### **ACEC October 2020 Newsletter**



# **ACE Center's Statement of Purpose**

The Asian Cultural Engagement Center (ACEC) is in the division of the Cultural and Community Centers under the Virginia Tech Office for Inclusion and Diversity. The ACEC's mission is to advocate for the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) communities, including Virginia Tech faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, and alumni. We also aim to educate the campus community on issues centered around or related to our communities. All members of the campus and the local community are welcome to the ACEC and can participate in the ACEC's events, programs, and activities.

# **Undergraduate Student Spotlight: Thien-Lam Vo**

Thien-Lam Vo is a junior majoring in Computer Engineering with his primary focus being in Software Systems and his secondary in Cyber Security. He really enjoys software and creating something that he can see the result of. For example, Vo really got into web development, learning the basics and designing his own website. Vo states that there is plenty of work to do and to learn but it was cool seeing it come together from nothing. Also, he's interested in full stack, working with both the front and back ends of



a website or application, as he likes knowing a little bit of everything as Vo stated that one should always be learning something everyday. He wants to be proficient in many fields.

Furthermore, Thien-Lam Vo has been a member of the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA), Filipino American Student Association (FASA), and Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers (SASE) for the past three years. He held an officer position last year and is currently the president of Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers. Vo chose to hold a leadership position since he has developed a character that makes him headstrong and outgoing, so he believed that leadership wass the next step. It was also natural to step up and take a leadership role. As the current president, Vo hopes for SASE to grow in a positive direction where the organization is more recognized on the same level as its fellow organizations under the Asian American Student Union (AASU).

"If I had to give any tips to my past self, I would tell myself to think more about the future and what you want to do," Vo said. "I came into college not knowing what I wanted to do. I came without a resume. Something incoming Virginia Tech students should take into consideration is to definitely be more outgoing. I became more outgoing coming to college. Also, focus on academics but do not forget to enjoy life in college. Don't take life so seriously."

# Organization Spotlight: Asian American Mental Health Alliance (AAMHA)

The Asian American Mental Health Alliance (AAMHA) is a student organization under the Asian American Student Union (AASU) and was formed in Spring 2020. Yullie Kwak, the current president for AAMHA, was originally planning to revive the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) chapter at Virginia Tech; however, she chose to create an organization with her own ideas and goals. The organization's founders include Yullie Kwak, Maggie Luo, Samantha Shin, Nick Karen, Jackie Oh, and James Zhang. The organization's mission is to destigmatize mental illness in the APIDA community at VT and reiterate the importance of mental health. Their goal is to have people, specifically those in the APIDA community, be heard and understood.



As a new organization, the Asian American Mental Health Alliance is planning to host events that include educational lectures and collaborating with the Mental Health Coalition as well as Cook Counseling at Virginia Tech. The organization really wants the public to look forward to their <u>podcasts</u>, which will be posted every Saturday. One memorable quote that Kwak shared was, "If we helped one person feel heard or represented, we completed our mission." To be more involved with the new organization, feel free to contact Yullie Kwak at <u>yulliek@vt.edu</u>. People can also be added to the organization's listserv through <u>GobblerConnect</u>. The best way to participate is to come to their events and talk. It's that simple!

# **Graduate Student Spotlight: Anthony Gang**

Anthony Gang is a first-year master's student studying Structural Engineering, a specific discipline within Civil Engineering that deals primarily with building design. Prior to his studies as a graduate student, he actually also earned his undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering at Virginia Tech as well! As his fifth year being a Hokie, Gang is heavily invested and involved in the APIDA community, particularly with KASA, the Korean American Student Association. He loves



the Virginia Tech community and when searching for colleges, wanted a balance of academics, community, and vibrancy in campus life.

Gang's involvement within KASA began his freshman year, as he really wanted to find a community of students who also valued Korean American culture. Throughout the year, participating in KASA events was often the highlight of his time at Virginia Tech. He particularly enjoyed the Big Little Program, which gave new members a mentor who helped them navigate college life, and KASA as well. His Big, Allison Park, still maintains a strong bond with him five years later. Due to his fond experiences in his freshman year, he really wanted to give back to KASA. He served as Treasurer his sophomore year and was unsuccessful in running for President during his junior year, but his passion and resolve were exemplified as he still chose to serve as Treasurer again. He also broke many norms, as it was not typical to run for an Officer position during senior year, but his

dedication and perseverance allowed him to finally become the KASA President. Many coin him as the "dad" of the Korean American Student Association, due to his longevity and love for the organization, but also his mentor-like presence he exudes. Finally, after a series of unlikely events, he made history again by running for a second term as President, as a graduate student at Virginia Tech. Now that is dedication.

"Make sure you make the most of your college experience, whether it is going to an extra event, going to every single thing you want to, whether it is for your education or for your personal growth," Gang proudly reflected upon. He wants to remind students that "it is perfectly acceptable to be spontaneous, to spend time in college living without regrets, and trying everything you want to do."

# Alumni Spotlight: Anna Enkhtur

Anna Enkhtur is a Mongolian-American Virginia Tech alumna who majored in International Studies and Russian. In her four years at the university, she unearthed her passions of serving the APIDA community through engagement and various leadership positions. Enkhtur joined an Asian-interest sorority, alpha Kappa Delta Phi Sorority, Inc. (aKDPhi) her freshman year and the Asian American Student Union (AASU) the following year. Among other positions, she describes her presidencies for both organizations as one of her most memorable and rewarding experiences. During her terms, she worked with her executive boards to host more community centered events and to strengthen inter-organizational relationships.

In her Junior year, Enkhtur interned for Congressman Gerry Connolly (VA-11) through Virginia Tech's Hokies



on the Hill program. She later served as an American Delegate for the U.S. Congress-Republic of Korea National Assembly Exchange Program where she spent time in Washington D.C. and South Korea meeting with various government officials and think tanks. Enkhtur is currently working as an analyst for Accenture Federal Services and serves on the Inclusion and Diversity team on her project. She also serves as the Director of Community Outreach for her sorority's alumnae association.

"Seek out mentors both within your community and outside of it," she said. "Find people you look up to, who will inspire you, and reach out to them for guidance because you are not alone in any fight."

# **APIDA Faculty spotlight: Dr. Carola Haas**

Dr. Carola Haas is a tenured professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation in the College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech. Her German-Chinese family history has given her a broader perspective on environments where people have grown up, opportunities, and life in general. She graduated with a B.A. from Wellesley College and earned a Ph.D. from Cornell University. Her own life trajectory led her to Virginia Tech in 1993, after completing a



postdoc in Japan. Her work has specifically been in applied conservation ecology and evolutionary biology.

Dr. Haas has been in this Department long enough to see it go from just her as the only

woman faculty member, to 50% of the faculty in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation becoming women. She was originally a part of a Provost's program that helped women enter faculty positions at Virginia Tech. She noted that Virginia Tech has more women in the Wildlife Program than any other university in the Southeast.

"I don't want to advise people to be patient, because I'm glad people are fighting and not being patient — but I think it is also important to celebrate victories and to acknowledge that things are hugely different," Dr. Haas said.

But she also mentioned that there is a greater opportunity for more racial diversity among her College's students and faculty. While she recognized that the campus as a whole has become more diverse since 1993, there is still a long way to go for representation among specific Colleges as well as for faculty across the board. She believes in having better faculty mentoring programs geared towards fostering more inclusive discussions on issues of diversity and acceptance for all faculty members.





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Dr. Shockley is a professor of English at Rutgers University and the author of three Dr. Shockley is a professor of English at Rutgers University and the author of three books of poetry, including the new black (winner of the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in Poetry) and semiautomatic (winner of the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award and finalisi for the Pulizer Frize and the LA Times Book Prize). She is also the euthor of a critical study, Renegate Poetres, Black Aesthetics and Status and Poetres and the Poetre

1:30-2:30 PM | THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020

#### Dr. Evie Shockley: "Rutgers **English Diversity Institute** (REDI), Pipeline Programs, and Graduate Studies: A **Discussion and Q&A**

- October 8, from 1:30-2:30 pm EST
- Host: Shaila Mehra, CLAHS Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, shailamehra@vt.edu
- Zoom link: https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/9 pwd=c3J0MEdYWXVGME5iR UVZdW5FQmkwdz09
- Please e-mail Dr. Shaila Mehra at shailamehra@vt.edu for Meeting ID and Passcode





#### Learning Lunch with Dr. **Carola Haas**

- October 9, 12-1 pm EST
- Dr. Carola Haas is a tenured professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation in the College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech. Much of her research focuses on restoration of wetland habitats for rare and endangered amphibians.
- Register here: https://rb.gy/5nfdmf



#### PATSY TAKEMOTO MINK: CENTERING WOMEN OF COLOR FEMINISM IN CONGRESS October 13, 2020 | 5PM EST

Patsy Takemoto Mink (1927-2002) was the first woman of color to serve in the U.S. Congress and the namesake for Title IX. A third generation served for 24 years in the House of Representatives (1965-1977 and 1990-2002) and even ran for the U.S. Presidency in 1972.



#### CHUN WU rofessor of Asian American Studies at the University of

California, Irvine and the director of the Humanities Center

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HISTORY

Japanese American from Hawai'i, Mink in particular on her efforts to advance feminist legislation in relation to federally subsidized childcare in the late 1960s and early 1970s with her efforts to reform welfare in the 1990s.

> REGISTER IN ADVANCE HTTPS://RB.GY/2VUMO3



### **Hokie Membership Connect**

We are now on Hokie Mentorship Connect! The <u>APIDA Career Connections Discussion Board</u> <u>Group</u> is a partnership between the Asian Cultural Engagement Center & Career and Professional Development. We are so excited to have joined the <u>Hokie Mentorship Connect platform</u>. We invite you to join our discussion board group to connect with other Hokies interested in career focused mentorship and networking. The purpose of this group is to create community. This discussion board aims to connect students with VT alumni working in various career fields. It is an opportunity to ask questions, share experiences and engage with industry professionals.



### Invitation to participate in online brief emotion regulation training program for college students

WHO: The Social Development and I-SPI Labs at Virginia Tech are currently recruiting participants to help us test a 5-week prevention program aimed at improving college students' adjustment and wellbeing! We are looking for students 18 years or older who are interested in testing an online emotion regulation program.

WHAT: BERT is an online brief emotion regulation training for college students. We are exploring a new approach to improving adjustment and well-being by targeting emotion regulation, or ways to manage emotions. You will learn more about your emotions,



We're recruiting participants to test out **BERT**, an online brief emotion regulation training program for college students.



Participants will be enrolled in an experimental 5-week program consisting of a series of surveys and activities that can be done on your phone or computer. Must be 18 years old to be eligible. You will receive a \$10 amazon gift card for your participation.

To sign up complete the following survey https://viginiatech.gualtics.com/felformSV\_6gSFguO4dfVkSGE You can also access this link using the QR code → For more information contact Alyssa Gatto at <u>BERTistudyVT@gmail.com</u>



mental wellness, and overall well-being in the process of participating in this 5-week intervention. All activities will be completed online at your convenience.

WHERE: Online!

WHEN: Over the course of 5 weeks you will complete a series of program activities and surveys. Every Monday you will fill out a brief survey to keep track of how things are going for you. Monday through Thursday you will complete short activities about emotion regulation. We'll do a brief emotion survey once a day to check-in on how your emotions are changing on a daily basis. You will fill out three long surveys (30 to 60 minutes) to keep track of any changes in adjustment and well-being as a result of this program, and you may also choose to complete a follow-up survey 3 months after completing the program.

WHY: To better understand your own emotions and psychological functioning while contributing to research on how to promote adjustment and well-being for college students.

COMPENSATION: A \$10 Amazon Gift Card or 5 SONA credits

CONTACT: If you're interested in participating you can fill out the following to determine if you are eligible: <u>https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\_6gSFguO4dfWs5QF</u> You can contact Alyssa Gatto at <u>BERTstudyVT@gmail.com</u> or sign up through SONA for more information!

### **Non-ACEC Events**





#### **CLUSA presents: Young**



# Leaders for America Summit 2020

- Webinar series part 5/5
- October 20, 1 pm EST
- Eventbrite link: <u>https://bit.ly/2GgFlku</u>
- For more information on the organization, check out their website at <u>https://clusa.org.</u>

### **AASU Student Organization Events**

- Korean American Student Association
  - Big/Little Week 30 September 10 October
  - Big/Little Clue Week 11 October 16 October
  - Big/Little Reveal 17 October
  - 3rd General Body Meeting 21 October 7 PM
  - Pumpkin Patch Event 24 October
- <u>Vietnamese Student Association</u>
  - Big/Little Mingle Week 5 October 9 October
  - Big/Little Clue Week 12 October 16 October
  - Big/Little Reveal 16 October 17 October
  - Battle of the Families 24 October 5PM
- Japanese Cultural Association
  - Big/Little Week 11 October 16 October
    - Speed Dating 11 October 5PM
    - Cooking Stream 12 October 7PM
    - Star Gazing at the Duck Pond 13 October 7PM
    - Jackbox Game Night 14 October 7PM
  - 3rd General Body Meeting 15 October 7PM
  - Virtual Painting 16 October 7PM
  - Sushi Factory Fundraiser 19 October
  - Big/Little Clue Week 19 October 23 October
  - Pumpkin Patch Event 23 October 12 PM
  - Big/Little Reveal 25 October
- <u>Chinese American Society</u>
  - Big/Little Mingle Week 12 October 16 October
  - Big/Little Clue Week 19 October 23 October
  - Big/Little Reveal 25 October
- <u>Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers</u>
  - SASE National Conference 2020 Collegiate Track 9 October 10 October
  - SASE National Conference 2020 Career Fair 16 October 17 October
  - Mentor/Mentee Week 12 October 16 October
    - Speed Dating 12 October 7PM

- ProDev Tips with the Exceleration Center 13 October 6:30PM
- Mentor/Mentee Dinner 14 October 7PM
- Study Night/Academic Support 15 October 7PM
- Game Night 16 October 7PM
- Mentor/Mentee Clue Week 18 October 22 October
- Mentor/Mentee Reveal 23 October

# **APIDA Caucus Updates**

- The APIDA Caucus serves as an advocacy and support group for all VT faculty/staff/graduate students and Blacksburg community members who identify as APIDA, and their allies. Please be on the lookout for upcoming details for our next meeting (mid-October). For more information, please email <u>smooncass@vt.edu</u> to be added to the email listserv google group, and follow us on Twitter @VTAPIDACaucus!
- For employees of VT, please consider reporting any form of suspected wrongdoing to the confidential and anonymous Hokie Hotline, located in the Office of Audit, Risk, and Compliance. For more information, please visit: <u>https://audit.vt.edu/report-a-concern.html</u>

Social Media

