

## OCA's APIA U Leadership Training at Wayne State University

by Roland Hwang

OCA Asian American Advocates brought APIA U leadership training to Wayne State University (WSU) on April 1, 2017.

Founded in 1973, OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates is a 501(c)(3) national non-profit, membership-driven organization based in Washington, D.C. with over 100 chapters and affiliates around the country.

The Association of Chinese Americans (ACA), the original founder of OCA, is the local chapter in Detroit.

About 40 students gathered on Saturday at the WSU Student Center. Monica Lee and Nick Lee from OCA, in Washington, DC led the training workshop.

The students learned about the Asian American historical timeline spanning the 1840's gold rush, through the 1860's railroad building, the 1880's exclusion laws, to the present immigration rhetoric and the Muslim ban. The students were also asked to project their goals in future in the midst of very complex environment. A considerable amount of discussion was devoted to -isms and bias: such as race, ethnicity, sex, immigration status, language and accent, sexual orientation, ability/disability, age, appearance, religion, and socioeconomic status. Other topics brought up such as economic, culture and job disparity may also bring some conflicts among ethnic groups. The training workshop gave students the opportunity to have dialogues besides their major studies in science, business, engineering, or social studies, etc. The training will equip them to deal with different level groups of people when they enter society after graduation.

The APIA U program is supported by generous donations from State Farm and Southwest Airlines. Local support came from the Association of Chinese Americans/OCA Detroit, Detroit Equity Action Lab, Wayne State University Chinese Students & Scholars Association, Muslim Students' Association, and WSU's Office of Multicultural Student Engagement.

Through this training, Wayne State University has expressed interest in holding future APIA U sessions. Contact OCA at 202-223-5500 for more details about APIA U's next venues.

