



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

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Meeting Notes

Unity Dinner Subcommittee Meeting
Monday, September 16, 2024, 12:00 - 1:00 PM
Zoom link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88390600771?pwd=TUKAjnOCbEsc4yZ5NUop0bZn0cbbeN.1>

The meeting will be held via teleconference in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on the Open Meeting Law

Commissioners in Attendance: Jennifer Rubin, Moana Bentin

Staff in Attendance: Lizette Sta. Maria, Jennifer Best, Yasmin Padamsee Forbes

Attachments:

- Awards Materials
- Theme Discussion
- List of Potential Keynote Speakers
- Analysis on Previous Performers

1. Call to Order (2 mins)

Subcommittee Chair Moana Bentin calls the meeting to order at 12:05 PM.

2. Update on Awards (3 mins)

Jennifer Best provides an update on awards. Award nominations are officially open, and must be submitted through google forms by October 20th. Moana will provide an update at the September Commission Meeting, with assistance from Lizette.

3. Discuss Theme (15 mins)

Commissioner Moana Bentin talks about a proposed theme for the Unity Dinner. She suggests having a theme around strength, toughness, courage, resilience, bravery, connections, collaboration, bridges. Potential options include *Bridging Cultures*, *Building Strength: A Celebration of Unity*; *Resilient Roots*, *Strong Bridges: Uniting Our Communities*; *Bridges of Unity: Strengthening Bonds Across Cultures*.

The Subcommittee would like to use *Bridging Cultures*, *Building Strength: A Celebration of Unity* as the theme.

4. Discuss Potential Keynote Speakers (30 mins)

Lizette put together a list of potential keynote speakers based off of Commissioner recommendations and previous potential speakers.



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Moana suggests doing a fireside chat so that more people can be involved. It also means that the speakers would not have to prepare a speech. The top three choices are Abhijit Banerjee, Yvonne Hao, and Michelle Wu. Moana will bring up the top three choices at the September Commission meeting.

The Program Working Group will discuss the program, including the timing of remarks and awardee speeches.

5. Update on Performances (5 mins)

Lizette provides an update on previous performers. Lizette and Jennifer looked at the previous performers since 2022 to determine which ethnic groups have been more and less represented in performances. Jennifer presented recommendations in terms of the gaps and repetitions. Commissioners are encouraged to reach out to Lizette with suggestions.

Can look at performers after awardees decided to ensure representation throughout the entire program, in addition to performances.

6. Define Actionable Next Steps (5 mins)

Yasmin has secured a tentative sponsorship from the Canadian Embassy.

Moana will provide an update at the September Commission meeting on awards and the theme. All Commissioners will be encouraged to bring in a sponsor. The Subcommittee has a goal to bring in \$20,000 in sponsorships by November 1, 2024. Sponsorship information will be shared.

Lizette will create a timeline for overall planning for the Unity Dinner.

The meeting is adjourned at 12:47 PM.



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