

Celebrating the Dragon New Year with the Intergenerational Storytelling Exhibition

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, UNITED STATES, March 15, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Led by Asian Media Access and in collaboration with the Asian Community Center and Legacy Adult Daycare Center, we had been hosting the 'Intergenerational Storytelling' Arts Project since mid-2023. The final exhibition was scheduled to coincide with the 2024 Lunar New Year period, celebrating the Year of the Dragon. Below is the information for the month-long exhibition:

- Jan. 27 – Feb 7th, 2024 at the St. Paul State Capitol's North Corridor with the exhibition hours: Mon – Fri 8am – 5pm, and Sat 10am – 3pm.
- Feb 8th – Feb 25th, 2024 at St. Paul Union Depot's Lobby Area, 214 4th Street East Saint Paul, MN 55101, with following exhibition hours: Mon – Sunday 8am – 5pm

A total of 3,000 audience came through during the one month of the exhibition.

Our project invited 2 intergenerational teams in working with us through:

- 5 pairs of Chinese American seniors and youth meet regularly to share immigration stories or folktales. The youth and seniors then reflect on these conversations, incorporating them into



Seniors and youth participants at the Intergeneration Storytelling Exhibit Opening Ceremony



Intergenerational Storytelling Exhibition at St. Paul Union Depot

their artwork to tell intergenerational stories.

- 4 pairs of Hmong American seniors and youth to meet regularly to do Hmong Pandau together (Paj Ntaub: Textile Techniques of the Hmong), and seniors and youth then use the technique to create the Hmong village story or American daily life experience.

With a total of 34 art works presented at the Exhibition, the hope: 1) to develop a platform through drawings and storytelling to engage Asian Americans showcasing their rich cultural traditions and struggles; and 2) to diversify opportunities for society at large to learn and appreciate Asians' contribution, and mitigate the Anti-Asian hate incidents.



Over the course of one month, the exhibition drew in a total of 3,000 visitors

One of the highlights is our Hmong American Elders have worked together to finish the large piece to depict the Hmong Village Lives from Laos; helping the Americans during the Viet Nam conflict, and fleeing through Mekong River to Thailand, then landed in America. Collectively, this story cloth - perhaps we should say "history cloth" documenting the salient events in Hmong history, and showcasing the Hmong Elders' claim of HOME. Our Hmong American youth have used the traditional stitches skills to portray the modern American life, a very different look to what Hmong Youth's claim of HOME, stories showcasing shopping at a supermarket, play with dog in a snowy forest, or a family together watching TV. Although very different pictorial narratives, but same artistic beauty in the way of storytelling!

Our Chinese American pair consists of Elder Gao Zhenfang (高真芳) and Youth Samuel Wang (王圣明), who showcase the theme of 'The Generational Differences of Life Expectations.' Elder Gao, valuing family deeply, shares numerous life stories with Sam. Actively participating in various activities, she enriches her life and learning, making it colorful. Delighting in imparting her wisdom to Sam, they both share many joyful moments in their daily lives. Elder Gao is particularly interested in showcasing 'Generational Differences in Life Expectations' and exploring how filiality and love can serve as solutions to intergenerational conflicts.

One of youth participants, Sophie Cue, says the best, "People often underestimate teenagers and seniors. They think we're too young or too old, but the people in this room prove otherwise. These paintings and drawings are not only beautiful, but they convey meaning and emotion too. I would say they tell stories, not only stories about each of our lives, but about how hard everyone has worked for this over the past few months."

Indeed, a very successful endeavor for all parties involved. For the next step, Asian Media Access is considering to set up a web site to capture the "Intergenerational Storytelling Exhibition"- its process, creations and reflections. For more information: 612-376-7715, amamedia@amamedia.org.

<Background Information>

Asian Media Access, a community-based organization dedicated to using community organizing multimedia and technology for social betterment, especially in Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities with high concentrations of immigrants and refugees. The mission of Asian Media Access is to "connect the disconnected". To get connected with AMA, please visit www.amamedia.org, and Like our Facebook page, "Asian Media Access".

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