



# Oakland Asian Cultural Center (OACC)

Oakland Asian Cultural Center (OACC), a hub in Oakland's Chinatown, serves as a strong artistic and cultural force. The organization strives to build a vibrant community through Asian and Pacific Islander American arts and culture programs. OACC takes a Pan-Asian approach to encourage diversity, intergenerational and cross-cultural dialogue, and cultural identity awareness. The center hopes to foster an environment of collaboration, tolerance and social justice, and to dispel harmful stereotypes. Mona Shah, co-director of OACC, explains that one of her goals is "to get people thinking beyond Bruce Lee when they think about Asians."

OACC promotes traditional art forms to diverse groups of youth through interactive school tour packages. The tours, one of OACC's longest running programs, are available to students in pre-K through 12th grade. During the tours, students often engage in a variety of hands-on arts and crafts projects, including Chinese drawing, dragon mobiles, daurma doll making and Khmer mask making. Other tours might include a live artist demonstration where students learn about the cultural significance of the artwork being created.

Visit any qigong class during a school tour and you can hear a pin drop as 35 elementary school students have laser-focused attention on the Shaolin monk demonstrating the eight brocades and guiding them through the gentle form of slow, graceful movements.

In addition to school tours, OACC offers a number of high-quality cultural programs, including docent-led tours for the permanent and travelling exhibits, performances, classes, workshops, walking tours of Oakland's Chinatown and storytelling, which is especially popular around Lunar New Year.

With support from Clorox, OACC was able to surpass its goal of reaching 500 students by serving more than 1,000 school-age children in the 2008-2009 school year.

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