

CELEBRATING CHANGEMAKERS

HONOREE SPOTLIGHT SERIES



MEET OUR HONOREES



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Chinese Community Center
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Gee Family Association of Houston



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Welcome back to our exciting annual newsletter series, "Celebrating Changemakers: Honoree Spotlight." In this series, we embark on a journey through the lives and accomplishments of extraordinary individuals who have made a lasting impact on our community and beyond. Each month, we will shine a well-deserved spotlight on one honoree, revealing their inspiring journey, their contributions, and the indelible mark they've left on the world. This month, delighted to spotlight the Gee Family Association of Houston, honoring their longstanding dedication to cultural heritage, community service, and legacy-building.

HONORING HERITAGE, INSPIRING GENERATIONS: GEE FAMILY ASSOCIATION (GFA) OF HOUSTON

REFLECTING THE JOURNEY OF GFA & ITS IMPACTFUL LEGACY



The Gee Family Association (GFA) holds a remarkable legacy as one of Houston's oldest and most respected family associations. Tracing its roots back to the late 1800s, the GFA embodies the rich history and resilience of the Chinese American community in Texas. In its earliest years, family associations like GFA, known then as Benevolent Associations, provided an essential support network for newly arrived Chinese immigrants, many of whom left China seeking opportunities in the United States. These associations were not only a source of community and camaraderie but also a means of survival, offering members critical resources and guidance. The Gee Family Association remains one of the few organizations today that continue this tradition, acting as a vital source of social, cultural, and emotional support for Gee descendants and other community members alike.

AN ENDURING COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Over the decades, the Gee Family Association has been a nurturing ground for generational success, emphasizing education, professional development, and leadership among its members. When the GFA's early pioneers, such as Harry Gee, Sr. and the Chu brothers, first established roots in Houston, they created opportunities not just for themselves but for their extended family. These community leaders provided mentorship in the grocery and restaurant industries, creating pathways for family members to build successful businesses in a challenging landscape. When the Chinese Exclusion Act limited opportunities, family associations like GFA played a pivotal role in ensuring financial stability and personal growth for their members. The tradition of fostering success continued as the second and third generations of Gee descendants expanded into diverse fields like law, medicine, and engineering, making significant strides in Houston's business, public, and nonprofit sectors.



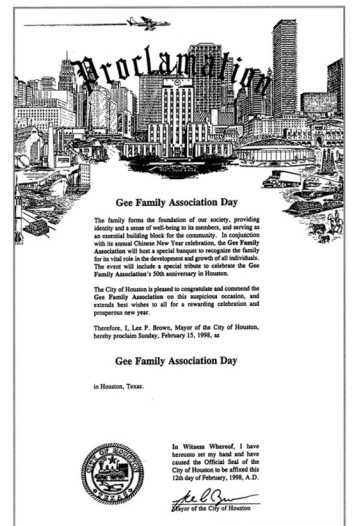
C.Y. Chu



Wanto Chu



Harry Gee, Sr.



PIONEERS OF CULTURAL LEADERSHIP AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



The Gee Family Association's mission has always extended beyond preserving family heritage; it is deeply rooted in civic engagement and community impact. By encouraging women and young adults to participate actively in leadership, the association has stayed relevant across generations, strengthening the voice of the Chinese American community in Houston. The GFA's forward-looking values have opened doors for new leaders and created an organization that remains connected to its heritage while adapting to modern challenges. Through educational programs, community events, and networking, GFA members connect and support one another, honoring the collective legacy of their family while building new opportunities for the future. By leading with a commitment to service, the Gee Family Association exemplifies the spirit of unity and progress.

A DYNAMIC PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CHINESE COMMUNITY CENTER



For over four decades, the Gee Family Association has partnered with the Chinese Community Center (CCC), working hand-in-hand to support the diverse needs of Houston's Asian American community. This close relationship began with early Gee leaders, including the late George Gee, whose service on CCC's board and leadership on the Long Range Planning Committee led to significant growth for the Center. Figures like Rogene Gee Calverton, who has advocated for CCC's integration with the United Way, and Jane Gee, who championed CCC's early building campaign, have helped solidify CCC's reputation as a major nonprofit in Houston. Today, younger Gee members like Linda Gee Wu, Harry Gee, Jr., and others have continued this tradition by serving on advisory committees, facilitating community projects, and contributing to CCC's programs in health, civil rights, and aging services. This multigenerational commitment is a testament to the association's belief in shared success and its dedication to strengthening community resources.

INSPIRING FUTURE GENERATIONS THROUGH LEGACY AND SERVICE

The Gee Family Association stands as a beacon of legacy and achievement, demonstrating how heritage and community values can be woven into the fabric of a city. GFA's contributions have profoundly shaped Houston's cultural and social landscape, and its members continue to inspire future generations to uphold the values of respect, service, and perseverance. Through continued partnerships, educational opportunities, and cultural events, the Gee Family Association remains a guiding light, ensuring that the strength of Houston's Chinese American community endures. We look forward to seeing how the Gee family's influence continues to impact future generations and Houston's diverse community for years to come.

Join us in celebrating Gee Family Association of Houston's incredible journey at our "Embracing Tomorrow's Harvest" 45th Anniversary Gala on November 16, 2024. For more details, please visit ccchouston.org/2024gala/.

NEXT MONTH...

Roger and Annie Yen: Building Community, Empowering Lives