

Memorial Scholarship Funds



Ruby W. Chiang (1924-2017) was born in Tientsin, China. In 1948 she came to the University of Wisconsin and earned an MS in Organic Chemistry. Shortly after, she married Robert Chiang, also a research chemist. Ruby also earned an MS in Environmental Science & Engineering from the University of North Carolina. They relocated to St. Louis where Robert died at a young age. Ruby took care of the family of 4 children and her mother, herself being diagnosed with breast cancer. She did research at Washington University, and also taught Chemistry in the Junior College District, where her classes were always in high demand. She was instrumental in the formation of the national Organization of Chinese Americans collaborating with members from Detroit and Washington, DC; and serving as President of the St. Louis branch. Ruby came to Fremont in 1978 to join her daughters. She continued as an active member not only of OCA, but SBCC and CBC. Known for her intelligent wit and humor, for her progressive and modern thinking, she was generous to people who needed help.



Bing J. Gee (1914-2004) was a Toisan native, immigrant to the S.E. Bay Area when he was 16. Working in private homes, he learned English at the Berkeley Adult School, graduated high school, and completed his B.S. in civil engineering in 1942 at the Polytechnic College of Engineering in Oakland. Husband to Kam M. Lee and father of six, surveyor and draftsman in defense as well as many subdivisions and housing developments, and dedicated volunteer with his professional skills in the Oakland Chinese community. Mr. Gee early on believed in the value of education, which he passed on to his children. Because he was the first among his generation of cousins to graduate from a U.S. college, he was a role model and mentor to them.



York F. Gin (1921-2004) was born in China and immigrated to the United States in 1934. Salinas was home to York for 70 years. York was a member of the Chinese Senior Club, a charter member of CACA and Salinas Northeast Rotary Club. He had a 20-year tenure as a trustee for Alisal Union School District, a 40-year tenure as Commissioner for the Housing Authority of Monterey County and Director of the Salinas Chamber of Commerce. He was a past president of Hartnell College Board of Trustees, Alisal Chamber of Commerce, Chinese Benevolent Association and Chinese School. York was a strong believer in education and helped fund several elementary schools in his native China.



Dora Gin (1922-2019) was born on August 25, 1922 in China. She immigrated to the U.S. in 1940 and joined her husband, York Gin, in Salinas, California, which was her home for 74 years. Dora, together with York, owned and operated a Neighborhood Grocery Store and Gin's Super Market from 1940-1970. Dora and York joined the Salinas Golf and Country Club, enjoying many years of golf and traveling throughout the world together. Dora was a remarkable cook and enjoyed preparing meals for her family and friends. She was an avid gardener with beautiful orchids, peonies, gardenias, as well as fruit trees--apples and Chinese pears, and many Chinese vegetables. Dora was a devoted family woman--generous to the multitude of relatives in her extended family.



Robert Vun Yau Lee (1932-2015) was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. He was in the Army and served in Korea. He graduated from San Francisco State University and worked for PG&E for 30 years. For many years, Robert was instrumental in bringing the Hawaiian culture, dance, music and sports to people in the Bay Area. Robert loved playing the ukulele. A long-time member of SBCC, Robert served as President of SBCC in 1971-72 and 1993-94, chaired and participated in numerous committees of the Ways and Means. Because of his love of golf, Robert also volunteered to chair the SBCSC Scholarship Golf Tournament for several years.



Karl Ngan (1926-1994) was born in Tucson, AZ. He served in the Army's 42nd Engineer Construction Battalion in Korea during WWII before completing his BS in Civil Engineering from Oregon State University and his M. Eng. in Structural Engineering from Yale. Karl and his family moved to Fremont in 1965. He enjoyed a long and successful career with the Alameda County Water District, serving as Engineering Manager until his retirement. Karl was an active member of the South Bay Chinese Club and its Service Club. He served as President of SBCC from 1967 to 1968. Karl instilled the values of education and community service to his family. His memorial scholarship honors these values and recognizes those in the coming generation who will continue to respect these ideals.



Dick E. Szeto (1917-2010) was a Hoiping native and a civil service worker in Guangdong Province. He received his law degree at the Chinese Mun Fah University in Guangzhou. His desire to practice law was cut short due to the Communist takeover of China. He came to the United States in the 1950s and opened his own grocery store in Oakland in 1960s. Husband to Lila Ginn and father of four, he encouraged his children, who all completed college, to love their families and give back to the community. He served as president of four San Francisco civic, literary, and family associations. He enjoyed calligraphy as well as composing essays and poetry, and sponsored siblings' and godbrother's families to the U.S. in the 1970s so they too can have better lives.



Mary Ruth Wong (1925-2017) was born in Tientsin, China, and came to the United States in 1948. She earned her degree in English Literature from Edgely College in Cincinnati, OH and a MA degree in Music from the University of North Carolina. Being deeply religious, she served as a Catholic missionary in Singapore for 14 years, doing missionary work for The Grail, a Catholic lay apostolic movement. Mary Ruth returned to the U.S. to help take care of her own mother who had emigrated from Communist China. She was a talented pianist and taught music in schools in Durham, NC and later in St. Louis, MO. After retiring, Mary Ruth moved to Las Cruces, NM and lived in a senior community along with many accomplished musicians. Mary Ruth came to Fremont in 2015. She was always soft spoken with a sweet smile. Mary Ruth brought beauty and appreciation of music and the arts to all she knew.



Howard Tom (1908-1996) is the founder and charter president of South Bay Chinese Club. He served four terms as SBCC president (1966-67, 1967-68, 1970-71, and 1980-81). Howard came to the United States at age 14 and was held at Angel Island for two weeks before being allowed to enter. Howard was President of Fremont Art Association, served on Fremont's Recreation Commission, and in 1965, named Chairman of the Bay Area Parks and Recreation Commissions Council. Howard was also the founder of the Chinese Club at the Fremont Senior Center.