

Asian American Career Resource Sheet

The Asian American community is diverse and comprised of many unique histories, ethnicities, languages, and cultures. There is not *one* Asian American narrative, counter to what one may see in the media. Still today, Asian Americans are challenged by the continuation of the Model Minority Myth or stereotype. This affects students' career choices and opportunities in many ways. AARCC and OCS hope that every student can study and pursue a career that they feel passionate and invested in.

ASIAN AMERICAN EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Often, in larger corporations one can find established Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). They are meant to provide resources, education, and support for their employees to help with recruitment, retention, and professional development.

ASIAN AMERICAN TRAILBLAZERS

- Chef Beverly Kim; winner of *Top Chef*
- Patsy Mink, Congresswoman and founder of Title IX for gender equality
- Julie Chou, professional women's ice hockey player
- Jeremy Lin, NBA player
- Ken Jeong; Actor in TV show *Community*
- George Takei; Actor and activist in the LGBTQ and Asian American communities
- Helen Zia; Author, community organizer, and journalist; activist in the LGBTQ and Asian American communities; founding sister of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) for reproductive health and justice
- Mindy Kaling; Actor in *The Mindy Kaling Show* and formerly *The Office*
- Kal Penn; Actor in *The Namesake*, *House*, and *Harold and Kumar* films; former Obama Whitehouse Community Engagement staff person

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

- *"I feel some pressure to go into medicine, because that's what my family wants."*

We understand that as a young person, family pressure can be difficult, especially if being a doctor is seen as a tangible and economically prosperous career. Try talking to your family early about this pressure and stress. Understand there might be a generational gap, which then bringing in other support might be helpful. Understand where your family is coming from, but also clearly and assertively communicate your hopes, dreams, and career goals.

- *"I'd like to go into a field, but I haven't seen a lot of Asian American role models in the area of profession."*

This might be the case here in Chicago, Illinois, or the Midwest, but try not to let this discourage you. There might be some role models in other parts of the nation or the world. Additionally, you might have to be that “trailblazer” for others!

- *“I feel like I’m still faced with Asian American stereotypes, even if they’re not so in your face.”*

What you might be experiencing is micro-aggressions or micro-biases. These are things people say or do that are harder to overtly call racism, but still can effect your self-esteem, productivity level, and feeling of community. Let someone you feel safe with know and get support. This is bad for the work environment and culture.

- *“I am Muslim, female identified and I wear a hijab. Should I be concerned about discrimination or prejudice as I interview?”*

Your religious affiliation is a federally protected class. However, there still might be some lack of education and awareness by individuals. If you think you have been discriminated due to religious affiliation, find support and if you want, work with Human Resources.

- *“My Asian birth name is difficult to pronounce for some people. How should I address this? Should I even use it?”*

This is a personal decision and may change over time with your feeling about identity. It might help to discuss this with a UIC staff member for support on however you choose.

UIC ASIAN AMERICAN RESOURCES

Asian American Resource and Cultural Center (AARCC)

aarcc.uic.edu

aarcc@uic.edu

101 Taft Hall

Phone: (312) 413-9569

Asian American Studies (ASAM)

asam.uic.edu

asam@uic.edu

Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Asian Americans (CCSAA)

www.ccsaa.uic.edu