

# The CAAV VOICE

Newsletter  
of the  
Committee  
Against  
Anti-Asian  
Violence

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

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## EDITORIAL

### GIULIANI'S POLICE MAKES WAR ON OUR COMMUNITIES

Americans would like to believe that a brutal and unjust criminal justice system is characteristic of "remote" and "less civilized" areas of the Third World; but in American cities, such as New York, police brutality and corruption has reached a record high. In 1994, the first year in office for Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner William Bratton, complaints of police brutality went up 40% even as they were aggressively gutting the processes which make the police accountable to the tax-paying New Yorkers who hire them to protect and serve.

#### Monolithic Police Power

Today, the New York Police Department (NYPD) has unprecedented scope and power. The city hired 11,000 new officers within a

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

### New York City Incidents

#### OFFICER CONVICTED IN BRUTALITY CASE

On November 8, 1995, after a week long bench trial, NYPD Officer Rolando Baquadano was convicted of attempted assault in the April 1994 beating and wrongful arrests of Ki Tae and Son Tae Kim in Park Slope, Brooklyn. (see *CAA AV Voice*, Spring '94) The result of a year and a half of tenacious organizing by CAAAV and the



Kims, the decision marks the first time a campaign organized by CAAAV resulted in the conviction of a police officer. Although this was a great victory, the verdict was a disappointment as Baquadano was convicted on a lesser charge than the one with which he was originally charged.

The trial was also disturbing because presumably on duty police officers continually packed the courtroom, intimidating witnesses with their presence. On the day of the verdict, large numbers of officers arrived

early and filled the courtroom, while uniformed officers guarding the court stopped CAAAV members from entering. CAAAV has filed a complaint with the NYPD Internal Affairs Bureau on the conduct of the officers present during the trial. Baquadano is scheduled to be sentenced in February 1996.

## UPDATES

### Yong Xin Huang, 3/24/95

On October 10 1995, as CAAAV members and other community leaders met with U.S. Attorney Zachary Carter to demand a federal investigation into the circumstances surrounding Yong Xin Huang's death, the Justice Committee for Yong Xin Huang held a vigil outside the Department of Justice. Huang, a sixteen-year-old honor student, was playing in his friend's yard when he was shot to death by Officer Mizrahi on March 24, 1995, in Brooklyn. At the end of the two hour meeting, Carter promised to examine the minutes of the grand jury hearing and to meet with the lawyers representing the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

CELEBRATING  
OUR  
10TH YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY

Huang family. He also promised to open a channel of communication between his office and community groups in order to examine systemic police violence in our communities. The Justice Committee is planning to dedicate a mural in the summer of 1996 to all those who died at the hands of the NYPD.

**Chinatown, 8/25/94**

NT, a Chinese American woman, was unfairly issued traffic tickets, handcuffed, arrested, and taken to the 5th Precinct in Chinatown, where she was stripsearched. (see CAAAV Voice, Winter '94/'95) Both traffic tickets were eventually dismissed, including one for failure to obey an order. AALDEF represented NT in a civil suit against the city which has been settled out of court for an undisclosed amount.

**R E C E N T  
I N C I D E N T S**

**Lower East Side, Manhattan,  
11/16/95**

On November 16, 1995, Hyung Chul Cho was assaulted and wrongfully arrested by Federal Correction Officer Tonya Henley after a dispute on 7th Street and Second Avenue in Manhattan. Cho had been knocking on Henley's car window because she had backed into his friend's leg. Henley emerged from her car and assaulted Cho. According to witnesses, when officers of the 9th Precinct arrived and learned that Henley was a corrections officer, they immediately assisted her in arresting the Cho rather than investigating the facts. Police told Cho's sister, "If you don't want to go with him, back off." After being charged with attempted assault, criminal mischief, and harassment, Cho was imprisoned. When his sister and his friend went to the precinct, officers refused to take the friend's complaint about her injuries.

According to Cho's lawyer Chanwoo Lee, 9th Precinct officers also refused to take her complaint regarding the assault on Cho.

CAAAV has been working with the Korean Merchants Association of the East Village to advocate in this case. Representatives of the two organizations met with 9th Precinct Commanding Officer Oveis, who agreed to conduct an investigation into the circumstances of the arrest. CAAAV and the Association will also meet with the Manhattan District Attorney to demand that all charges against Cho be dismissed.

**N a t i o n a l  
I n c i d e n t s**

*According to a report issued by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, hate crimes against Asian Americans have risen 35 percent in the past year. The report documented 452 anti-Asian hate crimes nationwide 1994, up from 335 incidents in 1993. In Northern California, incidents more than doubled, increasing from 39 to 93 cases.*

**Novato, California, 11/8/95**

"I didn't have anything to do when I woke up. No friends were around. It seemed that no one wanted to be around me. So I figured, "What the fuck, I'm gonna go kill me a Chinaman." These words come from a confession written by Robert Page, a 52-year-old white man from Marin County. He even underlined the word "Chinaman" in his statement.

Eddy Wu, 23, was the first Asian person Page saw that morning. As Wu was carrying groceries to his car, Page stabbed him twice in the back and then chased Wu inside the store, where he stabbed him two more times. Wu suffered multiple injuries, including a punctured lung. He is still recuperating.

In early February, Page pleaded guilty

to attempted murder with racist motivation. Page faces up to thirteen years in prison. This is the first felony hate crime conviction in Marin County.

**Bellingham, Washington, 11/95**

Two Skinheads, Jason Larue, 22, and Banner Dawson, 20, were arrested for attacking two Western Washington University students. The victims were a 20-year-old Asian man and a 19-year-old African American man. Witnesses claim the Skinheads shouted racial slurs while beating the students. The police chief said, "The two individuals were assaulted because of the color of their skin."

**Alpine Township, Michigan, 6/18/95**

Thanh Mai, 23, died after he was beaten by a white man who was one of a group of men who surrounded him and shouted racist slurs. Michael Hallman, 19, was charged with involuntary manslaughter.

**Las Vegas, Nevada, 8/94**

On June 21, 1995, alleged Skinhead Jason Fowler, 20, was sentenced to ten years for battery with a deadly weapon after he fractured the skull of a Japanese American girl at a Skinhead party in August 1994.

**U P D A T E S**

**Newark, New Jersey, 1/2/94**

After nearly two years of determined detective work, Fannie Simmons, a 32-year-old African American woman, was arrested for the killing of Mariko Westbrook. The 65-year-old Japanese American woman, the ex-wife of an African American GI, died after being attacked on a city bus and kicked out the door. (see CAAAV Voice, Spring '95)

**Garden Grove, California, 7/93**

Five Asian American youths have won a lawsuit against the Garden Grove Police Department. The five youths challenged the

# POLICE BRUTALITY IN ASIAN COMMUNITIES



Since 1986, CAAAV has seen the problem of brutality at the hands of the NYPD grow significantly. We have heard countless stories of egregious acts of misconduct on the part of the NYPD and have felt intensifying distrust of the police in our communities.

Since 1993 when CAAAV's staff expanded to include organizers who focus on specific communities, almost 50% of CAAAV cases have involved police officers as the main perpetrators. The violence inflicted by officers ranges from unjustified arrest, entrapment, to excessive use of force, and killings. Most of these cases involve flagrant abuse of authority and callous police attitude. Following are some of the patterns of police abuse documented by CAAAV.

## Anti-Asian Bias Among Police

Officers often show clear bias against Asian Americans, especially immigrants with limited English skills (or those the officers *perceive* to speak no English). Racial slurs such as "gook...dot head...chink...sand nigger" frequently accompany police assaults and arrests. The most often repeated sentiment is "This is my country. You don't fuck me, I'll fuck you." or "Go back to your fucking country."

Officers often make racist assumptions about the criminality of the communities in which they work. For example, Dat Nguyen, a Vietnamese college student, who was beaten and arrested in Chinatown, was questioned about "the other gang members."

Police officers are quick to use physical force when they feel a challenge to their authority, especially when the perceived threat, even a simple question, is from peo-

ple of color, particularly non-English speaking immigrants. When Ho Chin Han questioned why she was being arrested in "Korean, she was called a "yellow eggroll" and then beaten by police officers.

## Sharing the Street as Workplace

For those whose workplace is the streets of New York City, their interactions with the police are exacerbated by the fact that they share their daily space with police officers on the beat. Many Asians are forced to work outside and are therefore especially open to police abuse.

Despite cabdrivers' vulnerability to robbers and murderers, the police are aggressively hostile to drivers, the majority of whom are South Asian, and often ignore their stories in cases of farebeating or other disputes with riders. One officer stated that he "hate[s] these immigrant cabdrivers" and that he feels "no emotion whenever one of them is killed." Encounters with the police often escalate to racist and anti-immigrant slurs and physical assaults.

The usual harassment of Chinese and Vietnamese vendors in Chinatown escalated in 1994 with Mayor Giuliani's "Quality of Life" program, which led to a sweep of confiscations, assaults, and arrests. He justified

the abuse with claims that the sale of novelty tourist items—such as \$10 "Rolex" watches—was part of organized criminal activity. Vendors were beaten and jailed for up to four days when they asked police for their search warrants.

## Police as Accomplices in Attacks on Asians

When civilians are the main perpetrators of racial violence against Asians, the police are often active participants—adding their own threats or upholding the law in favor of the racist assailants.

Police insensitivity towards Asian Americans also manifests itself in less explicit ways—such as the hostile and uncooperative treatment Asians often receive when filing complaints or seeking help at their local precincts. When bias crimes are reported, the police often either fail or refuse to see the racial motivation.

The victim's language ability often plays a major role in the police attitude towards the victim. When mediating disputes, the police readily believe the version of the story offered by the English-speaking person (most often white), rather than that of the less fluent immigrant, even in cases of a hate crime.

From CAAAV's experiences, it is clear that bias against Asians pervades the New York City Police and taints our communities' interactions with the criminal justice system every step of the way. Only our constant vigilance and unified efforts will secure justice for our communities.

TOTAL: 136 CASES (1986-1995)			
1986-1993		1993-1995	
Law enforcement as primary perpetrator	15	Law enforcement as primary perpetrator	34
Law enforcement as accomplice	16	Law enforcement as accomplice	18
Civilian on civilian	34	Civilian on civilian	19
Total	65	Total	71

The city hired 11,000 new officers within a three-year period. Specialized forms of enforcement—the housing police, the transit police, and the enforcement section of the Taxi and Limousine Commission—used to be outside the purview of the NYPD, but now have been merged with it. As a result of the merging of all these units into one undifferentiated force, thousands of NYPD officers are on the streets without the benefit of specific trainings that were designed for the more specialized forces.

In addition, this monolithic police department look less and less like those communities it polices. The transit and housing police forces had developed strong leadership of color, who had worked hard to recruit officers of color. On the other hand, the NYPD officers' union, the Police Benevolent Association, has consistently opposed affirmative action—keeping the number of officers of color low and the leadership white and male—and provided legal defense for racist officers. With the merger of all units into the NYPD, the power of officers of color has been diluted, forcing them to rebuild whatever support structures they once had.

### **Battle Plans**

Early in his tenure, Bratton, borrowing from the wartime words of Winston Churchill, vowed to "take the city back, block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood." The NYPD now sees Bratton as its "field general" and our precious communities as its battlefield. Bratton has orchestrated this overhaul down to the choice of color for uniforms, changing from light blue to dark blue to create a more intimidating image.

Bratton and Giuliani's strategy for crime reduction is to target neighborhoods which have a high concentration of "quality-of-life" crimes on the theory that these petty "criminals" will lead to bigger fish. "Quality-of-

life" crimes are generally defined by complaints that the affluent have against the poor, the homeless, and/or people of color. These racist and elitist definitions of "crime" are then used by the NYPD to dig deeper into the communities which are already under siege. Those caught for these "crimes"—panhandling, playing music for donations or vending illegally—are subject to interrogations and searches that extend beyond the targeted "crime". Ex-mayor David Dinkins points out that illegal searches have gone up 100% since 1994.

### **Brutality and Corruption—Business as Usual**

Bratton has made it clear that brutality is not his main concern. He and Giuliani justify the rise in brutality as a natural consequence of a police crackdown on crime. The Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB), however, found that nearly 70% of complaints in 1994 were about being pushed, slapped and assaulted by police officers on routine patrol and had nothing to do with attempted arrests. In the first half of 1995 there were 1,778 use-of-force allegations filed with the CCRB. Three-fourths of the complainants were people of color.

Those whose rights are violated are precisely those members of society who often lack the knowledge or the resources to challenge the police. Nevertheless, the fraction who filed law suits against the NYPD for violation of their civil rights cost the city \$87 million in the last five years (close to \$24 million alone in 1994). These reparations are paid by our tax dollars and the NYPD officers themselves go unpunished.

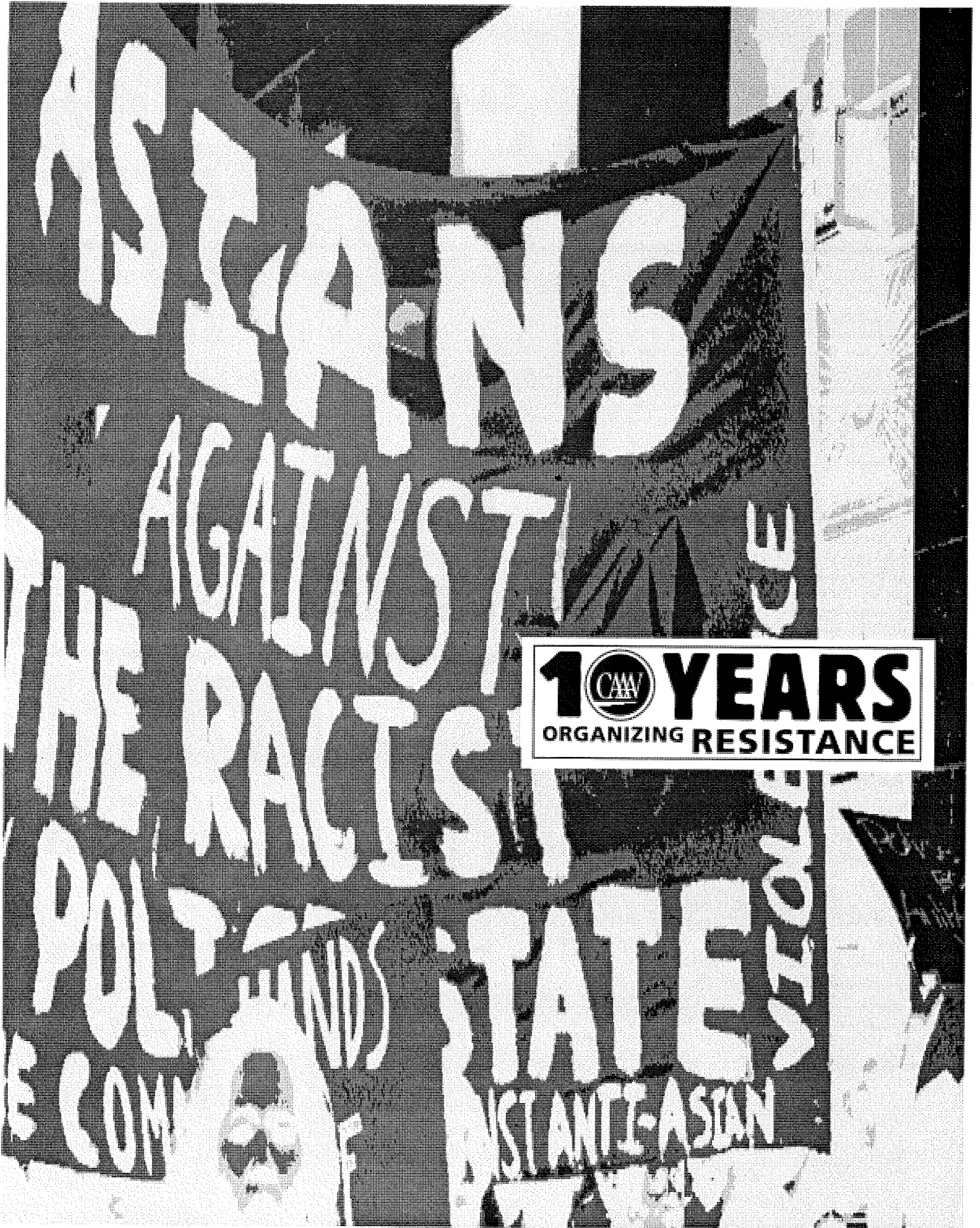
In addition, Bratton has announced that he has "no interest in being known as an anti-corruption zealot." The percentage of cops found guilty at police administrative trials plummeted from 63% in 1992 to 13% in 1994. The 1994 Mollen Commission, which investigated police corruption and the

failures of the NYPD Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB), recommended an independent corruption monitoring panel. However, Giuliani has opposed the City Council's attempt to implement this recommendation. Instead, he has appointed his own panel which only exists at the behest of an executive order, and has no budget to conduct independent investigations. Therefore it can only be a toothless monitor of existing, already discredited, agencies. Meanwhile, Bratton has repeatedly turned down requests from the IAB for more resources to investigate corruption and brutality.

### **Anti-Asian Violence and the NYPD**

According to a study by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, in 1994 there was a 35% national increase in anti-Asian violence, with the NYPD as the major perpetrator in New York City. Our experiences as Asians in New York City are part of a nationwide trend. Led by the onslaught of a reactionary and mean spirited United States Congress, war has been declared against the poor and immigrant communities and the vast majorities of women, people of color, the elderly, and gays and lesbians.

CAAIV's work, in the face of this challenge, needs to remain unwavering and forceful. There are too few organizations addressing this source of violence for the Asian communities—indeed for other communities of color as well. For the few organizations that do make this problem a priority, it is imperative that we work together, strengthen our own documentation, share ideas and resources, and develop a coherent strategy against the raging violence against our communities. CAAIV is determined to challenge the blue wall of silence that Giuliani and Bratton reinforce with their disregard for justice. After ten years, we are not only wiser, but better armed and ready to use that power.



**10** YEARS  
ORGANIZING RESISTANCE



# Ten Years Organ

1986-87

**10/18/86**

*Formation of CAAAV*

The Coalition Against Anti-Asian Violence formed at the first NYC-area forum on "Violence Against Asians in America," attended by 250 people. Founding members were Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund, Coalition of Labor Union Women-NY, Japanese American Citizens League-NY, Khmer Association in the U.S., Korean Americans for Social Concern, Korean American Women for Action, Organization of Asian Women, Organization of Chinese Americans-NY, Young Korean American Service & Education Center.

**12/27/86**

*Beginning of Multiracial Coalition Work*

CAAAV organized Asian American contingent to join African American-led protest against the racist killing of Michael Griffith in Howard Beach and police mishandling of the case. Outrage around case led to city-wide, multiracial movement against police brutality. In next two years CAAAV members spoke at over 50 multiracial rallies, forums and workshops all over New York City.



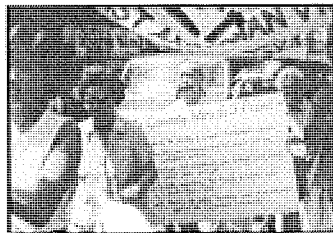
**1/2/87**

*First Police Brutality Case*

The Wong and Woo family beaten and arrested by 5th Precinct police in their Chinatown home. CAAAV organized Chinatown and Asian American communities to protest the police action – petitioned in Chinatown, packed courtroom for every hearing, did publicity work, organized rallies, met with District Attorney to demand he drop charges against the family and arrest the police, met with Office for Investigation the of NYC Criminal Justice System.

**1/27/87**

Held forum "Organizing Against Racist Violence", featuring C. Vernon Mason, African American activist attorney and leader.



**4/1/87**

Charges against Wong/Woo family were dismissed.

**7/28/87**

Rally protesting police assault of Wong/Woo family. Community indictment delivered to 5th Precinct by 200 Chinatown residents.

**9/4/87**

Yong Gook Ou, a Korean student on his bicycle, beaten by traffic police in midtown Manhattan. Korean members of CAAAV formed Korean Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence. CAAAV and KCAAV organized protest at precinct 10/19/87 and met with D.A.



**4/30/87**

*Initiation of Public Policy Work*

Organized group of Asian American community organizations, agencies, and police brutality victims to testify together at NYS hearing on bias-related violence.

**10/87 - 5/88**

*Early Community-based Organizing Effort*

Thousands of anti-Asian fliers distributed all over south Brooklyn, particularly Bensonhurst, warning against Asian conspiracy to take over neighborhood – Chinese buying homes and Koreans opening businesses. CAAAV met with Italian and African American community organizations and a multiracial youth group, organized Chinese and Korean community residents, held trilingual meetings at local church. Met with D.A. and U.S. Department of Justice.

# minizing Resistance

1987-91

**12/17/87**

Vuthikrai Thienvanich murdered by transit police in Brooklyn. CAAAV canvassed subway station for witnesses, gave family support, worked with Hainan Association to raise funds for family and to hold press conference protesting police cover-up.

**1/18/88**

Asian American contingent at March for Racial Justice commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.



**2/20/88**

Asian American contingent and speaker at Bushwick march protesting police murder of Juan Rodriguez organized by the Latino Coalition for Racial Justice.

**10/1/88**

CAAAV contingent to Jersey City rally organized by Indian Youth Against Racism against the Dorbusters.

**6/27/89**

Forum organized with Asian American women's groups on the case of Dong Lu Chen, who was cleared of wife's murder because of a "cultural defense."



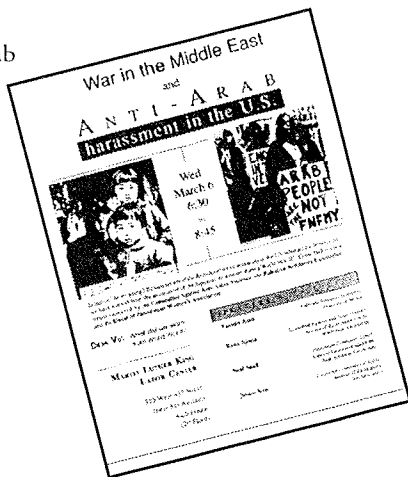
**10/1/90**

*First CAAAV Staff Person*  
Milyoung Cho hired. (third from left)



**3/6/91**

CAAAV forum on anti-Arab harassment during War in the Middle East, making parallels to internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.



**Fall '91**

*First Board of Directors*  
Anu Advani, Veena Cabrerossud, Marjorie Fujiki, Marla Kamiya, Michelle Lee, Mini Liu, Xuan Thao Nguyen, Tani Takagi, Monona Yin.

**Spring '92**

Chinese tenants at Woodside Housing Project reported being targets for crime. CAAAV organized Chinese tenants to work with other tenants. Succeeded in getting a Chinese housing police officer on site.

Office moved to present location at 191 E. Third Street.



5/27/92

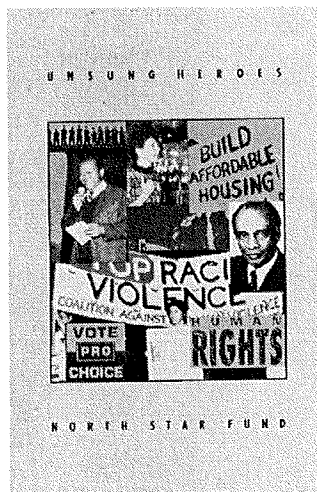
Recipient of 1992 North Star Fund Frederick Douglass Award.



TARYN HIGASHI

5/2/92

Initiated People of Color Against State Violence, which organized protest against verdict exonerating police of Rodney King beating in Los Angeles.



6/13/92

6/23/92

CAAAV joined with other Asian American groups to organize commemorative events for 10th anniversary of Vincent Chin's death.

Fall '92

Staff expanded to include Monona Yin, development & policy director, Kwong Hui, victim advocate. Milyoung's focus became community organizing.

*First Worker*

*Organizing Project*

CAAAV started the Lease Drivers Coalition.



TARYN HIGASHI

Winter '92

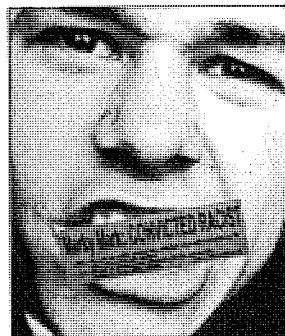
Workshops with Chinese and Bengali ESL students at Seward Park High School, with Project Reach and Asian/Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV and AIDS.

11/12/92

LDC protest at Susan's Maintenance, for owner's harassment and assault on LDC driver member, Saleem Osman.

2/11-18/93

Conducted sticker campaign, culminating in Times Square press conference, which protested Calvin Klein underwear ads using rap star Marky Mark, previously convicted of racist attacks against Vietnamese and African American youth.



3/11/93

CAAAV ran workshop series at St. Rita's on safety for Khmer and Vietnamese residents. Culminated in speak-out of over 100 community people confronting transit and precinct police about their neglect and abuse.

Summer '93

*First Community-specific Organizers* hired for Korean community and for Lease Drivers Coalition. Formation of Chinese and Korean Community Organizing Committees.

Southeast Asian Organizing Collective formed 12/93.

11/9/93

College student Dat Nguyen brutally beaten by undercover police in Chinatown and then arrested. CAAAV advocated for Nguyen, helped conduct investigation, organized community support and media publicity. Jury acquitted Nguyen of all charges 9/30/94.

5/14/94

CAAAV's First Fundraiser Broadway play "Twilight: L.A., 1992".





**5/26/94**

Saleem Osman, CAAAV organizer, beaten by police and arrested after offering to help translate for a cabdriver in Herald Square. Organized several demonstrations and community campaign to demand dismissal of charges against Osman and indictment of police assailants.

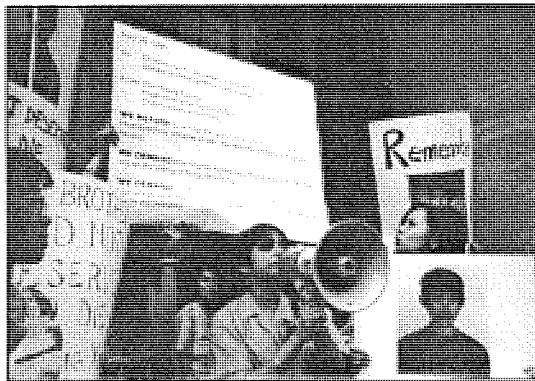


**10/94**

Hired first executive director, Anannya Bhattacharjee.

**3/6/95**

Organized Vietnamese vendors on Canal Street who were being harassed by police under guise of "Quality of Life" campaign against sales of imitation watches, etc. to tourists. Held protest march to City Hall.

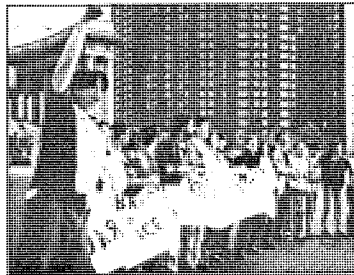


**3/24/95**

15-year-old Yong Xin Huang murdered by police in Brooklyn. CAAAV organized community support for family petition campaign, 5/23/95 demonstration at Brooklyn D.A.'s office protesting failure to indict police murderer, Yong Xin's 16th birthday memorial in Chinatown on 7/16/95.

**4/25/95**

CAAAV participated in city-wide coalition to protest budget cuts and escalating police oppression in NYC. CAAAV and National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights organized protest at 1 Police Plaza and blocking of Manhattan Bridge, where 23 CAAAV members were arrested.



**10/10/95**

Vigil held at U.S. Attorney's office as CAAAV and other community leaders met to request U.S. civil rights investigation into Yong Xin's murder.



**7/10/95**

D.A. abandoned prosecution of Saleem Osman, settling for an Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal on misdemeanor charges.



**11/8/95**

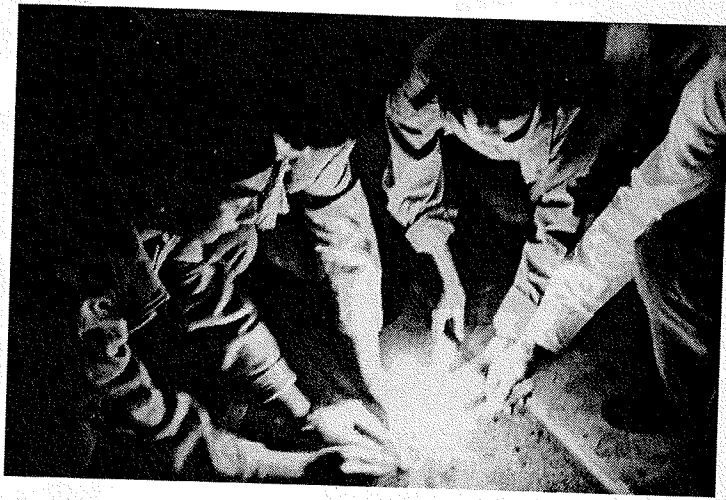
*Police Brutality Conviction*  
NYPD Officer Rolando Baguadano convicted of attempted assault on the beating and wrongful arrests of Ki Tae and Son Tae Kim, Brooklyn merchants, in April '94. CAAAV had organized community support and presence in the courtroom.

**Summer '95**

*First Youth Leadership Project Summer Program*  
held in Fordham Bronx area.



17



# CAA AV's First Steps

CAA AV really found its voice as an organization on December, 27, 1986. CAA AV had called for Asian Americans to join the five thousand people converging on Howard Beach to protest the racist murder of Michael Griffith one week before and the police mishandling of the case. The African American youth had been chased into highway traffic by white youth wielding baseball bats.

CAA AV joined the group that immediately went to confront the police. We gathered behind a freshly painted banner –“STOP Racist Violence, Coalition Against Anti-Asian Violence”– and headed for the 106th Precinct with a contingent of militant African American and Latino activists. The crowd in front of the precinct was all fired-up after a series of rousing speeches by African American and Latino leaders. We Asians had to speak and, there I was, trapped into giving the first extemporaneous speech of my life to this expectant crowd.

That demonstration, which was the beginning of two years of mobilization throughout the city against racist violence and police brutality, catapulted CAA AV into city-wide activist work. CAA AV was only two months old.

In those days, CAA AV members would speak almost every week at rallies, forums and workshops organized by community groups all over the city. CAA AV became the Asian voice in spirited, multiracial, citywide organizing. It was an amazing time – it really seemed like this militant movement would transform racial dynamics in the city and wrest power from the racist institutions that were attacking our communities.

In those heady times, I think CAA AV was able to keep its bearings because our grassroots organizing work was developing alongside the progressive coalition work. Only one week after the Howard Beach protest, a Chinatown family that had been brutalized by 5th Precinct police came to CAA AV, ready to go public and fight the assaults and arrests.

Our organizing around the Wong and Woo family became the model for our victim advocacy work. We built a support committee made up of Chinatown activists, who had started their community groups during the 1970's Asian American movement, Chinatown residents and newer Asian American activists. We collected over 3000 signatures tabling in Chinatown. We held a big rally at the District Attorney's office, met with the D.A., and packed the courtroom for every hearing. Three months later, in April 1987, the charges were dropped against the family. Since the police were never charged, we drew up an indictment on posterboard and marched it over to the precinct with a few hundred Chinatown residents. Our campaign

received a lot of media attention.

The Wong/Woo case put CAA AV on the map. We had organized the Asian American and Chinatown communities, confronted the authorities and won. Community people, as well as activists, respected that.

CAA AV had developed into an effective political force in a few fast-paced months. I think this was made possible by the groundwork done for the first convening forum of CAA AV and the collective political experience of the original groups.

The idea for a forum on anti-Asian violence was conceived in the spring of 1986, in the wake of the national organizing around the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin. The initiating groups were the Organization of Asian Women, a feminist group that grew out of the 1970's Asian American movement, and two larger, mainstream groups: the Organization of Chinese Americans and the Japanese American Citizens League. From the beginning, we wanted to ensure that the pan-Asian coalition organizing the forum be ethnically diverse and politically progressive. To broaden the coalition, we pulled in the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, grassroots Khmer and Korean groups, and representation from labor.

We were not narrowly Asian nationalist and were very concerned about linking up with other people of color. The call for the forum, as well as a presentation by panelist Reverend Wesley Woo, included a critique of the economic system and how it pitted people of color and working class people against each other, nationally and internationally. Another panelist, Sook Nam Choo, spoke about working together with an African American group to organize around police brutality against Koreans in Queens.

We were surprised by the success of the forum, held on October 18, 1986, whose 250 participants spontaneously called for an ongoing organization. The Coalition Against Anti-Asian Violence was formed that day.

However, the real success of our initial organizing was the establishment of those political principles which led us to seek out diverse, grassroots, immigrant Asian groups and African American and Latino activists. The working relationships we developed in those early days shaped our future work. CAA AV's survival and growth is a testament to the consistency of the political vision and commitment of CAA AV members, old and new, throughout its ten years of organizing.

—Mini Liu

# NEW STAFF

## Eric Tang

We begin 1996 by welcoming our newest Program Coordinator Eric Tang. For the past two years, Eric has been one of the most active members at CAAAV. In particular, Eric has played a central role in planning and implementing the 1995 Youth Leadership Project (YLP). From being an active member of the Southeast Asian Organizing Collective (SEAOC) and the Strategizing Committee to helping with coordination of rallies and working with Chinatown vendors, Eric has demonstrated a keen ability to juggle numerous responsibilities well.

He has also been an active member of the David Wong Support Committee, provided support work for the Free Mumia campaign, and developed working relationships with African American, Latino, and other Asian American activists. Eric was involved in initiating the Inter-Asian Council at New York



Ju Hye and Eric

University and coordinating the struggle for Asian American Studies.

Eric's first experience as CAAAV staff was a busy and productive 1995 summer internship. During that time, Eric's main work area was the Lease Drivers' Coalition. In his new position, Eric's primary duties will be to coordinate YLP and SEAOC. Given the expansion of YLP to a year round program, who is better than Eric to face the expected challenges and to maximize its potential?

## Ju Hye Ahn

CAAAV welcomes Ju Hye Ahn who joined the CAAAV staff in September 1995 as an intern from the Methodist Church Mission Intern Program. In her native Korea she worked with the Methodist Youth Fellowship of Korea and the Ecumenical Youth Council building an international network of youth activists and was also very active in the cultural movement.

She is currently on a two-year intern-

ship in the U.S. Prior to joining CAAAV, she worked with the urban ministry in San Diego, where she did emergency food relief work for Mexican immigrants and tutored immigrant children at an after-school program. In New York City, she organized events for the 50th anniversary of Korea's independence from Japan with the Council of Korean Churches in Greater New York.

Currently at CAAAV, she is actively involved in victim advocacy and the women workers project and is instrumental in outreach efforts to local Korean churches.

## FAREWELL

## Tony Thoai Nguyen

If you were looking for fun while volunteering to do worthwhile political work, you were lucky to be assigned to Tony. You'd be busy all day and then find yourself rushing to catch the last show of a Chinese kung-fu movie. You'd remember his broad, carefree and open smile and never forget his peculiar style of joking about you that makes you feel warm.

Since the day Tony came to New York, things have not been the same. He is definitely a "rare bird" among Vietnamese American organizers. He initiated and developed CAAAV's Southeast Asian Organizing Collective. The Youth Leadership Project in the Fordham area of the Bronx, now about to begin its second year, was his brainchild. Under his guidance the Vietnamese vendors in Chinatown challenged Mayor Giuliani's harassment under his "Quality of Life" program.

He is irreplaceable in his meticulous, but unorthodox and imaginative organizing style. The only word that can describe Tony is "driven"—he is "driven" by dedication to the causes of justice.

We already miss Tony! Next, he is heading towards Southeast Asia. . .

## CAAAV KEEPS ON DANCING

On December 8, CAAAV held its second 1995 fundraiser dance "Left of Center" at Lancer's Restaurant, an Indian restaurant that has become a popular site for Asian American events. DJ's Rekha and Joy of Sangam Sounds provided bhangra and a variety of other music to the mostly Asian American crowd. When people weren't dancing, they caught up with friends or browsed through the literature at the information table. Thanks to all staff and volunteers who worked at the party and to all the CAAAV folks, friends of CAAAV, and their friends who made the fundraiser a success.

# C A M P A I G N S F O R J U S T I C E

*The crisis of police brutality and police murder of people of color in our area has become so acute that coalition work is absolutely necessary. Below are some of the organizations with which CAAAV has been working.*

## **Black Cops Against Police Brutality**

The idea of police officers organizing against the racist crimes of other police officers is a relatively new idea that has taken many by surprise. The primary goal of Black Cops Against Police Brutality (B-CAP) is to "improve relations between the communities and police, especially in urban America." B-CAP has spoken out strongly against racist attacks by police officers against Black and Latino youth. It has educated communities on their rights they are accosted by the police and have circulated a leaflet "If I Witness

Police Brutality, What Do I Do?" In the police murder of Yong Xin Huang, B-CAP has firmly supported CAAAV in its struggle for justice.

B-CAP works with the Essex County Court in conducting their Juvenile Auto Theft Prevention Program, and it sponsors one young person in a 45-week "Youth Leadership Training Project." The group has also organized events which bring together community residents and police officers for a day of culture, entertainment and food.

While CAAAV recognizes that there are contradictions in working with a group that has a clear investment in the criminal justice system, we support B-CAP in its commitment to community empowerment and its defiance to the "blue wall of silence." Nevertheless, while B-CAP challenges police departments, it has also been a valuable asset to them by mediating with communities and averting outbreaks of civil unrest in East Orange and Patterson.



## **Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project**

The Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project (AVP) was established in 1980 to address the problem of violence against and within communities of gay men and lesbians. It runs many programs which deal with bias crimes and victim advocacy. Staff members and volunteers advocate for victims of police brutality and organize against unjust arrests by

the NYPD. Gay men are often the targets of harassment by the police in public bathrooms and other public spaces. AVP helps to document these cases and file reports with the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB). AVP has a long history of working in coalitions with other community organizations in New York City on cases of police brutality. AVP is presently working with several other groups in a campaign to impeach Ruben Diaz, the homophobic Bronx CCRB appointee. For more information, call 212-807-6761.

## **National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights**



The all-volunteer Justice Committee of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights was formed specifically to counter police brutality. The committee works primarily with victims and their families. They provide assistance to them and help organize actions to publicize cases, such as mobilizing support groups, organizing community meetings and rallies, and arranging for appearances on talk shows. A high point of their activities was the formation of the militant Parents Against Police Brutality, comprised of the families of victims of police

brutality and concerned parents in the community.

Currently the committee's attentions are focused on several high-profile cases: Anthony Baez, who died from a policeman's chokehold after accidentally hitting a police car with a football; Anthony Rosario and Hilton Vega, who were shot by police multiple times; and Manuel Maya of Queens, who was killed by a white gang. The grand jury indictment of the officer who killed Baez was recently thrown out due to a typographical error by the Bronx District Attorney's office. The Parents Against Police Brutality occupied the D.A.'s office and succeeded in forcing him to indict the officer himself rather than convene another grand jury, a process that would have taken at least another year. In the cases of Rosario and Vega,

the Civilian Complaint Review Board has ruled that the police were guilty for their deaths—findings that were hotly contested by the Bronx D.A.'s office. The efforts of the Justice Committee were invaluable in bringing these cases to public attention. For more information, call 212-631-4263.

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## STREETWATCH

Streetwatch started in the fall of 1993 in response to the high rate of beatings and harassment of homeless people in New York City, primarily perpetrated by the Amtrak police, transit police, and Port Authority police. Streetwatch helps homeless people understand their rights to occupy public spaces and also observes and documents brutality cases. Volunteers develop long term relationships with people living in homeless encampments and help organize and advocate for victims, which involves securing hospital records, gathering affidavits, conducting stakeouts, organizing cases for civil suits, etc. In one of the most significant cases of recent years, a law suit by thirteen homeless people was brought against Penn Station Amtrak police, charging them with harassment and brutality. Another important case is a minimum wage suit filed against the Grand Central Partnership (GCP) by those homeless who are employed by the GCP to remove other homeless people. For more information, call 212-229-2080, ext. 317.

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## SILVER PALACE OWNER BARRED FROM RESTAURANT

On December 9, 1995, Federal Bankruptcy Judge James Garritty issued an injunction against Silver Palace owner Richard Chan and established a trustee to run the daily operation of Silver Palace, the second largest and only unionized restaurant in Chinatown. Judge Garritty found Chan in contempt of court for destroying documents after they had been subpoenaed. He ruled that such dishonest and illegal behavior on the part of Chan and the former management of Silver Palace warranted the placement of a trustee. The decision was a victory for members of the 318 Independent Restaurant Workers' Union and the Committee of Unsecured Creditors. The workers now have a greater say in the daily operations of Silver Palace. The weekend following the injunction, dim sum cart service, which had been discontinued under Chan's management when all dim sum cart pushers were laid off on May 1, 1995, was resumed.

This victory for the union represents a culmination of repeated labor disputes at Silver Palace. In August 1993, a lock-out of union members developed into a successful seven-month strike, which ended with Chan capitulating to a contract that guaranteed almost all of the workers' demands. The tables have certainly turned for Chan, who is presently experiencing his own "lock-out" from the restaurant.

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### (NATIONAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

police department's practice of detaining and taking pictures of young people without "reasonable suspicion" because they supposedly dress like gang members. (see *CAAAV Voice*, Winter '94/'95) The five plaintiffs in the civil

rights case will share \$85,000. The police were also forced to set up new guidelines to insure that the rights of other Asian youths will not be violated in the future.

### Coral Springs, Florida, 8/15/92

On April 21, 1995, Michael Barychdo,

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21, was convicted of aggravated battery in connection with the racially motivated murder of Luyen Phan Nguyen, a 19-year-old pre-med student. Five others have been convicted of second-degree murder for beating and kicking Nguyen to death in 1992. (see *CAAAV Voice*, Fall '92, Winter '94/95)

**Make Ways for Change**

**Join CAAAV in:**

**Fighting racial violence and police brutality; demanding accountability from the criminal justice system**

**Organizing Asian immigrant cab drivers to challenge the racist and exploitative taxi industry in New York City**

**Empowering Asian immigrant women workers in marginalized industries**

**Developing youth leadership in low-income and refugee Asian communities**

**Publishing the CAAAV Voice, a unique voice in the Asian American community**

**Fund the Resistance**



*Hard times demand real and material support!!  
Your financial support for our office, our dedicated five-member staff, and our rising operating costs to match our expanding work will add strength to CAAAV's struggle against the growing forces of oppression and hate.*

**Support CAAAV today!**

YES! I want to take a stand with CAAAV. Here is my tax-deductible contribution:

\$1000\*     \$250\*     \$100     \$50  
 \$25     Other

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*\*These donations will be acknowledged in future issues of the CAAAV Voice, unless otherwise requested.*



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