

# Asian Commerce

MONEY • OUTREACH • NETWORKING

## Advantages of Leading as an APA



Sanjiv Sanghvi

with Wells Fargo's **Sanjiv Sanghvi**, San Francisco International and Tourism Development Director **William Lee**, and Vitria Technology's **Elizabeth Xu**.

**EVENT:** "Forefront of Globalism: Advantages of Multicultural Leadership"  
**DESCRIPTION:** The Corporate Asian American Employee Network 2007 annual panel discussion

## Women Doing The Work

**EVENT:** Women's Financial Conference — small business and personal financial planning

**DESCRIPTION:** Board of Equalization Chair **Betty Yee** and State Assemblyman **Sandre Swanson** will host a conference for women on personal budgeting, creditworthiness and predatory lending, and small business development.

**DETAILS:** Free, Sept. 5, 8:30 a.m. (registration), 9 a.m.—12:30 pm (conference), Elihu Harris State Building, 1515 Clay St., Oakland.

**CONTACT:** (415) 557-3000, RSVP1@boe.ca.gov

## Free Legal Advice

**EVENT:** "The Top Ten Pieces of Advice From Your Business Attorney"



Michelle Leu Zaccone

**DESCRIPTION:** Attorney **Michelle Leu Zaccone** of Carr, McClellan will provide **Asian American Contractors' Association** members and non-members with advice as a sub- or prime con-

tractor in the private sector or in public works.

**DETAILS:** \$10, Sept. 12, Four Seas Restaurant, 731 Grant Ave., San Francisco.

**CONTACT:** (415) 642-1818, aaca-sf.com

## Early Bird Catches AREEA

**EVENT:** "Tapping the Dynamic Asian Housing Market"

**DESCRIPTION:** The **Asian Real Estate Association of America** will host its second annual convention and gala focusing on APA housing and the international real estate market. Experts will share insights on understanding and marketing to Asian



American consumers.

**DETAILS:** Sept. 1 (early registration deadline), Nov. 11-13, The Bellagio, Las Vegas, Nev.

**CONTACT:** (760) 602-3232, areaa.org

## How's the Weather?

**EVENT:** "Real Estate Economic Review and Forecast"

**DESCRIPTION:** Leslie Appleton-

Young, vice president and chief economist for the California Association of Realtors, will update the **Chinese Real Estate Association of America** on how the rest of 2007 looks with the subprime mortgage market. Dinner will be provided.

**DETAILS:** \$18-23, Oct. 25, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Yet Wah Restaurant, 2140 Clement St., San Francisco.

**CONTACT:** (415) 252-2753, eva.hom@craa.com, Chinese-RealEstateAA.org

## Woo Joins Sedgwick

SAN FRANCISCO — **Woo & Associates**, a veteran of the city's complex housing battles, has joined Sedgwick, Detert, Moran & Arnold.

**Jeffery Woo**, a leading authority on

complex residential litigation, is now special counsel and leads the firm's new Complex Rental Property Litigation and Counseling Group.

Woo also brings in associates **David Blumenfeld**, **Harrison Nam**, **Scott Okamoto**, **Stanley Riddell** and **Stephen Sherman**.

They will represent clients in rental property disputes. Woo & Associates specialized in landlord-tenant issues, especially in the area of evictions.

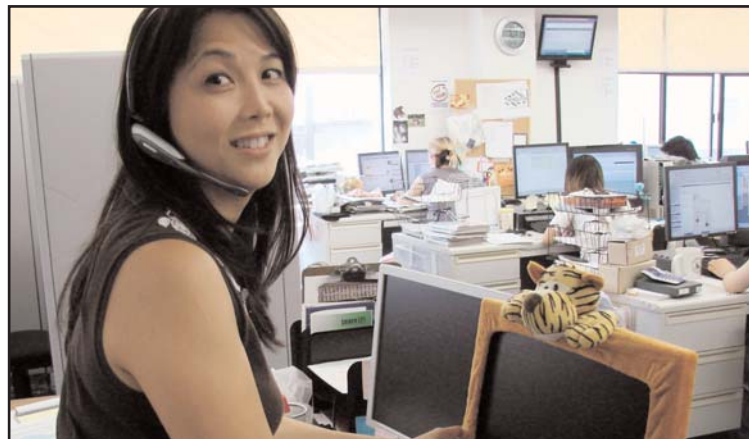
Woo, a former president of CREAA, is general counsel for the **Chinese Historical Society of America** and represented Asian American tenant class action suit in a S.F. public housing project. Woo is husband of **Shirley Tan**, president/CEO of online American Bridal Accessories.

# Minority Biz Group Honors Firms

BY SAMSON WONG

SAN FRANCISCO — A plump baby tiger's head perched on a computer monitor confirms **Shirley Tan's** instincts as she prepares to launch her new online baby product line. "All of these guys want one," said Tan, referring to her sales staff in computer stations taking orders for Tan's online company, **American Bridal Accessories**.

And posted on Tan's computer screen is her mantra: passion + focus = results. In seven years, 140,000 brides have come through the company; a Web search for



SAMSON WONG

*American Bridal Accessories CEO Shirley Tan will be honored as regional 'Minority Firm of the Year' at the Aug. 31 National Minority Enterprise Development Week awards.*

## Minority Enterprise Development Week's 25th Anniversary

The National Minority Enterprise Development Week will honor ten minority firms and marks 25 years since President Ronald Reagan's proclamation of the week in 1983. Among the APA firms, CEO **Shirley Tan** of **American Bridal Accessories** will be honored as regional "Minority Retail Firm of the Year." Other APA firms honored: President/CEO **Andrew Ly** of **Sugar Bowl** as "Supplier/Distributor Firm," **Vincent Agbayani** of **Agbayani Construction** as "Construction Firm."

"Celebrating the Legacy of Innovation And Competitiveness"  
Westin St. Francis Hotel  
330 Powell Street, San Francisco, CA  
Friday, Aug. 31, 2007  
6 pm networking reception  
7 pm awards banquet  
www.medweek.org

"wedding favors" or "bridesmaid gifts" finds **American Bridal** among the top three vendors. Ranging from engraved cufflinks to matching bathrobes, slippers embroidered with newlywed initials to Asian-themed cozies for wine bottles, **American Bridal** sells it.

On August 31, the 2007 San Francisco regional Minority Enterprise Development celebration will honor **American Bridal Accessories** as minority retailer of the year — a success story of the nascent Northern California Minority Business Enterprise Center.

The center, under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency, has provided more than 30 minority firms in 15 counties with management consulting, financing and procurement assistance and certification as minority/disadvantaged enterprises. The center is among 32 nationwide assisting minority businesses, including APA enterprises.

"We're here to help [minority businesses] go to the next level,"

said **Michael Chan**, president of San Francisco's **ASIAN Inc.**, a non-profit small business developer. The key is how to maintain a competitive edge," said Chan who started overseeing the San Jose-based center last January.

Among the Northern California center's more than 30 clients are a network security and software company — whose \$80 million in sales makes it the largest client — a firm bidding on a Costco contract for biodegradable lunch containers and even *AsianWeek*.

Tan's firm began a relationship with the center last spring, in the face of her company's rapid growth — from four to 28 employees in three years, tripling sales and expanding to 10,000 square-feet of sales space. A firm averaging \$80 to \$100 in customer purchases was skyrocketing to \$120 to \$150 per customer.

Growing pains "forced the management team to adapt very quickly, but they quickly learned that they had to implement a workable system to ensure smooth

growth," said Tan.

For a sliding scale of \$10 to \$60 per hour, center consultants **Nora Li** and **Alejandro Serrudo** are helping Tan keep on track — following a "stop list" of not immersing herself in the minutiae of the business, delegating routine duties and sticking to what she does best, like product development and market research. With private sector consulting costing \$150 to \$200 per hour, Li and Serrudo's work is a bargain, like "hiring another manager," said Tan.

Li has been working with Tan on strategic management, including a formal business plan detailing company goals, key employees, growth opportunities and competitors.

Li said that clients are "too busy to get their projects delivered on time. This is what we typically observe from our initial free counseling meeting with our clients."

Knowing the cultural nuances of Asian American-owned enterprises distinguishes the center. For example, many Asian Americans are skittish about debt, said **ASIAN Inc.'s Chan**, a fact that he says is both good and bad. On one hand, Asian American entrepreneurs with little debt could use assets to acquire more financing. However, there are the perils of unregulated, high-risk loans like the Korean Key Club where members pool money to loan a business in return for high interest.

"Understanding cultures and challenges particular to Asian or MBEs has made us stand apart and stand out from the consulting world," said Li.

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