

Organization of Chinese American Women (Hawaii Chapter)

美華婦女會

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Mission:

To advance and advocate for Chinese- and Asian Pacific-American women by enhancing their educational, economic, social, and political environments and by recognizing their achievements, potential, and contributions to the overall quality of life of the community. The organization a) promotes equal opportunities and social justice; b) raises individual and public awareness; c) develops networking; d) enhances the quality of life; and e) takes action when needed.

History The national chapter of the OCAW was founded in 1977 by Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch and Pauline W. Tsui, with headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, as a nonprofit, non-partisan organization dedicated to meeting specific needs of Chinese-American women. The Hawai'i Chapter was established in 1989. While guided by the OCAW National office, OCAW-Hawai'i has begun to forge new directions in coordination with other local Asian and community groups.

Activities The Hawai'i chapter board meets regularly to plan activities for the year, to recognize and honor Chinese-American women who have achieved success and contributed to the community in the US and overseas. General membership meetings are held four times a year— at the homes of hospitable members, at restaurants, at country clubs. The program of meetings include time to socialize and welcome new members, an opportunity to gain new cultural or civic/political knowledge through a lecture or demonstration, and a request for members to support a worthwhile cause: in the past, members have welcomed visitors from China, and raised funds in support of a bone marrow registry project, to alleviate flooding distress in China, and to provide scholarship support to rural students in China.

The OCAW-Hawai'i also works closely with organizations such as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce (to develop a directory of bilingual service providers to assist members of the Chinese community) and US-China People's Friendship Association (to sponsor a conference on US-China relations).

In 1991 and 1999, the OCAW Biennial National Conference was held in Honolulu, and attended by national as well as international representatives.

Association presidents

1989 Margaret Y. Lee

1990 Christine Ling

1991 Rosie Chang

1992 Lisa Lai

1993 Phyllis N.T. Shea

1994 Frances H. Goo

1995 Anita Wong

1996 Theresa Chun

1997–98 Yun Soong Jim

1999 Rose. Y. Lee

2000 Queenie Mow Chee

2001 Vivian H. Young

2002 Rena Young-Ochse

2003 Diane L. Wong

2004 Lei Ahu Isa

Membership:

Membership is open to all U.S. citizens and permanent residents who support the goals of the organization. Regular dues are \$25 and students dues are \$15. Members have the opportunity to participate in local and national programs, and receive newsletters from both national headquarters and the local OCAW offices. There are approximately 40 active Hawai'i members; nationally, about 1,700 members belong to the various chapters.

Sources: UCS and correspondence with Phyllis Shea and Queenie Mow Chee



Ted Li, OCAW-Hawaii president Yun Soong Jim, and OCAW founder Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch. Picture taken in 1998 by Queenie Mow Chee.