After years of student lobbying, the Asian American Resource and Cultural Center (AARCC) opened Spring 2005 to support the needs of Asian Americans at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC).

AARCC offers social, cultural, and educational programs that promote knowledge of Asian Americans. Our co-curricular programs enhance the UIC experience and provide opportunities for integrated learning and development.

MISSION
AARCC promotes the intellectual and personal growth of UIC students, staff, and faculty; advocates for greater access, equity, and inclusion of Asian Americans; and educates the UIC community about Asian Americans.

VISION
AARCC will be a national leader in promoting the greatest academic and personal success of Asian Americans in higher education.

VALUES
• Community: Foster a safe climate that provides a sense of belonging and enhances relationships of individuals.
• Empowerment: Support individuals in reaching their greatest potential.
• Engagement: Actively encourage the community to have meaningful participation in programs, events, and organizations.
• Respect: Acknowledge and honor the diverse values and identities of individuals and communities.
AARCC Visitor Data

This academic year, we had 422 students visit AARCC. University iCard swipes showed 4704 visits throughout the year. Despite our modest space, AARCC provides a sense of belonging and a community for students, faculty, and staff.

Space Survey Results

A space survey was conducted at the end of the fall and spring semesters to assess AARCC services, the collective data from 75 survey respondents reveals the following:

### Unique Swipes by College for Spring 2017

- College of Education: 97
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: 41
- College of Business Administration: 43
- College of Engineering: 35
- College of Applied Health Sciences: 14
- College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts: 7
- Graduate College: 4
- School of Public Health: 2
- College of Pharmacy: 2

In the spring space survey, the 43 respondents were asked if an advisor or a counselor who can directly work with Asian American students would be a useful resource to have at AARCC:

- 23 respondents (54%) would find it very useful.
- 16 respondents (37%) would find it useful.
- 2 respondents (5%) would find it somewhat useful.
- 2 respondents (5%) would find it not useful.
- 2 respondents (5%) would not use it at all.

Demographics: Spring 2017 Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unique Swipes by Student Class Level</th>
<th>Spring 2017 by Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>15% of swipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>30% of swipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>30% of swipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>20% of swipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>10% of swipes</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unique Swipes for Spring 2017 by Sex:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students taking a break in the AARCC conference room.
Faculty and Staff Engage
AARCC engages UIC faculty and staff through intentional collaboration. Consistently, staff and faculty have facilitated educational programs, participated in the training of our Asian American Mentor Program (AAMP) mentors, served as AARCC Ambassadors, and acted as a resource for our Student Organization Council. Through such partnerships with AARCC, faculty and staff play active roles in contributing to student success, and in return, AARCC promotes the engagement of staff and faculty at UIC. This year’s events include, but are not limited to:

A collaboration with the Women’s Leadership & Resource Center, the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, and the Chicago Alternative Comic Expo, AARCC invited award-winning herstorian, author, and comic creator Trina Robbins. At the Women, Culture, & Comics event, Trina lectured on women and diversity in comics and how comics can be a medium for cultural understanding and social change.

The half-day symposium Comics, Culture, & Society brought three scholars, writers, and creators to UIC. Valentino Zullo, teaching fellow at Kent State University, spoke on problematic female identification in superhero comics. Michi Trota, writer, editor, and community organizer, focused on moving beyond sidekick roles for Asian Americans in pop culture. Leila Abdelrazaq, Palestinian artist and author of Baddawi, shared her dad’s experience growing up in a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon. This event was in partnership with AARCC, Arab American Cultural Center, and African-American Cultural Center.

Scholarly Engagement

Space Survey Results

Top 3 Reasons for AARCC Visits:

1. Take a break, eat, or rest.
2. Connect and socialize with others.
3. Work on homework, study, or get peer tutoring.
AARCC cultivates mutually beneficial partnerships with diverse communities within and beyond Chicago through collaborations with organizations to provide cultural experiences for UIC students, staff, faculty, and alumni. This year’s events include, but are not limited to:

- hosting the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community to encourage Asian American students to register for the 2016 November election
- inviting Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Chicago and the Korean American Resource & Cultural Center to canvass and host phone banks in AARCC and in the Honors College to do outreach to Asian American communities and engage them on Asian American issues
- visiting Kelly High School and, with partnership with Project VISION, bringing high school students to UIC to encourage them to attend college by giving them a tour of UIC and introducing them to current students
- hosting a Lunchbox panel on Asian Americans and the Elections with Nayoung Ha and Adam Braun from the Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, Thuong Phan – Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, Jane Lau and Shobhana Verna – Chicago Board of Election Commissioners, Naomi Salcedo – Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment
- participating in two dragon boat races, including Chinatown’s Dragon Boat Race for Literacy. This involved 26 participants: 8 students, 5 staff, 11 alumni, and 2 faculty

Guided by the George Kuh’s (2010) theory of high-impact student engagement, AARCC engages UIC students, through collaborations with staff, faculty, and community members, in many ways that contribute to their empowerment and student success.

One example is through AARCC’s Asian American Mentor Program (AAMP), directed by Associate Director Jeff Alton. An academic credit-bearing program supported by the UIC AANAPISI Initiative and Global Asian Studies program, AAMP assists in the retention of Asian American first-year and transfer students.

The goal of Summer AAMP, which was held in June and July, is to help students in UIC’s Summer College ease their transition to campus by engaging them with campus resources that include academic support, peer support, campus support programs, and meeting with staff and faculty with a particular focus on Asian American student needs and resources.

This support continues in AAMP, which occurs only in the Fall semester, with a heavier focus on educational and social activities through peer support that eventually benefits the non-cognitive development of participants in AAMP. While attention is given to the mentees, the mentors’ experiences are also noteworthy for leadership building.

AAMP was featured in the March 2017 issue of Insight Into Diversity magazine. To view the feature, visit http://go.uic.edu/aampfeature.

Summer AAMP 2016 had 8 mentors assigned to 16 mentees.

Fall AAMP 2016 had 34 mentors assigned to 41 active mentees.
Another way AARCC engages UIC students and contributes to their empowerment and student success is through the Asian Student Organization Leadership Initiatives.

In mid-August, student leaders from 11 Asian-interest student organizations were invited to the annual Student Organization Leadership Retreat at the Loyola University Chicago Retreat & Ecology Campus. Led by Assistant Director Elvin Chan and facilitated by Student Organization Outreach Coordinator Lahney Vilayhong, this retreat was an opportunity to escape the campus and city and focus on communication skills, team building on the low ropes and high ropes course, and educational workshops.

Come September, there were four presidents roundtable meetings and a number of workshops:
- Financial and Event Planning, presented by Joy Vergara of Center for Student Involvement.
- Student Leadership Practices Inventory presented by Spencer Long Student Leadership Development and Volunteer Services.
- Team Challenge workshop facilitated by Campus Recreation.
- Resume Building workshop facilitated by Allan Trinh of Career Services.

The Spring semester concluded with the annual end of the year banquet, where students voted and gave out various student leadership and organizational awards. 33 student leaders were in attendance and recognized for their leadership involvement. This year, the keynote speaker was Jeff Alton of AARCC. His speech focused on how leadership and uniqueness can lead to a path to success.

There are about 40 Asian-interest, registered student organizations. Although the organizations have a number of different resources and systems of support, AARCC creates a unique and intentional space for support and sharing of ideas and best practices.

Here’s an example of student organizations that participated this year:
- alpha Kappa Delta Phi
- Alpha Phi Gamma
- Asian American Students in Alliance
- Chi Sigma Tau
- Delta Epsilon Psi
- Delta Kappa Delta
- Delta Phi Omega
- Filipinos in Alliance
- Kappa Pi Beta
- Korean American Student Association
- Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers
- Theta Lambda Beta
- Vietnamese Student Association
AARCC hosts a number of signature events and programs that expand frontiers of knowledge with the goal of promoting equity, inclusion, and respect and enhance community engagement by providing a sense of belonging.

In August, AARCC hosted its 12th Annual Ice Cream Social, which had over 285 guests, 10 student organizations, and 3 community organizations.

In early September, AARCC hosted its Open House, which had over 100 guests composed of faculty, staff, and students.

After assessing student concerns, AARCC hosted in fall semester Nothing but Love: Cultivating Success Through Our Parent’s Expectations. This session allowed dialogue amongst students and their shared concerns regarding family expectations.

In the spring semester, AARCC collaborated with Kristina Tendilla from Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Chicago for A Primer: Where Do We Stand? Deconstructing Trajectories of Success and Violence in the Asian American Experience. Both sessions had a total of 25 attendees.

Throughout the academic year, Jeff Alton collaborated with other CCUSC staff to facilitate Reimagining Masculinity sessions on topics such as Masculinity & Blank-Phobia; Marching Away From Machismo; wellness through trap yoga; a bow-tie-making workshop; and a book talk with author Aida Hurtado on Beyond Machismo.

In April, Asian American Awareness Month was held at UIC through the leadership of Asian American Students in Alliance, who brought Chinese-Korean rapper, comedian, television personality, television host and actress Awkwafina to campus. She spoke about her career in music, TV, and movies. Over 75 attended to hear her speak and perform.

Student Engagement: Community Connections Events

Another example AARCC engages UIC students and contributes to their empowerment and student success is through Community Connections Events.

Led by Community Connections Student Coordinator Elaine Rivera, a number of community organizations were invited to campus to engage the UIC student population. These events strengthen the interwoven relationship UIC has with the city and its community organizations. This year’s outreach events included, but are not limited to:

• a Career Pathways session, with the support from Ascene Chicago and the various career services departments at UIC, where students heard a panel presentation about different career pathways from professionals in various fields, such as healthcare, engineering, and business.

• a Engaging with a Non-profit Organization session with guest speaker Paul Luu, CEO of Vietnamese Association of Illinois, where he discussed his experience with non-profit work, the importance of non-profits, and tips on how students can serve those who need us most.

• a collaboration with the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community’s ORIGIN Youth Program. The Making a Difference in Chinatown presentation focused on how ORIGIN has been making strides within the Chinatown community through different initiatives and programs involving high school students.

• a Lunchbox with Chi Sigma Tau on Asian Americans in the Media led by Charles Valdez and Edzel Futotana.

Campus Engagement: Signature Events and Programs

We had about 1500 recorded attendees come to AARCC events and programs.
This year, Christina Khorn, Student Marketing Manager, worked with the student blog team (Nina Ambida, Giselle Legaspi, Krystal Ng) to research and write various posts about the diverse Asian American community. Some of the posts this year included: the Complexity of Asian American identities; Indigenous People's Day; Sex and Dating in AAPI communities; How Others Perceive Asian Americans; The Un-talked About Struggle with Asian Americans with Disabilities; The Whitewashing of Asian Americans in Hollywood. The blog provided another means of educational information for and about UIC and Chicagoland Asian Americans. The blog posts are shared on the AARCC Facebook page and can be found using #AARCCorner.

The second Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) Part A grant was in full effect this academic year. Through the partnership of AARCC and Global Asian Studies, the goal of UIC PASS (UIC’s Pipeline to Asian American and Pacific Islander Student Success) is to strengthen college transition through AAMP and career development through on and off-campus internships in GLAS. For more information about UIC AANAPISI, visit http://go.uic.edu/aanapisi.

On April 6-8, 2017, the UIC AANAPISI Initiative funded 6 UIC students (Elaine Rivera, Nalondria Banks, Abby Mohansundr, Cammille Go, Benjamin Tam, and Kimo Carl) to attend the Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education in Oakland, CA. Also, in attendance were UIC employees Mark Martell and Jeffrey Alton. This team was selected to present UIC PASS: Building Bridges for AAPI Students and Connecting Them to Student Success, where the students shared their experiences as student employees, leaders, interns, and mentors through the programs offered through the UIC AANAPISI Initiative. When they returned to campus, they were asked to write blog entries for AARCCorner and to share pictures that captured their experiences during APAHE.
In addition to their roles, AARCC professional staff serve in a number of committees, task forces, professional groups that benefit the UIC campus community. This includes but not limited to:

- APIASF Scholarship Readers
- Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Asian Americans
- Community Affairs Internal Council
- Greek Advisory Council
- Housing REAL Living Learning Community
- Latino Cultural Center Ambassadors
- Midwest Pop Culture Association
- MLK Scholarship Committee
- (Re)imagining Masculinity Dialogue Series
- Student ACCESS Bill Task Force
- Student Success Initiative: Orientation Task Force
- Tuesday/Thursday Advisor Topics
- UIC Impact
- Various search committees
- Weeks of Welcome Committee

The Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change

In 2016-2017, the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change worked collaboratively under the theme of “Remedy” in response to the recent violence affecting communities in the United States and internationally.

Through educational programming, the CCUSC continues to affirm their commitment to social change grounded in the principles of inclusion, access, and equity. Our name reflects the collective purpose: to expand understanding of the value of cultural diversity and connect diverse assets to find creative solutions for common challenges. The CCUSC include AARCC, African-American Cultural Center, Arab American Cultural Center, Disability Resource Center, Gender and Sexuality Center, Latino Cultural Center, and Women’s Leadership and Resource Center.

This year, AARCC’s Student Graphic Aide Alexis Woo designed the Asian American Resource Book using common motifs of Asian remedies: lotus and loose leaf teas. The resource book cover design consists of a lotus flower with petals as hands to represent communities coming together and overcoming recent adversities.

AARCC is just one part of UIC’s rich and vibrant Asian American landscape.

We regularly are in conversation and in partnership with Global Asian Studies, the UIC Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) Initiative, the Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Asian Americans, and Asian American related student organizations. In addition, AARCC is part of Great Lakes Asian American Student Services (GLAASS) to keep informed and share best practices with other universities to better serve Asian American students.

These on-going partnerships are why UIC became the first AANAPISI in the Midwest and what keeps Asian Americans thriving at UIC.
On April 25, 2017, the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF) recognized eleven UIC students with AANAPISI/APIASF scholarships. Awarded with $2000 from APIASF/Walmart, UIC was able to host a reception in conjunction of the Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Asian Americans’ annual Asian American Congratulatory Ceremony. The students (Christine Lee, Kenneth Li, Allan Trinh, MyMy Tang, Jia Wu, Claire Nicole Montesa, Elaine Rivera, Chuyan Li, Brenda Nguyen, Elsie Liu, Alpa Kotak) received a certificate, UIC mementos, and APIASF swag from Jeannette Soon-Ludes, Director of APIASF Scholarships & Programs in Washington, DC.
Asian American Congratulatory Ceremony

AARCC, in partnership with Global Asian Studies (GLAS) and the Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Asian Americans (CCSAA), hosted the 2nd Annual UIC Asian American Congratulatory Ceremony. The welcome was done by Provost Susan Poser, and the keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Radha Modi, GLAS Postdoctoral Research Fellow. CCSAA members Natasia Bongcas and Mark Martell, and student members Nina Ambida, Abby Mohansundr, and Ben Tam spearheaded this event. In attendance were 18 graduates and 47 guests consisting of family members, significant others, faculty, staff, and other students.
Thank you to Jeff Alton, Elvin Chan, Elaine Rivera, Lahney Vilayhong, Alexis Woo, Henna Vohra, Imee Ignacio, Mariam Aeijaz, Christina Khorn, Anna Guevarra, Karen Su, Jill Huynh, Joy Vergara, Greg Calip, the AARCC Bloggers, and many more.

We appreciate the constant support from the Office of Diversity, the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change, Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Asian Americans, Global Asian Studies, Native American Support Program, the UIC AANAPISI Initiative, other campus departments, alumni, and community partners.

Since 2010, the University of Illinois at Chicago is a federally-designated Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI). The campus has received close to $5.6 million dollars from the U.S. Department of Education to support recruitment, retention and graduation of Asian American and Pacific Islander students and all UIC students. To learn more about the UIC AANAPISI Initiative, visit http://go.uic.edu/aanapisi.