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Maryland House Speaker and Delegates to Speak at APA Justice Monthly Meeting on June 1



A racist video titled "ChiCom of the Year Award," featuring Maryland Delegates **Mark Fisher** and **Brian Chisholm**, was published in early May 2026. It drew widespread condemnation from lawmakers across party lines.

The video targeted Delegate **Chao Wu**, a Chinese American representative from Montgomery and Howard counties. In the footage, the two delegates mocked Wu's accent, accused him of being a spy for the Chinese government, and disparaged a piece of artificial intelligence legislation he had previously introduced.

The remarks were strongly denounced by public officials, House Speaker **Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk**, and the Maryland Legislative AAPI Caucus, who labeled the attacks xenophobic, racist, and reminiscent of witch-hunts against Asian Americans.

Watch the WBAL-TV report: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kd7ZXIGo7wA> (2:45).

Speaker Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk and Delegate Chao Wu have accepted our invitation to speak at the APA Justice monthly meeting on June 1, 2026. Maryland Delegate **Lily Qi**, Chair of the Maryland Legislative Asian American & Pacific Islander Caucus, will also give brief remarks. In addition to the regular speakers:

- **Judith Teruya**, Executive Director, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC)
- **Joanna YangQing Derman**, Director, Anti-Profilng, Civil Rights & National Security Program, Advancing Justice | AAJC
- **Gisela Perez Kusakawa**, Executive Director, Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF)

We also welcome these distinguished invited speakers:

- **Cindy Tsai**, Executive Vice President & General Counsel; Committee of 100
- **Clay Zhu 朱可亮**, Co-Founder, Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance 华美维权同盟 (CALDA)
- **Haipei Shue 薛海培**, President, United Chinese Americans

The monthly meetings are by invitation only and closed to the press. If you wish to join, either one time or for future meetings, please contact one of the co-organizers of APA Justice - **Vincent Wang 王文奎** and **Jeremy Wu 胡善庆** - or send a message to contact@apajustice.org.

June 3 Webinar: Geopolitics, Identity, and the Fight for Civil Rights

GLOBAL TENSIONS, LOCAL DIMENSIONS
 Navigating the U.S.-China relationship
Geopolitics, Identity, and the Fight for Civil Rights

Edgar Chen
 Special Advisor
 National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

Frank Wu
 President
 Queens College
 City University of New York

Moderated by:
Joanna Derman
 Director
 Asian American Advancing Justice

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 03, 4:00 PM ET ON ZOOM

Logos: APA Justice, Committee of 100, USCET

As geopolitical ties between the United States and China remain unsteady, the impact extends beyond diplomacy and into the lived experiences of people at home. For diaspora communities, shifts in foreign policy can shape everything from public perception to legal protections, raising complex questions about identity, belonging, and rights.

The third webinar in this series, co-hosted by the Committee of 100, US-China Education Trust, and APA Justice, examines the downstream effects of U.S. foreign policy through both a historical and contemporary lens. Drawing parallels across time, the conversation will explore how periods of international strain have influenced domestic policies and legal interpretations—from immigration restrictions to citizenship rights—and how these dynamics continue to evolve today.

The session will explore how narratives of rivalry and suspicion can translate into real-world consequences for communities with heritage ties to countries at the center of geopolitical tension. We will discuss the tradeoffs policymakers face and provide a nuanced understanding of how national priorities intersect with civil liberties.

Participants are encouraged to bring questions and perspectives as we explore what it means to navigate global tensions at a local, human level.

The views expressed by the panelists are their own and do not represent the views of their employer or any organization with which they are affiliated.

By registering for this event, you will be added to Committee of 100, APA Justice, and the US-China Education Trust's mailing lists and have access to our future public programming. If you wish to unsubscribe, you can do so at any time via the email opt-out.

WHAT: Geopolitics, Identity, and the Fight for Civil Rights

WHEN: June 3, 2026, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. ET

WHERE: Webinar

HOSTS: Committee of 100, US-China Education Trust, APA Justice

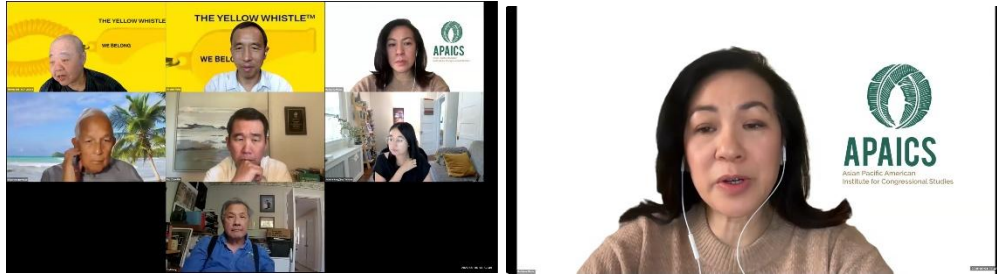
Moderator: **Joanna Derman**, Director, Asian American Advancing Justice | AAJC

Speakers:

- **Edgar Chen**, Senior Policy Advisor, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association
- **Frank Wu**, President, Queens College

REGISTRATION: <https://bit.ly/3PxYwQt>

Madalene Mielke: Report on APAICS



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on May 4, 2026, **Madalene Mielke**, President and CEO of the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS), provided an overview of the organization and its upcoming events.

About APAICS. APAICS is the nonprofit foundation arm of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), which is part of the Tri-Caucus alongside the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Hispanic Caucus. The organization was co-founded in 1994 by former Secretary **Norman Mineta** and Delegate **Robert Underwood**, with a mission to increase AANHPI participation and representation at all levels of public service.

Programs and Pipeline Development. APAICS runs several programs designed to build a sustained public service pipeline, including paid Congressional internships and fellowships. Notably, APAICS is the only Asian American-centered organization that also provides housing for congressional interns, ensuring access regardless of socioeconomic background. Additional programs include a Youth Leadership Academy targeting high school students and a Women's Collective to encourage more AANHPI women to enter public service. APAICS also works directly with state legislative AAPI caucuses, recognizing that many future congressional members first come through state legislatures.

Tracking Candidate Growth. APAICS maintains a catalog of all AANHPI candidates and elected officials. Madalene reported steady growth in the number of candidates filing for office each year since she joined the organization in 2018, including meaningful growth in the 2025 off-year elections compared to the last comparable cycle in 2023. She expressed optimism about the number of AANHPI candidates running in 2026.

Policy Summits and Community Partners. APAICS holds industry-focused policy summits throughout the year in coordination with CAPAC legislative priorities. Earlier in 2026 the focus was health; upcoming summits will cover energy and commerce, and technology. APAICS collaborates with a wide range of community partners including APIA Health Forum, APIA Votes, AREAA, and API Scholars.

Upcoming Events. The following week, APAICS was set to launch its AANHPI Heritage Month programming, including its Legislative Leadership Summit, its 32nd Annual Awards Gala —

widely known as "Asian Prom" — and a Military Leadership Appreciation Event. Visit <https://www.apaics.org/> for more information. Watch a video of Madalene's talk at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJV62YoNcK8> (5:39).



Two Asian American candidates are drawing attention in upcoming congressional primaries in California and Michigan: **Connie Chan** and **Eric Chung**.

In California's 11th Congressional District, Connie Chan is running to succeed retiring House Speaker Emerita **Nancy Pelosi**. Born in Hong Kong and raised in San Francisco after immigrating at age 13, Chan currently serves on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and has built a profile around labor rights, affordable housing, anti-Asian hate initiatives, and immigrant communities. The California primary will be held on June 2 under the state's "top-two" primary system, in which the two highest vote-getters advance to the general election regardless of party affiliation. Chan recently received a major endorsement from Pelosi, along with support from organized labor groups including the San Francisco Labor Council, National Nurses United, and California teachers unions.

In Michigan's 10th Congressional District, Eric Chung is running as a Democrat in the August 4 primary. Chung, a constitutional lawyer and son of Vietnamese immigrants and an autoworker family, has emphasized civil rights, economic opportunity, and democratic institutions in his campaign. Michigan uses a traditional partisan primary system in which party nominees advance to the general election. Chung has secured endorsements from the LGBTQ+ Victory Fund as well as members of Congress including **Andy Kim**, **Judy Chu**, and **Grace Meng**.



WHAT: AAPI Representation on Capitol Hill: Navigating Careers and Sharing Advice

WHEN: May 27, 2026, 6:00-7:30 pm ET

WHERE: In Person: 232 East Capitol Street NE, Washington DC

HOSTS: US-China Education Trust; U.S. Asia Institute

DESCRIPTION: The panel will offer first-hand insight into how policy is made and what AAPI representation looks like in the legislative branch. The discussion will also examine the challenges and opportunities that have shaped panelists' careers, along with practical advice for anyone looking to forge their own path in legislative politics and policymaking.

REGISTRATION: <https://bit.ly/3Pg4bdP>

IU Professor Roger Innes Lab Reopens



According to *Indiana Public Media* on May 19, 2026, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) concluded its investigation into the lab of Indiana University (IU) biology professor **Roger Innes** and found no serious violations. Aside from an expired import permit, a missing curation permit, and some unapproved houseplants, the department found nothing during its search violating federal guidelines. The lab was allowed to reopen, with Professor Innes noting there were no fines or penalties.

The lab was missing a permit needed to keep a plant pathogen for several years after importing it, though it remains permitted to work with that species. The USDA destroyed those petri

dishes, along with some organisms that could not be identified. The houseplants decorating the lab's windowsills were also destroyed — something Innes joked would upset his team.

The investigation drew considerable attention because of Innes's defense of Chinese researchers alleged of illegally importing research material. His own employee, **Youhuang Xiang**, was deported after mislabeling a shipment of DNA plasmids, and the lab had come under FBI scrutiny. Some colleagues and media outlets speculated the USDA search was a form of retribution.

Professor Innes noted that the USDA told him it was acting at the request of others in the government, though they were not free to discuss the details. He said the agency's typical concerns involve nurseries and markets, not research labs, and that inspecting his lab was unusual for them.

The two-week lab shutdown set research projects back by several months. The barrier IU had erected between the Innes lab and adjacent spaces was removed in the afternoon of Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

Read the *Indiana Public Media* report: <https://bit.ly/3PHDS0i>

True Story of Immigration, McCarthyism and Founding of JPL



According to *Spectrum News* on May 20, 2026, the world premiere of *Ascent*, a play at Skylight Theatre in Los Angeles, tells the true story of **Qian Xuesen 钱学森**, a Chinese immigrant who co-founded Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and helped develop America's missile program. During the McCarthy era, he was accused without evidence of being a communist, held under house arrest for five years, and ultimately deported. He went on to play a major role in building China's nuclear and aerospace capabilities and is considered a national hero there. The play was written by the late **Henry Ong**, a first-generation Asian American playwright who began the project in 2016 and had been developing it with director **Diana Wyenn** before his death in 2018.

A proud immigrant, Ong devoted his career to telling authentic stories from immigrant communities, and that authenticity is reflected here with the typical pre-show announcement

being made in four languages, including Ong's first language, Malay — the official language in Malaysia.

Both the creative team and lead actor **Trieu Tran** emphasize how timely the story feels today, drawing parallels between the Red Scare-era treatment of immigrants and current political climate.

Tran, who plays Qian, admits he had never heard of the scientist before he was cast in early workshops of the play. The reason can be traced back to the McCarthy Era and the Red Scare, when Qian was accused — without evidence — of being a communist.

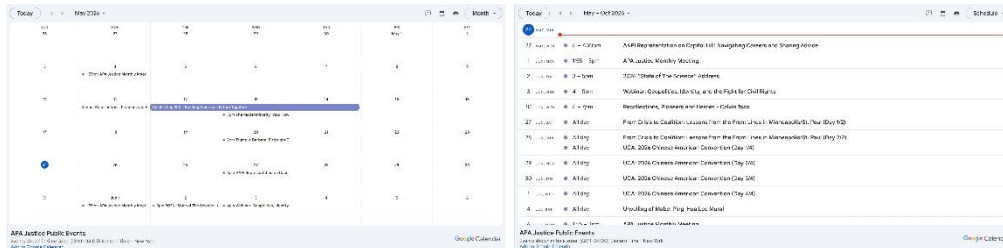
“Too much of an asset to let go and too much of a threat to stay,” Tran explained. “So they kept them for five long years in misery under house arrest, constant surveillance.”

The production runs through June 14, 2026.

Read the *Spectrum News* Report: <https://bit.ly/4tOjrN7>

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

2026/05/27 AAPI Representation on Capitol Hill: Navigating Careers and Sharing Advice

2026/06/01 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

2026/06/02 Third Annual “State of The Science” Address

2026/06/03 Webinar: Geopolitics, Identity, and the Fight for Civil Rights

2026/06/10 Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes - Calvin Tsao

2026/06/27-28 From Crisis to Coalition: Lessons from the Front Lines in Minneapolis/St. Paul

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

2. Third Annual “State of The Science” Address



“Science is our best hope for creating a future we all want – one in which our economy thrives, our country is safe and secure, and every American can enjoy a good quality of life.”

-Marcia McNutt

WHAT: 2026 “State of The Science” Address

WHEN: June 2, 2026, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. ET – Reception to Follow

WHERE:

- In Person: 2101 Constitution Ave NW, Washington D.C. 20418
- Online: Upon completion of registration

HOST: National Academy of Sciences

Speakers: **Marcia McNutt**, President, National Academy of Sciences and Expert Panel

DESCRIPTION: The third annual State of the Science address will explore the status of the U.S. research enterprise, global science leadership, and economic competitiveness.

The address, to be delivered by National Academy of Sciences President Marcia McNutt, will be followed by a panel including leaders in science and research, technology and innovation, policymaking, government, industry, and philanthropy.

REGISTRATION: <https://bit.ly/4tRVHHQ>

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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 APA Justice website at www.apajusticetaskforce.org. We value your feedback. Please send your comments to contact@apajustice.org.

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