

Guide to the Asian American Students Alliance, Yale University, Records

RU 1046



compiled by Daniel Hartwig

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: RU 1046

CREATOR: Yale University. Asian American Students Alliance

TITLE: Asian American Students Alliance, Yale University, records

DATES: 1969-2009

BULK DATES: 1970-1971

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The materials consist of correspondence, minutes and agendas, programs, newsletters, subject files, and publications documenting the activities of the Asian American Students Alliance, previously the Asian American Students Association.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ru.1046>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ru.1046>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The materials were a gift of Don Nakanishi, 2009; transferred from Asian American Students Alliance, 2009.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright for materials authored or otherwise produced as official business of Yale University is retained by Yale University. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

Asian American Students Alliance, Yale University, Records (RU 1046). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Processing Information

Yale University records are arranged and described at the accession level by the creating office. The University Archives creates collection level descriptive records, but typically does no further arrangement and description at the accession level.

Biographical / Historical

Asian American Students Association

Don Nakanishi (Class of 1971) established the first Asian American Students Association in 1969. At the time, this organization was the first student group on campus to raise consciousness about Asian Americans in the Yale undergraduate community regarding immediate political and long-term social issues. It was later renamed the Asian American Students Alliance (AASA) in 2001, the name which it is known today.

The Asian American community at Yale witnessed many key milestones in the 1970s due to AASA's student activism. In 1970, the first newsletter dealing with Asian American studies, the Amerasia Journal, was founded at Yale and is now a major publication in the field. Meanwhile, Don Nakanishi proposed a "floating counselor system" for students of color, which eventually resulted in the beginning of Yale College's Ethnic Counselor Program in 1972.

In 1973, Yale College started a pilot program designed to acclimatize Puerto Rican students to Yale life which was called the Puerto Rican Orientation Program (PROP). As the idea of PROP expanded as a resource for more students of color, including Asian Americans, this program was renamed into the Pre-Registration Orientation Program and finally just shortened to Cultural Connections since 1999.

In 1977, student leaders from major universities along the American East Coast, including Yale, to found what would later be known as the East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU) conference. ECAASU's mission was to further the Asian American cause by encouraging intercollegiate dialogue on issues relevant to today's Asian American student leaders. ECAASU conferences have been held once every year since 1978, and Yale University has been the host for ECAASU conferences three times in 1994, 2000, and 2007.

Today, AASA serves two functions. It is the vehicle for both pan-Asian American unity and Asian American political action on the Yale campus. Structurally, it serves as the umbrella organization for many Asian

American groups on campus and consists of AASA moderators together with the AASA officers. In addition, its executive board consists of the presidents of the nine member ethnic organizations. Issues tackled by AASA include diversifying faculty and curricula, increasing funding for Asian American student activities, strengthening the Asian American Cultural Center, addressing the rise in hate crimes, reaching out to immigrants and Asian American families, increasing political representation.

Asian American Cultural Center

The founding members of AASA had always envisioned a shared community space for Asian Americans on Yale's campus. Though AASA was given rooms in the basement of Bingham and Durfee since the early 1970's, the Yale undergraduate Asian American community continued to look for a larger space for their activities. In 1978, Nick Chen '79 was able to rally enough support among the Asian American community at Yale that his efforts led to talks with Bart Giamatti, who was just beginning his term as President of Yale University (1978-1986).

Through these talks, with the cooperation of other students on campus, the shared space that would be known as the Chicano and Asian American Cultural Center was finally established in 1981. It was to be housed with support from the administration on the former grounds of Yale's Psychology Department on 295 Crown Street. Jack Hasegawa, the general secretary of Dwight Hall at Yale at the time, became the unofficial director of Asian American affairs for the first years of the center's existence (1981-1985).

After Jack Hasegawa retired from his position as unofficial advisor for the Asian American community at Yale in 1985, Yale College Assistant Dean Joyce Baker became the first dean to oversee Asian American affairs. Joyce Baker stayed on until 1991 and set the precedent for how the house would be directed in the future. Since Joyce Baker, two assistant deans have overseen the affairs at the center: Mary Li Hsu (1992-1999) and Saveena Dhall (2000-present).

Under Mary Li Hsu, the house saw two major administrative changes. In 1993, Native American students joined the house and established a presence that would come to be known as the Native American Cultural Center (NACC). In the summer of 1999, the Chicano students moved next door to 301 Crown Street in the newly established house of their own, La Casa Cultural.

Under the current director Dean Dhall, the house saw a major change in the administration of the Native American Cultural Center (NACC). The first director of the NACC and Native American Affairs, Shelley Lowe, was appointed Yale College Assistant Dean in the summer of 2007. Today the NACC continues to share its location with the AACC at 295 Crown Street.

Today the AACC continues to support and provide space for the activities of its over 40 affiliated Asian and Asian American groups on Yale's campus. The AACC, however, also provides its own programming on issues relevant to Asian and Asian American life to the general Yale community during the academic year, through talks, performances, movie nights, and social events.

Scope and Contents

The materials consist of correspondence, minutes and agendas, programs, newsletters, subject files, and publications documenting the activities of the Asian American Students Alliance, previously the Asian American Students Association.

General note

Forms part of Yale Record Group 37 (YRG 37), Records of associations, institutes, centers, and organizations affiliated with Yale University.

Arrangement

The records are arranged by accession.

Collection Contents

Accession 2010-A-050: Records maintained by Don Nakanishi concerning the Asian American Student Association, 1969-2009

0.25 linear feet

b. 1, f. 1	25th Anniversary (Asian American Student Association) A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1995
b. 1, f. 2	"Asian Americans at Yale, 1909-1974"; research project of Henry Hayase A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1974
b. 1, f. 3	Asian American Conference A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1970 October 17
b. 1, f. 4	Asian American Student Association (AASA) mailing lists A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	circa 1970
b. 1, f. 5	Asian American Student Association (AASA) minutes, newsletter, correspondence, etc. A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1971
b. 1, f. 6	Asians in America conference A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1970
b. 1, f. 7	Constitution of Bay Area Japanese American Citizens League (JAACL)	1970
b. 1, f. 8	Correspondence of Don Nakanishi A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1970-2009
b. 1, f. 9	Course proposals (Yale College) submitted by Don Nakanishi A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1970
b. 1, f. 10	Eastern Communications Center for Asian Americans (ECCAA)	1970
b. 1, f. 11	Floating Counselor Program	1970
b. 1, f. 12	Interdisciplinary Study of Asian American Communities: Los Angeles and New York	1971

b. 1, f. 13	March on Washington, DC	1970?
b. 1, f. 14	May Day	1969
b. 1, f. 15	Post-it notes of Don Nakanishi [concerning items in accession]	undated
b. 1, f. 16	Publications (<i>Asian Americans for Equality</i> ; <i>Yale Third World Liberation Newspaper</i> ; <i>Amerasia Journal</i> ; <i>The Banana Peel</i> ; <i>Asian American Perspective</i>)	1970-1971
b. 1, f. 17	Recruitment (of Asian American students) A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1969-1970
b. 1, f. 18	Research proposal (Yale College) of Don Nakanishi concerning the Third World Liberation Front	1970
b. 1, f. 19	Student Lists (AASA)	1970-1974
b. 1, f. 20	Third World Coalition at Stanford University	1970
b. 1, f. 21	Wiretap class action lawsuit judgement, U.S. District Court, New Haven, Conn.	1984

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Asian American college students
Asian Americans
College students -- Societies, etc.

Corporate Bodies

Yale University. Asian American Students
Alliance
Yale University -- Societies, etc.
Yale University -- Students