Asian-Americans plan forum to discuss heritage

By Yvette Harms
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State's Asian-American faculty and staff will be examining their past, present and future on campus May 28 from 4 to 6:30 p.m. in the North Main Lounge of the Ohio Union.

The purpose of the forum, titled "Glimpses of The Past, Present and Future of Asian-American Faculty and Staff at OSU," is to convene the Asian-American faculty and staff to discuss the past, celebrate the present and plan for the future, said Moon Chen, professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine.

"Discussing the past means examining the status of Asian-American faculty and staff at Ohio State," Chen said.

"Celebrating the present means celebrating and welcoming the coming of Linda Tom to the university," Chen said.

Tom began her job as vice president for Human Relations and Resources in February, Chen said.

She is the highest ranking Asian-American administrator on campus.

Tom is also one of 12 Asian-Americans to hold the position of vice president or higher in the nation's higher education institutions, Chen said.

"I'm very pleased the program is occurring," Tom said. "Programs where we do recognize and acknowledge people are important. We have a lot of good people who should be acknowledged," she said.

The faculty and staff will also be honoring their co-workers who have received awards during the year, Chen said.

"Planning for the future means exploring the possibility of some sort of association of Asian-American faculty and staff for social support and networking," Chen said.

The association Chen proposes would be the same as the Asian-American Student Association, Chen said.

Part of planning for the future includes nominating an Asian-American whenever there is a vacancy in a university administrative position. They also try to get on search committees to fill these positions as part of the affirmative action effort, Chen said.

Chen said he thinks Asian-Americans are highly underrepresented in higher education administration.

"One percent of higher education administration is Asian-American," Chen said.

Barbara Newman, associate provost, will be speaking at the event. Newman is the administration's leader for Faculty Development, Chen said.

Chung-min Chen, chairperson for the Department of Anthropology, will be speaking as the Asian-American who has chaired a department the longest period of time.

Masanori Hashimoto, chairperson for the Department of Economics, will be speaking as the newest Asian-American department chairperson.

Felisima Serafica, from the Department of Psychology and chairwoman of the Provost's Asian-American Student Task Force, will be speaking along with Shelia Kapur, director of the Office of Asian-American Student Services, Chen said.

The purpose of this organization is to give faculty members a glimpse at academic administration, Chen said.

The event is being funded by an academic fellowship, a grant from the American Heart Association and also from the Office of Asian-American Student Services, Chen said.
Asian-Americans honor workers, discuss future

By Yvette Harms
Lantern staff writer

Asian-American faculty and staff assembled to discuss their plans for the future and honor co-workers who have received awards over the past year.

Speakers expressed a concern that Asian-Americans need to be more involved in campus affairs.

"The inclination to not be outspoken in leadership roles must be examined within us," said Linda Tom, vice president for the Office of Human Resources and Relations.

"We believe our accomplishments will speak louder than our words," said Moon Chen, director of the event.

However, Asian-Americans must not be known as the forgotten or silent minority, Chen said.

Chen suggested that the Asian-American faculty and staff at Ohio State should unite to form some sort of association resembling the Asian-American Student Association.

Some aspects of the students' association that could be carried over into the faculty's association were proposed by Sheila Kapur, director of the Office of Asian-American Student Services.

Kapur's ideas included building bridges among the different cultures to work together, learning from the support given by each cultural group and from the strength of working as a unified group.

"There is strength in numbers," Kapur said.

Before an association is formed, Kapur said the faculty should ask themselves: Is there one person who is willing to take the lead? Is there a unified purpose to this proposed association and what are the association's goals?

"The unified purpose would be to raise the consciousness of getting Asian-Americans more involved in the life of this university," Chen said.

Nobody is being considered to lead the organization yet because the faculty have not formerly met to discuss and plan this organization, Chen said.

Another idea, which would involve the Asian-American faculty and staff, includes nominating Asian-Americans for University Senate.

"The capacity for work is embodied in the Asian-American faculty and staff on campus," said Barbara Newman, who is drafting an action plan for the Asian-American Task Force.

"We need your leadership and your voice in the Senate," she said.

"Up to this point, I don't think Asian-Americans have been involved in the University Senate and other things that would contribute to the life of the university," Chen said.

There are many faculty members who have a scholarly interest in Asian-American issues, Newman said.

These members can provide a base for new courses focusing on Asian-Americans along with the augmentation of existing courses, Newman said.

Although it is important for Asian-American faculty and staff to unite, it is equally important for all minority groups to work together on campus, Newman said.

"Unless all these groups can find a common agenda, I think the impact will always be reduced," Newman said.
Minority chair quits; contends OSU failed to involve committee

By Rachel Rosko
Lantern staff writer

Professor Moon Chen, Jr., announced his resignation Friday as chair of the Asian-American oversight committee, under the Office of Minority Affairs.

The provost's office appointed the Asian-American oversight committee to help advise the university's Office of Minority Affairs on improving areas at Ohio State which relate to Asian-Americans.

"Through my resignation, I'm expressing the fact that I feel the process was a mockery, that it was an insult to be included in an advising committee when no advice was sought," Chen said.

Chen did not intend to publicly announce his resignation from the committee Friday. He wanted to give the administration a chance to respond to his complaints, but the issue surfaced during the question-and-answer period following a press conference for the Asian American Faculty/Staff Support Group.

The Office of Minority Affairs failed to consult with the oversight committee before filling a position in the office; the position is intended for an Asian-American, Chen said.

David Williams, vice provost of the Office of Minority Affairs could not be reached for comment.

"We've been neglected and deliberately avoided in terms of this first major policy decision for the Office of Minority Affairs, as it relates to Asian-American students," Chen said.

The Asian American Faculty/Staff Support Group wants the administration to recognize the Asian-American presence on campus and would like to at least be consulted in areas concerning the group's policies, Chen said.

"The beef is that we've been neglected, that we've been overlooked," Chen said.

The group said they think OSU administrators should address discrimination present at different levels of the university.

"There is an enormous amount of discrimination at this university, and as a group we ought to do something about it," said Vinod Sharma, treasurer of the support group.

The group has not yet made a specific plan to achieve its goal. It is organizing and wants the rest of the university to know its purpose, said Yung-Chen Lu, an associate professor in mathematics and member of AAFSG.

Feliciussa Serafica, former chair of the provost's task force on Asian-American students, stated in a news release that she was protesting continued opposition by the OSU administration, because administrators wouldn't discuss the task force's request for recruitment and academic support services for Asian-American students.

"Asian-Americans are changing demography of the campus, the state and the nation and at the same time, we are probably the most neglected minority group," Chen said.

The university tends to treat all minorities as if they have the same problems, although this is not the case, said Ayres D'Costa, a member of the group and a professor of education.

Chen and D'Costa both said they think in order to get the attention and recognition of the OSU administration, the support group must become more vocal and active to achieve its goals.

"Administration tends to respond to the squeaky wheel," D'Costa said.

Linda Tom, vice president for human resources and relations and the highest ranking Asian-American employed by Ohio State, said she shared the concerns of the group, as well as other minority groups on campus.

"I don't come here today with answers or the solutions," Tom said.

Tom said the administration is aware of the frustrations and concerns of the support group, and there are programs being looked at to address them.

A task force on diversity training has been formed to ensure members of the university are being treated with respect in relation to their cultural background, Tom said.

At OSU Main Campus, Asian-Americans are the fastest-growing faction of the 49,170 graduate and undergraduate students.

From Winter 1992 to January 1993, Asian-American student enrollment increased by 9.1 percent, while total campus enrollment dropped by 5.1 percent, according to the Office of the University Registrar.
Asian Americans want fair shake from administration

By David Sonderman

Despite the fact that Asian Americans are the fastest growing group in Ohio and at Ohio State, they remain an overlooked minority, a support group for Asian Americans says. “We’re not being proportionally included in University decisions, despite our proportionally greater numbers in the University as well as in the population as a whole.”

Moon Chen, professor of preventive medicine, said during a news conference April 31.

According to the support group, the Asian-American population grew 91 percent in Ohio during the 1980s, compared with a 1 percent population increase for the state population as a whole during the same time period.

Currently at Ohio State’s Columbus campus, there are more than 1,600 undergraduate, graduate and professional students who are identified as Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Office of Human Resources figures indicate in October 1992 there were 276 faculty and 405 staff members.

“At the very minimum, we would like to be consulted whenever the University intends to do something in terms of service to the Asian-American community,” Chen said.

“We appreciate the fact that there is a vision of inclusiveness (at the University), but that vision needs to be matched with actions.” It did not make formal demands, but the group did express dissatisfaction with the lack of University response to an Asian-American task force report issued in 1991. Other concerns were expressed about a “glass ceiling,” the limits faced by minorities in climbing career ladders.

Subir Nag, associate professor of radiology, said the University administration needs to recognize that there is discrimination against Asian Americans when it comes to promotions. “Discrimination is here at different levels and we have to stop it.”

Group is largest growing minority, statistics show

By David Sonderman

According to statistics compiled by Moon Chen, professor of preventive medicine, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are the fastest growing minority group in the country. Among Chen’s other findings are:

- Between 1970-80, the percentage of AAPIs grew by 127 percent, compared with a 6 percent growth overall in the U.S. population.
- Between 1980-90, the percentage for AAPIs grew by 108 percent, compared with 10 percent for the U.S. overall. Chen says no other racial or ethnic group has experienced triple digit growth for two consecutive decades.

* By the year 2050, Asian Americans will comprise 10.7 percent of the entire U.S. population.
* 16.8 percent of the Asian Americans aged 18-24 in Ohio live below the poverty level. As a whole, 10 percent of Ohio residents between 18 and 24 live in poverty.

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The tactics used by other special interest groups, such as Africans Committed to Improving Our Nation (ACTION), spurred the Asian Americans. The group of African Americans held protests and made demands last spring, then presented their grievances to the Board of Trustees.

Although not naming ACTION, Ayes D’Costa, associate professor of educational services and resources, said, “I think the administration tends to respond to the squeaky wheel.”

“The one that makes the loudest noise threatens the administration the most and is the one that gets the administration’s attention.”

Chen added. “So we take lessons from others who have been successful. And the ones that have been successful are the ones who have provoked, rightfully at times, confrontation. Especially when going through the regular protocol doesn’t yield the kinds of recognition and rewards it ought to.”

Linda Toon, vice president for human resources, said, “I share the concerns of this group as well as other minority groups. Institutionally, I think we have a commitment to make sure that when we talk about equal employment opportu-

Statistics...

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* Asian Americans are Ohio State’s fastest growing category of students. Asian-American student enrollment on the Columbus campus increased by 9.1 percent from winter quarter 1992 to winter quarter 1993. The total Columbus campus enrollment dropped by 5.1 percent for the same period. There are currently 1,649 Asian-American students enrolled on the Columbus campus.

(According to an October 1992 payroll report obtained by onCampus, on the Columbus campus there were: 276 faculty members, 539 administrative and professional staff and 66 classified civil service employees identified as AAPIs.)