

The CAAV VOICE

Newsletter
of the
Committee
Against
Anti-Asian
Violence

191 EAST 3RD STREET • NEW YORK, NY 10009 • (212) 473-6485

VOL. 6 No. 1

SPRING 1994

caav community based struggles

THE CHINESE COMMUNITY

The Chinese Community Organizing Committee (CCOC) has been involved in two important community struggles: supporting the efforts of Louisa Chan, School Board member of District 24 in Woodside, Queens, to confront racist practices by the board, and opposing the exploitation of Immigrant Social Services (ISS) teachers in Chinatown.

Louisa Chan, the first and only person of color to serve on the District 24 School Board, is an advocate of multicultural and bilingual programs and has encouraged other parents of color to get involved. District 24's student body is 20% Asian, 48% Latino and 12% African American, but the board, which hires managerial personnel and helps determine the curriculum, has only had white members since 1970.

At a school board meeting on November 4, 1993, when Louisa Chan questioned the board's recent hiring and contract decisions, Cummins responded, "What would you know? You are only a chink!" Cummins has defended herself publicly by saying that she is an American and protected by the First Amendment.

Mary Cummins was a driving force in the defeat of the Rainbow Curriculum—a program that promotes acceptance of multiculturalism and nontraditional families—and in the ousting of its originator, then Chancellor Fernandez. She has exploited hatred and resentment against immigrants, people of color, and gays and lesbians.

CCOC has been working to develop leadership within the

(Continued on Page 4)

CAA AV ORGANIZER BRUTALIZED BY POLICE



photo by Betsy Ho

On May 27, 1994, one hundred Asian Americans and yellow cab drivers protested the police beating and arrest of Saleem Osman the day before.

new york city incidents

POLICE BRUTALITY

On May 26, 1994 Saleem Osman, CAAAV organizer for the Lease Drivers Coalition, was assaulted and then arrested by officers from the Transit Police and the Midtown South Precinct. Saleem arrived at 33rd Street and Sixth Avenue in response to a call for assistance from another South Asian cab driver. During the incident a plainclothes transit officer told Saleem: "There's no black mayor anymore. You better watch out." and "Go back to your own country." Saleem was then dragged out of his cab by his hair and clothing by plainclothes officers, who had not identified themselves, and beaten by a group of officers on the scene. Saleem suffered injuries to his head, neck, legs,

and wrists which required medical attention.

As is typical in cases of police abuse, the police fabricated charges of assaulting two police officers and resisting arrest. Saleem spent over 24 hours in police custody. He was released only after a CAAAV media campaign, a demonstration the day after the incident by over 100 Asian Americans and yellow cab drivers, and legal representation for the arraignment by Liz OuYang of Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF). Saleem's first criminal court date is July 11.

The police attack on our own staff member comes at a time when CAAAV has been inundated by cases of police brutality and police neglect. On March 15, 1994, CAAAV and AALDEF sent a letter to Police Commissioner Bratton requesting a meeting to

(Continued on Page 6)

NATIONAL INCIDENTS

RAJIV ISAAC—

EDISON, NEW JERSEY

On the evening of February 4, 1994, Rajiv Isaac was doused with acid by a group of men in Edison, New Jersey. He was taking garbage to a dumpster in his apartment complex, which houses many Indian families, when four men drove up. The car stopped and one of the men threw what may have been battery acid into his face. Isaac, who is a data processor for the Swiss Bank Corporation, says that the attack was most certainly premeditated. Isaac suffered severe facial burns and was hospitalized for four days.

TAKUMA ITO AND GO MATSUURA—

SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA

On March 25, Japanese students Takuma Ito and Go Matsuura, were carjacked and then shot in the back of the head in a supermarket parking lot in San Pedro. Japanese government officials expressed concern over the rate of violent crime in California and the protection of Japanese citizens. Over 3 million Japanese travel to the U.S. each year, and over 50,000 are students. Ito and Matsuura are the third and fourth Japanese to have been murdered this year. Gang members Raymond Oscar Butler, 18, and Alberto V. Reygoza, 20, are being charged with murder and robbery with special circumstance allegations, which may result in the death penalty upon conviction.

BRUCE TENG THAO AND KAI LOR—

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Two Hmong youth involved in an attempted robbery of a food cooperative in St. Paul, Minnesota were shot and killed by a security guard on October 12, 1993. Bruce Teng Thao, 18, Kai Lor, 19, and Pha Vong, 16, entered the store and ordered customers and staff to the floor. The security guard David Timm claimed that he fired in response to gunfire. Two weeks later, an internal police investigation and a grand jury concluded there was no wrongdoing on the part of the guard,

who also works as a target-range instructor for the police. Timm, a 24-year veteran of the police force, was allowed to return from paid leave after these findings.

The Hmong Social Justice Committee was formed because of questions and inconsistencies surrounding the deaths. Thao was found dead with two gunshot wounds. Lying beside him was the only gun recovered in the robbery, which had never been fired. Lor, who Timm never claimed had a gun, was fatally shot four times, with two entrance wounds from the back of the chest and neck. The Committee has hired an investigator and a pathologist and are considering further legal actions.

FATT LEONG AND KA WONG—SAN FRANCISCO

BAY AREA, CALIFORNIA

Seven teenagers have been arrested for an 11 day crime spree, targeting Asians in San Francisco and Daly City that included two murders, kidnapping, carjacking and robberies. Police report that two of the youths laughingly told a youth counselor that they "only did Chinamen and cab drivers."

The bloody rampage began October 2, 1993 with the murder of 29-year-old Fatt Leong, who was robbed of \$150 and then shot three times. They then committed at least eight more robberies and shot a yellow cab driver. On the final day of their crime spree, the teenagers carjacked and kidnapped 28-year-old Ka Wong at gun point, drove him to several ATM machines, took turns smashing him in the face, and finally killed him.

KEERTHI WICKREMERATNE—

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Keerthi Wickremeratne is the second South Asian University of Nevada/Las Vegas student to die within a year. On January 28, Wickremeratne, a Sri Lankan, was found dead in the trunk of his car parked in a hotel lot. He had been missing for two and a half weeks. LVPD's homicide division refuses to disclose the reasons for Wickremeratne's death.

LOC MINH TRUONG—

LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA

This January, one year after Vietnamese American Loc Minh Truong was viciously gay-bashed beyond recognition in Laguna Beach, California, his assailants were sentenced. In his ruling the judge described the attack as "savagery" and clearly a hate crime. Jeff Michael Raines, the main attacker, was sentenced to a 10-year prison term and is eligible for parole in six years. Christopher Michael Cribbins received a one-year sentence and five-year probation. With time served, he could be released in two months. The defenders had been granted plea bargains without even consulting Truong. Activists, who had lobbied for stiff sentencing, were relieved at the judge's ruling.

Truong has also filed a \$5.8 million civil lawsuit against his two attackers. According to his attorney Russell S. Kerr, Truong is "almost childlike" with the mental capacity of a ten-year-old, and spends his days in cognitive and speech therapy. 56-year-old Truong was formerly a computer technician and is probably now unemployable. Truong has said that he would like to have an income so that he could sponsor his wife and 19-year-old daughter in Vietnam to come to the U.S.

LUYEN PHAN NGUYEN—

CORAL SPRINGS, FLORIDA

In August, 1992, Luyen Phan Nguyen, a 17-year-old Vietnamese American student, was beaten to death by 15 white youths in Coral Springs, Florida. One assailant, Bradley Mills, was convicted of second-degree murder last year and is serving fifty years in prison. The other defendants have not yet been brought to trial.

COUNCILMAN JIMMIE YEE—

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

One arrest has been made in the rash of firebombings in Sacramento, California last fall, claimed by the Aryan Liberation Front. An 18-year-old teenager has been charged with

(UPDATES Continued from Page 2)

attempted murder for the firebombing of Councilman Jimmie Yee's home. The defendant's attorney is claiming the teenager did not act alone and was not the person who threw the bomb. Police are continuing to investigate the attacks against local JACL and NAACP offices and a synagogue.

SAM NANG NHEM AND SOPHY SEONG—

FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS

In early April, the 17-year-old youth indicted for the beating of Sophy Seong was found guilty of assault and battery/hate crime by a juvenile court judge. He is now serving time at a residential facility and will continue to be monitored by the Department of

Youth Services until he turns 18.

On November 30, Harold R. Latour, 23, was indicted for the murder of Sam Nang Nhem, assault and battery of Nhem and Seong, and two counts of hate crime enhancement. Joseph Barboza was also indicted, for assault and battery on Seong. In addition, Wayne Moss was indicted for intimidation of a witness. The trials of Latour and Barboza are expected to begin in July.

Sam Nang Nhem and his friend Sophy Seong were attacked after a family gathering on August 16, 1993. Approximately seven men were involved in the assault, which resulted in Nhem's death. The National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium is urging that the investigation continue until all parties are brought to justice.

media offenses

JOHN ZORN

KPFA, a progressive community-oriented radio station in California, withdrew its sponsorship of John Zorn's concert at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco in January. Zorn's scheduled performance at the Museum of Natural History in New York City was also cancelled this year, after word of our media committee's objections to his

work got out. Responding to the criticism and pressure, John Zorn has recently informed CAAAV of some positive steps. He has asked his Japanese record distributor to suspend further exports of four of his albums until an "obi", or black paper wrapper, could be made with a statement from Zorn saying that "his intention was not to denigrate or insult in any way particular groups of persons."

Who is John Zorn and why does his work raise the ire of the Asian American community? Zorn is an avant-garde jazz saxophonist, a veteran of New York City's "new music" scene. He is known for his collaging of music genres, his bad-boy humor, his shock "shtick."

For close to a decade, Zorn's work has employed a recurring motif to illustrate his music releases—that of brutally violent acts mainly against Asian women. He takes bits and pieces of Asian culture and presents them out of context with little thought to the repercussions. What results is work that eroticizes violence and degrades Asian women. These images not only stereotype, but also perpetuate, violence and racism against Asians and Asian Americans. And it's this type of work that has contributed to his popularity/notoreity.

The cover art of his most recent album entitled *Torture Garden* and the disc itself display pornographic film stills of partially nude Asian women bound and strung up by ropes – their bodies contorted, their facial expressions either vacant or wracked with pain – and a panel from a *manga* (comic book) in which a schoolboy licks the bloody eyeball of a schoolgirl's flayed face. Zorn's 1989 CD *Naked City/Leng Tch'e*, features archival photos of the live dismemberment of a Chinese person as a crowd of people watches. The liner

(Continued on Page 7)



photo by Lia Chang ©1994

Three hundred and fifty guests joined CAAAV on Saturday evening, May 14, for a benefit performance of the Broadway play, *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, by Anna Deavere Smith, raising over \$10,000 for our work. *Twilight*, which was just awarded an Obie for Best Play and has received Tony Award nominations for Best Play and Best Actress, is based on interviews with over 200 Asian, African American, Latino, and white participants and observers of the Los Angeles riots which followed the acquittal of the police officers who beat Rodney King.

The event was part of CAAAV's effort to bring together Asians of different generations and ethnicities to address the conditions that make Asian communities vulnerable to violence, such as linguistic and political isolation, economic scapegoating, and a growing climate of anti-immigrant sentiment. After the play, attendees were treated to a rare opportunity to speak with Ms. Smith about the characters in the play, how they were selected, and what she had learned from developing both *Twilight* and *Fires in the Mirror: Crown Heights, Brooklyn and Other Identities*.

(COMMUNITY Continued from Page 1)

community to enable it to deal with the racism on the board. In March, 25 members of CCOC and other CAAAV members attended a District 24 School Board meeting to support the demand for Cummins' removal. We were treated with hostility by the parents, most of whom were white, and the school board. We were not given a chance to speak until the end of the meeting and one member was ejected by security guards after attempting to raise our concerns.

In an effort to broaden the struggle, we distributed Spanish-language fliers explaining Chan's position at another school board meeting on May 19. Chan and CAAAV were well-received by the Latino, gay, and lesbian parents present, many of whom offered to help.

On June 7 Mary Cummins announced her resignation from the board. Although she rescinded this decision a day later, citing irritation at the suggestion that she had been forced out because of issues raised by Chan and her supporters, it is a hopeful sign that pressure is building for a change.

CCOC has also been supporting the workers' struggle against ISS—a social service agency that provides after-school and summer school tutorial programs. Last July, three of the teachers were fired and one resigned in protest when they attempted to improve working conditions and the ISS programs. [see CAAAV Voice, Fall 1993]

Presently, the NLRB has issued a complaint against ISS for violating the employees right to organize and participate in collective bargaining. ISS, which attempted to intimidate its opponents by filing a \$6 million lawsuit against CAAAV, CSWA, and the four teachers, is now motioning to end the lawsuit. Believing that we can and must expose the baseless and abusive character of this lawsuit, which has intimidated other workers in the community from protecting their rights, we are declining ISS's motion.

**THE
KOREAN COMMUNITY**

From the Korean peninsula to New York City, Koreans live in a community divided: North and South Korean, first and second generation, exclusively English-speaking and exclusively Korean-speaking, students and shopkeepers, businessmen and factory workers. Combating these divisions, the Korean Community

Organizing Committee (KCOC) is working to heal and reconcile, to regain peace in a violated community and a violent society.

Recognizing the necessity for unity among Koreans as a first step toward reconciliation, KCOC is quickly strengthening ties with other Korean American organizations. This spring, KCOC conducted anti-Asian violence workshops at local high schools and at the YWCA in Flushing, Queens, as part of its youth outreach.

In addition, together with Flushing-based Action for Young Korean-Americans (AYKA), KCOC began its English literacy classes in April as a proactive measure since many victims of anti-Asian violence are first generation, non-English-speaking immigrants. Directed towards Korean garment factory and nail salon workers in Manhattan and Koreans in Flushing, a two-person team, consisting of one KCOC and one AYKA member, teaches conversational English needed to communicate in the workplace, in emergency situations, in reporting a crime. Through this joint project, KCOC hopes to equip members of the community with the fundamental tool, language, which can enable them to defuse hostile situations and defend themselves.

Division and violence within and against Korean communities is perhaps most poignantly embodied by the L.A. incident, otherwise known as "Sa-i-gu" to Koreans. On April 29, KCOC joined AYKA, Umuncha (Center for Korean American Culture), Seoro, and Korea Working Group for an evening of reflection, discussion, and planning for future joint action.

**THE SOUTH ASIAN
COMMUNITY**

Lease Drivers Coalition

The Lease Drivers Coalition (LDC) has expanded rapidly since we hired Saleem Osman as our organizer in January 1994. We have seen an exponential growth in our driver membership and major advances in our campaigns for driver safety and against this year's proposed fare increase.

The need for the demands of the LDC safety campaign became tragically clear with the murder of three South Asian drivers in a 24-hour period. The outpouring of rage by cab drivers coalesced in a demonstration on October 26, 1993 — the largest demonstration of cab drivers in the city's history. It forced the City Council to hold hearings on safety for drivers

and the TLC to require partitions in all yellow cabs. In addition, Commissioner DelValle is finally considering the LDC recommendation for the installation of locating devices, which use a radio signal to notify police of the location of a cab in trouble.

The campaign against the fare increase was a great success. LDC took a leading role in building pressure against the increase with driver petitions, a postcard campaign from riders, letters from elected officials, and hearing testimonies. The TLC published a surprisingly detailed and truthful report on the earnings of drivers and the profits of the industry which unequivocally proved a point that LDC has maintained all along: that the lease system results in enormous profits for garage and medallion owners and very low income and hard working conditions for drivers. For the first time, the TLC proposed that it might be time to regulate lease prices.

Saleem has introduced new organizing methods that have increased LDC's connections to drivers. First, he has been communicating with drivers through different CB channels, an informal way that drivers share information and call for help in emergencies. Saleem has also been holding political meetings in conjunction with celebrations of Eid Millan and other holidays. Discussions at these gatherings have been spirited and productive. New projects have grown out of the increased participation and input of drivers — a campaign targeting hotel doormen who discriminate against South Asian cab drivers by directing their customers to other cars, a program to help Pakistanis apply for the Green Card lottery, four cases of police brutality against South Asian drivers, and an investigation of life and health insurance options for drivers.

There also has been an encouraging surge in the participation of non-driver members, some of whom have useful language skills and expertise in visual and print media. There is a subcommittee exploring the possibility of publishing a four-language magazine (Urdu, English, Bengali, Punjabi) to assist drivers and keep them abreast of political developments in the industry.

**THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN
COMMUNITY**

In December 1993 CAAAV initiated the Southeast Asian Organizing Collective (SEAOC) to address the needs and concerns of New York's Southeast Asian

(Continued on Page 7)

In 1992, 119 people were murdered on the job in New York City according to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. This statistic represents 45% of all occupational deaths reported and puts New York well ahead of other metropolitan areas for percentage of homicides at work. Most of these homicides were committed against taxi and livery drivers and employees at retail outlets, particularly small grocery stores, fast-food restaurants and gas stations. In New York City, a large number of these workers are immigrants of color.

The numbers prove what we already know—South Asian cab drivers and news agents, Korean grocers, Chinese takeout workers—are dying on the job. It's happening in New York and in other cities across the nation.

There are many reasons for these senseless deaths. These jobs involve cash, little security, late hours, and are often located in high-crime areas. Asian immigrants often work in these occupations because language barriers and racism in the job market push them into marginalized,

ASIANS

dangerous jobs. They are left without adequate protection because of racism and insensitivity among the police and, for cab drivers, the Taxi and Limousine Commission. Criminals are well aware of this lack of attention from law enforcement agencies.

In addition to these institutional problems, racist assumptions make Asians more attractive targets. Because of stereotypes—that Asians make a lot of money, that they are smaller, weaker and don't fight back, that they don't report crimes to the police or other authorities—Asians are seen as desirable victims. Some criminals may actually target Asian Americans out of resentment against Asians as "model minorities" or successful outsiders. Sometimes a robber's motive is purely economic, but the resulting violence may stem from anti-Asian sentiment and the devaluation of an Asian life.

The role of institutional and individual racism cannot be ignored when discussing the murder of Asian merchants. It is clearly not enough to view these murders solely within a discussion of rising national crime rates. As Asians and immigrants, we have to address the racism that drives

many members of our community into poorly paid, life-threatening jobs that the criminal justice system chooses not to protect. We also need to educate the public about the day-to-day difficulties our communities face despite the "model minority" images. Finally, we have to educate and organize our own communities about racist practices and racially charged situations that perpetuate tension and backlash.

NEW YORK CITY

Pravin Shah, who worked in a newsstand at a busy intersection in midtown Manhattan, was shot once in the forehead and killed in an apparent robbery attempt on February 9, 1994 at 11 A.M. Shah, 58 years old, had worked at this location for five years and was known as friendly, hardworking and honest. He had said many times that he would never fight for his money.

The New York City's Operators Association (NYCOA), which represents newsstand owners, has called for improved security by the police and a change in regulations that

dying **FOR** WORK

would make telephones in the newsstands more affordable. They urged Mayor Giuliani to conduct an aggressive investigation for Shah's murderer. NYCOA, as well as each of the city's four dailies, have pledged money for information leading to his killer.

Robberies of newsstands are common. Because their owners run a cash-only business in isolated stands out on the street, they are especially vulnerable targets. Half of newsstand licensees and 90% of new applicants are immigrants from South Asia.

On December 15, 1993, Chul Ho Park, a produce manager at a small Queens supermarket, was confronted by a gunman while taking a break in the back of the store. Another employee reported that Park had only a simple understanding of English and that he apparently did not respond fast enough to the gunman's repeated orders to "Lie down!" and "Get down!" Park was shot in the head and killed. Two of the four robbers have been arrested.

On November 24, 1993, Siew Kin Yeo was shot and killed in a Chinese takeout restaurant in the Bronx. Ms.

Yeo died for refusing to surrender \$19—all the cash in the store at the time. Three teenagers have been arrested, including fifteen-year-old Shakeem Hodge, who was charged as an adult for second-degree murder and attempted robbery. Ms. Yeo's death brought the death toll for takeout restaurant workers to six with 50 more wounded in robberies, according to Philip Lam of the United Fujianese of America Association.

Five days after Ms. Yeo's murder, 200 recent Chinese immigrants protested in front of Police Headquarters demanding more police protection for restaurant workers and all immigrants. They compared these killings to those of taxi drivers, many of whom are also immigrants at risk on the job. [See **Lease Drivers Coalition**, page 4.]

WASHINGTON, D.C.

On October 26, 1993, Tae Sik Yoon was fatally shot in the head while working in a supermarket in a poverty-stricken neighborhood in Washington, D.C. Yoon, a 25-year-old student from Korea, was

in the U.S. for one month studying English and was scheduled to leave the weekend after he was shot. Although no money was taken, the police are labeling the incident an attempted robbery. Yoon was the ninth Asian American merchant/worker to be murdered in Washington, D.C.

There has been a debate in the D.C. Asian American community whether these killings, are racially motivated or based on socio-economic factors. Asian American merchants are a high-profile sector of the small business community in D.C. They own two-thirds of small D.C. businesses, while Korean Americans alone own 55%. While the deaths of the Asian merchants are alarming, especially in this racialized society, they must also be seen in context. At the time of Yoon's death, there was a total of 49 homicide robberies in D.C., over 300 store robberies and close to 400 homicides—mostly by and against African Americans.

Some leaders, such as Daphne Kwok of the Organization of Chinese Americans, have urged the police to consider hate motivation in Yoon's
(Continued on Page 9)

(NYC Continued from Page 1)

address the alarming increase in racially-motivated violence and police brutality against Asian Americans in the city. It is outrageous that, months after this urgent request, the Commissioner's office has yet to respond to our letter, while police assaults continue to escalate.

Clearly, the new mayor's policies have encouraged increased racism on the part of the police toward immigrants and other people of color. Shortly after taking office, Mayor Giuliani unequivocally supported the police attack on a Harlem mosque and the fatal shooting of a Brooklyn imam's son. He refused to meet with religious and political leaders to address concerns of the African American community in response to these incidents. In addition, the Mayor has dismantled the community affairs offices, which have served as liaisons to various ethnic communities, the lesbian and gay community, and immigrants. He also considered, but fortunately has not implemented, a revision of city policy that forbids the reporting of undocumented immigrants to the Immigration and Naturalization Service by police and other city employees.

Given the wave of police brutality with institutionalized racism at its heart and the conservative political landscape, it has become critical that we focus our efforts on making the police accountable to our communities.

PARK SLOPE, BROOKLYN

Two Korean brothers were assaulted by police officers from the 78th Precinct in Brooklyn on April 19, 1994. The brothers, KTK and STK, own a deli in Park Slope. The assault occurred after a dispute with a customer, who left and returned with three officers.

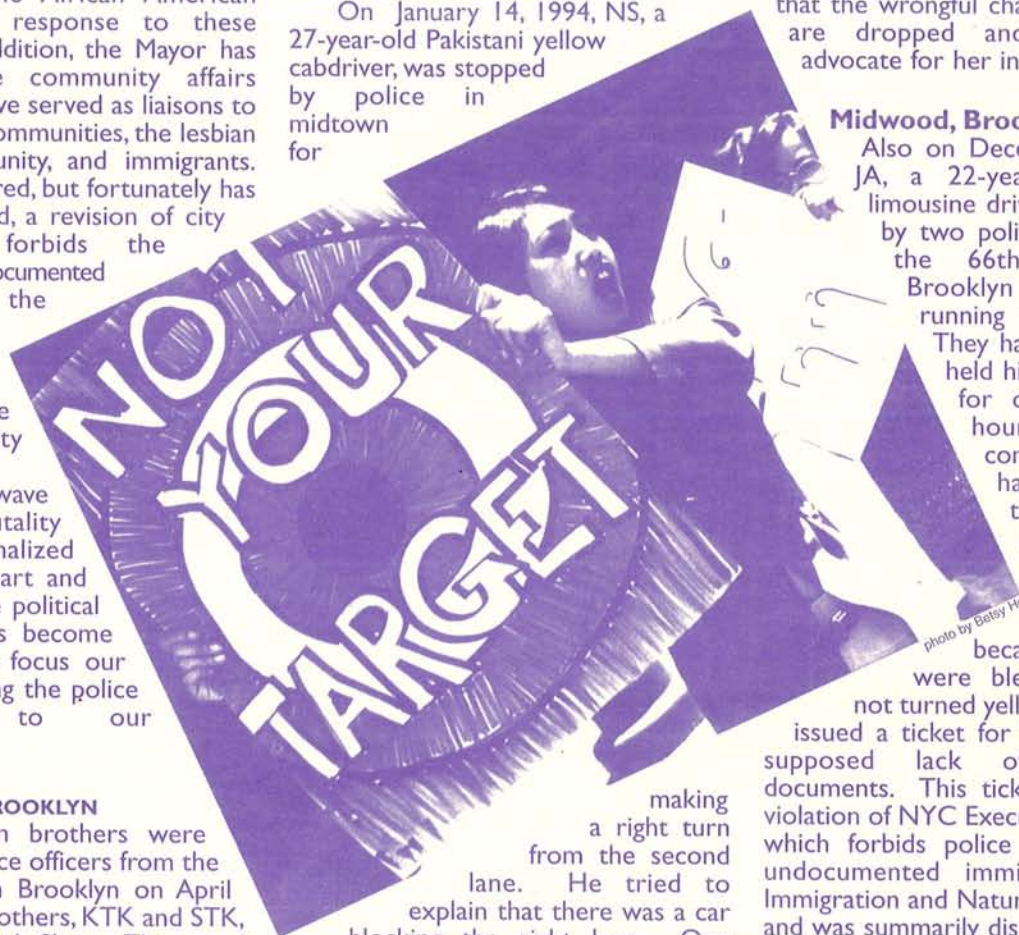
The customer accused the brothers of giving him counterfeit money for change, which the brothers denied. When the officers arrived, they began writing up a report based only on the customer's complaint without asking the brothers for an account. When KTK complained to the officers about not listening to his side, Officer Rolando Bacuadano jumped over the counter and began assaulting him.

Both brothers were arrested. While being taken to the 78th Precinct in the patrol car, the officers assaulted the brothers and verbally attacked them with racial slurs, yelling, among other things, "Asians are animals!" They were held for two days and were finally issued a summons for resisting arrest. The brothers have retained a lawyer and are pursuing a civil suit.

CAA AV visited the brothers' store, explaining to them their legal rights and the process of filing a civil suit. CAA AV also visited many other Korean stores in the Park Slope area to speak with the owners about the incident and inform them of their rights when dealing with the police.

Midtown Manhattan

On January 14, 1994, NS, a 27-year-old Pakistani yellow cabdriver, was stopped by police in midtown for



Bay Ridge, Brooklyn

On December 16, 1993, HCH, a Korean woman who speaks very little English, was thrown into a police car and beaten after a fare dispute with a cab driver in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Witnesses report that these officers yelled racial epithets, kicked and hit her, pulled her hair, and pounded her head against the wall. Her injuries were so severe that the booking officer sent her to the hospital when she arrived at the precinct. Misinformed by the arresting officer, HCH left the hospital without treatment. She was held illegally for a total of 40 hours and was told that a lawyer was not necessary. HCH has been charged with resisting arrest and assaulting an officer. CAA AV has accompanied HCH to court to ensure that the wrongful charges against her are dropped and will further advocate for her in court.

Midwood, Brooklyn

Also on December 16, 1993, JA, a 22-year-old Pakistani limousine driver, was stopped by two police officers from the 66th Precinct in Brooklyn for allegedly running two red lights. They handcuffed JA and held him at the station for one and a half hours. When he complained that the handcuffs were too tight, the officer joked that his circulation must be okay because JA's hands were bleeding and had not turned yellow. He was also issued a ticket for "No INS," i.e. a supposed lack of immigration documents. This ticket was in clear violation of NYC Executive Order 124, which forbids police from reporting undocumented immigrants to the Immigration and Naturalization Service and was summarily dismissed. CAA AV has been advocating for JA at the CCRB and at court hearings.

Chinatown, Manhattan

On November 9, 1993, two Latino plainclothes officers beat and clubbed DN, a Vietnamese youth. Without identifying themselves as police, the detectives shoved and verbally abused DN, who wanted to use the restroom in a Chinatown shopping plaza. When DN tried to enter the restroom again, the officers flashed their badges. DN tried to walk away, but one officer hit

him on the back of his head, knocking him to the ground. The officer continued to beat him until he was unconscious and lying in a pool of blood. DN's brother, who tried to come to his aid, was also arrested. Subsequently, the cases of two other Vietnamese youths who were also unfairly arrested the same day, several blocks away, were inexplicably linked to the two brothers' cases. The four youths were charged with a total of six counts, including second-degree assault and criminal possession of a weapon. A grand jury is being convened. CAAAV will advocate for him in court, and is conducting a petition drive to demand that District Attorney Morgenthau investigate the incident.

ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

CANARSIE, BROOKLYN

A Chinese family has been physically and verbally harassed by their neighbors in Canarsie, Brooklyn. Since moving there in 1990, the family has been subject to vandalism, racial slurs, verbal harassment, intimidation, and death threats. In August 1992, the neighbors' teenage children trespassed into the family's yard and taunted the 2-year-old girl, calling her "Chink baby" and pulling her hair. Last summer, the neighbors and at least five men threatened the child again. When the

mother tried to intervene, they pushed her to the ground and kicked her repeatedly. The Chinese family filed several complaints, but the police were consistently unresponsive and hostile. Some officers even physically barred them from entering the precinct to file further complaints. CAAAV has been accompanying family members to court proceedings to ensure their physical safety and that they receive fair treatment in the court system.

BENSONHURST, BROOKLYN

A Chinese family in Bensonhurst was harassed by their Italian neighbors following disputes over the use of a driveway that both families had constructed together in 1989. After the family erected a fence between the adjoining properties, the neighbors began throwing dog feces, broken eggs, rotting fruit, and garbage onto their property. The neighbors even stalked members of the Chinese family on their way to work and broke into their cars. The family was also subjected to racist and heterosexist slurs such as "Fuckin' chinks, you probably fuckin' each other inside. Two lezzie fucking chinks. We could rape [the family's three daughters] and they wouldn't care." Terrorized, the family filed a police complaint. Both parties eventually signed a mediation agreement in June 1993, which CAAAV assisted in drawing up.

demonstration

UPPER WEST SIDE, MANHATTAN

Holding signs that read "End Police Brutality" and "Stop Racist Violence" in both Korean and English, CAAAV members joined Action for Young Korean Americans (AYKA) and other concerned activists outside the 20th Precinct on October 26, 1993 to protest the police attack on Korean street vendor Kum Nam Kim. [see CAAAV Voice, Fall 1993]

Demonstrators demanded punishment for the two officers involved in the August

beating, police accountability to immigrant communities, and a meeting with the police commissioner. In support of Kim's case, CAAAV and AYKA also organized a petitioning event and held a legal clinic in Flushing, Queens. In one afternoon, 600 signatures were collected, bringing the total number of signatures to over 1,000. Not only was the petition drive an effort to gain justice for Kum Nam Kim, but it also served to educate the Korean community about the problem of police brutality and to encourage other victims to come forward.

(COMMUNITY Continued from Page 4)

communities. Many recent Southeast Asian immigrants arrived during the Reagan-Bush era – the time of drastic cuts to federal funding of social services and resettlement agencies.

New York's Southeast Asian population continues to grow. According to U.S. census estimates, there are approximately 4,000 Thai, 8,500 Vietnamese, 3,000 Cambodians, and 43,000 Filipinos in New York City alone.

SEAOOC plans to conduct in-person surveys to Southeast Asians living in Fordham, Bronx; Flushing and Woodside, Queens; Sunset Park, Brooklyn; and Chinatown. SEAOOC will be distributing CAAAV's anti-Asian violence brochures and other outreach materials, which will first be translated into Vietnamese, Khmer and Tagalog, and later, Burmese, Thai and Malay. SEAOOC also plans to put together a victim advocacy handbook that will inform Southeast Asians about their legal rights concerning police brutality and racial violence and will also include a discussion about grassroots organizing and empowerment.

Southeast Asian youths will be a major focus of the committee. Many children of the second wave of Southeast Asian immigrants, now approaching their teens, do not fit into the "model minority" mold. SEAOOC wants to work with youth to organize themselves.

SEAOOC is also supporting Vietnamese college student DN, who was brutally beaten by two plainclothes officer on November 9, 1993. [see **Chinatown, Manhattan**, page 6]

(ZORN Continued from Page 3)

notes, only in Japanese, describe *leng tch'e* as a form of capital punishment, which was performed during the Ch'ing Dynasty and last practiced in 1905.

The incorporation of these types of images is very much a signature of his music and his performances, which draw a considerable, uncritical following. Last year, he played at the Radical Jewish Music Festival at the Knitting Factory. To set the mood, Zorn placed five Japanese porno posters on the wall. What was chilling was that hardly anyone blinked an eye. Asian Americans must continue to challenge this uncritical acceptance of dehumanizing and violent images of Asian women.

ORGANIZATIONAL NEWS

MONONA'S on the move

After almost two years working as CAAAV's Director of Development and Public Policy, Monona Yin will be leaving her staff position at CAAAV in June. Monona has accepted a position as program officer for a new national foundation at Rockefeller Financial Services. John Hayakawa Torok, former CAAAV staff, will be taking over her duties for the summer and we will be hiring an Executive Director for September (see job description, next page).

In her time on the staff, Monona has made it possible for CAAAV to quadruple its budget, growing to a staff of six, including four community organizers and a full-time intern. Although this is certainly impressive, it does not nearly describe everything she brought to CAAAV—her cool, clear and quick-thinking presence even under the heat of the media spotlight, her ability to keep her eye on “the big picture” even as we were immersed in a myriad of programs, campaigns and crises, her history and ties with other progressive groups locally and nationally, and last, but not least, her attention to the innumerable thankless tasks that kept the busy office functioning.

Fortunately for us, Monona is only leaving the staff, not CAAAV. Monona has a long history with CAAAV—from co-founder of CAAAV in 1986, coordinating committee member while we were an all-volunteer organization, member of the first Board of Directors in 1990, to staff. We look forward to working with her in new ways as an active member of CAAAV.

new staff

With the beginning of the new year, CAAAV welcomed Saleem Osman as the new organizer for the Lease Drivers Coalition. Saleem replaces Mobashar Khalil, who left the staff late last fall because of increasing school demands. Saleem brings a unique combination of skills to LDC. He practiced law in Lahore, Pakistan for five years before he became a law professor. He has been driving a yellow cab in New York City for the past three years. LDC met Saleem through our first organizing campaign at Susan's Maintenance, where he distinguished himself with his energy and his willingness to confront the unfair practices of the owner.

Joining the Korean Community Organizing Committee as its new organizer/victim advocate is Hyun Lee. A recent graduate of Columbia University, Hyun first joined KCOC as a volunteer in the fall of 1993. She worked previously as a youth worker with the New York City Summer Youth Employment Program and has taught English as a Second Language in New York, Prague, and Seoul.

Also joining KCOC is Sherwin Yoon, a Mission Intern with the United Methodist Church. Sherwin arrives at CAAAV after spending 15 months in Korea where he worked with the Methodist Youth Fellowship, a student movement group.



saleem osman



hyun lee



sherwin yoon

POSITION AVAILABLE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CAAAV is hiring an Executive Director to replace and expand Monona Yin's previous position of Director of Development and Public Policy. There are presently five staff members whose primary work is community organizing, but who also share administrative duties.

The responsibilities of the Executive Director will include supervision of staff members, their hiring and review, financial management of CAAAV, fundraising and facilitation of short- and long-term organizational planning by CAAAV Board, staff and members. CAAAV has a Board of Directors that includes elected and appointed members. It is important that the Executive Director have strong leadership, managerial and supervisory skills, while being able to work effectively and cooperatively with an active and diverse membership and Board. S/he must have experience working with immigrant communities, civil rights organizations, and/or community organizing.

DATE AVAILABLE

September 6, 1994

SALARY

\$32,000 to \$38,000 (based on experience)
plus benefits

**Send cover letter, resume and
three references to the
CAAAV Search Committee,
191 E. 3rd Street, NY, NY 10009.**

POSITION AVAILABLE

(DYING Continued from Page 5)

death because of the absence of a robbery. On the other hand, many merchants do not want to raise the racial issue because they fear retaliation and feel they cannot defend themselves. Meanwhile, leaders from other communities, such as Bishop Samuel Grooms of the greater Miracle Temple, deny the hate motivation in these crimes but support the merchants by demanding increased police presence in the area.

In the wake of these murders, another group entered the arena last fall. The National Rifle Association contacted dozens of Korean American and Chinese American shop owners and civic leaders, allegedly to enlist their support in its national campaign for tougher laws against violent criminals. The NRA stated that it merely wanted to offer its resources to help unify local merchants and publicize their feelings about violent crime, not to promote the NRA stance on guns. Asian American leaders, recognizing the dangers of being identified with the NRA's racist framing of the crime problem and the need for guns, wrote: "We cannot stand by and allow our community's grief and outrage to be used for your political purposes." At a meeting convened by the NRA to court Asian Americans, half the attendees left in protest and community leaders took the stage in a 10-minute rebuttal to the NRA. Countering the NRA's call for more guns to stop gun-related violence, the Asian American leaders called for police and government action, community cooperation and gun control.

LOS ANGELES

Since February 1993, over 40 Korean Americans have been killed or wounded during robberies in Los Angeles County. Half of these attacks occurred at businesses. October was a particularly brutal month, with four merchants murdered. Among them was Myung Lee, a single woman who ran a doughnut shop and regularly donated to a breakfast program for the homeless. Lee died three months after she fell into a coma from being shot in a robbery. One minister of a Korean American church reported that over 100 members of his congregation had been victims of robberies, including three who were killed.

In Los Angeles, gun stores with mostly Korean American customers report unprecedented increases in weapons purchases. On the other hand, there is a growing acknowledgment of the need to bridge the racial gap in neighborhoods, such as those of the African American community, where Korean American stores have multiplied. For example, the 3,500-member Korean American Grocers Association of Southern California (KAGASC) has been working with the African American Food Association to develop ties between black-owned food distributors and Korean American retailers. KAGASC has also promoted a Korean-language primer that educates its readers about African American history and culture.

C A M P A I G N S FOR

J U S T I C E

THE SHINWA SHELL GAME

The notorious Shinwa Restaurant, which closed on June 4, 1993 after its Asian and Latino workers struggled against racist and abusive labor practices for three years, has now reopened under so-called "new management." [see CAAAV Voice, Fall 1993.]

Not to be fooled by this tactic often used by employers to enable them to continue their exploitation, the National Labor Relations Board has filed complaints by the workers regarding reinstatement and compensation for loss of wages against both the "old" and "new" Shinwa owners. Meanwhile, the case before the New York State Supreme Court against Shinwa concerning unpaid back wages—including overtime and tips totaling over \$450,000—owed the workers continues. Shinwa Restaurant is refusing to comply with court instructions to turn over key documents.

For further information, call the Latino Workers Center, 212-473-3936.



VICTORY FOR THE SILVER PALACE WORKERS

After seven months of picketing the Silver Palace Restaurant, the forty locked-out, but determined, workers finally triumphed. Silver Palace management ceded to the workers' demand for a fair labor agreement and signed a contract with the 318 Restaurant Workers Union on March 11. The only unionized restaurant in Chinatown, Silver Palace was first unionized in 1981 after a prolonged and bitter workers' struggle.

A rally scheduled on March 12 to support the workers on the picket line turned into a victory celebration and a call for economic justice. Posters, calling for the enforcement of labor laws and the elimination of slave labor, were carried by hundreds of people of all colors and thirty-six organizations. Silver Palace workers who spoke at the rally expressed their hope that their victory would send a message of

encouragement to other oppressed workers that they, too, can achieve decent working conditions through collective action.

For more information, call Peter Lin at the Chinese Staff & Workers Association, 212-619-7979.

EAST RIVER CHANGES MORE THAN ITS NAME

On April 27, 1994, the dining room workers of East River Restaurant gained a 3-year union contract with the restaurant's new owners. Located in Flushing, Queens, Golden River Restaurant, as it is now known, had just reopened.

In addition to filing an unfair labor practices complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, the workers picketed the East River Restaurant for several months, forcing it to close in January. The workers were successful in gaining community support for their demands. The new management,

concerned that negative public opinion would keep customers away, decided to recognize the 318 Restaurant Workers' Union. The message was clear—in order to run a successful business, management had to recognize the rights of the workers.

The workers began their boycott campaign because the original management was paying waiters as little as 70 cents an hour, pocketing one-third of their tips (which is illegal by New York State law), and not reporting taxes deducted from workers' paychecks to the IRS. The workers organized, joining Local 318 Restaurant Workers Union. With the support of Chinese Staff and Workers Association, CAAAV and the community, they finally gained a fair contract.

The new contract ensures that tip-earning busboys and waiters earn at least \$3.00 per hour as their base rate, and dim sum sellers at least \$6.00 per hour. All workers receive time and a half for overtime and percentage increases of

their base salaries in successive years. The workers gained pro-rated medical benefits and paid sick leave, vacation, and maternity/paternity/adoption leave. New employees have 30 days to join the union and must stay in good standing with the union for the duration of their employment.

GARMENT WORKERS REJECT JESSICA'S "CHARITY"

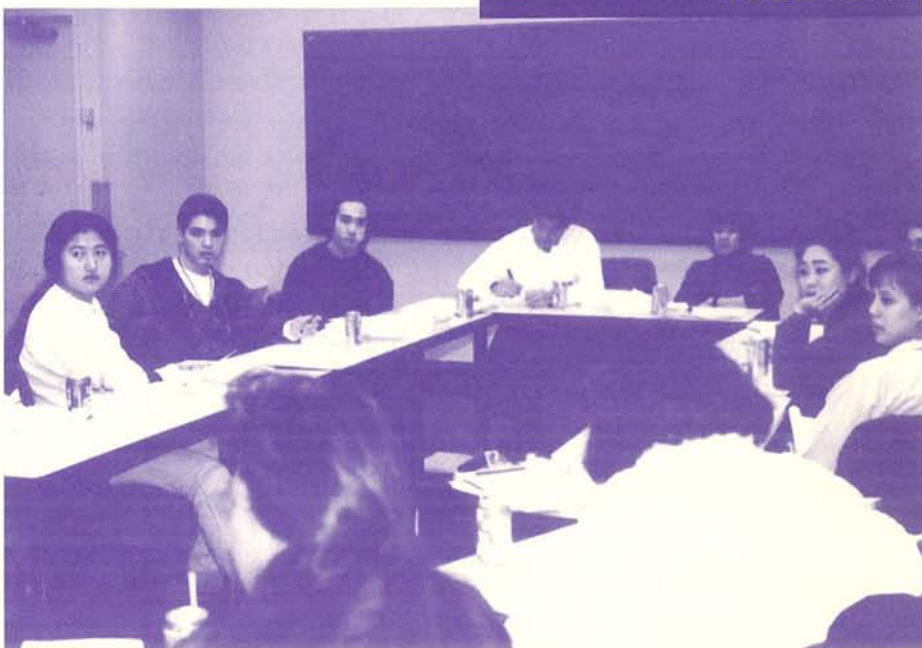
Asian Immigrant Women Advocates (AIWA) in Oakland, California, is leading a nationwide boycott in support of the struggle of twelve garment workers against manufacturer Jessica McClintock.

The workers are entitled to \$15,000 in back wages from the Lucky Sewing Co., a former contractor and supplier of McClintock's formal wear, which folded in May, 1992.

After months of protests at the headquarters of Jessica McClintock Inc. in San Francisco and pickets at boutiques across the country, including New York City. According to Roy Hong of Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates in Los Angeles, the pickets in front of the flagship Jessica McClintock boutique in Beverly Hills, California, have already cost the store 30% of its business while also raising awareness about the subminimum wages and unsafe working conditions of immigrant garment workers. The manufacturer, while still denying any responsibility, offered to give a "charitable contribution" to the workers.

Of the twelve workers, only five decided to accept the money. One of the women (who wished to remain anonymous to protect her job) explained that she refused the money because the written agreement she was asked to sign stated that the worker agreed to receive the money as a "charitable contribution," and that the worker did not hold Jessica McClintock responsible for back wages. "I didn't want to sign it. How can it be a gift if you attach these conditions? It is insulting for her to try to buy our silence," she said.

Although she recognized the offer as a "partial victory," Helen Kim of AIWA reasserted AIWA's continuing support of the workers for full compensation and its recognition of the remaining workers' right not to accept the money. She appealed to the Asian



THE ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA TAKEOVER. About 75 people attended "The Asian American Media Takeover Strategy Meeting" organized by CAAAV and the Hunter College Asian Pacific Student Alliance on November 21, 1993. The event was a combination of presentations about media activism, and smaller discussion groups and training sessions. Participants addressed what had been successful and difficult in previous media campaigns. As media organizers, we tried to challenge ourselves to go beyond confrontation and protest, seeking ways of reshaping media so that it abandons racist representations and covers the issues facing our communities.

American community throughout the country to support their stand.

To support the workers, write a letter to Jessica McClintock, at 1400 16th Street, San Francisco, California 94103, demanding that she pay back wages to the former Lucky Sewing Co. workers and that she guarantee minimum wage, overtime pay and safe working conditions for all her workers. For more information contact Amy Hsi at 212-595-5500, or AIWA 510-268-0192.

KUNSTLER, DEUTSCH & FINK IN DAVID WONG'S CORNER

Great news for David Wong and his supporters! In a major breakthrough, renowned civil rights attorneys, William Kunstler, Michael Deutsch and Liz Fink, and the Center for Constitutional Rights have pledged their commitment to David Wong's case. The David Wong Support Committee, who secured the

services of these attorneys, are hopeful of David's eventual liberation.

David is the young immigrant (now 30 years old) from China who was imprisoned for theft, his first and only criminal offense, in 1984. In 1986, while serving an unduly harsh sentence for the crime, he was accused of murdering another inmate. He was convicted solely on the testimony of a tower guard who changed his original story from "the attacker appeared white" to "the attacker was David Wong." It was a clear case of a racist frame-up and cover-up by the prison. David was represented by an incompetent court-appointed lawyer and his case was heard before an all-white jury selected from a small conservative upstate town. [see CAAAV Voice, Fall 1992]

In anticipation of accelerated legal activity, the David Wong Support Committee is planning fundraisers and extended outreach. Interested supporters can call the committee at 212-926-7412.

The Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence was founded in 1986 to organize Asian communities in the New York City area to combat racist violence and police brutality. Through community education and organizing efforts, CAAAV strives to develop leadership within Asian communities to speak out and effect change in public policies, the police department and the criminal justice system. CAAAV assists and advocates for victims of racist violence and police brutality.

CAAAV seeks to strengthen the understanding within Asian communities of the economic and political roots of racist violence and our commonalities with other people of color. CAAAV works in coalition with other community groups for racial and economic justice.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARJI FUJIKI
KAZU IJIMA
SARITA KHURANA
BEN LEE
FRANCES LEE
MINI LIU
TANI TAKAGI
GRAHAM WONG

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

KAZU IJIMA
MILI KANG
EDDIE KOCHIYAMA
YURI KOCHIYAMA
MINI LIU
DEBI RAY-CHAUDHURI
MARSHA TAJIMA

SPECIAL THANKS

ELIZABETH HO
GRAHAM WONG

Name/Contact Person _____
Organization _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone # _____

- Individual Voice Subscriber—\$15/year.
- Institutional Voice Subscriber—\$25/year.
- CAAAV Supporter (includes Voice)—\$25/year.
- Subscription for Low-Income/Senior Citizen Member—\$7/year.
- I would like to make a contribution of _____ to support CAAAV's work.

The
CAAAV VOICE

Newsletter
of the
Committee
Against
Anti-Asian
Violence

191 East 3rd Street
New York, NY 10009
212-473-6485

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, N.Y.
Permit No. 5983