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Paying Tribute to Scholar Activists Dr. Dawn Bohulano Mabalon (1972-2018) and Jane Lin [née Lee] (1982-2019)

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Special Dedication

## Paying Tribute to Scholar Activists Dr. Dawn Bohulano Mabalon (1972–2018) and Jane Lin [née Lee] (1982–2019)

Melany De La Cruz-Viesca

Scholar Activists, Women Warriors, and Beloved Storytellers are just a few of the words that best describe two remarkable women who were part of the Asian American Studies community. The UCLA Asian American Studies Center and the *AAPI Nexus Journal* mourn the loss of Professor Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, who passed away on August 10, 2018 in Kauai, Hawai'i and Jane Lin, who passed away on April 19, 2019 in San Francisco, California.

Dr. Dawn Bohulano Mabalon was a respected historian, author, filmmaker, poet, chef and baker, community leader, and activist. She was an extraordinary historical and social commentator, especially in capturing the lives, experiences, and contributions of Filipina/o Americans in her writings. Through various mediums such as journalism, film, and poetry, Dawn's works inspired and helped Filipina/o youth make sense of the world and their place in it. She wrote for the *UCLA Daily Bruin* newspaper. She coproduced, "Beats, Rhymes, and Resistance: Filipinos in Hip Hop in Los Angeles" the first and definitive documentary on the impact of Filipinos in Hip Hop culture. In 2016, the *AAPI Nexus Journal* published her article, "Cultural Preservation Policy and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders: Reimagining Historic Preservation in Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities" co-authored with Michelle Magalong. Her indefatigable research and energetic creative activity addressed race and racism, gender, community displacement, youth organizing, and more—with passion, laughter, commitment, generosity, and spirit.

Dawn's UCLA Asian American Studies master's thesis on "Filipina Pioneers: The Pinay in Stockton, California, 1929–1946" became the basis

for her dissertation at Stanford University, which eventually became the award-winning book published by Duke University Press, *Little Manila Is in the Heart: The Making of the Filipina/o American Community in Stockton, California* (2013), now in its sixth printing. The book contributes to our understandings of how racial ethnic communities struggle over identities, place and space, power, and resources, both within and outside of the community. In 2014, her book won Honorable Mention for the Frederick Jackson Turner Award. Her work paved the way for California Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Oakland) to pass the Filipino American Farm Worker Bill, AB 123 in 2013, a first-of-its-kind bill to require the state curriculum to include the contributions of Filipino Americans to the farm labor movement in California. She left us with a beautiful historic book for youth entitled, *Journey for Justice: The Life of Larry Itliong* (2018) cowritten with Gayle Romasanta and illustrated by Andre Sibayan. This is the first illustrated children’s book on Filipino American history and the first about Larry Itliong, the cofounder of the United Farm Workers.

Dr. Dawn Bohulano Mabalon will always be in the hearts of her family, friends, and the many communities and generations she touched through her writings, activism, mentoring, and teaching.



Dawn Mabalon

Photo by: Jeremy Keith Villaluz



Jane Lin

Photo by: Jane Lin

Jane Lin was the phenomenal Assistant Managing Editor for the *AAPI Nexus Journal* from 2011 to 2013. She provided thought-provoking insights, laughs, and much needed editorial support throughout her work with the journal. During her undergraduate senior year at Oberlin, she had the opportunity to conduct research in Osaka, Japan, to complete her honors thesis on social and historical factors that affect the identity formation of young Zainichi Korean women in Japan. This set up the foundation for Jane's thesis for her UCLA Master of Arts in Asian American Studies entitled, "Elderly Korean Women in Little Tokyo Towers: Dispelling the Myth of Homogeneity." An ethnographic, sociological, and historical project looks at the ways that elderly immigrant Korean women living in Little Tokyo Towers deal with difficult historical legacies of Japanese colonization and war, and navigate their relationships with their Japanese and Japanese American neighbors, as well as within their own Korean community.

Beyond her scholarship, Jane was passionate about uplifting Korean, Asian American, and communities of color. She is a second-generation Korean American who grew up in California, Korea, and Ohio. During her undergraduate years at Oberlin College, she was actively involved in the Asian American Alliance and Oberlin Korean Students Association,

joining the ongoing fight for Asian American and Korean Studies courses in the school's curriculum. Jane was also a community organizer with the San Francisco Organizing Project and Asian Health Services. Her activism also included working with Hella Organized Bay Area Koreans and Eclipse Rising, a Zainichi Korean group that works to recognize and celebrate the rich and unique history of Koreans in Japan; promote peace and reunification; and work for social justice for all minorities in Japan. Above all, Jane was a beautiful songwriter, singer, and acoustic guitar player. She was an incredibly kind, thoughtful, and talented scholar activist! May she Rest in Power!

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MELANY DE LA CRUZ-VIESCA is the Assistant Director of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center and the Managing Editor of AAPI NexusJournal. She also serves as the Director of the AAPI Community Development Census Information Center, a partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau. Her research focuses on Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander demographics and policy, in relation to asset building, housing, community and economic development, and education. She was appointed by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa in 2008 and reappointed by Mayor Eric Garcetti to the City's Human Relations Commission.