Early in January, AAU members began teaching a Community Action class at the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures School (FACTS). Students explored how change can happen through information gathering and collective action.

Sixth and seventh graders focused specifically on the abandoned railway viaduct that is next to FACTS and that goes through much of the neighborhood. The students walked by the viaduct, took photos of it and adjacent properties, heard presentations by the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation and Reading Viaduct Project on various proposals, and discussed and debated ideas on what changes are needed in the area. After surveying FACTS staff and community members, the class did a great job of presenting their findings and their thoughts to FACTS and AAU leaders.
AAU Launches High School Youth Leadership Program

Following in the long tradition of our first summer program, AAU continues to work with high school students to provide leadership training and opportunities for them to mentor and tutor younger students. AAU provides training and support for high school students who volunteer as tutors and mentors in the FACTS aftercare program. FACTS after care is a homework help and enrichment program for 25 FACTS students who attend kindergarten through 6th grade (and that is run by AAU youth alumna, Anh Ha and two other FACTS staffers). AAU Executive Director Ellen Somekawa and Anh worked to design training sessions for high school students that were supportive and team building, helped them understand the needs of the FACTS students, and nurtured their potential for being positive role models and mentors to the FACTS students.

This youth leadership program has distinct cycles that correspond with FACTS marking periods. The high school tutors who participated in the first cycle were pleased by the positive impact they had on the FACTS program and its students; many are continuing on in the second cycle. Thanks to our dedicated, responsible and caring volunteers: Jessica Do, Kenneth Huang, Xin Lin, Dior Miller, Winnie Rao, Stephanie Tran, Ada Wu, Yan Zhang who successfully finished our first session. Another crew is now starting up for the second session.

We are still recruiting volunteers who are prepared to commit to a regular weekly schedule of volunteering and who are willing to come to training and evaluation meetings. Send us an email at esomekawa@mac.com to find out when the next orientation and training session will be held.

Folk Arts Classes at FACTS

AAU partners with the Philadelphia Folklore Project and FACTS to offer children the opportunity to study kung fu and lion dancing with Shu Pui Cheung and Chinese dance with Shu Yuan Li. By creating opportunities for students to learn from elders and artists that live in their communities, our folk arts programs help bridge generations and build respect for diverse cultural traditions.
The Central High School Asian Students’ Association organized the first annual Pan Asian-American Student Conference. It was held at FACTS last May. AAU members created an interactive workshop focused on current immigration and deportation issues, challenging students to think critically about this complex issue. In January, AAU members Anh Ha and Adrienne Poon presented this workshop to groups of Central High School students as part of a series of speakers for the school’s “International Day” and again at the East Coast Asian American Student Union Conference at Cornell University.

Immigration Workshop: The Current Face of Immigration

Anh and Adrienne leading the immigration workshop with help from Helen Gym.

Thanks to Our Donors!

Alexander Chang, Jeffrey & Jung Fin Pan, Kathy Shimizu & Gregor Reid, Michelle Myers, Nordon & Alice Bauder, Jean Hunt, Marlene & Joseph Ramsay, Andrea Gaskins-Battle, Dr. Joan May Cordova, Robert Eng, Barbara Baskin & Jon Berger, William & Sylvia Maston, Neeta Patel, Bernard & Judith Kolman, David Fava, Scott Kurashige & Emily Lawsin, A. Hirotsushi & Sumie Nishikawa, William David Murphy & Rebecca Rathje, Gregory & Karin Laszakovits, Frank Parisi & Joan Autrey, Flora Mae Teague, Kimberly & Kristofer Henning, Diane Rohnemus, Bernadine Joselyn, John Malinowski & Debora Frazer, Hao-Li & Dr. Evan Loh, Lois Davidson, Deborah Maskar, Bruce Shimmel, Susan Langmuir, Yleen & Gary Joselyn, Sarah Furnas, Katherine Miller & Max Molinaro, Carol Rogers, Amy Brodky, Ed Nakawatase, Sovannary Heang, Lisa & David Lee, Kao Kue, Bao Tran, Shui Wah & Yin Ping Lui, Sunni & Sheri Massey, Kay Yoon & Kenneth Hung, Emilia Rastrick, Lai Har Cheung & Kotaro Fujita, May Hing Lee, Dawn Pratson, Deb Dorn, Jeannie Lei, Michael Chow, Pheng Lim, Mayuko lwaki, Erica Young, Cesar Herrera, Anh Ha, Patricia Sandiford, Fernando Chang-Muy & Len Reiser, Carl & Julie Ackerman, Joseph & May Sun, Deirdre Obrien Knight, Robin Manteleone, Alisa McCann, Lai Yee Hom & Arjun Yodh, Ying Shek Wong, Georgeanne Fong, Adrienne Poon, Chiu-Man & Karen Poon, David Luftman, Carl & Mari Somekawa, Carolyn Thompson, Roger Somekawa, Heng Han, Jenny, Ruthanne Lum McCunn, Peter Kent, Michi Tashjian, Rodelia Fontanilla, Yingying Gu, Dr. Herbert and Miiko Horikawa, Tejoon Jung, Amelia Laytham, Sally Moua, Tien D. Nguyen, Dr. Lawrence & Mary Tom, Quyian Wang, Rendell for Governor Campaign, Mary Yee and Paul Uyehara, Betty Foo, Ignatius Wang, Ivan Novasak, Patricia Kozu, Helen Gym & Bret Flaherty, Kathleen Uno, Cindy Rosenthal & Art Read, Dr. Hsing Cheng Loh and Jean Loh, Suzanne Young & David Rammller, Sham-e-Ali, Taria & Husayn al-Jamil, Yun Frowine, Debora Wei & Ming Chau, Gregory & Lisa Warshaw

Thanks to Hao-Li!

With tremendous gratitude, Asian Americans United thanks Hao-Li Tai Loh for almost a decade of service as one of AAU’s most energetic and devoted board members. During her tenure, Hao-Li anchored numerous board projects, including personnel issues and fundraising, an area where she and her family devoted tremendous time and effort. Hao-Li led donor drives and anchored events such as the AAU “Strike for Justice Bowl-A-Thon.” Hao-Li was a leader in transforming a trash-filled lot next to AAU’s former Arch Street home into the award-winning Chinatown garden, which served elderly residents for almost five years. And she was a founder of AAU’s Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School, where she now serves as Board Chair. All of us at AAU have benefited from Hao-Li’s devotion to politics, community and process.

Thank you Hao-Li, Evan and Nicholas, from all of us at Asian Americans United.
AAU Opposes Iraq War

On October 27, AAU joined over 3,000 opponents of the Iraq War in the greater Philadelphia area in a human chain that extended from the Veterans Affairs Hospital in West Philadelphia to Center City. That event was then followed by a march to and rally at Independence Mall. AAU endorsed the local action which was part of a national day of action coordinated by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) and held in 11 locations throughout the United States.

A series of antiwar activities were organized by UFPJ on March 19, which marks the fifth anniversary of the US invasion and occupation of Iraq. Please check the UFPJ website for coverage and news or upcoming actions.

http://www.unitedforpeace.org/

AAU’s 2007 Bowl-A-Thon raised $7400!

Thanks to everyone who made it happen!

Thank you to our Bowl-A-Thon bowlers who raised the money we needed to pilot our 2007 Paths to Leadership Project. We couldn’t have done our project without your support. Thanks to: Doua Xiong, Leng Song, Ka Xiong, Dee Song, Daou Hiecke, Xue Song Jin, Steve Ngo, James Li, Andy Cao, James Au-Yeung, Devin Liang, Alex Buligon, the brothers of Delta Chi Psi, Neeta Patel, Ahn Ha, Adrienne Poon, Nicholas and Evan Loh, Olivia and Mae Jane Sun, Helen Gym, Bret, Aimon, Karina, Taryn Flaherty, Linda Chung, Joanie Cordova, Gregor Reid, Betty Lui, Kathy Shimizu, Marshall Lee, Suzanne Lee, Kelsey McGowan-Heilman, Eric, Tai and Chi Joselyn, Ellen Somekawa, Max Klink, Bill Davidson, Suzanne, Michelle Myers and Myong Pok McCloud, Ed and Kenzo Nakawatase, Jean Hunt, and Alice Bailey.

Be a Member of AAU!

I want to help build the strength of our communities. Sign me up!

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Notices of major AAU public events. Less than one email a month.

Asian Americans United is registered with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a Charitable Organization. The official registration and financial information of Asian Americans United, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0099. Registration does not imply endorsement.
**Paths to Leadership**

This past summer, AAU organized a summer program titled “Paths to Leadership” for middle school youth from both FACTS and from other local schools. The youth participated in a variety of leadership development activities, learned about environmental and community issues, and developed a plan to implement a recycling program at the FACTS. Youth met with leaders at FACTS to present their plan to create a recycling program. The 2008 program will run from July 14 to August 8.

Congratulations to Ellen Somekawa, honored by the Bread & Roses Community Fund as one of 30 local activists who’ve “broken new ground in building paths to social justice.” Involved in AAU since 1988 and Executive Director since 1996, Ellen’s work with AAU builds on previous years of activism in the anti-apartheid movement, the anti-nuclear movement, and the movement for indigenous land rights in the Black Hills. While active in the Asian American Student Alliance at the University of Pennsylvania, the group successfully fought to get Penn to change the offensive name of the “Oriental” Studies Department and to initiate its Asian American Studies program.
On September 22, thousands of people gathered under the full moon to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival in Philadelphia's Chinatown. Closing down 10th Street, people gathered to reclaim old traditions and establish new ones, and in so doing, asserted their right to exist as a community.

The Festival creates an opportunity for people to connect with each other and with their neighbors. A committee of artists organized daytime arts activities for children. Chinatown restaurants fed the hundreds of volunteers and artists. Sifu Cheung, brought out all of the students from Cheung's Hung Gar Kung Fu Academy to do lion dance and dragon dance in a lantern procession. The evening culminated in performances showcasing Chinese folk and traditional artists both from the neighborhood and from the larger region, as well as selected other Asian performers, and a tradition of our own invention – our annual mooncake-eating contest.

All of these activities were made possible with support of our event co-sponsors: the Chinese Benevolent Association, the Fujian Fraternal Association, and the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School, our media supporters Chinese Radio 1540, security services by ΔΧΨ Chinatown Town Watch, and students from Cheung's Kung Fu Academy, the donations of dozens of Chinatown associations and businesses, technical support from our partners at the Philadelphia Folklore Project, and funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and The Philadelphia Foundation. Thanks to our Host Committee: Fernando Chang-Muy and Len Reiser, Lai Har Cheung and Kotaro Fujita, Betty Foo, Hunan Restaurant, Helen Gym and Bret Flaherty, Councilman James Kenney, Dr. Evan Loh and Hao-Li Tai Loh, Linh Phan, Kathy Shimizu and Gregor Reid, Ellen Somekawa and Eric Jozelyn, Mary Yee and Paul Uyehara, and Ignatius Wang.

Thanks to Mid-Autumn Festival Organizing Committee members: Alex Buligon, David Chan, Ming Chau, Jenny Chen, Maxine Cheng, Michael Chow, Joan May Cordova, Jennifer Huh, Ken Hung, Willy Ip, Debora Kodish, Xin Shen Liu, Betty Lui, Hon Fung Lui, Jian Yong Mai, Dun Mark, Neeta Patel, Kathy Shimizu, Ellen Somekawa, Jack Tam, Wing Tang, Kevin Vo, Ally Vuong, Debbie Wei, Allan K. Wong, and Lisa Yau, who worked for months to organize the Festival.

Thanks to all who were a part of this effort to reclaim culture and strengthen our community.