



AAPI Young Leaders Summit 2020

Day IV: Entrepreneurship

Thursday, July 23, 2020 @ 4 PM ET

This session will be divided into two panel discussions – “Starting Your Own Business” and “Doing Business with the Government”. Hear from successful AAPI entrepreneurs on how they got started, their key to success and how they have been navigating the current challenges. Be ready to be inspired by our speakers and learn how you can take advantage of resources and opportunities from federal government as well as how to do business with the federal government.

AGENDA

Welcome Remarks

Tina Wei Smith, Executive Director, White House Initiative on AAPIs

Introduction of Moderator

Daniel Kim, WHIAAPI Intern

Introduction of Panel Discussions on *Entrepreneurship: Starting Your Own Business*

Ben Raju, District Director for the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Los Angeles District Office & WHIAAPI Regional Network Co-Lead

Panel I: *Starting Your Own Business*

- Lavanya Jawaharlal, President & Co-Founder, Stem Center USA
- Teddy Liaw, CEO, NexRep
- Frances Luong, Co-Founder/Managing Partner, Reverb Marketers
- Ian So, CEO, Chicken & Rice Guys

Panel II: *Doing Business with the Government*

- Dr. Paul Hsu, Founder, Hsu Educational Foundation
- Dottie Li, Founder/CEO, TransPacific Communications
- Tony Tang, Director, ASIAN, Inc./San Jose Minority Business Center (DOC/MBDA)
- Van Tran, Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Business Development, US Small Business Administration (SBA)

SELECTED SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Ben Raju

District Director
U.S. Small Business Administration's Los Angeles District Office &
WHIAAPI Regional Network Co-Lead

Ben Raju is the District Director for the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Los Angeles District Office. Mr. Raju is responsible for providing the leadership, management and oversight required to optimize the deployment of all SBA programs and services within the nation's largest lending market.

During his Federal career, Mr. Raju has represented the SBA in various capacities throughout the United States, including Assistant District Director of Lender Relations, Collateral Cashier, Customer Service Representative, and as a Public Information Officer with SBA's Office of Disaster Assistance where he was responsible for communicating the agency's Disaster Loan Program for the Western United States and the U.S. Pacific Territories. While he is passionate about utilizing his experience and assisting the diverse small business communities, Mr. Raju engages the District's many resources, ideas, industries, and cultures to create a strong eco-system where commerce can continue to thrive locally and have a dynamic influence globally.



Lavanya Jawaharlal President & Co-Founder Stem Center USA

Lavanya Jawaharlal is the President and Co-Founder of STEM Center USA, a K-12 robotics and education company. She received her Mechanical Engineering degree from the University of California – Berkeley, where she served as the Executive Vice President of the student body. Lavanya also served on the national board of ACE NextGen - a millennial Asian entrepreneurship organization operating in Los Angeles, Houston, and Boston.

Lavanya and her sister are focused on inspiring the next generation of STEM leaders through hands-on, engaging robotics and coding courses. They have been recognized for their work in STEM education by former Vice President Joe Biden and been featured on ABC's hit show "Shark Tank" in Season 7, Episode 6. On the episode, Lavanya received investment offers from Lori Greiner and Chris Sacca. Lavanya has spoken at several key events regarding diversity and inclusion within the STEM fields, including TEDxCPP and the national AAPI summit in Washington DC. STEM Center USA operates two locations in Southern California (Claremont & Rancho Cucamonga) and has plans for further expansion. During COVID-19, Lavanya has successfully pivoted her business operations to include virtual classes for students nationwide and created partnerships with local colleges to provide robotics and coding opportunities for underrepresented communities and children of migrant workers. In her spare time, Lavanya enjoys trail running, playing soccer, and scuba diving.



Teddy Liaw
CEO
NexRep

Teddy Liaw is the CEO of NexRep, a leader in work-at-home contact centers. With 6000+ US-based virtual agents on their platform, NexRep has the largest virtual contact center footprint in America, and they have been innovators in the work-at-home movement for over a decade. Teddy is a recognized pioneer and was appointed by California Governor Newsom on the CA Governor's Entrepreneur Task Force. Teddy has held roles at numerous companies, including Liveops, Levi Strauss and Company, Canon Computers, and Morgan Stanley. He founded Taiwanese American Professionals and Global Leadership Organization and serves on the Board of Leaders Forum. He doubled in Business Administration and Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley, where he was student body President and founded the Berkeley Asian American Association.



Frances Luong
Co-Founder/Managing Partner
Reverb Marketers

Frances Luong is the CEO and Co-Founder of Re:verb - a digital lead generation firm for medical practices and professional services. She began her career as a director of marketing in the hospitality industry, leading the marketing launch of what is now a multimillion-dollar concept, before starting Reverb in 2017 to refine and scale her customer generation methodology. Re:verb now generates leads at ticket values of up to six figures for its client roster under an AAPI female managed team. Frances particularly enjoys empowering the growth of AAPI women as team members and clients. Outside of work, she contributes to the AAPI community as an ACE NextGen Houston board member and national volunteer. She is a Posse Scholar and Freeman Scholar. She resides in Houston, TX.



Ian So
CEO
Chicken & Rice Guys

From 2012 to 2016, Ian has led Chicken & Rice Guys to be the 206th fastest growing private company in America (officially recognized by Inc 5000) and the 10th fastest in Massachusetts. He is not stopping there. Ian's goal is to be the first global food truck brand. And, with a 4-year growth rate of over 3,000%, his business is quickly on track for that global expansion. What started as one food truck the team bought on eBay, is now 5 trucks with permanent locations, 7 restaurants, and a multi-million-dollar catering business.

Chicken & Rice Guys has also won numerous awards and publications in the media including, 2017 Boston Business Journal's 2017 Fast 50 (Private Businesses), Boston Business Journal's 2016 Diversity in Leadership Award for Corporate Impact, Boston Eater's Hottest Restaurants of 2015, Thrillist's Best Food Trucks in Boston, Reader's Digest Nationally Top Ranked Food Truck, Boston A-List's Best Food Truck of 2013, 2014 and 2016, and has enjoyed top rankings Yelp.com.

Some of Ian's greatest accomplishments are winning Boston Business Journal's 2016 40 Under 40, winning Mayor Walsh's 2016 Spark Impact Awards, and Smart CEO's Future 50 2017 award.

Ian is frequently featured on the speaking circuit for his entrepreneurship. Notable appearances include sitting on a panel with Bizarre Food's Andrew Zimmern & Top Chef's Gail Simmons at Babson College's Food Day, and a guest on NBC's Asia Focus with Mary Sit. His most interesting speaking engagement was doing a reading with Pulitzer Prize winner Cerise Jacobs.

In his spare time, Ian is very active in the Asian community serving as a board member/leader for the Boston Asian Entrepreneurship Foundation, the Asian American Civic Association, and the Boston Hurricanes Athletic Club. He also recently joined the City of Boston's Food Truck Advisory Committee. To balance out all his hard work, Ian spends his free time doing yoga, meditating, hiking, biking, and his favorite past time, playing basketball.



Dr. Paul Hsu
Founder
Hsu Educational Foundation

Paul S. Hsu, Ph.D. serves as Chairman of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. An Engineer, Entrepreneur, Business Leader, Author and Public Servant, Paul is a first-generation immigrant who came to America in 1976, receiving citizenship in 1980, later successfully achieving his American Dream.

Paul founded Manufacturing Technology, Inc. (MTI) in 1984, serving the DoD in avionics and battlefield electronics. Following MTI, Paul built three successful businesses - Total Parts Plus, Inc., an internet based data content company providing electronic component obsolescence management and engineering services; ActiGraph, LLC, an electronic medical device manufacturer of a product that collects biometric data; and Crestview Technology Air Park, an airport development providing infrastructure for aerospace and technology driven solutions in Northwest Florida.

Previous Presidential Appointments and roles in public service include President's Export Council (PEC), SBA's National Advisory Board, SBA's Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Board, USAF Chief of Staff Civic Leaders Advisory Group, Associate Administrator of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Office of Government Contracting and Business Development.

Paul serves as National Chairman for the International Leadership Foundation, an organization bringing young Asian American leaders to Washington, D.C. for summer internships. As Founder and Chairman of HSU Educational Foundation Inc., Paul's vision has inspired establishment of HSU Innovation Institutes of learning, hosting business to student initiatives that inspire and prepare tomorrow's workforce with high demand skills.

Receiving an M.S. degree in 1978 from the University of Central Missouri in Industrial Management and System Engineering, Paul received his Ph.D. in 1992 in Engineering Management from LaSalle University and in 1995, completed a three-year Executive Educational Program at Harvard Business School. Since 2014, Paul holds a Sr. Research Fellow position in the Harvard University Asia Center. In 2014, Paul authored and published Guardians of the Dream, The Enduring Legacy of America's Immigrants.



Dottie Li
Founder/CEO
TransPacific Communications

Dottie Li, Founder and CEO of TransPacific Communications, has extensive global expertise in cross-cultural communication. Her path has taken her from China to the corridors of government, association and corporate power in Washington, D.C..

She moved from broadcast and print journalism to work as a corporate spokesperson and public relations executive. Then to the White House, handling media advance assignments around the country and the world for presidential trips. After her White House service, she served as a communications chief for several large national and international nonprofit organizations.

An important part of her mission with Transpacific Communications is helping to break down cultural barriers in the workplace, ensuring that talented individuals fulfill their promise. This simultaneously assists these government and private organizations to fulfill their mission by improving employee performance.

Sharing her expertise in cross-cultural communications, Dottie Li is active in the community, serving as a Commissioner on the Maryland Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs and as a Board Member of the Governor's Wellmobile Program Advisory Board in Maryland.

Dottie Li was named a Mandarin Leader in America in 2018 and was recognized as one of "Maryland's Top 100 Women" in both 2020 and 2015 for her "professional accomplishment, community leadership and mentoring" by *The Daily Record*. She was awarded an "Outstanding Chinese American" by the Alliance Cultural Media, Inc. in 2016. She is the recipient of the "Best Cross-Cultural Communicator of the Year" in 2013 by the and Washington Maryland Minority Companies Association.

She also testified in the House Small Business Committee as an 8(a) business owner. Dottie's voice can be heard by millions as the Voice (and Voice Coach) of Rosetta Stone's Mandarin products.

Dottie has been a guest on radio and television programs and her work has been profiled in several media outlets, including the NPR <http://ow.ly/zleK50ysGt7>, *China Daily* <http://ow.ly/PuWtC> and the *ALIST Magazine* <http://ow.ly/mlVtB> .

In addition to her devotion to cross-cultural communications, Dottie is an avid fitness enthusiast and has run 5Ks on several continents. She is a graduate of University of Mobile in Alabama and Hefei College in her native China.



Tony Tang
Director
ASIAN, Inc./San Jose Minority Business Center (MBDA)

Tony Tang is the Project Director for the San Jose Minority Business Development Agency. The MBDA is a technical assistance business center that promotes the growth of small, local, and minority owned businesses. In just a little over 5 years with the agency Tony has facilitated over \$500 Million in access to contracts and \$200 million in access to capital. Tony developed an early interest in Small Businesses from the 10 years he spent in Banking. With the knowledge he gained from his work experience and college education he was able to impact many MBE's.



Van Tran
Deputy Associate Administrator
Office of Business Development, Small Business Administration (SBA)

Van Tran is the Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Business Development, Small Business Administration (SBA). She leads the SBA workforce responsible for the 8(a) Business Development Program certification/continuing eligibility and business assistance. Her ability to quickly analyze complex situations and develop creative solutions is her trademark. Her focus is to consistently raise the bar of excellence in customer service.

With 20 years of federal service, Van joined the SBA in 2013 after serving 12 years with the General Services Administration (GSA) in various roles including Program Expert in the areas of business planning and performance management, and Branch Chief for the GSA's IT Schedule 70 Program. She played a key role in the \$16 billion GSA's IT Schedule 70 Program with its business development and strategic planning.

Van believes in the importance of self-growth and minority empowerment. She graduated from the Asian American Government Executives Network (AAGEN) Senior Executive Service Professional Development Program in 2017. She also served as the Executive Director on the AAGEN's Advisory Board from 2018 to 2019. Most recently, she participated on the SBA's White House Initiative for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in 2019. Van holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from American University, Washington, D.C..