



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 28, 2010

Contact: Lauren Takeda
Phone: (626) 396 - 9927
Email: Lntakeda@earthlink.net

Real Life Role Models to be featured in Disabilities Conference October 29-30

Los Angeles, CA – Asians and Pacific Islanders with Disabilities of California (APIDC) will host a special statewide disabilities conference on October 29th and 30th, 2010 at the Long Beach Westin Hotel in California. The two-day conference will bring together consumers, families, agency representatives and advocates to identify mechanisms for delivering culturally competent resources to Asian and Pacific Islanders with disabilities and their families to explore ways to educate Asian and Pacific Islander (API) families on how to better access resources, and to educate health and service providers on the specific barriers facing APIs with disabilities.

This year's conference will feature speakers from varied backgrounds, with varied disabilities who will share their challenges and successes. The speakers will include:

Jian Hong is currently an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) candidate in the creative nonfiction program at Mills College in Oakland, and earned a B.A. Degree in English Literature from UC Berkeley. A quadriplegic since a 1997 car accident, Mr. Hong has an interest in outreach to people with disabilities and those that lack access to higher education. She published a resource guide for prospective students with disabilities, *UC Berkeley's Transfer Student Handbook: A Guide for New Transfers*.

Luke Hseih was born in Taipei, Taiwan in 1975. He completed his master's degree in history from the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Mr. Hseih works as an Assistive Technology Advocate for the Riverside Community Access Center. He is the author of "Unicorn, you taught me how to fly".

Tim Jin holds a B.A. in speech communications from Cal State Long Beach, where he worked at the Disabled High Tech Center. He is an educational publisher in Orange County. Assistive technology is a major interest in his professional life. He serves on several committees, including the Department of Rehabilitation Assistive Technology Advisory Committee. He is a strong believer in fitness, and in working out, regardless of one's limitations. He is a strong advocate for others because he understands what it is like to have a disability. He believes communication is key to achieving one's goals.

Sophornia Ko is a volunteer with the Chinese American Disability Living, a non-profit organization founded by two Chinese Americans with disabilities. The organization's objective is to form a disability oriented website to assist Chinese people with disabilities worldwide and to provide information on disability living.



Jennifer Kumiyama is Ms. Wheelchair California 2010 and the 1st Runner Up Ms. Wheelchair America 2011. Born with Arthrogyrosis (AMC), she overcame adversity through a combination of major surgeries and personal determination to become an accomplished singer and actress. Jennifer was the first performer in a wheelchair at a Disney Theme Park production when she was cast in Disney's Aladdin--A Musical Spectacular. Jennifer also is Chief Editor of Disabled Guides for notanotherguide.com, an online travel guide for visitors with disabilities.

Lucianne Latu, San Mateo County Behavioral Health Recovery Services Division, also works for a community-based organization Taulama for Tongans. She had osteogenic sarcoma at age 8, with part of her treatment the amputation of her right leg. She went through high school suffering from severe depression, which was not diagnosed until after high school. She still has bouts of severe depression, but lives a normal life through therapy and medication. She provides mental health outreach to the Pacific Islander communities, law enforcement and mental health professionals, and welcomes opportunities to help others have an insight into mental illness.

Ernest Kevin Mar, M.D. is a Board Certified Disability Analyst/Physiatrist, with a private practice in Integrative and Physical Medicine in Arizona. Born with cerebral palsy, he has been exposed to integrative therapies since the age of one, which diminished the effects of his disability. Author of publications for adults and children (Captain Life Force, Your Body's Energy), he is a regular guest on the radio show, "Believe", and addresses audiences on natural and alternative medical therapies to manage health challenges. He holds degrees in medicine, acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, and integrative medicine. He is an active community member, a source of inspiration in overcoming life's obstacles.

Charlie Woo is the nationally renowned co-founder and CEO of Megatoys, an international toy manufacturing company headquartered in Los Angeles. Charlie started this business with his brother Peter in 1989, and they have grown it to the current size of more than 300 employees in the Los Angeles area. Among the many community organizations to which Charlie has lent his leadership and support are the Asian Rehabilitation Service, Inc., CAUSE, and the Los Angeles Historic and Cultural Neighborhood Council. A native of Hong Kong, Charlie attended UCLA where he graduated summa cum laude and received his master's degree.

21-year old **Kevin Vu** has been a public speaker since he was 12, advocating for the rights of people with disabilities in education and healthcare, using his ability to speak to get his foot in the door. Once he was, in his mind, the one that doctors and teachers once said had no potential but began some serious work. At 16 he was given the opportunity to meet President George W. Bush as a representative for people with disabilities. He attends California State University, Fresno majoring in Communications with a vision to make a difference. He is actively involved in the disability community in his hometown and continues to strive for change across the nation.



APIDC, a California non-profit organization, has hosted three major conferences in California: Los Angeles (1999), the Bay Area (2001), and Orange County (2005). APIDC's goal is to bridge the service and cultural barriers that APIs with disabilities and their families may face. APIDC acts as the technical assistance network to interconnect disabilities organizations with API communities, and API individuals with disabilities and their families.

For more detailed information and to register for the APIDC conference please visit our webpage at: www.apidc2010conference.org; www.apidisabilities.org, or contact Intakeda@gmail.com, 213-623-8588.

Become a fan and receive conference updates by visiting our facebook fan page at:
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/apidc2010conference/133082343398558?v=wall&ref=ts>

###