



ASIAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE  
AND EDUCATION FUND

**1974**  
**2019**  
45 YEARS OF  
RIGHTING  
WRONGS

*Anniversary Celebration*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2019  
PIER SIXTY, CHELSEA PIERS, NYC

Asian American Legal Defense  
and Education Fund  
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New York, NY 10013

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[www.aaldef.org](http://www.aaldef.org)

Justice in Action Award Recipients 1987 to 2018



1987 Dith Pran



1987 Michi Weglyn



1988 Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga



1988 Irene Natividad



1988 Anthony M. Tung



1989 Benjamin Gim



1989 David Henry Hwang



1989 Grayce Uyehara  
1994 Norman Mineta



1990  
Mary Frances Berry



1990 Christine Choy,  
Renee Tajima-Peña



1990 Jack Greenberg



1990 Pat Morita



1991 Connie Chung



1991 BD Wong



1992 Gordon Hirabayashi,  
Maya Lin, George Takei



1993 Harold Koh, Yoko Ono



1994 Lani Guinier



1994  
Asian Americans for Action



1995  
Shamita Das Dasgupta



1995 Deval L. Patrick,  
Midori Shimanouchi Lederer



1996 Chang-Lin Tien,  
Patsy T. Mink



1997 Midori, Urvashi Vaid, Christopher Lee



1998 Bill Lann Lee, Nickelodeon



1999 Ira Glasser, Loida Nicolas Lewis

## Program

Welcoming Remarks

Tommy Shi  
President

Margaret Fung  
Executive Director

## Emcees

Juju Chang  
Co-Ancor, ABC News' *Nightline*

Sree Sreenivasan  
Digital and social media strategist



## 2019 Justice in Action Awards Presentation

Michael C. Wu  
Senior Vice President, General Counsel, and Secretary  
Carter's, Inc.

Presenter: Samuel S. Choy

Vanita Gupta  
President and CEO  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Presenter: Theodore M. Shaw

Special Message  
Aasif Mandvi

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These individuals have made a special commitment to help AALDEF continue its legacy of protecting and promoting the civil rights of Asian Americans.

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## Vanita Gupta

Vanita Gupta is president and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the first woman to direct the nation's oldest and largest civil rights coalition founded in 1950. Before joining the Leadership Conference in 2017, Gupta served as Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Justice. Appointed by President Barack Obama in 2014, Gupta oversaw criminal and civil enforcement efforts in such areas as advancing criminal justice reform and police accountability, prosecuting hate crimes and human trafficking, promoting disability rights, protecting the rights of LGBTQ individuals, ensuring voting rights for all, and combating discrimination in education, housing, employment, lending, and religious exercise.

Gupta, the daughter of Indian immigrants, grew up in Philadelphia. After graduating from Yale University and NYU Law School, Gupta became assistant counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where she litigated a series of landmark wrongful drug conviction cases in Tulia, Texas. Prior to joining the Justice Department, she also served as Deputy Legal Director and Director of the Center for Justice at the American Civil Liberties Union, where she launched the Smart Justice Campaign to end mass incarceration.

After being chosen president of the Leadership Conference, Gupta told the *Washington Post*: "This organization is perfectly situated to address the current assault on civil rights that we are seeing today. I think it's unfortunate that we're in such a polarized time and these issues appear to be politicized when fundamentally they are about the character of the country and what the country stands for."

For her lifetime dedication to advancing civil rights and her commitment to racial and economic justice, AALDEF is proud to honor Vanita Gupta with the 2019 Justice in Action Award.



## Michael C. Wu

Michael C. Wu is senior vice president, general counsel, and secretary of Carter's, Inc., a leading children's apparel company based in Atlanta with over 20,000 employees and 1,000 company-operated stores. He is responsible for all legal and government affairs, compliance, internal audit, risk management, and corporate social responsibility at Carter's.

Prior to joining Carter's in 2014, Wu was general counsel and corporate secretary of Rosetta Stone Inc. and oversaw the company's successful initial public offering on the New York Stock Exchange in 2009. He has also worked as a senior attorney at Montreal-based Teleglobe International Holdings Ltd. and in the Hong Kong and Reston, Virginia offices of Global One.

A graduate of Emory University and the University of Virginia School of Law, Wu is a member of the Retail Industry Leaders Association General Counsel Committee and the National Retail Federation General Counsel Forum. He was named a Top General Counsel to Watch by NYSE's Corporate Board Member magazine in 2013.

As one of the few Asian American attorneys to reach the top ranks of a Fortune 1000 company, Wu speaks at events and panel discussions about the importance of diversity and inclusion in the corporate sector. He serves on the board of directors of the Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association and encourages young lawyers to get involved in public service.

For his commitment to diversity and outstanding legal achievements, AALDEF presents the 2019 Justice in Action Award to Michael C. Wu.

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45 YEARS OF  
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*After 45 years of precedent-setting litigation, advocacy, and organizing, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) celebrates its hard-fought victories to protect the civil rights of Asian Americans and promote human rights for all. Here are some highlights from our ongoing battle for social justice.*



Calls for hiring of Chinese American construction workers at Confucius Plaza in Manhattan's Chinatown.



Opens first office at 43 Canal Street in Manhattan's Chinatown.

Represents Silver Palace waiters fired for protesting against employer stealing their tips; assists in formation of first independent Chinatown restaurant workers' union.



A group of Asian American lawyers, activists, and students came together at a conference in Lower Manhattan to create the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF).

1974

1975

1976

1978

1979

1980



Joins rally to support Peter Yew, a bystander who was beaten up after complaining about police mishandling of a minor traffic incident. Represents Chinese Americans arrested in protest against police brutality in Chinatown.



Begins free legal advice clinics at Hamilton-Madison House, Korean Senior Citizens Society, and other community agencies.

Intervenes on behalf of Asian American Law Students Association in *Doherty v. Rutgers Law School*, defending the inclusion of Asian Americans in minority admissions program.

Demands federal civil rights prosecution of the murderers of Vincent Chin, a Chinese American engineer beaten to death by two unemployed auto workers in Detroit.



1982



Fred Korematsu attends NYC premiere of "Unfinished Business," Steven Okazaki's film about the Japanese American redress movement, at AALDEF's 10th anniversary event at Lincoln Center.

1984

Represents Dr. Kaushal Sharan, one of several South Asians attacked by a hate group called the Dotbusters; works for passage of first hate crimes law in New Jersey.



1987

Protests against the casting of a white British actor for lead Asian role in Broadway musical, Miss Saigon; works with NYC Human Rights Commission to organize hearings on discriminatory hiring practices of Broadway theater producers.



1990

1991

1992



Testifies in support of Japanese American redress before the U.S. Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians.

1983

Files amicus briefs in U.S. Supreme Court supporting rights of undocumented immigrants to receive a public education (*Plyler v. Doe*) and to organize under National Labor Relations Act (*Sure-Tan v. NLRB*).



*Chinese Staff and Workers' Association v. City of New York*. Wins landmark ruling requiring environmental review of new developments that may displace low-income tenants and small businesses; court blocks construction of Henry Street Tower.

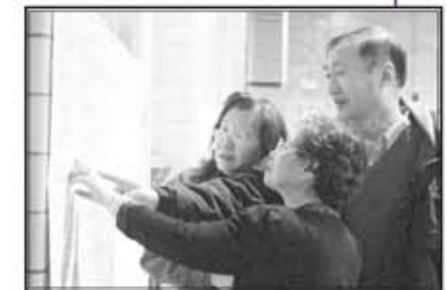
1986



Conducts the nation's first nonpartisan exit poll of Asian American voters in the presidential election.

1988

Submits redistricting plan for Asian-Latino NYC Council district in Manhattan's Chinatown and Lower East Side.



Testifies before U.S. House Judiciary Committee in support of expanding Asian-language assistance under the Voting Rights Act.

Secures first fully-translated Chinese-language voting machine ballots in New York City under the Voting Rights Act.



1993

1994



Represents the family of Yong Xin Huang, the 16-year-old Chinese American fatally shot by NYPD officers in Brooklyn; wins \$400,000 settlement in civil rights lawsuit against New York City.

1995

1997



Educates Asian Americans about participation in Census 2000; secures policy change protecting confidentiality of undocumented immigrants.

1998

2000



After the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, AALDEF represents South Asian and Muslim victims of hate violence and immigrant detainees held without criminal charges.

2001

2002



Represents Chinese immigrants seeking political asylum after the Golden Venture freighter runs aground in Far Rockaway, Queens.



*Chan v. Jing Fong.* Works with NYS Attorney General's office to win \$1.1 million settlement for back wages and tips for Chinese immigrant restaurant workers.



Organizes teach-in about the selective prosecution of Los Alamos nuclear engineer Wen Ho Lee for mishandling restricted data. A federal judge releases Lee after nine months of solitary confinement, citing government misconduct.

*Moon v. Kwan.* Wins \$440,000 judgment for back wages on behalf of Korean maintenance worker forced to work without pay in midtown Manhattan hotel.

Testifies before Congress calling for treatment of post-9/11 environmental health problems affecting Chinatown residents; works with Beyond Ground Zero Network to broaden access to 9/11 relief programs.







Provides legal representation to more than 1,000 people across the country affected by Special Registration, a post-9/11 policy requiring men from Muslim countries to register with immigration officials.

*Grutter v. Bollinger.* Files amicus brief in U.S. Supreme Court, supporting consideration of race in Michigan Law School minority admissions program.



Monitors Justice Department consent decree requiring Lafayette High School in Brooklyn to implement anti-harassment policy after Pakistani and Chinese immigrant students are attacked.



*Ke v. Saigon Grill.* After trial, federal court awards \$4.6 million in back wages and damages to 36 Chinese immigrant take-out delivery workers at two Manhattan restaurants.

*Chinatown Voter Education Alliance v. Ravitz.* In response to AALDEF's lawsuit under the Voting Rights Act, NYC Board of Elections agrees to improve its Chinese and Korean language assistance programs.



*Baoanan v. Baja.* Secures T visa for Filipina immigrant worker trafficked to the U.S. by former ambassador and sues employer for her back wages.

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

*Chatham Towers v. Bloomberg.* Court rules in AALDEF lawsuit that NYPD should have prepared environmental impact statement studying post 9/11 security zone around police headquarters and street closings that adversely affected Chinatown tenants.

*Testifies before U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee in support of 25-year reauthorization of Voting Rights Act.*



*Oung v. Lowell School Committee.* Wins reinstatement for Cambodian and Puerto Rican teachers in Lowell, Mass. who were fired after taking a flawed English fluency test required after a state English-only education initiative is passed.



Manhattan federal jury awards \$182,000 to Susan Kim, a Korean immigrant nail salon worker who was fired after demanding regular breaks; campaign begins to reform wage and hour practices and hazardous working conditions in NYC nail salons.

Organizes first-ever National Asian American Education Advocates Summit to discuss ways to improve public education.



Files lawsuit to challenge NYC's rezoning of Sunset Park, Brooklyn, because the plan would accelerate displacement of tenants and small businesses.

Justice Department files settlement in federal court in response to AALDEF complaint on behalf of two dozen South Philadelphia High School immigrant students facing anti-Asian harassment and violence.



Rhode Island federal judge awards \$1.2 million judgment for Filipina domestic worker who was trafficked by a UAE military officer.

Speaks at rally to support voting rights; Supreme Court limits protections for minority voters under Voting Rights Act in *Shelby County v. Holder*.



NYC Board of Elections agrees to provide Bengali ballots and interpreters in Queens County after AALDEF files voting rights lawsuit.

After AALDEF's challenge to discriminatory zoning change, a settlement allows Al Falah Center to build a mosque in Bridgewater Township, NJ.

2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015

Secures \$400,000 for Asian small business owners from the NYC Chinatown Business Improvement District, which overcharged local merchants before the BID took effect.



Indian immigrant factory workers recover back wages and overtime pay from Rajbhog Foods, a national distributor of Indian snack foods in Jersey City, NJ.



Members of undocumented youth group RAISE (Revolutionizing Asian American Stories on the East Coast) share personal stories in an original theater production, "UndocuAsians."

Korean and Latino workers win \$2.67 million judgment in wage theft lawsuit against Kum Gang San restaurant in NYC.





Releases report on multilingual exit poll of 13,846 Asian American voters in the 2016 presidential election.

*OCA-Greater Houston v. State of Texas.* Federal appeals court affirms ruling that Texas election law restricting assistance to limited English proficient voters violates the Voting Rights Act.



Files amicus brief in federal court on behalf of Asian American groups in *SFFA v. Harvard University*, in support of race-conscious admissions and diversity in higher education.

2016 2017 2018



*Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin.* Supreme Court upholds consideration of race in college admissions process and cites AALDEF amicus brief on behalf of Asian American groups.

*Hawaii v. Trump.* Joins amicus brief in the Supreme Court supporting challenge to Muslim travel ban.



Calls for passage of DREAM Act and conducts free legal clinics to assist undocumented youth seeking to renew Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status.

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2000 Hiroshima



2000 Dennis Rivera



2001 Bill Ong Hing,  
Wen Ho Lee Family and Legal Team



2002 Fred Korematsu, David Lim



2003 Margaret Cho,  
Bhairavi Desai



2004 Mira Nair, Alice Young,  
Open Society Institute



2005 Don Liu,  
Salman Rushdie



2006 Charles J. Ogletree, Jr.,  
Katrina vanden Heuvel, Ivan K. Fong



2007 Javade Chaudhri



2007 Nicholas  
deB. Katzenbach



2007 Helen Zia



2008 Harry Belafonte



2008 Art Chong



2008 Seymour Hersh



2009 Dale Minami, Nicholas D. Kristof,  
Sheryl WuDunn, Sandra Leung



2010 Juan Gonzalez,  
Larry Tu



2011 Lillian Kimura,  
A.B. Cruz III



2012 Jean Koh Peters,  
Parkin Lee



2012 Fareed Zakaria



2013 Jose Antonio Vargas,  
John Lewis



2013 Simone Wu



2014 John G. Chou,  
Mari J. Matsuda, Asif Mandvi



2015 Jessica Hagedorn,  
Neal Katyal



2015 John W. Kuo



2016 Heidi C. Chen,  
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2017 Marie Oh Huber,  
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