



Association of Chinese Americans, Inc.
Detroit Chapter of the OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates

**OCA Detroit (Association of Chinese Americans, Inc.)
2021 Unsung Hero Award Nomination Statement**

Nominee: Gracia Lee



Nominee unselfishly shared their time and expertise no matter how insignificant the task:

Gracia was a long-time volunteer and supporter of OCA Detroit. She got involved with the chapter when she and her husband moved from Pittsburgh to Michigan in 1985. She served as a chapter volunteer in various fields and made significant contributions toward the creation of the Chinese Community Center, the first of its kind in the Chinese American Community. She helped with fundraising, site searching, clean-up, and building renovation, and she also prepared food for the volunteers. Gracia helped in a multitude of apparent and behind-the-scenes ways for the chapter's fundraising events during her many years as a volunteer. From organizing seating arrangements to making center pieces, she was rarely under the spotlight, but she was always there to help and she never hesitated to step up. Gracia also served on the chapter's high school achievement scholarship program for almost 38 years.

Nominee has served at a leadership position within the community:

Gracia volunteered her time for the Chinese American community through her involvement with local Chinese organizations. She had a passion for community service, and she was a strong advocate for equal rights. She served on the chapter's Board and as the Treasurer 15 years ago. Her kindness, humbleness, and integrity made a great impact on the people in her work, in her community service, and in her personal life. Gracia joined many classes offered at the Chinese Community Center. She always cared for her fellow classmates and assisted them if they ran into problems during class or needed help communicating with the office. She cared about how rules and policies would affect people, and she stood for those who were too shy to speak up. She helped promote our programs and shared our messages in her circle. She always stood behind us and encouraged her friends to contribute financially or through participating in our activities. Whenever something happened in the community, she was a leader.



Association of Chinese Americans, Inc.

Detroit Chapter of the OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates

Nominee has showcased a consistent track record of volunteering:

Gracia served on the chapter's High School Achievement Scholarship Award Program for almost 38 years, beginning at the inception of the program. She was focused and logical, and she was always willing to offer her valuable insight when she interviewed candidates. She cared deeply about younger generations and showed it by serving on the Committee with enthusiasm. In 2020, during the pandemic, she managed to overcome many technical challenges and successfully interviewed 40 candidates in a virtual setting in one day. She helped recognize the scholarship honorees and presented awards to the recipients. She was a proud volunteer of this long-lasting program.

Nominee has attended and participated in the Chapter events:

Gracia attended many events held by the Chapter. She attended our fundraiser events, including our concerts and galas whenever she was in town, and she always invited her friends to join as well. She was also very active in attending classes at our Center such as Tai Chi, Cooking, and Line Dance.

Nominee has attended and participated in the OCA National events:

Gracia did not get the opportunity to attend events hosted by OCA National in recent years. She was not a sitting Board member or a chapter representative to National. The National programs we are currently engaged with were not suited for her.