Yul Kwon, Dion Lim, Deborah Liu, Evan Low, Dave Lu Join 1990 Institute's 2026 Roots & Wings Youth Symposium

Asian American trailblazers across media, technology, entrepreneurship, education, and mental health share lessons on leadership, identity, and resilience.

SAN MATEO, CA, UNITED STATES, September 10, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The 1990 Institute today announced the speaker lineup for its second annual Roots & Wings Youth Symposium, bringing accomplished Asian American leaders across media, technology, entrepreneurship, education, mental health and public service together with the next generation on Saturday, September 19, 2026, at the College of San Mateo.

Held under the theme "Pathways to Empowerment," the free, full-day symposium is designed for youth ages 14–21, alongside parents and educators, with programming focused on the real-world questions young people face as they navigate identity, resilience, career choices, financial confidence, and a rapidly changing world.

The day will open with a Trailblazer Keynote Panel featuring Dion Lim, Emmy Award-winning journalist, author and activist; Deborah Liu, Co-Founder of Ember AI and former CEO of Ancestry; Evan Low, President and CEO of LGBTQ+ Victory Fund; and Dave Lu, Founder of Hyphen Capital. The conversation will bring together leaders whose careers span journalism, technology, entrepreneurship, and public service to share the experiences and choices that shaped their paths.

Throughout the day, participants can choose from career conversations and hands-on workshops built around the challenges and opportunities facing today's young people.

Career Pathfinder Conversations will introduce students and young adults to leaders including

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>
> *Lisa Hsu, 2026 Roots & Wings Youth Symposium Co-Chair*

Steven Kan, Other Bets Director at Alphabet; Rajen Sheth, Founder of Kyron Learning; Thien Pham, cartoonist, illustrator and educator; Sora Lee, CEO of Korean skincare brand JIYU and Founder of Hustle & Heart, a functional wellness brand; Andrew Chau, founder of Boba Guys; Cameron N. Sasai, Mayor of Pinole, CA; Maggie Xie, Executive Director of Red Envelope Collective; and Hudson Liao and Zeien Cheung, co-founders of Asians Are Strong.

The symposium's Life Skills Workshops will turn those larger conversations into practical tools participants can take with them. Jia Jiang, CEO and Owner of Rejection Therapy, author and entrepreneur, will lead "The Pivot: Turning Rejection into Your Secret Superpower." John Wang, author and podcast host of Big Asian Energy and Founder of Mastery Academy, will explore how culture and identity shape your authentic voice and personal brand. Lindsay Bryan-Podvin, Founder of Mind Money Balance, will lead an intergenerational conversation on money stories and building financial confidence.

Parents and educators will have dedicated programming as well, with experts including Dr. Rona Hu of Stanford Hospital; Dr. Helen Hsu of Stanford University Counseling & Psychological Services; Dr. Gwenn Lei of the San Mateo County Office of Education; Stacey Wang, CEO of Yu Ming Charter School; Jeremy Chan-Kraushar, Senior Advisor at The Asian American Education Project (AAEdu); and participants from YURI Education Project and GoodforMedia. Programming will explore topics including edu-tech, social studies, multilingual learning, and youth and social media.

The day will culminate with a keynote fireside chat featuring Yul Kwon, Vice President and General Manager, Paradigms of Intelligence at Google, technology leader and the first Asian American winner of Survivor. Kwon will bring the day's themes together through a conversation about leadership, identity, and navigating a non-linear path to success.

"Our speakers represent so many different paths to leadership and success, and we want young people to see that there is no single roadmap for their future," said Lisa Hsu, 2026 Roots & Wings Youth Symposium Co-Chair.

"By connecting students directly with leaders who have navigated challenges, taken risks and built careers across industries, we hope they leave Roots & Wings with greater confidence in what's possible—and practical tools and relationships to help them chart their own path," added Sandra Pan, Co-Chair.

Beyond the stage, Roots & Wings is designed to create space for conversations that don't always happen in classrooms or around the dinner table. Youth, parents and educators will explore

evolving ideas of success, emotional well-being, identity, money, technology and purpose while building stronger connections across generations.

The 2026 Roots & Wings Youth Symposium will take place Saturday, September 19, 2026, at the College of San Mateo Theatre, beginning with breakfast and registration at 8:15 a.m. and programming through 5:00 p.m. Attendance is free.

Youth, parents and educators may reserve their spots by registering here. The first 60 youth participants who register will also be eligible to receive two tickets to the San Francisco Giants vs. Minnesota Twins game on Monday, September 21, 2026, at 6:45 p.m. at Oracle Park in San Francisco.

MEDIA INFORMATION

Members of the media are invited to attend the 2026 Roots & Wings Youth Symposium. Credentialed press will have access to designated event programming and photo opportunities, with select speakers, guests, and 1990 Institute representatives available for interviews during designated media-accessible portions of the program. To preserve a safe space for participants, certain breakout sessions and community conversations will remain private and closed to media coverage.

Media Arrival and Check-In: Saturday, September 19, at 8:30 a.m. at the registration desk in front of the College of San Mateo Theatre.

Interview and Photo Opportunities: Select speakers, guests, and 1990 Institute representatives will be available for interviews and photo opportunities during designated media-accessible portions of the program, including breakfast and registration (8:15–8:45 a.m.); opening remarks (8:45–8:55 a.m.); the Trailblazer Keynote Panel (8:55–10:05 a.m.); special film presentation (10:05–10:25 a.m.); lunch (approximately 11:35 a.m.–12:25 p.m.); afternoon special film presentation (3:40–4:00 p.m.); and the Keynote Fireside Chat (4:00–4:45 p.m.).

To request media credentials, schedule an interview, or receive additional information, please contact Sandra Pan at ys@1990institute.org with “2026 Youth Symposium Media Request” in the subject line.

ABOUT THE 1990 INSTITUTE

Rooted in its 36-year history, the 1990 Institute is a San Francisco-based 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to championing the equitable treatment and advancement of Asian Americans and promoting a deeper understanding of contemporary China through educational programming and collaborative leadership networks. Learn more at: www.1990institute.org.

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