



CALIFORNIA ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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California Celebrates Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month *Exceptional APIs Recognized at the State Capitol*

Sacramento, CA – The Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus recognized Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month in California with the adoption of [Assembly Concurrent Resolution \(ACR\) 61](#), authored by Assemblymember Kansen Chu (D – San Jose). Awards were presented to distinguished Asian & Pacific Islander Americans during a special floor ceremony dedicated to honoring leaders who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of civil rights, education, law, culinary arts, and journalism.

“It is with great pleasure to author Assembly Concurrent Resolution 61, which designates May 2015 as Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) Heritage Month,” said Assemblymember Chu. “While the APIA community includes many different nationalities, all of their stories are tied together by challenges they faced. In spite of these struggles, they have dedicated their lives to their families, our State, and our Nation.”

“This group of diverse and extraordinary leaders empowers the Asian Pacific Islander American community in California and in this country,” said Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus Chair Assemblymember Das Williams (D – Santa Barbara). “I thank them and take great honor in recognizing their tremendous contributions and service to the community.”

Nearly six million APIs account for 16 percent of the state’s population, comprising one of the fastest growing demographics in California. The impact of APIs in the state continues to be evident through the accomplishments of the honorees as well as the presence of increasing API elected officials in state and local government. The 2014 Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Award Recipients include:

- **Excellence in Education** – **Henry T. Yang** is Chancellor for UC Santa Barbara and former Neil Armstrong Distinguished Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics at Purdue University. .
- **Excellence in Law** – **Erica Yew** is the first Asian-American female to serve on the Santa Clara County Supervisor Court, Civil Division.
- **Excellence in Journalism** – **K.W. Lee** became the first Asian immigrant hired by mainstream media. He covered stories on social justice including a series of investigatory pieces on Chol Soo Lee, an immigrant Korean who was wrongfully convicted in 1973 for a murder involving Chinese gangs in San Francisco’s Chinatown.
- **Excellence in Civil Rights** – **Larry Itliong** was a prominent leader during the American farm labor movement. He organized a group of 1,500 Filipinos to strike against the grape growers of Delano, California. His son, Johnny Itliong, will accept this posthumous award.



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- **Excellence in Culinary Arts – Charles Phan** is the award-winning Executive Chef and owner of San Francisco's The Slanted Door and 6 other restaurants. He is considered to be the inventor of modern Vietnamese cuisine in the United States.

The API Legislative Caucus was established in 2001 with the mission of representing and advocating for the diverse interests of California's API community. Additionally, the Caucus seeks to increase API participation and representation in all levels of government.

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