

THE FOUNDING OF ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES AT SJSU - SERVING THE VALLEY FOR 53 YEARS

Whereas, Asian American Studies was one of the Ethnic Studies fields born in 1968 from the Civil Rights Movement, Third World Liberation Front, the anti-War movement, and in solidarity with multiple oppressed communities; and

Whereas, The Asian American Studies Movement at San Jose State was founded on the heels of these cross-racial movements through faculty, staff, student, and community agitation and mobilization; and

Whereas, Progressive Asian American Coalition (PAAC), Associated Students, and key faculty and staff wrote the proposal for and founded the Asian American Studies Program in Fall 1970; and

Whereas, the Proposal for the BA in Asian American Studies was rejected in Winter 1970, the Minor in Asian American Studies was approved in Spring 1970; and

Whereas, Progressive Asian American Coalition (PAAC) under the leadership of Dan Kubo strategized with elected members of Associated Students (Roy Hirabayashi, Steve Takakuwa, James Lee, Matsuo Furuyama, Steve Wong, and Hisashi Takeuchi) and other Asian American organizations on campus;

Whereas, Founding faculty like Dr. Kichung Kim from the Department of English served an instrumental role in coordinating, developing, and teaching Asian American Studies from 1970-1972; and

Whereas, Dr. Kichung Kim was steadfast in his support of the anti-war movement as well as the need to diversify faculty and curriculum (e.g., proposing a Black literature course); and

Whereas, Key administrator and staff agitators like Dr. Paul Sakamoto and Mike Honda in securing resources and services for San Jose State Asian American students through programs like EOP; and

Whereas, Subsequent faculty like Stephen "Steve" Ngoin, George Woo, and Charles Ogawa were at the helm of institutionalizing a community-based Asian American Studies curriculum; and

Whereas, the first Asian American Studies course was developed in collaboration with students Tom Tan, Victor Jang, and Dan Kubo and taught by Steven Ngoin: Sociology 196 (Asian American Experience); and

Whereas, Student coordinators like Roy Hirabayashi (personnel and key administrator), George Custodia (marketing and outreach), and Cheryl Fong (curriculum) worked closely with Dr. Kichung Kim to administer the Asian American Studies program and found the Asian American Studies Reading Room in Barrack 9; and

Whereas, In 1971, Roy Hirabayashi, under the support of Dr. Paul Sakamoto, expanded financial aid opportunities through EOP for Asian American students and acquired one full-time tutorial coordinator and one full-time EOP counselor; and

Whereas students like Victor Jang, Roy Hirabayashi, and Cheryl Fong taught courses in Asian American Studies before the program was fully institutionalized; and

Whereas, Tsukasa Matsueda, Mike Morizono, Mike Honda, William Sato, Jiro Saito, Sachiko Nakamura, Dr. Hong, Donna Fung, Robert Fung, and Victoria Taketa were hired to teach courses in Asian American Studies; and

Whereas, Jiro Saito served as Acting Program Coordinator from 1973-1974; and

Whereas, The first tenure-track hire, Dr. Gregory Mark, for the Asian American Studies Program was secured in Fall 1974; and

Whereas, Dr. Gregory Mark centered a “Serve the People” ethos as core curriculum in Asian American Studies—planning and coordinating experiential learning opportunities at significant Asian American historic sites such as Angel Island and Oakland Chinatown; and

Whereas, Dr. Gregory Mark led student sit-ins at President John Harvey Bunzel to ensure funding for the Asian American Studies Program; and

Whereas, Dr. Gregory Mark and Jiro Saito shepherded the curricular approval of Asian American Studies to fulfill the state requirement for American history and institutions; and

Whereas, Acting Program Coordinator PJ Hirabayashi not only taught Asian American Communities (175A and B) and Individual Studies (180) but also fostered and activated program ties with the local Asian American communities from 1977-1979; and

Whereas, The Asian American Studies Program at San Jose State was created to address the longstanding inequities in education, research, and most importantly, community service; and

Whereas, The Asian American Studies Program at San Jose State became more institutionalized after 1980, albeit without department status or a major, it continues to call attention to the histories and contributions of Asian Americans and the important heterogeneity within these communities; and

Whereas, The Asian American Studies Program at San Jose State currently brings together perspectives from different fields in the creative arts, humanities and social sciences while at the same time seeking to maintain a commitment to activism and to the needs of our communities, locally and nationally; and

Whereas, The next generation of Asian American Studies students will apply interdisciplinary theories into action, cultivate critical thought, and serve Asian American and other marginalized communities;

Whereas, The San Jose State University administration has expressed support in developing and funding an Asian American Studies bachelor's degree program; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council takes great pride in recognizing the contributions of the Asian American Studies Program at San Jose State for its more than 50-year commitment to providing outstanding service to the California State University system; critical educational preparation and support of numerous community leaders; research rooted in community empowerment; and a moral compass for dismantling white supremacy and systemic inequities.

FOUNDING ALUMNI AND STUDENTS IN ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Whereas, Asian American Studies was one of the Ethnic Studies fields born in 1968 from the Civil Rights Movement, Third World Liberation Front, the anti-War movement, and in solidarity with multiple oppressed communities; and

Whereas, Arty Kameda (Asian American Curriculum Chairman), James Lee (Chinese American Curriculum Subcommittee), Robert Reyes (Filipino American Curriculum Subcommittee Chairman), and Douglas Tsuchiya (Japanese American Curriculum Subcommittee Chairman and Committee Chairman) worked in conjunction with community members (James Ono and Mike Honda), faculty (Kichung Kim, Assistant Professor of English; Stephen Ngim, Instructor of Sociology; Charles Ogata, Assistant Professor of Economics; Allency Yang, Assistant Professor of Sociology), and administrators (Acting President H.W. Burns and Acting Academic Vice President Brett Melendy) were the key individuals who drafted the proposed BA degree in Asian American Studies, submitted January 1970; and

Whereas, This program represented the culmination of the concerted efforts of many Asian American students at San Jose State College; and

Whereas, These students include students from Progressive Asian American Coalition under the leadership of Douglas Tsuchiya, James Lee, Mike Honda, Steve Takaguwa, and others; and

Whereas, The students wrote a detailed proposal for an Asian American Studies Program and then approached the college administration, interested faculty members, and the city's Asian American community; and

Whereas, When the BA degree proposal was rejected, they pursued a new proposal for a minor in Asian American Studies in April 1970; and

Whereas, Beginning in Fall 1970, then San Jose State College began offering a minor in Asian American Studies; and

Whereas, Student participation has been an integral part of our program from its very inception, and Asian American students either individually, or through their organizations (Asians for Community Action, Progressive Asian American Coalition, Spartan Chi, Filipino American Student Association, Spartan Oriocci, among others) have helped to do the bulk of the work required in operating the program; and

Whereas, If there is any one creed agreed on by all those participating in the program, it is that the program continued to welcome the support of and active participation of any and all members of the college community; and

Whereas, The basic goal of the Asian American Studies Program was to create an Asian American awareness and an understanding of the Asian American communities; and

Whereas, Through active student participation not only within the program but also within the community, the Asian American Studies Program became a great benefit to the student, college and the community; and

Whereas, The program office was located in Barracks 9, at the back of the Tower Hall, inviting students and community members to drop in at any time 8a-5p on weekdays "to rap, look around, and feel at home"; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council takes great pride in recognizing the contributions of the students who helped found and shepherd the Asian American Studies Program at San Jose State University in its infancy.