



# ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER ORGANIZATION

January – April 2009

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## President's Message

Happy New Year folks!

Pooh Vongkhamdy is moving up — as Rhode Island's first Asian State Conservationist. Congratulations on your hard work! Pooh joins Larry Yamamoto as our congregation of NRCS State Conservationists.

I would be remiss not to mention other major achievements that occurred this past year — Jae Lee, Assistant State Conservationist to Field Operations California Angela Biggs, District Conservationist, Vermont; Phuc Vu, Technology Center Engineer (see *Spotlight* story on page 2); Hue Dang, Resource Conservationist, California. Wave your hand if I missed someone!

Training and Information always allow us to be educated to do our jobs. Plan to participate or help with the 2009 APIO Training Conference in Sacramento, California, August 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. This is a 'MAJOR' transitional year having President Barack Obama just sworn in as our 44<sup>th</sup> U.S. President along with 'how we tweaked our APIO Bylaws and Constitution'.

I have an incentive award for the best 2009 APIO Theme this year. **DEADLINE: Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>.** Please send your theme to me at [kent.matsutani@ftc.usda.gov](mailto:kent.matsutani@ftc.usda.gov). I'll announce the winner in May.

Mentors and Mobility has been on our agenda this past year. It is also my hope that your involvement in the process and challenge will help our Organization gain strength, knowledge, and career advantage.

Please consider running for a National Council/Regional Representative position. We need your active support in our Organization. APIO can make a difference for our employees.

Another incentive award I have is sending Liz or any Council Member some of your highlights for our Heritage Month coming up in May. I am always game for displaying your adventures, whether it is on the snow-capped mountains or enjoying the tropical island life.

I also want to gather the art of language again. Virginia had a database, but I cannot find the summary, so another ambition is to develop a new spreadsheet.

Until next time,

*Kent*

## [APIO 2009 Awards Nominations](#)

Four awards will be presented during the Sacramento Annual Training Conference in August. Please start thinking about nominating one or more of our Outstanding Members.

You can submit your nominations to [Dave Fischer](#). The deadline is the end of May.



## APIO News

- ◆ The next APIO newsletter will be published on May 1. The theme will be Asian American Heritage. Articles should be submitted before **April 15** to [Liz Warner](#).
- ◆ The following APIO newsletter will be published on Aug. 1. It will be on convention issue. Articles should be submitted before **July 15** to [Liz](#). Look for all of the latest details on the convention in this issue.
- ◆ Articles and information for the website can be submitted **anytime** to [Liz](#).

## 2009 Dues are Due

Don't forget to renew your membership. APIO Secretary Nick Vira is anxiously waiting to get your money!

Download the form and sign up today: [http://www.apio.org/forms/2009\\_membership\\_form.pdf](http://www.apio.org/forms/2009_membership_form.pdf)



**APIO Member Spotlight on**

## Phuc Vu

Design Engineer, National Design, Construction, and Soil Mechanics Center, NRCS, Texas

I was the State Design Engineer in Portland Oregon. In Sept. 2008, I applied and was selected for the Design Engineer position at the National Design, Construction, and Soil Mechanics Center in Texas.

I have been with the Service for over 15 years and this is my third move and promotion. The biggest factor for me is setting goals and finding new challenges in my career. I was lucky to have the support of my family in these things.

Also, there are wonderful people within the agency who have provided the nudging and encouragement that got me to this point. It is a good thing to have people that one can call on for advice and conversation. I do try to do the same for others.

I just moved from Oregon to Texas. I hope to visit all the local BBQ joints before the end of the year.

### APIO 2009 Award Categories

#### LEADERSHIP/ VISIONARY

The Leadership Award recognizes the accomplishments of proactive, motivating, forward-looking, and innovative members of the APIO. The Award especially recognizes their participation in and support of the APIO in addition to their contributions in the profession and the Asian Pacific Islander Communities. This Award is given in tribute to the fore-runners and pacesetters in the APIO whose dedication and leadership resulted in the founding of the Organization. Only one award will be presented each year.

#### EXCELLENCE IN ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Award of Excellence is designed to recognize individuals who, over a period of

time, have contributed substantially and creatively to Asian Pacific Islander Communities. The recipient should exemplify excellence in a particular discipline, and possibly in multi-discipline efforts, promoting excellence and creativity. Awards of Excellence should not be given to members currently serving on the National Council or be a current chair of a standing or ad hoc committee. The Awards Committee will determine the number of awards presented each year.

#### OUTSTANDING MEMBER

The Outstanding Member Award is the highest recognition given by the members themselves to one of its members. The purpose of the award is to recognize excellence in professionalism and leadership as an

APIO member. It is based on achievements in APIO over an extended period of years and on participation and support of its mission. Only one award will be presented each year.

#### SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT

The Special Achievement Award is designed to recognize an individual or non-profit organization for support of the Asian Pacific Islander Communities. The Special Achievement Award should not be given to current members of APIO, the National Council or current chairs of a standing or ad hoc committee. One award can be presented per year.

### APIO STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS WILL AGAIN BE AWARDED IN 2009

We would like to award and announce our four scholarships during the Annual Training Conference that will be in August. Please start getting the word out about the scholarship program.

If you have questions or need more information on qualifications or application forms, contact [Dave Fisher](#).

Please take time to recognize your fellow members and others who help our Organization and Asian Pacific Islanders.

#### EXCELLENCE IN NATURAL RESOURCES

The Award of Excellence is designed to recognize individuals who, over a period of time, have contributed substantially and creatively to our Natural Resources Conservation profession. The recipient should exemplify excellence in a particular discipline, and possibly multi-discipline efforts, that promote excellence and creativity. The recipient also should demonstrate involvement in the Asian Pacific Islander Organization. Awards of Excellence should not be given to members currently serving on the National Council or a current chair of a standing or ad hoc committee. The Awards Committee will determine the number of awards presented each year.