For students seeking support in the criminology program, the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution Initiative is a great opportunity to find resources. Also known as AANAPISI, the program was funded with a five year federal grant from the U.S Department of Education.
The goal is to inspire the AANAPI community to get involved with the major.
Samantha Bautista, the AANAPISI work-based learning experiences project coordinator, said that despite criminology being one of the largest majors on campus, there is a low representation of Asian and Pacific Islander students.
“Our goals are to outreach and recruit more AANAPI students to consider pursuing careers in criminology and promote retention efforts,” Bautista said.
The initiative makes a continuous effort to bring more people into the program.
Students can get involved in several ways: workshops, panels and career fairs are some of the ways students can get to know each other while also learning about the criminology major. They also feature Asian and Pacific Islander professionals during the annual Criminology Career Fair.
Bautista said the initiative also conducts site visits at police departments and probation departments, to name a few.
Courses such as CRIM 136T can help students with professional development in the field, said AANAPISI working project assistant Lisa Xiong.
In addition, the AAPI Cognition Peer Mentors program connects peer mentors and students from their chosen major option.
“The AAPIC Peer Mentoring Programs’ mission is to foster a sense of belonging and cultural competency for AANAPI students in the Department of Criminology under the College of Social Sciences,” Xiong said.
As of fall 2022, there are over 100 Asian American and Pacific Islander students enrolled in the criminology program, said Bautista.
With their initiative, they hope to improve the six-year graduation rate for AAPI criminology students.
To see upcoming events, visit the AANAPISI Initiative (@fsaunanapi) on Instagram.

By the numbers

100
Asian American and Pacific Islander students are enrolled in the criminology program as of fall 2022.
Lee Jung-Jae Wins Prestigious Emmy Award

By Isabella De La Torre

South Korea experienced a big win during the 74th Primetime Emmy Awards on Sept. 12.

Actor Lee Jung-Jae was awarded Outstanding Lead Actor in a drama series for his role as Seong Gi-hun in the hit Netflix show “Squid Game.”

He became the first Asian actor to win the coveted award, which has been known to be especially difficult to receive.

His fellow nominees for the category included seasoned actors Jason Bateman of “Ozark” and Brian Cox of “Succession.”

Jung-jae wasn’t the only “Squid Game” member to take home an award.

Director Hwang Dong-hyuk won Outstanding Directing for a Drama series. Fellow co-stars Park Hae-soo, Oh Young-soo, and Jung Ho-yeon were nominated for their supporting roles in the show.

“Squid Game” follows the story of Seong Gi-hun, a gambling addict who is in need of money to support his ailing mother.

He is invited to join a competition, where there is only one winner and a cash prize of 45.6 billion South Korean won, which is about $35 to $38 million.

The tasks include various children’s games (with a deadly twist). According to Netflix, the show reached over 1.65 billion hours of viewing only days after its premiere in September 2021.

With its popularity, a second season is in the works.

This isn’t the first time South Korean films and television shows have been in the spotlight. In 2020, “Parasite” won best picture at the 92nd annual Academy Awards becoming the first non-English-language film to win.

It also received three other awards that same year.

“Parasite” follows the story of a South Korean family in their attempt to infiltrate the lives of their wealthy employers.

The film highlights the class struggles faced by many people in the country.

Asian movies are seeing a rise in global popularity in recent years.

During the first quarter of 2020, Asian movies only made up about 4.2% of all titles in the Netflix top 10s, increasing to nearly 17% in the fourth quarter of 2021, according to Netflix News.

Netflix announced in 2021 that it would invest more in K-dramas similar to “Squid Game.”
Dr. Pa Nhia Xiong is Fresno State’s newest and one of the first Hmong women hired as an assistant professor in the Social Work Department.

As a local Fresno-raised woman, she got her undergraduate, master’s and doctoral degrees at Fresno State. As a first-generation college graduate with over 20 years of professional experience, she shares her thoughts and stories.

Why did you choose Fresno State?

This is my home. This place is part of my journey!

I am locally from the Central Valley, being born in Merced and raised in Clovis, it meant a journey! This is my home. This place is part of my journey. Being Fresno-raised, I got my bachelor's degree there.

Have you ever felt the imposter syndrome, and if so how did you navigate your way through it?

My kids were my main inspiration to move forward.

The times I wanted to give up, having my kids, I realized that was the biggest contributing factor in my lifetime. I wanted them to see me as their inspiration, for them to see that anything is possible when you put your mind to it. I wanted them not only to see me as their mother, but also as their inspiration as well.

Something I always take with me is the saying that, “you have to make it important for others to be supportive of you.”

Taking into consideration the very apparent misogyny in the Hmong community, what is your message to young Hmong women?

I would say, the only person that can stop you is you. No matter how hard the journey looks, no matter how many people try to stop you, you’re the only person that can make that decision.

Think about the change you can bring into this world, to be able to have a voice in a community where women have been taught to have none.

This is your path, not anyone else’s timeline or competition.

Dream big, life leads you where you’re supposed to be.
The idea that racism still exists in 2022 is abhorrent. As much as people would like to believe in the ideals of tolerance and mankind’s supposed evolution, many people are still raised to see color and find fault with anyone who appears different than themselves.

Human history is littered with intolerance because it is easier to blame others, than to examine and change personal biases and faulty perception.

Nations attack other nations because it is convenient to vilify others. The truth is, however, that no matter what ideological, religious or physical differences people have, we are more similar than dissimilar.

Thankfully, I was raised by parents who espoused the liberal views of the baby-boomer generation. They believed people should be accepted regardless of race or religious background. They taught me and my siblings to view people as individuals and hold nonjudgmental attitudes.

My maternal grandparents, immigrants themselves (from Sweden and Italy) believed as my mother does; they believed that the United States was for everybody and a place for cultures to mix and meld together.

They taught us to incorporate old world family traditions with more recently acquired American customs. Their views were a stark contrast to the views held by my paternal grandparents.

My dad’s parents adopted a racist belief commonplace amongst many upper-middle class whites following World War II. They believed that immigrants were beneath them and did not think mixed race marriages were acceptable.

They looked down upon non-whites, specifically as mates for their children, which led to a devastating incident a year after my parents’ divorce.

Following their divorce in 1980, my dad began dating a Filipino woman named Mona. My mom approved and saw her as a good mate for my dad.

In addition, me and my siblings loved her and wanted Mona to be our stepmother. After two years of dating, my dad was ready to propose marriage.

Unfortunately, his desire to marry Mona caused an untenable strain on his relationship with his father, so he called it off.

The only reason they broke up was that she was Filipino, and my grandparents could not accept that. They told my dad that they would always be judged and looked down upon because they were not of the same race.

Even though my dad didn’t agree with his parents’ stance, he acquiesced and ended up heartbroken. He missed her until the day he died in 2013.

Except for the narrow-minded views of my paternal grandparents, my family has never viewed interracial marriage as taboo. In fact, we view the blending of cultures as positive.

At the risk of sounding too esoteric, I believe that mixing cultures through marriage and parenthood is important for the spiritual growth and evolution of humanity.

The more we learn from each other and pass down to our children, the smaller this world becomes. I believe that cultural appreciation is vital. Appreciating the beauty of other cultures teaches us about others and ourselves. It also helps us understand that, while each culture has its own distinctive voice, the voices sing a song of common humanity.

I feel like it is important to honor cultural differences, while avoiding divisiveness and judgment. People who oppose interracial marriage ultimately fear losing their cultural fingerprint and ancestral legacy.

Unfortunately, those archaic attitudes encourage racism, hate, oppression and war. Fortunately, I think more people are open to the idea of interracial marriage and I am one such person.

I have always seen the beauty in other cultures and feel lucky to have fallen in love with a Filipino man.

I enjoy learning about his heritage and sharing it with our daughter. She loves learning about his family’s history and helping me prepare various Filipino dishes.

By learning about his family, we can see how his parents faced similar struggles to my mother’s immigrant parents. We also see how their lives were different than that of my father’s privileged white parents. Being in an interracial relationship helps us see the world in a more comprehensive way, which I think is beneficial.

Interracial relationships bolster humanity by promoting the idea that we are all one.

We are all human and we feel the same feelings. As a mother, I feel united with all mothers. We all go through the same things.

By the same logic, I do not see race or color when I look into my husband’s eyes.

I see acceptance. I see home. I see a beautiful soul. I see love.

Jennifer Ramirez

Jennifer Ramirez is a junior majoring in English Studies. A returning student, she spent much of her adult life traveling, working, and raising children. She loves music, art and writing. After college, she aspires to teach English as a second language.

She lives in Clovis with her husband and 11-year-old daughter.