



# NEW JERSEY

Embracing the Hopes & Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans

# ACTION

June 2021 Vol.3 No.1

## Day of National Solidarity Rally

by Virginia Ng, OCA-NJ Chapter Advisor

**May 31st** With the recent onslaught of anti-Asian rhetoric, OCA-New Jersey jointly hosted with the Chinese American Heritage Foundation, THE DAY of NATIONAL SOLIDARITY AGAINST HATE RALLY, which was held in Jersey City on Memorial Day, May 31, 2021. The OCA-New Jersey Chapter held the rally concurrently with 20 other rallies in cities across the United States. The rally's goals were to bring visibility to the contributions AAPIs have made in America, especially the AAPI veterans who served our country; encourage the AAPI community to speak up and be heard; and highlight the rise of anti-AAPI hate incidents in the past year and the discrimination and under-representation over the decade. It was a call for racial understanding, inclusion and justice.

Starting off the rally was the color guard from the American Legion Post 1291 led by Tommy Ong, who also spoke on behalf of the OCA Long Island Chapter. The OCA New York Chapter was represented by their board member, Lillian Gee who gave out information and free giveaways. Thanks to Li En Chong and the generosity of the Yellow Whistle Campaign, we were able to distribute over 150 whistles at the rally with yellow cards imprinted with "WHEN IN DANGER BLOW THE WHISTLE" and "WHEN YOU HEAR A WHISTLE, CALL 911." Over 60 rally signs were crafted and designed by the talented, Cali and generously donated by Apogee Design and Construction. The signs were then rallied with "STOP AAPI HATE"/"WE BELONG HERE TOO"/"JUSTICE FOR ASIANS"/"PROUD TO BE ASIAN," and my personal favorite "PROTECT OUR ELDERS." Tradition, dance and music were provided in a Lion Dance performed by students from Columbia



University and led by OCA-New Jersey Chapter President, Henry Lee and in a Dragon performance by the Nai Ni Chen Dance Company heralding the Lion and Dragon into action.

Over 200 people were in attendance with 15 prominent speakers including Tahesha Way (New Jersey Secretary of State), Steven Fulop (Jersey City Mayor) and Rolando Lavarro ( Jersey City Council Member). Joining also were our friends and allies, Upendra Chivukula (Commissioner NJ Board of Public Utilities), Jun Choi (former Edison Mayor and Jersey Promise co-founder) and Ludi Hughes (Asian American Heritage Council of New Jersey and chair of the Filipino American Festival). The final impactful speaker was Glenn Magpantay who has worked alongside the OCA NJ/NY chapters for more than 20 years.

A thank you to the volunteers, board members, sponsors and speakers as we STOP THE HATE and IN SOLIDARITY, WE STAND TOGETHER. **OCA**

## President's Message June 2021

Dear OCA friends and families,  
The Year of the Ox has so far been a productive year for the New Jersey Chapter. With the generosity of members' and friends' donations, our Chapter was able to support front line medical workers, food pantries and soup kitchens, and also crossed state line to Chinatown, NYC to provide winter clothing and supplies to many people who were homeless for the first time due to the lockdowns caused by the Covid pandemic.



The lockdowns did not keep our fantastic board members from producing a number of events and programs including a Virtual Lunar New Year Celebration via Zoom. Our tireless John Tan designed a first Lunar Year of the Ox Tee shirt. Get yours while they last! Theresa Chan took the lead with launching the Monthly Tea Time program. Laura Lee led the Chapter in awarding thousands of dollars to high school seniors through the OCA-NJ Scholarship program. Virginia Ng organized the board and members in honoring our fallen service men and women on Memorial Day and speaking out against Anti-AAPI Hate. Our Chapter and friends displayed a great sense of unity and a voice in the community.

Our work is not done, and we need your help in the areas of building membership and sponsorship. I ask that every chapter member invite a friend or their entire family to our next in-person gathering. I am happy to announce that the annual 4 Chapter Picnic will be held on Sunday September 13th, 2021, and I am also very pleased to announce that the Chapter will be hosting the Annual Holiday Black Tie Ball at The Grand, in Totowa on Saturday December 4th, 2021.

Join OCA-NJ by visiting our website and enjoy the many programs and events we have and you are welcome to make suggestions.

With much gratitude,

Henry Lee

OCA-NJ, President 2021-2022

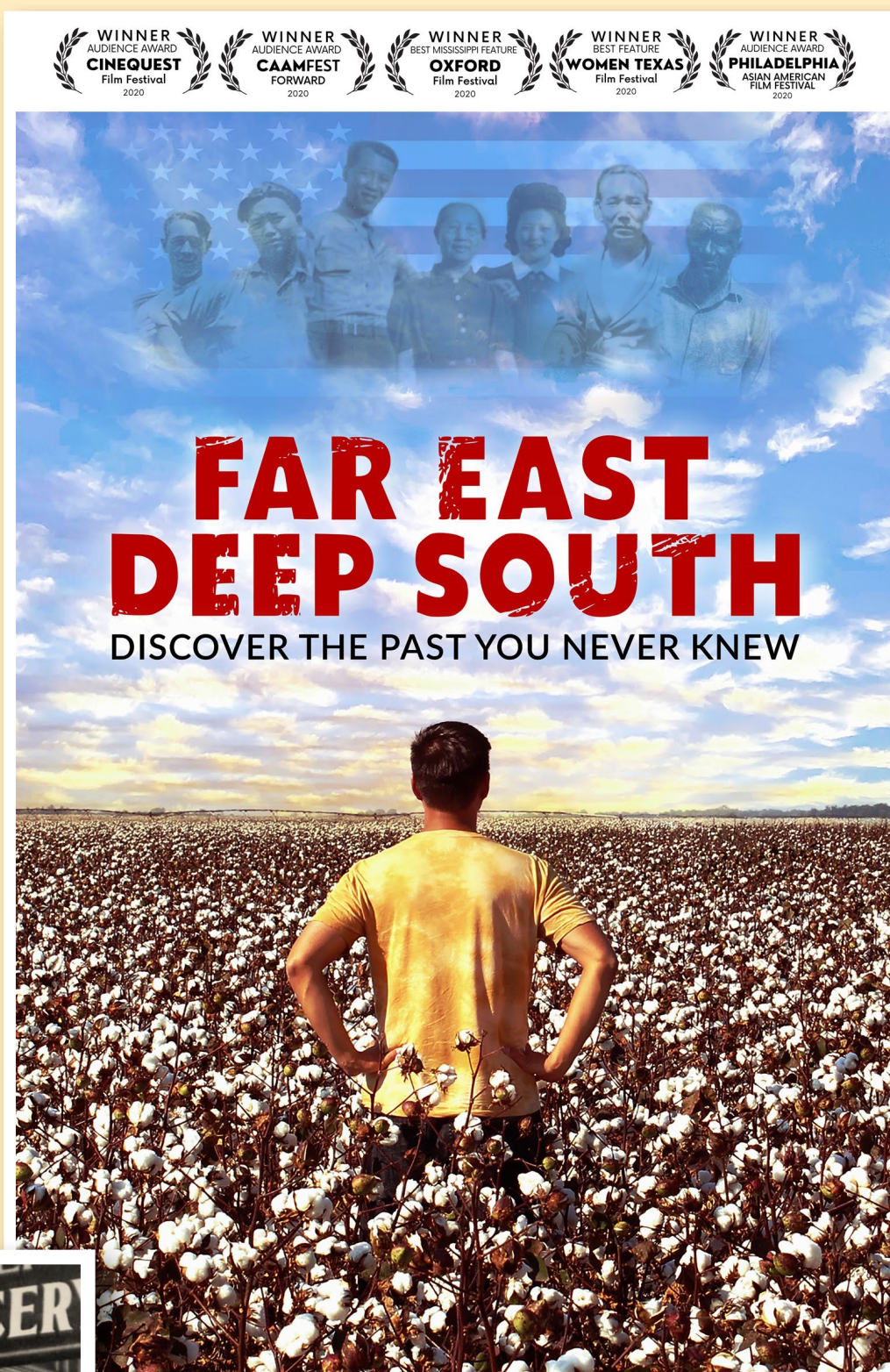


# Far East, Deep South

by Laura Lee, OCA-NJ Immediate Past President

**March 27th** OCA-New Jersey and OCA-Westchester Hudson Valley joined together to co-host a screening of the award-winning documentary, FAR EAST, DEEP SOUTH, produced by Baldwin Chiu and directed by Larissa Lam. This moving documentary follows Charles Chiu and his family on their journey to find the gravesite of his father and grandfather in the Mississippi Delta. Along the way, they meet a diverse group of local residents and historians that share information, memories and mementos of Charles' father that heal deep wounds and resentment that Charles felt about his father who he last saw when he was only one years old. This moving documentary tells the story not only of the Chiu family, but also that of the many early Chinese American settlers caught between the Black and White population. Dealing with racism, segregation, loneliness, depression, and financial burden during the time Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, this documentary sheds light on the important relationship that developed between the African American and Chinese American communities in the segregated South, as both were shut out of white communities and needed one another to sustain themselves.

After the screening, we were treated to a special one-on-one Q&A session with producer, Baldwin Chiu, who shared many other insights discovered during their travels to the South that didn't make it into the movie or were discovered after the film was completed. If you weren't able to join us for this very special event, we urge you to seek out other screenings of the film, as this is definitely a must-see movie for the whole family. OCA gives it 2 thumbs up! **OCA**



# 20th Annual OCA-NJ APA Heritage and Scholarship Celebration

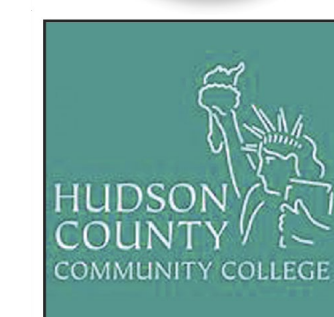
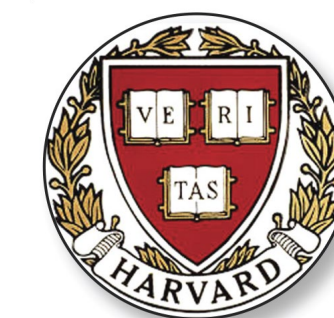
by Laura Lee, OCA-NJ Immediate Past President

**May 23rd** OCA-NJ celebrated virtually its 20th Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage and Scholarship event. In honor of APA Heritage month, we celebrated a "Tea Time" by sharing stories of our ancestors who have inspired us. It was wonderful to hear all the proud personal stories of our own history here in the United States, and to hear of the service our ancestors gave for our country and for our community, and the work and effort they put in to make our lives better. They say the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, so remember to pay it forward.

We also presented our annual scholarships to six deserving students from across New Jersey. Rachel Lee from Northern Valley Regional High School at Demarest won the Robert E. Wone Memorial Scholarship \$2,500. Sabrina Fong from Weehawken High School won the Linda Lee Memorial Scholarship \$2,000. Ellie Shin from The Lawrenceville School received the Dr. Ferdinand Gajewski, Jr. Memorial Scholarship \$2,000. Julia Zhang from West Essex Senior High School won the Edwin & Aurora Len Memorial Scholarship \$1,000. Jenna Gomes from J.P.

Stevens High School won the Willie Lau Memorial Scholarship \$500.

The inaugural Spirit of Corky Lee Memorial Scholarship \$1,500 went to Michelle Bae from Wayne Hills High School for her creative photography entitled, "Intertwined," which depicts two ethnically different subjects: an East Asian girl and a South Asian girl. She writes, "Although Corky Lee and I have different photography styles, his grit, spirit, and vision still shines through in my work." "Corky Lee made it a priority to fight for all Asian-Americans, not just those who shared his ethnicity." "While all Asians are unique, we still share similar experiences as many of us have been discriminated against due to our appearances. The stitched patches of the opposing subjects' faces and the thread connecting the subjects' heads represent the way our experiences connect us." She concludes, "As Asian-Americans and allies make themselves heard, it would be an honor to do my due diligence to my community and photograph my people coming together. I would hope that my work could influence at least one person; for one person, as Corky Lee has proven, can make a lasting impact on the world." We are so proud of all our scholarship winners and wish them well. We know they will continue to pay it forward, as well.



**College and Universities to be attended by our scholarship recipients**

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## Lunar New Year of the Ox Celebration

by Christine Braccino, OCA-NJ Board Member

**February 27th** OCA-NJ welcomed the Lunar New Year of the OX in a virtual celebration with members and friends. With the pandemic, the annual Lunar New Year Dinner Banquet could not be held, so OCA-NJ got creative!

The virtual celebration included demonstrations in kung fu (Alex Woo), shadow puppets (Terry Shih) and bamboo framing of a lion (Vinh Bui). Henry Lee, OCA-NJ President, performed lion dance including the dance's symbolism for the new year. ICEPN Television's talents performed song and instrumental music and even cooking presentations! Also, fun was had by all with bingo games and raffles! We took a trip down

our Chapter's Memory Lane via a slideshow of photos of past events and achievements. Lastly, the presentation of the Unsung Hero Award to our board member, Theresa Chan!

Attendees were able to buy party boxes to enjoy at the celebration. The party boxes contained OCA-NJ face mask, lantern decorations and baked goods from M&W Bakery in NYC Chinatown. The baked goods were moon cakes, gold ingot (for good fortune), almond cookies (for luck) and sesame balls (for happiness).

Year of the OX will end on January 31, 2022. Then the Tiger arrives!

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**Unsung Hero Board Member Theresa Chan unboxing the Party Box containing baked goodies and Lunar New Year themed bingo game card**

## Asian American Heritage Month

by Virginia Ng, OCA-NJ Chapter Advisor

Many of you know that May was ASIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH and a time for recognizing the contributions and influence of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans in the United States.

The month of May is over, but let us not forget the individuals, organizations and history that led us to this point. During the month, the Chinese American Heritage Foundation hosted zoom webinars every day to highlight AAPI individuals and organizations who have made positive lasting impact on America. I personally didn't get a chance to join all of the webinars, but the ones I did, they were both educational and enlightening. Most of us have a semblance of the Chinese and Asian American history in this country, but I was grateful that I was able to learn "something new" and also help educate the next generation about some of the household names and history.

There are some webinars I like to highlight. May 1 is a presentation on Angel Island. A very sad place indeed. I was fortunate to have attended the 150th Anniversary of the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad

in Utah in 2019; and listening to Professor Gordon Chang speaking so eloquently about the 15,000 Chinese who were there brought back many soulful memories is featured on May 10. A Celebration of the Life and Work of Corky Lee is on May 13. I'm a speaker on the May 15 presentation speaking about the Day of National Solidarity Against Hate Rally. The Committee of 100 is featured on May 16 and speaks about how Chinese are perceived in this country. I remember when this report first came out. Surprised, not really. Disheartening is more the word for it. And who hasn't heard of Vincent Chin and how his death sparked the advocacy of Asians today—featured in the May 18 webinar. Check out the history of OCA's Legacy: A Review of Our History and the Future of OCA on May 24 and May 25. My personal favorite—Memorial Day Tribute to American Veterans and Celebration of AAPI Heritage Month—on May 31.

So if you have a chance, click on this website. Don't know how long they will be there. You may just be surprised at what YOU DIDN'T KNOW. Click on the website [www.cahf.us/aapitalks](http://www.cahf.us/aapitalks)

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## Tribute To Corky Lee

by Virginia Ng, OCA-NJ Chapter Advisor

Corky Lee...It's hard to believe he's gone. Someone whom you have known for over 50 years has passed and it hits hard, because he is one of your peers and a friend.

Corky is the person who got me involved in advocacy, seeing the injustices and opening my eyes to what was happening. He tells a story about when he read in the history books that the Chinese built the Transcontinental Railroads. There was just one little paragraph. He did his own research, and he found the famous photo of the driving of the Golden Spike. With a magnifying glass, he searched through the photo looking for the representation of Chinese. To his utmost horror, he did not discover "one" in the entire photo. He realized that a piece was missing from American history. Who is to believe that the thousands of Chinese who built the railroad even existed? He decided that he would start a photo library, photographing the journey of Chinese Americans in this country. He would go on to include all Asians in his pursuit.

His taking of the memorable photograph of the descendants at the 150th Anniversary of the building of the Transcontinental Railroads will go down in history. He wanted to reenact that famous photo, but this time with the Chinese who had been excluded.

How did Corky get me involved? Years ago, Corky asked me "Do you know who built the railroads in this country?" I didn't know. My history teacher didn't even touch this portion in our class. Maybe because it was only a short paragraph, she conveniently excluded it. So once again, we were forgotten, overlooked and excluded.

Corky supported the OCA chapters in the NJ/NY areas; organizations he felt was righting injustices. Corky was constantly letting me know what was happening. He would send me emails, or messages of what was coming up. He was my calendar and the go to person. Even if things were happening across the country, I got event notices. He introduced me to so many people that he thought I should know. He knew them all.

When you met him for the first time, he spoke to you as if he had known you for years. He was such a personable and friendly person. If you were looking at photos at his exhibits, he would talk and tell stories about the photographs. He would remember the exact place, time it was taken, and even who was there. Some of which I had forgotten, but his story would trigger a memory. I use to think of him as an encyclopedia and dictionary for his photographs.

We encounter a lot of people in our lives, but very few or if, any impact your life as Corky has done to so many of us. We have lost an Icon in our Asian American community. A photojournalist, advocate, role model, teacher, and a close friend. I'm going to miss you!

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# Hui Kwang “Keith” Wang

July 1, 1947 ~ May 19, 2021

It is with heartfelt feelings that I convey the following news.

Keith Wang, OCA-NJ Founding Member and Chapter President (1986) passed away in Naples, FL. He lived in Ramsey, New Jersey before retiring to Florida. He and his wife Julie were Life Time Members of the OCA National Organization, and subsequently continued to generously support the New Jersey chapter and the national organization.

As a CPA, Keith continued to serve the New Jersey Chapter by generously donating his time by keeping up with the extensive financial records for many years.

It was a true pleasure to know Keith and be inspired by him. Keith grew up in Taiwan and was fluent in Mandarin, Korean and

the Japanese languages.

Keith and Julie would entertain the board members and conduct board meetings in their home. I remember spending many hours getting to know this quiet, generous and knowledgeable man.

In 1999, when I stepped into the role of chapter president, he was always there to guide me. Giving heartfelt advice and life experiences which I sadly lacked. He was my role model and teacher. He will be sadly missed.

**Virginia L. Ng**  
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# Why Be a Part of OCA-NJ?

by Eric Chau, Vice President - OCA-NJ Chapter

As an entrepreneur running two demanding businesses and raising a young family with a 3 year old active boy, people would ask why and how do I find time to serve in a non-profit organization. I supposed like most things in life, as long as we know our “why’s,” the “how’s” become strikingly apparent.

My history with OCA began in fall of 1996 when I was in my high school senior year. The Detroit chapter of OCA, Association of Chinese Americans (ACAetroit.org), was the founding chapter of OCA with history dating back to 1972. Growing up in Michigan as a first-generation immigrant child was both exciting and challenging. I was a decent student in high school but due to my introverted and quiet nature, I never received any major recognition in school. My school counselor at that time encouraged me to apply for a scholarship opportunity with ACA. I applied and luckily, was selected as one of ACA’s scholarship recipients. This “win” gave me a tremendous amount of confidence to ignite the next stages of personal growth. Because of the leadership of ACA Detroit at that time who dedicated their effort to serve and elevate the community and its people, their contributions made a positive impact to me and many others. This simple act of recognition influenced my decision to serve with the AmeriCorps for 2 years during college; served on a board with ACA-Detroit, APIA-Vote, and now OCA-NJ. Just like the heroes and leaders who have served before us, I am inspired

to be a part of movement that can build up the community and the next generations.

I’m very proud of OCA-NJ for all the projects it has executed for Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities, especially during this challenging time over this pandemic. As you read in this newsletter about OCA-NJ’s work and contributions, I encourage to discover your “why’s” to be involved with our organization. Maybe you are a parent who wants to make an impact in other children’s lives; maybe you are a teenager struggling with self-confidence like myself before; maybe you are a college student who believes in changing the image of AAPI community; maybe you are a busy working professional who’s looking for worthy causes to further your growth; or maybe you are a retired professional who wants to help other young professionals advance their careers. Whatever your “Why” is, it’s certainly worthy of your sincere effort and precious time. We hope to connect with you to discover and pursue your “Why.”

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# Monthly Tea Time with Friends

by Theresa Chan, OCA-NJ Board Member

**April 22nd,** It had been over one year of pandemic, and over one year of quarantining for so many. To combat feelings of isolation from not being able to interact with friends and family in person, OCA-NJ got innovative. We wanted to bring our community together again while social distancing.

We kicked-off the first of our Monthly Tea Time with Friends virtual event on April 22, 2021. The

purpose of these monthly virtual events is to come together and discuss topics related to the Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. It’s a chance to get to know each other, share our favorite tea, share our feelings and a story related to the monthly topic, and most of all a chance to interact from the comfort of our own homes! In April, we discussed self-defense and self-preservation amidst increasing



violence towards Asians. In May, we celebrated our OCA-NJ scholarship winners and shared personal stories and memories about our ancestors. At our third Tea Time in June, we will chat about weddings and the unique cultural traditions

we did, want to, wanted to, or even didn’t want to incorporate into the wedding.

Be on the lookout for OCA-NJ’s Monthly Tea Time with Friends virtual events. Introduce yourself, the tea you’re drinking, and share a story. If there is a topic pertaining to the AAPI community you are interested in, or are interested in leading a discussion yourself, contact Theresa Chan, OCA-NJ Programs Committee Chair at [theresa.ocanj.cana@gmail.com](mailto:theresa.ocanj.cana@gmail.com). We’d love to hear from you!

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## Milestones & Celebrations



JANUARY  
FEBRUARY  
MARCH  
APRIL  
MAY  
JUNE

Cinnamon Lee Sweet 16, April 26, 2021

Crystal Lee and Daniel Kemp engaged, May 15, 2021

Derek and Jenny Lee 33rd wedding anniversary, June 11, 2021

Gloria Yee 80th birthday, June 14, 2021

## Upcoming 2021 Events

Check [www.oca-nj.com](http://www.oca-nj.com) for date, time and location

### July

OCA-NJ Board Meeting

### September

SAVE THE DATE

The 4 OCA Chapters and FCC Annual Summer Family Picnic

This year hosted by OCA New York Chapter

Sunday, September 12, 2021  
Van Saun Park, 216 Forest Ave.  
Paramus, NJ  
Pavilion I - 11:00am to 3:00pm

### October

OCA-NJ Board Meeting  
OCA-NJ Membership Appreciation and General Meeting  
Board Elections

### November

OCA-NJ Holiday Wrapping Party

### December

OCA-NJ Annual Holiday Ball

# OCA New Jersey & COVID Relief Effort

## Thank You to Donors

During the pandemic, OCA-NJ initiated the COVID NJ Relief Effort to help frontline workers and food pantries by providing donations of food, snacks and

drinks. This was made possible by the generous donations from the many OCA-NJ members and friends and the Girl Scouts of Northern NJ. The following organizations received our help: Holy Name Medical Center, St Barnabas Medical Center, St Joseph's Health, Hackensack University Medical Center, Jersey City Med-

ical Center, Clara Maass Medical Center MCFOODS Middlesex County, Toni's Kitchen, Reformed Church of Boonton Food Pantry and Paterson Food Drive. A relief effort was also made for NYC Chinatown in coordination with 46 Mott Street Bakery, and winter clothing and accessories were donated. OCA-NJ sends a huge THANK YOU to all the donors for their support. You helped make a difference!



Donations for Toni's Kitchen in Montclair, NJ



Food Donations to Frontline Workers



Food Donations to MCFOODS in Middlesex County, NJ



Food Donations to Frontline Workers



Donations to 46 Mott St. for Chinatown Homeless



Food Donations to Frontline Workers



Donations for Toni's Kitchen in Montclair, NJ



Donated Clothes and Items for the Homeless in Chinatown



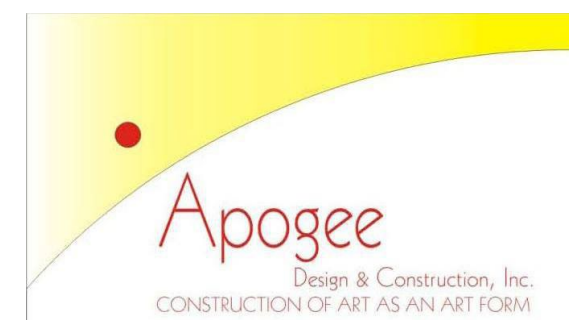
## Mission Statement

OCA-New Jersey Chapter is a state chapter of OCA, a section 501(c)(3) national organization dedicated to advancing the social, political and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans in the United States. Our goals are: (1) To advocate for social justice, equal opportunity and fair treatment. (2) To promote civic participation, education and leadership. (3) To advance coalitions and community building. (4) To foster cultural heritage. Founded in 1973 as the Organization of Chinese Americans, OCA maintains its headquarters in Washington, D.C. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

## OCA's PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- Promoting active participation of Asian Pacific Americans in both civic and national matters;
- Securing the social justice, equal opportunity and equal treatment of Asian Pacific Americans;
- Eliminating prejudices, stereotypes and ignorance of Asian Pacific Americans, and;
- Promoting the cultural heritage of Chinese and Asian Pacific Americans

## Sponsored by the following:



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