

TeachAAPI Names Maya Dharwarkar and Iva Shah as First Co-Chairs of the Board of Directors

Longtime board members will guide TeachAAPI's next phase of growth and maturity as the organization expands national reach and deepens impact in AAPI education



LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES,

November 5, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [TeachAAPI](#), the non-profit organization dedicated to weaving Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) stories into America's educational fabric, today announced the appointment of Maya Dharwarkar and Iva Shah as the organization's first co-chairs of the Board of Directors. Both have served on TeachAAPI's board for several years and have been instrumental in shaping its strategic direction, helping guide the organization from its grassroots beginnings to a nationally recognized leader in AAPI education.

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Ann Kono and Renee Yang, co-founders of TeachAAPI

This leadership milestone reflects TeachAAPI's continued growth and maturation as an organization—defining key governance roles that will strengthen its long-term

sustainability, deepen its partnerships, and ensure thoughtful stewardship as it scales to reach more schools, districts, and communities across the country.

Maya Dharwarkar, a founding board member, has been with TeachAAPI since its inception in 2021, helping to shape the organization's curriculum framework, Educator Advisory Board, and foundational program strategy. Since TeachAAPI's founding, she has been a key leader in developing and expanding the organization's novel and shelf-ready programming. As TeachAAPI enters its next chapter, Maya will help drive collaboration among the organization's talented and passionate board members to deepen its national impact and extend its reach to more public schools and districts.

In addition, Maya will focus on and is committed to deepening TeachAAPI's allyship efforts, recognizing that its programming is designed for—and benefits—all students, educators, and

school administrators, regardless of background.

“TeachAAPI’s mission is deeply personal to me,” said Dharwarkar. “Education has the power to shape identity and understanding, and when we include AAPI stories in that narrative, we help every student feel seen and valued. It’s not just about teaching history—it’s about building empathy, allyship, and belonging for generations to come.”

Outside of TeachAAPI, Maya is a litigation attorney at Roll Law Group, which provides legal services and counseling to The Wonderful Company and affiliated entities. After graduating from UCLA and Harvard Law School, she began her legal career at a major firm in New York before returning to her native Los Angeles. A lifelong learner and mother of two children who attend Brentwood School and Harvard-Westlake, Maya remains deeply involved in her alma maters and the broader educational community.

Iva Shah joined TeachAAPI in 2022, initially serving on its Advisory Board. Guided by the belief that all children deserve windows, mirrors, and sliding doors into one another’s stories, she quickly became an instrumental voice in expanding TeachAAPI’s reach and programming. As co-chair of the Programming Committee, Iva helped plan and execute the organization’s Cultural Roadshow and launched its first-of-its-kind Affinity Group Toolkit—a resource designed to help students and faculty advisors build meaningful affinity spaces and explore identity-based topics such as the Model Minority Myth and Civic Discourse.



Iva Shah



Maya Dharwarkar

“TeachAAPI’s work reminds us that representation isn’t just about inclusion—it’s about

connection,” said Shah. “When students see themselves and their peers reflected in what they learn, it builds empathy, understanding, and belonging that extend far beyond the classroom.”

Professionally, Iva has built a career in consumer products licensing, focusing on storytelling that authentically reflects diverse audiences and families. She serves as Senior Director of Apparel & Retail at OneTeam Partners, representing professional and collegiate athletes across major sports associations. Previously, she led apparel programs at Disney and Pixar, including the global Frozen 2 launch, and held senior roles at Group Nine Media and Mattel, where she managed franchise planning for the Barbie movie. Iva earned both her BA and MBA from Northwestern University and serves on the West Coast Board of the American India Foundation (AIF) and the Groton School Women’s Network.

“Iva and Maya each embody TeachAAPI’s mission to build a more inclusive American story,” said Ann Kono and Renee Yang, co-founders of TeachAAPI. “Their vision for strategic, long-term growth—anchored in relationships that bridge education, community, and culture—will help propel TeachAAPI into its next phase of national expansion. Their leadership ensures we continue to grow with purpose and integrity as we bring AAPI stories to students in every state.”

As TeachAAPI prepares for its fourth annual [Palate for Learning Gala](#) on December 3 at the SLS Hotel in Beverly Hills, the organization remains focused on strengthening its foundation for national growth. With Shah and Dharwarkar’s continued guidance, TeachAAPI will build enduring and strategic relationships to advance its goal of reaching one million students by 2028 through inclusive, high-impact educational programming.

For TeachAAPI
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