

CAAUV VOICE

v15no1 . Fall 2008



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EDITORS' NOTE

As this issue of the VOICE goes to the printer, the lines have been more clearly drawn for this upcoming historic presidential election. Much has been debated and much made of the promise of the Democratic candidate and his potential progressivism. But no matter what the assessment of his politics is, one thing is clear: low-income communities, immigrants, and people of color must be organized and be powerful forces that make demands that Obama must acknowledge and address if and when he is president. It is the daily efforts of marginalized communities around the country, like the ones in New York City that CAAAV organizes, that will determine how progressive the next president is. In New York City, low income, immigrant, communities of color are amongst those facing the largest impact from the financial situation that Wall Street investors have left us in. Millions of dollars will be lost in the city which will unfairly leave workers and families jobless and in need of safe and affordable housing, health care, and basic human needs. However, the global and national financial crisis is not new to our communities who have been facing economic exploitation and uncertainty for a long time, and the exploitation will continue even when the big banks have been bailed out. CAAAV's members and organizers have committed to lead the force in these tough times and work to alter the relationship of power within our communities and win victories that improve peoples' lives. Without our powerful and collective efforts, conditions will not change for the better—this has been a constant lesson in CAAAV's two decades of tireless efforts.

CAAAV is also in the midst of a historic leadership transition. On August 1, long-time member Haeyoung Yoon began her new position as our Executive Director. In her 12 years of involvement with CAAAV, Haeyoung has served as the Board Chair; participated in the Strategizing Committee, CAAAV's leadership body; and provided legal support to the Chinatown Justice Project and Women Workers Project. In doing so, she built an extensive and intimate knowledge of the breadth of the organization's work. We are extremely excited and privileged to have Haeyoung on board! We are also excited

to welcome Esther Wang as a new CJP staff member. As we welcome Haeyoung and Esther, we also say goodbye to former Executive Director Sung E Bai. In her 14 years with CAAAV, Sung E built a remarkable track record and led the organization as it established the Youth Leadership Project and Women Workers Project; played crucial roles in local and national alliances; was instrumental in purchasing our Bronx office, located in the heart of New York's Southeast Asian community; and supported the development of a generation of organizers and leaders in the racial justice and immigrant rights movements. We are deeply indebted to her contributions and look forward to working with her in her new role at Social Justice Leadership.

During this transition, our program areas have not missed a beat and continue to do important work in our communities. The Chinatown Justice Project, in conjunction with a city-wide coalition, won the passage of a groundbreaking executive order mandating multi-lingual access for City services. Signed in July by Mayor Bloomberg, this first-of-its-kind executive order will make critical programs more accessible for the more than 40 percent of New Yorkers whose primary language is not English. The Youth Leadership Project (YLP) concluded another successful summer youth program, won a commitment from the Montefiore Medical Center to expand services for the Bronx's Southeast Asian communities, and are in the midst of developing a plan to establish a community center which will help create a sustainable community. CJP and the Chinatown Tenants Union, working within the OUR Waterfront Coalition, have made strategic headway on the East River Waterfront campaign, which aims to assert a democratic space for working-class residents in both the Lower East Side and Chinatown. In the past year, Women Workers Project continued its coalition work with Domestic Workers United on the Bill of Rights campaign and has also been organizing locally by providing free health services and trainings to workers.

In celebration, in transition, and in struggle,

— THE EDITORS

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CAAAV VOICE

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CAAAV Welcomes HAEYOUNG YOON as Executive Director!

**HAEYOUNG'S DEEP EXPERIENCE AND
EXPERTISE AS A LEGAL ADVOCATE IS
MATCHED BY HER COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND ORGANIZING LOW-INCOME
IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES.**



Haeyoung Yoon

2008 marks an important moment in CAAAV's history. After serving as Executive Director of CAAAV for over 12 years, Sung E Bai has moved on to take up new challenges elsewhere. CAAAV is excited to see Sung E pursue other opportunities in her personal and professional life and wishes her the best in all her pursuits. We know her passion for social justice is unwavering, so this is not an end but a new beginning. We will continue to see each other on the frontlines wherever there is work to be done.

As we say goodbye to Sung E with sadness, we welcome our new Executive Director, Haeyoung Yoon, with great excitement. In addition to a long history of active CAAAV membership, Haeyoung brings eight years of experience working as a legal advocate. Recognized as one of New York's foremost immigrant and workers' rights attorneys, Haeyoung has worked at MFY Legal Services, providing legal representation to the Chinatown community. And during her tenure at the Community Development Project of the

Urban Justice Center, she worked closely with community groups in New York City to represent low-wage immigrant workers who faced exploitative working conditions and provided legislative support for housing advocacy groups and worker centers. For her groundbreaking work defending the civil and human rights of South Asian, Arab, and Muslim detainees in federal custody, Trial Lawyers for Public Justice selected Haeyoung as Trial Lawyer of the Year Finalist in 2006. Haeyoung's deep experience and expertise as a legal advocate is matched by her commitment to social justice and organizing low-income immigrant communities.

CAAAV's leadership transition also signals important and positive shifts within the organization. CAAAV recently reconstituted its Strategizing Committee, which is now made up of members and staff and focuses primarily on political education and movement history to deepen the organization's understanding of itself in the current landscape. CAAAV's Board of Directors is also being transformed, adding more members and increasing its scope of responsibility, especially in the areas of supporting our new Executive Director and broadening the organization's base of financial support. During this time of renewed energy, excitement, and possibility, we are doubling our efforts to increase our individual donor base. Our goal is greater balance between financial support from foundations and individuals who are inspired by CAAAV's work. With a larger base of individual donors, CAAAV will have greater flexibility and responsiveness in its programs, in addition to developing a community of active and conscious supporters.

CAAAV is more open than ever to feedback and engagement with our wider membership and encourage you to contact us with your ideas and input. Last year marked our 20th year anniversary, which we celebrated with over 200 members, supporters, and allies in May 2007. With new leadership and passion, we look forward to working with all of you in 2009 and beyond!



Deva X Ji Woo and Sung E Bai

CJP MEMBER PROFILE: KAH EAN CHANG



Kah Ean Chang, a long-time Chinatown resident who hails from Malaysia and speaks two Chinese dialects (in addition to English), has been a member of CAAAV's Chinatown Justice Project (CJP) since 2000. She joined CJP as a high school student, and recently finished coordinating the very same summer youth program she participated in during high school. Kah Ean is currently working on her BFA in Film Production and minoring in Women's Studies at Brooklyn College.

How did you become involved with CAAAV?

One day, two CJP members came to my class at Seward Park High School in Chinatown and gave a presentation about CJP's work. I thought it was pretty interesting, so I applied.

You've been involved for quite some time. Why do you want to stay connected to CAAAV and organizing?

I've stayed involved for so long because I think it's really important to always work for change, whether it's change within your community, overall society or the whole world. It's especially important for me to get involved with CJP because the work is related to where I live—Chinatown. Also, all the work that CAAAV does is very inspiring.

What groups within the community have you organized?

Low-income tenants living in Chinatown, Chinese immigrant youth, and street vendors in Chinatown.

If you were to name one of your most memorable organizing experiences, what would that be? Why?

I would say the language access campaign has been the most memorable. I remember that a lot of Chinatown tenants came out with us to protest outside New York City's Housing and Preservation Department building a few years ago. It was really exciting. This campaign went on for four

years, and we finally got a victory this year when Mayor Bloomberg signed an executive order that requires city agencies to provide services to all residents of New York, regardless of what language they speak.

What have you learned about yourself through organizing, and also, what have you learned about your community and its members from your experiences?

I noticed that I actually feel very connected to organizing work. I could do more than what I thought I could in terms of outreach, facilitation, and talking to people. I've learned that my community is being impacted more and more by gentrification, more rich people are moving in, more luxury condos, cafes and boutiques are opening up and appearing, and more low-income tenants are getting kicked out or just can't afford the rent.

How has CAAAV helped to shape your politics?

Before joining CAAAV, I thought very much like other people in the community. For example, most conform to what the status quo is and believe that this is the way it has to be. However, I found that it's no longer true to me. I've been through a lot of political workshops in CAAAV, and I've realized that the country that I'm living in, can and needs to be better for everyone, without exception.

What are you doing now?

I've just finished coordinating CJP's summer youth program for the first time with fellow member MinMin Li, which was an intense but rewarding experience. School starts again this fall, so I'll be going back to student life while continuing the organizing work with CJP/CTU.

What do you see yourself doing in the next 10 years?

Becoming a filmmaker and continue doing what I'm doing in CAAAV now, organizing the Chinatown community.

What would your ideal Chinatown look like?

Housing conditions would get better, and fewer tenants would be harassed or evicted from their homes by landlords. Basically, no more gentrification!

What's your relationship to CAAAV?

I have been a member of CAAAV's Asian Resistance Media (ARM) since 2002 and recently joined the board.

How long have you been a CAAAV donor?

I've been donating to CAAAV for over ten years. The first time I ever donated was in college. I attended a fundraiser for the Women Workers Project and heard a member talk about their campaign to fight for dignity in the workplace for domestic workers. I was so moved that gave my last \$20 when they made a solicitation pitch. And I've donated ever since.

Why did you first start giving?

When I first became politically active in college, CAAAV would come up in different contexts. Later, when a broad coalition of student groups held a sit-in protesting the systematic role-back of minority representation in the student association and the excessive show of force by the campus police against students, CAAAV sent a representative to show their solidarity. That really made an impression on me. When a friend invited me to a CAAAV event, I jumped at the chance to learn more about their work. While listening to the members talk about their working conditions, I realized that their stories were those of my own friends and family. And that the success of their organizing campaigns would not only help the members but would improve the lives of people I care about. That is why I decided to support them.

Why do you continue to give?

CAAAV is my political home. As the only pan-Asian group in New York City organizing working-class immigrants, they play an important role in the social justice movement. They are part of a broader effort to work for a more just society. CAAAV has also shared its strategies and lessons learned with other social justice groups and connect their

DONOR PROFILE: SOPHIA SILAO, ARM



Sophia Silao was born in Manila, Philippines, grew up in Spring Valley, NY and is a proud resident of Queens. She has been a member of CAAAV's Asian Resistance Media (ARM) since 2002 and has helped in a variety of projects including project support, fundraising, and special events, in addition to serving as a board member. She has worked in the field of philanthropy for ten years.

local work to national and global social justice efforts. I've seen high school students, elderly grandmothers, recent immigrants and 2nd-3rd generation Asians work together to push for better housing conditions in Chinatown, language access in the Bronx and the passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. It's quite inspiring, and the process is so important to New York's social fabric.

What do you think you get as donor?

As a donor, I become part of a larger community of individuals who believe in equality and justice. It is also a way for me to publicly state my opposition to institutional racism, patriarchy and xenophobia.

CAAAV is starting a major donor campaign called, Seeding Our Future. Thoughts?

It's really exciting. CAAAV has organized grassroots communities for over 20 years and has worked to improve the lives of so many individuals. Seeding Our Future is a great opportunity for the community to show their appreciation and to ensure that CAAAV will continue its work for years to come.

THANK YOU CAAAV 2008 SUPPORTERS!

All of us at CAAAV want to express our sincere appreciation for the institutional and individual support we've received this year. We know that social justice organizations like CAAAV are blessed by the care and commitment of all those that partner with us.

SEEDING OUR FUTURE

As we go to print with this issue of the Voice, CAAAV is in the midst of launching Seeding Our Future—our first major donor campaign—to expand our base of individuals donating \$600 or more annually. As of early October, we have already raised over \$40,000 from this first campaign.

FOUNDING MAJOR DONORS of Seeding Our Future (as of October 3, 2008)

Anonymous	Becky Leung & Christy Leung
Katherine Acey	Holly Lim Gang
Sung E Bai	Mini Liu
Shona Chakravartty	Scott Lu
Hyon mi Chang	Nancy Morawetz
Amy Chen	Lisa & Richard Orbé-Austin
Ann Chung	Huy Ong
Kamau K. Franklin	Jenn Pae
Penny Fujiko Willgerodt	Supriya Pillai
Michael J. Hirschhorn	Chandan Reddy
& Jimena P. Martinez	Sandra Sebastian
Andrew Hsiao	& Mario Lugay
Joo-Hyun Kang	Robert Sherman
Mai Kiang	Sophia Silao
Helen S. Kim	& Noah Fessenden
Jee Kim & Sumitra Rajkumar	Javid Syed
Jee Mee Kim & Pete Diaz	Nat Choike Williams
Donnie Kwak	Karen Zelermeier & Tami Gold

BECOME A CAAAV MAJOR DONOR

For information about Seeding Our Future, please email: seeds@caaav.org. All donors providing gifts or pledges of \$600 or more by December 31, 2008 will be founding members of Seeding Our Future.

WANT TO BUILD THE POWER OF ASIAN IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE COMMUNITIES? DONATE TO CAAAV TODAY!

During this time of organizational transition and growth, we hope you'll join us to support critical organizing work in Asian immigrant & refugee communities. Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to CAAAV today. You can use the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.caaav.org/support

FROM ALL OF US AT CAAAV, THANK YOU!

OTHER INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

(as of October 3, 2008)

Christine Ahn	Becky Lee
Anonymous	Hyun Lee
Tammy Bang Luu	Sujin Lee & Christine T. Lipat
Franziska Castillo	Yul-san Liem
Christine Chai	Celine Liu
June Chan	Dan Liu
& Mariana Romo-Carmona	Julian Liu
Chhaya Chhoum	Stacie Ma'a
Donna Chin	Sam Miller
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Mandy Hu	Valerie Taing
Holmes Hummel	Tata Traore-Rogers
Abbie Illenberger	Helen Wan
Jazmine Irizarry	Grace Wang
Dana Kaplan	Kathleen Webster
Hyun Kim	Cindy Weisner
Jamie Kim	Mayumi Willgerodt & Damien Lee
Larry Kressley	Bob Wing
Charlotte Kuo-Benitez	Sophy Shiahua Wong
Douglas Lasdon	Tsuya Yee

2008 FOUNDATION, BUSINESS & INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

(as of October 3, 2008)

Andrus Family Fund	Hill-Snowdon Foundation
API Movement	Jewish Funds for Justice
Applied Research Center	Jews for Racial
Asian American Legal Defense	& Economic Justice
& Education Fund	Johnson Family Foundation
Asian Americans for Equality	Justice Committee
Audre Lorde Project	Labor/Community Strategy Center
Cambodian Association of	Make the Road New York
Greater Philadelphia	Mei Mei Chinese Restaurant
Center for Constitutional Rights	Merck Family Fund
Chinese Progressive Association	Ms. Foundation for Women
The Currents of Change Fund	Social Justice Leadership
Direct Action for Rights & Equality	SouthWest Organizing Project
Domestic Workers United	Southwest Workers Union
Edward W. Hazen Foundation	Surdna Foundation
Elektra Corp.	University Settlement
Elite Contracting	Urban Justice Center
& Construction Corp.	William H. Prusoff Foundation
FIERCE!	Young Korean American Service
Good Old Lower East Side	Education Center

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

CHINATOWN JUSTICE PROJECT

WOMEN WORKERS PROJECT

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROJECT



T-shirt made by the Chinatown Justice Project youth for their Summer 2008 event

In 2008, the forces of gentrification have continued to creep into New York City's Chinatown. Developers continue to build high-rises for the wealthy, while landlords neglect rent-regulated apartments and harass low-income tenants as a tactic to displace them, with the ultimate goal of converting rent-regulated apartments into market-rate units. While little has changed in this respect, the Chinatown Justice Project (CJP) has progressed leaps and bounds since the start of this year. Much has changed around the CJP office and in the Chinatown community.

Our most notable recent victory includes the July 21, 2008 passage of a New York City Language Access Executive Order, which sets a precedent for City agencies to provide services to tenants in languages other than English. Previously, Chinese-speaking tenants had limited access to City services, despite the fact that the homes of many

CHINATOWN JUSTICE PROJECT

recent immigrants are severely neglected by landlords. This victory follows four years of CJP's participation in a city-wide coalition called Communities for Housing Equity, in which CJP played a key role in rallies, petition drives, report writing, the education of City officials, and community organizing to fight for language access to the City's housing services.

CJP HAS NOT ONLY TAKEN ON INDIVIDUAL SLUMLORDS AND CITY AGENCIES PROVIDING HOUSING SERVICES—WE HAVE ALSO BROADENED OUR SCOPE TO CHALLENGE DEVELOPERS PROMOTING GROWTH THAT ONLY SERVES TOURISM AND THE WEALTHY.

While we constantly work to keep City agencies accountable, we also earned a recent victory to hold a slumlord accountable. Two years ago, a landlord in a single-room occupant building (commonly known as "SROs") on the Bowery gave all of its tenants eviction notices so that the units could be converted to hotel rooms. Through the Chinatown Tenants Union, a program of CJP, we worked with tenants in the ensuing legal battle, which concluded when a State judge ruled that all tenants had a right to stay in their apartments. We will continue our work to improve housing conditions of this building and to challenge the landlord to prevent the conversion of the entire building into a hotel.

CJP has not only taken on individual slumlords and City agencies providing housing services—we have also broadened our scope to challenge developers promoting growth that only serves tourism and the wealthy. The City's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) plans to transform the East River waterfront along Chinatown and the Lower East Side by installing new walkways with seating and tables and developing space on piers for commercial use. While community members welcome the beautification of this long-neglected space, Chinatown and Lower East Side residents see this development as yet another gentrification project that will

squeeze long-term community members out of their homes. Most significantly, the planning process hasn't meaningfully involved the communities it will most impact. Sharing these common concerns, CJP and other community organizations in Chinatown and Lower East Side have come together to form a coalition called Organizing and Uniting Residents on the Waterfront, also known as OUR Waterfront Coalition. This coalition aims to ensure that communities living close to the waterfront, especially those most risk of displacement – namely low-income people, people of color, and immigrants – are central in decision-making on the development and management of the waterfront. On July 19th, CJP, along with other members of the coalition,

organized an event called “Its OUR Waterfront Day!” during which community residents joined together to launch a community visioning process that will help us determine the types of services, programs, and businesses that should occupy the waterfront space.

In addition to forming local coalitions to fight for community self-determination, CJP has broadened its scope even further by joining the leadership of a national alliance, Right to the City. On August 29th, the Right to the City supporters in New York City marched through Chinatown in conjunction with demonstrations in cities throughout the country to commemorate the third anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. By acknowledging this tragedy and showing solidarity with Chinatown residents facing similar issues of displacement, demonstrators demanded the reinvestment in strong communities, real democracy, and the right for community control in development.

While it may seem that CJP has enough on its plate, we continue our most challenging and important task: developing the leadership of community members so that we can continue to work for real changes in our own community. This summer, we trained fifteen youth in political education and organizing skills, and they played a key role in all of the CJP events throughout the summer. On August 24th, the youth organized a Chinatown Community Struggle exhibition, where they displayed beautifully crafted t-shirts designed to educate the Chinatown community on gentrification.

All this is occurring in the context of the current fi-



CJP youth member holding up a sign from the commemoration of the 3rd Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina in Chinatown, August 29, 2008



CJP members in Miami for the RTTC National Expression in July 2008: RTTC held a spirited march and rally in the midst of a torrential downpour

ncial crisis that is redefining the U.S. and world economies. Much of the gentrification that our community has experienced has come as a result of reckless real estate speculation, facilitated by global capital. As the national economy struggles to adjust to the current crisis, our sense is that the government will continue to play some role in bailing out floundering financial companies. How this will impact our community—in terms of services, quality of housing, and major development projects—is still unclear, but we believe that the aftershocks will begin to manifest themselves in ways that highlight the contradictions of years of unchecked and illusory growth.

While we still have a long way to go in the struggle for self-determination in our communities, CJP has increased its role as a widely recognized and forceful presence in Chinatown, and we've shown ourselves to be able to take action on important and pressing issues on both a local and national level. Moving into 2009, we ask for your continued support of CAAAV, which will allow us to face the challenges that lie ahead as we continue our fast-paced and rigorous work.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

WOMEN WORKERS PROJECT

The Women Workers Project (WWP) continued to work with the Domestic Workers United (DWU) to pass the "Domestic Workers Bill of Rights," a State-wide bill to establish labor standards for domestic workers, including health care and basic benefits. Excluded from many federal and state labor laws, the "Bill of Rights" would bring long overdue respect and recognition to the domestic workforce. WWP participated in various aspects of the Bill of Rights campaign, including garnering support from students, faith-based communities, and unions, and conducting workshops. In the spring of 2008, WWP also joined Domestic Workers United and their supporters (including AFL-CIO President John Sweeney) as they traveled to Albany for their "Day of Action" that called on State legislators to support the Bill of Rights.*



WWP members at Health Fair in Woodside, Queens in May 2008

Recognizing that many of our women workers have little or no access to health care while working long hours, WWP held a health fair in May to educate workers on the critical health needs of women as well as to provide free health consultations and services. Thanks to the help of the NYU Center for the Study of Asian American Health, the Kalusugan Coalition, APICHA, Charles B. Wang Health Center, the Philippine Nurses Association, and Dr. Arnil Neri, we were able to provide free breast and cervical cancer screenings, HIV testing, counseling, free blood pressure screening, cholesterol screening, glucose screening, and chiropractic service.

WWP also participated in organizing the first National Domestic Workers Congress, which was held in New York in June. More than 100 workers from 16 organizations across the country participated in this first-of-its-kind congress.

** Please see our "Alliance Updates" section for more information on DWU's work.*



Above photo and photos on next page: YLP youth members at Youth Leadership Summer Event

The Youth Leadership Project continued our work of building the capacity of young Cambodian and Vietnamese youth to develop inter-generational strategies to address community-wide struggles. This year, YLP, working in collaboration with the Buddhist Temple, hosted its first-ever Khmer New Year's event, which brought out over 500 community members, demonstrating the strength and vibrancy of our community. Other recent events that YLP organized was a Community Memorial Service in March, where we denounced the war, spoke about our Health Justice campaign, and launched the Community Memorial Project, where we will collect video of 50 community members talking about their experience during the Khmer Rouge. This event took place on the fifth anniversary of the war in Iraq. At the end of the summer, YLP graduated eight new Youth Organizers and in September, we hosted a health forum for the community. We are eager to continue our work in our community to help it grow and thrive.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROJECT

YLP concluded its two-year partnership with the NYU School Medicine's Institute of Community Health and Research to better understand the community's health needs by conducting surveys and focus group sessions. In September 2007, we co-published two reports, entitled "Community Health Needs & Resource Assessment," for the Cambodian and Vietnamese communities in the Bronx. The study highlighted that health services at the local Montefiore Medical Center, which has the highest frequency of visits by Southeast Asian, was inadequate. YLP also discovered that an often-unacknowledged thread that runs through every struggle our community faces is the ongoing health and mental health impacts of war, genocide, and migration on all generations; the sufferings the Southeast Asian community has endured over two decades ago have left permanent scars. Many still complain of chronic aches and pains. Diabetes and high

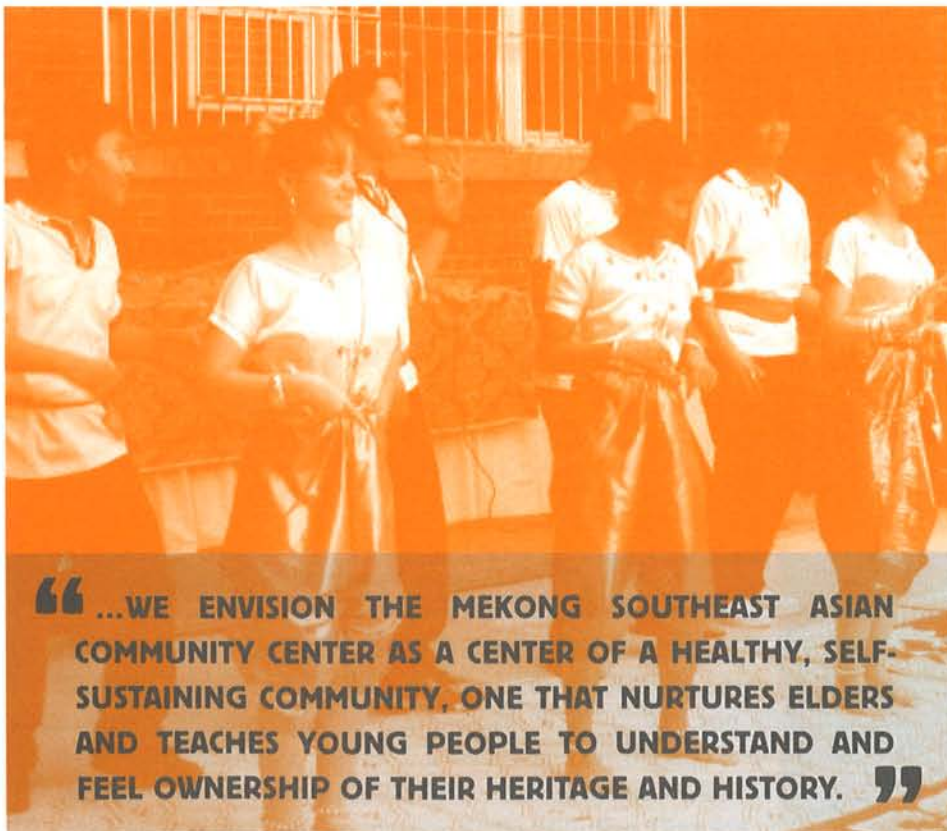
blood pressure are commonly reported ailments as well. Yet the Medical Center lacked bilingual staff to serve overwhelmingly non-English speaking Southeast Asian clients and failed to connect the community's prevailing health conditions to their past trauma. We thus launched the Southeast Asian Health Justice Campaign to demand the Medical Center build a comprehensive war survivors health program which would include: community outreach, services for war survivors, bilingual health care providers, and holistic care that includes alternative healing methods, such as acupuncture.

In May 2008, the Montefiore Medical Center agreed to work with YLP to build this program. In 2009 we plan to: (1) maintain pressure on the hospital to establish the program in accordance with our demands and in a timely manner; (2) and monitor service provision to ensure quality health-care for the community. The success of this campaign will result in improved



health services and treatment for the 10,000 Cambodians and Vietnamese in the Bronx.

Finally YLP is in the early stages of building of an exciting community institution and resource—the Mekong Southeast Asian Community Center. Named after the river that flows as a lifeline to communities in both Cambodia and Vietnam, we envision the Mekong Southeast Asian Community Center as a center of a healthy, self-sustaining community, one that nurtures elders and teaches young people to understand and feel ownership of their heritage and history. Mekong will offer both Eastern-influenced health services such as acupuncture, a resource center to provide referrals to public services for community members, a community garden tended by youth and elders, and a vibrant physical home for all of YLP's activities. The center will serve the approximately 10,000 Southeast Asians in the north-west Bronx, as well as those in New Jersey and Connecticut, where there is also a lack of community institution. In preparation for the conversion of CAAAV's offices, a four-story former convent, into the Mekong Center, we recently completed an ambitious renovation plan which includes "green" architectural designs and a financing plan, in collaboration with Hunter College Urban Planning students.



“...WE ENVISION THE MEKONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMMUNITY CENTER AS A CENTER OF A HEALTHY, SELF-SUSTAINING COMMUNITY, ONE THAT NURTURES ELDER AND TEACHES YOUNG PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND AND FEEL OWNERSHIP OF THEIR HERITAGE AND HISTORY.”

ALLIANCE UPDATES

Domestic Workers United (DWU) continued the fight to establish labor standards for domestic workers in New York, focused on mobilizing the expanded coalition of support that we have built from diverse sectors of the social justice movement to exercise our collective power in Albany. On April 15, DWU was joined in our first Albany Day of Action by over 250 supporters, including members of TWU Local 100, as well as its President Roger Toussaint who spoke at the rally; 30 high school students from Boys and Girls High School; and new organizers in the Social Justice Leadership's Foundations of Organizing training program. On DWU's second Albany Day, May 20, domestic workers, farm workers, street vendors and queer youth of color were joined by President John Sweeney of the AFL-CIO, who announced that 10 million U.S. workers support the Bill of Rights. These actions, along with a vibrant National Domestic Workers Congress hosted by DWU in New York, lifted the visibility of the struggle of domestic workers to new levels. The Congress, attended by 100 domestic workers representing 10 cities and 16 organizations, included joint education workshops, sharing and exchange of organizing strategies, discussions on workplan and structure, and ended with a march to support the Bill of Rights. In the midst of this campaign work, DWU has hired two full-time staff, Joycelyn Gill-Campbell, a nanny and long-time member, and Priscilla Gonzalez, the daughter of a domestic worker



and part-time DWU organizer since 2004. We were fortunate enough to have Marisa Franco with us from January to June, working to support the Bill of Rights Campaign, media work, and the leadership development of Latina members, and we look forward to continuing to build on this work in 2009. Finally, after 8 years, DWU is transitioning out of CAAAV's fiscal sponsorship and becoming independent. Since 2000, CAAAV has helped to support what has become a vibrant, unique, 2,000-member domestic workers organization. We're looking forward to the next stage of growth for DWU as an independent organization. Look out for an invitation to an office-warming party in the near future, and check our website (www.domesticworkersunited.org) for opportunities to get involved in passing the Bill of Rights in 2009!

Peoples' Justice (PJ): Throughout our 20-year history, CAAAV has consistently played a role in fighting police violence in New York City, whether it was organizing around the murder of Chinese teenager Yong Xin Huang or the murder of Amadou Diallo in 1999, both at the hands of the NYPD. We realize that in New York City, the police target not only Black and Latino residents, but ALL communities of color, as well as queer, immigrant, and poor communities, and police brutality must be addressed as a form of state violence. In the aftermath of the murder of Sean Bell in 2006, CAAAV, along with other grassroots organizations in New York City, formed the anti-police brutality coalition Peoples' Justice to demand justice in the Sean Bell case and again demand police accountability and push for community control of the NYPD. In addition to organizing protests and rallies around the Sean Bell case, PJ's work has consisted of:



CAAAV members at a rally and march calling for justice for Sean Bell, who was murdered by the NYPD in 2006. This year, the police officers who killed him were acquitted on all charges.

- Know Your Rights trainings that focus on the violence committed by the NYPD against immigrants, people of color, and the LGBTQ community and offer practical advice on how to deal with police encounters;
- and*
- A CopWatch program that involves groups of people monitoring police activity in neighborhoods that are heavily policed by the NYPD. The monitoring involves videotaping police actions with the goal of preventing police misconduct, as well as documenting abuses in an effort to insure accountability.

In the coming months, CAAAV, as part of PJ, will continue our work to build a strong movement against police violence here in New York City. For more information, you can visit www.peoplesjustice.org.



CJP Youth Members during the RTTC National Expression March holding our banner, which wound its way through downtown Miami and ended up at the hotel where the U.S. Conference of Mayors was meeting.

Launched in 2007, **Right to the City (RTTC)** national alliance came together under a common framework to increase the strength of our community organizations and our collective power. Our goal is to build a national urban movement for housing, education, health, racial justice and democracy. In the past year, RTTC has developed and grown in exciting ways. The RTTC national members came together in February and decided to have three “National Expressions” – events and actions around gentrification that would build on one another and provide opportunities for groups nationally to work together.

Part one of the “National Expressions” began in Miami in June with the U.S. Conference of Mayors. While mayors all over the U.S. convened to talk about their programs for economic development, among other issues, RTTC members also had our own strategy sessions and actions. We organized a People’s Summit where

we laid out the issues we work on, marched through downtown Miami to call attention to those issues, and put together the Urban Strategies Roundtable, where we put forth a vision for building a strong movement led by working class-communities and communities of color. CAAAV was part of the New York City and youth delegations and sent seven people to Miami to participate in the events. Part two was a national commemoration of the third anniversary of Katrina on August 29th. RTTC organizations in the Bay Area, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Miami, the DC metro area, New York, and Boston/Providence all hosted events relating their local work to what is happening in New Orleans. In New York City, RTTC-NYC marched through Chinatown and the Lower East Side on August 29th with survivors of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. CAAAV’s work in Chinatown was highlighted in stops that were made along the way. We were able to connect the gentrification that is happening in Chinatown to the gentrification occurring in the rest of the City and in the rest of the country. Part three of the National Expression will happen in 2009. Members will decide where and when later on this year. For more information on the Right to the City Alliance, visit their website at: <http://www.righttothecity.org>.

CAA AV STAFF UPDATE



CAA AV welcomes our newest staff member! **Esther Wang**, a member since 2005, fills an organizer position at the Chinatown Justice Project (CJP). Esther brings deep experience in organizing, teaching, and communications. CJP enthusiastically welcomes Esther’s energy and thoughtfulness, knowing that Esther will continue to boost CJP amid its recent victories. Esther will be focusing on CJP’s East River waterfront development campaign, which is working to ensure that the City-driven development of the waterfront doesn’t lead to more gentrification and displacement in Chinatown. Prior to joining staff, Esther worked in communications at the Center for Constitutional Rights. Esther will remain a part of CAA AV’s Asian Resistance Media (ARM) committee while on staff.

Carolyn de Leon-Hermogenes, Director of the Women Worker’s Project, has left her position after more than seven years on staff. Carolyn began her involvement with CAA AV and Women Workers Project as a domestic worker member organizer in 1998 and joined the staff in 2000. Her commitment to worker and immigrant rights has been tireless throughout her time at CAA AV. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.





CAAUV : ORGANIZING ASIAN COMMUNITIES

Founded in 1986, CAAAV (also known as Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence) organizes across diverse poor and working-class Asian immigrant communities in New York City to build community power to exercise self-determination and participate in a broader movement of Third World people within the U.S. and abroad, for racial and economic justice. CAAAV is a volunteer-driven organization led by members of our program areas.

CAAUV'S PROGRAM AREAS INCLUDE:

CHINATOWN JUSTICE PROJECT

Uniting low-income residents and vendors for affordable housing, preservation of public space, and an end to displacement caused by gentrification.

SOUTHEAST ASIAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROJECT

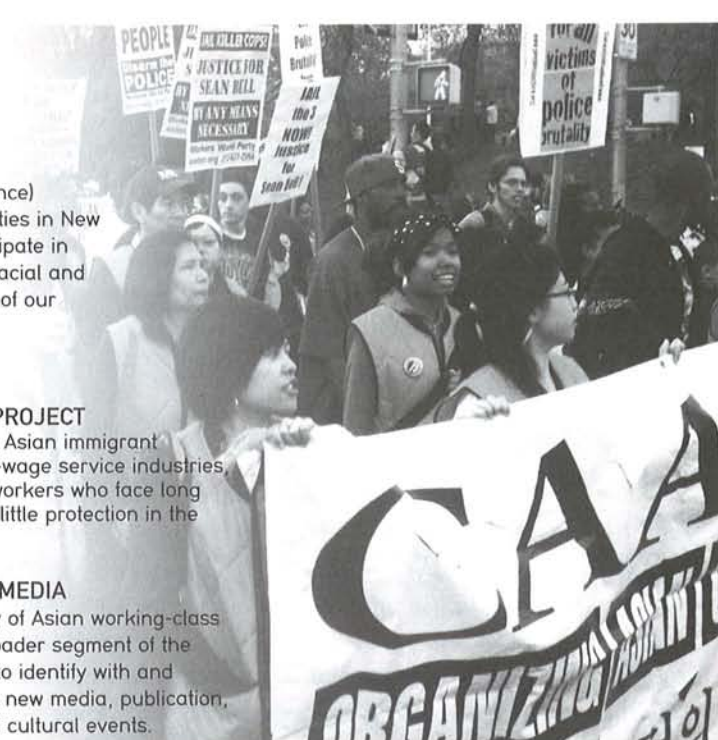
Organizing young people and adults in the Vietnamese and Cambodian refugee community of the Bronx for immigrant rights and racial justice, while creating alternatives to poverty.

WOMEN WORKERS PROJECT

Building power among Asian immigrant women working in low-wage service industries, particularly domestic workers who face long hours, low wages and little protection in the workplace.

ASIAN RESISTANCE MEDIA

Increasing the visibility of Asian working-class struggles so that a broader segment of the community can begin to identify with and support them, through new media, publication, political education and cultural events.



VISIT THE CAAAV WEBSITE: WWW.CAAAV.ORG

CAAUV VOICE

NEWSLETTER OF CAAAV: ORGANIZING ASIAN COMMUNITIES

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