



OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

MICHAEL W. FRERICHS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 17, 2016

CONTACT:

Greg Rivara 312.814.1901

Treasurer Frerichs Honors Asian Pacific American Month

CHICAGO – Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs today honored influential leaders as part of the Asian Pacific American heritage month celebration.

“The Asian Pacific American History Month invites us to contemplate the struggles of Asian Pacific Americans. It challenges us to learn from our shared experiences. It demands of us the strength to move our country forward,” Frerichs said.

The gathering honored award winners:

Outstanding Service in Leadership – the late Laura Cha-Yu Liu.

Liu was the first Chinese American woman judge appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court. She co-chaired the Illinois Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission, which bridged language barriers for non-English-speaking litigants. She helped create rules requiring courts to provide qualified interpreters for parties and witnesses and to install signage in different languages outside courthouses.

Justice Liu passed on Friday, April 15, from breast cancer. In her honor, the Justice Laura Liu Scholarship Fund has been established at St. Therese Chinese Catholic School. Donations may be made at <http://www.StThereseChicago.org> or mailed to 247 W. 23rd St., Chicago, IL 60616.

Business Leadership – Raymond M. Chin P.E.

Chin is the founder of R.M. Chin, which has provided expert project and construction management services for leading public and private entities in the transportation, aviation and building sectors.

His firm played a vital role in well-known projects, including the expansion and modernization of O'Hare and Midway international airports and the advancement of the Illinois Tollway's *Move Illinois* program.

Chin also is involved in trade and civic organizations, including the American Association of Airport Executives, Construction Management Association of America, Illinois Road & Transportation Builders Association, Chinese American Service League and the Chicago Simfonietta.

MORE

Community Service – Asif Ashiqali

Ashiqali is a dedicated individual who has a keen passion for service and has been involved as a volunteer in various leadership capacities for more than 17 years.

He is an executive board member, with the Youth Career Advising and Mentoring Program (YCAMP) at the [University of Illinois at Chicago](#). He is a former associate board member of *Apna Ghar* (Our Home), a non-profit organization that offers shelter, vocational training and social services to victims of domestic violence. He is a member of the National Resource Mobilization Team (NRMT), training volunteers with event management and fundraising. He is a member of the National Disaster Management Team and works with FEMA, Red Cross, and FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance to obtain training and facilitate disaster preparedness training sessions across the U.S.

He earned a M.A. in Education and Human Resources/Organization Development and is pursuing a doctorate in Organizational Leadership.

Education- Jennifer Chang

Chang, from Seoul, South Korea, is an educational consultant with More Than Scores And Tests (More Than SAT). She also is president of the non-profit Monster Education Foundation which identifies and supports young ‘Agents of Change’ as they pursue higher education and make a difference in their communities.

Elected Official – Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar

Pawar is the first Asian-American elected to Chicago City Council. He has sponsored several pieces of legislation to improve wages and human rights and prevent wage-theft and predatory debt collection methods.

He also created a K-12 neighborhood school community group called GROW47 to organize residents, business owners and parents and solicit information about education.

Pawar earned a M.S. degree in Threat & Response Management from The University of Chicago, a M.P.A. in Public Administration from the Illinois Institute of Technology, and is working on a M.A. in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago.

Leadership – Bernarda “Bernie” Wong

Wong is the founder of the Chinese American Service League (1978). She was born and raised in Hong Kong and came to the United States in 1962 at the age of 18.

She earned a degree in social work from Briar Cliff University in Sioux City, Iowa and a master's degree in social work from Washington University in St. Louis in 1968.

She worked as a social worker in the Chicago area before incorporating the Chinese American Service League in Chicago. The organization has grown from a handful of employees to 450, with an annual operating budget of \$12 million. It serves more than 17,000 people of all ages in Chicago's Chinese-American community.

In October 2012, Wong received the Champions of Change award from President Barack Obama.

-MORE-

“As we reflect upon the progress that we have made, we also can celebrate our success. The works of Asian Pacific Americans spring forth from arts and social justice to science and public policy. Joyously reveling in these accomplishments is the best way to honor those who have suffered and sacrificed,” Frerich said.

About the Illinois Treasurer

The Illinois Treasurer is the state’s chief investment officer and Frerichs is a Certified Public Finance Officer. He protects consumers by encouraging savings plans for college or trade school, increasing financial education among all ages, and removing barriers to a secure retirement. As the state’s Chief Investment Officer, he actively manages approximately \$25 billion. The portfolio includes \$13 billion in state funds, \$7 billion in college savings plans and \$5 billion on behalf of local and state governments. The investment approach is cautious to ensure the preservation of capital and returns \$28 to the state for every \$1 spent in operations. The Treasurer’s Office predates Illinois incorporation in 1818. Voters in 1848 chose to make it an elected office.

-END-