

Association of Chinese American's 29th Annual High School Achievement Awards Dinner successfully held at ACA's Chinese Community Center

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In 1984, Roland Hwang suggested to the Association of Chinese America (ACA) Board that it establish a scholarship program to recognize excellent students to further encourage them to study hard. In the years since, caring ACA members set up a fund-raising campaign to raise scholarship funds. The scholarship program is a great encouragement. For 29 years, many devoted and loving ACA members have continued to support the scholarship program with their enduring efforts to support the younger generation of Chinese Americans and encouraging them to be leaders in society. Their support of the scholarship program hasn't stopped and a few have even established memorial scholarships in memory of their loved ones.

As the years have gone by, the number of young Chinese American students has increased from initial handfuls up to thousands today. The workload for the scholarship committee also increased in complexity. Thanks to the experience of the ACA Scholarships Committee, under the leadership of the Committee Chair, the committee works with the high school counselors to participate in the recommendation process to nominate the excellent students. The Detroit Chinese Engineers Association (DCEA) and the Council of Asian Pacific Americans (CAPA) also participated in the recommended process and selected the best students for the scholarships they provided.

The 2012 High School Achievement Award dinner was held on Dec. 9, 2012, at ACA's Chinese Community Center with about 80 guests in attendance. During the dinner, each honoree student was introduced and highly praised for their academic and community service excellence with an award certificate. Also the recipients of the scholarships awards were announced.

A total of 34 Asian American students were honored from several high schools in the Metro Detroit area. These honorees were among 52 students nominated by their school counselors based on their above-standard academic grades, community service and other criteria. The selected honorees were:

Vikas Aravindabose (Troy HS)	Sophia Li (International Academy East)
Aamina Bashi (Troy HS)	Ally Liang (Troy HS)
Lucy Bolerjack (Groves HS)	Christine Liu (Troy HS)
Bryant Chen (Canton HS)	Sara Li Hua Ma (Troy HS)
Dorothy Chen (Troy HS)	Raghuram Palepu (Troy HS)
Mai Cheng (Pontiac HS)	Luna Shen (Detroit Country Day)
Samantha Chhan (Crestwood HS)	Apara Silverman (Troy HS)
Kathie Chuang (Detroit Country Day)	Angela Sun (Canton HS)
Promit Ghosh (Troy Athens HS)	Cuthbert Sun (West Bloomfield HS)
Shannon Guo (Canton HS)	Trinha Ton (Pontiac HS)
Stephanie Hong (Northville HS)	Hue Truong (Pontiac HS)
Anna Hsu (Troy HS)	Chuckry Vengadam (Troy HS)
Eric Huang (Troy HS)	Jefferson Yang (Pontiac HS)
Kevin Huang (Troy HS)	Phillip Yang (Troy HS)
Michelle Lily Huang (Troy HS)	Wendy Yang (Pontiac HS)
Olena Huang (Troy HS)	Xinrui Yang (Troy HS)
Kevin Hwang (Northville HS)	Helen Zhou (International Academy East)

This year, the recipients and the scholarships awarded to them were:

Bryant Chen (Canton HS) ACA Best-All-Around Scholarship \$1,000
Stephanie Hong (Northville HS) ACA Scholarship \$500
Phillip Yang (Troy HS) ACA Scholarship \$500
Angela Sun (Canton) Mabel Peng Scholarship
Samantha Chhan (Crestwood HS) P.L. Siak Scholarship

The scholarships awarded included the P. L. Scholarship which is awarded to a physically or mentally handicapped student for overcoming adversity to achieve good academic results. DCEA will present their scholarships to Cuthbert Sun (Andover HS) and Olena Huang (Troy HS) at the DCEA event held at the Society of Automotive (SAE) World Conference in April 2013. CAPA announce and present their scholarships at their Splendor of the East event in May 2013.

Among the attendees were the honored students and their parents, representatives from the organizations offering the scholarships, ACA members, ACA Board and other guests. After the introduction speech by ACA President Ron Wong, Frances Kai-Hwa Wang (an Asian American activist, journalist and blogger) gave the keynote speech. She described her Chinese American heritage background, growing up caught between an American culture and traditional Chinese family. Ms. Wang noted the advantages of being multi-lingual and embracing cross-cultural differences especially for specialty professionals such as medical doctor and lawyers when serving a diverse community where there may be language barriers. She encouraged the students to take advantage of college time to learn a lot of knowledge, to take useful courses and to make close friends who may become your mentor and support as life goes on.

After enjoying a delicious Chinese dinner, all the honored students, scholarship committee members, and the keynote speaker gathered for a group picture to end a memorable ACA event for 2012!



Class of 2013 Honorees with Scholarship Committee Members