Finding Aid to the Katie Quan Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) collection

Finding aid prepared by Wendy Welker
Labor Archives and Research Center
2019
San Francisco State University
J. Paul Leonard Library, Room 460
1630 Holloway Ave
San Francisco 94132-1722
larc@sfsu.edu
URL: http://library.sfsu.edu/larc
Title: Katie Quan Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) collection
Date (inclusive): 1988-1998
Creator: Quan, Katie
Physical Description: 3.75 Cubic Feet (3 cartons)
Collection number: larc.ms.0419
Accession number: 2016/003
Repository: Labor Archives and Research Center
J. Paul Leonard Library, Room 460
San Francisco State University
1630 Holloway Ave
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Abstract: Comprises notes, correspondence, memos, agendas, minutes, reports, convention materials, rosters, press material and other organizational documents collected and generated by Katie Quan in her role as a founding member of the Asian Pacific American Alliance (APALA). APALA, a nationwide organization of Asian Pacific American trade unionists formed under the auspices of the AFL-CIO, was created in response to the working conditions, concerns and aspirations of Asian Pacific American workers.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English.
Availability
Collection is open for research. Some material is restricted to protect personal identifiable information. Access restrictions are noted at the file level. Please contact the Director of the Labor Archives and Research Center for more information.
Acquisition
Donated by Katie Quan in 2016.
Arrangement
Arranged as received. Quan's folder titles were retained.
Biographical Note
Katie Quan, one of the leading Asian Americans in the U. S. labor movement, has been involved in the Asian American community since her student days at the University of California, Berkeley, when she worked with Oakland-based civil rights groups. In 1975, Quan moved to New York City and worked as a sewing machine operator in a Chinatown garment factory. She joined the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) that same year, and then became a shop steward in 1982. She went on to join the union staff as an educator and an organizer. During her years in New York City, Quan helped establish a day care center for garment workers and helped organize the Chinese Committee of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, a political and social group for Chinese seamstresses. She returned to San Francisco in 1990 to take on the position of manager of the Pacific Northwest District Council of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Union (UNITE), and in 1992 she was instrumental in establishing the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), a nationwide group of Asian Pacific unionists formed under the auspices of the AFL-CIO. She served as the vice president of APALA and international vice president of ILGWU and its successor, UNITE. Quan's husband, Richard Leung, president of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 87, was also a founding member of APALA and he served as its treasurer.
Historical Note
Founded in 1992 the Asian Pacific American Alliance (APALA) is the first and only National organization of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander (AAPI) workers, whose mission is to advance worker, immigrant and civil rights. In 1990, AAPI labor activists approached the AFL-CIO with a proposal to form a national AAPI group. A year later, the AFL-CIO Executive Council established a committee to explore the formation of a national AAPI labor group. The 37-member Steering Committee was formed from representatives of the three regional AAPI labor groups, the Hawaii State AFL-CIO, and seven founding unions. In 1992, over 500 labor activists from around the country convened in Washington, D.C. for the founding of APALA.
General
Some material is duplicated across series.
Preferred Citation
Finding Aid to the Katie Quan Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) collection, larc.ms.04192016/003, Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University.

**Processing information**

Collection was processed by Wendy Welker in 2019.

**Content Description**

Comprises notes, correspondence, memos, agendas, minutes, reports, convention materials, rosters, press material and other organizational documents collected and generated by Katie Quan in her role as a founding member of the Asian Pacific American Alliance (APALA). APALA, a nationwide organization of Asian Pacific American trade unionists formed under the auspices of the AFL-CIO, was created in response to the working conditions, concerns and aspirations of Asian Pacific American workers. The material in this collection evidences APALA’s focus on recruiting a new generation as labor organizers, forging labor-community alliances, supporting civil rights legislation, securing fair representation for Asian Pacific Americans at all levels of politics, and advancing Asian Pacific American political power.

**Restrictions**

Copyright has not been assigned to the Labor Archives and Research Center. All requests for permission to publish or quote from materials must be submitted in writing to the Director of the Archives. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Labor Archives and Research Center as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the reader.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Asian Americans -- Employment.
Pacific Islander Americans -- Employment.
Labor unions -- Organizing -- California.

**Series 1: Conventions and conferences 1989-1997**

**Physical Description:** 58 folders (Carton 1, folders 1-42; Carton 2, folders 1-16)

**Scope and Contents**

Contains convention and conference programs, budgets, reports, registration material, agendas, minutes, rosters, newsletters, correspondence, delegate selection documents, articles of incorporation, constitution and by-laws, memos, Quan’s notes, and press materials. The National Founding Convention files contain a significant amount of pre-founding material from when the Ad Hoc Committee of San Francisco Asian American trade union officers was creating an Asian Pacific American labor support group, sometimes called the Asian Pacific American Labor Committee. These pre-founding files contain documents on the AFL-CIO initiative to form a National Asian Pacific American Labor organization, the outlines of the organization and how it will be established, notes on putting together a National Steering Committee, and the process of planning a founding convention. The New York National Convention files include material on APALA’s response to proposed immigration reform legislation that would introduce cuts in legal immigration. The San Francisco National Convention files include a proposed organizing curriculum and a resources guide to rebuilding the labor movement.

**Arrangement**

Arranged as received.

- Founding National Convention, Washington D.C., 1992 April 30-May 2
  - Asian labor meeting notes (Pre-founding) 1990-1991
  - Asian Pacific American labor support material (Pre-founding) 1989-1992
  - Steering Committee of the Asian Pacific American Support Group (Pre-founding) 1991
  - Preparatory notes for June 21, 1991 Steering Committee meeting (Pre-founding) 1990-1991
  - Notes from June 21, 1991 Steering Committee meeting (Pre-founding) 1991
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder Details</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>carton 1, folder 7</td>
<td>Follow-up notes on June 21, 1991 Steering Committee meeting (Pre-founding) 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>carton 1, folder 8</td>
<td>Notes from September 1-2, 1991 Steering Committee meeting (Pre-founding) 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>carton 1, folder 9</td>
<td>Follow-up notes on September 1-2, 1991 Steering Committee meeting (Pre-founding) 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>carton 1, folder 10</td>
<td>Notes from October 25-26, 1991 Steering Committee meeting (Pre-founding) 1989-1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>carton 1, folder 11</td>
<td>Follow-up notes on October 25-26, 1991 Steering Committee meeting (Pre-founding) 1991-1992</td>
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<tr>
<td>carton 1, folder 12</td>
<td>Steering Committee rosters (Pre-founding) 1991</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 13</td>
<td>Asian Pacific American Labor Committee (APALC) Interim Coordinator search (Pre-founding) 1990-1991</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 15</td>
<td>Membership and Budget Subcommittee 1991</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 16</td>
<td>Preparatory notes for March 27-28, 1992 Steering Committee meeting 1991-1992</td>
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<td>Notes from March 27-28, 1992 Steering Committee meeting 1991-1992</td>
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<td>Follow-up notes on March 27-28, 1992 Steering Committee meeting 1991-1992</td>
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<td>Reception for Steering Committee 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 22</td>
<td>Convention call 1992</td>
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<td>Constitution and By-laws Subcommittee notes 1991-1992</td>
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<td>By-laws and articles of incorporation 1991</td>
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<td>Drafts of constitution 1991-1992</td>
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<td>Constitution 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 27</td>
<td>Convention roster 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 28</td>
<td>Convention agenda 1989-1992</td>
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<td>Convention rules 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 30</td>
<td>Convention notes 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 31</td>
<td>Convention correspondence 1991-1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 32</td>
<td>Convention materials 1992</td>
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<td>Convention materials (Loose contents from Katie Quan’s binder of convention materials) 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 34</td>
<td>Opening speech by Katie Quan 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 35</td>
<td>Convention resolutions 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folders 36-37</td>
<td>Convention press 1992</td>
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<td>carton 1, folders 38-40</td>
<td>National Convention, Los Angeles, 1993 August 19-22</td>
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<td>carton 1, folder 41</td>
<td>Constitution Committee 1993</td>
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<td>carton 1, Folder 42, carton 2, folders 1-2</td>
<td>Delegates and registration 1993</td>
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<td>carton 2, folders 3-4</td>
<td>Convention materials 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carton 2, folders 36-37</td>
<td>Leadership and Education Conference, Seattle, 1994 August 5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carton 2, folders 38-40</td>
<td>Conference materials 1993-1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carton 2, folders 3-4</td>
<td>National Convention, New York City, 1995 August 3-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series 1: Conventions and conferences 1989-1997

Constitution Committee 1995-1996

Scope and Contents
Folder includes one floppy disk containing constitution.

Convention materials 1994-1995

Organizing Asian Pacific Workers Conference, San Diego, 1996 August 2-4
Conference materials circa 1995-1996

National Convention, San Francisco, 1997 August 7-10

Constitution Committee 1997
Media Subcommittee 1997

Note on Contents
Folder includes four photographs taken during the convention, one of them showing APALA delegates demonstrating at Fisherman's Wharf against H and N Fish Company.

Constitution Committee 1997

Convention attendees 1997
Convention materials 1996-1997

Convention program 1997
Official Convention Materials booklet 1997

Series 2: Committees 1989-1994

Physical Description: 4 folders (Carton 2, folders 17-20)
Arrangement
Arranged as received.

Scope and Contents
Materials from various committees comprising correspondence, meeting agendas and notes, demographics material, membership brochures and statistics, reference material on organizing, and documents on the APALA and AFL-CIO Organizing Institute joint training project.

Membership Committee 1993-1994
AFL-CIO Asian Pacific American Labor Committee 1990
Los Angeles Regional Advisory Committee 1990


Physical Description: 2 folders (Box 2, folders 21-22)
Arrangement
Arranged as received.

Scope and Contents
Consists of memos, correspondence, minutes and agendas concerning Solidarity Day (August 31, 1991), and APALA's first cultural event with performances and activities (February 29, 1992). Includes Katie Quan's typed manuscript for her Solidarity Day speech and Solidarity Day stickers.

Solidarity Day 1991
APALA Cultural Event 1991-1992
Series 4: Chapters and other groups 1990-1998

Physical Description: 7 folders (Box 2, folders 23-29)

Arrangement
Arranged as received.

Scope and Contents
Contains various material from regional chapters of APALA and the Asian Labor Council and Alliance of Asian Pacific Labor. Includes applications for membership, membership lists and surveys, memos, agendas, minutes, announcements, event flyers, correspondence, and photocopies of published articles on APALA and Asian Pacific American issues. The Northern California Chapter material includes a proposed constitution and by-laws of the San Francisco Chapter, a flyer on how to build an APALA Chapter, short summaries of meetings in which members discussed the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute, lobbying on behalf of Wards Cove workers, and the Voting Rights Act. The San Francisco Chapter material includes memos on APALA scholarships, San Francisco Chapter work plans, support material on The Living Wage Initiative, and one copy of a letter to Bill Clinton opposing the elimination of government benefits for legal immigrants, and one copy of a letter to Edward Kennedy urging him to move the Justice for Wards Cove Act to the floor of the Senate. The Justice for Wards Cove Act sought to overturn the exemption of Asian Pacific American workers at Wards Cove Cannery from the redress provided for in the Civil Rights Act of 1991. The Los Angeles Chapter material includes notices concerning the human trafficking case involving Thai workers at the makeshift El Monte garment factory and APALA’s involvement in assisting the workers. It also contains a bulletin and support material highlighting APALA’s opposition to Proposition 187 (“Save Our State”), which denies government services to undocumented immigrants, an APALA brochure in five languages, and an announcement and agenda for a Conference on Labor’s Answer to Asian-Bashing. The Asian Labor Council material includes an outline and draft of a proposal for an Asian Labor Council by the San Francisco Ad Hoc Committee. The Alliance of Asian Pacific Labor material includes notice of AAPL’s joining with the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 11 to boycott Hyatt Hotels in Los Angeles, a summary report on the impact of a growing number of Asian Pacific workers in various California industries, and an emergency appeal to support the striking workers of Radio Korea in July, 1991.

carton 2, folder 23  Northern California Chapter 1991-1995
carton 2, folder 24  San Francisco Chapter 1991-1998
carton 2, folder 25  Los Angeles Chapter 1992-1996
carton 2, folder 26  Orange County Chapter 1992
carton 2, folder 27  New York Chapter 1992-1993
carton 2, folder 28  Asian Labor Council circa 1990-1991
carton 2, folder 29  Alliance of Asian Pacific Labor (AAPL) 1990-1992

Physical Description: 28 folders (Carton 2, folders 30-34; Carton 3, 1-23)

Scope and Contents
Consists primarily of material relating to the National Executive Board, including procedures for Nominations Committee, configuration of the Board, proposal for Executive Board membership, documents used in Executive Director search, specific Board meetings, and general Board files. Also contains meeting agendas; budget proposals; financial statements and reports; drafts of constitution and by-laws; convention resolutions, job announcements; demographics statistics; campus recruitment plans; labor surveys; minutes with summaries on civil rights issues, community outreach, chapter development, and organizing topics, including APALA/AFL-CIO Organizing Institute and Union Summers educational internship in union organizing. Includes memos on the enactment of the Voting Rights Act, endorsements of Bill Clinton for president; drafts of article written by Quan about unions; joint statement of Asian Pacific American Organizations on The Reintroduction of the Justice for Wards Cove Workers Act, delivered by Matthew Finucane, Executive Director of APALA, on March 2, 1993 in Washington, D.C.; draft of advertisement opposing the Immigration Control and Financial Responsibility Act of 1996; and briefing paper on growing anti-immigrant sentiment and resulting scapegoating through legislation, and APALA's intention to fight anti-immigrant backlash and support immigrant rights. This series also contains a folder on Secretary-Treasurer Pat Lee, which contains copies of publications she wrote or on which she contributed, and a folder on Tony Sarmiento, Assistant Director of AFL-CIO Education Department, which consists of biographical material.

Arrangement
Arranged as received.

carton 2,
Folder 30
carton 2,
folders 31-32
carton 2,
folders 33-34,
carton 3,
folders 1-2
carton 3, folder 3
carton 3, folder 4
carton 3, folder 5
carton 3, folder 6
carton 3, folder 7
carton 3, folder 8
carton 3, folder 9
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carton 3, folder 23

Executive Board composition 1991

Executive Director search 1991-1992

Executive Board 1992-1996

Executive Board meeting, 1993 April 2 1993
Executive Board meeting, 1994 March 4-5 circa 1990-1994
Executive Board meeting, 1995 March 10-11 1990-1995
Executive Board meeting, 1995 August 3 circa 1990-1995
Executive Board meeting, 1996 March 15-16 1995-1996
Executive Board meeting, 1996 August 2 1996
Executive Board meeting, 1997 August 10 1997
Executive Board meeting, 1995-1997 March 14 1995-1997
Executive Board meeting, 1998 March 26 1997-1998
Labor surveys 1988-1991
Demographics statistics 1989-1991
APALA brochure and other material in Chinese circa 1990-1995
Drafts of pamphlet, _Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in the Work Force_ 1991
Labor network and outreach 1990
Media coverage 1991-1993
Article by Katie Quan for _Amerasia Journal_ 1991
Lee, Pat 1985-1990
Sarmiento, Tony 1989-1993
Sweatshop Watch's Garment Workers Calendar 1998
General 1993-1994