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SAWTELLE JAPANTOWN

Preserving Ethnic Neighborhoods through Cultural Institutions

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PREFACE

These reports represent Asian American Studies' commitment to engaged scholarship through teaching and community-oriented research that are mutually beneficial. Community partners are instrumental in identifying research needs, participating in and facilitating data collection, assisting in analyzing information, and disseminating findings to inform policy debates and program development. For community members, we hope that they will gain insights from student research. At the same time, students gain real-world understanding of Asian American issues. The class that sponsored a community project serves as a bridge for students' academic training and their life after graduation. We hope that this project enables students to acquire and apply research skills and engage in broader social justice movements.

This course, "Capstone Community-based Research: Asian American Enclaves and Community Institutions," connected students to Sawtelle Japantown Association (SJA). The class was offered through UCLA's Asian American Studies Department. This year's project examines the factors that contribute to the vitality of ethnic enclaves and community institutions to then provide recommendations to SJA. SJA has been working since 2014 to preserve the cultural and historic aspects of the Sawtelle area. They are working to mobilize and strengthen community and cultural organizations so that its members have an active, strong, and effective voice in planning their neighborhood's future. This project emerged from a joint planning effort that started during the summer of 2014. Students conducted interviews with key stakeholders around four topics:

- Background and history of Japanese settlements in California and contemporary issues that Japantowns and Japanese neighborhoods experience.
- Efforts by Los Angeles Asian enclaves in seeking official neighborhood designation.
- The role of cultural institutions in preserving and promoting Asian American neighborhoods.
- Review of community-based initiatives to engage in neighborhood planning processes, particularly in Asian neighborhoods.

Most of these interviewees were located in the Los Angeles area. Based on their interviews, each group developed evidence-based recommendations to help SJA with its efforts of community building and preservation. We believe that the analyses and findings are also useful to other neighborhoods interested in promoting their unique cultural and ethnic identity.

This project was conducted in partnership with the UCLA Asian American Studies Center and the George and Sakaye Aratani "Community Advancement Research Endowment" (C.A.R.E.), which provided funding to edit and produce the final reports. Additional funding was provided by the UCLA Office of Instructional

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Sawtelle Japantown sign on Sawtelle Blvd.
Photo: C. Aujean Lee

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Gardena Obon Festival
Photo: Mark (Flickr)

INTRODUCTION

Visitors often see Sawtelle as a commercial district. The neighborhood, however, holds historical and cultural significance for the Japanese American community. With redevelopment projects, Sawtelle community members have been advocating for the cultural preservation and promotion of Sawtelle's Japantown.

The purpose of the research project is to examine the role of cultural institutions in preserving the history and culture of Asian neighborhoods, specifically Little Saigon, Historic Pilipinotown, and the Japanese American community of Torrance/Gardena. After the report includes background information about cultural institutions, 16 interviewees were conducted with organizational leaders. (For more detailed information on these neighborhoods and interviews, please see the Methodology section in the Appendix.)

Our analysis of the interviews and secondary data found that community partnerships within and outside the targeted ethnic community help with viability; school and university partnerships can provide additional resources; and designing events to cater to different audiences can help to increase organizational members. From these findings, we recommend that SJA use community partnerships to publicize events; reach out to Japanese American student organizations and professors from neighboring schools; and organize events based on community feedback, after gauging the audience's interests.



Japanese Institute of Sawtelle sign
Photo: C. Aujean Lee

BACKGROUND

Cultural institutions play an important role in cultural preservation. While ethnic organizations in Asian neighborhoods may perform a wide array of social, cultural, and economic functions, this report defines cultural institutions as organizations that promote and preserve cuisine, music, arts, and language in addition to tangible cultural items such as monuments. The following section defines other information on cultural institutions and how they have contributed to Asian neighborhoods.

Defining Cultural Institutions

To understand cultural institutions, we define culture and institutions separately. According to Zimmerman (2012), the idiosyncrasies of the lifestyles of a particular group of people – defined by language, beliefs, religion, cuisine, social habits, traditions, and music and arts – constitute culture. Culture is also learned behavior—individuals growing up within a culture learn to behave and function in the realm of their respective communities (Martin, 1994).

From kinship groups and states to multi-national corporations, culture can organize society in different ways (Miraglia, Law, & Collins, 1996). Culture impacts interpersonal interactions, ranging from how individuals connect with their kinship groups to how they communicate in a corporate setting. These impacts serve as cultural templates that shape and perpetuate behaviors and practices within a human society (Miraglia, Law, & Collins, 1996). Culture can also distinguish one group from another (Hall, 1981). This concept is relevant to our study because, oftentimes, the diversity of Asian Americans are misrepresented. Asian American and Pacific Islander ethnic groups are clumped together under the umbrella term of “Asian American,” which hides diverse experiences among these communities (Aina, 2012).

Culture, however, is constantly changing (Mckenzie & Crowcroft, 1994). This is particularly relevant for multicultural spaces that are diverse. This fluidity should not be problematized. Liddicoat (1997)

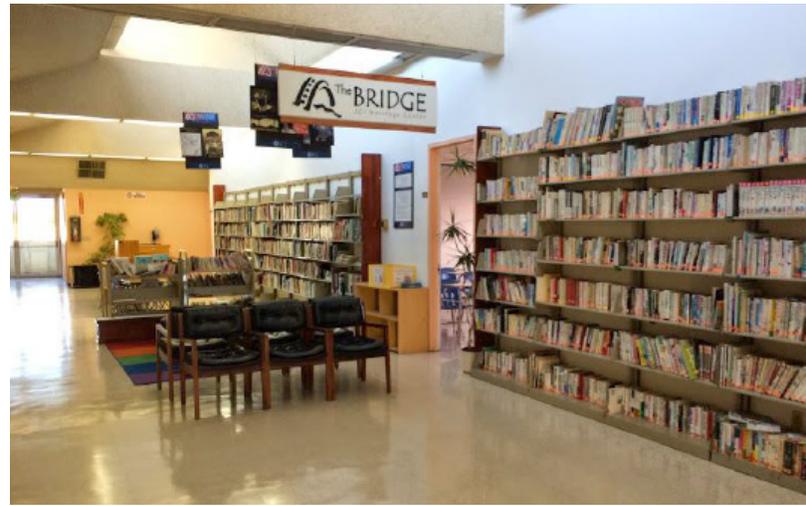
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argues that culture is dynamic and multidimensional: the connections within cultural values and practices are products of their time and place which also evolve as time progresses (Kramsch, 1987). We now move onto understanding institutions.

According to Barley and Tolbert (1997), institutions are groups and organizations that promote a particular cause or program, especially one of a public, educational, or charitable character. Institutions, however, need to learn how to adapt to changing societies by changing their structures, programs, and mission to address new and emerging needs (Borero, 1993). As a result, local organizations are heavily influenced by wider environmental meanings, definitions, roles, and models (Singerman, 1988). Gumpert (2007) states that environments “constitute local situations – establishing and defining their core entities, purposes, and relations” (p. 177).

Using these definitions, this report adopts different characteristics of “culture” and “institution,” which are operationally defined as organizations that protect, honor, and/or promote a culture (e.g., language, cuisine, music and arts, and traditions). Cultural institutions should engage in the cultural enrichment of its members, community, and the general public (Oregon Legislature, 2013). Cultural enrichment includes things that are tangible and intangible: tangible items include monuments, objects, and artifacts while intangible items consist of language, performing arts, music, and dances (McCook, 2008). In order to qualify as a cultural institution, they should promote these activities and artifacts in order to engage the community (Soule, 2015).

Although this project focuses on the cultural components of an organization, many provide additional services. For example, while the Thai Community Development Center (Thai CDC) does hold festivals, it also provides legal/crisis counseling, economic assistance, and advocacy to low-income Thai immigrants and families (Thai CDC, 2015). Similar



UCLA students observed this language classroom at the Japanese Institute of Sawtelle. Programs such as this play a pivotal role in the preservation and promotion of languages.

Photo: Sinh Nguyen

with other immigrant-serving organizations, these organizations provide multiple community needs and are essential to the development of Asian American communities.

Role of Cultural Institutions in Asian Neighborhoods and Communities

Cultural institutions serve important roles in neighborhoods and communities. For instance, Vezina (2010) describes how cultural institutions such as museums, archives, and libraries preserve and promote the history and knowledge of a certain ethnic neighborhood. An organization’s cultural programs and/or holiday event celebrations also qualifies it as a cultural organization (Soule, 2015). Cultural organizations are also available to provide facilities for social and recreational events that promote cross-cultural communication across college campuses and communities (Renner, 1998). These organizations establish a home away from home while also educating people about traditions, practices, and ancestry (Rex, Mason, & Jenkins, 1986; Turner, 1994).



Similarly, these organizations are important in Asian neighborhoods. Some Asian neighborhoods in the United States are unique because they are diasporic – a collective identity centered on the memories of the homeland – which allows residents to preserve their culture (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). While some diasporic cultures have clear origins that are well documented (e.g. the Greek, Italian, and Jewish Diasporas), there is a dearth of information on Asian Diasporas. Therefore, Asian American cultural organizations help to recognize these distinct community ties by implementing programs and projects that not only preserve and promote culture, but also take into account the struggles of Asian Americans.

While preserving and promoting culture, cultural organizations should do so without “Disneyfying” or “exoticizing” a neighborhood’s culture (Chanchanit Martorell, personal communication, February 5, 2015). For instance, the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawai’i has been highly criticized by scholars as “Disneyfied” and as an inaccurate portrayal of Polynesian culture (Desmond, 1999). Therefore, it was crucial to operationally define “cultural institutions” so that the report can focus on organizations that

clearly protects, honors, and promotes a neighborhood’s culture without exoticizing it.

Cultural organizations should be sustained because they are vital to the development of Asian American communities. For the past several years, there has been a greater influx of Asian immigrants in the United States (Overberg, 2014). It is not a coincidence that Asian American organizations have also experienced rapid growth following this massive immigration: a growing Asian American population provides these organizations with more sustaining power. (Hung & Ong, 2012). Hung and Ong (2012) argue, however, that although older organizations may struggle to adapt to these changing demographics, younger organizations are most vulnerable. Therefore, cultural organizations need new approaches to keep themselves and their ethnic neighborhoods viable.

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Little Saigon businesses
Photo: Sinh Nguyen

REPORT FINDINGS

Using 16 interviews and secondary data, we present 3 major findings about community involvement, partnerships with schools, and audience engagement. Many of these organizations had similar experiences with trying to stay viable through multifaceted projects. Nevertheless, they found several strategies to connect with other organizations and cultivate their membership.

1. Community partnerships within and outside the targeted neighborhood can increase an organization's viability.

These partnerships can include organizations, advocacy groups, and churches. Interviewees who developed a variety of partnerships benefited from greater publicity, volunteer recruitment, and financial assistance. Partnerships within and outside of the ethnic community provide a range of benefits, which is explained below.

A majority of the cultural organizations that were

interviewed collaborate with organizations within their ethnic community. For example, Andy Matsuda from the Sushi Chef Institute partners with Japanese organizations in Torrance to increase support for a campaign. Specifically, he hopes to help pass a regulation that requires sushi chefs to wear gloves, a sanitary practice traditionally performed in Japan (A. Matsuda, personal communication, February 20, 2015). Alison Kochiyama from the Gardena Japanese Cultural Institute (JCI) also works with other Japanese organizations to network across Southern California (A. Kochiyama, personal communication, February 17, 2015). Student organizations also found it useful to network with their respective ethnic organizations to exchange ideas and connect for resources (J. Luna, personal communication, March 11, 2015).

Other interviewees described the benefits of connecting across ethnic and racial communities. For example, Meg Thorton, the previous director of Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA) in the



FilAm ARTS annual festival
Photo: Chris (Flickr)

1980s, referenced strong partnerships with other Asian American and Latino organizations; some of these organizations helped SIPA raise funds for programs that targeted youth involved in gangs, drugs, and prostitution (personal communication, March 13, 2015). Luan Vu from Việt Cẩm Dance/Lạc Hồng Dance similarly commented that it was important to work with other communities: “I have to open my arm up, everyone is friends. And when I need help, they help me. When they need help, I help them” (personal communication, January 28, 2015).

These connections can also help with promoting events. Melany De La Cruz-Viesca commented that FilAm ARTS works with African American organizations to coordinate an African American market event. Simultaneously, FilAm ARTS is able to publicize the annual Festival of Philippine Arts and Culture, their largest fundraiser (M. De La Cruz-Viesca, personal communication, March 10, 2015). Similarly, in addition to the Pilipino community, Joshua Jose from Tribal Café reaches out to local African American and Latino communities to hold events, fundraiser, and open-mic nights to showcase the neighborhood’s diversity (M. De La Cruz-Viesca,

personal communication, March 14, 2015). Cooperating with other organizations outside of the ethnic community presents more opportunities to promote culture.

Some organizations worked with churches and other religious institutions for additional resources. For example, Trường Việt Ngữ is a program held at a church, which connects members with other racial and ethnic groups, including Latino and Pilipino people who attend the same church. These other groups have provided assistance with funding and volunteers—it is “through donations from parents and fundraisers, we’re able to rent out spaces for our services and programs” (C. Mai, personal communication, February 20, 2015). Melany from FilAm ARTS also agrees that working with other organizations helps subsidize the cost of their events which is one way they can overcome financial barriers.

Findings from these interviews have proven how important partnerships within and outside the ethnic community are. Whether it is working with advocacy groups, or other cultural organizations, collaboration creates a mutual relationship where they can

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depend on each other for help.

2. Cultural organizations have partnerships with schools.

A majority of interviewees have worked closely with students and teachers in their neighborhoods. These volunteers not only assist with implementing programs, but they also advise organizations. It also helps organizations to remain viable with new generations to help with cultural preservation.

There are several examples of how professors and students can assist with programs. For example, Bich Hai Vu described how local Vietnamese university professors annually train Trường Việt Ngữ teachers on language teaching skills. These trainings provide techniques that Trường Việt Ngữ teachers can utilize to engage their students in the language-learning process (B. H. Vu, personal communication, February 23, 2015). SIPA and Tribal Café have also worked with local schools to help with program implementation. For example, SIPA partnered with Samahang Pilipino at UCLA during the 1980s to teach youth traditional Pilipino dances (M. Thornton, personal communications, March 13, 2015). Tribal Café has also partnered with a UCLA Asian American group to distribute organic vegetables to UCLA.

Student cultural organizations also collaborate with other student organizations and schools for resources and volunteers. John Luna of Samahang Pilipino at UCLA mentioned that his organization works with other Pilipino organizations from other universities such as UC Irvine and USC. According to Krizelle Cuevas from Samahang Pilipino Culture Night (SPCN), becoming partners with other campus organizations is helpful because they give each other advice and provide assistance with facilities (personal communication, March 12, 2015). Similarly, the United Vietnamese Student Association of Southern California (UVSA) works with high schools and universities within Southern California to recruit

volunteers for their annual Tet festival (J. Huynh, personal communication, January 26, 2015). There are always students that want to become involved in their own ethnic community. Therefore, many organizations have reached out to students and formed partnerships with them. Since many cultural organizations are nonprofit, these volunteers are crucial and needed to keep the organization viable.



Việt Cẩm Dance/Lạc Hồng Dance features various styles of dance. Luan occasionally works with dancers from different communities to choreograph and teach his students.

Photo: Sinh Nguyen



Bilingualism is adapted in this Trường Việt Ngữ program. Instructions are often carried out in both English and Vietnamese so that students can understand.

Photo: Sinh Nguyen

3. Cultural organizations engage the community through public events based on the target audience's demographics and interests.

Interviewees recognized that keeping events interesting for the audience is essential to sustain their organizations. While organizations may target different audiences, Melany from FilAm ARTS emphasized how important it is to divide and distinguish the audience (personal communication, March 10, 2015). The audience can be within or outside the ethnic community and can be divided by age range or generation. Joshua from Tribal Café and Meg from SIPA also utilize this technique. Their cultural organizations were able to identify what would draw a large crowd to their events ranging from food to contemporary mainstream popular phenomena. These findings also showed that bilingual events and programs interest a diverse group of people.

Recognizing what interests the audience and community is key to planning events or programs. For

example, Andy from the Sushi Chef Institute found that people are more interested in food (personal communication, February 20, 2015). If the goal is to solicit active participation, then organizations can capitalize on refreshments and food at their events. SIPA also used arts to help engage youth. For example, Meg described how youth made Christmas parols, which are traditional Pilipino crafts. She believes that arts and culture “speaks to the soul” and is an outlet that people need (M. Thornton, personal communication, March 13, 2015). Offering these cultural activities not only engages the audience but it also preserves culture by teaching them about traditional crafts and activities.

Other organizations have incorporated history into their events to reach a broader proportion of their target community. For example, the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) hosted a Japanese Concentration Camp exhibit that was very successful, according to Clement Hanami. Hanami mentioned that the “exhibit was most rewarding because it really engaged the largest possible audience of Japanese Americans that I have ever been able to experience” (personal communication, February 3, 2015). This exhibit has been particularly successful because it preserves an important part of Japanese American history and also has the potential to be a cathartic and thought-provoking. This demonstrates how JANM engages the interests of the audience to promote the Japanese culture and history, as well as the organization itself.

Other organizations have also included bilingual programs. For example, there are language barriers among Vietnamese Americans. To engage their audience, Trường Việt Ngữ has shifted to include bilingual programs. Cay commented that “with both languages, it’s easier for students to understand and for them to understand and be more engaged” (personal communication, February 20, 2015). Every member can understand and converse with one another

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which is crucial in community programs.

Trường Việt Ngữ also understands that children often are not as interested in learning the Vietnamese language. As a result, the organization tries to be creative by incorporating cultural games and arts and crafts in their language programs (C. V. Cao, personal communication, February 23, 2015). They also incorporate field trips to festivals, holiday caroling, and volunteer events to encourage students to practice Vietnamese while interacting with students or elders. The organization is creative in their programs by designing them to meet several target audiences and promote Vietnamese culture.

As Alison from JCI described, it is important to find how programs and events are “relevant to today and in their lives” (A. Kochiyama, personal communication, February 17, 2015). Organizations have worked to develop to develop programs that are not just culturally relevant, but also interesting to their target audience using a number of tactics and strategies. By engaging more target groups, organizations also simultaneously remain viable and develop their membership base.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, this project recommends three actions for SJA:

1. Use community partnerships and multiple methods to publicize their organization and events.
2. Reach out to students and professors.
3. Organize events to cater to different target audiences.

Each action is discussed in further detail below.

1. SJA should use community partnerships and multiple methods to publicize their organization and events.

SJA has successfully created a number of community partners, including the Japanese Institute of Sawtelle and the local churches and temples in the neighborhood. The following describes additional

ways to strengthen these partnerships through social media and other nontraditional ways. Although SJA already works with other organizations within Sawtelle, we also recommend that they outreach to organizations and leaders outside of Sawtelle.

Many organizations used social media as a way to publicize their organization and events, particularly because it effectively targets youth. Andy mentioned that his institute is a Google top search which is how people hear about his program. In order to become a top search on Google, SJA must become more active on social media and create “hashtags” that will trend them on Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram. Therefore, SJA could create their own website and create a Twitter and Instagram. On these social media applications, SJA can create a photo campaign where students from schools, programs, and community meetings can “hashtag” SJA (#SJA) and participate in giveaways. They can continue to publicize their cause and events on Facebook, which also features a “Promote Page” or “Promote Website”

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function. For a minimal fee, this function will allow SJA to publicize their page or website to Facebook users within and outside Sawtelle.

SJA can also use a combination of other ways to publicize themselves. For example, Andy from the Sushi Chef Institute said:

In the beginning...no one show up...My challenges are I need to expose myself. So I go to event, I need to meet people, I hand out, trade shows...advertising newspapers...major stations. That is the challenge is who I am and what I am doing to expose (personal communication, February 20, 2015).

For Andy, non-traditional marketing entails networking, cooking demonstrations, printed advertisements, and radio stations. SJA should adopt some of these methods by attending community networking events and publicizing their events and programs through printed media.

By combining social media and print media, SJA can “divide the audience,” which JCI, FilAm ARTS, and SIPA described. This technique uses multiple techniques to target different audiences and generations. Print media is helpful for older generations and newer immigrants, while social media connects with younger community members. In addition to newsletters and print materials, SJA can hang banners at Japanese supermarkets and stores including Nijiya and Daiso. For example, FilAm ARTS hangs large ethnic media flyers in popular Pilipino supermarkets and stores to target other community members who are newly immigrated.

Another way for SJA to publicize is through television and radio stations. For example, Việt Cầm Dance/Lạc Hồng Dance connects with local television stations which publicize his dance program and performances. Therefore, SJA can connect with LA

18, Los Angeles’ Asian language TV station, which is located near Sawtelle. In addition to broadcasting commercials and news, LA 18 features a community events calendar on their website that SJA can utilize. Additionally, SJA can use local public radio to raise awareness about their campaigns and events. For example, 89.3 KPCC-FM is the largest public radio station in Southern California and has Immigration and Emerging Communities reporters, who often-times report stories about Asian Americans.

It is highly recommended that SJA continues to publicize their organization and programs through multiple mediums. Outreaching and building more relationships creates more volunteers and financial assistance which is vital to maintaining an organization. Social media and other non-traditional ways of networking and advertising their organization and programs helps them become more successful in incorporating the entire community into preserving Sawtelle.

2. Reach out to students and professors.

As previously mentioned, many interviewees worked with schools and universities. There are several schools and specific professors that SJA can reach out to and get them involved in the organization and the Japanese American community.

SJA can work with professors who share similar goals of preserving and promoting Japanese American culture and history. Similar to this project, SJA can work with other UCLA Asian American Studies Department professors who have expertise in community development and Japanese American Studies. They can also reach out to Professor Renee Tajima-Pena who teaches the EthnoCommunications course, where students create community-based documentaries. These professors can offer students projects or assignments to connect students with SJA while also providing SJA with extra volunteers.

There are also several Japanese language professors and teachers at schools such as UCLA, El Camino College, and a few high schools in Torrance that have a large Japanese American population. For example, Professor Yoshida and Lopez are Japanese language professors at El Camino College. Both professors are passionate about sharing their knowledge of the Japanese language and culture. North High and South High both offer an extensive Japanese language program for high school teachers. SJA can connect with these language teachers to become more involved with SJA's services and programs. Professors can also publicize SJA events to students.

SJA can also reach out to Japanese American student organizations in high schools and colleges across Los

Angeles. Specifically, SJA can connect with Japanese American students and organizations at El Camino College. There are also several student organizations nearby, including UCLA's and USC's Nikkei Student Union (NSU). These student organizations can help to volunteer for events and teach SJA about social media. Similar to SIPA, these students can also connect with the Japanese Institute of Sawtelle around taiko and other cultural events to build a stronger connection between the Sawtelle neighborhood and these universities.

This year, Asian Pacific Coalition (APC), a coalition of 24 Asian American and Pacific Islander student groups at UCLA, will hold a night market event in May. This event celebrates Asian Pacific American



Gardena Japanese Cultural Institute
Photo: C. Aujean Lee

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Heritage Month. Last year, APC was able to connect with over 800 student participants. Local community organizations and leaders were also invited and tabled at the event, which helped them connect with students. While this event may not annually occur, similar events can help SJA recruit volunteers. SJA can also work to organize smaller events with student organizations, such as speaking at a board meeting about SJA and their campaigns.

To build their programs and support base, SJA can connect with students and professors. As previously mentioned, many students would be willing to volunteer and become involved in the community. SJA should also partner with Japanese American and Asian American student organizations and professors to recruit and grow their organization.

3. Create events based on target audience interests.

As described in the findings section, many organizations work to target multiple audiences. To do so, SJA can implement a survey and other interesting programs to build their base. The following explains several examples in more detail.

To learn about their audience and their interests, SJA can create surveys. Nina from UVSA recommended “looking at [audience] demographics a little bit more closely and see how to integrate their programming to better serve their demographics” (personal communication, January 26, 2015). Therefore, SJA should identify the demographics of their targeted audience and from there, they can find the interests of that audience. Even though the Japanese language school attendance has been decreasing, SJA could outreach to people from other communities that might be interested in learning the language because of the increased popularity of anime and manga. Because of anime and manga, people have found that the Japanese language is relevant and something that they can relate to easily.

JCI emphasizes the importance of the Japanese language in preserving culture. Alison sees that “A lot of the young people became interested in Japanese language because they wanted to get more involved in anime and manga” (personal communication, February 20, 2015). Finding out what people are interested in is key in creating programs that cater to the community. Based off of Alison’s finding, SJA can use more manga and anime in their programs and events to attract more people.

Trường Việt Ngữ, TNTT, and UVSA create fun programs to engage the community while promoting the Vietnamese culture. For example, Lunar New Year is a communal celebration that involves collaboration among Vietnamese organizations. Bích Hai from Trường Việt Ngữ found that “to keep them interested...for Lunar New Year...I try to tell them about background, and bring typical foods we would eat. Of course they love food and money origami for good luck money for the New Year.”

UVSA holds a festival for Lunar New Year that attracts over 100,000 participants annually: they work in partnership with student and community organizations to hold booths, programs, and activities that cater to both the younger and older generations. Although the Vietnamese culture is very different from the Japanese culture, SJA can work to create similar programs and ideas that would engage the youth with the Japanese culture. Food is always a great way to attract people to an event.

Japanese food in particular has become very trendy: SJA can incorporate food into their programs as a way to bring the community together and promote the Japanese culture. Incorporating food can make a program fun, which is something that organizations such as Trường Việt Ngữ aims for during traditional holidays, and should also be a goal for SJA. SJA can create a “Taste of Sawtelle” program where visitors not only tour Sawtelle, but also sample different foods from local restaurants along the way.



Torrance Mitsuwa Summer Festival-
Photo: jessicahtam (Flickr)

SJA should not limit their programs to Japanese Americans. According to interviewees from JCI, SPCN, and FilAm Arts, programs are successful when they are accessible to the general public. Specifically, FilAm ARTS encourages non-Pilipino families to attend their annual festival and SPCN welcomes students from all ethnic backgrounds to participate or attend their culture night. SJA should follow this recommendation because it creates awareness about the Japanese culture and gets a larger and more diverse audience.

It is important to be mindful of the current Japanese American demographics: a significant percentage of Japanese Americans is mixed race. Therefore, Japanese organizations such as SJA should get those individuals more involved in their programs so they can learn more about the Japanese culture. Alison recommended the following:

The way to bring in especially the younger generation; the population that we're really

missing in our center; is to be more proactive in developing in programs of their interests and and try to do more outreach and get them involved and actually involve even developing programs that they can relate to. We can't just be passive...we have to be there to actually make opportunities available for them to feel part of this (personal communication, February 20, 2015).

Meg from SIPA also agrees with Andy. While it is important to preserve traditional Japanese culture, SJA should look for similarities that they share with other cultures and create partnerships with them for programming and support. Therefore, it is important for SJA to be proactive and find what the interests of those individuals are and then incorporate them into programs and events. SJA should engage the youth with the older generations through these programs and events that both generations can relate to and find interesting. They can find common interests within groups or in the overall community.

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SJA and Asian American Studies students
Photo: C. Aujean Lee

CONCLUSION

After conducting sixteen interviews across Little Saigon, Historic Filipinotown, and Torrance/Gardena, this paper presented three recommendations to SJA. The recommendations emphasized community involvements within and outside the targeted ethnic community, partnerships with student organizations and professors from nearby schools, and events that reflect the audience's demographics and interests.

Attempting to define the extensive breadth of culture and subsequently making recommendations to promote the spirit of culture was no simple task. The efficacy of programs offered by cultural organizations in Little Saigon, Historic Filipinotown, and Torrance/Gardena were analyzed to provide proper context to Sawtelle Japantown's cultural preservation and promotion. Through a comprehensive analysis of these interviews and literary sources, this report identified key topics for constructive conversations with regards to the advancement of SJA and other cultural organizations across Southern California.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: METHODOLOGY

A total of 16 interviews were conducted in three target neighborhoods: Little Saigon, Gardena/Torrance, and Historic Pilipinotown. Organizations were identified as those that met the “cultural institutions” criteria described in previous sections. Most organizations were identified through internet searches, while others were recommended by other interviewees or class instructors. Three interviews were conducted over Skype, while the other 13 were in-person at either the organization or convenient public area. A total of 17 organizations were initially contacted, but some were not available or did not respond to requests for interviews. In the end, 13 organizations were included in the study. Two interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, and transcripts were translated by one of the students. The other 14 interviews were conducted in English.

The following provides more detailed information about the key research questions, each target neighborhood, and the interviewed organizations. The neighborhoods are Asian American areas in Los Angeles County and Orange County. This section also includes materials used during the interviews, including the consent form, interview guide and script, interview questions, and field notes. In developing the protocol and research questions, two beta tests were done. These interviews help to understand patterns in challenges and successes that Asian cultural institutions experience in remaining viable.

Key Research Questions

The research questions targeted community leaders who are involved with cultural organizations. The following lists the key research questions. However, based on the interviewee’s experiences, some questions are not answered as in-depth as other questions.

- What keeps a cultural organization viable?
- What are effective ways of publicizing and outreaching to the community?
- What are some ways to overcome financial barriers?
- What are some effective techniques to promote culture?

Case Studies

The selected ethnic neighborhoods are located in Southern Orange County, specifically Garden Grove and Westminster for Little Saigon, Los Angeles for Historic Pilipinotown, and Garden/Torrance for the Japanese American community.

Little Saigon, Orange County

Saigon is the former name of the capital of the former South Vietnam, where a large number of first-generation Vietnamese immigrants originate (Mazumdar, Docuyanan, & McLaughlin, 2000). Located in Orange County, California, Little Saigon was first formed in Westminster and then spread to the adjacent city of Garden Grove (Do, 2008). There are more than 189,000 Vietnamese Americans, the highest concentration in any U.S. city (Ablaza & Morino, 2013). Also, 31% of Garden Grove's residents and 37% of Westminster's residents are Vietnamese American (Ablaza & Morino, 2013). Their neighboring cities, Santa Ana and Fountain Valley, also have large populations of Vietnamese Americans (Vontz, 2006). However, researchers are focusing only on the official Little Saigon, which is located in Westminster and Garden Grove (Do, 2008).

Around 1978, Vietnamese businesses began to establish and spread into adjacent Garden Grove, Stanton, Fountain Valley, Anaheim, and Santa Ana (Tran, 2004). In 1988, a freeway sign was placed on the Garden Grove Freeway (State Route 22) designating the exits leading to Little Saigon (Estrella, 2007). Today, a commemorative stone sign marks the official entrance to Little Saigon in Garden Grove, California (Mazumdar, Docuyanan, & McLaughlin, 2000). The main focus of Little Saigon is Bolsa Avenue center in Westminster, where Asian Garden Mall and Little Saigon Plaza are considered the heart of the community (Do, 2008). Additionally, Little Saigon is lined with over 200 family-owned restaurants, Vietnamese supermarkets, Vietnamese banks, and professional offices of doctors, dentists, lawyers, accountants, and other businesses who speak Vietnamese (Balassone, 2005).



The Little Saigon commemorative sign welcomes visitors and residents to the officially designated Little Saigon.

Map: Google Maps

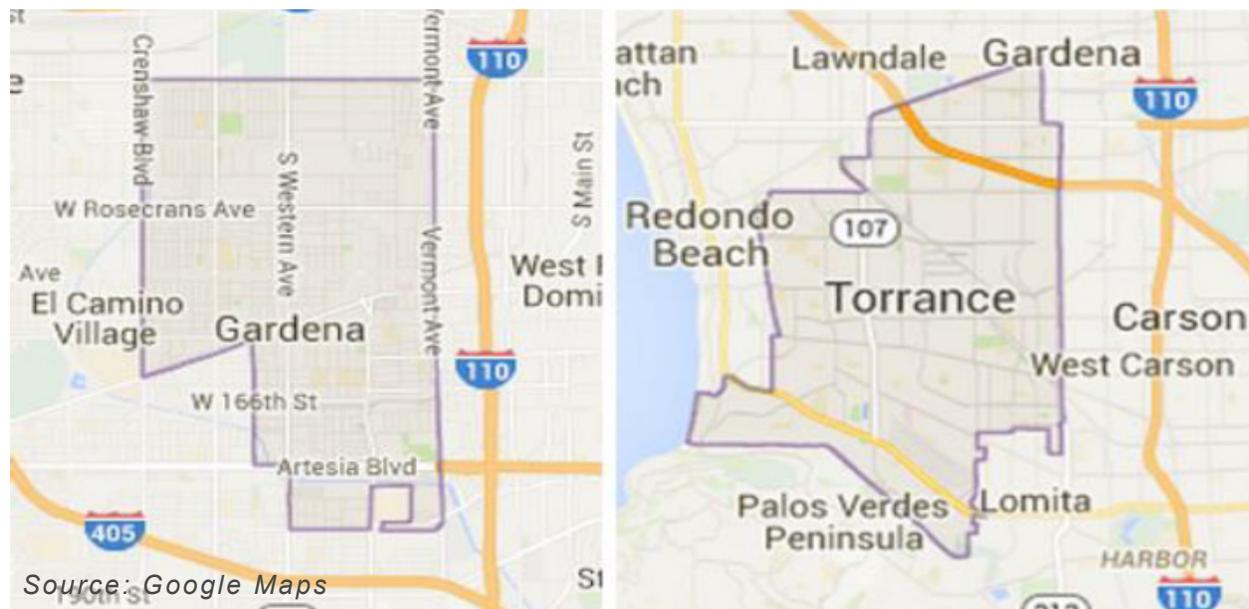
Photo: Sinh Nguyen

Gardena/Torrance

Gardena has the highest percentage of Japanese in North America outside of Hawai'i – Japanese Americans comprise more than a fifth of the city's population (Goodman, 1989). Torrance also has a large Japanese American population, or 147,027 in 2013. We selected both cities because of the large Japanese American concentration and their close proximity to each other. South Gardena is very close to the city of Torrance, which is why both Gardena and Torrance was examined for this research.

About 59% of Asian Americans in Torrance are foreign-born, which creates demand for Asian businesses and organizations. There are a variety of Japanese corporations in Torrance including Toyota, All Nippon Airlines, and Japan Tiger Corporation USA. In addition to these large companies, there are Japanese markets, schools, churches, and festivals that help preserve the Japanese culture.

Historically, Gardena's Japanese Americans played an important role in the farming industry (County of Los Angeles Public Library, 2015). All of the Japanese living in Gardena during WWII were sent to the internment camps (County of Los Angeles Public Library, 2015). Even after the return of Japanese Americans and migration out of Gardena, some of the Japanese organizations and businesses have remained and helped preserve language, foods, and customs (see "The Trajectory of Japanese American Neighborhoods" report for more information about Japanese American neighborhoods).

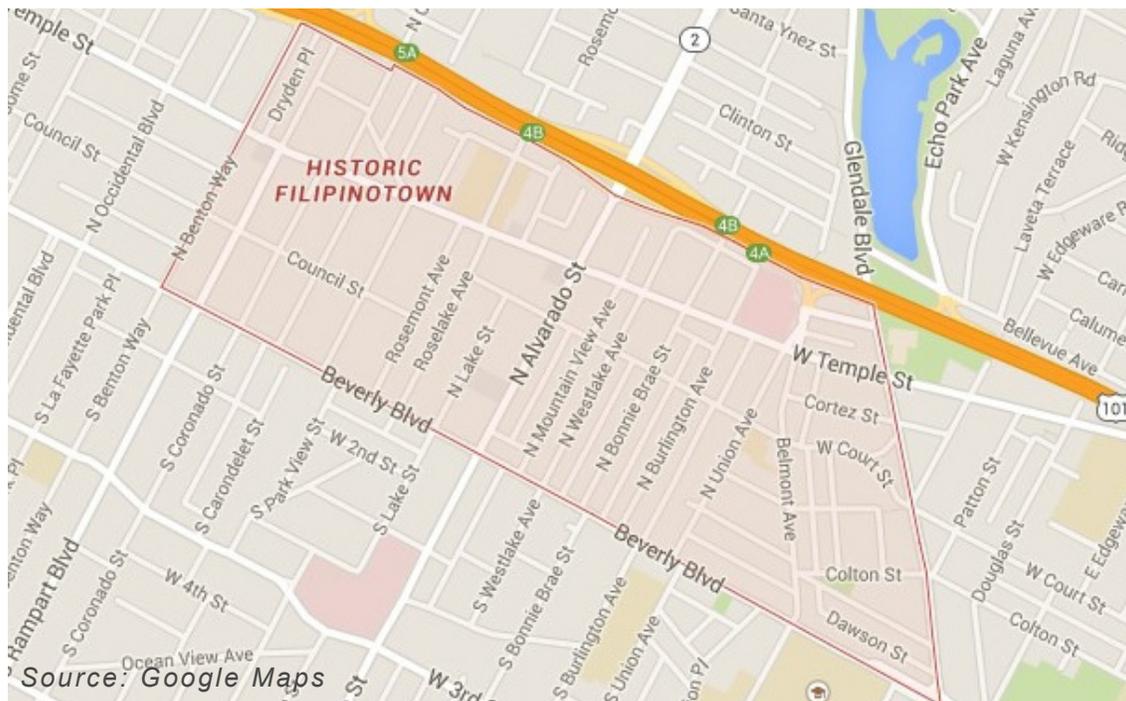


Source: Google Maps

Historic Pilipinotown

This neighborhood has approximately 25,000 persons, and 60% of residents are Latino while 25% of residents are Pilipino American (Historic Pilipinotown Neighborhood Council, 2011). Pilipino Americans are now minorities in Historic Pilipinotown; Historic Pilipinotown would be a good case study since the demographic trend of Pilipino Americans follows a similar path relative to the dwindling population of Japanese Americans in Sawtelle. Historic Pilipinotown received its designation due to the fact that it was one of the first areas of settlement amongst Pilipinos entering America.

Many Pilipino organizations are also located within the neighborhood which adds to the presence of Pilipino Americans in Pilipinotown such as the Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA). There is a current project underway to construct a permanent building for the Pilipino American Library (Historic Pilipinotown Neighborhood Council, 2011). Similar to Budokan in Little Tokyo, it aims to preserve and promote culture by bringing younger generations to the neighborhood and interact with Pilipino history and literature. The Pilipino American Library contains a compilation of published and unpublished materials on the history of Pilipinos in Los Angeles. This collection includes books, reports, memorandums, periodicals, and programs (USC Libraries, 2015). Studying these cultural works will help Historic Pilipinotown preserve its culture and history.



Targeted Organizations

The following organizations (see Table 1) were selected based on this study’s definition and criteria of “cultural institutions.”

United Vietnamese Student Association (UVSA) Southern Orange County

UVSA is a student community-based organization committed to cultural awareness, educating peers, and community service (UVSA Southern, n.d.). Founded in 1982 to organize socially and politically high school and college students, UVSA is also comprised of working professionals, alumni, and educators. UVSA Southern California represents dozens of schools across Southern California. This organization holds various programs, but the focus is on UVSA’s biggest program of the year: Little Saigon Tet Festival. Held annually for Lunar New Year, the Little Saigon Tet Festival – located in Garden Grove – is one of largest Tet Festival in the world, attracting over 100,000 guests (UVSA SoCal, 2015). UVSA aims to educate both the Vietnamese American community and the general public about traditional Vietnamese traditions, practices, and values (UVSA SoCal, 2015).

Table 1. Interviewee Information and Affiliated Organizations

Neighborhood	Organization	Name	Position
Torrance & Gardena	Sushi Chef Institute	Andy Matsuda	Educator
Torrance & Gardena	Japanese Cultural Institute	Alison Kochiyama	Executive Director
Little Saigon	Trường Việt Ngữ, Cộng Đoàn Saddleback Valley	Cay Mai	Instructor's Assistant
Little Saigon	Trường Việt Ngữ, Cộng Đoàn Saddleback Valley	Bich Hai Vu	Instructor
Little Saigon	Trường Việt Ngữ, Cộng Đoàn Saddleback Valley	Cam Van Cao	Principal
Little Saigon	Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể (TNNT), Cộng Đoàn Saddleback	Tony Nguyen	Executive Youth Coordinator
Little Saigon	United Vietnamese Student Association (UVSA) of Southern California	Nina Tran	President
Little Saigon	United Vietnamese Student Association (UVSA) of Southern California	Julie Huynh	Social Media Coordinator/Webmaster
Little Saigon	Việt Cầm Dance/Lạc Hồng Dance	Luan Vu	Director/Main Choreographer
Sawtelle Japantown	Sawtelle Japantown Association (SJA)	Randy Sakamoto	
	Japanese American National Museum (JANM)	Clement Hanami	Vice President of Operations and Art Director
Historic Pilipinotown	FilAm ARTS	Melany De La Cruz-Viesca	Board of Directors
Historic Pilipinotown	Samahang Pilipino at UCLA	John Luna	Cultural Coordinator
Historic Pilipinotown	Samahang Pilipino Culture Night (SPCN) at UCLA	Krizelle Cuevas	Executive Producer
Historic Pilipinotown	Tribal Café	Joshua Jose	Owner
Historic Pilipinotown	Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA)	Meg Thornton	Director (1980s)

Note: Compiled by authors

Việt Cẩm Dance/Lạc Hồng Dance

Before the performing arts school was built, Việt Cẩm Dance/Lạc Hồng was a dance group formed in 1988 by former music instructors from the Vietnamese National Conservatory of Music in Saigon and Vietnamese musicians living in Orange County (Việt Cẩm Dance, 2012). The group expanded, and opened up a performing arts center in the heart of Little Saigon (Kornhaber, 2010). Students perform for Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese audiences. The group has competed internationally, including Canada and Australia. Notably, the center has trained dancers to perform in well-known Vietnamese music and TV productions, such as Thuy Nga Productions, a prestigious recording studio and music production in the overseas Vietnamese music world (Kornhaber, 2010). The center's mission is to develop and promote Vietnamese traditional music and dance throughout the United States (Việt Cẩm Dance, 2012).

Kito Vua Parish

Kito Vua parish is the Vietnamese congregation of Saint Columban Catholic Church, located in Garden Grove, and is one of largest Vietnamese communities across Southern Orange County (Loc, 2015). One of its weekly programs is Trường Việt Ngữ, a language program that teaches Vietnamese. Although the majority of participants are Vietnamese, this program is open to the general public as well. The goals of this program are to preserve and promote Vietnamese culture by teaching Vietnamese language (Loc, 2015). While Cay Mai, a teacher's assistance, was initially contacted, Cay connected researchers to Bich Hai Vu and Cam Van Cao, two Vietnamese language teachers in the Trường Việt Ngữ chapter of St. Nicholas parish. The St. Nicholas parish serves the small Vietnamese community of Southern Orange County Laguna Woods and its neighboring cities (Aliso Viejo, Mission Viejo, Lake Forest, and Tustin). The Trường Việt Ngữ chapter of St. Nicholas Parish was included in the study as a way to compare the language program experiences in both a large and small Vietnamese community.

Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể (TNTT), Kito Vua Chapter

TNTT, or the Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Society, is a Catholic non-profit organization that teaches youth to become better people and educate youth about Vietnamese culture (Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể, 2014). While the Eucharistic Crusade was founded by Pere Bessiere, it was brought to Hanoi, Vietnam, by the Sulpicians in 1929. By the 1960s, it became an organized association in Vietnam (Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể, 2014). During the Vietnam War, the Society's activities temporarily ceased. However, with Vietnamese refugees, it became re-established in the United States. There are about 15,000 members in 70 Vietnamese American Catholic communities and parishes under the direction of 1,300 coordinating-leaders and chaplains (Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể, 2014). The Kito Vua chapter, located in Garden Grove, and Westminster chapter, located in Westminster, are among the biggest chapters internationally (Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể, 2014).

Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institution

JCI has served the Japanese American community for over 40 years. They offer social, cultural, and educational programs (Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute, n.d.). JCI also has a language school and other programs for people of all ages, including martial arts, Japanese dance and art, sports, and boy scouts (Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute, n.d.). This organization qualifies as a cultural institution because it raises awareness and promotes Japanese cultural activities such as martial art and dance.

Sushi Chef Institute

Located in Torrance, the Sushi Chef Institute offers classes on how to make sushi and traditional Japanese food. Chef Andy Matsuda, the instructor, has appeared in several newspapers, magazines, and television shows. We included the institute because students learn about Japanese culture and cuisine. On a daily basis, individuals come to the sushi school for a one-day workshop to learn more about Japanese cuisine (Sushi Chef Institute, 2010).

Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA)

Founded in 1972, SIPA aims to increase the quality of life of Pilipino Americans in Historic Filipinotown and Los Angeles County. Their services promote Pilipino American economic self-sufficiency, educational attainment, and civic engagement, as well as health, welfare, political and cultural empowerment, thereby increasing community involvement (Search to Involve Pilipino Americans, 2015). According to their Executive Director, SIPA seeks to build mutually beneficial relationships by partnering with other organizations (Search to Involve Pilipino Americans, 2015). SIPA's perspective could be crucial to SJA as SIPA is currently working to transform into a Filipinotown Community & Cultural Center, which is similar to SJA attempting to create a cultural center in Sawtelle.

Tribal Café

Originally called Travelers Café, this café was frequented by the famous labor organizer and writer Carlos Bulosan along with other writers and Pilipinos. Travelers Café operated from the 1940s to 1980s. Originally at Temple and Figueroa at the heart of Little Manila, the café moved to its current site at Temple and Union during the 1950s and is now home to Tribal Café and Sunday Jump, an open mic series held every first and third Sundays, making Tribal Café a popular cultural hub in Los Angeles (Tribal Café, 2015).

Samahang Pilipino at UCLA

Samahang Pilipino is a multi-faceted student organization that addresses the needs of the Pilipino and Pilipino American community at UCLA and the greater Los Angeles area. Since 1972, Samahang's mission is to develop student leaders who will organize, advocate, and provide services for themselves and the community, while strengthening relationships with other communities on and off campus (Samahang Pilipino at UCLA, n.d.). They create opportunities to dialogue about diversity and foster cultural empowerment.

Samahang Pilipino Culture Night (SPCN) at UCLA

The history of Samahang Pilipino Cultural Nights (SPCN) originated from the Pilipino Far West Conventions held in the West Coast during the early 1970s and 1980s (Samahang Pilipino at UCLA, n.d.). At UCLA, Samahang Pilipino adopted the educational cultural drama of these Far West Conventions and created annual large-scale presentations that highlighted various community issues and historical events. These cultural presentations developed into SPCN, which provides students a space to learn about themselves, their histories, and their communities, as well as express that growing knowledge to a larger community beyond campus. It is a space where students can learn about Pilipino culture (Samahang Pilipino at UCLA, n.d.).

Association for the Advancement of Pilipino American Arts and Culture (FilAm ARTS)

FilAm ARTS's mission is to advance the arts and diverse cultural heritage of Pilipinos through arts services, presentation, and education (Association for the Advancement of Pilipino American Arts and Culture, n.d.). This organization offers three programs: Eskuwela Kultura (EK), Festival of Philippine Arts & Culture (FPAC), and Pilipino Artist Network (PAN). EK is an education program that encourage youth to share their stories and empower them to develop art (Association for the Advancement of Pilipino American Arts and Culture, n.d.). FPAC is the largest festival of Philippine arts and culture in Southern California and attracts more than 25,000 attendees. FPAC is created by a group of 50 volunteer professionals and involves more than 400 volunteers. PAN is a California-statewide capacity-building initiative for Pilipino American artists in arts/cultural disciplines: dance, music, literary arts, visual arts, theater, media arts, traditional arts, arts education, and arts presenters.

Japanese American National Museum (JANM)

JANM is the largest museum dedicated to preserving and sharing the experiences of Japanese Americans. Working alongside various organizations and diverse communities, JANM provides a venue for community events, holds archives related to Japanese Americans, and presents exhibits related to Asian Americans and Japan (JANM, 2015). Major projects and units include: Discover Nikkei, National Conferences, Arts Innovation, National Center for Preservation of Democracy, and U.S.-Japan Programs. Additionally, the museum highlights the Japanese experience within an international context – it showcases the diasporic experiences of Japanese (Japanese American National Museum, 2015).

Appendix B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Participant Consent Form

University of California, Los Angeles

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH INTERVIEW ROLE OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN ETHNIC NEIGHBORHOODS

Students of the UCLA Asian American Studies Department are conducting research on the role of cultural institutions in preserving and promoting ethnic neighborhoods. You were selected to be a participant in this research because you are part of a cultural organization that is located in an ethnic neighborhood.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of our research project – led by undergraduate students of the Asian American Studies Department – is to examine the role of cultural institutions in ethnic neighborhoods. With the information from our interview, we hope to provide recommendations to our client, Sawtelle Japantown Association (SJA). Your help would assist in informing how SJA can work to preserve the historical and cultural aspects of Sawtelle.

What happens if I take part in this research study?

You will be asked to answer a series of questions by a student researcher. The interview will take approximately 30-60 minutes. You will be asked about your organization and what you do for the community.

Are there any potential risks that I may experience from this study?

There are no potential risks that are expected. However, if you feel uncomfortable at any time during our conversation, you can refrain from answering the questions or withdraw from the study. The interview will also be audio-recorded so that we can reference your answers accurately in our report. The audio file will be kept confidential and stored in a password-locked folder – we will not release the audio-recording or allow anyone outside our group to have access to it. The file will be deleted as soon as we finish our report. If you feel uncomfortable with it at any time during the interview, please let me know and I will turn it off. Your name and organization will be put into our report, unless requested otherwise.

Are there any benefits if I participate?

You are not expected to directly benefit by participating in this study. By giving recommendations to SJA, your input will benefit the Sawtelle community in the future. At your request, a copy of the final report will be emailed to you.

Will my participation remain confidential?

You are allowed to identify any information that you would like to remain confidential.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the study?

Candice Lau, Sinh Nguyen, or Jackie Tieu

You will be given a copy of this Consent Form for your records.

VERBAL CONSENT

As a voluntary participant in this study, I have read and understand the consent form. I verify that I am 18 years of age or older, and have been given a copy of this consent form. I also give permission for the interview to be audio-recorded.

Interview Guide

University of California, Los Angeles
Asian Neighborhoods and Official Designation in Los Angeles County

Opening Script

I would like to thank you for meeting with me today. My name is _____ and I am a researcher with UCLA's Asian American Studies capstone course. For our group project, I am conducting interviews in the [Little Saigon, Historic Pilipino Town, or Torrance/Gardena] neighborhood. During the interview, please feel free to ask me any questions.

First, as a research participant, we are required to have your verbal consent.

1. The purpose of this study is explained in this form, which is to research ethnic organizations and then provide recommendations for Sawtelle Japanese Association (SJA).
2. The interview should last 30 – 60 minutes.
3. The consent form discusses your rights as a research participant. If you feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview, you are allowed to withdraw from the interview or refrain from answering the question.
4. This research project is voluntary. Since we may draw quotes from our conversation, please let us know if there is any information you would like to remain confidential. If there is any information that you would like me to not release, please let me know.
5. The interview will be audio-recorded, unless you request otherwise. Only group members can have access to the recording. The file will be stored in a password-locked folder and deleted as soon as we finish our report.
6. Information is provided so that you may contact our research group for any questions or concerns.

Please take a few minutes to review the consent form. [When the participant is finished reading the form, ask:]

- Do you feel comfortable giving consent to participate in this study?
- Do you feel comfortable being audio-recorded?
- If they're iffy about it, remind them of confidentiality
- If no, then say:

I'll just be taking notes during our conversation

Before we move onto our interview, do you have any questions?

INTERVIEWER:

DATE:

LOCATION:

INTERVIEWEE (Title and name):

Introduction

You are being interviewed because the organization that you work for is identified as a “cultural institution.” Our project as a whole focuses on ethnic neighborhoods, so our conversation today will give us a better understanding of how organizations such as yours help to preserve and promote culture in Asian American neighborhoods.

Background Information

First, I’m going to ask you some background questions.

1. How long have you worked here for?
 - a. Probe: [if applicable and you don’t know the answer] What is your role in this organization?
 - b. Probe: How did you get involved with [organization or program]
 - c. Probe [before interview, do research. If their program has volunteers, ask them:] How do you work with your volunteers to make sure that your [organization or program] meets its goals?
 - d. Probe: [if applicable] How does your program fit into your organization’s goals?
2. Probe: Have your organization’s goals changed over time? If so, how?
3. What are your goals for the neighborhood and organization?
 - a. Probe: Why are these goals important to you?

Community Feedback and Partnerships

Now, we’re going to talk about community feedback and partnerships.

4. Which specific ethnic community or communities does [name of program] target?
 - a. Probe: How have people from these communities responded to [name of program]?
 - b. Probe: Have the goals of your [program or project] changed accordingly to these community feedbacks?
5. We found out about your program through your organization’s website. In your experiences, what are some good ways to advertise your program?
 - a. Probe: In your experiences, what is the most effective method for outreaching to

- the community?
- b. Probe: In outreaching, have you experienced any indifferences or unresponsiveness?
 - c. Probe: How has your organization worked to overcome this challenge?
6. Is your organization involved in other (not culturally oriented) community and/or neighborhood activities (e.g., working with others on community/neighborhood beautification projects)?
7. For your program, what are some of the other ethnic organizations or leaders that you work with?
- a. Probe: Why is it helpful to work with these organizations or leaders?
 - b. Probe: How do you outreach to them?
 - c. Probe: How have they helped your program achieve its goals?
 - d. Probe: What types of programs have you held with them?
 - e. Probe: What are some challenges you have found from working with these community partners or leaders?

Cultural Preservation and the Neighborhood

We're moving onto questions related to cultural preservation and your neighborhood

8. How do you define "cultural preservation?"
- a. Probe: What types of cultural activities are offered by your organization?
 - b. Probe: Where are these activities are offered? (in what neighborhood, in what type of building)
 - c. Probe: What are the types of people who participate? (number, ethnicity, location)
 - d. Probe: What are the recent trends in level of activities, participants and interest? (increasing, declining, stable, etc.)
9. What do you believe are some of the challenges and opportunities in keeping cultural organizations viable?
- a. Probe: How has your organization addressed these challenges?
10. Since you've been working, how has the neighborhood that you serve changed?
- a. Probe: How have these changes impacted your program goals?

Conclusion

We're wrapping up our interview with a few concluding questions.

11. Where do you see your neighborhood in five years?
 - a. Probe: Do you see your program goals changing?
 - b. Probe [If they mention new goals or programs in the future:] What kind of resources would you want to meet future goals?
 - c. Probe [if they mention new program:] How do you think a potentially new program would fit into the future of your organization?
 - d. Probe: Are there any financial barriers that may hinder the success of your current or future program?
 - e. Probe: How do you plan to overcome this financial challenge?
12. Probe: Do you think [ethnic neighborhood] will support this new program?
 - a. Probe: How do you plan to involve the community when planning these new programs?
 - b. Probe: What do you hope for from the future generations of this neighborhood?
 - c. Probe: As we've mentioned, we are working with the Sawtelle Japantown Association. If you could give advice to SJA, who is aiming to preserve culture in Sawtelle, what would it be?
13. Would you be able to connect us to the ethnic institutions or leaders that you have worked with or are currently working with?

Closing Script

Before I conclude the interview, is there anything else you would like to tell me about your community work, program, or organization?

Thank you so much for your time and responses. We've learned so much about your organization and neighborhood during this interview. The information that you provided will give helpful recommendations Sawtelle Japantown Association, and help the larger Asian American community with preserving and promoting culture. If you have further comments or questions, feel free to contact any of us.

[Turn off recording.]

[Add additional notes or comments about the interview and interviewee. Make sure notes are comprehensive so that emotions, characteristics, etc. are highlighted.]

Field Notes

Fill this out ASAP!

1. How was the setting of the interview?
2. Were there any distractions or disruptions during the interview?
3. Were there any questions that interviewee struggled to answer?
4. Did you (the interviewer) feel comfortable during the interview? Why?
5. What are three words to describe your emotions during the interview?
6. What are three words to describe the interviewee during his/her interview?
7. Did the interviewee say any words or phrases that stood out to you particularly?
8. Did the interviewee display any characteristics that stood out to you? If so, what were they?



Japanese Institute of Sawtelle mural
Photo: C. Aujean Lee