

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao

On the 20th Anniversary of the International Leadership Foundation

Remarks Prepared for Delivery by
2019 Leadership and Business Conference
Scholarship Awards Gala
Thursday, July 25, 2019
Washington, D.C.
Thank you, Dr. Hsu [Paul], for that warm welcome.

Congratulations to ILF and its founder Chiling Tong on its 20th anniversary. Along with Norm Mineta, I have been an honorary co-chair of the ILF when I was in the private sector. In the 20 years since its founding, ILF has flourished and offered so many enriching experiences in mainstream America to so many Asian Pacific American young people in their career and personal development.

The ILF galas are always such wonderful occasions to recognize and celebrate the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to our country. They are also so impressive because they are attended by so many distinguished leaders from across the country who are forging new paths for Asian Pacific Americans in their communities. Tonight is no exception – and I want to also congratulate the Asian Pacific American leaders from the public, private and non-profit sectors being recognized tonight. And many thanks to Mary Millben for delighting us again this year with such a beautiful rendition of “America the Beautiful.”

As you know, throughout my career in public service, I have worked to help Asian Pacific Americans—and other traditionally underserved communities—access opportunities in mainstream America. And I have made consistent efforts to highlight the contributions of

Asian Pacific Americans.

This year on May 10, 2019 at Promontory Summit, Utah, I had the unique privilege to fully acknowledge and recognize the contributions and sacrifices of the 12,000 laborers of Chinese heritage who helped build one of America’s greatest pieces of infrastructure: the transcontinental railroad -- 150 years after its completion. It was especially noteworthy that this tribute was made by the first Secretary of Transportation of Chinese ancestry.

The achievements of these 12,000 Chinese laborers was even more poignant given that they did not have the opportunity to bring their families with them or to become citizens of the United States.

America has moved forward since those days to become the diverse country it is today. The most recent estimate shows the Asian Pacific American community is nearly 7% of our country’s population—or about 23 million strong.

As our community has grown in numbers, we are increasingly contributing to the economic



vitality and cultural diversity of our country. As you may know, our economy is booming. The tax cuts and deregulatory policies of this Administration have jump started the economy. The U.S. economy grew 3.1 percent in the first quarter of 2019. The national unemployment rate of 3.7 percent is about the lowest in 50 years. The unemployment rate within the Asian American community is at 2.1 percent, the lowest ever since this figure was recorded.

Asian Pacific Americans have branched out to every field in mainstream America. And Asian Pacific Americans have also distinguished themselves in military service. On January 29, 2019, I participated in a moving ceremony conferring the Congressional Gold Medal on the Chinese American veterans of World War II.

The progress made by Asian Pacific Americans in mainstream America is a testament to the values our community holds dear, especially our emphasis on strong families, hard work and the value of a quality education.

As we authenticate and celebrate our contributions to this country, let me mention an issue which I have heard from many Chinese Ameri-

cans across all social and economic strata and that is the growing anxiety at the specter of ethnic profiling. As the relationship between the U. S. and China becomes more complex, many Chinese-Americans are growing increasingly anxious about how their ethnicity affects their acceptance in the United States.

My own family was recently the subject of malicious political partisan attacks that would not have occurred if our last name were “Smith” and if we came from England. I’ve been criticized by the “mainstream” media for including my father at some official appearances and social or ceremonial events, and for attending certain non-governmental events in my personal capacity with my father. Occasions such as these are not unusual for Cabinet members. This also reflects a deliberate mischaracterization of our Asian value of traditional respect for our parents - filial piety.

As our community grows in numbers, we have the chance to explain and inform others of our Asian values. I used to be reluctant or shy to do so, in an effort to blend in. Perhaps it’s age or maybe it’s because our country is becoming more diverse which is more emboldening... I have a few words: 1) Be strong. 2) I will always fight for our community. 3) Our community must not be afraid in asserting our contributions to America, and in sharing our cultural values and how they make our country stronger.

So kudos to you for being here tonight, and to what you do in your communities to highlight the talents of our community and its contributions to mainstream America. Good night.

趙小蘭致辭國際領袖基金會二十周年年會

赵小兰部长：國際領袖基金會為美國主流社會的亞太裔年輕人在職業和個人領域發展中做出了巨大貢獻(美國美中報道)
2019年7月29日
美国联邦交通部部部长赵小兰致辞国际领袖基金会二十周年年會

[美中报道讯]美國交通部部長趙小蘭于7月25日晚,在美国首都华盛顿DC,应邀出席了第二屆國際領袖基金會周年慶暨2019領袖人物與商業峰會晚宴并发表主旨演講。

趙小蘭部長接見國際領袖基金會領導成員及骨干

趙小蘭部長表示,在慶祝國際領袖基金會成立二十週年之際,我謹向基金會與董繼玲女士表達我誠摯的祝賀。還在私營企業任職時,我就與峰田部長(Norm Mineta)一起擔任過國際領袖基金會的聯合主席。過去20年,國際領袖基金會為美國主流社會的亞太裔年輕人在職業和個人領域發展中做出了巨大貢獻。

國際領袖基金會的頒獎晚宴一直以來舉辦得都非常精彩,在此我們慶祝並表彰對我們國家做出傑出貢獻的亞太裔美國人。每年都有許多來自不同地方的優秀領導人前來參加,這些領導人一直都致力於幫助亞裔美國人社群。今晚也無例外,我也想向來自政府公共部門,私營部門和非盈利機構的人士表達祝賀,對你們表示認同。同時也非常感謝瑪麗密爾本女士(Mary Millben),讓我們再次聽到了“美麗的阿美利加”(America the Beautiful)優美的演繹。

眾所周知,在我從事政府公共服務的職業生涯中,我一直都致力於幫助亞太裔美國人與其他少數民族群體融入到美國主流社會。我也非常注重亞裔美國人在各個領域所取得的成就。

趙小蘭部長與國際領袖基金會2019年



暑期实习计划结业的优秀亚太裔大学生以及国际领袖基金会2019年华府实习生亲切合影留念

今年的五月十號,我有機會在美國猶他州的海角峰上認可並且答謝了一萬兩千名中國勞工。他們在150年前為幫助建設美國最大基礎設施之一的跨州際鐵路付出巨大的犧牲,做出了卓越的貢獻。作為美國歷史上第一位擁有華裔血統的交通部部長,我感到非常榮幸。這一萬兩千名華工的經歷令人深感遺憾,他們沒有機會將他們的家人帶來美國,也最終沒有機會成為美國公民。

美國已經學習並且取得許多大進步,現在的美國是一個多元化的國家。最近的調查顯示,

美國有百分之七的人口是亞裔,幾乎達到兩千三百萬。

我們的社群逐步擴大,我們也不斷為美國經濟和文化發展做出貢獻。眾所周知,我們的經濟日趨繁榮。本屆政府的減稅提案和解除管制的政策都從各個層面幫助了經濟發展。美國的經濟在2019年第一季度,增加了百分之三點一。國家普遍失業率也降到了50年最低百分之三點七。亞裔美國人的普遍失業率更是達到了歷史上最低百分之二點一的記錄。亞太裔美國人已經在美國主流社會各行各業中成長起來。亞裔美國人在美國軍事上也有傑出的表現。2019年的1月29日,我有幸參加了為第二次世界大戰華裔美國軍人頒發國會

金質獎章的頒獎典禮。

亞太裔美國人在美國主流社會中所取得的進步證明了我們社區所珍視的價值觀,尤其是我們對於家庭和睦,努力工作和優質教育的重視。

在我們認同並慶祝為美國社會所做出貢獻的同時,也請允許我提出我從不同的社會與經濟層面裡諸多華裔美國人中聽到關於亞裔美國人刻板印象而產生的負面影響和擔憂。在中美兩國關係日漸複雜化的今天,許多華裔美國人對於他們的種族身份會如何影響他們在美國的發展有些許質疑和煩惱。

我的家庭在近日一個惡毒的黨派紛爭中變成了被攻擊的對象。所有的這一切都與我的種族密切相關。如果我的姓氏是史密斯(Smith),或者我的家庭來自英國來,這一切都將不會發生。我因為攜帶我的父親出席一些社交和正式場合,慶典以及與我父親一同參加了一些非政府的個人活動而被所謂的“主流”媒體攻擊。這些場合對於美國內閣成員並不罕見。這也反應了亞裔傳統價值觀中對父母的尊重和孝道長期被誤解。

趙小蘭部長在國際領袖基金會2019年年會上與獲獎者們合影

隨著我們的社群日漸增長,我們有機會來解釋並且弘揚我們亞裔的價值觀。我曾經因為過於期望融入美國社會而對此有過猶豫和不情願,也許是因為我的年齡和資歷或者我們國家正在慢慢變得更加包容與多元,讓我有勇氣說出這些話:1. 要堅強。2. 我將竭力為我們的社會服務。3. 我們一定要勇敢來投入我們的精力,分享我們的文化價值觀,以幫助美國成為一個更美好的國家。

感謝你們今晚的到來,對你們為我們社群做出的貢獻表達最誠摯的謝意。祝大家有一個美好愉快的夜晚。

