

The AAARCC 2023 Highlight Report

This year, the Asian American and Asian Resource and Cultural Center (AAARCC) at Purdue University continues our efforts to weave diverse Asian and Asian American histories and experiences into Purdue campus lives. Please find several highlights of our initiatives this year. To support the AAARCC through financial gifts, please use the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/GivetoPurdueAAARCC>

Thank you for all your support!

1) Facility

Our current facility at 915 5th Street continues to be well-used, and often bursting at its seams. The house includes shared spaces with a kitchen, dining room, conference room, computer lab, and lounge, as well as offices for center staff. For those who identify as Asians and Asian Americans, this building represents belonging, networking, and a place for growing leadership skills. For the rest of campus, it is a place for learning and honing intercultural competencies.

Monthly visitation during open hours (9 am to 5 pm) currently averages at 831 individuals for Fall 2023. We open up our space for **after-hour student organizations** and campus/community partners to use, and we have seen a rise in average number of reservations, **from 20 reservations in Spring 2023 to 34 reservations in Fall 2023.** November 2023 alone, the AAARCC received 62 after-hour reservations. Each reservation brings in between 10 to 100 or more participants, utilizing all the rooms and even the outdoor lawn space when weather allows.

Image 1. Student organization event



2) Pedagogy series

Since 2018, the AAARCC has been the hub for sharing the latest research, teaching, and engagement on Asian/American communities through our **weekly Lunch and Learn series**. Each week for 10 or 11 weeks during the semester, faculty, staff, and students share their work to attendees. The popularity of the program has **grown from around 15-20 attendees in Fall 2021/Spring 2022 to 55 attendees in Fall 2023**. At this point of the program, we have been utilizing the whole Center, with participants on the second floor of the building view the presentation on Zoom. **Since 2018, this program has featured 103 unique speakers and 73 partnerships with other campus units.**

Participants have mentioned the impacts of this program such as: finding out about AAARCC's initiatives, connecting with professors outside of the classrooms, finding out about job opportunities at research labs, enjoying food and taking a break from work, learning more about intersectional Asian and Asian American identities, and many more.

Image 2. Fall 2023 Lunch and Learn photo



Along with the weekly series, the AAARCC also invites speakers from outside of Purdue University to share their expertise through our **Speaker Series events**. This year, we invited Ret. President, Chief Executive Officer, and Director at Cabot Microelectronics Corporation - David Li, Associate Professor of Italian Studies at the University of British Columbia - Dr. Gaoheng Zhang, President of the Islamic Center of Muncie - Bibi Bahrami, President of the Asian American Alliance - Rupal Thanawala, Strategic Communications Leader - Ximena N. Beltran Quan Kiu, and Podcaster, Speaker,

and Creator of Conversation Piece Podcast - Patrick Armstrong. All of the speakers represented different areas of expertise and experiences.

In the Spring 2024 we are planning to invite speakers such as Dr. Claire Jean Kim (Professor of Political Science and Asian American Studies at UC Irvine) and Dr. Long T. Bui (Associate Professor of Global and International Studies at the University of California, Irvine). Additionally, we are excited to welcome Dr. OiYan Poon to campus as a keynote speaker for the APA Heritage Month in April as she will be presenting on her most recent work *Asian American Is Not a Color: Conversations on Race, Affirmative Action, and Family*.

We recognize the importance of collaborations with other Cultural Centers in featuring intersectional Asian and Asian American experiences. In this year's programming, we collaborate with all of the Cultural Centers. We partnered with the LGBTQ Center's Fabulous Friday program, where the AAARCC featured activities that highlight the story of the Monkey King (English Department's Big Reads selection). In observance of the Hispanic Heritage Month, in collaboration with the LCC, the AAARCC invited writer and publicist, Ximena N. Beltran Quan Kiu, who spoke about her identity as an Asian Latina and her professional journey. To recognize Adoptee Awareness Month and Native American Heritage Month in November, the AAARCC collaborated with the NAEC to host Chantel Cloud (Member, Southern Ute Indian Tribe and former Chief Justice of the Southern Ute Tribal Courts in Colorado) and Patrick Armstrong (Podcaster, Speaker, and Creator of Conversation Piece Podcast). In Spring 2024 and in partnership with the BCC, we have invited Dr. Claire Jean Kim, who will speak about Afro-Asian solidarity. We continue exploring partnerships for the Spring 2024 semester.

3) AAARCC Research Lab

The AAARCC Research Lab (PI: Dr. Pamela K. Sari) studies the diversity of Asian and Asian American experiences, with particular contexts of Purdue University and the Midwest. The lab is currently working on several research projects: oral history of the founding of the AAARCC, Asian and Asian American Teens Living in Rural Midwest, Music and the Lives of Asian and Asian American adolescents in the Midwest, and student leadership in Asian-interest student organizations at Purdue University. The AAARCC Research Lab has mentored more than 30 student researchers, and have/will have published a total of one book, two peer-reviewed articles, and mentored two student-authored papers by next year, not to mention exhibits and undergraduate research fairs that feature students' work.

Dr. Sari and Manabu Taketani presented AAARCC research work at the Association for Asian American Studies annual meeting in Long Beach, CA this year. In addition, they co-taught IDIS 491: Internship in Asian American Studies offered Spring 2022 and Spring 2023. The lab will teach AMST 101: America and the World in Spring 2024, and just got accepted to present a paper at the prestigious Asian American Studies Association 2024 annual meeting in Seattle, WA.

Publication and mentored publication (current and upcoming)

Huber, S., Sari, P., & Meher, R. (2021). Diversity and Making: A Living History Quilt. *Journal of Learning Spaces*, 10(3). Retrieved from <http://libjournal.uncg.edu/jls/article/view/2125>

Chang, S., Chang, T., Nguyen, T., & Prasad, N. (n.d.). Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic to the Asian and Asian American Communities: Persistent History, Collective Resistance, and Intersectional Solidarity. *Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research* Vol 11, 2021. (Mentor: Dr. Pamela K. Sari)

(in press, 2024) Sari, Pamela K, Monica M. Trieu, Casiana Warfield. "Asian/Asian American Higher Education Practitioners during rising Anti-Asian Violence and COVID-19 Global Pandemic." *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* 11(1), 2024.

(in press, 2024) David, Kawika; Palanca, Margaret; Zhou, James S.; Taketani, Manabu; Sari, Pamela. "Service-Learning in the Context of Asian American Studies and AAARCC at Purdue University: Asian/American Business Owners in Greater Lafayette and Indiana." *Purdue Journal of Service-Learning and International Engagement*

(under review) Sari, Pamela K. and Denny Putra. *The Founding and Early History of Purdue University's Asian American and Asian Resource and Cultural Center*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.

4) Cultural Engagement

Alongside pedagogical initiatives, the AAARCC offers campus-wide cultural engagement programs, fostering learning and dialogues. This year, the AAARCC's Lunar New Year celebration brought together around 1,000 people, including 35 volunteers and 40 unique tabling activities brought together by campus partners, student organizations, and community partners. The AAARCC also partnered with student organizations in the Holi event (Spring 2023) and Diwali (Fall 2023).

Image 3. 2023 Lunar New Year event



The AAARCC currently has two performance art ensembles: Lion Dance team and Asian American and Asian Vocal Ensemble (A3VE). **The AAARCC Lion Dance team** has been performing at Purdue and city-wide events, such as the annual City of West Lafayette Global Fest event. The **A3VE** has successfully presented their Fall 2023 concert, featuring Cultural Mixtape as a theme, and brought together partnership with Purdue Black Cultural Center's Black Voices of Inspiration, Indian Classical Music Association at Purdue, and band Neon Taxi.

5) **Advocacy**

The AAARCC has provided many opportunities for students to get connected with the diverse array of resources available to them at Purdue University. Through the Refresh and Refuel Wednesday program in Fall 2023, the AAARCC offered 14 hours of Liaison hours with Purdue's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff therapists for students and 4 hours of Liaison hours with staff members from the Center for Advocacy, Response & Education (CARE). The AAARCC offered 7 hours of Liaison hours with staff members from the Purdue Center for Career Opportunities (CCO) to assist students who went through application and interview processes for internship and post-graduate opportunities.

To further build better systemic support on campus, the AAARCC was involved in the founding of the **Asian American and Asian Graduate Student Association (AAAGraSA)**, the **Purdue Asian Alumni Network (PAAN)**, and the **Asian American and Asian Faculty and Staff Caucus (PAAAC)**. We also continue partnering with the **Asian Student Union Board (ASUB)**, an umbrella organization of more than 25 Asian-interest student organizations on campus.

To support the community and take action against food insecurity, in collaboration with the campus ACE Food Pantry, the AAARCC serves as a pop-up food pantry location (including pop-up bread table location). Throughout the Fall 2023 semester, the AAARCC was able to provide service to 307 individuals who utilized the food and fresh vegetable pantry and 454 individuals who utilized the bread table. In addition to our own garden produce, the fresh vegetable pantry was generously provided with support from Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (ODIB) at Purdue and Purdue Student Farm's Community Supported Agriculture program weekly deliveries.

Image 4. The AAARCC weekly vegetable pantry



6) Personnel and Professional Student Staff Mentoring

The AAARCC places an important focus on training student staff and introducing them to the work of higher education/cultural center administration. We hired **Maia Talbert** (Senior, Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences) as a student staff member for the 2023-2024 academic year. This year also marked the second year that the AAARCC successfully partnered with Purdue Libraries and the School of Information Studies in the Peer Information Consultancy program. This program trains student staff in research projects related to Libraries and information use. This year's PIC student staff are **Khushi Rao** (Sophomore, Biology and Minor in Psychology) and **Aerrielle Condino** (First Year Engineering). The AAARCC has also partnered with Dr. Franki Kung (College of Health and Human Sciences) in his NSF-funded initiative with the hiring of student staff **Enya Song** to assist with a Spring 2024 event.

Our staff members also continue excelling in professional and cultural engagement with campus and communities:

In addition to working as the Graduate Student Assistant at the AAARCC, **Denny Putra** (Ph.D. Candidate, Counseling Psychology) has been serving as the President of the Asian American and Asian Graduate Student Association (AAAGraSA). In this capacity, he has successfully promoted AAAGraSA and AAARCC events to new incoming Asian graduate students during the Fall 2023 Graduate Student orientation and other promotional events to be involved with the organization and engage with the cultural center. AAAGraSA currently has 37 members and 342 have joined the mailing list and expressed their interest to learn more about the organization events. In 2022, Denny was awarded Boiler Changemaker Award by Purdue University Graduate School for his assistance in AAARCC initiatives for graduate student development and engagement in campus wide programming.

AAARCC Administrative Assistant **Tracey Jen** has put her artistic skills to make the AAARCC a hub of creative and artistic innovations. Tracey has suggested transforming the second floor conference room decoration into a "home" exhibit space for student artists. The efforts to exemplify this vision has successfully invited students and academic classes with aspirations and skills, beautifying the

Center and encouraging more visitors. So far, the Center had two student artists and one academic class that we partnered with to do “home” exhibitions, and there will be more in the future. Tracey has also volunteered, above and beyond her work, to make the artwork/large banner that was used during BGR and Express Fest events.

AAARCC Program Administrator **Manabu Taketani** has received internal and external recognition and awards for his work. This Spring 2023, Manabu was awarded the Purdue Bravo Award in recognition of reaching the milestone of planning 100 Lunch & Learn sessions. Within the Purdue community, Manabu contributes to offering opportunities for student organizations to receive funding for their initiatives through his involvement in the One Community Grant Committee. In the Spring of 2024, he will be recognized at the Annual Engagement Awards Luncheon with the Jefferson Award for his service to the community.

The AAARCC Director, **Dr. Pamela K. Sari** was part of the CLA Study Abroad Learning Community for Spring 2023, a program that provided detailed learning on implementing a study abroad program. Please check back as the AAARCC is developing a study abroad program for the 2025-2026 academic year! Dr. Sari has been invited to speak at MathWorks’ Asian Pacific American Heritage Month event in Spring 2023, and at University of Wyoming American Studies Program alumni panel. In addition to her role at the AAARCC, Dr. Sari serves as a Board member for the Lafayette Master Chorale and Lafayette Children’s Choir. She was recently presented with the Excellence in Leadership award for Staff category from Purdue University’s Susan Bulkeley Center for Leadership Excellence.

The AAARCC Staff for the 2023-2024 academic year wishes you a wonderful holiday season!

