

# PULSE



The Official Newsletter for NAPA FASA

## Newsletter Topics

**A Beginner's Guide to Cantonese cuisine: Tam's Noodle House Review**



**An Artist Profile of Sunday Orchid**



**Proposition 31: Californians have spoken against Big Tobacco**



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**Upcoming Events in the AAPI Community**



**Newsletter Staff**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR...

We are so excited to relaunch PULSE! It has been almost three years since our last edition, which was released in July 2020. Suffice to say, the last few years have been eventful, concerning, surprising. We continue to maneuver through the pandemic and what it means for our families, friends, neighbors, and communities; navigate leadership and staff changes; revisited our values, mission, and direction; and even moved our office to Alhambra after our long stay in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles.

When envisioning our newsletter relaunch, in addition to sharing educational information and announcements, we also wanted to share think pieces from our communities around unique experiences, as well as spotlight small businesses and other organizations whose mission and vision aligns with the spirit of health and wholeness we hope to cultivate together. We hope this issue achieves this, and we're excited to see how this spirit will evolve in issues to come.

Thank you for your continued support. Happy reading!



BEEF CHOW FUN WITH DARK SOY SAUCE

## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CANTONESE CUISINE: TAM'S NOODLE HOUSE REVIEW

By Gabriella Guerrieri

The San Gabriel Valley is home to a myriad of cuisines across the Asian Diaspora—ranging from Southeast Asian to East Asian to South Asian foods. Foodies from all over the Southern California region come to enjoy the savory spices, fragrant flavors, and immaculate vibes the SGV has to offer. Perfectly placed in the corner of a plaza on the corner of East Las Tunas Drive and South San Gabriel Boulevard lies one of the many family-owned restaurants the SGV has to offer. Tam's Noodle House offers traditional Cantonese cuisine and beverages. Compared to other Chinese regional cuisines, Cantonese foods are traditionally well-balanced and rely on the food and texture themselves for flavor rather than the spices, making the food more mellow and esculent for even the most sensitive of stomachs.

As a patron at Tam's, I definitely tasted the garlicky and roasted flavors of the Beef Chow Fun with Dark Soy Sauce. The rice noodles perfectly absorbed the fragrance of the green onions and tartness of the dark soy sauce while simultaneously lightened by the bean sprouts. The marriage of the rice noodles and dark soy sauce had perfectly complemented the beef tendon, which tasted as if it had been tenderized and marinated all day due to the juiciness and succulence of the beef.

And if the balanced aroma of the Beef Chow Fun was not enough, we have not even gotten to the best part. In the past years, Rice Noodle Rolls have finally received their long overdue praise thanks in part to social media exposure of dim sum cuisine and culture. The aesthetically pleasing dish has caught the attention of other diasporas due to its pillowy soft appearance and perfect ratio of food to sauce. Here at Tam's Noodle House, Chef Alex Tam has perfected the millennial old recipe for his SGV guests. Upon recommendation from the informative and kind hostess, I ordered the Steamed Rice Noodle with Yellow Chinese Leeks and Shrimp.

There is a reason why this dish is a bestseller, as indicated by a coveted thumbs up next to #126. Upon the first bite, an explosion of flavor and texture decorated my mouth, leaving me salivating for more. The flavor of hoisin sauce and oyster sauce had been combined to the tee, it was almost like the rice noodle roll had been the vehicle for the sauce. Speaking of the rice noodle roll itself, if you thought it looked fluffy in pictures, be prepared to be swept off your feet from Tam's lighter-than-air rolls. The roll feels like it softens from the warmth of your mouth, making it almost slide down your throat and leave you wanting more. I found myself begrudgingly sharing the other half with my friend because it was just that good. Speaking of my friend, this was their first time trying any Canto cuisine. Their taste buds are usually more sensitive, however, they found themselves relishing in the chewy texture of the rice noodle roll, wishing they had seen the extra sauce the staff had packed for the rolls.

Of course, at any Cantonese restaurant, one must always get the Hong Kong-style Milk Tea, and you do not want to miss out on this. The tea itself tastes like what "It's Boba Time" thinks it's doing. Usually, sugary milk tea drinks leave boba connoisseurs needing to chase the aftertaste with water. Tam's milk tea has no such effect. In fact, the model combination of Ceylon tea, black tea, evaporated milk, and condensed milk will leave any auntie saying "Just enough sweetness".

What a delight it was to try Tam's Noodle House for the first time! You can certainly tell from the ambience of the restaurant to the friendly disposition of staff, Tam and his family put all their love and effort into making their restaurant a place for all to enjoy. Alex Tam has been serving quality, authentic Cantonese cuisine for over 20 years and surely shows his excitement to serve the San Gabriel Valley residents through bold flavors and a genuine experience. Personally, the best time to dine in would be at night when all the lights are light-up outside, creating an airy and comfortable atmosphere only a family-owned restaurant can effortlessly create. Check out Tam's Noodle House on the corner of East Las Tunas Drive and South San Gabriel Boulevard, open everyday except Wednesdays. You will not be disappointed.



STEAMED RICE NOODLE WITH YELLOW CHINESE LEEKS AND SHRIMP

## AN ARTIST PROFILE OF SUNDAY ORCHID

By Vincent Basobas

During the pandemic when the world stopped, my creative juices started flowing. I learned to sew, painted on clothes, and wrote original songs. This creative spark came at a pivotal time for me because like so many others, this pandemic struck fear and also feelings of loneliness. I felt anxious more often because of the unknown. I felt pressure but lacked motivation to complete my Master's degree. The pandemic overall affected my mental health but my newfound creativity helped me overcome those shortcomings. Being creative brought me comfort and a form of expression. It blossomed into something special, my alias Sunday Orchid.

The name Sunday Orchid emerged when I bought a tote bag from Daiso that I wanted to paint for my grandma. I was planning on painting my grandma's favorite flower, the Orchid. What I thought was a blank tote bag, had the word "Sunday" written on it so I decided to write the word Orchid under it. It was supposed to be a one off thing. Never did I think it would symbolize my safe space.

I have always shown my emotions. According to my mom, when I was born I was already smiling from ear to ear. When I feel happy, it feels like a surge of positivity runs through my body and I radiate a smile so bright. When I am sad, the gloom looms over me and tears flood my cheeks. It is a blessing and a curse because though I do not bundle up these feelings, I do not express them in a healthy way. I get lost in the emotions that I forget to recenter myself.

This became evident during the start of the pandemic. I often lost composure at inconvenient times because I couldn't hold myself together. The pandemic negatively affected my school, work, and family life, valid reasons why I was so emotional.

I knew I needed to find a better output to handle these emotions. I first tried to write about my feelings through songwriting. This was something that I used to do because I wanted to become a YouTube star. Before I wrote corny love songs, but during the pandemic I wrote about my mental health and the other challenges I was facing.

Sewing came into the picture because for one of my classes, we sewed masks for those that were not able to purchase them at the time. I enjoyed it so much that I ventured off into sewing tote bags and hemming pants. Sewing my own items felt rewarding and brought me positive feelings. My dad in particular was happy because he and his parents owned a tailoring business in the Philippines. He jokingly said that I am now finally doing the family business.

I also started painting on clothes as a way to bring some humor into my life. I would paint caricature portraits of my friends and family on t-shirts and stamp the name "Manong" on the chest. Manong is an Ilocano term for older brother which is what my siblings call me. Though I enjoyed the laughs, I soon realized that I enjoyed the calmness that it brought me more. I transitioned from caricatures to flowers. Instead of "Manong" it became "Sunday Orchid".

Slowly but surely through these activities, I learned how to express my emotions in a healthier way. I even gave myself a name for whenever I felt creative. Sunday Orchid started off as a brand of clothes I painted but soon became my persona because of what the name meant to me. Sundays for me always were a day of calmness. In addition to tranquility, the orchid represents beauty and refinement. When I felt down, stressed, or just wanted a moment of calmness, rather than falling into vices, I went into my creative space. Songwriting, sewing, and painting helped heal my mental health in ways that I could never imagine. I am now in a better place because of this healthy outlet.



## ATTENDING ZOOM UNIVERSITY

By Pia Vasquez

March 18, 2020 was my first day at Zoom University. I had previously attended CSU Long Beach for the last year and a half, working to obtain my bachelor's in Health Science. The novel coronavirus forced me to switch to an alternative mode of learning but we were told that classes would only be online for two weeks.

My new morning routine was amazing. I no longer had to wake up two hours before class to get dressed, make breakfast, drive to campus, find parking, and walk twenty minutes from the parking structure by the pyramid to upper campus where my classes were. I just had to roll out of bed twenty minutes before clicking a link and logging into class.

Two weeks then turned into one month. My morning routine changed slightly as the days went by. I would wake up fifteen minutes before class, then ten, then five, until I just logged into class and went right back to sleep. There were no notes, no engagement, no study groups. All of my days merged together and my classes didn't feel important anymore.

One month turned into two. The exams became ten times easier than when I had to sit at a desk, filling in individual scantron bubbles. Many of my professors encouraged the class to "use our available resources" and conveniently decided to make all of the tests into open-book exams. Gone were the days of pulling all-nighters with study groups and cramming information with the person next to me ten minutes before an exam. Testing anxiety was a thing of the past and I no longer had to question my major every time I took a midterm.

Two months of lockdown turned into the rest of the semester and I realized that my brain still felt empty. I had learned nothing. I do not even remember what classes I took for the Spring 2020 semester. Lectures felt like an episode of "Dora the Explorer." Professors would ask us discussion questions but were met with silence. My classmates and I knew that if we were quiet enough, the answers would eventually be given to us.

**The only thing keeping me in school was the thought of all the student loans that I would have to pay back.**

**Lectures felt like an episode of "Dora the Explorer".**

This was not what I expected college life to be like. I was isolated, bored, and lost in my classes. Staring at a screen for hours irritated my eyes and sitting down all day made my body ache. I felt so much screen burnout but there was nothing I could do about it. I was finally starting my upper-division classes but I had no friends in my majors. I had no significant connections in any of my classes. The closest thing I had to friendship was seeing familiar names on a screen. I felt so alone.

Two years later, I was on campus again, ready to start in-person classes. I would finally be able to learn properly again. Unfortunately, as the semester went on, I realized that post-COVID learning would never be the same as pre-COVID. I still felt burnt out and had no motivation to go to class anymore. What made it even more difficult was the fact that I had no one to keep me accountable. The only thing keeping me in school was the thought of all the student loans that I would have to pay back. As the weeks went by, I forced myself to socialize by joining clubs. I even tried Greek life even though I told myself when I entered college that I would never become a sorority girl. I made friends – superficial ones but they were enough to get me out of the house. I was still lonely, but not as lonely as I was behind the screen.

The longer I stayed active in my organizations, the deeper my connections became. It started with study groups in the library. Classmates and acquaintances would ask me if I was free to study with them. Time I spent with others also meant the time I devoted to studying and doing homework. Getting closer to the people around me helped bring my grades up as well. I was motivated to do well in my classes because I wanted to motivate my friends too. If I knew what I was doing then I could help the people around me understand the content as well. I realized then I could kill two birds with one stone. I could make friends and do well in my classes at the same time. I was finally excited to be in school again. This was the college experience I wanted.

# PROPOSITION 31: CALIFORNIANS HAVE SPOKEN AGAINST BIG TOBACCO

By Marielle Reataza

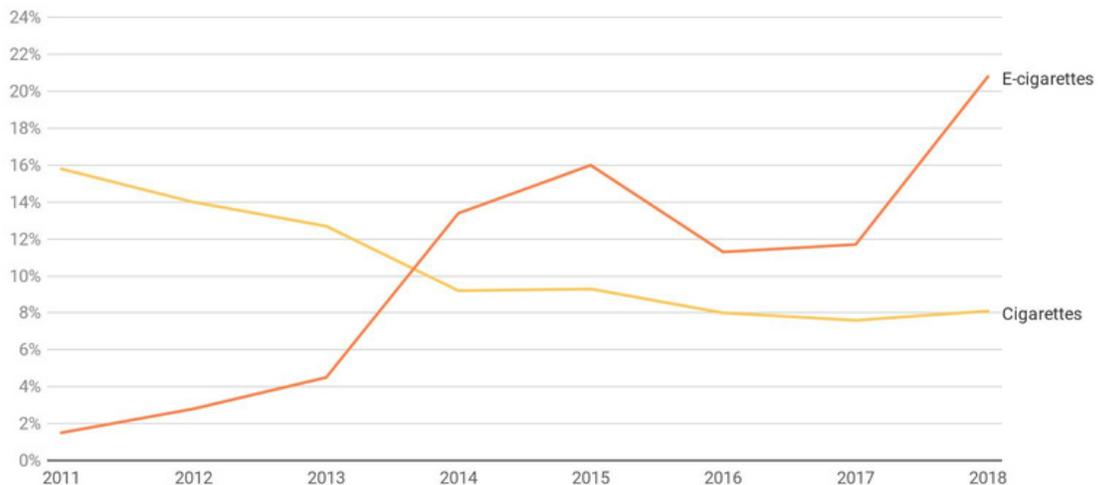
Last November, 63.4% of California voters said yes to Proposition 31, officially known as the Referendum Challenging a 2020 Law Prohibiting Retail Sale of Certain Flavored Tobacco Products. Senate Bill 793 (SB 793), the 2020 law in question, was initially passed by the California State Legislature and then signed into law by Governor Newsom in August of 2020. The last major statewide policy limiting access to tobacco products occurred in June 2016 when the minimum tobacco sales age was raised to 21 years old (the minimum tobacco sales age was raised to 21 nationwide in December 2019). The passage of SB 793 initiated a series of efforts to collect signatures to challenge the law, which was largely funded by Big Tobacco industry giants R.J. Reynolds, Philip Morris, and ITG Brands. Garnering enough signatures, the referendum appeared as Proposition 31 on the November 2022 California ballot. Voting yes on the referendum would uphold SB 793.

Limiting access to flavored tobacco products is ultimately an attempt to reduce their appeal. The restrictions are expected to curb appeal, and thereby, smoking-related deaths, particularly among vulnerable groups such as marginalized communities, as well as reduce the concerning rates of youth tobacco use, particularly the use of e-cigarettes, also known as vaping. According to SAMHSA's 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 11.0% of people between the ages of 12 and 20 used tobacco or vaped nicotine, with 19.2% of people over 12 years old who vaped using flavored products. Studies have shown that most youth who vape start with a flavored variety, with flavored products reported as the reason for use. In 2022, 84.9% of youth who vaped used flavored varieties. If we are serious about protecting our youth and our future from the modern tobacco epidemic, we must continue to challenge Big Tobacco.

It is important to note that the passage of Proposition 31 prohibits retail sale of certain flavored tobacco products. Specifically, the law bans the sale of a broad range of flavored tobacco products from retail stores and vending machines, curbing access to menthol cigarettes, chewing tobacco, snuff, cigarillos, roll-your-own tobacco, e-cigarettes (flavored "vapes"). There are exceptions to the law, and they remain highly contested. They are as follows:

## High School Students Smoking Less, Vaping More

The National Youth Tobacco Survey, published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, quantified the surging popularity of e-cigarettes among high school students.



These numbers represent the percentage of high school students who reported having used cigarettes or e-cigarettes within the previous 30 days.

Credit: Harriet Blair Rowan/California Healthline

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention • Created with Datawrapper

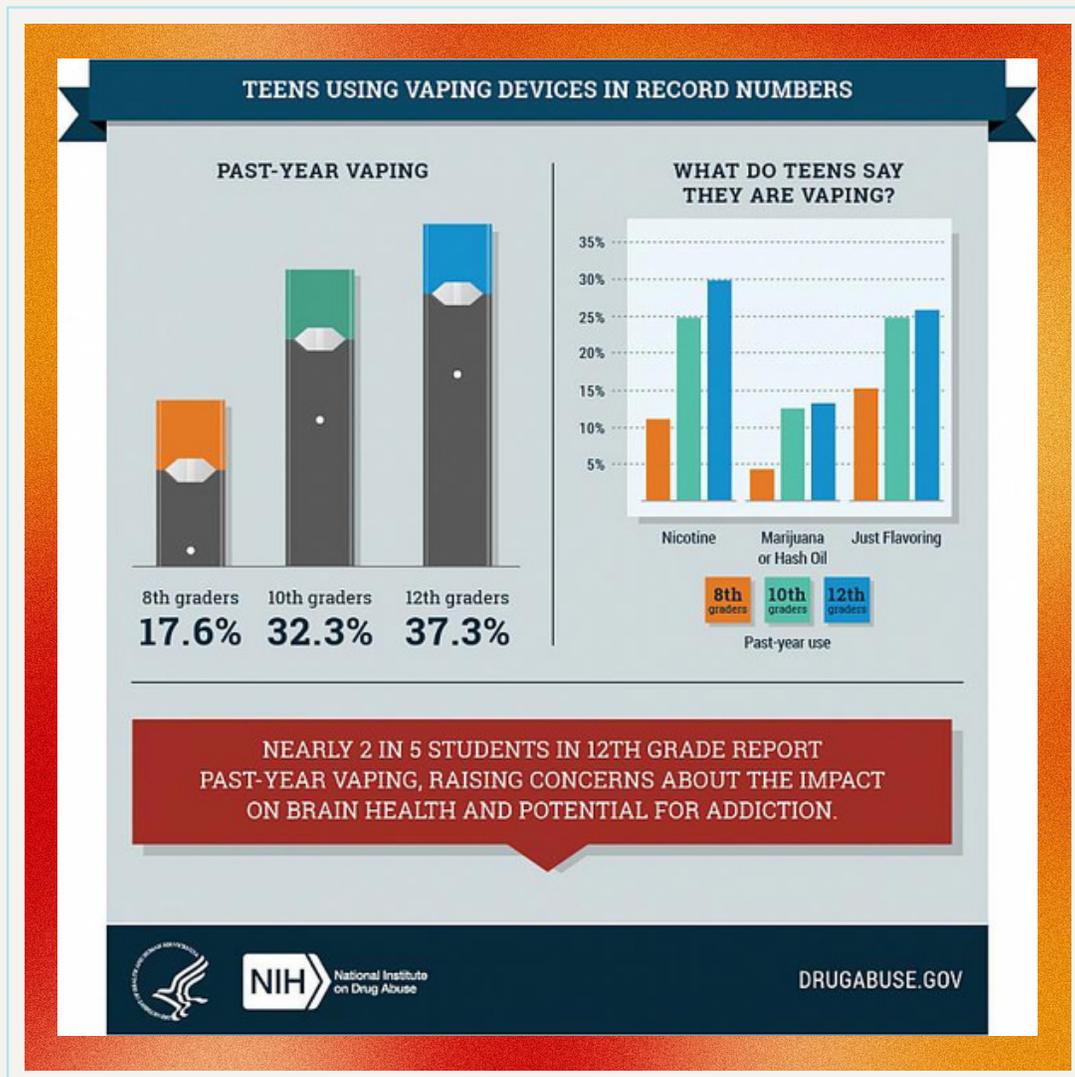
- Flavored hookah and shisha sold at licensed hookah tobacco retailers
- Flavored loose leaf pipe tobacco
- Flavored handmade premium cigars wrapped in tobacco leaf, costing at least \$12, lacking a filter or non-tobacco mouthpiece, and capped by hand

Considered a public health victory, SB 793 is not a win over consumers of commercial tobacco, but rather, a win over Big Tobacco and commercial industry.

Once a tightly guarded secret, there is abundant, well-documented evidence that Big Tobacco has spent enormous amounts to use predatory marketing techniques, funded research and advertising that has pandered to specific cultural groups and minimized the harms of smoking, as well as conducted research intended to make tobacco products more addictive. In fact, Big Tobacco’s models for recruiting new and maintaining users have been so effective that the sugary beverage industry adopted similar models and has done so with great success. In 2020, Big Tobacco spent over \$28.7 million just on lobbying within US. In 2021, the industry spent almost \$31.7 million on similar efforts. Prior to certification of the California Secretary of State,

R.J. Renoys and other plaintiffs filed an emergency request to place a hold on the ban, arguing that the policy conflicted with federal law. The U.S. Supreme Court denied the request and upheld SB 793, allowing it to go into effect on December 21, 2022 upon certification and mandating that retailers stop the sale of the prohibited flavored tobacco products, otherwise face a \$250 fine for each violation. Enforcement will largely be done by local authorities, with 241 Californian municipalities already restricting the sale of flavored tobacco products as of October 1, 2022. It is also worth noting that in April 2022, the U.S. Federal and Drug Administration proposed to ban menthol and other flavored tobacco cigarettes and cigars. The ban must still be finalized by the FDA to take effect.

Moving forward, we know Big Tobacco will not fold without a fight, whether through lobbying, remarketing, or developing newer products with great addiction potential, and the industry has a seemingly endless amount of resources to do so. Given the ongoing pandemic, the palpable anxieties in the air, and the worsening mental health crisis in the US—particularly among our young people—we must continue to innovate how we protect our communities’ health and wellbeing.





## MISSING YOU IN CHINATOWN

**BRENDA CHI**  
SOLO SHOW  
ABOUT LA  
CHINATOWN

**@LEIMINSPACE**  
443 LEI MIN WAY

**01/21/23-02/11/23**

*How long have you been creating art? What are some of your favorite mediums to work with?*

I've been a Professional Artist and Illustrator for 9 years. My favorite mediums are oil painting and digital. I have a background in commercial illustration, published comics, apparel design, Storyboarding and have a hobby in plein air painting around Los Angeles. Many paintings in my "Missing You In Chinatown" are from plein air painting sessions.

*What is this art show about?*

The story that these art works tell is to show my adoration for Chinatown, and to share with everyone that this place is incredibly unique and represents a legacy Chinese American community that has been here for decades.

## a sneak preview of "Missing You in Chinatown"

*Where did you get the inspiration for this show from? What do you hope patrons will take away from your art show?*

Some of these pieces are of places that are now long gone, others still around but seem to be struggling with gentrification, and lastly some that are thriving. I wanted these pieces to be nostalgia for the LA community, to remind them of the great memories that they have in Chinatown, and to encourage them to come and visit more often. I also want to show that Chinatown is more than just a decorative place for social media posts, but a place of LA community.

I worked in Chinatown during the Covid-19 crisis. I saw how Chinatown had grown even emptier because of the pandemic and xenophobia. I heard stories of people not wanting to come to Chinatown because "they didn't want to get sick." I saw businesses close down because they couldn't afford to run anymore.

Then, people all over the country started attacking Asian elders, especially East Asian elders, and that felt all too close to Chinatown being attacked. I was afraid that the elders who felt safe and lived in Chinatown were also in danger. I wanted to bring attention, especially to my Chinese American peers, to not forget about about this neighborhood which has so many elders walking around.

I wanted to preserve what I knew and loved about Chinatown through my art. It was a way for me to process my sadness of seeing this neighborhood suffer. I want people to see that they'd be remiss to not visit Chinatown. There is so much to offer from the neighborhood and a huge community that still needs their support.

## NO HISTORY, NO SELF. KNOW HISTORY, KNOW SELF.

A person who does not look back to where he came from would not be able to reach his destination (English translation of Ang hindi lumungon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makarating sa paroroonan.)

– Dr. Jose P. Rizal

# STOP THE HATE

*Community Art Project*

Stop the Hate Community Art Project is recruiting 10 participants in Los Angeles County to participate in bi-weekly discussion spaces for various topics such as labor, civil rights, and social justice movements and the art created in response during those times. Participants will also create their own art pieces which will be displayed during a public art installation in May.

Participants aged 14-24 will:

- develop a piece in response to the question, “What does it mean to stop the hate?”
- be paired with an art teacher (if desired)
- be provided a \$100 gift card donation from BLICK Art Materials
- be awarded a \$250 stipend

**Applications are due: February 15, 2023**

*Participants are NOT required to have any formal art background or training, but rather, a desire to learn and express in new ways.*

scan for more info



To submit an application, go to:

[bit.ly/3PMHcTs](https://bit.ly/3PMHcTs)

Contact [pia@napafasa.org](https://pia@napafasa.org) for any questions, comments or concerns

**WHEN:**  
Feb - May  
2023

**WHERE:**  
Via Zoom

**BLICK**  
art materials



**AAPI EQUITY**  
ALLIANCE



# PACIFIC BODY TEMPLE

AN OCEANIA DANCE MEDITATION

JOIN US FOR AN  
OPEN CLASS WORKSHOP

JAN 27, 2023  
6:30-8:30 PM

SALT DANCE STUDIOS  
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA



PASION  
PERFORMANCE GROUP



**"PASION  
ENVISIONS A  
FUTURE THAT  
MOVES BEYOND  
IMMEDIATE  
GRATIFICATION  
AND URGENCY,  
AND PRIORITIZES  
STRATEGY AND  
IMPLEMENTATION  
OF PREVENTATIVE  
CARE FOR A  
WELL-  
FUNCTIONING,  
PROGRESSIVE  
SOCIETY."**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN 27  
RIVERSIDE, CA

SALT STUDIOS  
OPEN CLASS WORKSHOP  
Pacific Body Temple: An Oceania Dance Meditation



JAN 29  
LONG BEACH, CA

PACIFIC ISLAND ETHNIC ART MUSEUM  
BOOK READING & PERFORMANCE  
*Upon Shared Waters: A Conversation of Cousins -  
An Experimental Playbook on Oceanic Identity & Memory*

FEB 6-10  
BELLINGHAM, WA

WEST WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SERIES:

- PACIFIC BODY TEMPLE
- FILIPINX SAYAW
- HAWAIIAN HULA
- SAYAW & KALI
- ACTIVATING OUR PILLARS



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**THE BRIDGE ACADEMY**  
at the University of Southern California presents

# THE THIRD CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

February 25th, 2023



Bridging youth globally through a virtual series of seminars, projects, and team bonding events

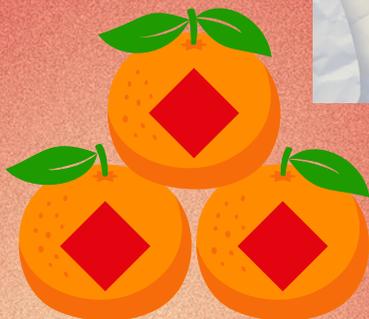
**LEARN THE ROOT CAUSE OF HATE CRIME AND FIND THE KEY TO A GLOBAL COMMUNITY WITH DISTINGUISHED GUEST SPEAKERS FROM AN AWARD-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT, GENDER AND CULTURAL STUDIES RESEARCHERS, AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF USC.**

**Apply here!**

**Deadline: Feb 19th, 2023**



**Visit The Bridge  
Kickstarter page  
(donation and fund-related)**



### Contact Us

Email: [thebridgeusc@gmail.com](mailto:thebridgeusc@gmail.com)

Instagram: [@thebridge\\_culturalexchange](https://www.instagram.com/thebridge_culturalexchange)



# Newsletter Staff



**GABRIELLA A. GUERRIERI**  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR AND STAFF WRITER

Gabriella Guerrieri is optimistic of the future. She is a graduate from George Mason University and the Community Engagement Coordinator for NAPAFAASA. She enjoys reading and writing about intersectional feminism, stories of fraternal disconnect, and anything and everything pop culture.



**MARIELLE A. REATAZA, MD, MS**  
STAFF WRITER

Marielle serves as the Executive Director at NAPAFAASA. She is passionate about public health and improving access to health and behavioral health resources. Marielle is an avid reader, and her favorite genres are magical realism, satire, philosophy, and poetry. In her free time, you can find her crafting, gardening, or practicing movement arts and therapy.



**VINCENT C. BASOBAS, MPH, CHES**  
STAFF WRITER

Vincent Basobas is the Project Coordinator at NAPAFAASA. He finds his passion in community health because he believes that with a strong foundation in the community, Public Health can flourish organically. Vincent loves listening to Kpop and R&B. If he is not working, you can find him at the gym, playing basketball, or thrifting.



**PIA ANTOINETTE VASQUEZ**  
STAFF WRITER

Pia is the project assistant at NAPAFAASA. She strives to make health data and resources accessible to everyone in order to empower her community. Pia loves to explore by trying new restaurants and finding different activities throughout SoCal. She also enjoys spending quality time with her friends and her cat by watching movies together at home.