

# 克城成功舉辦亞太文化節活動

Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao Spoke at the A/PAF Cleveland Asian Heritage Month Celebration  
Special Report by Lihua Feng (Leah Feng Patuwo)



上接 P01 Friendship Foundation of American-Vietnamese, Vietnamese Community in Greater Cleveland, Inc., Korean American Association of Greater Cleveland, Taiwanese American Association of Greater Cleveland, and Organization of Chinese Americans of Greater Cleveland. The city of Cleveland is the home of 117 different ethnic communities.

The Celebration began at noon with the procession of Lincoln West High School Students carrying flags of many nations. After the warm welcome from Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and opening remarks from A/PAF President Gia Hoa Ryan, proclamations from representatives of Cleveland City Council, U. S. Senator George Voinovich, Governor Ted Strickland and Cuyahoga County Commissioner were read. Mr. Le Nguyen, the Asian American Liaison of Community Relation Board-City of Cleveland and Chair of the Heritage Day was honored with an award for his contribution.

Elaine L. Chao, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor, was the guest speaker for this event. Secretary Chao is the first Chinese-American, and the first Asian American woman to hold a position in the U.S. President's Cabinet. After congratulating the Asian/Pacific communities for the celebration, she emphasized that Asian American is an important part of this country and affirmed Asian American devotion to the American society. Secretary Chao also encouraged Asian American from all professions to be proud of their dedicated contributions to this country and their heritage.

In her remarks, she mentioned that the Bush Administration has appointed over 400 Asian American to positions in his Administration, more than any other U.S. Presidents in history. Two of these were Cabinet Secretaries. She herself has appointed more Asian Pacific Americans to positions in the Department of Labor (DoL) than any other Cabinet Secretary, and Anna Hui, the Associate Deputy Secretary who accompanied her at the Celebration, was one of them.

To help Asian Pacific American workers and employers understand their rights and obligations, the Rapid Employee Assistance in Chinese Hotline (REACH) was set up in New York City. Chinese speaking staff answers the hotline (212-264-4175) for workers with questions. Information regarding Fair Labor Standard



Act (FLSA) is provided in Chinese and reinforced using posters and wallet-sized cards. To make non-English speaking workers aware of government services and labor rules, the DoL's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides worker safety awareness materials in Chinese and Vietnamese. Her Department also distributes Chinese Language manuals for teen workers to ensure their safety.

After Secretary Chao's speech, Anna Hui (Associate Deputy Secretary) warmly escorted me to a small Media Conference Room. Not long after, Secretary Elaine Chao walked energetically into the room. Her eyes radiated the light of wisdom and a beautiful smile was constantly on her face. She shook my hand and greeted me in Chinese. We talked about culture, family, children, education, opportunity, community, etc. She also looked through our Erie Chinese Journal. She seemed like a big sister I haven't seen for a long time. I was touched.

After the greetings, she mentioned about helping Asian Pacific Americans overcome challenges and more fully participate in the American Dream. Funds are made available for educational and vocational training, counseling, peer support, mentoring, life skills services, and job placement services to enhance employability of the participants. During her Cleveland visit, she also delivered the keynote address at the at new Cleveland Job Corps Center open house. The mission of the center is to provide students with education and training upon which they can build a career and a brighter future. The \$35 million Cleveland Job Corps Center includes nine buildings on a 25 acre campus, which has the capacity to serve about 440 students who will receive education and training in fields such as health care, construction, computers and tax preparation.

The Grammy Award winner pianist Dr. Angeline Chang was the next keynote speaker. Dr. Chang is the Head of Keyboard Studies and Associate Professor

of Piano at Cleveland State University. It is quite unusual for a Grammy Award winner to be both a performer and especially professor. Angeline Chang was the first pianist of Asian descent and the first female of Asian descent to win a Grammy Award. She won a Grammy for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance with Orchestra.

In her speech, Dr. Chang emphasized the importance of family and education: "Without our families and teachers, we would not be where we are today." She then elaborated on her 3 C's Elements of Success: Care, Commitment and Confidence in relating to self and community (family, friends, colleagues, and all interactions). Dr. Chang advised care for yourself and community responsibly, and commit and follow-through on that care. Proceed with confidence because it is a foundation for further successes. She concluded her speech with a quote from Darwin: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." Dr. Chang encouraged us to dare to be open and responsive to change through and from care, commitment and confidence.

Following the speeches, the audience was entertained by cultural performances from Solon Chinese School, guitarist Kevin Namkoong and Possibilities, a jazz quintet from China consisting of 3 Chinese and 2 Americans. Fantastic exhibits of Asian arts from various Asian American communities are displayed in the rotunda. Some of these will be on display for the entire month of May. Last but not least, the celebration would not be complete without guests enjoying a variety of delicious Asian ethnic food.



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