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Chinese American Citizens Alliance

~ National ~

1044 Stockton Street, San Francisco, California 94108 • Telephone/Fax (415)829-9332

National Lodge
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Chinese American Citizens Alliance Remembers National Asian American Leader March Fong Eu

San Francisco, December 24, 2017—The Chinese American Citizens Alliance (C.A.C.A.) mourns the passing of one its most prominent members, March Fong Eu, a renowned civic leader who became the first Asian American woman ever elected to a state constitutional office in the United States. Dr. Eu passed away Thursday, December 21, 2017, following surgery after falling in her home in Irvine, California. She was 95.

“She was a pioneering woman who helped open doors to public service for more women and Asian Americans,” said Governor Jerry Brown of the third-generation Californian.

“As a teen growing up in California in the 80’s, it was meaningful to see someone who looked like me serving in a highly respected state office,” stated C.A.C.A. National President Davace Chin. “March was someone you remember and respected for many reasons including breaking the glass ceiling for both Asian Americans and women. It was very befitting that March would become one of the first recipients of the Alliance’s inaugural Spirit of America Award in 2003.”

Born in the rural central valley town of Oakdale in 1922, Dr. Eu would later earn a B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley, an M.A. from Mills College, and a Ph.D. in education from Stanford University. A lifelong Democrat, Dr. Eu began her political career in the California Legislature in 1966 when she was elected as representative of Oakland and Castro Valley, serving four terms. In 1974, she became California’s 25th secretary of state, making her the first Asian American woman to become the state’s chief elections officer and keeper of business and archival records for a five successive terms. Responsible for instituting many of the state’s modern voter registration practices, Dr. Eu had gained wider fame in the legislature for her efforts to ban pay toilets, which she claimed discriminated against women. Between 1994 and 1996, Dr. Eu served as U.S. Ambassador to Micronesia under President Bill Clinton.

At the time of her passing, Dr. Eu had been a member of Los Angeles Lodge of C.A.C.A.

C.A.C.A. National Vice President of Civic and Public Affairs Ted Gong recounts his association with Dr. Eu through several affiliations, including the traditional village association where Mr. Gong’s father and Dr. Eu were cousins. “My father and March Fong Eu worked together in the Democratic Party during the term of Governor Edmund G. Brown,” said Mr. Gong. “There were very few Chinese Americans running for elected offices in those days.” While a career diplomat in the U.S. Department of State, Mr. Gong said they tried to keep in touch periodically, even meeting in Taiwan when he was assigned to work there on the U.S. consular programs and Dr. Eu was studying Chinese in the possibility of an Ambassador’s appointment to Beijing.



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“I do not think she received enough recognition for her trail-blazing role as a Chinese American in elected office, and a woman at that,” said Mr. Gong. “I can say she inspired me into a public service career.”

Dr. Eu is survived by her daughter Suyin Stein, four grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. Her son, former California State Treasurer Matt Fong, passed away in 2011.

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1044 Stockton St.
San Francisco, CA.

Web: www.CACAnational.org
Chinese American Citizens Alliance

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance, established in 1895, is among the oldest civil rights organizations in the United States. Headquartered in San Francisco with chapter/lodges in Albuquerque (NM), Boston (MA), Chicago (IL), Greater San Gabriel Valley (CA), Greater New York (NY), Houston (TX), Las Vegas (NV), Los Angeles (CA), Mississippi, Oakland (CA), Peninsula (CA), Portland (OR), Phoenix (AZ), Salinas (CA), San Antonio (TX), San Francisco (CA), Seattle (WA) and Washington, D.C., the Alliance addresses issues regarding voter education, political participation, racial discrimination and hate crimes, and supports youth leadership training programs and equal employment opportunities for all Chinese Americans.