

‘Local Heroes’ From Bay Area APA Community Recognized



From left: (back row) Joseph Petitti, senior vice president, Union Bank of California; Paul Abe, vice president, UBOC; Jeff Clarke, president and CEO, KQED; (front row) honorees Dr. Samuel So, Kwei Fong Lin, Chi Mei Yeung, Linda K. Asato, Dr. Tuong-Vi Ta, and Dr. Chui L. Tsang.

KQED and Union Bank of California recently honored six “local heroes” at their annual celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month at the Channel 9 studios in San Francisco.

Opening remarks were made by Jeff Clarke, president and CEO of KQED; Paul Abe, vice president of UBOC; Michael Isip, executive director of TV production and programming, KQED Public Television; Eddie Wong, executive director of National Asian American Telecommunications Association; Joseph Petitti, senior vice president of community banking, UBOC; and Jo Anne Wallace, vice president and general manager of KQED Public Radio.

Abe noted that this is the seventh year that UBOC has co-presented the awards with KQED.

The audience was shown clips from programs about Asia and Asian Americans that were broadcast on KQED throughout May, many of which were co-presented by NAATA.

Channel 9 also aired brief profiles of each honoree during the month.

Entertainment was provided by Ka 'Ehu Kai, a Hawaiian band, during the reception and by Miwa Kai, a Japanese classical dance group, Jeryl Ray d. Concepcion, a talented vocalist who is only in the seventh grade, and Jamaesori, a Korean drumming group, during the awards program.

The honorees [included]:

* Dr. Tuong-Vi Ta, staff psychiatrist, Asian Community Mental Health Services (Oakland). She came to this country 30 years ago with her family as a refugee

from Vietnam. In September 1982 she became the Bay Area's first bilingual, bicultural Vietnamese psychiatrist, volunteering her services to ACMHS.

Her expertise was instrumental in the organization's ability to obtain start-up funding and begin serving the influx of Vietnamese and other Southeast Asian community members suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome and other psychological disorders.



Entertainment was provided by Jamaesori.

In her capacity with ACMHS, Ta has served nearly 800 chronically and severely mentally ill and continues her work to de-stigmatize the concept of mental illness in the API community.

She has inspired and mentored staff to refine their cultural competency and therapeutic skills, while continuing to maintain a private practice that provides health and mental health services to low-income Vietnamese residents in the East Bay.

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