

Donor Corner: Meet Tony Yu



This month's Donor Corner spotlight is on Mr. **Tony Yu**, Managing Principal of [DSG Insurance Services, Inc.](#), former Chair of APCF's Board of Directors, and current Emeritus Board Member:

"I was a first grader with a bowl haircut who knew no English." As an only child, Tony was born in Taiwan and immigrated to the US at six years old. Starting from almost nothing, his parents worked diligently to provide for him, with his mom as a waitress and dad at a computer company. Tony credits his work ethic and excellence to his parents, who devoted everything to him, and counts them as his inspiration for graduating from UCLA and earning his law degree at UC Hastings Law School, along with 16 professional designations. After his father passed away in 2014, Tony took over as the second generation owner of his family's business.

From his parents, Tony also learned one of his earliest lessons in philanthropy. "My mother taught me to give what you can. If you have wealth, give money. If you have less money, give time. I try to give both."

This is a lesson that Tony took to heart when he was approached by his friend, Norman Lee, about the Asian Pacific Community Fund (APCF). Initially attracted by APCF's long history, broad approach, and stable management under then executive director, Debra Fong, he was also encouraged by friends Shawn Chou and Chun-Yen Chen to join the board in 2013.

During his tenure on APCF's board, Tony had a vision to inspire more business professionals and those who are in strong financial positions to learn and be inspired by philanthropy to benefit Asian & Pacific Islander (API) communities in need. He was a fast study and quickly rose up to leadership as Board Chair in just two years by 2015.

"I was a complete rookie when it came to charitable giving," Tony shares, recognizing Debra's efforts in walking him through all the ins and outs of philanthropy, as well as APCF's unique role as an intermediary between donors and nonprofits.

To help APCF board members understand their impact in building Asian American philanthropy for API communities in need, Tony implemented several initiatives during his two years as Board Chair. One was to institute site visits to APCF grant recipient organization by each board member, as well as regular updates about the impact of APCF's grant making at each board meeting.

The second initiative was reflective of Tony's leadership style in facilitating board meetings. By running meetings in an ultra-efficient manner, he was able to prioritize time on the agenda for board members to share about their personal lives outside of work and APCF, which helped to create a closer bond amongst the board. As board members are on the front lines of fundraising and supporting the organization's mission, Tony felt it was important to emphasize the personal relationships between board members to make their collective work fun, meaningful, and more engaging.

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As Tony stepped down from the Board last summer, he remains committed to supporting APCF's work. On Sept. 20, 2017, along with fellow board member, Jason Yu, Tony co-presented a workshop on human resources, employment law, and risk management to nearly 20 nonprofits serving the API community. Thanks to Tony and Jason, APCF was able to offer this topic for the first time as part of its [API Nonprofit Capacity Building Program](#), and it was well received by nonprofit staff who attended.

"I particularly enjoyed speaking to nonprofits about risk management. Even though the nonprofit industry itself may not carry a lot of operation risk, we can work to minimize risks, so that we can deliver nonprofit services with a greater peace of mind," Tony remarks.

In joining APCF's Emeritus Board, Tony continues his vision of motivating business professionals like him to give back to the API community. As there are a myriad of issues that affect API communities, such as poverty, illness, violence, and lack of basic needs, he hopes that APCF can inspire others to help our diverse communities.

As his parents had instilled to him, Tony also wishes to impart the importance of philanthropy to the next generation. He especially wants his two sons, Connor and Brandon, to learn that financial and academic success are not their main life goals, but only the means to have the resources to contribute and have a positive impact on the community.

"The world is one big family," Tony says. "Our ability to demonstrate empathy is what makes us human."

(This article was featured in APCF's March 2018 Newsletter – [click here](#) for the full issue.)