Reflections on the First Asian American Christian Counseling Symposium
by Tiffany Cheuk, MSW*

I don’t think we understood the magnitude of what we were trying to accomplish until we were in the middle of it all—three graduate students and two amazing AACCS leaders—putting together the First Asian American Christian Counseling Symposium. We just had a vision that was threefold: to bring in an expert in the field, to create a resource for Asian American Christian counselors, and most importantly, to bring the community together.

It wasn’t until I was sitting amongst nearly 90 Asian American Christian counselors listening to the inspiring Dr. Siang-Yang Tan speak of implicit and explicit integration of faith and psychotherapy and share stories of witnessing God’s transformative power through Inner Healing Prayer in a counseling context that I was fully able to experience the excitement of seeing the community united.

Personally, not ever having taken counseling classes from a Christian perspective, and not having many opportunities to interact with other Christian counselors, I have always struggled to understand where God fits into my work. Meeting Asian American Christian counselors and hearing of the effectiveness and power of integrating faith into practice was an incredibly invigorating and refreshing experience. It affirmed for me that, yes, God uses counselors for His work, and I am so humbled to be called into this powerful and transformative field. I have officially graduated from my Master of Social Work (MSW) program, and as I walk hesitantly out of the classrooms and into the professional world, I know that I will take this empowering experience with me—the stories of the Asian American Christians who have pioneered the field wisdom that they blessing!

Dr. Siang-Yang Tan and 2011 Komae Scholarship Recipients

*Tiffany Cheuk was a 2011 Inaugural Ryo & Jean Komae Graduate School Scholarship recipient.
The past six months have been remarkably productive. As you will read in this issue of The AACCS Anchor, we sent three therapists to Japan who provided member care services to field workers as well training to ministry groups. We hosted our annual Afternoon of Kindness Luncheon as well as sponsored our First Asian American Christian Counseling Symposium. Our clinical staff provided counseling and psychotherapy to nearly 300 clients per month, and therapists involved in our speakers bureau program provided at least nine presentations in the community and abroad.

There were also three additional events that gave us pause to reflect and praise God for his sovereignty and continuing watch care over AACCS. The first was an unexpected gift. In February, we were approached by a devoted Christian couple who offered AACCS free office space in the City of Cerritos where they believe our services are much needed. We have been busy preparing this new office to open in August. Our plan is to have the Los Alamitos staff move to the Cerritos site where we will be able to see more clients and have greater flexibility in scheduling. We are grateful to this wonderful Christian couple whose generosity and vision for AACCS allows us to expand into new territory.

A second significant event occurred on March 19 during the Third Asian American Equipping Symposium (3AAES) sponsored by the Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC) and Fuller Theological Seminary. With the theme of the symposium, “Healing of Memories: Ministering to Asian American Families,” the Board of Directors of ISAAC selected AACCS to receive the second Asian North American Leadership Legacy Award. During the symposium banquet where there were approximately 150 guests in attendance, we were honored to be recognized by both Dr. Young Lee Hertig, Executive Director of ISAAC, and Dr. Richard Mouw, President of Fuller Seminary.

Lastly, our Board of Directors have come to appreciate how rare it is to serve on a volunteer board with a group of people who have remained united in spirit and purpose for as many years as we have been together. Each of our 10 board members have been on the board for no less than 20 years. We recognize, however, that God has called each of us to invest in this ministry for a season. After serving with AACCS for more than 26 years as a founding board member and for the last 14 years as Chairperson, Paul Sawasaki stepped down from his service with AACCS on May 31, 2012. Although we will miss Paul’s leadership and his wisdom, he will remain a friend and advocate as a member of our golf committee. We are thankful for his devoted service through the years and wish him continued blessings as God calls him to dedicate more of his time and talents to his home church. We welcome Alan Oda, former AACCS Executive Director, as our new board chair.

Through all of the activities and changes of the past several months, we are secure in knowing that God is preparing AACCS for the future. The expansion to Cerritos and our growing network of community relationships have been affirming. We know that the Lord will bring fresh new leadership to AACCS in

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Afternoon of Kindness Luncheon
Grace Anatomy: Coping with Life’s Emergencies
Arlene Yee, LCSW, Board Member

Wonderful fellowship…joyful conversation…moving testimony…lively raffle/silent auction...a wonderful gathering of AACCS supporters...an Afternoon of Kindness Luncheon.

Nearly 190 men and women gathered together at Almansor Court in Alhambra on April 22. Evelyn Lo, an emergency room physician, missionary, and pastor’s wife shared her inspiring testimony and mission experiences overseas. Our hearts were moved as she spoke, revealing to us God’s grace and love for us and how He redeems life’s disappointments as we trust in His purposes in our lives.

AACCS awarded the Ryo and Jean Komae Scholarship to two graduate students. The generosity of the Komae family provided two $2,000 scholarships for graduate students in the mental health field. This year, the recipients are Timothy Yen, a Doctor of Psychology student at Azusa Pacific University, and Gloria Bit Na Choi, a Masters of Social Welfare student at UCLA.

The luncheon, raffle and silent auction raised $18,800 for the work at AACCS. Thank you to everyone who joined us for the luncheon to make it a successful event!

The date for next year’s luncheon has been set for April 21, 2013…. save the date!
March 11, 2011 – As Carol Miyake, LCSW, and I sat around the table at the TEAM Center for our last consultation, the earth began to shake violently. A few seconds later, a strong jolt sent us under the table to seek cover, and there we knelt praying for an endless five minutes. The magnitude of the earthquake seemed severe in Tokyo where we were, but in the coming hours, we were to see on TV the devastation that the earthquake, ensuing tsunami and the resulting nuclear meltdown had wrought in the Tohoku region of Japan.

March 2, 2012 – Rhonda Gee, LCSW, and I left LAX for Japan, to attend the Japanese Evangelical Missionary Association’s (JEMA) Women in Ministry (WIM) Retreat to provide counseling for the missionaries and Christian workers who would be in attendance. Last year, Carol and I had gone to the retreat for the same purpose, but that was before the triple Tohoku disasters. We knew that this year, the women would be in even greater need of encouragement and prayer because of the challenges and ministry opportunities that were a direct result of the disasters.

This year’s WIM Retreat had a record number of new attendees, as well as many more Japanese national ministry workers than in the past. Christian Relief Assistance Support + Help (CRASH) which had been a fledgling organization before the disasters, sent 10 bilingual workers plus the wife of the founder. Many of these women had had little rest since the disaster relief efforts had begun nearly a year before, and they were in need of time to spend with the Lord and with other Christian women. Other missionaries had moved up into the Tohoku area following the disasters, and each had a different story to tell about the challenges that came with ministering to people amidst such tragic loss. Still others told of how their families were affected when there were shortages in gasoline and essential food items, even in Tokyo where there was little direct damage from the earthquake, and the fear that surrounded the unseen effects of the radiation still permeated the country.

Rhonda, myself, and Eileen Nielsen, The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM) missionary counselor were booked with counseling appointments. We held our sessions in little prayer huts which were furnished with hori gotatsu, a hole in the floor with a table on top which had a heating unit, providing warmth to the feet. On one afternoon, I never left the hori gotatsu, as I saw five women, one after another. Due to time limitations, some who wanted appointments needed to be turned away. Although it was just an hour or two that we could spend with these women, we trust that the time they had to share (Continued on page 5)
My Fourth Mission Trip to Japan: Remaining Open to Different Purposes and Tasks
By Ken Yabuki, MFT

I made a quick mission trip to Japan in May to conduct a listening seminar with the International VIP Club in Tokyo and at CRASH Headquarters just outside of Tokyo. While there I had an opportunity to spend time with three individuals whom I knew over 45 years ago when I worked with Japan Campus Crusade for Christ. Since then they have become Christians and are serving the Lord, which was very encouraging.

The first meeting was held at Ochanomizu Christian Center in Tokyo with the VIP Club leadership. About 40 persons were there, and we had a time for praise and worship with testimonies, followed by my listening seminar. The meeting ended at 10 p.m., and afterwards we went to a nearby coffee shop and spent another hour to discuss issues related to Christian counseling.

The next day I went to the CRASH Headquarters, located a few miles outside of Tokyo where I conducted a listening workshop with the staff and volunteers who work there. The meeting was held in a conference room on the campus of Christian Academy Japan, which is located just a few blocks from the CRASH Headquarters. About 20 persons were in attendance, and they all seemed to enjoy and benefit from learning to listen to one another. My hope at all of these listening workshops is that the participants will continue to practice mutual listening as a tool to reduce stress in their own lives and also learn to use it as a ministry tool by deepening their relationships with others. After the workshop I also spent time with CRASH staff to discuss future ministry collaboration between CRASH and AACCS, which will be further followed up by Carol Miyake and Rie Mizuki of AACCS.

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Remaining Open to Different Purposes and Tasks

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This was my fourth mission trip to Japan since last August to engage in the “ministry of listening.” Each time the Lord seemed to have different purposes and tasks. This time I came away with a burden to look into the tragedy of the high suicide rate in Japan. Each year over 30,000 persons are known to commit suicide. At both of the workshops, I was led to discuss the use of effective listening as a tool to prevent a potential suicide. Everyone agreed that when a person who is in desperate pain cannot find anyone to talk to, the likelihood of suicide increases. It was reported to me that the suicide rate among the triple disaster victims in Japan was lower in 2011 than had been expected possibly due to the excitement and publicity of the rescue and recovery efforts immediately following the disaster. However, people are concerned that the suicide rate will go up as time grinds on with slow recovery from the aftermath of the disaster and people begin to lose hope and become discouraged.

As of this publication I am once again in Japan where I will present a listening workshop at the Harvest Time Leadership Training Retreat in Sizuoka. I remain open to the leading of the Lord as to what, if any, would be my next assignment.

Presentations/Events by AACCS

Apr 21-“Managing My Crazy Youth: Development, Spiritual Guidance, and Discipline,” Part 1 and Part 2, Parenting Conference, First Chinese Baptist Church, Los Angeles, Jenny Lu, LCSW

May 2 - “Growing in Emotional and Spiritual Maturity,” Epicentre Training School, Pasadena, Carol Miyake, LCSW

May 15 - “Time Management and Self Care,” Epicentre Training School, Pasadena, Carol Miyake, LCSW

May 17 - “Listening Seminar,” VIP International Club Christian Businessmen, Tokyo, Japan, Ken Yabuki, MFT

May 18 - “Ministry of Listening Training,” Christian Relief Assistance Support + Help (CRASH) staff and volunteers, Higashi Kurame, Japan, Ken Yabuki, MFT

Aug 12 - “Keeping Youth Safe from Risky Behaviors,” Youth Directors and Staff Training, Evergreen Baptist Church, San Gabriel Valley, La Puente, Vicky Kwan, LCSW

Oct 6 - “Parenting Seminar,” Bread of Life Church, English Parents Group, Torrance, Peggy Wang, MFT

Oct 12 - 20th Annual Art & Sharon Memorial Golf Tournament, Los Verdes Golf Course, Rancho Palos Verdes

Apr 21, 2013 - Afternoon of Kindness Luncheon, Almansor Court, Alhambra
Cerritos Office Clinical Staff
June Sano, MFT, Clinical Director

We are excited to introduce our Cerritos office clinical staff to you.

Those who are familiar with our Los Alamitos office clinical staff, will recognize many of the names, as they will all be relocating to our new Cerritos office location. Also, the other clinical staff members who will be joining are from our Alhambra office location. We are looking forward to our ministry in this new location. We are so blessed as to how the Lord provided this opportunity to us.

Emi Konuma Bojan is an MFT intern. She provides counseling services for children, individual adults, couples and families. She works with cross-cultural adjustment issues, depression, anxiety and substance abuse concerns. Emi is bilingual Japanese speaking.

Amy Lee is an LCSW. She provides counseling for children, adolescents, individual adults, couples and families. She works with school related issues as well as eating disorders. Amy has a limited capacity to speak and understand Cantonese.

Mike Mikulski is an MFT. He provides counseling with adolescents, individual adults, couples and families. Mike is bilingual Spanish speaking.

Rie Mizuki is a Clinical Psychologist. She provides counseling with individual adults, couples, families, missionaries and pastors. She works with issues of depression, parenting, premarital and ministerial evaluations. Rie is bilingual Japanese speaking.

Jennifer Oh is an MSW Associate. She provides counseling with adolescents, individual adults, families and deals especially with self-esteem issues, eating disorders and anxiety disorders. She is bilingual Korean speaking.

Jane Shintaku is an MFT. She provides counseling with adults and couples and deals with anxiety, depression, grief and loss, transitions, identity and self-esteem issues.

Jean Un is an LCSW. She provides counseling with young adults, individual adults and couples. She works with parenting issues, depression, and eating disorders. Jean is bilingual Korean speaking.

New Cerritos Office
AACCS is relocating its Los Alamitos office in August to the City of Cerritos. Our new address is 11879 Del Amo Boulevard, east of Pioneer Boulevard. The office remains “By Appointment Only” by calling our main office at 626-457-2900.
20TH ANNUAL ART & SHARON YOKOI MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

October 12, 2012
Los Verdes Golf Course
7000 West Los Verdes Drive
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
1:00 PM Shotgun Start

$125 registration before September 4
$150 after September 4

For more information on sponsorship opportunities or registration:
www.aaccs.org or 626.457.2900 ext. 355

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