



GSGV Lodge Will Hold Virtual Lodge Meetings in Midst of Coronavirus Pandemic

At the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic since March, 2020, a slew of preventive measures (social distancing, shelter in place, prohibition of large meetings, closing of restaurants, etc) were ordered by the state of California. With the grim prospect that the pandemic will be with us for some time, the Board of Officers of our Lodge decided to conduct our monthly meetings in virtual format using the Zoom online meeting package, until further notice. The first such meeting was held successfully on Monday, July 13 at 8:00 PM, chaired by Lodge President Sharon Wong.

Our next Lodge meeting will be held on Monday, August 10, starting at 8:00 PM. Instructions for joining the meeting will be e-mailed to Lodge members.

New Schedule for Lodge Newsletter Issuance

Because of the COVID-19 persistent outbreak that affected our Lodge's programs and activities, issuance of our Lodge newsletter will be scaled back for the time being to *once every quarter*, instead of once every two months. Also, occasional supplemental release of the newsletter will occur on an "as needed" basis.

The editorial staff apologizes for this inconvenience to our members, and promises that regular issuance will be resumed as soon as the pandemic is over and things are back to "normal".

GSGV Lodge Opposes Proposition 16

Assembly Constitution Amendment #5 (ACA-5) was a resolution, originally submitted on January 18, 2019, that proposes an amendment to the Constitution of the State of California by repealing Section 31 of Article I of the Constitution, relating to government preferences. Section 31.I is based on Proposition 209 that was passed in 1996, prohibits the state "from discriminating against, or granting preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting." Specifically, the "state" here includes, in addition to all state government

entities, the University of California (UC) and the California State Universities in the public education system.

Since ACA-5 was passed in the State Assembly on June 10, and approved by the State Senate on June 24, the legislation was transformed into Proposition 16, a California ballot proposition to be voted on in the November 3, 2020 general election. If Prop. 16 were passed, it would mean that, among other things, the UC admissions could revert to the old system of admissions based on the "affirmative action" principle, which would allow students being admitted with race/ethnic consideration being one of the criteria. It will be a major step backward, retreating from a system that is based on merit, with race not being a consideration. This is the part of the proposed amendment most strongly opposed by the C.A.C.A.-GSGV Chapter. Affirmative Action has completed its excellent job of righting past wrongs a long time ago, and let's not bring this obsolete tool of social engineering back.

To our organization, universities and institutions of higher learning (particularly those in the top tier) play the pivotal role of incubating future leaders and top-notch scientists and professionals who form the bedrock foundation of this nation and, as such, admission of students must be based on merits such as academic achievement, leadership potential and well-roundedness of character, and not by consideration of race, sex, etc.

Since one main mission of our organization is the advancement of Chinese Americans in the social standing in American Society via promoting academic excellence, community leadership, social awareness and political participation, an excellent higher education provides a pivotal stepping stone to achieving this goal. The passing of Prop 16 would severely dilute their chances of obtaining a high-quality education and deal an unfair blow to these students who oftentimes work extremely hard and under very difficult circumstances to attain their goals. The biggest problem of a "race-based" admission system is the potential waste of valuable resources spent on students woefully unprepared for a rigorous curriculum designed for the very best of the students. On the other hand, judicious use of scarce resources to develop the best of talents, including scientists and engineers, is of paramount importance to this nation in competing with the rest of the world.

Diversity in a student population is a noble goal that is purported to enrich the educational experience, promote personal growth and a healthy society, strengthen communities and the workplace, and enhance America's economic competitiveness. These touted benefits still need to be unambiguously verified by examining the graduation rates among the various under-represented groups and their career advancement afterward. Quoting American Council on Education's brief on the Importance of Diversity in Higher Education, "Diversity on college campuses is not achieved through quotas. Nor does diversity justify or warrant admission of unqualified applicants." Let us not lose sight of this.

We are truly concerned that implementing university admission practices based on "Affirmative Action" will eventually induce many universities to fall into the trap of admitting unqualified students just to "fill the quota", while denying opportunities to many more well-deserved candidates.

Chinese American Community Divided over Proposition 16

As would be expected, there is a strong division of opinion in the Asian/Chinese Community on Proposition 16 and what it represents. Californians for Equal Rights (CFER) is an organization that led the effort to defeat the passage of Prop 16. It is led by Ward Connerly, a former member of the UC Board of Regents, with Sister Betty Chu of Orange County Lodge, and Sister Wai-Wah Chin, Charter President of Greater New York Lodge, serving as Honorary Co-Chairs. Bro. Marc Ang, of Orange County Chapter, is Director of Outreach in Orange County. With respect to Proposition 16, CFER maintains that the passing of this constitution amendment would legalize racial discrimination, pit ethnic groups against each other and cost taxpayers billions of dollars. It also reminded people that since the passing Prop 209 in 1996, California had made great strides in diversity. For more info, please visit <https://californiansforequalrights.org>.

On the other side, Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) comes out to support Proposition 16. Their argument is that Chinese Americans have historically enjoyed the benefits of Affirmative Action, not only in university admissions, but also in employment in government entities and equal opportunity in winning government contracts. And the passing of Prop 16 would solidify the equity of opportunity for all ethnic groups including Chinese Americans. Race will only be one of the considerations in university admissions to achieve diversity of the student population, and this is

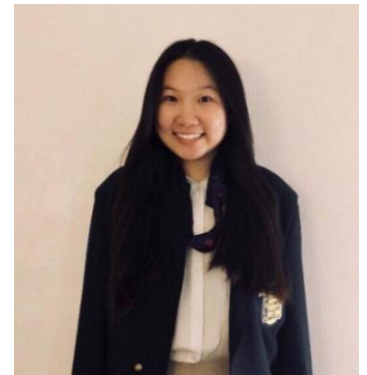
not an attempt to "fill the quota". For more details, visit <https://caasf.org>.

For a site with a comprehensive coverage of Prop 16, you may visit https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_California_Proposition_16. This site presents arguments on both sides in much more details.

Shiny Weng is our Lodge's Summer Intern Working on a COVID-19-Related Project

This year, GSGV Lodge retained Shiny Weng, a recent high-school graduate from neighboring Hacienda Heights, as our summer intern. The duration of this appointment runs roughly from July 1 to the middle of August, 2020, and a stipend of \$500.00 will be awarded to Shiny on completion of the internship. This internship is funded as a Capacity Building Grant by the National Headquarter of C.A.C.A. located in San Francisco. Shiny was highly recommended by Bro. Winston Wu as a member of the Youth Council, and came with very impressive credentials, including a 4.8/4.0 GPA and numerous extracurricular and leadership-training activities. She will be a freshman this fall at UC-Berkeley majoring in Computer Science and Statistics.

Right now Shiny is working on two tasks: (1) Collecting data from LA County and, possibly, State of California, to write a study report on the responses to the COVID-19 epidemic from the Chinese community, and how they fare compared with the "mainstream" and other ethnic communities, and what lessons to be drawn as precaution for a present and future similar outbreak. She will also rely on available news articles and relevant sources from county/state government



agencies for research purposes. GSGV Lodge will distribute the findings from this report to its members and upload it to the Lodge website for the benefit of a general audience. (2) Writing a set of instructions for GSGV lodge members and friends on how to use present-day technologies, in this age of shelter in place, to communicate among themselves online, like using ZOOM and/or Google-meet, etc. This is to be written in a simple language that can be understood by the "layman".