

PROBATION NEWS



CELEBRATING ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

**BY VINCENT YUNG
PRESIDENT OF THE ASIAN PACIFIC
PROBATION ASSOCIATION**

Returning from the groundbreaking ceremony at the new Compton school site, I finally got a chance to sit down and reflect on Asian American Heritage Month. I am not a journalist nor a politician. I am simply a proud member of this community who has served the Probation department for the last 30 seasons. My current tour is serving the cities of Compton and Whittier as a Director. My teams are housed at the South Central Area Office and the Rio Hondo Area Office.

Inside this issue:

Santa Monica Job Fair

R.O.C. Wins Architecture Awards

Camp Afflerbaugh Receives Perfect Rating



(L to R) Probation Director Jose Villar, President of the Asian Pacific Probation Association Vincent Yung, DSO Tatiana Acevedo, Dr. Adolfo Gonzales, Sr. DSO Erica Martin, SDPO Dr. Jeffry Inada, APPA Media Director Nina Peggs, SDPO Gilbert Ayuyao

CELEBRATING ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH (CONT)

BY VINCENT YUNG, PRESIDENT OF THE ASIAN PACIFIC PROBATION ASSOCIATION

Working in the Juvenile Field Services Bureau and heavily involved in the community engagement has been an amazing experience. I am blessed to be able to work with so many caring professionals within our organization including the external stakeholders, such as the city and County departments, court, Judges, Attorneys, State Officials, educators, mental health professionals, social services and the list just goes on and on. A quick shout out to my amazing team on the third floor in the Compton Court Building and Team Rio at the Rio Hondo Area Office. All of you have been a blessing to me, thank you for your support throughout the pandemic and civil unrest. I am writing this article as the President of the Asian Pacific Probation Association, but I would not be where I am today without the support of my team, friends, colleagues, and family.

To some of the newer members of the Probation Team, I would like to introduce the first Japanese American Probation Chief Paul Higa who passed away in 2006. Chief Higa graduated from UCLA in 1974, majoring in psychology and political science with a minor in chemistry. He began his 31-year tenure as a Deputy Probation Officer Trainee and rose through the ranks to become the Chief Probation Officer of the Los Angeles County Probation Department. He was the last home-grown Probation Chief, and he truly understood the meaning of rehabilitation. He pioneered the complex methodology in evidence-based practices by adopting multiple conventional models and technology to fit the complexity of the Los Angeles clients. His blueprints had set the foundations for many EBP programs in this department.



Chief Paul Higa

Chief Higa began his 31-year tenure as a Deputy Probation Officer Trainee and rose through the ranks to become the Chief Probation Officer of the Los Angeles County Probation Department.

Chief Higa was a quiet and unassuming man who masked his caring nature to many people. He was an honest, caring, compassionate Christian who truly understood poverty, social inequity, and the importance of education. He suffered a massive stroke and passed away in April 2006.

I still vividly remembered his celebration of life at the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Barbara. Hundreds of Probation staff, colleagues, union representatives, friends, and family members were in the audience. Although I did not have the privilege to personally know Chief Higa, I spoke with those close to him and I was able gather enough information and thoughts to draft a eulogy to honor him. I learned through many of his close friends that he genuinely believed in young people who have gone astray, especially those who came from poverty, inadequate domestic violence, child abuse, drug addiction, mental illness, or gang life.

His convictions were to help the vulnerable get a second chance and he strongly believed that Probation has the responsibility to care for them, guide them, protect them, and ensure their growth.

A majority of the Probation Officers from my generation were instilled with his convictions and these have stuck with us until today. I still have a close circle of colleagues and friends that are now in the leadership capacity, and some in the line level, that are still inspired by him while on assignment every day. Despite everything going on in the world, no matter how difficult the circumstances, we continue to support each other by showing up, knowing that we are in this together.

CELEBRATING ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH (CONT)

BY VINCENT YUNG, PRESIDENT OF THE ASIAN PACIFIC PROBATION ASSOCIATION



(L to R) Detective Henry Lai (Chicago PD), Detective John Pham (Chicago PD), Detective Roger Germino (Chicago PD), Arldwin Flores (LAPD), Vincent Yung, President of the Asian Pacific Probation Association

Some of you may ask why I am bringing up such ancient history, but I am interested in how this history has impacted our everyday lives. My thought is that history could be important in illuminating the present. Chief Higa's legacy should remind us of what we really sign up for, who we are, and how important this calling is.

If you don't have meaning in life, life will be hard, but passion is what get you through the tough times. Turbulent times lead to the metamorphosis and can transform an ordinary person to a war time leader. With that, please join me in celebrating the career of the first Japanese American Probation Chief in the history of the Los Angeles County Probation Department. Thank you for taking the time to read this article. Wishing you and your family a healthy and a happy Asian Pacific Heritage Month, and many more to come.

Probation News



(L to R) Michael Ishii (Hawthorne Police Department Chief), Probation - DPO II Jack Yao, Captain Wilson Lee (Washington DC Metro PD / Station Commander), Vincent Yung, President of the Asian Pacific Probation Association