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## OAPIA Bi-Weekly Newsletter

*News Updates from the DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs*

### A Message from the Director

**Dear Community Members,**

OAPIA has always believed that getting involved in the political process is an important way that one can be counted and heard. The District's many AAPI residents have a significant impact on elections, specifically local elections.

This year, the District of Columbia will hold a primary election on April 1, 2014, and general election on November 4, 2014.



OAPIA and the DC Board of Elections have been promoting voter registration activities throughout the year, and have been working to help ensure the AAPI community experience at the polls will include language support. If you are bilingual in an Asian language and would like to become a poll worker, please email [oapia@dc.gov](mailto:oapia@dc.gov).

Furthermore, we encourage all District residents to participate in civic engagement. For more information on [registering to vote](#), [upcoming elections](#), [general information about voting](#), or [ways to volunteer](#), please visit [here](#).

Warm Wishes,

Soohyun "Julie" Koo  
Director, DC Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

### OAPIA in the Community

**Mayor Gray and OAPIA Celebrate Lunar New Year and Highlight Support for District AAPI Senior Residents**



*Mayor Gray and OAPIA Director Soohyun "Julie" Koo with AAPI senior residents.*

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) - Mayor Vincent C. Gray and the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) welcomed the Lunar New Year at the Wah Luck House in Chinatown on Tuesday, February 11, 2014. At the event, the Mayor engaged Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) seniors, highlighted continued efforts of District programs and services to support aging residents, and offered Lunar New Year greetings. Over 150 District senior residents, including Chinese, Vietnamese, and other AAPI residents, community leaders, and District government officials celebrated the Lunar New Year with Mayor Gray. Language interpretation was provided in Mandarin, Cantonese, and Vietnamese.

"I am delighted to celebrate the Lunar New Year as we continue to improve the quality of life for our senior residents," said Mayor Gray. "The District is becoming an age-friendly city with the goal of providing all senior residents access to nutritious meals, physical and recreational activities, and tools to be financially prepared for their retirement and long-term care needs."

For the entire press release, please visit [here](#). For photos, please visit [here](#).

### **OAPIA Attends Lunar New Year Celebration at the Asian Senior Center**



*OAPIA Director Koo addressing the audience.*

On February 18, 2014, OAPIA attended a Lunar New Year celebration at the Asian Senior Center. OAPIA Director Koo made Lunar New Year greetings. OAPIA, non-profit organizations, community leaders, and AAPI senior residents attended the celebration.

### **OAPIA Promotes Internship Opportunities at the East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU) Conference**



*OAPIA Community Outreach Specialist Andrew Chang promoting the OAPIA internship program at the ECAASU 2014 conference.*

On Saturday, February 22, 2014, the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) promoted internship opportunities at the East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU) 2014 conference at George Washington University. [ECAASU](#) is a national, nonprofit intercollegiate Asian-Pacific American advocacy organization and is the largest and oldest conference in the country for Asian American students.

For information about [OAPIA internships](#), please visit [here](#). For more information on [ECAASU 2014](#), please visit [here](#).

## OAPIA News

### **OAPIA Welcomes New Community Outreach Assistant Yiyang Guo**

Yiyang Guo currently serves as a community outreach assistant for OAPIA. With a Master of Arts in Public Policy from Georgetown University, Yiyang is endeavored to make changes for a better society. At OAPIA, she promotes District government programs and services to the District's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. She also conducts community outreach activities and assists in language translation and interpretation using her Mandarin Chinese skills.

In the past, Yiyang served as an experienced interpreter, having interpreted at over 150 interpretation sessions. She strives to enhance the understanding and interaction between the District government and AAPI community to help build a more prosperous and livable city.



**Yiyang Guo**

### **OAPIA Welcomes Spring Intern**

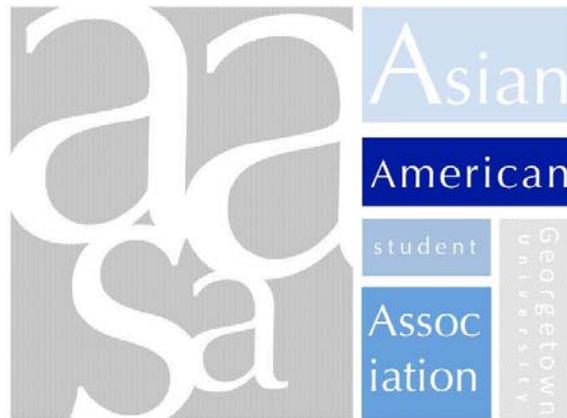


**Gorawan Ngernsilpachoke**

Gorawan Ngernsilpachoke was born and raised in Bangkok, Thailand. She recently graduated from Peking University in China with a bachelor's degree in world history. Currently, she is pursuing a Master of Arts in Statecraft and International Affairs at the Institute of World Politics in Washington, DC. Gorawan has lived in Beijing, China for six years, and previously interned at the Royal Thai Consulate General in Shanghai, China in the summer of 2010. At the consulate, Gorawan used her Chinese language skills to provide linguistic services for Thai delegates, residents, and business owners in Shanghai.

Outside of OAPIA, Gorawan volunteers at the Washington Animal Rescue League. She believes in two things that guides her in life: never stop learning, and experience plays a vital role in shaping the way you think and the way you are.

### **Spotlight: Georgetown University's Asian American Student Association (AASA)**



The Asian American Student Association (AASA) at Georgetown University serves primarily to promote various Asian American cultures, inviting Asian American speakers and professionals to the Georgetown University campus, and helping to generate dialogue on issues pertinent to the community. AASA also serves as a monitoring body for the school's many cultural associations. Working with the Chinese Student Association, Club Singapore, Korean Students Association and other cultural clubs, AASA hosts its annual Asia Fest, an event that urges ethnic students to showcase their talents.

In addition to both on-campus and off-campus outreach, AASA is always considering new ways to engage the DC Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. AASA will be participating in the annual Relay for Life event, an American Cancer Society event that raises awareness and funds for cancer research. AASA has also encouraged its members to take part in blood drives in the past, responding to the calls for more blood donors of AAPI descent.

For more information on [AASA](#), please visit [here](#) or email [aasa@georgetown.edu](mailto:aasa@georgetown.edu).

## February is National Children's Dental Health Month



National Children's Dental Health Month is a campaign held each February to raise awareness about the importance of children's oral health. Poor oral health care among children is a growing epidemic that not only affects their teeth, but also their intellectual and social

development, and overall health. According to a report by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), tooth decay in young children can lead to malnutrition, life-threatening infections, poor school performance, and reluctance to speak, smile and play.

The DC Department of Health (DOH) recommends that all children three years of age and older have an oral health examination performed by a licensed dentist and to have the DC Oral Health Assessment Form completed. Additionally, DOH sponsors a School Based Oral Health Program that provides preventive oral health services to DC Public Schools (DCPS), DC Public Charter Schools (DCPCS) elementary school students and Head Start Centers/Early Child Learning Centers who present their signed parental consent forms. Schools that are allowed to participate in the program must have at least 50% of its student population enrolled in the National Free or Reduced Lunch Program.

For more information on National Children's Dental Health Month or related resources in the District, please visit:

- [DC Department of Health: Oral Health Program](#)
- [National Network for Oral Health Access \(NNOHA\)](#)
- [The American Dental Association \(ADA\): National Children's Dental Health Month](#)

[oapia@dc.gov](mailto:oapia@dc.gov) | [www.apia.dc.gov](http://www.apia.dc.gov) | Phone: (202) 727-3120 | Fax: (202) 727-9655



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OAPIA | 441 4th St NW | Suite 721 North | Washington | DC | 20001