

The AACCP Newsletter

Since 1970

Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc.

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Entries From Growing Up Asian in America 2010 A Program of the Asian Pacific Fund

Here's our annual presentation of a few of our favorite winning entries from the Asian Pacific Fund's *Growing Up Asian in America* contest. We first wrote about the Asian Pacific Fund and their contest back in our May 2004 newsletter.

Growing Up Asian in America is a writing and art contest for students from around the San Francisco Bay Area. The contest is timed to work in conjunction with Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Each year the Asian Pacific Fund chooses a different theme for the contest.

This year's theme is entitled –

Expectations: To be and do what you feel in your heart.

To see the traveling exhibit of all of the winning entries, go to the Asian Pacific Fund's exhibit schedule page to find the date and locations of the exposition nearest you. To see all of this year's winners online, go to Asian Pacific Fund's winners page.

Check back with the Asian Pacific Fund's website in January of 2011 to learn of the new theme, and to find the entry form and rules.

2010 Growing Up Asian in America Featured Entries

Provided courtesy of the Asian Pacific Fund

Some of the major sponsors include The Safeway Foundation, Walgreens, the Wells Fargo Foundation, and the Asian Art Museum. The Asian Pacific Fund is a community foundation that works with donors to improve the well-being of all Asian Americans in the Bay Area.

K-5 2nd Place

Climb Every Mountain

Payal D. Ahuja, Age 11, 5th Grade

Edith Landels Elementary School, Mountain View

As a tween about to enter middle school, I feel that my life is changing rapidly. I have come a long way from my Barbie doll days and have started to think more about my future. One of the things I wonder most about is what I would like to achieve in life. Like everyone else, I too have goals and dreams. My dreams are a very important part of my personality and form the core essence of me as a person. My dream gives my life a sense of meaning and purpose and pushes me to try my best to achieve what I want.

My dream is to become an architect. Being good at both math and art, this is my natural choice. I know that it is going to involve a lot of hard work and perseverance to make a place for myself in this highly competitive field, but this doesn't scare me. Instead it motivates me to try hard. I have many short term goals too, such as being on the swim team and I practice a lot to achieve this goal as well. Yet, I realize that all my dreams may not be fulfilled no matter how hard I try. Fulfillment of a dream also involves many external factors over which I have little control. Still, I feel that one shouldn't stop dreaming and become discouraged if one's efforts are not rewarded. If my dreams do not come true, I would still feel grateful for the pleasure my dream gave me and put it behind me as a useful learning experience. I would never stop dreaming and would instead evaluate my strong points and adjust my goals accordingly.

For me, the support of my family is very important. I would like them to be a part of my dreams. However, as an Asian kid

growing up in the U.S, I am frequently caught between the conflicting values of Eastern and Western culture. I'm confident that my parents would support me in all my academic pursuits, but unlike my American friends, I cannot count on my parents' support if I make unconventional choices. My parents would never accept my decision to join a rock band or become a sports coach. No matter how long my parents may have stayed in the US, no matter how many American values they may have adopted, my parents will never give me permission to experiment and find my own direction in life. This attitude of my parents confuses me a lot as they came to the US to give us, their children, a better life with more comforts and better opportunities. Why then do they limit our choices?

My dreams keep changing constantly and I cannot say how I would feel a few years from now when I'm in high school. Certainly I would never want to realize my dreams at the cost of hurting my parents, but at the same time I am a unique individual with a distinct personality. I don't think I'd like to shape my life according to somebody else's choices. I feel that if I am going to spend my entire life doing something, then it is very important that I love what I choose to do.

To conclude, I feel that we must try our level best to attain our dreams. I am inspired by the words of Mother Abbess from the all-time favorite "The Sound Of Music":

Climb every mountain
Ford every stream,
Follow every rainbow
Till you find your dream.

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Give Us Your Feedback

Please feel free to send us your reviews, comments, and book suggestions. You can contact us at - aacpinc@asianamericanbooks.com

Up Coming Events

Here are some events that AACP will soon be attending. Invite us to your events.

Date/Time	Event	Location
July 2-5	Tule Lake Pilgrimage	Klamath Falls, OR Tulelake, CA
July 10-11	San Jose Obon Festival	SJ Buddhist Temple San Jose, CA
July 17-18	Ginza Bazaar & Obon Odori	SF Buddhist Church San Francisco, CA
Other Event of Interest that AACP May Not Attend		
June 1-5	23rd Annual National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE) in American Higher Education	National Harbor, MD
June 17-20	OCA National Convention	Houston, TX
June 19	Japanese Cultural Fair	Santa Cruz, CA
June 23-25	2010 Advancing Justice Conference - Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders Building New Foundations for Civil Rights	Alexandria, VA
June 30 - July 4	JACL National Convention	Chicago, IL
July 1-17	Beijing, California An Asian American Theater Company play by Paul Heller	Thick House 1695 18th St. San Francisco, CA
July 17-18	Mountain View Obon Festival	575 N. Shoreline Blvd. Mountain View, CA
July 23-25	The 12th Annual KAAN Conference (Korean Am. Adoptee Adoptive Family Network)	Holiday Inn Harrisburg East Harrisburg, PA
July 31- Aug 1	Giant Japanese Kites 25th Berkeley Kite Festival	Cesar Chavez Park Berkeley, CA

Editor's Message

Hello Everyone,

Looks like I'm working on Hawaii time again - I'm just finishing the May newsletter in time for our readers in Hawaii. Sorry to everyone else :).

I've been busy working with the videos from our Asian Pacific American Heritage Authors Celebration. It's amazing how long it takes to upload videos even with broadband. Now I know why some people want those really high speeds.

Anyway, when it's done, you'll be able to view some of the sessions from our event at asianamericanbooks.com/apahac/apahacvids.htm. Note that I'm only uploading the low-resolution versions. For those of you that want the HD versions, you'll have to contact me to get it on DVD. I don't plan on uploading the HD versions anytime soon.

I hope you all had a good Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Many of my past grips about people missing the point of the month are still valid - it's about the American experience of Asians and Pacific Islanders. asianamericanbooks.com/newslets/n10509.htm#misc

I had one person that came up to me at our event that wanted to complain about the Japanese occupation of Korea and how people were not being educated about it. He huffed away after I said we were focusing on the American experience. Hey, I wish that person was reading this, I really would have like to talk more with him after he counted to twenty or forty. It's not that I'm not interested in his cause, it's just that our event and what AACP is about is primarily a narrow focus of Asian and Pacific Islander American issues. There are other organizations that handle international affairs and foreign culture and history, and if there are not any in the area that you are interested in, you can champion your own nonprofit organization for that.

Okay on to other business, looks like the experiment to get more reader participation is not working so well. We'll be contemplating about the future of the newsletter in the next few months.

If you or someone you know wishes to intern with us and work on the newsletter during the summer, please contact me.

Meanwhile, if you have articles and book review that you wrote or have permission to use, feel free to submit them to me. If we use it, you can get any book that we can order at our cost plus shipping. Our next newsletter is our annual Asian Pacific American travel newsletter. So keep in mind that if the article doesn't have something to do with APA important destinations, your piece may not make it into the AACP newsletter.

As always, thank you very much Gail Kong and the Asia Pacific Fund for allowing us to reprint some of your wonderful contest's winning entries.

Thank again to all the authors and book creators that came to our event. Thanks to all of the people that volunteered their time to make the event possible. Thank you to the sponsors and most of all thank you to all the people that came to the event.

Leonard Chan
Executive Editor

Growing Up Asian in America

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Honorable Mention, Grade Category 6-8

Great Expectations

Rachel Winsho Wu, Age 12, 7th Grade
Terman Middle School, Palo Alto

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens. That is what came to mind when I first heard about the theme of this essay. I thought for a while about incorporating the story into my essay, but then I realized that book was written by a white Caucasian male, and it is about a white boy. The book has nothing to do with me - I am an American-born Chinese female.

Expectations are different from goals. Expectations are what other people think about me and sometimes, my own expectation. Goals are self-formed. When I reach a goal, I feel good about myself, but when I meet an expectation, it doesn't make me feel any better than what I was feeling before. However, if I exceed expectations and become my own outstanding self, I feel great. For me, expectations are there to be surpassed.

Unfortunately, I have some unforgettable memories that come with great expectations. When I was growing up, my life was filled with expectations. I was always expecting this and that. I expected people to buy me presents, give me sweets, and do whatever I wanted them to do. My parents are very generous to me. I got what I expected to get. Instead of appreciating the fact that I had everything I wanted, these fulfilled expectations led me to take it all for granted. Soon, I was a spoiled kid who cried when somebody didn't give me a new toy car or a cute stuffed bunny I had seen at the store. I was very disappointed and cried. As time goes by, my friends and family started getting used to my "crying habit" and no longer paid much attention to me. I then learned not to expect everything I wanted.

In fourth grade I ran for student council. As an Asian girl who was shy and quiet, I didn't expect my classmates would vote for me. But they did and I won! I then took for granted that I will be in student council next year. In fifth grade, I ran for student council again and expected to win. But I didn't. I lost to my best friend. I was very disappointed. But I also learned that expectations are sometimes followed by disappointment.

After many incidences like these, I realize that I should focus on my goals, not my expectations. Goals help me accomplish things. Expectations help me follow ideas. Sometimes, when there are absolutely no expectations of what I will do, I could shine. For example, if I see a snail, I "expect" it to move slowly - but then the snail actually moves as fast as I run. Then, I will be shocked at how fast the snail moves and the snail "shines."

The next time I see a snail, I will expect it to move very fast, just like the other snail I saw. Obviously, there is little chance that snail will move as quickly as the other one does, so I will be disappointed. I call this the "Great Expectation Circle." If one Asian girl can dance ballet, it doesn't mean I am able to just because I am Asian too. In my life, growing up Asian in America is the same as any child growing up in America. Asian kids are all different and we should just be ourselves and not follow the stereotype of Asian Expectation.

However, expectations sometimes help form who I am. Expectations make me go along the path or stray from it. When I stray from

expectations, I am resisting peer pressure. When I follow expectations, I become what people expected me to be. When my parents and school expect me to get A's in grade, I try my best to get all A's. When my school friends expected me to share my cookies or other things, I share with them. People expect me to be funny, I will be funny. People expect me to be kind and caring, I become kind and caring. This gives me great pleasure and it also makes people happy. However, if someone expects me to be rude and steal from others, I will not. I want to do what is right.

Great expectations help me to become the best I can be. I am very fortunate being an Asian in Silicon Valley where I never feel being disadvantaged to other races. I was given so many choices in life. People around me, my parents, my school all expect me to be just myself. I would like to meet all the expectations of others and even my own. But most importantly, deep in my heart, I expected me to be just myself and reaching for those goals in my dream.

1st Place, Grade Category 6-8

I Feel Asian Today

Jihyeon Janel Lee, Age 12, 7th Grade
Harvest Park Middle, Pleasanton

To be Asian. To feel Asian. I've always questioned what these things were. When I was little and growing up in America, I took no notice of race and simply did what I felt was right. I didn't think I was different from

other little boys and girls of different ethnicities. Then things started to change, and there came a clear line of separation between Asians and other races. I was expected to do things other Asian girls did and be just like them. People at school didn't take me for who I was or what I could do and didn't even try to get to know me. I was simply "that Asian girl," a term that was used by people of other races. It would be undoubtedly responded to with "Which one?" Was it wrong to be an Asian in America?

People treated me like the meatballs in spaghetti. Once a meatball, always a meatball. They seemed to all look the same so they treated me the same and expected to be the same. What if the meatball's heart was to roll around and run away from utensils instead of staying still and getting eaten? If it did so, wouldn't it be considered abnormal and be considered strange by the rest of the spaghetti?

I was a victim of racism and perhaps something called "expectism," where there were rules and restrictions in which I was supposed to meet. If I didn't do what I was supposedly "expected" to, instead of what I truly felt, there was no way to avoid questioning eyes from others. Because of these staring faces, I couldn't help but let a quiet side wash over me. When doing projects I couldn't help but let a burst of noise that had been kept quiet explode in my group, which caused dislike and fluttered around debris talk like "Are you ok? Wow, you're not quiet like her," and "You're not like other Asians I know." I wanted to say something for my group to the class. I actually wanted to answer my teachers' questions. I did want to deliver my essay to the class. I wanted to do what I felt was right.

One of the things I didn't let get influenced by racism was lacrosse. Of course, most of the people on my team were white, but they treated me fairly. However, I was still slightly scared by what they could comment about my personality at any moment and was shy in the usually forceful sport. Then at a lacrosse game, I saw a dark-haired girl playing lacrosse, the only meatball in the sea of spaghetti.

She was amazing; she was so fast and aggressive that I caught myself thinking "she can't be Asian." Not only was her physical ability marvelous, but she didn't let the fact that people of other races had to be passed get in her way. She was comfortable at tackling her opponents, whether they were white, black, yellow or red. The goggles came off her face and indeed, she was Asian. Her smile was bright as sunshine and though it seemed she didn't have many friends in the league, perhaps because she was different to others of her race, she didn't let that stop her from doing what she loved and playing lacrosse. My teammates, also mostly white girls, were a little dazed by her talent.

From that day on, I wanted to be like the dark-haired lacrosse girl. I found that being Asian was not something that made you who you are. "Asian" is but a name given to our kind, and through it, you cannot expect what that person will be like. Even I was finding myself being surprised when people were different from others of their race. We're all different and should do what we feel is right, like participating in class even if you are a little shy or helping out someone even though they aren't the same race as you.

Being Asian isn't something you wake up and decide to be. There is no assembly line that makes the meatballs all the same. There's no chosen path of being Asian and only you can decide what kind of person you want to be. Today, I don't let people at school or in public expect me to be what they think, but do what I want to do and choose what I want to be. I'm no longer the predicted quiet girl that doesn't get out a lot, but now strive to take advantage of a good education, try to get to know new people and love outrunning my opponents in a lacrosse game.

Honorable Mention, Grade Category 9-12

Defying Expectations and Finding Ambitions

Angeline Victoria Capati, Age 17, 12th Grade
Mountain View High, Mountain View

Being under-average height-check. Having a cup of rice at least once a day-check. Having a Pacquiao party every time he has a fight-check. Planning on becoming a nurse-sorry, not gonna happen. That's my life as a Filipino in a nutshell.

I am the product of high school sweethearts from the rural province of Pampanga, two hours north of Manila. Growing up, being an American citizen was only a title-I was still a Filipino and was raised as such. While most of my classmates were eating PB&J sandwiches, I had a Tupperware filled with adobo and rice. The majority of my classmates spoke in English or Spanish to their parents-I spoke in Tagalog and English to my relatives. I often felt as if I was stuck between two separate, distinct cultures and until now, I wasn't comfortable with it.

My parents imposed much of the values that their parents had imposed on them-be proud of my heritage and, above all, to respect and obey the wishes of my elders. My aspirations as to what I wanted to be changed constantly as I got older. At the age of ten, I wanted to

be a lawyer simply because I saw Legally Blonde. At eleven, I wanted to be an actress, then changed my mind because I felt as if I knew nothing of the craft. From when I started to talk up until I was thirteen, my parents wanted me to be a nurse. They emphasized the pay, the stability, the easiness of finding a job wherever you are. I gave in at thirteen-I wanted to make them happy by living up to their expectations. I'd planned out my life according to what they wanted for me-I would go to UCLA and major in nursing then work for Lucille Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. It seemed perfect enough since UCLA is a good school and Stanford a reputable hospital.

It was also at this time that I became more aware of the stereotype in society that all Filipinos were nurses. Looking at my family, it proved true to a degree-I had two aunts who were nurses in the maternity ward, an uncle who was a nurse in the rehab division at Stanford, an two more aunts who worked in the E.R. Whenever a relative asked me what I was going to be when I was older, I was proud to say nurse. It would make them happy to hear it and make me happy to please them.

Once I got into high school, everything changed. I was exposed to new people, new classes, new teachers and new experiences. I learned that I was a natural Spanish speaker and had a gift for telling stories. I learned I was completely uninterested with Algebra, Calculus, and Biology-the subjects most needed in order to be a nurse. The latter experience helped to convince me that nursing probably wasn't for me. I didn't want to be bored with my career and do something I hate for the rest of my life. The latter experience convinced me that I should work on having a major in creative writing. But in-between the former and the latter experience, I competed in a speech contest. I didn't like the idea of speaking in public and it didn't seem like much of a big deal at the time-writing and performing my own speech about the classic films seemed like just another task. It didn't seem like much of a big deal until I won for my performance and content. It was this experience that helped me to discover a hidden talent for public speaking and helped me figure out what I wanted to do with the rest of my life: go into broadcast journalism, a field where Filipinos are underrepresented.





When I told my parents about my decision, they struggled to come to terms with it. They still tried to convince me that a career in nursing was better but eventually they accepted it. Whenever I tell any relative who asks about my future plans, they undergo the same process as my parents did. I know I have to keep my chin up and know that expectations of my parents, my relatives and even society shouldn't dictate how I live my life.

Being proud of my Filipino culture-check. Being proud of the Filipinos who have succeeded in mainstream society and helped to make a change in the world-check. Respecting the Filipinos who are nurses-check. Trying to show the world that there's more to Filipinos than rice, adobo, Manny Pacquiao and nursing-working on it. That's what I'm aiming to make of my life.

Links for this Article

- AACFP's first article on the Asian Pacific Fund - <http://asianamericanbooks.com/newslets/n10504.htm>
- Asian Pacific Fund's website - <http://asianpacificfund.org/>
- Growing Up Asian In America 2009 winning entries page - <http://asianpacificfund.org/awards/guaa/this-years-winners>
- Exhibit schedule - <http://asianpacificfund.org/awards/guaa/general-information/exhibit-schedule>

Growing Up Asian In American Art

<i>K-5 Honorable Mention</i>	<i>6-8 1st Place</i>	<i>9-12 Honorable Mention</i>	<i>9-12 1st Place</i>
 <p>My Parent's Expectation or My Dream? Kamya Venkatesan, 4th Grade San Jose, CA Discovery Charter School</p>	 <p>Road to the Future Karen Chou, 8th Grade San Jose, CA Chaboya Middle School</p>	 <p>Let Us Become One Minseo Yoon, 9th Grade San Jose, CA Valley Christian High School</p>	 <p>Escaping Conformity Jackie Ho, 12th Grade San Jose, CA The Harker School</p>

ADDITIONS TO OUR WEBSITE

The following books are discounted for subscribers to our newsletter. The discounts on these books end June 21, 2010.

	<p>I Hotel</p> <p>By Karen Yamashita Illustrated Leland Wong, Sina Grace 2010, 640 pages, Paperback.</p> <p>Item #3604, Price \$19.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$15.96</p>
	<p>Bon Dance in Hawai'i Dance with the Wind and the Spirits</p> <p>By Jill Suzuki Haworth 2004, 32 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>Item #3605, Price \$12.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$10.36</p>
	<p>Fables Beneath the Rainbow</p> <p>By Leslie Ann Hayashi Illustrated Kathleen Wong Bishop 2005, 32 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>Item #3606, Price \$14.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$11.96</p>