



美洲同源總會

Chinese American Citizens Alliance

~ National ~

1044 Stockton Street, San Francisco, California 94108 • Telephone/Fax (415)829-9332

National Lodge
ESTABLISHED 1895

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CONTACT: info@cacanational.org

C.A.C.A. Albuquerque Instrumental in Civil Rights Monument Commending Landmark Court Decision for Chinese Americans

Albuquerque, February 28, 2020 – Chinese Americans have been pioneers for civil rights for all Americans for over a century. The names of Wong Kim Ark, Yick Lo and Gong Lum are attached to noted U.S. Supreme Court cases. And while these decisions are embedded in the public conscience and in history through legal citations and academic treatises, rarely are they memorialized with a public monument.

On January 11, recognition of a forgotten historic landmark Chinese American civil rights case came to fruition at the Bernalillo County Courthouse of the New Mexico Second Judicial District in Albuquerque, with the official unveiling of “View from Gold Mountain,” a public installation dedicated to Territory of *New Mexico v. Yee Shun* (1882), a judicial decision granting Chinese the right to testify in court in many states and territories.

Among the dignitaries at the monument dedication was Dr. Siu G. Wong, 2019 president of the Albuquerque Lodge of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance (C.A.C.A.), who began eight years ago to realize the monument. With the help of her husband, Dr. William Jones, an Albuquerque Lodge member, Dr. Wong organized fundraising efforts and secured bi-partisan support of the New Mexico Legislature.

“During the latter part of the 19th Century, Chinese encountered discriminatory federal and state legislation that obstructed full participation in American society,” says Dr. Wong. “Among the Constitutional rights denied to Chinese was prohibiting the testimony of Chinese in criminal and civil court. As victims of judicial discrimination, the Chinese used the Court system to fight back and helped establish legal principles, which affected the course of American jurisprudence for all Americans. The Yee Shun case contributed to the developing relationship of law and race in the 19th century in the United States. The case contributed to the defining of due process and equal protection under the 14th Amendment of the Constitution.”

Dr. Wong worked with the New Mexico Bernalillo County Cultural Services, Parks and Recreation Department to create the monument. Bernalillo County issued a national call for artists in 2018 and the commission was awarded to Seattle-based artists Cheryl Leo-Gwin and Stewart Wong for their design



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“View from Gold Mountain.” The 16-foot monument resembles a carpenter’s plumb bob incorporating motifs that pays homage to the Chinese, Native American and Hispanic inhabitants of the region.

“Clouds on the plumb and on the wall of the courthouse represent the hopes and dreams of everyone who came to America,” noted Ms. Leo-Gwin.

An inscription on the plaque at the installation states:

This is a landmark Chinese-American civil rights case from an era of racism and exclusion laws that denied Chinese-Americans the political and legal rights available to others in the United States. Chinese-Americans did not have the full protection of the Constitution. Barred from political rights, their only recourse was in the courts. The Yee Shun case affirms the competency of Chinese Americans to testify in court and to have their testimonies accepted. — Chinese American Citizens Alliance

Dr. Wong states, “Chinese American contribution to the shaping of the U.S. jurisprudence system should be recognized. This monument honors the tenacity of the human spirit. Welcomed in the beginning, the Chinese American became hated, excluded and driven out of communities, and based on race, were denied the protection of the Constitution. Resilient, the Chinese American persevered, embraced their new country, and overcame anti-Chinese American sentiment to contribute to the fabric of American life including our legal system. The story of the Chinese American in America is an inspirational lesson for all.”

“This monument is a symbol of a long road of civil rights for not only Chinese Americans but for every American who had to face racism and inequity,” spoke C.A.C.A. National President Melanie Chan at the monument’s dedication. “I’m so very proud that the Chinese American Citizens Alliance is a sponsor of this monument.” A video recording of the January 11 ceremony is available for viewing on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPlhaho0HUo&t=124s

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1044 Stockton St.
San Francisco, CA.

Web: www.CACAnational.org
Chinese American Citizens Alliance

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance, established in 1895, is among the oldest civil rights organizations in the United States. Headquartered in San Francisco with chapter/lodges in Albuquerque (NM), Boston (MA), Chicago (IL), Greater San Gabriel Valley (CA), Greater New York (NY), Houston (TX), Las Vegas (NV), Los Angeles (CA), Mississippi, Oakland (CA), Peninsula (CA), Portland (OR), Phoenix (AZ), Sacramento (CA), Salinas (CA), San Antonio (TX), San Francisco (CA), Seattle (WA) and Washington, D.C., the Alliance addresses issues regarding voter education, political participation, racial discrimination and hate crimes, and supports youth leadership training programs and equal employment opportunities for all Chinese Americans.