

We offer our condolences to the Pon family, Matty, Tim, Eileen and Maureen in the passing of their father.

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We also offer condolences to the Soo Hoo family, Robert, Howard & Frank in the passing of their brother-in-law Richard (Richie) Ng in Rye, New Hampshire who was married to their sister Ida.

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**NEW YORK**  
**JUNE 23, 2012**

East Harlem Sees Rise in Asian Population

The number of Asian-Americans in East Harlem is growing, census data shows, as residents continue to leave Manhattan's Chinatown, no longer home to the highest number of Chinese-born New Yorkers.

Chinatown's Chinese population dropped nearly 20 percent from 2000, with almost 6,000 residents finding new neighborhoods.

During the same time period, East Harlem's total Asian population reached 3 percent, according to the 2010 census. Asian residents increased from 520 to 1,766 — a 239 percent increase.

Preston Tan, Asian community liaison for Councilmember Melissa Mark-Viverito, said both older adults and young families are moving into the area. "They're all coming here for the same reasons, though: public housing that's offered up here, cheaper rents and larger spaces family," Tan said.

He recently met a Chinese family who had moved into Franklin Plaza and has kids in high school. He's also met families with children who attend elementary school.

"The Asian population up in Franklin Plaza wasn't that much in the 1990s, but now through word of mouth, they're saying there's cheap rent. The environment is not that bad and people sign up and wait over six to 10 years," Tan said.

Most of the newcomers have immigrated from Guangdong and Fujian provinces and Taiwan; a majority are Cantonese and Mandarin speakers.

The Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc., a large Asian social service organization, has been helping Chinese communities for five decades. "For individuals that come in, we provide a variety of services, especially for immigrants that are new to the country," said Eileen Ooi,

development associate.

The Council assists with anything from job searches to after-school programs and food stamp assistance. “I would think if they move to a neighborhood where stores don’t offer services in Chinese, it would be a problem,” said Ooi of new residents.

In addition to East Harlem, Flushing and parts of Brooklyn have also seen an influx of Chinese-Americans.

But Joseph Pereria, director of the CUNY Center for Urban Research, cautioned, “Don’t expect Harlem to become the next Chinatown overnight. The numbers are so small.”

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Huang Ying Xia, an 80-year-old immigrant from Shanghai, has lived alone in an East Harlem senior housing center for four years. Her husband moved back to China to better cope with his medical problems; meanwhile, she hesitates to ask her married children to drive over from New Jersey just to keep her company.

Feeling sick and intimidated by the wintry weather, Huang missed the most recent community trip to Chinatown, where she usually buys Chinese groceries, prescription medicines and, sometimes, an ethnic dinner. “I like going down to Chinatown, because I’m able to talk to people there,” said Huang in Mandarin, though she notes she has never lived there. “People around here don’t really speak Chinese.”

Just this fall, Alma Collazo, the social work coordinator for Linkage Houses – where Huang and six other elderly Chinese reside – began offering free monthly shuttle bus trips to Chinatown, in conjunction with East Harlem’s Union Settlement Association. Collazo had noticed that elderly Chinese residents couldn’t easily make the long trek to Chinatown alone.

In response to such concerns, City Councilwoman Melissa Mark-Viverito is also devising a plan to invite Chinese businesses to East Harlem. Initially, she hopes to bring a stall selling fresh Chinese produce to La Marqueta, the city-owned marketplace at East 115th Street and Park Avenue.

“This is an idea that came about as a result of interactions and outreach with my Chinese constituents,” said Mark-Viverito. “Residents in senior buildings asked about some assistance in getting to Chinatown in order to shop.”

Mark-Viverito plans to work with Chinatown Councilwoman Margaret Chin, as well as the city’s Economic Development Corporation, to make this fledging business plan a reality. She is more cautious, however, about inviting even a handful of other Chinese businesses to East Harlem too hastily. Although the area’s Chinese population has grown and become more visible in recent years, it remains relatively small.

According to the Center for Urban Research at the City University of New York, Asians represented only 0.9 percent of East Harlem's population in 2000, but had reached 3 percent in 2010. This represents an increase of almost 1250 Asians over the decade, with 1766 Asian East Harlem residents counted in 2010.

"We'd want to see how this stall is received first," said Mark-Viverito. "We want to see how the community responds." She added, "I think the community will respond well."

Asked about possible tensions between new Chinese businesses and longtime local businessowners, she noted, "This is a stall in La Marqueta. It's not a bodega, and what it can do is limited, since right now it could only sell produce." At least two stall owners in La Marqueta, John Colon of Breezy Hill Orchard and Mama Grace of the X-Square African Caribbean Food Store, would welcome a future Chinese neighbor.

Justin Yu, president of the city's Chinese Chamber of Commerce, said he agreed "100 per cent with Mark-Viverito's plan. But Yu added that "there would have to be incentives" for larger Chinese businesses to move into East Harlem. Businesspeople would only be attracted to the area if they spotted opportunities to make money, in addition to providing a public service to locals. "The government should give these businesses a place, like a greenmarket, to regularly sell these vegetables," he said.

Mak Cheung, 73, has lived at Franklin Plaza, an East Harlem public housing complex, for over a decade; he was also glad to hear of the plan. "It'd be more convenient," he said of the proposed stall, speaking in Cantonese. "I would definitely buy from there. I also wouldn't have to spend any money getting down to Chinatown anymore."

Franklin Plaza is particularly popular with Chinese families, said Preston Tan, Mark-Viverito's Chinese community liaison. Commenting on the plan, Tan said, "I think it's great, and will definitely attract a lot of Chinese customers. Even if it's a small stall, it's a start, and we don't know how it would fare if we made a big Chinese supermarket."

The local Chinese population also needs medical and health services, Tan said, and special attention for Asian children attending schools here.

Huang's concerns, however, are smaller in scale. She'd love to be able to buy fresh fish from a local Chinese-style wet market stall, instead of frozen fish from Costco, where she's currently forced to shop because of her limited mobility. "In our culture," she concluded, "we love to eat live, fresh seafood."

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A decorated former Marine corporal who served two tours of duty in Iraq has overcome yet another challenge: college, and with flying colors. Chemistry major Tony Wan, 25, of Fresh

Meadows, was named valedictorian of his class at York College. Wan, the first college grad in his family, is to accept his diploma on Friday.

He keeps a silver bracelet engraved with the names of two fallen Marines from his unit with him at all times. “Whenever I feel like I can’t make it or something is difficult, I just remember these two Marines had made the ultimate sacrifice so I could be here today and continue what I’m doing,” Wan said.

He graduated from the Jamaica school in three years with a 3.99 GPA.

Wan, an immigrant who arrived in the U.S. when he was 3 years old, said he plans to go to med school and become a neurosurgeon. He hopes to help veterans suffering from brain injuries.

He first considered joining the military after 9-11, he said. He knew his parents, a seamstress and cook who immigrated from China to Belize to the U.S., could not afford to send both himself and his brother to college. So at 17, Wan enlisted in the Marines. He showed up to boot camp a month after his 2005 graduation from Benjamin N. Cardozo High School in Bayside.

“I was still a little bit naive at that time,” Wan said. “I didn’t really understand the war.” On his first tour in Iraq, in 2005, he was involved in two IED explosions during Humvee patrols of a main supply route between Fallujah and Ramadi, but escaped serious injury. “Even though we don’t get injured physically on the outside, the concussions from the explosions cause serious damage to the brain,” he said. “There are many Marines that suffer from PTSD and traumatic brain injuries.” Of the 13 Marines in his unit during his first tour, two died. No members of his unit were killed on his second tour of Iraq in late 2007 to mid-2008.

After returning to the U.S. in 2009, Wan enrolled at York College, a part of the City University of New York. He said he chose the school because he wanted to go a place where he could receive personalized attention. “I thought it would be hard not to just come back to school, but to civilian life,” Wan said. But his fellow students and professors were very “open-minded” and accepting of him, he said.

Emmanuel Chang, a chemistry professor, said Wan was “an excellent student.”

Wan initially wanted to be a physician’s assistant, but faculty soon convinced him he should become a doctor, Chang said. While at York, Wan became a chemistry tutor and conducted research on neurotoxins from venomous sea snails. “He has a unique combination of intellectual ability, a strong work ethic and an ability to relate to people,” Chang said. And “he’s quite a humble student.”

York College President Marcia Keizs said she was “delighted at his achievement.” “He’s clearly a very exceptional person,” she said.

Wan has also become an inspiration to his younger brother Danny Wan, 22, of Flushing. “After he was done with the four years of military service, he came back as a stronger, more determined person,” Danny Wan said. “He knew his goals in life and what he wanted to achieve.” “I honestly look up to him and what he’s done,” he said. WASJO

## **WASHINGTON, DC**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – OCA, a national organization dedicated to advancing the political, social, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), is overwhelmed with community pride in the passage of the H.Res. 683 by the United States House of Representatives. Introduced by Congresswoman Judy Chu (CA-32), the resolution is an

acknowledgement and regret for the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

“OCA is honored to share in this work with strategic allies from all corners of the APA community to reach this historic milestone,” says Tom Hayashi, OCA Executive Director. “The passage of the resolutions in both Houses poignantly echoes the very virtues that this great nation aspires to live up to since its founding.”

Passed within the resolution, Congress acknowledges that the framework of past anti-Chinese legislation, including the Chinese Exclusion Act, is incompatible with the basic founding principle that all persons are created equal. In recognition that Chinese Americans continue to play a significant role in the success of the United States, Congress officially expresses regret for the passing of six decades of legislation targeting the Chinese people for physical and political exclusion.

Congress has never before acknowledged the wrongful actions of the past in violating the fundamental civil rights of persons of Chinese descent. This specific piece of legislation does not only encompass regret, but also seeks to educate the current and future generations about the challenges around and remedies for race based oppression in America.

“We are extremely pleased with Congress’ commitment to ensuring equality for all,” says Ken Lee, OCA National President. “The extraordinary work of the 1882 Project, along with strong Congressional leadership, has brought us to this historic moment that we should all be proud of.”

The 1882 Project, a nonpartisan and grassroots effort focused on educating lawmakers and the public on the Chinese Exclusion Laws and the impact that such legislation had on our history, has been instrumental in moving the legislation forward. OCA sits on the steering committee the effort and whole-heartedly supported the passage of H.Res. 683 in recognizing the injustices committed of the past while the displaying a commitment to equality of the future.

“We are particularly grateful for the countless citizen advocates from all walks of life who faithfully answered our call to ensure that their collective voices were heard by members of Congress,” says Hayashi. “They mobilized passionately because they believe in the importance of a just society.”

OCA would like to thank all the supporting organizational partners for their continued efforts: the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Committee of 100, Japanese American Citizens League, and the National Council of Chinese Americans. We would especially like to thank former OCA President and Executive Director Michael Lin, Chair of the 1882 Project Steering Committee, for his tireless work in making this dream into a reality.

The full text of the Resolution can be found at:  
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hres683/text>

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—OCA, a national organization dedicated to advancing the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), announces the honorees for the **OCA Outstanding Citizen Achievement and Pioneer Awards**, to be presented at **OCA’s National Convention in Las Vegas, August 2-5, 2012**.

This year's Pioneer Award honorees are **Major Kurt Chew- Een Lee, USMC, Ret.** and author **Maxine Hong Kingston**. From Executive Directors and Presidents to community leaders and advocates, **J.D. Hokoyama, Floyd Mori,** and **Karen Narasaki**, will be receiving OCA's Outstanding Citizen Achievement Award.

"We are proud to honor a diverse and legendary group of APA leaders who have made impactful contributions to the community and their respective fields," said OCA National President, Ken Lee. "Their courage and leadership have paved the way for countless APAs in the arts, education, military, and civil rights."

The 2012 National Convention, **GOTV<sup>2</sup> - Get Out To Vegas, Get Out The Vote**, will take place at the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino. The Pioneer Award and Outstanding Citizen Achievement Awards will be presented during the Gala Awards on Saturday, August 4. At this year's convention, OCA will also recognize the achievements of its own members with the Chapter of the Year Award and the Unsung Heroes Awards.

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### **LAS VEGAS**

Another successful NYC Chinatown Reunion was enjoyed by many. Dennis Coffey donated some of his beautiful handiwork as prizes along with prizes donated by the Boyd Corp. The torch has been passed to Richard Chu who will be handling the next reunion in 2014. Of course I will also be there to assist. So keep the early part of 2014 open for another reunion!!!

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### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Chinatown in Calcutta, India

**<http://www.sunilshibad.com/2010/01/legend-of-fat-mama.html>**

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Lecture on Chinese immigration by Erika Lee, Fay Huie's daughter.

**<http://www.ustream.tv/usnationalarchives>**

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Positive stereotypes about Asian Americans are rooted in reality: They are more educated, wealthier and value work, marriage and family more than Americans as a whole, according to Pew Research report out today.

The study, which includes a survey of 3,511 Asians, shows that more than 60% of recent Asian immigrants have at least a college degree. Many work in high-paying fields such as science, engineering, medicine and finance. "These are not the tired, poor huddled masses of that inscription on the Statue of Liberty," says [Paul Taylor](#), executive vice president of the [Pew Research Center](#). "Recent Asian arrivals are the most highly educated ... immigrants in [U.S.](#) history."

The [USA's](#) 18.2 million Asians are the fastest-growing racial group and have surpassed Hispanics as the largest group of new immigrants. They represent 6% of the population. The survey says Asian Americans are more satisfied with their lives, personal finances and the general direction of the country than Americans as a whole.

Indians have the highest share of college-educated and the highest median household income (\$88,000) among the largest Asian-American groups. Asians as a whole have a median household income of \$66,000 (half make more, half less) compared with the U.S. median of \$49,800. The telephone survey includes large enough samples of the six largest U.S. Asian groups (Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese) to pinpoint differences among them.

"This is the first time anyone has been able to develop this level of detail about the Asian-American community and about the differences between different sets of populations," says [Neera Tanden](#), an Indian American who is president of the Center for American Progress, a liberal think-tank. Not all Asian groups are prosperous. Koreans, Chinese and Vietnamese, many who came to the USA as refugees, have a higher poverty rate than Americans in general. All groups value marriage, family and hard work more than the U.S. population as a whole.

"If that's a stereotype that people have assigned to this group, believe me, that's a stereotype this group has embraced," Taylor says. "It stands out." More than half say a successful marriage is one of the most important things in life vs. 34% of all Americans; two-thirds say being a good parent is right up there, too, vs. 50% for the country.

"One aspect that some people in the community may be concerned about is that the survey will in some sense reinforce the stereotype of 'They work hard, they're highly educated,' " says Benjamin Wu, vice chairman of the U.S.-Asia Institute, a group that works with Congress to help strengthen relationships with Asia.

"We know in some (Asian) communities, that's not the case," he says. Many Asian immigrants do not come on a student visa and need housing assistance, Wu says.

Tanden is struck by the fact that even though Indian Americans are overwhelmingly Democrats, two Indians in high U.S. political offices are both Republican — Louisiana Gov. [Bobby Jindal](#) and South Carolina Gov. Nikki Hailey.

"Asians have a much more positive attitude toward government" than the country as a whole, Tanden says. "That may be in part because many Asians come from countries where government does not work nearly as properly or on behalf of the people."

Other findings:

- Asians are more likely to be married and to live in a multigenerational household. They are less likely to be born to an unwed mother.
- Among Asians, Japanese and Filipino are most accepting of interracial and intergroup marriages. From 2008-10, 55% of Japanese newlyweds married non-Asians.
- Koreans are most likely to say that discrimination against them is a major problem and half say they don't get along very well with blacks. There has been a history of tension between blacks and Korean store owners who come in to their neighborhoods.
- Almost 40% says parents of Asian origin put too much pressure on their kids to do well in school.

"The best and the brightest in the world are coming to the United States," Tanden says. "The report is a testament to the promise of America and the promise of the American dream."

The full report is at

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/06/19/the-rise-of-asian-americans/>

