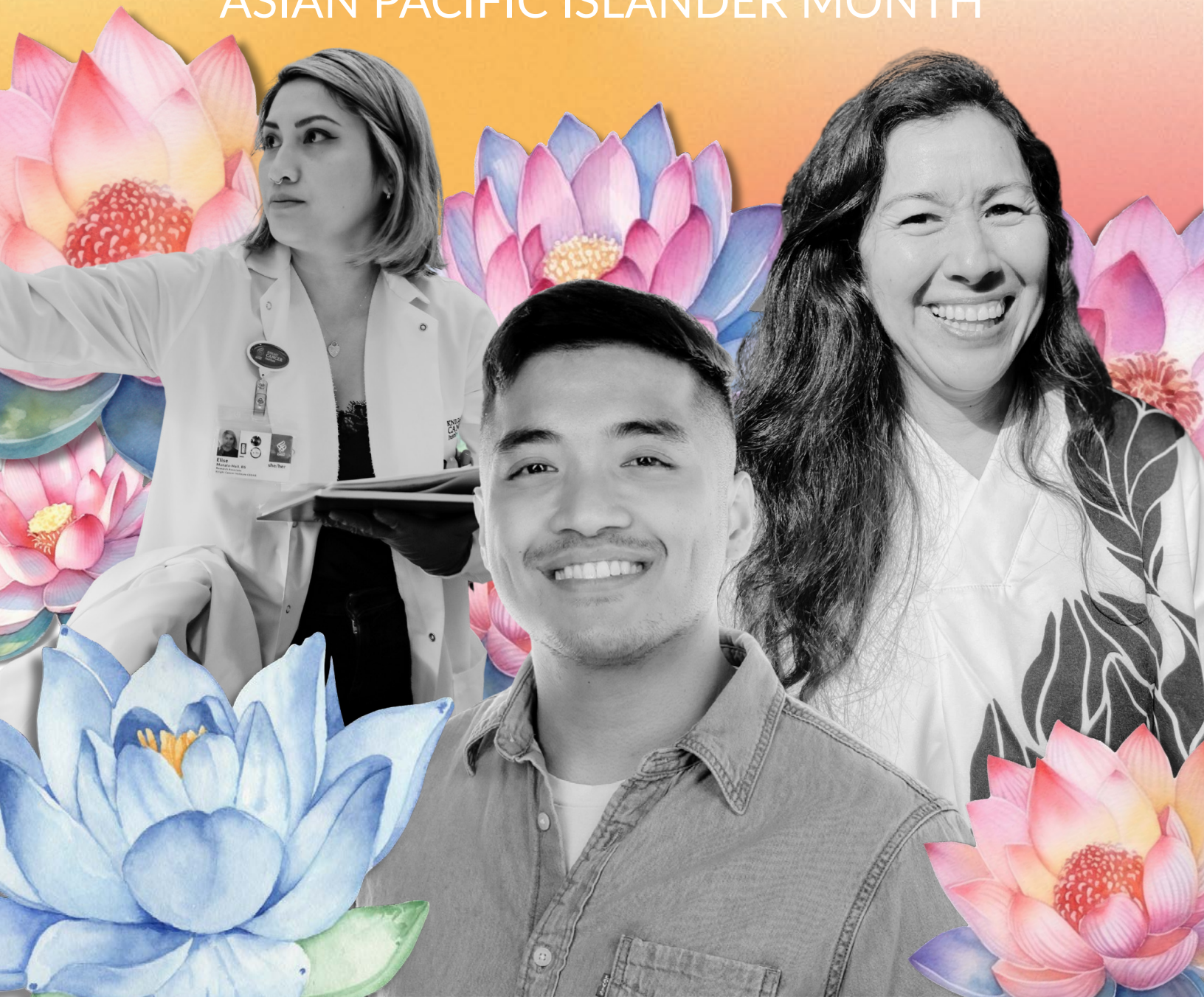


WE ARE OHSU

CELEBRATING
ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER MONTH



We celebrate Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May. This month honors and recognizes the contributions, achievements and influence of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities that have shaped the history and culture of the United States.

We celebrate AANHPI Month in May because it includes two milestones in our history:

- The arrival of the first Japanese immigrant to the U.S., in May 1843.
- The completion of the transcontinental railroad, which Chinese workers helped build, on May 10, 1869.

WE ARE OHSU

OHSU is a diverse campus with members with different identities. Diversity is one of our core values, and we strive to create an environment of respect and inclusion. We acknowledge that diversity is not always seen, and we want to be intentional. The Center for Diversity and Inclusion started an initiative to highlight OHSU members in an interview series named We Are OHSU. This will go on all year long, where we can uplift and celebrate members of all communities, highlighting their impact on campus and their daily lives and showing everyone the wonderful communities we belong to.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the Asian Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group for helping curate thoughtful questions and nominating folks for interviews.

WE ARE OHSU

AOI NATHALIA MIZUSHIMA

Baird Hall is known primarily as an administrative building at OHSU, but if you peep into rooms 6 and 12, you will find the Student Health and Wellness (SHW) Center – A center that offers a full range of services for students and postdoctoral scholars to keep them healthy while they focus on their studies and work. If you are seeking services, it is very likely that you will come across Dr. Aoi Nathalia Mizushima (AH-OH-EE), one of the four medical providers (3 physicians and a nurse practitioner) that provides high-quality and affordable health care at the

center.

Dr. Aoi joined the SHW team at the end of 2024, but her journey at OHSU started long ago at the beginning of her career. A full circle moment for Dr. Aoi, completing her residency at OHSU in Family Medicine 21 years ago and now providing high-quality care to the next generation of physicians, health care workers and researchers. At the Student Health and Wellness Center, Dr. Aoi takes care of students, post docs (as well as their spouses, domestic partners and adult dependents over 18 years old). She provides both preventative care like pap smears, IUD/Nexplanon insertions, vaccines, travel visits while also providing problem focused care like injuries and chronic illnesses.

FAMILY MEDICINE TO STUDENT HEALTH

“Right after my training at OHSU, I was doing full spectrum family medicine at Providence in North Portland. I did a lot of deliveries in the first decade of my career. I switched over to student health and worked at Portland State University student health

center for the next decade. Students have a special place in my heart. I am learning a lot about our students, and postdocs, everything they’ve been through in their journeys to get to OHSU and so many fascinating things that they’re coming to the clinic with. While taking care of their medical concerns, I also enjoy connecting and learning about what they are working on or experiencing. I feel lucky to work with an amazing primary care and behavioral health team. People who work at SHW tend to be people who really enjoy the work that they’re doing, so it helps create a good work culture.”

“I feel so fortunate that the medical director here really heard me saying when I was interviewing that I really wanted to continue doing colposcopy (a diagnostic procedure to take a closer look at the cervix that can help detect precancerous lesions early), which is something that I’ve been doing ever since residency. Previously, it was not a service offered here, but it’s now coming to the Student Health and Wellness Center. I really feel so privileged in this space that I’m in now and being able to connect with patients. You walk into that



room with the patient and you have like 20 minutes with them. But in that short time, you can create a space that feels really safe and sacred and have a moment where somebody just opens up to you about some of their most deep, vulnerable things that they're worried about their health and being able to partner with them, I think is really such an honor."

THE POWER OF CULTURE, NAMES AND TRADITION

Our stories are often tied to our parents' identities and where they are from; they become a part of us and who we are. For Dr. Aoi, her story starts with both her immigrant parents from Japan and Mexico meeting in ESL classes in Los Angeles, where they went on to raise their family.

"My father came to the United States when he was 27 years old, he is a very traditional Japanese man. I identify strongly with being part of an immigrant family, where I grew up, there were not many immigrants in our neighborhood. My father really wanted us to assimilate, and we were not taught Japanese growing up.

When people want to know my background, I am unable to answer that question by saying "I am 'half' Japanese and 'half' Mexican" because the word "half" is discordant with my upbringing. I have had the interesting

experience of complete strangers trying to decide whether I am "fill-in-the-blank" enough to fit into their narrow racial stereotype. Because I know my roots, and because I have been lucky enough to have been raised by both parents who are each very traditional in their rich, unique cultural ways, I do not bother spending too much energy worrying about what these strangers think. I do not ascribe to the notion that there is only space inside a person for a singular identity, nor am I being inauthentic when I choose to celebrate any part of who I am."

"I look the most like my father even though I am multiracial and multicultural. My name is Japanese, and it was given to me by my great-grandmother. When you write it out in Kanji, it stands for "Hollyhock." Hollyhock has symbolism in Shinto tradition and the name was also the name of one of her favorite fictional princesses in the Samurai times who had a Winter birthday like mine. Hollyhock, a red berry that grows in the snow."

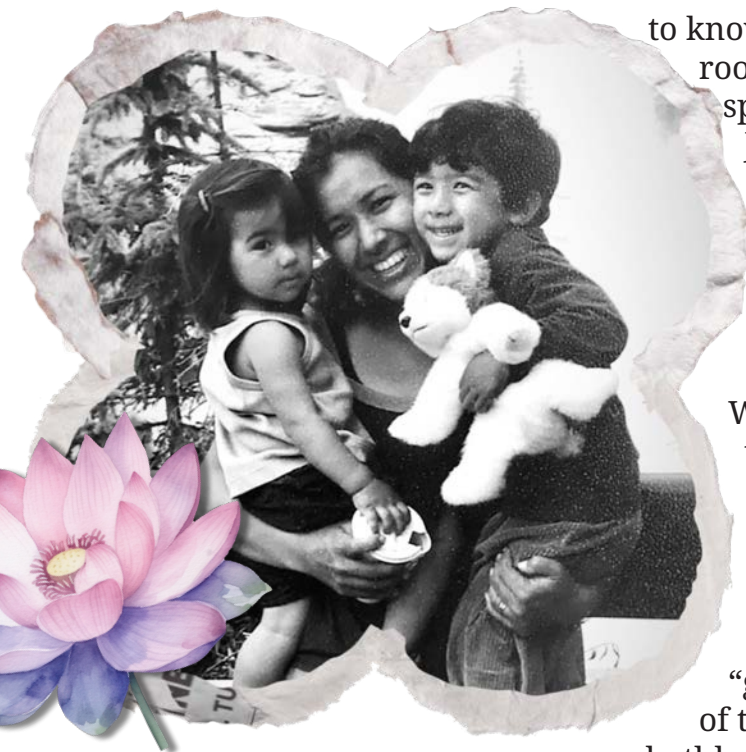
Dr. Aoi on the bottom right, gathered with her parents and siblings.



"Every single person has so many different identities within themselves and I feel proud to be raised with such incredibly traditional parents who have really shown me my roots growing up. I very strongly identify with my Mexican roots and I very strongly identify with my Japanese roots. It's been great to gather in community and feel so welcome and excited to be part of the Asian Pacific Islander ERG and the Culturas Unidas ERG at OHSU.

A PLACE OF RICH HISTORY AND COMMUNITY - MIYAZAKI, JAPAN

"My father is the only person in his entire family to leave Japan. He is from Miyazaki – a small fishing village located on the Japan Sea which is in the Toyama prefecture. Our ancestors include



samurai, Shinto priests, rice patty farmers, wood workers and of course generations of people whose entire livelihood involved fishing, crabbing, gathering kelp and anything else involving the ocean. There are monkeys and wild boar in the lush mountains that meet the pebble stone beaches in my father's fishing village and our trips to Miyazaki focus on visiting relatives and preparing the Mizushima tombstone (containing over 300 years of our ancestors' ashes) for a Shinto ceremony."

Dr. Aoi recounts a coming-of-age moment for her when she was just 11 years old.

"My father decided that each of his three kids would travel back to Japan by themselves when they turned 11 to spend the summer with relatives and it was a moment to get

to know our Japanese roots. Without speaking a word of Japanese lived in Japan for that summer when I was 11 years old. I have lots of great memories with my family. We would spend time visiting family places. My grandfather had a Japanese bathhouse, that is where I was the "granddaughter of the owner of the bathhouse" and got to experience neighbors coming together. It was also a special experience to be a part of some important summer festivals. This year I look forward to participating in the Bon Odori dance classes being offered by the Oregon Buddhist temple in preparation for the Japan Fest Obon celebration in August, to honor my ancestors."

THE COMFORT OF FATHER'S SOUP AND ASIAN FILMS

Food is essential for nurturing our bodies and for many cultures food is more than just nourishment. Food is a plate full of comfort, generational stories all garnished with love on top. We all have that meal that reminds us of home, fills us with warmth – while bringing people together and creating community.

"Miso and Ozōni are soups I

grew up with. My father was always particular to make sure our whole family knew how to make Ozōni because it's traditionally eaten on the first day of the New Year. Even when I moved away from California, I have continued to carry forward my father's traditions and superstitions about the importance of Ozōni being the first meal I eat on New Year's Day. If you visit Japan, you will find that traditional soups such as Miso and Ozōni are made differently depending on which region of Japan you are in. My father often incorporates clams and fish into the broths as well as special seaweed (kombu for Ozōni and wakame for Miso) which he would sometimes bring back from his village."

Often U.S. media lacks representation and often includes negative portrayals of marginalized communities. Authentic representation in media matters, it fosters empathy, positively affects our self-esteem and the way others perceive us. Embracing different lived experiences, points of views and stories in media cultivates a more inclusive society.

"My Neighbor Totoro" (Director Hayao Miyazaki, produced by Studio Ghibli)- I've watched countless times, especially since we banned Disney in our house, due to the repetitive portrayal of a damsel in distress and the lack of anyone who

looked like my kids. Studio Ghibli usually has a female protagonist who is a strong, creative, self-sufficient, problem-solver which I really wanted my kids to see. I love this movie because it highlights the power of imagination and wonder-and a lot of the scenes which look a lot like the countryside my father grew up in and the emphasis on an appreciation of the sound of wind or rain, or simply sitting and waiting are all things that resonate with me and are comforting

“Everything Everywhere All at Once” and “DiDi”—are both movies I LOVE. They both highlight the immigrant family experience in ways I had never seen shown on the big screen before-so many things...the sacrifices, the unspoken expectations, the INVISIBILITY many immigrants feel, trying to assimilate while also trying not to lose some important cultural and family values and the impact of all these things on mental health and identity.”

CONTRIBUTION OF AAPI INDIVIDUALS TO THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

History school curriculum in the U.S. often doesn't give an accurate depiction of the Asian American experience and overlooks the contributions into society. Honoring the ones that came before us and recognizing the significance of their

achievements are crucial in creating an inclusive understanding of our American society. Asians have been in America dating back to the 16th century, making notable millstones.

“Because of what I know as a kid of immigrant parents-I think a lot about how immigrants have shaped the history and culture of the U.S.

I feel like a lot of folks who identify with AAPI immigrant communities are overall silent and often an invisible work force.

One example that comes to mind is the history of American agriculture. A lot of people don't realize that the agriculture that we—especially on the west coast so often take for granted was developed and established by Asian farmers. Starting

in the mid-1800's, after the CA Gold rush Chinese farmers and then followed by Japanese Farmers in the early 1900's (peak prominence of Japanese farmers 1910's to 1930's)- shaped American Agriculture. Innovative farming techniques (irrigation systems, pruning and grafting techniques, high yield crops, composting and organic fertilization, crop rotation) and increase of vegetable and fruits, napa cabbage, strawberries — despite intense systemic racial discrimination. WWII internment removed a lot of the workers from the fields and the Bracero program of 1942 brought a lot of Mexican and Filipino farm workers to California. Internment removed a lot of the workers from the fields and the Bracero program of 1942 brought a lot of Mexican and Filipino farm workers to



Dr. Marie Lo (who's a professor at PSU) painted this photo of Aoi (middle) with her siblings.

California.”

AOI'S MESSAGE TO THE NEW GENERATION OF HEALTHCARE WORKERS

“I think it’s important to explore within yourself. Find what motivates you or where your drive is coming from because you need that as a guiding force to get you through all the different steps.

Living life true to you isn’t dishonoring your parents’ sacrifices; in the end, it’s important to choose a career that will be one where you can find balance and thrive.

I encourage informational interviews- from people in the field as well as people who left the field.

Seek out mentors.

Protect your mental health.

Find people who affirm your humanity and identity.

Know your value - It is easy to feel like an imposter stepping into a space where you don’t see many people who look like you or whose parents may be immigrants, which was my experience as someone being in the first generation to go to college.”

Dr. Aoi at her med school graduation, carrying her 4 month old son, Micah Zapata Mizushima.



Dr. Aoi's father in his fishing village, Miyazaki.

WE ARE OHSU

JEREMY GALVEZ

People are the most crucial asset of any organization. People bring in the necessary skills and passion to carry out missions like OHSU's, that strives for excellence in education, research and scholarship, clinical practice and community service. Do you ever wonder how OHSU has so many amazing professionals? It starts with Talent Acquisition partners like Jeremy Galvez who you can find managing all phases of the recruitment process. Jeremy is behind recruiting advertisements, often the main contact for candidates and acts as a main resource for hiring managers and supervisors. When he isn't focused on bringing talent to OHSU, Jeremy fills another key role and serves as a co-chair for the Asian Pacific Islander ERG – focused on fostering community while advocating for the diverse needs of AAPI communities.

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN OUR CAREERS

“Naturally, Filipinos are very kind, many are nurses or in the hospitality industry as it comes naturally to want to build relationships and viewing life in a positive outlook. I think naturally it led me to be a recruiter.

I'm a huge people person so having the ability to talk to candidates from various backgrounds who want to work for OHSU puts a smile on my face. My recruiting efforts contribute positively to OHSU for patient and non-patient facing roles and it gives my work a strong sense of purpose. As a leader for the API ERG, I love the opportunity to provide a safe space for API individuals and allies with the intention of giving back to our community through our various endeavors.”

BRINGING TALENT TO THE COURT

Dance plays a vital role in AAPI cultures, often part of celebrations, ceremonies and everyday life. Through dance, we build

connections and unity while allowing us to express our emotions, perspectives and stories.

“Given the Philippines' abundant cultural heritage in dance and the arts, I pursued dance from a young age. This experience has taught me that a people-centric approach—a principle I heavily apply to both dance and recruiting—is vital for success in all aspects of life. I've been dancing with Blazer's hip hop team for the past three years. I served as one of the captains for the team where I led routines and fulfilled any other duties needed.

I've been dancing for over 12 years, dancing a lot in high school, college and now Portland.

I love



*Jeremy dancing for the
Portland Trail Blazers.*



basketball and I love dancing. I love having family and friends come through for games; it's a chance to build the network. I am originally from Seattle, and I wanted to find a community, so I was like "let me dance." I have built a really good community and met a lot of different people.

SHAPING FUTURE ASPIRATIONS - JABBAWOCKEEZ AND BRIAN PUSPOS

Role models inspire us, challenge and guide us. We are inspired to become better versions of ourselves and to aspire to greatness.

"My confidence today was largely built through dance, and the dance community remains a major influence.

Seeing Filipino talent like the Jabbawockeez and choreographer Brian Puspos achieve media success was deeply impactful during my upbringing, solidifying my faith that I could succeed as a young Filipino. Pre-internet there was not a lot of Filipino people being represented, nowadays, there is more, so seeing Filipino talent on big media had a significant impact on me. "If they can do it, I can do it!" I had faith in myself that I could succeed and it led me into what I do today and all the choices I make."

FINDING HOME IN A BOWL OF PORK SINIGANG

"My favorite recipe is pork sinigang, a Filipino soup dish made with a tamarind soup base with vegetables

and pork served with rice. It always reminds me of home and growing up, it was one of the first I ate and where I thought "I love Filipino food!"

The API ERG just released a 2025 Cookbook in celebration of AANHPI month where you can view my Pork Sinigang recipe and 7 new recipes contributed by API ERG members. Former API ERG leaders started this cookbook, and it is something we wanted to prioritize this year as well. Food is important in many cultures; it's tied to certain values and flavors. I was happy to share my recipe and pass down, it's good and easy to make."

THE JOY OF EMBRACING CULTURE

There is power in embracing your identity. Strong ties provide support and a sense of belonging, allowing us to pass down traditions, values and stories of our families. We are stronger in community and finding joy in our identity contributes to happiness and fulfillment.

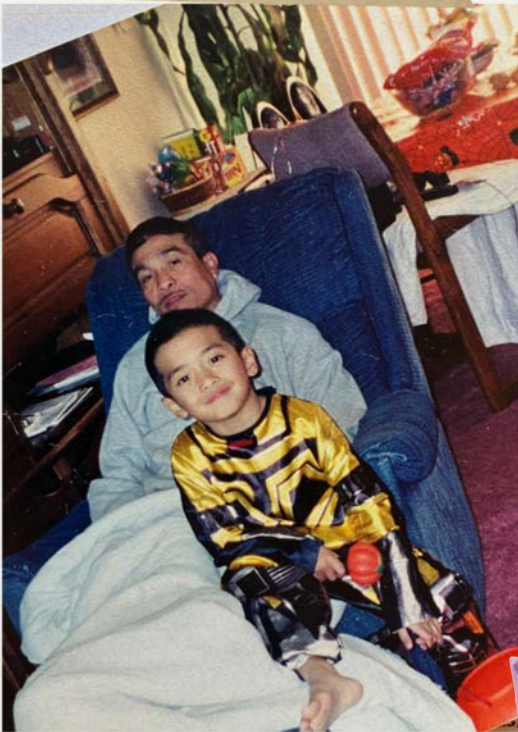
"My Filipino heritage has instilled in me the importance of family. I have a very big family. They're all mainly in Seattle, all on the West Coast, which is nice. Whenever I go back to Seattle, I like hanging out with my relatives, my aunts, uncles, all my cousins and my dad. My aunts and uncles as well as my dad are older and it's nice to be active and want to talk is cool.

I look forward to my future kids and nurturing these familial connections. Family is important, because at the end of the day, it's where you came from and you don't want to lose that."

JEREMY INVITES YOU TO JOIN THE API ERG

"I am a co-chair of the API ERG and this past year we have significantly grown our community. We host meetings bimonthly. We have various in-person and virtual opportunities and we provide many different resources. If you are interested in joining, send us a message at api@ohsu.edu"

Jeremy with the API ERG.



Jeremy and his dad.



WE ARE OHSU

ELISE MANALO-HALL

Down at the Waterfront, you will find the Knight Cancer Institute – where they are driven by a single mission to end cancer as we know it. The Cancer Early Detection Advancement Research Center or CEDAR is focused on researching new methods to detect and eliminate lethal cancers early. In a lab coat, you will find researcher, Elise Manalo-Hall attending to different vivariums and animals. Her days consist of weaning litters, genotyping, organizing, scheduling work on projects for others and building

community through planning and taking part in the Engagement Committee and other Councils.

Elise has been in research at OHSU since 2009, conducting research in the Sakai Lab after completing her education at the University of Oregon. In 2018, Elise became a Senior Research Associate for OHSU and has been here since. When she is not at her 9-5, Elise is at her 5-9 “job” with her husband Luke, as a mother of a very demanding 3.5-year-old “boss”.

FINDING PASSION IN SCIENCE SINCE ELISE CAN REMEMBER

“I loved science at an early age. I was interested in biology, animals, plants, systems and nature, and

there was pressure from my parents to go into nursing or STEM for absolute job security – “Sorry I didn’t become a nurse, mom!” In college I knew I

had to start early and so I got a job in a research lab working with zebra-fish and mice in my first experience in an academic research setting. Then I moved onto micro-dissections, Marfan Syndrome, mouse models at Shriners Children’s Hospital. When I got to CEDAR, I gained more experience and honed my expertise with animal models and learned about how to build on the science work and make it into culture work.”

CEDAR - A PLACE WHERE MORE THAN SCIENCE IS WELCOME

“I like that I can be involved in things that aren’t always science related, I get to be in different roles that senior research associates wouldn’t usually have. I like fostering community within the people I work with and getting to know people that I don’t usually work with while leading change from within. We have numerous groups here that are willing to come up with ideas for change that can help a variety of people. I also train students, peers and postdocs in animal work. CEDAR is not the typical lab, I have 16 years of experience in various settings, and I feel the most accepted, respected and accomplished in this type of environment.”



“I like helping people, which I think is what’s most surprising about my “research scientist” job, I didn’t dream of taking tissues and genotyping animals as a little girl. I actually wanted to become a marine biologist! I love that I can lead work here and do science; people rely on me and respect my opinion, and I am really grateful for that experience because I know a lot of people don’t get the appreciation or the respect they deserve in this area.”

“In the past 7 years, I have been more heavily involved in creating a safe, inclusive space at work. The KCI community is really important to me and I want to create a positive place where people WANT to come to work. The idea of spreading knowledge, support and education has really driven me this far. It can be a lot at times, but having a 3.5-year-old daughter-boss at home keeps me motivated, I am continuing to do this for her and myself. Growing up, I didn’t see people that looked like me in my predominantly white town in Southern Oregon and

that’s why I’m grateful to be in this community where I can get more involved and create change. I want to be inclusive; I want to be an inclusive mom and coworker.”

GROWING UP AS A FIRST-GENERATION FILIPINA AMERICAN

Embracing diversity means acknowledging that individuals experience the world differently because of intersecting identities like race, gender, age, class, immigration and several other factors. With over 23.5 million and the fastest growing racial group in the U.S., AAPI communities,

representing over 55 Asian and Pacific Islander countries and 4,000 spoken languages.

“My experience as a Filipina American has been complicated. I think, and have heard from others’ experiences, that there is a third group of representation between 2 worlds of “Asian” and “American”—First Generation Asian Americans. We have a complicated history with our past; growing up with the shame of being different and wanting to assimilate. That’s a lot to carry for a child or adolescent. Then comes re-identifying, relearning about and embracing your identity and culture at a later stage in life. We are not quite from the motherland, and not quite “American” enough. In recent years,

I’ve been trying to repair and empower myself to be more gentle and accepting of my roots and myself while on this journey. I have also joined groups and communities at work: there are only a few Filipinos within



Elise and her husband Luke and daughter, Maya





CEDAR, but there are quite a few other Asians in DEIB work at the KCI that I have really connected with lately, most recently joining the API ERG. Outside of work, I make efforts to support local businesses, restaurants, shops, social media, and AAPI groups. Since experiencing a lot of microaggressions throughout my life, I now strive to exclusively support AAPI people in all aspects of my life to avoid them, from my aesthetician to my hair colorist, to the food I shop for and eat at home. I try to support all AAPI businesses in and outside the Jade district, in SE Portland where I live. Like I've said, it's important for my family, my daughter, to see herself in others unlike when I grew up. I've also done a complete overhaul on social media to follow and support people who look like me."

THE ART OF CULTURAL FOOD

AND MUSIC

"I love and have such a soft spot for Filipino food. My all-time favorite is Adobo, which some have said I make a pretty great recipe. Another crowd favorite that I enjoy is Sinigang and

I also love my Mom's Palabok, which is a noodle dish with seafood and annatto based sauce with lots of toppings (like ground chicharrones, green onion, hardboiled egg and smoked fish) to mix and match. It always brings me great comfort to when I eat Filipino food. I'm a big fan of sushi, kimbap, and absolutely nothing beats the whole dim sum cart experience. As far as music, I've been really into Laufey, a Chinese-Islandic artist, she does traditional pop vocals with orchestral backing. Beabadoobee is another one of my favorites and I have recently been into alternative/indie Korean bands like Se So Neon and lead singer, So!YoON!'s solo projects. A friend and local Filipina folk/indie artist to check out is Haley Heynderickx. Again, supporting AAPI Artists is something I've more recently been into and intentionally done in the past few years."

CREATING A STRONGER CULTURE AND PASSING DOWN TRADITIONS

Having a strong sense of identity and belonging is connected to our identities to our culture and traditions. We are guided by our ancestors, their hardships and contributions to our community. When we have a strong understanding of who we are, it can create beautiful things for us and our families that come after us.

"Sharing and celebrating culture with others is lots of work, but worth it. During AAPI month, I am open to learning new things from diverse cultures and people and their experiences. Everyone has a lived experience that is valid and right. Celebrate yourself and others because I think that this work that we're doing is so necessary, but so emotionally taxing that we need to find joy in people, communities and our cultures."

"I am trying to keep family traditions and make new ones. We have big Christmas and New Year's traditions that come from a mixture of cultures since the Philippines was colonized by many different people. For Christmas, Parol ornaments are a big thing: they light up, they are bright and colorful and hung by the window. For New Year's, we have a 12-fruit tradition where we need to have 12 different types of

Photographed here by OHSU, Elise is pictured working in the lab



round fruit at our table. We make noise to scare the bad spirits away at midnight; we need to ensure we have a full gas tank and a full bank account and things like that by midnight because New Year's Day represents the type of year you will have."

"In trying to find and recapture my identity, I have a lot of tattoos that are not traditionally Filipino, yet in a sense, they are. In a recent cover of Vogue a couple of years ago, Whang- Od was featured and she is the last person to do Kalinga style Filipino traditional tribal tattoos. I realized that tattooing is actually a tradition of my culture, especially before we were colonized. I am leaning into

it, and I want to get a piece on my back! The idea of traditions is a significant part of my life and so is creating a mixture of Eurocentric and Asian ones for my own unique family. In doing my own personal research, the history of the Philippines has been interesting to look up and incorporate into my life."

