

MAASU

Midwest Asian American Students Union

MEMBER SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT:

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
ALSO KNOWN AS MIZZOU

VOL. 2 ISSUE. 1

#WhereAreYouFrom

Check out this new initiative of storytelling about APIAs and each of our stories -- and it starts with YOU!

COME MEET MAASU's 2015-2016

EXECUTIVE
COORDINATING
COMMITTEE

FROM MAASU TO YOU,
WELCOME BACK TO

SCHOOL

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAASU MIXERS

October 8, 2025: University of Illinois-Champaign
October 17, 2025: University of Missouri-Columbia
Come meet our founders, speakers, & other MAASU members at our mixer events! Advice on grad school in APAC will be available.

MAASU LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

November 20-21, 2025: Radu University

MAASU SPRING CONFERENCE

April 15-18, 2026: University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

OPPORTUNITIES

Asian-Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APASF) Scholarship Programs

Variety of fellowships for U.S. APAC students.
Substantial awards in January 8, 2026.
Award amount: \$2500 - \$5000
<http://www.asianpacificscholarship.org/afst/>

The Asian Women in Business Scholarship Fund

Online application to the Program of APAC University.
Online application deadline: October 1, 2025.
Award amount: \$2500
<http://www.apwib.org/afstscholarship/afstscholarshipapplication.aspx>

If you are aware of any other awards, fellowships, or other opportunities for Asian and Pacific Islander American students, please share and let us at MAASU know! Find us on social media to continue sharing opportunities for our community.

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Visit <http://www.maasu.com/maasu/alumni/About> to learn more about MAASU.

The MAASU Alumni Association (MAA) is a group for all MAASU alumni. MAA's purpose is to continue building and sustaining lifelong relationships between MAASU and its alumni through the following ways:

- Providing social and career networking for alumni
- Engaging students as future alumni
- Providing alumni opportunities to reconnect with MAASU
- Recognize alumni for various accomplishments and service
- Providing an avenue for feedback to MAASU leadership



UNIVERSITY OF
MISSOURI'S

ASIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION



Who are you?

My name is Zach Morrison, the current President of Missouri's Asian American Association. I'm studying Biochemistry and expected to graduate in Spring 2018.

How would you describe the space that Missouri's Asian American Association occupies on campus?

Our AAA strives to provide an inclusive community for any student interested in learning about Asian American culture, history, and current issues. We also aim to provide a voice for the Asian American community on campus.

Are there any specific issues (immigration, identity, etc.) that you personally want to focus on?

This year, one topic I would like to focus on is leadership in the Asian American community and the bamboo ceiling. I think the fact that Asians and Asian Americans are often passed over for promotions and upper level management positions is something that

MEMBER SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

Each month, we'd like to showcase and feature one of our member schools. Through these member school spotlights, we'd like to share the activities and experiences of other schools, hoping to further connect and bridge the Asian and Pacific Islander American college communities closer together. The strength behind a community is the building blocks that we all represent, coming together as one. If you'd like your school and organization to be featured or have any questions, please email us at pr@missou.org.

that college students especially should be discussing, not only because it is a very real problem Asian Americans are facing, but also because it has ties to multiple other APIA issues such as negative consequences of the model minority myth, stereotype portrayal in the media, and others.

What are some specific or overall goals for the organization as a whole?

This upcoming year, I would like to see a larger turnout at our events but at the same time, I want to have quality events that are engaging and get members involved. Overall, I hope that AAA is able to help foster and build a tight knit community for all of its members.





What are the main challenges you see facing the Asian American Association this year?

I think our biggest challenge will be creating a strong executive board that is able to plan and execute events successfully. Right now, we still have some open positions that we will be looking to fill once the year begins, and there are also a number of members on our executive board that have not had any prior experience on the board. If we are able to build a strong executive team, I have confidence that we will also have a great year.

What's your favorite event that the Asian American Association does or has done in the past?

Our end of the year banquet where we celebrate the end of the year and send off the graduating members of AAA. We also crown a new Mr. and Mrs. AAA, have a ceremonial passing of powers from outgoing officers to incoming officers, and then end with a video occupying the year.

How do you raise awareness of APIA issues on campus or get non-APIA students involved in your activities/ events?

During our AAA month in April, we try to raise awareness of APIA issues by bringing in guest speakers and performers, and including educational aspects in our events. The use of social media has also been an effective method of spreading awareness to members outside of the APIA community. In my opinion, one of the best ways to get non-APIA students involved in our events (besides free food) is to provide them with a chance to experience various aspects of APIA culture. For example, the past few years, we hosted an Asian night market open to the community, and in addition to having games, activities, and foods, we had a Facebook photo campaign to break down stereotypes. This has consistently been one of our most successful events each year.



What are some fun events that your organization hosts?

At the beginning of the fall semester, we have an event called UniteAsian, which is our welcome event for new students who are interested in learning more about AAA. We provide lunch and spend the afternoon doing group activities and playing games to give new students a taste of AAA. It also is a great chance for them to meet older members and get to know each other as well. Additionally, there are various cultural events and holiday celebrations like the Lunar New Year celebration and our annual Thanksgiving potluck.

Is there anything you hope to get more out from MAASU?

I think it would be interesting to have more opportunities for collaboration between MAASU and other Asian American interest organizations in the Midwest.



If you're interested in learning more about Missouri's AAA, please email them at aaa.missou@missouri.edu.

Check out the next page to see some more Missouri members!

MEMBERS OF THE MONTH

Similar to the Member School Spotlight, MAASU would love to share individual members who exemplify strong leadership and passion for the AP/IA and their own communities. If you're interested in being featured, email pr@maasu.org.

LORENZO AGUAS

Who are you?

My name is Lorenzo Aguas. I'm a junior graduating in 2015 as an accounting major, and I go to the University of Missouri (Missouri).

How are you involved in your AP/IA organization?

I hold the position of Treasurer for the sponsoring org. My primary duties are budgeting and handling money, as well as helping the other executive officers make sure the Asian American Association (AAA) runs smoothly.

Do you have any pet peeves?

When kids stare at you for extended lengths of time while being held by their parents. It's cute at first but after a while it gets awkward and I don't know what to do besides stand there and look away. Also people who don't see their feet again when driving.

Who is your biggest role model?

I would have to say my biggest role model is my big brother Erwin Balboa. Although he is not my biological brother, he has taught me so much and cares for me as though we are blood related. His example I can definitely look up to and learn from besides his weird crazy sides.

Do you have a short, funny story you'd like to share?

The Philippines is an island with tropical weather that we have great cockroaches everywhere. When I was a kid visiting the Philippines I was using the bathroom and spotted a cockroach. It wasn't me the first time I ran out of those giant cockroaches because I heard out of the room with my pants down yelling "mommy!"

Is there a certain topic you're passionate about?

A general issue the passionate about are stereotyping and generalization. No matter what race, religion, etc. etc. you are, I believe we are all unique people who should not be generalized with what we are or identify as. We are made up of more than the groups we belong to. Not every Asian is a genius, not every Muslim is a terrorist, and not every woman is a feminist in distress.

If you had to live in one country for the rest of your life, where?

I would probably live in the Philippines for the rest of my life. It's where I was born but I was taken away from there early on in my life. There's still so much more I'd love to learn about my own culture and heritage.

KELLAH LIU

Who are you?

My name is Kellah Liu and I am graduating from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2015, with degrees in Psychology & Biology.

How are you involved in your AP/IA organization?

I am the Advocacy Chair for my school's AAA. I follow AP/IA issues such as cultural appropriation, stereotyping, and racism and organize the general body meetings discussing these issues. I also find ways to increase AP/IA activities around campus.

What are your top three bucket list items?

1. Bring widespread medical and educational opportunities to those who cannot afford it
2. Become a mentor for mental health advocacy nationally and eventually globally
3. Launch a startup idea in intellectual design

What's your favorite part about the Asian American Association?

My favorite part of AAA is being able to have open discussions on hot topic issues in general body meetings. This was partially the reason for my decision to become the advocacy chair, as I feel like listening to different opinions on topics that affect us in our daily lives gives us an opportunity to learn more about our culture and ourselves.

What kind of ice cream flavor would you be and why?

If I were an ice cream flavor, I would be waffle chocolate chip. A somewhat hard chocolate, but can also have a hard edge.

Do you cook? What's the best dish you can make?

Yes, my best dish is probably chicken egg.

Is there a certain topic you're passionate about?

Affirmative Action in US universities - especially after the Project on Fair Representation launched a lawsuit against several high profile universities and recruited Asians in a campaign against Affirmative Action.

Cultural effects on mental health - given that many Asian children are told to suppress their inner feelings and Asian countries having some of the highest suicide rates in the world.

If you had to live in one country for the rest of your life, where?

If I had to live somewhere other than the United States, I would probably live in London, England. I admire the city for its rich history and mix between historical and modern architecture.



CURRENT MEMBER SCHOOLS

Here is a Google map of the Midwest Asian American Students Union's current member schools. The official website link is available [here](#).



ILLINOIS

Loyola University
Northern Illinois University
Northwestern University
University of Illinois - Chicago
University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign

INDIANA

Ball State University
Purdue University

KANSAS

University of Kansas
Wichita State University

MICHIGAN

Kalamazoo College
Michigan State University
University of Michigan

MISSOURI

St. Louis University
University of Missouri

MINNESOTA

Augsburg College
St. Catherine's University
University of Minnesota - Duluth
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

OHIO

Denison University
Ohio State University

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma State University

WISCONSIN

University of Wisconsin - Madison
University of Wisconsin - Platteville
University of Wisconsin - Whitewater

#WHEREAREYOUFROM

The new MAASU initiative with an introduction by Jonathan Sun, our Advocacy Co-Chair.

This year, MAASU is starting a new initiative in order to help other students understand what Asian American culture in the Midwest looks like. Asian American culture is everywhere while at the same time nowhere. As the Midwest Asian American Students Union, we believe that we should try to have a better understanding of what Midwest Asian American culture looks like. While pondering the thought of better understanding Asian American Culture some may be lead to ask, "Is it even necessary to perpetuate the concept of Asian American culture?" It may be such a broad idea that even the idea of trying to construct a box around it, may prove to be impossible, however that doesn't mean we should not try. Thus MAASU would like to proudly present the first season of our thought exercise into Asian American Culture, #whereareyoufrom!

Often times Asian Americans are

asked, "Where are you from?" in the hopes of eliciting the "Correct response" as saying, "I am from such and such Asian country." However, many Asian Americans are from the United States. This kind of question can be defined as a micro aggression, a seemingly harmless statement that in actuality has a lot of offense to it. What makes this kind of question offensive is the fact that it challenges ones identity as an American. Thus the first season of MAASU's exploration into Asian American culture is to explore where people really are from and their experiences that they have. This project is intended to not only capture the experiences of people living and growing up in the Midwest, but to capture their family histories and struggles as well.

As noted this is the first season of this exploration. Each year, MAASU will continue to look into different aspects of

Asian American culture through the form of commonly asked questions, such as "What are you?" or "Where what's that smell?" Each of these questions will lead to a larger overarching dialogue on what makes Asian Americans, Asian Americans. We hope to challenge other students to engage with each other and learn more about each other and their pasts and their stories. Storytelling is one of the most powerful tools we have to learn about each and about ourselves. It makes us recount our experiences and really think about how we felt, how it impacts us now, and legitimize our experiences. We have utilized the Storycorp app, in order to compile all our stories, so there is one location to access the stories. In addition to accessing these stories, we challenge you to gather your own stories with your friends and families about where they are from and their experiences growing up in the Midwest.

In addition to sharing stories, we would also like to present different education material that goes with the stories. Each of these stories, underscores a different theme starting with the model minority myth, after this each of the stories we present will present a new word and material with it. The first story we have in this series is founder of the Midwest Asian American Students Union Charles Chang. He recounts his story of being the tough guy and being a role model to his family. His story is read by Jonathan Sun.



Charles and his brother Bob waiting at Seoul International Airport to immigrate to the United States

MAASU

MAASU

#WHEREAREYOUFROM

Often times, Asian Americans are asked, "Where are you from?" in the hopes of eliciting the "Correct response" as saying, "I am from such and such Asian country."

However, many Asian Americans are born and raised elsewhere, beyond where their ancestors come from.

MAASU would like to explore the Asian American culture with YOU, to capture the experiences of people growing up in the Midwest and their family's histories and struggles to survive.

Please click the hashtag below to learn more and get involved!

www.asianusa.com

MEET THE EXECUTIVE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Midwest Asian American Students Union is governed by the Executive Coordinating Committee. The ECC is composed of mainly undergraduate student leaders from across the Midwest. These individuals are given the opportunity, with the voting power given to member schools, to run and maintain the organization through a variety of duties and responsibilities.



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Business Executive Leadership Committee, Graduate Advisory Council, and Executive Director

GRADUATE ADVISORY COUNCIL & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ^{THE}

The Graduate Advisory Council and the Executive Director is composed of young professionals who are currently enrolled in a Graduate program, often seeking a higher education degree. The GAC is responsible for overseeing MAASU ECC, acting as a voice and resource. The ED is responsible for being an advisor and liaison for ECC in terms of legal, financial, and national details.



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MIDWEST ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS UNION

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Connect with us on social media!

