

FOREWARD



Dear Readers:

One of the goals of Chinese American Forum (CAF) is to promote Chinese American heritage and interest and to cultivate mutual understanding between Chinese Americans and the general public. Toward this goal, CAF is pleased to co-sponsor the Chinese American Identity conference in October, 2003 with the Center for International Studies, University of Missouri in St. Louis.

Self-identity has been a lingering issue as Chinese Americans are trying to secure a place in the mainstream society. The questions of "Who am I?" and "Where do I fit in?" have been asked by the immigration generation, second and even third generation Americans of Chinese ancestry. This question is compounded by a growing multiracial (mixed-marriage) situation, and most recently by transracial adoption (Chinese children adopted by white parents).

The papers in this conference approach this self-identity issue from three different perspectives. The first perspective is from active participation in the political process and making our voice heard. The second perspective is from the continuing immigration due to globalization of world markets and economy, which created two distinct groups of new immigrants from China. The third perspective is from the recent and growing multiracial (mixed marriages) and transracial (adoption) situations, which introduce a whole new dimension in this subject. These papers stimulated thought-provoking perspectives and ideas that make this self-identity a dynamic and ever-challenging topic.

We would like our readers to share their views, understandings and experience on this self-identity subject matter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harold Law".

Harold Law
President
Chinese American Forum



Dear Readers:

The most profound hallmark of the new millennium is the increasing interdependence of our world. In St. Louis, international business accounts for a growing number of jobs and immigrants make up a large percentage of those moving into the region. It is time to change our view of the world and our place in it - to envision ours as an emerging global city.

As a civically engaged university, UM-St. Louis has worked to position itself as both a community leader and resource in the on-going effort to meet the challenges and opportunities of globalization. Consistent with our heritage as a land grant institution, we attempt to work in partnership with the community to address society's needs.

As our community becomes increasingly diverse, we have organized the E. Desmond Lee Global Ethnic Collaborative, inside of our Center for International Studies, to engage St. Louis' ethnic communities in a dialogue about the future. The Global Ethnic Collaborative has become a forum for discussing shared concerns and learning about each group's respective heritage.

One of our strongest relationships has been with St. Louis' Chinese and Chinese-American communities. Time has built strong links with many local organizations, none the least of which is the Chinese American Forum.

We proudly co-sponsored the Chinese American Identity conference in October 2003 with the Chinese American Forum and now are pleased to join with them in publishing the major presentations from the conference. These papers speak eloquently to challenges today faced by Chinese-Americans, as they strive to preserve their culture and secure their place in American society. These papers also clearly reflect the great strength that all Americans, and especially St. Louisans, derive from our diversity.

I commend these papers to you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas R. George".

Thomas R George
Chancellor
March 8, 2004

