

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS AND CAMPUS DIVERSITY

SDSU Office of AANAPISI Affairs & APIDA Center



Read all about it!!!

Check your email! Newsletter #139 is out!

If you didn't get it, don't miss out! Everyone is reading it!

Join the APIDA Center contact list: <https://bit.ly/SDSUAPIDA>



Hours:

Mon-Thurs 10:00-8:00pm

Fridays 10:00-4:30pm

Location: 2nd floor of Student Union

Rooms #210A-K (directly above Starbucks)

Center Website: <https://sacd.sdsu.edu/apida>

Center Email: apida@sdsu.edu

Executive Director: Dr. Loh-Hagan at vloh-hagan@sdsu.edu

Associate Director: Matthew H Garcia at mhgarcia@sdsu.edu

Assistant Coordinator: Gi Vargas at ggonzales3@sdsu.edu

connect with us!



@sdsuapidacenter



**SDSU APIDA
Resource Center**

SA+CD

SDSU Office of AANHPISI Affairs & APIDA Center Executive Director's Message

June 27, 2025

All students, regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, or national origin, who are interested in APIDA Center programming and services are welcome.



From Dr. Loh-Hagan: Teaching AAS in Palau!

About two years ago, Dr. **Caren Sax**, Professor Emerita and Director of the Interwork Institute and Dr. **Theresa Lally**, Director of the [Center for Pacific Studies](#), invited me to participate in an amazing program to teach AAS 442 (Asian American Experiences) in Palau in order to fulfill the CSU Ethnic Studies requirement. This became a reality in early June 2025. This was the very first time such a course was taught in this program (maybe even on the island!). What a historic moment!

A partnership between the [SDSU Interwork Institute](#) and [Palau Community College](#), this program offers an Interdisciplinary BA Degree for educators. It provides 18 courses that have been selected to enhance the skills of practicing teachers. SDSU faculty, primarily from the College of Education, commit to teaching in Palau for the first week of each class. For the next nine weeks, the course is taught online with weekly meetings with their on-site facilitator, Ms. **Aberlyn Ngiruos**. I join the ranks of my former COE colleagues, Dr. **Rafaela SantaCruz** (who is also an APIDA Center donor), Dr. **Marva Cappello**, and others who have taught in Palau.

Prior to the program, Palauans seeking a bachelor's degree would have to leave the island, a fact that created "brain drain" emigration. This SDSU program has helped to increase educational levels and degree attainment on the island. So far, there have been about 4-5 cohorts and more than 250 SDSU graduates in Palau, a country with 18,000 people. (In fact, three of the 29 members of the Palau National Congress — two delegates and one senator — are SDSU alumni.)

I was thrilled to represent the APIDA Center and the Office of AANHPISI Affairs in Palau. I invited **Gi Gonzales Vargas**, Assistant Coordinator, to serve as a Teaching Associate and hope to be able to bring students in the future. We met so many wonderful people and learned so many things. One of my main takeaways from this experience is that the APIDA Center is going to be much more intentional this year about including programs about Micronesia. In addition, we will be learning more about the Compacts of Free Association (COFA), which are international agreements between the United States and the island nations of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau. These agreements grant the U.S. military access to the strategic Pacific region; in exchange, citizens of these nations are allowed to live and work in the United States and receive economic and security assistance.

We had many wonderful adventures in Palau. First, we got to work with a fabulous cohort of students and met with Dr. **Patrick Tellei**, the President of Palau Community College, and **Hedrick Kual**, the Dean of Continuing Education. Second, we ate yummy Palauan food - lots of fish, taro, and coconuts. Third, we visited museums, the recycling center, and other cultural sites. Lastly, a major highlight, was taking a woodcarving class with a [Palauan master storyboard carver](#). (I also bought a lot of muumuu dresses and necklaces, for real.)



I would be remiss if I did not give a great deal of gratitude to President **Adela de la Torre**. In October 2022, President de la Torre visited Palau, becoming the first SDSU president to do so. She was inspired by the trip and encouraged the APIDA Center to get involved...and I am so glad she did. This was most definitely a highlight of my career.

I hope you are all having an equally inspiring summer! Our next newsletter will be issued on July 25, 2025. Until then, have a ton of grand adventures.

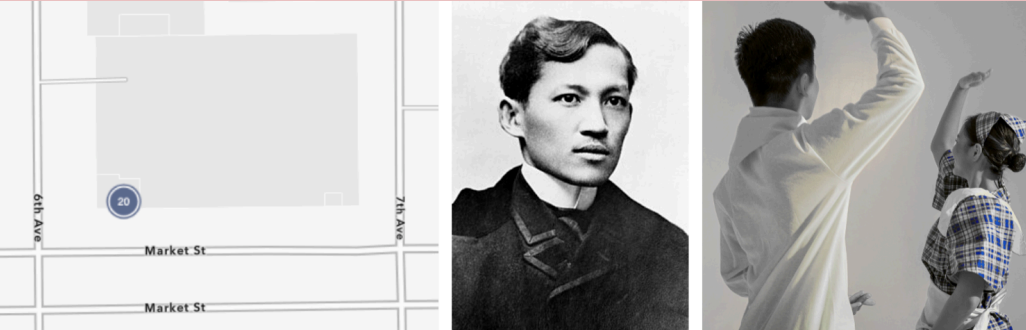
Donate to the APIDA Center!



APIDA Center needs your support!

Since we opened in 2020, we have hosted over 300 programs per year. Our most exciting programs are our place-based learning initiatives in which we have been able to take students on various off-campus adventures to learn more about APIDA history. Our local field trips in San Diego County include Fil-Am sites in National City, founding father of Downtown San Diego Kanaka Bill's house, San Diego Asian Film Festival screenings, and more. We have also taken bus trips to The Huntington, The Grammy Museum, Camp Cuyamaca, and more. We also drove a van to Manzanar and have flown to New Orleans, Seattle, San Francisco, Oakland, and more. We have learned about Chinatowns, important APIDA pioneers, immigrant centers, etc. Fortunately, we have been able to use a variety of funding sources to fund our adventures including SSF, REO, APIDA Center, grants, and of course, our donors! We ask for your continued support. Please contribute to the [APIDA Center Program Fund](#) so that we can continue to support our students and learn more about our histories!

Know APIDA History!



APIDA Center learns about San Diego Filipino dance halls!

June 19th is remarkable for several reasons, First, as "[Juneteenth](#)," it marks the day in 1865 when the last enslaved Black Americans in Texas learned they were free this was 2.5 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. Second, on June 19, 1982, Vincent Chin (1955-1982) was the victim of a brutal hate crime in Detroit, Michigan; his murder ignited a pan-Asian American movement for civil rights. Third, June 19th is the birthday of the Filipino national hero, José Rizal (1861-1896), who challenged Spanish colonial rule and inspired a national independence movement. Though rooted in different histories and cultures, June 19th reflects a shared struggle for freedom, dignity, and self-determination. While there is no national recognition of Rizal Day in the United States, his influence is evident in places like San Diego's Rizal Dance Hall, which carried his name.

Together with ethnic newspapers, dance halls played a crucial role in shaping identity and offering safety and a sense belonging. Although it no longer stands at its original location at Sixth and Market Streets in Downtown San Diego, the Rizal Dance Hall was significant to San Diego's early Filipino community during the early 20th century.

By the 1940s, most U.S. cities had at least one dance hall. These venues featured live musicians performing everything from ballroom to swing to jazz. They helped popularize new dance trends and musical styles. Crowds engaged in competitions, exhibitions, and social events. Dance halls also facilitated cultural exchange across ethnic and class lines. Chinese, Vietnamese, and Filipino immigrants often spent their free time in these spaces. For Filipino men, dance halls provided one of the few opportunities to socialize with women, making these venues crucial sites of social interaction. However, this also sparked backlash. In California, the 1930 anti-Filipino riots were fueled by discriminatory beliefs about Filipino laborers and the fear that their dancing might attract White women.

In San Diego, Filipino immigrants were excluded from venues like the U.S. Grant, Coronado, and El Cortez ballrooms. In response, they established their own spaces—most notably, the Rizal Dance Hall, a Filipino taxi-dance hall. (The name "taxi dance halls" comes from patrons paying fifteen cents per minute to dance with partners, similar to how a passenger pays to rent a taxi by the minute.)

The image of White women dancing with Filipino men provoked anger among White community leaders. The San Diego City Council attempted to shut down such venues by outlawing dance halls that allowed "dancing partners." Dance hall owners evaded the law by rebranding their dancers as "dance instructors," a small but significant victory for the Fil-Am community. However, tensions escalated after the 1935 murder of the Rizal Dance Hall's owner, Paul Arriola (died 1935), which brought increased scrutiny and pressure. Combined with broader urban redevelopment efforts, these factors ultimately led to the closure of the Rizal Dance Hall.

Know your history! Know your rights! Know you matter!

APIDA Center Highlights: News to Know!



Remembering the Past and Preserving the Future

Created by a \$2.5 million gift, the Kit and Karen Sickels Endowed Chair in University Heritage and Community Engagement is a welcome campus resource.

BY TOBIN VAUGHN
PHOTOGRAPH BY SANDY HUFFAKER

Christopher "Kit" ('60, '19 LHD) and Karen Sickels have always appreciated the relationship between San Diego State University and the community—and that appreciation inspired them to donate \$2.5 million to create the Kit and Karen Sickels Endowed Chair in University Heritage and Community Engagement at SDSU. Photo by Sandy Huffaker. Photo by Sandy Huffaker.

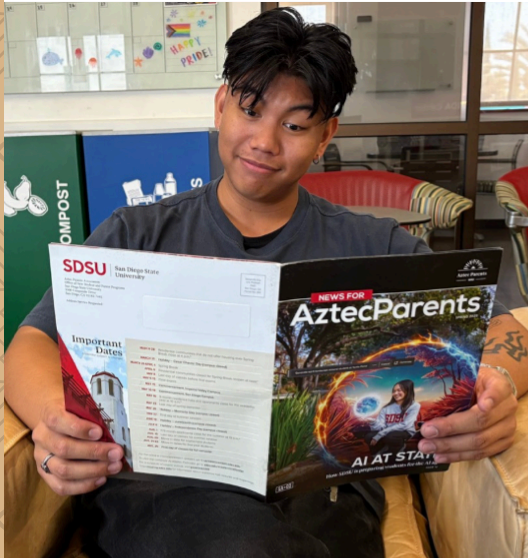


APIDA Center is featured in *SDSU Magazine*!

Check out page 34 of the latest edition of "[SDSU Magazine](#)." Many thanks to **Tobin Vaughn** for writing his article entitled, "Remembering the Past and Preserving the Future" about Dr. **Seth Mallios**, the Kit and Karen Sickels Endowed Chair in University Heritage and Community Engagement. He writes:

"Among the first to tap into the Center for University Heritage and Community Engagement's resources was Dr. Virginia Loh-Hagan, executive director of SDSU's Office of AANHPISI Affairs and the APIDA Center. She works to create more knowledge and awareness of the local APIDA community. Loh-Hagan achieves this in part by emphasizing the memories, traditions and histories that build the community. "We're not a passive group," she said, "we're just not amplified." Loh-Hagan's work to instill university, cultural and community pride has gained traction through the APIDA Center over the past five years. Now, she is advancing it further through a collaboration between the two centers. "The Sickelses' donation elevates the importance of preserving the history of the university, which we very much want to be a part of, and now we have additional assets to highlight the value of preserving our community's histories in new and exciting ways," Loh-Hagan said."

Stay tuned to learn more about the exciting initiatives we will be pursuing to preserve SDSU's APIDA histories. (Fun Fact: Both Dr. Mallios and Dr. Loh-Hagan are alumni of the University of Virginia.)



APIDA Center is featured in *Aztec Parents* magazine!

Many thanks to **Aaron Burgin** for writing an article entitled, "APIDA Center at 5: Much to Celebrate" in the latest edition of "[Aztec Parents](#)," a magazine for parents families of SDSU students. The article highlights some of our achievements over the past five years. Dr. Loh-Hagan is quoted as saying, "We want to encourage students to come take advantage of our resources. We are here for you."



APIDA Center makes connections!

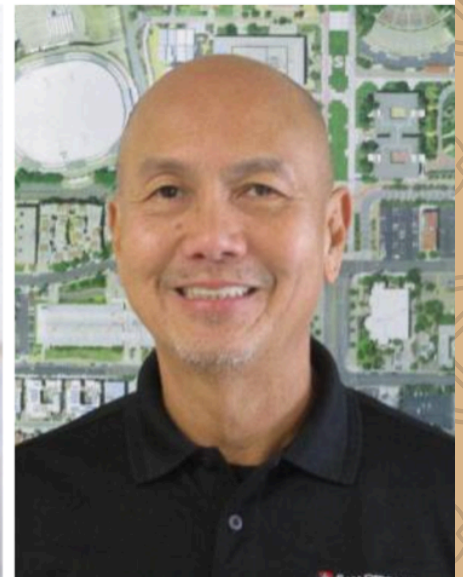
In June, the APIDA Center hosted a SoCal AANAPISI social where our colleagues from local community colleges (i.e., Mesa College and City College) joined us for a meal and for some community conversations. (Stay tuned to learn more about our goals to better support our Transfer Students.) In addition, we also tabled at the the Commuter Center's summer receptions. We love making connections!

APIDA Flex Alerts!

Thomas Wang, a graduate student in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program, was the 2025 recipient of a student scholarship by the San Diego section of the American Planning Association.

Food scientists Dr. **Changqi Liu**, Professor of ENS, and Dr. **Jing Zhao**, Associate Professor of ENS, and their team from the SDSU College of Health and Human Services have been working on a freeze-dried guacamole product. Funded by NASA and USDA, this project aims to add more options to astronauts' diets and give crews a nutrient boost on long missions.

Alfredo "Jun" Dandan, Warehouse and Mail Worker from SDSU's Logistical Services department, was recognized as one of the 2025 New Student Organization (NSO) staff spotlights.



We want to celebrate the SDSU APIDA community!

Have a flex to share?

Email us at apida@sdsu.edu.

APIDA Recommendation: Suha Roni



Suha Roni is a third year psychology major. She recommends Hayley Kiyoko (born 1991), a singer-songwriter and actress whose mother is of Japanese ancestry. Roni said, "Hayley Kiyoko is one of my favorite singers! I first found her through her song called 'Girls Like Girls' which took the romance cliché of a person telling their crush that they could treat them better than their current partner. It's one we've heard through a song medium from plenty of artists including Taylor Swift. However, Kiyoko takes this classic concept and adds a twist. Her song focuses on queer love, normalizing girls being romantically attracted to each other. Having an Asian American represent queer women and their right to exist in romance was so satisfying, especially in times like these! She's someone I highly recommend listening to!" Happy Pride Month!

Upcoming APIDA Center Events

Opportunities & Events



Come visit us all summer long!

We are open from 10:00-4:30pm Monday through Friday. Pop in to say hello, work on our puzzle, watch TV, hang out, craft, and more! We would love to see you! We miss all the laughs!

Here's a summer joke for you:
Q: What do you call Dewey on the beach in the summer?
A: A hot dog!

Craft for a Cause

Location: APIDA Center

Dates: All Semester Long!

Crochet, knit, and loom hats, scarves, blankets, etc. with us. We will donate our hand/heart-made goods to local communities in need! Come to the APIDA Center and craft away. Instructions and supplies will be provided.

NOTE: In order to participate in the workshop (i.e., crafts, food, etc.) and/or earn APIDA SWAG, course extra credit, etc., you must attend events on time and in their entirety and be engaged for the entire event. For events marked with an asterisk (), we will not permit attendees after the indicated start time. We don't want you to miss out on anything and we want to be courteous to the presenters.*

Student-Led Workshops & Student-Created Social Media Campaigns

APIDA Center is hosting Student-Led Workshops and Student-Created Social Media Campaigns. This is a great opportunity to share your passion with others. It's also an opportunity to learn how to plan an event or prepare a campaign with our support. We are interested in any and all APIDA-related topics! If you are interested, email Dr. Loh-Hagan at vloh-hagan@sdsu.edu.

APIDA Student Organizations:

- The [Asian American Journalists Association \(AAJA\)](#) at SDSU announced their [2025-2026 Executive Board](#).
- [Tabletop Gaming Club at SDSU](#) is supporting [Pride & Dragons](#) at Off the Shelf Games on Sat, June 28th from 12-4pm.
- Most student organizations will be off for the summer. Check out their Instagrams to stay informed!

Community Center Partners:

- The [Gus and Emma Thompson Black Resource Center \(BRC\)](#) and [The Pride Center](#) are hosting [Rainbow Picnic & Crafting](#) on Tues, July 15th from 1-2pm.
- [The Pride Center](#) is also hosting the [18th annual Pride Flag Raising Ceremony](#) on Wed, July 16th from 12:00-1:30pm in the Student Union Courtyard.

Campus Partners:

- The [Glazer Center for Leadership & Service](#) is hosting a [Summer Leadership Virtual Workshop Series](#). The next workshop is on Wed, July 2nd at 1pm. Check out the [workshop schedule](#) and [RSVP](#) today!
- Professor Prabhakar Clement, the founding director of the Center for Water Quality Research at the University of Alabama, is presenting at SDSU as a guest speaker on Wednesday, July 9, from 3-4pm in Engineering 401 (E401).
- Struggling with basic needs? Need resources? Connect with the [Economic Crisis Resource Team](#).

Community Partners:

- The Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA) is accepting applications for the ABC News Storytellers Summit until Mon, July 14th. [Sign up](#) today!
- Pacific Arts Movement is accepting featured film submissions for the [26th annual San Diego Asian Film Festival](#) until Mon, July 14th. Submit your film at pacarts.org/submit.
- Asian Business Association (ABA) San Diego is hosting a [Creating Your Own Website](#) workshop on Fri, July 18th from 10-12pm. [RSVP](#) today!
- The 2025 San Diego Pride Festival is on July 19-20th at Marston Point Balboa Park. [Buy tickets](#) today!
- The Asian American Education Project offers free APIDA resources on their [website](#) and [Instagram](#).

Do you have an opportunity to share?
Email us at apida@sdsu.edu.

Research Opportunities

- **NEW!** AAPI Data is accepting applications for the Bolder Futures Social Impact Fellowship, a 12-week virtual program designed to grow skills in data, research, and narrative for social impact. Fellows will gain hands-on experience in areas such as public narrative, data analysis, and social innovation. [Apply](#) by July 1st!
- **NEW!** Alon Journal for Filipinx American and Diasporic Studies is looking for submissions from high school and undergraduate students focused on [Contemporary Filipinx-ness from a Youth Lens](#). [Submit](#) by Sept. 1st.

Do you have a research opportunity to share?
Email us at apida@sdsu.edu.

Paid Internships & Scholarships

Paid Internships:

- **NEW!** SAY San Diego is looking for part-time Youth Leaders. [Apply](#) today!
- **NEW!** NBC Universal is looking for a NBC 7 and Telemundo 20 intern for Fall 2025. [Apply](#) today!
- **NEW!** OHLA USA is looking for 2025 Field Engineer Interns. [Apply](#) today!

Scholarships:

- The Hyundai Women in STEM Scholarship is offering \$10,000 to five female students pursuing a STEM-related field. [Apply](#) by June 30th.
- The University Network is offering \$10,000 to up to five female college undergraduates pursuing a STEM-related field. [Apply](#) by June 30th.
- Delete Cyberbullying is offering a \$1,000 Mental Health Awareness Scholarship. [Apply](#) by June 30th.
- **NEW!** The California Student Aid Commission is offering the [Dream Act Service Incentive Grant](#) to eligible California Dream Act Application students who complete community or volunteer service. [Applications](#) open on July 1st.
- The Asian Business Association Foundation is offering \$1,000 to two undergraduate students. [Apply](#) by July 7th.
- **NEW!** MPower is offering multiple awards for the Global Citizen Scholarship. [Apply](#) by July 31st.
- **NEW!** The Gen and Kelly Tanabe Scholarship offers \$1,000 to high school, undergraduate, or graduate students. [Apply](#) by July 31st.

Do you have a resource to share?
Email us at apida@sdsu.edu.