

SPEAKER BIOS | EDMONTON CHINATOWN CONFERENCE 2016

AARON LAO 劉子亨 is a part of the Youth Collaborative for Chinatown in Vancouver, and is a Master's student at the School of Community & Regional Planning at UBC, focusing in community development, social planning, and urban design. His Master's research examines how visuals can be used in planning material to more effectively communicate with the public. As part of the Youth Collaborative for Chinatown, Aaron helps put on monthly public mahjong socials, which have proven to be very popular and a great way to activate quiet public spaces in Chinatown. Aaron was born and raised in Vancouver, and studied human geography in his undergraduate degree.

CANDAS JANE DORSEY is an internationally-known writer and editor who was born and raised in Edmonton and has been an advocate for many arts, social justice and community issues. At the moment, she is on the board of the Edmonton Social Planning Council, the Edmonton Heritage Council, and the Boyle Street Community League (Boyle Street includes Historic Chinatown).

C.W.CHAN 陳增華, a retired entrepreneur and former mental health consultant and social service administrator, has been active in voluntary community service for four decades. In his varied capacities, he was able to impact and spearhead a wide spectrum of issues and projects that concern and affect the Asian American community in general, and Chinese American community in particular in the Chicago area. A graduate of The School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, he served for twelve years as director of psychiatric social work at Chicago's Cook County Hospital before entering the business world in 1986, a change of career eventually leading to his running a group of companies engaging in aquaculture and production, nation-wide distribution and wholesale of seafood products. His extensive civic service record over the decades has included being founder and board president of the Chinese American Service League; president and chairman of the Chicago Chinatown Chamber of Commerce; chairman of the Asian American Coalition of Chicago; and since 2000, founder and chairman of the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC). CBCAC recently completed the first ever Chinatown Comprehensive Community Vision Plan and has been credited with many of the major infrastructure and general improvements in Chicago's Chinatown community.

CLAUDIA WONG-RUSNAK is an enthusiastic urban planner. For the last 8 years she has worked in various roles at the City of Edmonton, in the Sustainable Development Department. From being on teams that design new neighbourhoods, to land and project development, Claudia is always up for a challenge. Most recently she has been tackling a plan for Edmonton's Chinatown. She's excited to be part of growing city and you can often spot her side-saddle on the back of her husband's retro bicycle en route to favorite downtown neighbourhood restaurants and venues.

DORIS CHOW is a founding member of the Youth Collaborative for Chinatown. She is actively involved in Vancouver's Chinatown as a member of the Hoy Ping Society, a member of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee, and a member of the City of Vancouver's Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee. She has worked in Chinatown/the Downtown Eastside for over seven years, where much of her work has focused on food security. She is passionate about supporting Chinatown's seniors.

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DR. DAVID CHUENYAN LAI taught in Department of Geography at University of Victoria for 35 years and retired in 2004 as Professor Emeritus. His major research interests are the urban development of Chinatowns and Chinese Migration to Canada. He has surveyed over 40 Chinatowns across North America. Over half of his 350 publications are related to these two areas. He is a Member of the Order of Canada and Honorary Citizen of City of Victoria. He has also received 44 awards in recognition of his scholarship and community services. After retirement, he is a Research Affiliate of Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health at University of Victoria.

DR GEORGE GEORGIU is an associate professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta. His research focuses on the role of cognitive and non-cognitive factors in literacy development across languages. He has been collaborating with several researchers from China and as of 2015 he is an adjunct professor in the School of Cognitive Sciences at East China Normal University in Shanghai.

JAMIE LEE 李嘉明 is the IDEA Space Manager at the Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDpda). IDEA Space, a program of SCIDpda, addresses the variety of issues that affect the businesses, residents, and community members in the neighborhood. Jamie has over eight years in fund development and project management. She holds Master's in Social Work and Public Administration from the University of Washington. She's passionate about poverty alleviation, racial justice, neighborhoods, and the important interplay of policy and practice. She is a second generation Chinese American, born in California. Her parents immigrated from Taiwan and Hong Kong to explore their education in America.

DR. JORGE SOUSA is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. He is the coordinator for the Adult, Community and Higher Education specialization. He has taught and researched different areas associated with the Social Economy and Community Development for over 15 years. His 2013 book "Building a Co-operative Community in Public Housing: The Case of The Atkinson Housing Co-operative" describes a community's journey to becoming a housing co-operative. He's currently working on developing a research and practice framework that recognizes the unique characteristics nature of education for co-operation.

KELVIN KWOK 郭華 was born in Hong Kong and came to Canada in 1994. He worked as outreach worker and later as Older Adult Service Coordinator with The Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association for twenty years. His client included seniors, new immigrants, low-income families, welfare recipients and subsidized housing tenants. After his retirement in 2015, his current position is a volunteer of the "Bovside Manor Tenants' Advocacy Group".

KEVIN HUANG 黃儀軒 has been involved with Vancouver's Chinatown since 2009. Originally, his work with Shark Truth focused on culturally appropriate education and business strategies to decrease the consumption of shark fin. Realizing that there was a growing gap in Chinese-Canadian youth engagement on environmental, social, and political issues, Kevin co-founded Hua Foundation to increase youth participation and empowerment in local communities. Kevin currently serves as the Executive Director of Hua Foundation and spends his time exploring intersections between food, culture, and identity.

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KRISTIN CHEUNG is an Arts Administrator. She is currently the Development Officer at Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver and former Managing Editor at Ricepaper Magazine. As a fundraiser, she has worked in theatre, literary arts, and grant-writer for culturally diverse organizations including Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society, Hapa-Palooza and Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre. Born and raised in Edmonton, she graduated from Macewan University in Arts and Cultural Management Program in 2007. She is an alumni of Edmonton's ECBEA Mandarin-Bilingual program.

LLOYD SCIBAN 史羅一 was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. He studied in Taiwan for ten years and earned an MA degree from the Department of Chinese Literature, National Taiwan University. He also holds a PhD degree from the Department of East Asian Studies, University of Toronto and is presently a semi-retired professor of East Asian Studies at the University of Calgary. His research interests are the influence of Chinese culture in Canada and Confucian ethics. He recently published the book /From Chopsticks to Hockey Sticks: The Achievements of Chinese Canadians/. Since then he has begun research on the Chinese philosopher Wang Yangming (1472-1529) and his theory of the unity of knowing and acting and how it can be applied in environmental ethics.

LYNNE WILTSE is an Associate Professor in the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta where she teaches courses in the areas of language and literacy and children's literature. She holds a PhD from the University of Alberta. Previously, she taught at Thompson Rivers University and in First Nations communities in British Columbia. Her research interests include multicultural children's literature, teaching for social justice, minority language education, sociocultural theory, teacher education and qualitative methodologies. Currently, she is conducting research with a group of Edmonton-area teachers for a national study, Developing a Pedagogy of Social Justice Through Postcolonial Literature.

MICHAEL PHAIR is Chair of the Board of Governors of the University of Alberta. He is part time Executive Director with the North Saskatchewan River Valley Conservation Society and previously he was an Educational Coordinator with the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services at the University of Alberta and from 1992-2007 an elected member of Edmonton City Council. He is a past Board member of Edmonton Housing Trust and currently serves as the Chair of the Homeless Youth Systems Committee.

MEGAN TSANG 曾文心 is a Bachelor of Commerce student at the University of Alberta and an alumni of the ECBEA Chinese Bilingual Program. At the U of A, she is involved with the UAlberta Ambassador Program and is the Vice President External of the Chinese Student Club. As a proud Chinese born Canadian, Megan is always eager to share the uniqueness of Chinese culture with others through volunteering with the ECBEA and the Edmonton Chinese Young Leaders Council (ECYLC). Being the Vice President of Events for ECYLC, Megan works towards celebrating heritage, inspiring leadership, and opening opportunities for youth to create a vibrant Edmonton. In 2013, she was the recipient of the Premier's Citizenship Award and was also a Young Woman of Distinction nominee for YWCA's Women of Distinction. For the last 7 years, she has been a dedicated martial arts student at Shang De Tai Chi Praying Mantis Association and Ji Hong Wushu and Taichi College. In 2015, she received a gold medal in a National Tai Chi Competition. Looking ahead, Megan is excited to contribute a youth perspective in the revitalization of Chinatown and hopes to see it become the sustainable and ever-growing community she imagines it to be.

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MELISSA FONG is a PhD Candidate at the University of Toronto in the Department of Geography and Planning and a SSHRC Fellow. Her dissertation explores the social geography of Vancouver's Chinatown through the revitalization and neighbourhood planning process (2001- 2016). Melissa is most passionate about projects about social justice and equity. Melissa has taken research lead on other projects, including organization development for Neighbourhood Settlement Houses in Toronto and Vancouver; worked with the Fannie Mae Foundation and the National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (National CAPACD) to improve housing security for racialized communities in the wake of the subprime mortgage crisis; and worked with The University of British Columbia to contribute to policy recommendations for housing and homelessness for the World Urban Forum. Melissa is also active on the Board of Directors for Centre A: The Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art.

MICHAEL LEE 李世昌 is the Chairman of the Chinese Benevolent Association of Edmonton.

NICOLE SO 蘇健盈 is a University of British Columbia alumni (2015) with a BA in English Literature and a minor in Asian Canadian and Asian Migration studies. Her recent work and involvement in Chinatown began with making the video "4 Reasons Why You Should Care about Vancouver's Chinatown" for class. Since the launch and positive receptions of the video, Nicole has committed her summer to working on the Hong Kong-Canada Crosscurrents Project with Dr. Henry Yu, helping Heritage BC organize workshops to assess the intangible heritage of Vancouver's Chinatown, and interning at Hua Foundation, a non-profit start up organization for Chinese-Canadian youth. Nicole enjoys indulging in good films and travelling in her spare time, and is a self-proclaimed bubble tea connoisseur.

NATHAN IP is the President of the Edmonton Chinese Young Leaders Council, and a Public School Trustee for Edmonton's Ward H. He was elected to the Edmonton Public Schools Board of Education in October 2013. He is an advocate for equity and the inclusive education of individuals with developmental disabilities. Nathan has over 15 years of community experience, both professionally and as a volunteer, in youth engagement and community development. Previously, Nathan was the coordinator of inclusive post-secondary education at MacEwan University. He has served on several boards, including the Community Services Advisory Board for the City of Edmonton, Our House Addiction Recovery Centre and the Edmonton Food Bank. Nathan has also worked on province-wide youth engagement initiatives.

PATRICK TEOH is a member of I Love YYC Chinatown, Calgary. He is a board member of Calgary's Malaysian Singaporean and Bruneian Community Association. Patrick obtained his Chartered Accountant designation in 2009 after graduating from the University of Calgary in 2007 with a Bachelor of Commerce. Patrick's other interests involve public speaking and advocacy regarding climate change.

PAUL GIANG is the Editor of Spacing Edmonton. He grew up exploring Edmonton's landscape, which led him to become an ecologist and urbanist. After studying in Montreal and India, he came back to Edmonton to rediscover and share what he loves about the city. He works as a Parks Planner at the City of Edmonton.

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RYAN STEPHENS is a freelance writer and Communications Coordinator with the Edmonton Heritage Council. He is a graduate of the University of Alberta, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in English and Sociology and complemented his studies by volunteering as a journalist with The Gateway, the university's student-run newspaper. There, he grew especially fond of writing about Edmonton's past and future—a passion that he continues to nourish through his writing and his work with the EHC.

DR. SANDEEP K. AGRAWAL is a professor and inaugural director of the Urban and Regional Planning Program in at the University of Alberta. Dr. Agrawal's research works focus on Canada's ethnic communities and the effects of multiculturalism, religion, and human rights on urban structures and public policies. His research interests also include land use planning, urban design, and international planning. He is a co-author of the forthcoming book *Understanding India's New Approach to Spatial Planning and Development: A Salient Shift?* (Oxford University Press). Dr. Agrawal has extensive experience in administrative law and municipal decision making. He currently serves on Alberta's Municipal Government Board.

SARAH YEUNG 揚星兒 is the Director of Planning and Senior Project Manager for the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation. Sarah oversees the Neighborhood Planning & Advocacy program and coordinates all real estate and affordable housing developments. As the Director of Planning, she works with PCDC's Planning Committee to engage, educate, and cultivate community leaders in matters of zoning and development, and works with the City and a diverse range of stakeholders in order to advance the goals of the Chinatown Neighborhood Plan. As a project manager, she shepherds PCDC's real estate projects through all aspects of the development process, from acquisition to construction completion. She is a 2015-2016 Community in the Capital Fellow at the National Coalition for Asian Pacific Americans in Community Development (National CAPACD), where she helped develop an national policy platform focused on equitable development for over 100 member organizations. She is also a 2016 Emerging Cities Champion for the Knight Foundation. She has a Master of City of and Regional Planning from Rutgers University, and a BA from the University of Pennsylvania.

TERESA WOO-PAW 鮑胡嫻儀 is the first trustee and chair of the Calgary Board of Education of Asian Canadian descent (1995 to 1999) and the first female Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta and Cabinet Minister of Asian Canadian descent (2008-2015). An active part of her community for 40 years, Ms. Woo-Paw founded six organizations including the Asian Heritage Foundation, the Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary and the Calgary Chinese Community Services Association as well as served on over 30 committees and boards. Her community service has earned Ms. Woo-Paw an Immigrant of Distinction Award, YWCA's Woman of Distinction Award, the Queen's Jubilee Award for Multiculturalism and Community Services, the Canada 125th Commemorative Award for Community Services and the Queen Elizabeth's 60th Jubilee Award.

UMID ABDULLAEV is originally from Uzbekistan. He has been working at DIALOG since last November, and recently graduated from the Master of Interior Design program at the University of Manitoba. His interest in conflict, culture and religion was sparked during his international school education in India where he came across various cultures. Following his move to Canada he became interested in the growing divide between the eastern and western civilizations, and thanks to his practicum he was able to address it through built environment and design. To him, "The Rumi Cultural Events Centre – Design for Winnipeg's Second Generation Muslims" became a step in understanding the role of Islamic culture in a secular Western environment.

THE HONOURABLE DR. VIVIENNE POY, Chancellor Emerita of the University of Toronto, is an author, entrepreneur, historian, fashion designer, and community volunteer. In 1998, she was the first Canadian of Asian descent to be appointed to the Senate of Canada where she focused on gender issues, multiculturalism, immigration, and human rights, and was instrumental in having May recognized as Asian Heritage Month across Canada. After her retirement from the Senate in September 2012, she continues to be actively involved with communities across Canada. She has received numerous honorary degrees and professorship from universities in Canada, USA, China, Hong Kong and South Korea, as well as many honours and awards.

VALERIE MAH is affectionately known as the Toronto Chinese historian for her research on the early Chinese community in Toronto. She was born and raised in Brockville, Ontario where her family owned and operated a restaurant for 55 years. Both her grandparents operated laundries prior to restaurants. She was the first female principal in the Toronto Board of Education. She received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award in September 2012, the Constance Hamilton Award in 2014 Access, Equity and Human Rights Award from the City of Toronto and the John Herra Award from the Toronto Police Service as Volunteer of the Year in 2015. Her most favourite title though is "Mah Hou Cheung" or Principal Mah, which is how she is affectionately known in the Toronto Chinese Community. She is a vice president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of East Toronto and was instrumental in helping them build an archway designed by their late councillor, Jack Layton, and a local artist. In addition she represents them on the local CPLC (Community Police Liaison Committee) for 55 Division and is a member of the CCCC Chinese Community Consultative Committee for the Toronto Police Service. She is involved in a summer project working with the police and six store owners to create six new murals. She is one of the founders of the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care to provide high quality and culturally appropriate care for Chinese seniors. She sits on the Board of Governors of both the Mon Sheong and the Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundations.

YI CHEN is an award winning filmmaker whose work has aired on PBS station WHUT-TV and screened at numerous film festivals internationally. Her work has been featured on the Washington Post, National Public Radio, Washington City Paper and NBC Washington. DC Office of Motion Picture and Television Development named her "Filmmaker of the Month" in April 2013. She received the Artist Fellowship from DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities in 2014. The fellowship program recognizes individual artists whose artistic excellence significantly contributes to the District of Columbia and brings vitality to the local community. Chen has produced digital media content for the United Nations, National Geographic Studios, Kojo Nnamdi Show, Link TV, MIT Tech TV, Hillwood Museum, and Voice of America. In addition to filmmaking, Chen has spoken at national and international conferences on race, immigration, language access, urban development and gentrification issues. As a first-generation immigrant, she is a passionate advocate for AAPI community. Chen received her Master of Fine Arts degree in Film and Media Arts from American University and has been teaching at George Mason University's Film and Video Studies program since 2014.