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02/26 Webinar: Global Competition for Talent & International Students



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on February 2, 2026, **Rosie Levine** 卢晓玫, Executive Director of US-China Education Trust (USCET), highlighted USCET’s ongoing collaborative webinar series with APA Justice and C100, which examines how U.S.-China relations affect Asian American communities. The first session in October featured Governor **Gary Locke** 骆家辉 and Ambassador **Julia Chang Bloch** 张之香 and attracted over 800 registrations.

The second webinar of this series will be held on February 26, 2026, starting at 8:00 pm ET. It will focus on global competition for talent and international students.

As geopolitical competition intensifies between the United States and China, the flow of talent and students across borders has become a critical flashpoint. International students – particularly those from China – have enriched American universities, driven innovation, and strengthened people-to-people ties. Yet today, visa restrictions, security concerns, and shifting immigration policies are reshaping the landscape. At the same time, China and other nations

are competing aggressively to attract global talent, transforming higher education into an arena of strategic competition. Chinese American students and scholars increasingly find themselves caught in the middle – facing heightened scrutiny, profiling, and questions about their loyalty.

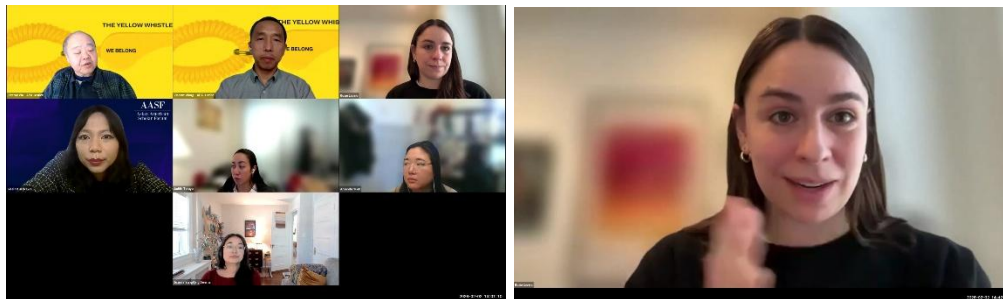
This webinar will examine how the U.S.-China relationship is affecting international student mobility, university partnerships, and the global competition for talent. What are the implications of competition for American universities, research ecosystems, and soft power? How are students and scholars navigating new restrictions and uncertainties? How can policies balance openness and U.S. competitiveness?

Distinguished speakers and moderator for the webinar are:

- Dr. **Fanta Aw** (speaker), Executive Director and CEO of Association of International Educators (NAFSA)
- Dr. **Steven Chu** 朱棣文 (speaker), William R. Kenan Jr. Professor, Professor of Molecular and Cellular Physiology and of Energy Science and Engineering; former U.S. Secretary of Energy
- Professor **Margaret K. Lewis** 陸梅吉 (moderator), Seton Hall University School of Law

Register to attend the webinar today: <https://bit.ly/1-15email>

Rosie Levine: USCET Update



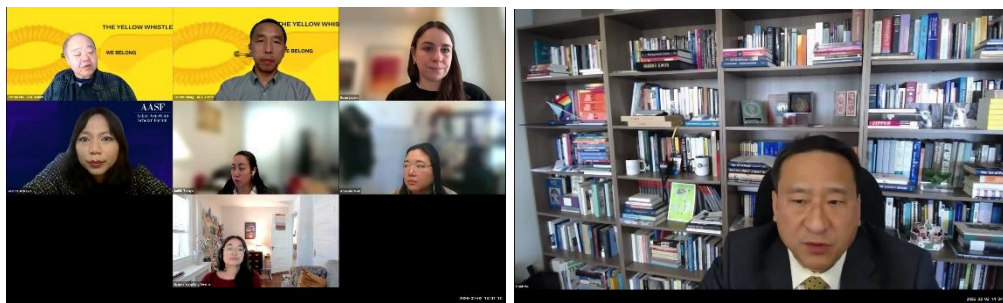
During the APA Justice monthly meeting on February 2, 2026, **Rosie Levine** 卢晓玫 also provided an update on USCET, a DC-based nonprofit housed at George Washington University and founded over 25 years ago by Ambassador **Julia Chang Bloch** 张之香. USCET focuses on U.S.-China relations in higher education while highlighting the contributions of Asian Americans to both the United States and bilateral engagement.

Rosie highlighted concerning declines in student exchanges: Chinese students in the U.S. are down roughly one-third from pre-pandemic levels, and fewer than 2,000 Americans are currently studying in China, a steep drop from 15,000 a decade ago. She emphasized that this trend

threatens nuanced understanding of China and could have significant implications for U.S. policy, innovation, and global competitiveness.

In response, USCET has established a senior expert working group to develop recommendations for boosting American student engagement in China. The group has convened academics, policymakers, and diplomatic leaders, including the U.S. Ambassador to China, and will release a report in the coming months. Rosie expressed cautious optimism that upcoming U.S.-China summits may create opportunities to strengthen education policy and international exchange.

Frank Wu: “The Past is Not Even Past”



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on February 2, 2026, **Frank Wu** 吴华扬, President of Queens College, City University of New York, provided historical context for current civil rights challenges facing Asian American communities, emphasizing that recent developments—such as the China Initiative and renewed alien land laws—are not new phenomena but part of a recurring pattern. He described the “perpetual foreigner” stereotype, noting that Asian Americans are repeatedly portrayed as outsiders or potential threats tied to foreign governments. While acknowledging that the China Initiative has been defeated for now, he cautioned that such outcomes are never permanent, stating that in a democracy there are no lasting victories.

Frank illustrated this continuity through historical examples, including the scapegoating of Chinese communities during the San Francisco bubonic plague 125 years ago, ongoing threats to birthright citizenship first secured by Chinese Americans well more than a century ago, and the legacy of Japanese American incarceration during World War II. He stressed that these issues are not merely historical, citing contemporary discussions about the possible return of internment-style policies in the event of conflict with China. He underscored this point by quoting **William Faulkner** that “the past is never dead. It's not even past.”

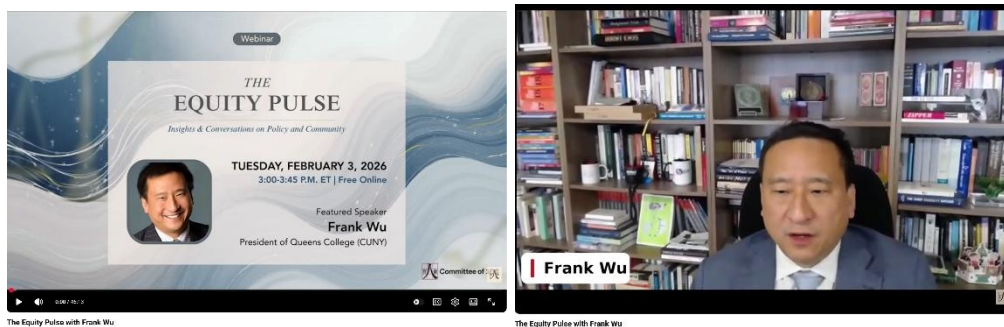
Turning to his first core point, Frank emphasized the importance of sustained civic engagement. He argued that engagement must be ongoing and institutional, not limited to moments of crisis.

He highlighted the value of regular organizing structures—such as standing coalitions, nonprofits, and recurring convenings—and praised the consistency of the APA Justice monthly call as an example of how communities can build experience, infrastructure, and readiness over time.

Frank's second point focused on relationship-building and coalition work. He stressed the need to cultivate allies across racial and political lines, pointing to the role of non-Asian American elected officials such as Rep. **Al Green** in opposing alien land laws in certain jurisdictions. He emphasized that effective civil rights advocacy requires showing up for others and maintaining principled relationships, even when disagreements exist on other policy issues. He shared his article published by *The Guardian* in 2023: ['Can we move?' Chinese residents are fearful over new US laws banning property ownership](#).

Finally, Frank highlighted the importance of allowing multiple strategies within a broader civil rights ecosystem. He encouraged bipartisan engagement, work at both grassroots and national levels, and acceptance of internal differences while maintaining unity on core issues such as opposing discriminatory land laws and surveillance abuses. He concluded by encouraging participants to involve others in their networks—including those less politically engaged—and reiterated his appreciation for the ongoing work of APA Justice and its members.

Frank Wu Kicks Off Equity Pulse Webinar Series



On February 3, 2026, **Frank Wu** 吴华扬's iconic voice opened the inaugural Equity Pulse webinar with the words, "Hello. Good afternoon. It is great to be here, and I'm so honored to be the first speaker in this wonderful series." The moment marked the launch of the Committee of 100's new webinar series, following an introduction by **Cindy Tsai** 蔡欣玲, Executive Vice President and General Counsel of C100, who welcomed audiences to the conversation.

Frank traced the "perpetual foreigner syndrome" from its historical roots to its modern consequences for Asian Americans. He described how Chinese immigrants were legally cast as temporary sojourners rather than future citizens—excluded through laws such as the Chinese

Exclusion Act, barred from naturalization, and portrayed as inherently disloyal. Even U.S.-born children were challenged until birthright citizenship was affirmed by the Supreme Court in *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*. Frank emphasized that these policies were not passive exclusions but active efforts to deny belonging, despite repeated legal challenges by Chinese American communities determined to remain in the United States.

He then connected this history to modern manifestations of the same mindset: the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II; the murder of **Vincent Chin** amid economic scapegoating in Detroit; the surge of anti-Asian violence during COVID; and more recent policies such as the “China Initiative” and proposed alien land laws that cast suspicion on Asian Americans as potential spies. Frank stressed that these harms are not abstract. Careers were destroyed, families traumatized, and lives lost—all driven by the assumption that Asian Americans are “not really from here.” As he noted, *“It’s not an academic theory. It has actual consequences of people being hurt.”*

Turning to advocacy, Frank argued that resisting the perpetual foreigner syndrome requires sustained civic engagement and coalition-building—before crises erupt, not after. To illustrate the difficulty of this work, he shared a personal story about his 90-year-old father, a daily mall walker in suburban Washington, D.C. His father observed three distinct groups of older Chinese Americans walking the same mall: recent immigrants from mainland China; immigrants who lived in Taiwan before coming to the U.S. decades ago; and Taiwanese Americans who strongly identify with Taiwan. Though they recognize one another, they do not interact. Frank noted that to outsiders, these distinctions are invisible: *“To everyone else in the mall, they just see three groups of older Chinese people—and they can’t tell the difference.”* The story underscored how internal divisions can weaken collective action, even when communities share the same vulnerabilities.

Frank concluded that progress requires embracing multiple strategies—grassroots activism, legal advocacy, quiet institutional work, and bipartisan engagement—modeled in part on the diversity of approaches within Jewish American organizations. He emphasized that solidarity across racial and ethnic lines is essential, citing alliances with African American leaders opposing racial profiling and discriminatory land laws. The goal, he said, is not assimilation or silence, but belonging: *“We want to be accepted as equals while honoring our heritage.”*

Frank closed on a personal note, reflecting that his own rise to become the first Asian American president of Queens College was made possible not only by individual merit, but by collective advocacy that insisted Asian Americans be seen as fully American—without having to prove it again and again.

Watch the video of Frank’s Equity Impulse talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2F-P8m_Fgms (46:13)

Read the report by *Northwest Asian Weekly*: <https://bit.ly/4ankeNg>

AAPIs United in the Twin Cities: Help Ourselves and Others



According to APIAVote, since December 2025, Minneapolis–St. Paul has been the site of the largest Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid in U.S. history. Over 3,000 ICE and Border Patrol agents have been deployed to the Twin Cities. More than 3,400 arrests have been made.

The Twin Cities is home to approximately 95,000–100,000 Hmong residents, the largest urban Hmong population in the country, and the largest Karen refugee community in the U.S. We are witnessing an aggressive campaign to detain and deport Southeast Asian refugee and immigrant communities (Hmong, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Lao, Karen). South Asian community members are also being detained at unprecedented rates.

AANHPI-led organizations are on the ground responding: legal defense, food assistance, know-your-rights education, emergency support. They speak the languages, understand the cultural context, and are trusted by the community.

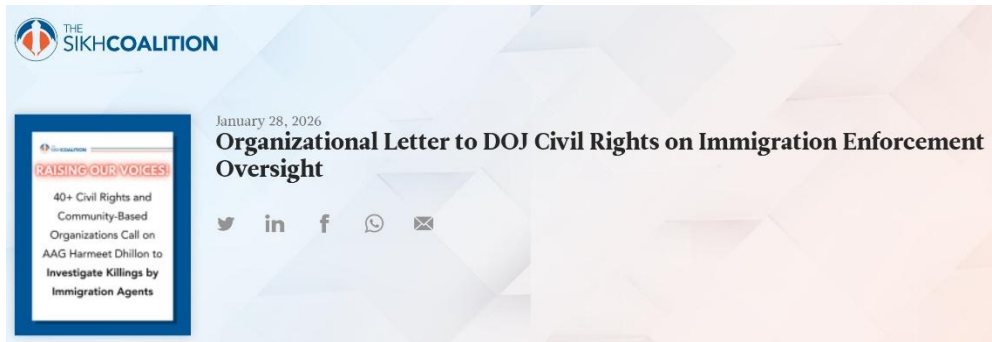
Visit <https://aapiunited.net/> for more information and how you can help.

Here is the structural challenge: Only 0.13% of philanthropic dollars in the Twin Cities, 13 cents of every \$100, go to AANHPI causes and organizations. Most AANHPI community organizations operate with fewer than five staff and budgets under \$500,000.

APIAVote reported that the [AAPIP Twin Cities Rapid Response Fund](#) was launched on February 5, 2026. Visit the website to learn how the fund works and how your gift supports organizations providing

- **Urgent, basic needs:** Organizations providing immediate support such as food, housing stabilization, transportation, health care access, and other essential services.
- **Legal support and protection:** Organizations offering legal defense, due process support, rights education, and navigation assistance, particularly for individuals and families facing deportation orders.
- **Offering wrap-around and adaptive support:** Organizations delivering holistic services such as know-your-rights education, mental health and wellness support, community safety planning, and other emerging or unmet needs as conditions evolve.

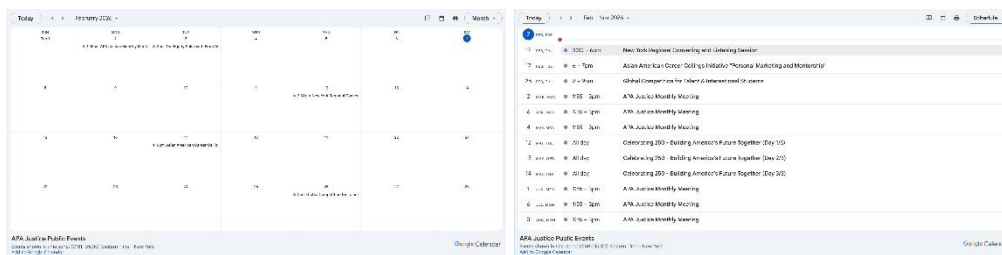
- **Working collaboratively within community ecosystems:** Organizations that coordinate with partners and informal networks to ensure services are responsive and culturally appropriate, recognizing that deep collaboration during this moment is needed.



On January 28, 2026, the Sikh Coalition and more than 40 partner organizations sent a letter to Assistant Attorney General **Harmeet Dhillon** urging the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice to investigate the recent killings of American citizens by federal immigration officers, and to more broadly work to ensure some oversight of immigration enforcement activities in the United States. Read the coalition letter: <https://bit.ly/3ZKwyCq>

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

2026/02/12 New York Regional Convening and Listening Session
 2026/02/17 Asian American Career Ceilings Initiative "Personal Marketing and Mentorship"
 2026/02/26 Global Competition for Talent & International Students
 2026/03/02 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

Visit <https://bit.ly/3XD61qV> for event details.

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APA Justice Task Force is a non-partisan platform to build a sustainable ecosystem that addresses racial profiling concerns and to facilitate, inform, and advocate on selected issues related to justice and fairness for the Asian Pacific American community. For more information, please refer to the new APA Justice website under development at www.apajusticetaskforce.org. We value your feedback. Please send your comments to contact@apajustice.org.

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