Program at Susan B. Anthony Elementary through their work and dedication in preserving and helping others understand the value of knowing one's own identity.

**Sao Vue**

Sao Vue is a Hmong immersion kindergarden teacher who has been teaching with Sacramento City Unified School for over 20 years. He's one of the original co-founders of the Hmong Immersion Program in Sacramento, California, and is the first Hmong teacher to teach the program since its inception in 2010.

**See Chang**

See Chang is a passionate 1st grade teacher. She enjoys working with students and seeing them succeed. This is her second year teaching in the Hmong Immersion Program. Her experience with the program was very positive. She feels that it is very important that students learn two languages.

**See Lor**

See Lor is a second-grade teacher in the Hmong Dual Language Immersion Program at Susan B. Anthony Elementary School in SCUSD. She has 19 years of extensive experience in education as a school administrator and a teacher. Besides teaching, See also writes and publishes multicultural children's books. Some of her publications include, *The Forbidden Treasure* (2015), *The Magic Stone* (2015), *The Greedy Couple* (2016), and *The Family that I Love* (2017). All her books can be found in both Hmong and English. See is also Founder/CEO of her publishing company, *READING KARMA*. The mission of Reading Karma is to promote reading literacy for children and to create a collection of multicultural children's literature where the Hmong culture, history, and language are preserved and sustained for future generations.

**Seng Alex Vang**

Seng Alex Vang is managing editor of the Hmong American Experience social media platform. He teaches writing classes at the Merritt Writing Program at UC Merced. He also teaches ethnic studies and Asiann American studies courses at Cal State University, Stanislaus.

**Shelong Yang**

Shelong Yang is a video game industry professional, having worked with major players such as Sony Computer Entertainment America, Sega, Zynga, Big Fish Games, Machine Zone, and most recently, NCSOFT West. Diving into the industry in 2008, Shelong has worked in multiple facets

of video games from quality assurance to design to production and has led multiple cross functional teams. Currently, he is leading the monetization and live operations strategy for an unannounced title.

### **Sheng Xiong**

Sheng Xiong was born and raised in Merced, CA and graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her work as a youth coordinator and organizer with Building Healthy Communities Merced, a 10-year initiative through The California Endowment, focused on issues affecting young people of color to galvanize their impact and fight for equitable change. She developed a summer leadership academy designed for young people to learn about community organizing through political education. Currently she is working with Hmong youth to develop a culturally conscious curriculum that demonstrates leadership development and Hmong appreciation.

### **Song Lee**

Dr. Song E. Lee is an Associate Professor in Counselor Education at California State University, Fresno. She currently serves as Department Chair, leading faculty members in 4 different counseling programs. Her research agenda revolves around the needs of the Hmong community in the behavioral/mental health area. She is also engaged with the community, participating in task forces to advocate for and provide services to meet the needs of the Hmong community in mental health and education. Her leadership experiences included (although not limited to) leading different programs, a department, and committees in reaching common missions and visions.

### **Song Yang**

Song Yang is a DIY crafter who loves to sew paj ntaub and Hmong clothes. She is passionate about preserving this cultural tradition and making sure that future generations have the opportunity to learn how to sew. She works as the Director of Distance Education at a two year college in Georgia where she teaches online, conducts training for online instructors and evaluates course design. With her experience in teaching online and sewing paj ntaub, she has combined her two passions to create a learning platform through HmongSewing.com in hopes of inspiring others to learn how to sew Hmong clothes and paj ntaub online.

### **Soua Xiong**

Soua Xiong is an Assistant Professor in the Student Affairs and College Counseling program at California State University, Fresno. His scholarly interests centers on student success in higher education with a particular focus on contributors to positive outcomes for Southeast Asian American students. He has co-authored 8 publications and delivered over 30 scholarly presentations at local, state, national, and international conferences including the Hmong National Development Conference and the International Conference on Hmong Studies. He was co-editor of the recent special issue in the Hmong Studies Journal titled, "Prioritizing Hmong American student success: Advancing research, policy, and practice."

**Stu Keroff**

Stu Keroff is the technology coordinator at Community School of Excellence. He helps teachers use technology with their students, most of whom are immigrants or children of immigrants from Southeast Asia. He is also the director of the Asian Penguins. The Asian Penguins are the first and only Linux users group based in a Hmong school. The club has provided over 200 computers for needy families over the last seven years. He is also a husband, married to a wonderful woman for 21 years, and the father of two great kids. They make our home in Saint Paul, MN.

**Tim Vang**

Tim Vang is a 3rd Grade Hmong Immersion Teacher at Susan B. Anthony. This is his first year teaching in the program but has been in the district 4 years teaching 6th, 5th and 3rd grade. He graduated from CSU Sacramento with a Liberal Studies Major and also received his credential through the Bilingual/Multicultural Educational Department (BMED) at CSU Sacramento. He has 3 children who also attend the program and are in 2nd, 4th, and 5th grade. He believes that it is important to preserve the language.

**Timmy Lu**

Timmy Lu is the founding director of AAPIs for Civic Empowerment and AAPIs for Civic Empowerment Education Fund, organizations dedicated to increasing the electoral power of AAPI grassroots communities. AAPIs for Civic Empowerment Education Fund launched the first ever national AAPI Campaign School this year and is a partner of the Million Voters Project in California. He brings 11 years of experience in community organizing, political campaigns, and voter data management. Prior to this role, Timmy was the State Organizing Director at Asian Pacific Environmental Network, where he led the organization's integrated voter engagement programs in contacting tens of thousands of voters. A second-generation ethnic Chinese refugee from Vietnam, he's also a new father. Timmy is based in Oakland, CA.

**Trer Vang**

Trer Vang has been teaching in the SCUSD for 19 years. She graduated from CSU Fresno with a degree in Liberal Studies and completed her Teaching Credential at CSU Stanislaus. She also earned an Administration Credential from CSU Sacramento. Currently, she is teaching at Susan B. Anthony Elementary School. This is her 3rd year teaching intermediate students in the Hmong Immersion Program. She believes that embracing culture and language strengthens awareness for the future.

**Tristan Yang**

Tristan Yang is a Hmong biomedical researcher from Atwater, CA. In 2018, he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Human Biology from UC Merced. His current research is on viruses that affect the Merced community. He also dedicates time to co-lead the Hmong Youth Mobilization Initiative as a Hmong Youth Leader with the Hlub Hmong Center. Through this initiative, he

helps create culturally-relevant curriculum on how to use storytelling to create equitable systems change in early education for the Hmong community. In the future, Tristan hopes to become a physician to improve the health of our Hmong community.

### **Vince Xiong**

Vince Xiong is the co-founder of Yav Pem Suab Academy (YPSA) Charter School in Sacramento, California. He has been the principal of YPSA for the past nine years and has conducted support and training for his staff, enabling them to be effective in their services to children. With last year's increases in achievement data, Vince and his team will be sharing their big ideas and strategies to increasing student achievement.

### **Winnie Chang**

Winnie is a strategic designer and researcher specializing in leading interdisciplinary research initiatives, translating complex content into effective communication tools, and co-creating action agendas with different communities. She believes that approaching problems from different perspectives can open new possibilities, empower communities to initiate social change. As part of UNICEF's Office of Innovation, Winnie currently applies design methodologies to flagship innovation initiatives that find inclusive, scalable solutions for the world's most marginalized children.

### **Yeng Lo**

Yeng Lo is Project Coordinator leading community engagement and systems change at Hlub Hmong Center in Merced, CA. She holds a Business Management BA with over ten years of expertise in community development and entrepreneurship. Yeng is co-leading a program called Tsev Neeg Club to address major disparities in educational outcomes (e.g., literacy, learning) and language and cultural development for Hmong children. Yeng uses asset-based community development to build partnerships between Hmong residents and public institutions. She catalyzes community-driven action to ensure early literacy, better child care, and stronger family and community support for Hmong language and culture.

### **Yeng Xiong**

Chayeng Xiong is a faculty with the Department of Social Work Education at California State University, Fresno where he teaches undergraduate social work courses and facilitates graduate field seminars. He also develops program curricula; develops and facilitates seminars; provides consultation, as needed, to professional service providers and students; and reviews department curriculum content with community members and solicits feedback. He conducts trainings and workshops for students as well as professional service providers in the community on working effectively in the Southeast Asians communities. Mr. Xiong remains as an active advocate on refugees and immigrant issues.

**Yeng Yang**

Yeng Yang is a Career Advisor in the Center for Advising, Career, & Student Success at Cal State Monterey Bay. He is also a Lecturer at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Over the course of the past 8 years, he has conducted research looking at Hmong students' educational attainments and experiences at the elementary, high school, and college levels. He received his doctorate in culture, literacy, and language from The University of Texas at San Antonio. In addition to fluency in Hmong and English, he has basic proficiency in Spanish and Mandarin-Chinese.

**Yer Thao**

Yer Thao is a teacher at Community School of Excellence teaching Hmong. Before that Yer Thao taught Hmong at New Millennium Academy for eight years. Prior to that, Yer Thao has been working as an Educational Assistance for St. Paul, Public School for two years. In addition to working in the school setting, he had worked with Hmong Women Association in Minnesota, Lao Family Community of Minnesota, and Lutheran Social Service in Minnesota providing counseling to youth. Yer Thao graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Concordia University in St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Yia Xiong**

Ms. Xiong graduated with her Master of Public Health from Touro University, California, with an emphasis in Community Health. She has experience working with Hmong elders who have or are at risk of mental health illness. She has been working with Hmong elders in Butte County to reduce their isolation, hopelessness, and increase their mental well-being and self-confidence by educating them about Western coping skills and relating them back to the Hmong roots. Ms. Xiong is also pursuing her Doctoral degree in Public Health from Capella University and hopes to continue to gather data for Hmong mental health.

**Yia Xiong**

Yia is a first year MFA student in fiction writing at CSU Fresno. She received her BA in English with an emphasis on creative writing at UC Davis. She is interested in long form fiction such as novellas or novels, as well as playwriting. But poetry is her enemy. Yia has been published in *How Do I Begin: A Hmong American Literary Anthology* and *Txhawb*. Her play *Ours to Lose* was produced by the Valley Roots project in Merced.

**Zha Blong Xiong**

Dr. Zha Blong Xiong is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Social Science in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Xiong research focuses on the influences of family, community, and school social capital on children's adjustment. He publishes widely on Hmong children and youth educational issues and serves on several community organizations' boards and advisories, including the Hmong National Development, the Hmong 18 Council, the Hmong Culture Center and the Journal of Southeast Asian American Education and Advancement.

**Zong Yang**

Visual artist and community organizer, Zong Yang works at Hmong American Women's Association as the Community Outreach Organizer to lead civic engagement efforts to mobilize Southeast Asian communities in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin area to engage in the electoral process. He graduated from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities with a bachelor's degree in Sociology. Mr. Yang is an active member of ManForward, an organization dedicated to train and organize young men and boys to end gender violence in the Hmong and Southeast Asian community. As a visual artist, he focuses on themes of social justice through the medium of oil painting, charcoal and writing. In his spare time, Mr. Yang is a competitive volleyball player in sports tournaments.