

**2017 United Chinese Americans UCA
Illinois Chapter Year End Report
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Executive Summary

United Chinese Americans (UCA) is a nationwide 501(c)(3) non-profit and nonpartisan organization. It is a federation of organizations and individuals dedicated to enriching and empowering Chinese American communities through civic participation, heritage sharing, youth development, and promoting greater understanding between the United States and China. UCA is igniting a civic movement among Chinese American communities through its expanding chapters, community partners, and coalition members. The movement is driven by the UCA motto “Serve, Lead, Inspire”, and based on our values of compassion, service, integrity, collaboration, fairness, and humanity.

As the first chapter of UCA national, an independent 501(c)(3), UCA IL is an all-volunteer organization. UCA IL began with its founding president, Lily Chen, collaborating with UCA leadership and inviting dedicated community leaders representing a diverse background and ethnicities in government, non-profit, small business, and education to be its first year interim board members. The executive team continued to invest time in recruiting motivated committee leaders and volunteers, planning various programs, events, and fundraisers. The mission of UCA IL is to serve and build up our community through well-thought-out and impactful programs according to the needs of the community.

In its inaugural year, UCA IL fulfilled the promise to serve and build up our community, and organized multiple programs and initiatives in the areas of civic engagement, culture sharing, and youth development. Over 1000 community members from toddlers to seniors participated in our programs, and over 11,000 people were exposed to UCA IL events and services. UCA IL events and volunteers were featured in 30 news reports including multiple Chinese newspapers, WeChat blogs, Wenxue City, mainstream local TV and radio stations, and organization news. UCA IL is well-recognized and respected in the community and successfully built strong relations with many Chinese American organizations in Chicagoland.

UCA IL volunteers have contributed over 6,000 volunteer hours in organizing its events and initiatives, building infrastructure, and maintaining its operations with the highest standards. UCA IL has a wide community support network through partnerships with more than 29 organizations and government entities for its events, initiatives, and services. UCA IL would like to acknowledge and thank the multiple foundations, sponsorships, in-kind donations, and members in support of programming and events.



A. UCA IL 2017 Program Reports

1. Lunar New Year Jiaozi Festival

In January, UCA launched a Chinese Lunar New Year Initiative “Jiaozi Festival” to introduce public service and charity into the traditional holiday celebration. UCA IL led the way by organizing a small scale neighborhood Jiaozi party with 30 attendees and collected and donated over 2000 cough drops to The Hesed House, a local homeless shelter in Aurora. On January 28, Lunar New Year’s Day, UCA IL organized a large scale Jiaozi Festival at Willow Creek Community Church with dumpling making, family arts and crafts activities, Chinese dance performances, and collected canned food for a local food bank called Loaves and Fishes. The event was attended by over 450 participants with special guests: Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, Illinois Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti, Illinois State Representative Theresa Mah, People’s Republic of China Consul, and UCA National President Haipei Shue. The festival was supported by many local Chinese businesses and supporters with cash donations and in-kind food and gift donations. Over 100 volunteers participated in the two month planning process that included activity planning, food transportation and preparation, decoration, stage production, and serving food during the day of the event. The Jiaozi Festival was reported by 8 local Chinese newspapers and online reports including a Wenxie City cover story with over 70,000 readers. The Jiaozi Festival was widely praised by the community and families enjoyed the activities, adding a new meaning to the traditional celebration.

2. “Asian Parents and American Children” Parenting Conference

In April 2017 UCA and UCA IL co-organized the “Asian Parents and American Children” conference, addressing the emotional needs and mental health issues among Asian American youth. The Calvin Jia-Xin Li Foundation and Midwest Asian Health Association co-sponsored the event. Two Harvard Chinese American child psychiatrists from Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness and two youth and parenting experts were featured as keynote speakers. Participants viewed the film trailer for “Looking for Luke”, a story of parents trying to understand why their passionate and brilliant son, a Chinese American Harvard sophomore chose to take his own life. Following the trailer, the executive producer and fellow panelists discussed the importance of stress, communication, and emotional wellness. In a separate panel discussion with three panelists including a college student, teacher, and the first Chinese-American state representative, they shared their stories about what it was like growing up as a Chinese American. The conference drew 250 participants including many parents from coast to coast, and was live-streamed with over 300 viewers and video archived on both UCA and UCA IL websites. Over 16,000 readers and viewers were reached with pre-conference video promotion and after conference media reports on UCA WeChat blogs and local Chinese newspapers. The overwhelming positive response



from verbal feedback and written evaluations validated the urgent needs of our community for programs that can help our youth and families.

3. Volunteerism and Community Service

With its motto “Serve, Lead, Inspire” UCA IL chapter organized multiple volunteer service activities for youth to participate during the summer of 2017 and partnered with many Chinese American organizations and senior housing buildings. All service events drew over 100 high school students and parent volunteers. Service projects included collecting historic significant events to contribute to the UCA Interactive Chinese American Heritage Map, bringing 45 seniors to a classical music concert, performing music for seniors at senior housing buildings, co-organizing and attending hearings to advocate for a new high school in Chinatown, recruiting water station volunteers for the Chicago marathon, organizing and serving food at events, and providing logistical help and customer service for an open-air concert “Friendship Lasts Forever” with over 10,000 concertgoers in Chicago’s Millennium Park.

An UCA IL volunteer was nominated in November as the “Neighbor of the Month” in the city of Naperville and the story was featured on Naperville Channel 17 TV station and website. UCA IL partnered with Northern Illinois University’s School of Nursing and a local church to bring Santa and health education to seniors in senior buildings during the Christmas season. The story was featured in the NIU College of Health and Sciences News.

UCA IL is a certified Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) site by Illinois Department on Aging with volunteers participating in SHIP training programs to become certified counselors. The volunteers then conducted multiple one on one Medicare counseling to help seniors with Medicare enrollment. As a community partner, UCA IL participated in the Chinatown Medicare seminar presented by AARP and was attended by over 100 seniors. UCA IL volunteers also conducted monthly blood pressure checks in a senior building.

4. Youth Tutoring Program

UCA IL collaborated with Cornerstone Education (CsEdu) for the second year in a row, where Chinese international high school students tutored math and Chinese to Valentine Boys & Girls Club after-school program students on a weekly basis in Chicago’s Bridgeport. The students also tutored Chinese students at the Beverly Area Planning Association. The program served around 60 students from a 4-year-old to 70-year-old senior. This year, the tutoring service expanded to Oak Lawn St. Germaine School. The program has grown so popular that students are added to a waitlist. The tutoring program promoted service, culture sharing, and established great relationships with local communities.



5. Community Advocacy

UCA IL executive team members collaborated with other Chicago Chinatown civic organizations and actively participated in advocating for a new Chicago Chinatown high school. UCA IL members and volunteers attended Chicago Public Schools' board meetings, helped mobilize hundreds of community members to attend two hearings and community input sessions, spoke at the hearings held at the future high school site, as well as being interviewed by a local radio station.

6. Civic Leadership Forum (CLF)

In May 2017 UCA IL hosted CLF Foundation's Executive Director for a two-day tour exploring the possibility of UCA IL as a grantee for organizing civic leadership forum (CLF) series. The UCA IL President scheduled many meetings with local community leaders, elected school board members, State Representative Theresa Mah's office, and UCA IL executive team, and volunteers to secure the funding of being the organizer and grantee for the UCA CLF series working with UCA leadership. In Fall of 2017, with the generous seed grant and support from CLF Foundation, UCA successfully organized four Civic Leadership Forums in Milwaukee, WI, Twin Cities, MN, Chicago, IL and Salt Lake City, UT. All four CLF series drew over 250 community activists, civic leaders, and many youth. Participants and local communities were impressed and inspired by the wide range of speakers and panelists. All four CLF series were reported on by local media, and video will be archived and available online soon along with post-forum survey results.

7. UCA IL Fundraising

UCA IL received grants and sponsorships from the following organizations in 2017:

- CLF Foundation
- Calvin Jia-Xin Li Foundation
- Midwest Asian Health Association (MAHA)
- Julian Grace Foundation

UCA IL programs and initiatives were supported by many generous individual donors, some donating multiple times. We are grateful for their support and trust.

8. UCA IL Volunteer Hours

UCA IL core team of volunteers have logged in estimated at more than six thousand hours and countless volunteer hours from one-time event volunteers to ensure the success of programs and events for our community.



B. Community Partnerships

UCA IL strongly believes in establishing strong relationships and partnerships with other community organizations to build up our community. UCA IL has partnered with and/or supported the following 29 organizations for programs and events:

1. Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA) Chicago Lodge
2. Calvin Jia-Xin Li Foundation
3. MGH Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness
4. Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC)
5. Midwest Asian Health Association (MAHA)
6. State Representative Theresa Mah
7. Paul Hastings LLP
8. Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
9. Illinois Department on Aging Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP)
10. Association of Chinese-American Scientists and Engineers
11. Concordia University Chicago
12. Dongfang Performing Arts Association
13. Cornerstone Education (CsEdu)
14. Prominent Image
15. Bright Pei Consulting
16. Chicago International Youth Exchange
17. Willow Creek Community Church
18. Living Water Chinese Church
19. Global Federation of Business Women Chicago Chapter
20. Greater Chicago Chinese American Women Chamber of Commerce
21. Chicago Culture and Arts Society
22. Dongfang Chinese Education Institute
23. Organization for Parents/Patrons United Support (OPUS)
24. Northern Illinois University NIU School of Nursing
25. Shaw Legal Services. Ltd
26. Xilin Association
27. ICARE Senior Building
28. Peace Manor Senior Building
29. Chicago North Shore Chinese Center



C. UCA IL Media Reports

UCA IL events, programs, initiatives, and volunteers were covered in 30 Chinese and English newspapers, mainstream TV and radio stations, and organization newsletters that reached over tens of thousands of readers. Please visit the link below for a partial list of media reports (complete list to be updated soon) www.uca-il.org/news

D. Organizational Governance

UCA IL Chapter obtained IRS 501(c)(3) status on November 7, 2017. UCA IL first year interim board consisted of five board members who were appointed by its founding president, and has adopted its interim bylaws drafted by lawyers from Paul Hastings LLP. In 2018 the interim board will revise the bylaws and prepare for the UCA IL executive board official election by December 31, 2018. UCA IL is committed to the highest standards of organizational governance, financial transparency, and continuing its high-impact and high-quality programs in 2018 to enrich and empower communities.

E. Summary

In a very short time, UCA IL has successfully organized multiple events and initiatives with proven results to operationalize its vision enriching and empowering communities. 2017 has been an awesome year with UCA IL carrying out UCA's motto: Serve, Lead, and Inspire. We are extremely grateful for the most valuable assets of UCA IL of dedicated, passionate, and talented volunteers with hearts to serve, and the overwhelming support of the community. With the continuation of selfless service of our volunteers led by the UCA IL executive team, and support from our community partners, UCA IL is determined to revitalize and serve our community with enthusiasm in 2018 and beyond.

F. Acknowledgments

UCA IL would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the heart and soul of our new organization - our awesome volunteer executive team and volunteers: Ren Li (interim board secretary), Sandy Hui (administrative support), Hongbo Wang (program chair), Gracie Wu Lavitt (communication chair), Jing Kong (program co-chair), Katherine Wang (young professional council chair), Steve Hugh (interim board chair), Steve Wang (interim board treasurer), John K Holton (interim board vice chair), , Ivy Lam, Yaoming Pei, Jean Ma, Lucy Tung, Dr. William Wan, Meranda Ma, Gary Yang, Taylor Xia, Ada Tong, Nancy Tang, Sherri Liang-Zhou, Ken Li,



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Sherry Huang, Qiankun Xie, Kevin Zhou, Lily Liming McCarty, Mei Zheng, Wen Raiti, Fan Li, Jenny Long, Kaidi Hu, Candace Tang, and Wendy Xiong. The list is by no means exhaustive and we sincerely appreciate all of our dedicated volunteers of youth, parents, and community partners.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the following foundations and organizations for supporting UCA IL with grants and organization sponsorships: CLF Foundation (Anthony Ng), Calvin Jia-Xin Li Foundation (Paul Li), Midwest Asian Health Association (Hong Liu), and Julian Grace Foundation (Marjorie Moore).

Our sincere thanks goes to Paul Hastings LLP (Gabriella Pan) for their most professional and compassionate pro-bono legal services to UCA IL for obtaining IRS 501(c)(3) status.

Special awards were given to the following individuals and groups for the 2017 Jiaozi Festival: Outstanding Volunteer – Hongbo Wang; Outstanding Business Sponsor – Mala Restaurant (Linda Sui); Outstanding PR Support – Prominent Image (Gracie Wu Lavitt); Outstanding Volunteer Group – Dongliang Education; Outstanding Community Partner – Chinese American Citizens Alliance Chicago Lodge (Ivy Lam), Outstanding Performing Group – Chicago Culture and Arts Society; Outstanding Administrative Support – Sandy Hui; and Outstanding Creativity award – Jing Kong.

Finally, our heartfelt thanks to the UCA founding members and lifetime members for your generosity and trust: Linda Bi, Steven Wang, Jean Ma, Yan Bellatoni, Steven Hugh, Ren Li, Dr. William Wan, Gracie Wu Lavitt, Ivy Lam, Lucy Tung, Johnny Zheng, Jimmy Lei, Hong Liu, Linda Sui, Howard Wu, Anne Shaw, Lily Chen, Sharon Shi, Ling Liu, Sai Chang Xu, Lubo Zhou, Jie Hu, Jeff Li, and Ming Gui.

Wishing all UCA and UCA IL friends and supporters a happy and healthy new year!