



## **Special GSGV 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue**

<http://www.cacagreaterangabrielvalley.org>

### **GSGV Lodge Commemorates the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its Founding**

C.A.C.A. Greater San Gabriel Valley Lodge was launched on August 6, 2000 at Lincoln Plaza Hotel in Monterey Park, CA. Our Lodge is 20 years old now, and it is cause for celebration after the growing pains we have gone through during the formative years to blossom through the second decade of its existence with some notable achievements in pursuit of C.A.C.A.'s missions.

In preparation, our Lodge initiated a summer project in 2019, offering a National Lodge-funded internship to Anrui Gu to perform a thorough research on the history of our Lodge during its first two decades. Under the mentorship of Past President Charles Mau, Anrui interviewed many key players who participated in the preparatory stages of the founding of the Lodge, and submitted a draft of an article "GSGV: The making of a Lodge" towards the end of the internship. After much editorial work by Charles Mau with more input from David Yuen, John Wong, Lisa Yang and Munson Kwok, the final version of the article is presented as follows:

#### **GSGV: The Making of a Lodge**

**Anrui Gu and the Piazza Editorial Board**

*[As told by members Lisa Yang, John Wong, John Gee, David Yuen and LA Lodge members Pedro Chan, Winston Wu, Munson Kwok]*

#### **A Millennial Launch**

Some time near the turn of the last century, Winston Wu, past President of the Los Angeles Lodge and on the Grand Board of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance (C.A.C.A.), was having breakfast at Sunday Café in Monterey Park, since then moved to neighboring Alhambra. Along with a considerably successful engineering career, he had been leading the L.A. Lodge's education programs since he joined in the 1980's. With him among others, like then LA Lodge member Lisa Yang, were two MP residents and frequent diners John Gee and John Wong, who had been working together since 1996. The only thing Mr. Gee was certain of is that "one of the John's" brought to Winston the idea of a new chapter covering the San Gabriel Valley. Winston Wu and then LA-Lodge President Collin Lai were immediately on board. Pedro Chan of LA Lodge also had ideas of convening a group and was also assigned by President Lai to help. The birth of the idea



**2000 Chartering Event participants (from left to right):** Monterey Park City Councilmember Francisco Alonso, CA Assemblywoman Judy Chu, City of Walnut Mayor & MC Joaquin Lin, Founding Member Paul Wong, C.A.C.A. Grand President Nancy Gee, Founding President John Wong, Monterey Park City Councilmember David Lau, CA Senator Hilda Solis, Founding VP Lisa Yang, and Member of CA State Board of Equalization John Chiang.

was, in retrospect, somewhat inevitable. "The demographic shift from Chinatown to the San Gabriel Valley was so clear to everyone and still continues today," remarks Munson Kwok, past C.A.C.A. Grand President and LA Lodge member.

A new lodge carries the minimum requirement of 15 members. As the small group continued their breakfasts at Sunday Café, McDonalds, and Tommy's the burger place, they reached out to available channels for interested members. Over food, they sold the pitch of heightened political involvement in Monterey Park including voter registration, taking advantage of a surge of political enthusiasm at the time. Winston Wu also sold the idea to the prospects' children, which later explains the two lodges co-sponsoring many scholarships and essay contests. Pedro Chan, LA Lodge President 2000-2001, remembers applying for a grant from the Grand Lodge, with the support of then Grand Vice-President Saykin Foo and Grand Secretary Munson Kwok, and receiving around \$1000. With that money, the founding group called a meeting with all the potential members.

These members started meeting at Sunday Café, often paid in full by LA Lodge via the grant, to hash out its concrete foundations. They followed the Grand and LA Lodge bylaws to form the GSGV Lodge bylaws, and gave the task of checking for compliance to Grand Secretary Munson Kwok.

The work came to fruition at the successful chartering of the Greater San Gabriel Valley (GSGV) Lodge held at the Lincoln Plaza Hotel in MP on August 5, 2000, with 58 charter members, and with the participation of C.A.C.A. Grand President Nancy Gee and representatives from many other lodges, including quite a few LA Lodge members. (The level of involvement that LA Lodge has sustained is unsurprising -- a majority of their own members live in the San Gabriel Valley. Wu remarks that he attended more GSGV meetings than a few of their own members.) National officers gave out red envelopes. John Wong, at the time a businessman with a real estate brokerage, was elected the Founding President. He had been an energetic recruiter of the founding members. Lisa Yang remembered the impression he made to everyone at the time: "enthusiastic, a good speaker, and ambitious." Kwok attributed his success in part to his understanding and successful incorporation of Chinese traditions into the Lodge. John Wong treated everyone who graced the event as his personal friend. For instance, he met then

|                                      |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>President:</b>                    | John Y. Wong  |
| <b>Vice President:</b>               | Lisa Yang     |
| <b>Secretary:</b>                    | Sabrina Chang |
| <b>Assistant Secretary:</b>          | Diana Davis   |
| <b>Treasurer:</b>                    | Peter Chan    |
| <b>Financial Secretary:</b>          | Victor Wong   |
| <b>Auditor:</b>                      | Richard Fong  |
| <b>Auditor:</b>                      | Maureen Sur   |
| <b>Marshall:</b>                     | Roland Chow   |
| <b>Sentinel:</b>                     | Sam Gee       |
| <b>Collector:</b>                    | Pek Chan      |
| <b>Grand Representative:</b>         | John Y. Gee   |
| <b>GSGV Lodge founding officers.</b> |               |

State Senator Hilda Solis while he was working to improve conditions at Mark Keppel High School, and further advanced her relationship with the Asian community. Kwok also remembers a general atmosphere of sharing John's ambition: "Everyone wanted to do things."

### An Active Lot

GSGV was among the most active lodges. "People here in general aren't the kind that profits from those who play mahjong there," Pedro Chan says. He had practiced Chinese medicine in the U.S. for over 50 years; during his time as LA Lodge President, he loved encouraging serious academic members to have fun. He also dedicated himself to expanding C.A.C.A.'s presence in Orange County and Las Vegas. "We're really starting



2002 Lodge Picnic at Barnes Park, MP

Lodges all over," confirms Wu, who voluntarily handled much of the Lodges' behind-the-scenes work like applications and membership dues. Many Lodge members would eventually serve national positions as well.

For over ten years, a favorite monthly meeting place was the Empress Harbor Seafood Restaurant in MP, owned by a member. By the end of 2000, the Lodge had over 100 members and showed that it had



Chefs led by John Wong (3rd from left) at 2002 Picnic

money in the bank. It also got a new banner made in Guangzhou, China, because the original one didn't have the Chinese characters for "Citizens Alliance" on it.

Past President Lisa Yang still remembers her successful installation as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lodge president at Ocean Star Restaurant, MP. Carrying a communications background, she had been in real estate until she returned to filmmaking to raise awareness of Chinese American history. During her tenure, the Lodge grew to a record membership of more than 180, and hosted voter registration picnics. For both of her terms, her focus had been on bridging new Mandarin-speaking immigrants and C.A.C.A.'s mission.

During these formative years, Munson Kwok observed a lot of effort to increase Chinese representation in the MP City Council, as well as generating media exposure through press conferences. In addition to benefiting the community by raising money to improve the Monterey

Park Library, and supporting the fundraising for various elected officials, the Lodge promptly took positions on activism. For instance, John Wong co-authored a letter with then Grand President Saykin Foo to the District Attorney to protest the unfair prosecution of the minor Anna Guo, who was shot by the police. In 2002, the Lodge initiated a protest against the MP City Council for awarding a 15-year contract to Athens Services, a trash hauling vendor, without an open bidding process.

In 2009, under the presidency of Paul Wong, GSGV Lodge proudly hosted the 50<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention, held at Pacific Palms Resort in the City of Industry. It was a rare occasion that a Local Lodge so new to the organization was awarded the honor and responsibility. The event was a memorable and resounding success. To this day, John Wong still fondly remembers sharing the task of chauffeuring around convention attendees with new Lodge member Charles Mau.

### **Regretting the Regret**

John Wong, the six-term president, takes pride in the fact that “GSGV has led National Lodge in addressing many major issues, sometimes even providing an alternative resolution against it.” This is perhaps best reflected in the campaign for passing of the 2011-2012 Congressional Bills expressing regret for enacting the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

The idea brewed at the breakfast club in 2009. David Yuen, a retired engineer who later would become Lodge President, used to live and work in San Francisco. He disliked the name Kearny Street, thinking that it honored the anti-Chinese labor leader Denis Kearney. He began writing a name-changing proposal. John Wong and Winston Wu found out that the street in fact obtained its name from a U.S. Army general of good character, so Yuen scrapped the proposal but saved the text in his PC. It was at this time that the California legislature passed a resolution ACR-42 of regret for enacting past discriminatory laws against Chinese living in California. John Wong then asked David Yuen, then Lodge Vice-President, to write a Resolution for the Lodge requesting Congress to apologize for enacting the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Yuen agreed, and quickly converted his Kearny Street proposal into the apology resolution. As a delegate representing GSGV Lodge, he submitted the resolution to the C.A.C.A. National Convention of 2009. Lisa Yang was also a delegate to the Convention, helping to ensure smooth sailing of the Resolution through the review process. Resolution 23, as it was officially named, passed the Convention vote unanimously.

In the following May, now Immediate Past Grand President Munson Kwok got involved in advocacy of the

bill’s prospects in Washington DC. He and the C.A.C.A. team sought support from several congressmen. After Congressman David Wu dismissed the idea because he favored moving on from past history, the team hadn’t expected much when they knocked on the door of the only other Chinese American in Congress, Judy Chu. In less than five minutes, however, she indicated her sponsorship.

The team then went down to the cafeteria and learned that the National Council of Chinese Americans, a newly formed East Coast coalition of recent Chinese immigrants, had already proposed the bill two weeks prior. But instead of expressing disappointment, they

### **RESOLUTION**

*WHEREAS the United States of America has a long tradition of tolerance towards minorities, of promoting ethnic harmony among its citizens, and of correcting wrongs even if they were long overdue.*

*WHEREAS the opening of the West was due in large part to the toiling, sacrifice, and persistence of the Chinese immigrant laborers under extremely harsh conditions, both physically and socially, with relentless discrimination at its worst.*

*WHEREAS, due to historical reasons, the California State Constitution in 1879 was revised to contain anti-Chinese provisions, and the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 by the United States Congress, resulting in permanent and irreparable damage to loyal American citizens, who happen to be Chinese-Americans, to the present.*

*WHEREAS the great State of California Senate and Legislature have unanimously passed a resolution, and immediately signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger in July, 2009, expressing profound regret for the persecution of Chinese immigrants, and recognizing the contributions of the Chinese in the development of this country.*

*THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we must learn from past mistakes, and remedy past injustices, and to honor the numerous and great contributions of the Chinese-Americans to the great United States of America, by passing a resolution from the Congress of the United States of America, to apologize for past discrimination against Chinese who helped to develop this United States of America. As they say, those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.*

**Original text of Apology Resolution submitted to  
2009 C.A.C.A. National Convention**

collaborated with its leader Haipei Shue and offered C.A.C.A.’s unique strength as a West Coast old-timer that boasted the membership of Congresswoman Chu herself, who shortly after became the leader of the

Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. They also secured the sponsorship of Senator Diane Feinstein because of her hometown's proximity with the San Francisco Lodge. Martin Gold, an attorney representing the Jewish community, offered support and dedicated his company pro bono to the cause. He had a strong influence in the Senate and maneuvered enough of the House as well. Surprisingly, Republican Congressman Ed Royce pitched in, likely because he had a huge Chinese-American constituency in his Southern California District.

But soon the House forced a compromise, arguing that an apology implied reparation for all Chinese Americans, which would pose a formidable budget challenge. The team promised that they wanted nothing of the sort, but the House never believed it. After much deliberation, now Past Grand President Munson Kwok advised the team to accept the compromise proposal by Congressional opposition to "bite the bullet" and let Judy Chu submit the changed version to Congress, which passed by unanimous vote in less than two years as the "Regret Bill" HR-282 in 2012, after the Senate version SR-201 was actually passed unanimously in 2011.

David Yuen considers this "one of our proudest moments". Even today, the bill is regarded as a milestone for the Asian American community. It was the first bill ever to be passed in less than two years in both branches of Congress, compared to 10 to 20 years for previous similar bills. Nevertheless, the GSGV Lodge was not totally satisfied with the compromise, and had since passed a separate resolution to pursue an eventual apology from Congress.

In 2014, California once again led the Nation by passing its own Apology Bill sponsored by CA Assemblyman Bob Huff. John Gee recounts a minor episode where the Democratic Senate Leader Kevin de León wanted credit for authoring the apology bill, because Huff split the bill with him, and only wrote the part that urged Congress to take action. This project was spearheaded by Sister Betty Chu and Brother John Y. Wong.

That same year, the Lodge took a stance against affirmative action in state school admissions (SCA-5) and lobbied in Sacramento. The bill was eventually withdrawn, due to lack of support from Asian-American lawmakers and strong opposition mainly from Asian Americans.

### **Still Going Strong**

John Gee, Lodge President in 2012-2013, gladly hands everyone he meets a copy of the U.S. Constitution, asserting that most civil rights violations originate from

bad interpretations of the document. This persevering spirit and historical responsibility is perhaps why the Lodge continues to win community support.

In 2015, the Lodge cooperated with the Southern California Committee for Commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of End of WWII to honor WWII veterans of Asian descent. At the LA County Patriotic Hall, Congressman Ed Royce presented medals to 250 WWII veterans of Chinese and other Asian ethnic groups. This project was led by Brother John Y. Wong, Sister Betty Chu and Sister Sophie Wong.

In 2017, at the request of then Grand President Ed Gor, the Lodge, together with the Orange County chapter, got Congressman Ed Royce's support of the veteran's project, which demanded Congressional recognition of Chinese American Veterans of World War II for their valor and sacrifice. This initiative was the work of John Y. Wong, Betty Chu and Sophie Wong who were good friends of the Congressman. The campaign earned near-unanimous support and, with the introduction and shepherding by Congressmen Ed Royce and Ted Lieu, H.R. 2358 (115<sup>th</sup> Congress) was passed and signed into law by President Donald Trump in December 2018, honoring Chinese American WWII Veterans with the Congressional Gold Medal, with the Smithsonian Institution designated as the curator for display and safe keeping. At the 2019 National Convention in Boston, John Wong nominated Ed Royce for the "Spirit of America Award." Instead, C.A.C.A. gave Congressman Royce a higher recognition, the "National Impact Award" and John Wong accepted it on his behalf. [Congressman Royce was snowed-in at the airport in Washington DC and could not come.]

Although C.A.C.A. is one of the oldest national civil-rights organizations, it is innovative in its interpretation of the spirit of America. Whether it is reaching into the depths of history or mentoring tomorrow's Chinese American activists, or removing being Chinese as a criterion of membership admission, the now 20-year old GSGV Lodge always walks at the forefront of the same tide that draws an endless stream of dreamers to its piece of America.

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### **GSGV Lodge Awards Scholarships and Essay Contest Winners**

In the joint Education Program with Los Angeles Lodge, GSGV Lodge gave out two scholarships to high school seniors who would attend college this fall. Due to the pandemic, this year's presentation ceremony took place on August 1 at LA Lodge in Chinatown, later than usual.

Our Lodge's Youth Committee Chair Scott Kwong was present at the event, presided over by Winston Wu of LA Lodge. During the ceremony on Bamboo Lane just outside the LA Lodge building, strict rules of social gathering and face-mask wearing were observed. The entire gathering came off smoothly.

From GSGV Lodge, Charles Liu, from South Pasadena High, receives the Tammy and Charles Mau Scholarship. He will attend UC Berkeley this fall as a freshman majoring in Computer Science. The scholarship amount is \$750.00.



**Charles Liu, recipient of Scholarship**

intern working on a Covid-19-related project, and completed the project with excellence. The award amount is \$750.

The LA Lodge also awarded two scholarships to Joyce Liang and Alice Yao, both of Downtown Magnets High School, Los Angeles.



**Angel Lei, Essay Contest Winner, receiving award from Scott Kwong.**

Lei is an 11<sup>th</sup> Grade student from Downtown Magnets High School, Los Angeles. The First-Place Winner from LA is Richard Zhu, a 9<sup>th</sup> Grader from North Hollywood Highly Gifted Magnet.

Congratulations to all the Winners and Participants for your great work and spirit of excellence!

Also from our Lodge, Shiny Weng of Glen A. Wilson High, Hacienda Heights, receives the Betty and Andrew Sit Scholarship, presented by Scott Kwong. She is enrolled as a freshman at UC Berkeley this fall semester, majoring in Computer Science & Statistics.

Wendy is also our Lodge's summer



**Shiny Weng, Scholarship Recipient**

On the same occasion, GSGV Lodge awarded a scholarship of \$100 to Angel Lei, First-Place Winner of the Local Essay Contest. The award was presented by Scott Kwong. Angel

## **GSGV Winning Essay of Angel Lei on the Theme: "Participation in Census 2020"**

"The Census Bureau is a once-a-decade tradition required by the Constitution for every household living in the U.S. to report information of each person in the home; date of birth, age, gender, and race. Within the past years, there has been undercounting due to the lack of awareness, unable to understand English, and being too scared to report. This issue will continue to occur if not taking in to action.

The lack of awareness is one contributing factor because many Chinese/Asian immigrants are not aware of what is happening within our government. Many immigrants came to America without knowing the language so without proper translation they are unable to even understand the paper forms given to them or be able to speak English on the phone. Although it is said that there are no citizenship questions on the 2020 census, the scare tactic enforced by President Trump also threatens those who are here illegally or without permanent residency to participate.

The Census is severely important because it determines the amount of Congress representatives allowed to be sent by each state and the amount of funds each state get till the next decade. The long-term consequence of the undercount of the U.S. population comes to affect each citizen within the U.S. due to the under-representation and lack of funding.

To approach this issue of undercount and to persuade Chinese/Asian family of recent immigration to participate in the district's Census, I will first talk to the local organization around the area. Living in Chinatown, I will most likely talk to the Chinese Service Center and Chinatown Business Improvement District to help hold local meetings and have booths that can help fill in forms for the immigrants. Having local meetings with translators and being able to inform information in multiple languages will bring awareness to a bigger audience. To encourage the immigrants to come, it is best to be able to provide free items to those who participate because if one knows Chinese/Asian families, they love free stuff. I will also match people to help with those who are within the same age group because it provides a sense of comfort when there is a mutual similarity for example; a mom helping a mom. We must also assure them that even if they are here illegally or without permanent residency they can still participate without a risk.

Most immigrant families came to America for their child's future benefits. Providing information about how more people participating in the Census will get more funding for the state which will allow more money to be

put into education. Most immigrant families' motivation is their children which is why if we were to be able to provide information benefitting their child, they will more likely participate. Chinese/Asian immigrants need to fight for their rights and stance in the U.S. as well, recognizing that they have a place and voice within our nation."

## Members Mourn the Passing of Brother Andrew Sit

It is with the deepest of sorrows that the Lodge announces the passing of Brother Andrew Sit in the morning of August 13, 2020 with his wife Betty by his side. Andrew is a Founding Member of our Lodge in 2000, and has served as a Board Officer and Associate, contributing generously to the Lodge missions and particularly to the scholarships for college freshmen. During the last year, he fought cancer courageously and always with a cheerful and positive spirit. C.A.C.A. members John Wong, Charles Mau, Pek Chan and Winston Wu paid their last respect at his funeral on August 21. We will all miss him very much as a dear friend, a very kind gentleman and a dedicated member of the Lodge.



Andrew was born in Hong Kong in 1946 to loving parents, was baptized in 1961 and remained a devoted Catholic all his life. Andrew was a hardworking student, a fun-loving person, an avid cruiser and an outstanding aerospace engineer in his lifetime. Pursuing college education in the US, he attended Kansas State University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he graduated with a BS in Engineering. [It was in Madison around 1970 when he became a house-mate with Charles Mau, past Lodge President, and a long friendship started.] After Madison, Andrew went to Texas for graduate programs at Texas A&M and University of Houston, graduating with an MS in Mechanical Engineering.



Andrew Sit with C.A.C.A. members at a Monterey Park Sister Cities Fundraising Event in 2019; Sitting from Left: Betty and Andrew Sit, Congresswoman Judy Chu, Winston Wu; Standing from Left: David Lau (L1), Tammy Tam (L2), Sophie Wong (L3), Jessica Mei (L5), MP Councilmember Peter Chan (L6), Pedro and Pek Chan (L8,L10).

Bro. Andrew has a successful career working for major companies like Unisys, Litton, Burroughs Computer System, Northrop Grumman, Boeing, and JPL. He was the stress analysis expert for Boeing's various aircrafts, for the Joint Strike Fighter 35 program, and he made significant contributions to the space programs at JPL before retiring with distinction and recognition.

Andrew and Betty were happily married in December 1980, and they remained a loving couple, inseparable and dedicated to each other for 40 years! He will be dearly missed by Betty, his sister Lily and many nephews and nieces, and friends.

## Summer Intern Shiny Weng Successfully Completed Her Project

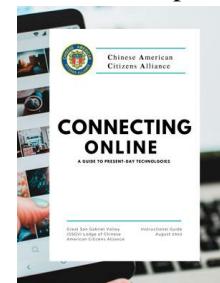
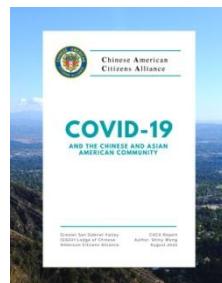
Shiny Weng, our Lodge's summer intern, successfully completed her project in the middle of August, and submitted two reports of her work: (1) **Covid-19 and the Chinese and Asian American Community**, that chronicles the response of the Asian Community to the novel corona-virus pandemic, describes how they fared better compared to the other ethnic groups and why, and concludes with a guideline on how to fight the virus based on the CDC rules and experts' advice from outside; (2) **Connecting Online—A Guide to Present-Day Technologies**, that is an easy-to-read handbook on how to connect with your family and friends in a virtual meeting platform, using social media software like Zoom, GoogleMeet, etc. Both reports can be downloaded and printed, or

read online via our GSGV Lodge website, with its link at the top of the front page of the Newsletter. Once you are inside the homepage, click/tap on the report icons (as shown) on the lower left panel to open the reports.

Shiny: We are proud of your work, and we wish you the best in your college education at UC Berkeley!

## Support for “NO to PROP 16” Campaign

As an organization upholding the rights of Chinese Americans, Lodge members recently passed a resolution to oppose CA Proposition 16 on the November General Election ballot. If passed, Affirmative Action will be restored as a criterion for college admissions,



government job applications and state contract awards. This is tantamount to a form of discrimination against those who work hard to attain the merits as a gateway to good college education, jobs and business contracts administered by the state, and Prop 16 must not be allowed to pass! As a member, you can help by (1) voting No to Prop 16, on or before the November 3 election, (2) donating to the cause on <https://californiansforequalrights.org>, (3) telling your family and friends to support the campaign, and (4) planting a “No to Prop 16” sign in your front yard. If you need signs, please call Charles Mau at (626)215-9692 or [takmau888@gmail.com](mailto:takmau888@gmail.com), and he will do his best to deliver it to you. You may also visit the “Californians For Equal Rights” website above to sign up for the scheduled events and rallies.

### **Commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the End of World War II**

C.A.C.A. National Lodge is one of the Commemorative Partners in a joint project to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the End of WWII and honor the 1300 Chinese American Veterans in California. This honor event does not replace the Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) national ceremony in Washington DC, postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The End of WWII commemorative ceremony is an additional recognition of the honorees in California.

The commemorative event, a one-hour virtual program/webinar, was held on September 26, with presentations from the State of California, and from several military and Veterans organizations. A special short film by Montgomery Hom, co-produced with C.A.C.A., highlighted the journeys of Chinese Americans in military service from the Civil War to WWII, and to the current CGM award. Both touching testimonies of the living honorees and respectful tributes to the deceased were presented. To view the event video, you may visit the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cB4kZ5bAyQ>.

Accompanying the short film will be a book, by Monty Hom, “Operation: WWII Chinese American G.I. – Profiles of Service and Sacrifice from the Golden State.” This book includes heartfelt personal tributes, a historical presentation of Chinese Americans in the military, a look at the Home Front and Women at War, and previously unseen WWII memorabilia. The book will be available for sale towards the end of the year.

### **UC is Dropping SAT/ACT Requirement in Admission Policy**

On May 21, the Board of Regents of the University

California System voted unanimously to approve the suspension of standardized test requirements (SAT/ACT) for all California freshman applicants until fall 2024. The policy will be implemented in two stages, during which UC faculties will design a new test that measures what UC expects from California freshmen their readiness for college, while a separate policy will be established for out-of state and foreign applicants.

The advocates maintain that the standardized tests unlawfully discriminate against disabled, low-income, multilingual and under-represented minority students. Kids from rich neighborhoods can afford to take after-class lessons to brush up on their test skills, they assert. The opposing side expresses fears that when high school GPAs are the only measure of an applicant’s academic readiness, it would lead to widespread grade inflation in traditionally lower performing schools under pressure to get more seniors to be admitted to college. For Chinese and Asian American students, it may seem another blow to weaken their chances of acceptance by universities of their choice, as they usually perform very well in standardized tests either because of after-school preparatory classes or their hard work. It remains to be seen what the UC-designed admission test will look like.

### **Debate on Efficacy of a Race-Neutral University Admission Policy as a Result of Prop 209, 1996**

Closely related to Prop 16, a central question has been whether under-represented minorities (URM), like Hispanics, Blacks and Native Americans, need racial preferences to secure fair access to the University of California, and advance their socioeconomic standing in society. A recent study by a UC Berkeley graduate student, Zachary Bleemer, purported to show that Prop 209 indeed hurt URM enrollment in top campuses, graduation rates, completion of degrees in STEM fields, and long-term earnings, based on privileged data from the university. However, in a recent peer-reviewed paper by Richard Sander, a UCLA Law Professor, it was shown via available data that, beyond 1998 when Prop 209 went into effect, URM enrollment including transfers actually rose steadily from 5376 in 1998 to 20013 in 2019. Remarkably, total URM (URM STEM) degrees increase from 5568 (989) in 2000 to 11633 (3183) in 2014, with an average of 5 years to graduate. This would indicate that, Prop 209 implementation, coupled with an effective outreach effort by UC, is adequate in improving URM enrollment and graduation rates in UC, including those in STEM fields.

**Our Next Lodge Zoom Meeting will be on Monday, Oct. 12, 8:00 PM.** Meeting invitation and info will be emailed to you soon