

# RECONNECTION AND REFLECTION

2023 ECAASU CONFERENCE  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



APRIL 14 — APRIL 15  
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

# 2023 ECAASU Conference Schedule

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## Conference Day 1 | Friday, April 14

3:00 PM - 4:45 PM	Registration Check-in   <i>Newcomb Hall</i>
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Opening Ceremony   <i>Wilson Hall</i>
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM	Sunset Series/Networking   <i>Carter Mountain Orchard</i> (Food trucks will be on site, dinner available for purchase at the orchard)
9:00 PM	Free-time

## Conference Day 2 | Saturday, April 15

9:30 AM	Breakfast   <i>Peabody Lawn</i>
11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Workshop Block 1   <i>New Cabell Hall</i>
12:30 PM - 1:45 PM	Workshop Block 2   <i>New Cabell Hall</i>
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Lunch   <i>Peabody Lawn</i>
(2:30 PM - 3:30 PM)	Networking Fair   <i>Peabody Lawn</i>
3:45 PM - 5:00 PM	Workshop Block 3   <i>New Cabell Hall</i>
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Free Time
6:15 PM - 7:45 PM	Dinner   <i>Amphitheater</i>
8:30 - 9:20 PM	Closing Ceremony   <i>Blackbox Theatre, BMS</i>
9:30 PM - 11:30 PM	Performances


\*All meals will be provided on Saturday

\*Registration check-in will also be set up on Day 2 for those with varying travel accommodations

## Check Out | Sunday, April 16

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# LETTER TO ATTENDEES

Welcome to the 2023 East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU) Conference! This year, you've arrived at the site of an ECAASU conference in person for the first time in three years. Your respective journeys have culminated in what we hope to be a nexus point for the Asian and Asian American community, a climactic moment wherein we can better appreciate the path we share moving forward.

This year's theme is "Reconnection and Reflection" We chose this theme after bearing personal witness to the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent spike in anti-Asian hate crime. As we isolated ourselves physically for the sake of public safety, our political identity became challenged and fragmented, especially along the fault lines of cultural tensions we've grappled with since the emergence of the concept of "Asian Americanness."

"Reconnection and Reflection" is the remedy we've proposed for such fragmentation. Through reflection, in terms of both meditative self-reflection and well-informed historical reflection, we absorb the deeper personal and institutional knowledge that we need to understand ourselves, our lineages, and the systems of oppression we navigate. Through reconnection, in terms of both reawakening our own sense of identity and re-establishing bonds with the BIPOC communities we've suffered distancing from, we form stronger coalitions which serve us well as we mobilize to rectify both recent and long standing injustices.

The 2023 ECAASU Conference should be a model and a microcosm of the way we conduct our continued struggle. We hope that through our eclectic workshops, you develop new perspectives on your new perspectives, and through our speakers, you realize the value of a unique story. We hope you find peace and love at every turn. Happy reconnecting and reflecting!

Sincerely,  
The Virginia Conference Team





# OPENING CEREMONY

## Opening Remarks

Estelle Kim and Gordon Shi  
*2023 Co-executive Conference Directors*

## National Board Remarks

Eisa Casaclang  
*ECAASU Executive Director*

## Keynote Address

jason chu  
*2023 Keynote Speaker*

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## jason chu



**jason chu** speaks hope and healing in a hurting world, blending high energy performances with thoughtfully crafted lyricism. As an Asian American kid in suburban Delaware, he found a vocabulary for racial identity and liberation in rap music and hip-hop culture. Starting out freestyling with friends at school, he began recording and performing music in college.

jason was a 2022 Artists at Work Fellow at the Japanese American National Museum. He has been presented on the National Mall in Washington DC (In America: Remember) and

curated in the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs virtual exhibition Reimagine Public Art: House and Home (2021) and the LA County Department of Arts and Culture's 2023 public installation Illuminate LA: Collective Memory.

jason has also been featured in the Chinese American Museum of Los Angeles and presented at the Getty Center, Flushing Town Hall, and the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center. As an expert on Asian American identity and hip-hop culture, jason has spoken and led workshops at colleges, conferences, community centers and beyond. He is a contributor to the St. James Encyclopedia of Hip Hop Culture. jason's work has been graciously supported by The Mellon Foundation, The Slants Foundation, Culture Surge, Equal Sound, and the California Relief Fund for Artists & Cultural Practitioners.

Follow jason at @jasonchumusic everywhere.



# 2023 WORKSHOPS

(New Cabell Hall | Floor 3)

## BLOCK I

Frameworks for the Future: Tools for Healing, Empowering, and Grounding as Student Organizers | **Rm. 368**

BIPOC Mental Health in Virginia Public Schools | **Rm. 389**

Racism Against Ourselves: Division in Asian Americans | **Rm. 315**

Beat, Belonging, and Beyond: Understanding Rave Culture in the AAPI Community | **Rm. 309**

Am I Khmer? | **Rm. 383**

Eating Disorders Within the AAPI Community: An Exploration of Collective Healing | **Rm. 364**

Disorientation: Returning to Our Radical Roots | **Rm. 323**

Isolating As/Am Experiences | **Rm. 332**

## BLOCK II

The Duality of South Asian American Mental Health | **Rm. 383**

Techno-oriental Girls: Robot Asian Femmes and Their Queer Potentials | **Rm. 368**

A Brighter Day: The Philippines and Revolution | **Rm. 315**

Conversations About Intergenerational Trauma as A/AA | **Rm. 323**

Radical Networking: Forging Connections through Community Care, Authenticity, and Collaboration | **Rm. 389**

The Power of Local History | **Rm. 364**

Rapid Community Mobilization for Protests and Rallies: Tips from the Field | **Rm. 309**

## BLOCK III

Dispute of Asian Identity: Who is truly Asian? | **Rm. 323**

Anti-Asian Violence and The Limitations of "Hate Crimes" | **Rm. 309**

Find, Make, and Speak Your Truth | **Rm. 338**

APALA, Unions, and AAPI Labor History | **Rm. 383**

Coalition Building and Cross-Community Work: Reflections from the Japanese American Community | **Rm. 332**

On Radical Acceptance and Love as Intersectionality | **Rm. 368**

Being a Bad Asian | **Rm. 389**

# Workshop Block I

11AM-12:15PM

## BIPOC Mental Health Reform in Public Schools

Amy Tran | Room 389

Asian-Americans specifically are taught to never show vulnerability, to assimilate, and to, under no circumstances, reach out for help. The cure for depression is to work harder. The anecdote for anxiety is to think less. The remedy for an eating disorder is to eat better. Issues in our community are bottled up to be stored away with the intent to never be opened. We believe if we reveal what is going on in our lives, everything will collapse. How can we begin to solve these issues within our community to ensure a better future for new generations of Asian Americans? This workshop will explore how mental health care in public schools neglect BIPOC communities while examining the root causes behind why Asian Americans are not seeking mental health services. Additionally, we will be delving into issues of funding culturally aware mental health care and how the presence of police in schools disproportionately impact the black community.

## Eating Disorders Within the AAPI Community: An Exploration of Collective Healing

Bridget Keaveney | Room 364

Over the last several decades, meta-analysis has revealed that Asian Americans report having the lowest rates of diagnosis and treatment among any ethnic or racial group in the United States when it comes to mental illness. The number of those reporting as having disordered eating behaviors is especially of high concern. While eating pathology in Asian American communities is not new, the movement to openly address, discuss, and treat eating disorders among AAPI communities leaves much to be desired. According to South Carolina's Department of Mental Health, and other corroborating studies, eating disorders are reported to have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. It is high time for a frank conversation surrounding the prevalence of eating disorders within the AAPI community and to foster a safe space that not only calls in those who may be currently suffering but also invites all those who are interested in eradicating fatphobia. It is crucial that, as a community, we consider what steps to take to dismantle and challenge the normalization of harmful messaging and how to empower and encourage those struggling to seek help.

## Racism Against Ourselves: Division in Asian Americans

Anish Bhatia | Room 315 | Virtual Presenter

# Workshop Block I

11AM-12:15PM

## Disorientalism: Returning to Our Radical Roots

Tony Ruan, Yolanda Wong, Yamato Takabe | Room 323

From the Third World Liberation Front protests to the very term “Asian American,” the history of the Asian American community is rooted in cross-culturalism and solidarity with other minority groups. However, our radical roots have today become glorified: our historical victories become stories of institutional cooperation, while stories of our resistance fade from memory. Through this workshop, the Asian American Students Alliance at Yale hopes to reflect upon our community’s radical roots and encourage everyone to reconnect with not only pan-Asian, but also pan-Cultural issues so that together we can organize for racial justice for all.

## Isolating As/Am Experiences

Anna MacLennan | Room 332

Whether in K-12 or in college, many Asian Americans attend a predominantly white institution (PWI) at least once in their life. In this workshop we will use discussion to unpack the ways PWIs affect our connections to our identities, our families, and our communities. What burdens do they place on us? How do they isolate us? and most importantly, how can we find connection regardless?

## Am I Khmer?

Erika Khemarika Pen | Room 383

This workshop is dedicated to looking at and reexamining the Khmer identity. Often the Khmer identity and basic knowledge are connected to the Khmer Rouge and the atrocities committed by the regime. In this workshop, we’ll reexamine what it means to be Khmer and shape a new one. This new narrative builds off the past but includes more than the Khmer Rouge. It allows for Cambodian and Cambodian Americans to be recognized for their accomplishments and heard for more than just their trauma. You don’t need to be Khmer to attend this workshop as it’s open to everyone. The basis of this workshop is understanding our cultural identity!

## Beat, Belonging, and Beyond: Understanding Rave Culture in the AAPI Community

Lucy Zhou | Room 309

## Frameworks for the Future: Tools for Healing, Empowering and Grounding as Student Organizers

Mike Messina, Juilie Wu | Room 368

# Workshop Block II

12:30PM-1:45PM

## Duality of South Asian American mental Health

Heshani Amugoda | Room 383

The Duality of South Asian American Mental Health will be a workshop on the intersecting components of being both "South Asian" and "American." We will be discussing immigrant identities, social psychology topics, and addressing how some diaspora discussions all intersect with a South Asian American individual and their experiences with/ perceptions of mental health. This workshop will consist of both small and whole group discussions, as well as space for individual reflection. While the South Asian American narrative is centered, the topics discussed can be applied to many different Asian American identities.

## A Brighter Day: The Philippines and Revolution

Eisa Marie Casaclang | Room 315

The Philippines has endured hundreds of years of oppression as a result of capitalistic mindsets. From Spanish colonization to United States occupation, the Filipino community has been exploited. In more recent history, the Marcos' regime in the Philippines has caused many Filipinos undue pain and suffering. Despite this, however, the Filipino people have managed to overcome to see a brighter day. This workshop will overview consequences of the Marcos regime to the current Marcos Jr. regime on Filipino people. We will then review Filipino revolutionary movements, past and present, that have stood firmly against these systems of oppression. Lastly, there will be a discussion on how to support and uplift the work being done to oppose the Marcos Jr. regime today.

## Radical Networking: Forging Connections through Community Care, Authenticity, and Collaboration

Claire Gunawan, Lowell Lobaton | Room 389

The idea of networking is formatted as a business practice to exchange information and services between people and organizations. In this workshop, we will be going over dominant white cultural practices in the workforce and how we can imagine networking through the lens of community care and authentic relationship building. How does networking look different when it is decolonized and is centered around community as opposed to transactional? Many college students join identity-based organizations on campus in hopes of finding community and a sense of belonging. These two aspects require the intentionality of community care and forming organic and authentic relationships. How does building relationships at the speed of trust look different than building relationships at the speed of capitalism? In this workshop, we will (1) reflect on our circles of communities: our hometowns, our work, school, organizations, and our friend groups. (2) We will then reflect on

# Workshop Block II

12:30PM-1:45PM

## Techno-oriental Girls: Robot Asian Femmes and Their Queer Potentials

Katie Zhang | Room 368

This workshop is a media analysis of robots when they are gendered as femme, racialized as asian, and temporarily placed in the future. In a cyberpunk deep dive, we will explore the concepts of asian roboticism, techno-orientalism, and queer posthumanism. After seeing how cis-heteropatriarchy and imperialism have historically corrupted robots, we together explore and imagine the queer, subversive potential of robot asian femmes.

## Conversations About Intergenerational Trauma as A/AA

Kelly Guo, Felicia Yan | Room 323

This workshop explores the topic of intergenerational trauma, specifically as Asian and Asian American individuals. Attendees will get the opportunity to explore the systemic origins of intergenerational trauma, and discuss its portrayal in film and media, personal experiences, and its translation beyond the surface level. We hope to empower Asian American youths to initiate difficult conversations with their families and peers regarding mental health and experiences that can improve their quality of life. We hope to create a space that is open for reflection and discussion.

## The Power of Local History

Diana Kim, Isabella DiFulvio | Room 364

What if I told you there's local Asian American history in Williamsburg? (Yes, at William & Mary, where Thomas Jefferson attended school). In this workshop, we will discuss the APM Research project that uncovered the stories of the first Asian American students and student organizations at W&M. Join us in discussing and sharing the power of local history and how we can change the K-12 history curriculum with some good old Asian American history. Thomas Jefferson has got nothing on Pu Kao Chen.

## Rapid Community Mobilization for Protests and Rallies: Tips from the Field

Michael Nguyen | Room 309

Rapid mobilization is a necessary tactic in movement work, and relies heavily on intentionally-created, long-term relationships with community members and organizations. Through storytelling and dialogue, learn with us to develop practical skills and frameworks to host in-person events towards justice.



# Workshop Block III

3:45PM-5PM

## Coalition Building and Cross-Community Work: Reflections from the Japanese American Community

Matthew Weisbly | Room 332

Cross-community solidarity is not a new concept, it has its roots in decades even before the Civil Rights movement. In looking at the historic context of specifically Japanese American solidarity with other marginalized communities, as well as current work being done by different organizations, participants will build a better understanding of solidarity work. As well as learn how to better work collaboratively with other communities and get the chance to work with their peers on ideas, action plans, and goals they can take back to their schools and organizations.

## BAD ASIANS: Exploring the Relationship Between Heritage, Language, and Identity for Asian Americans

Grace Liscomb, Jeffrey Gu | Room 389

"I'm a bad Asian— I can't even talk to my grandparents on the phone." This workshop explores the phenomenology behind the creation of identity through sociolinguistics. What does it mean to be a hyphenated ethnic American if you aren't fluent in your language? Does your ability to speak, read, and understand your heritage's language detract from your cultural identity? How does one feel more "Asian" if they also feel Americanized? This workshop is for those who want to learn from sociolinguistic research, ongoing literature, and ultimately will create a safe space for dialogue and reconnection to senses of self.

## Anti-Asian Violence and The Limitations of "Hate Crimes"

Jane Shim | Room 309

"Hate crimes" are commonly used as a shorthand to refer to the harassment, discrimination, and violence against Asian Americans. What is lost when we use the hate crimes framework? What actually is and isn't a crime? What causes interpersonal violence, and racial violence? And what can Asian Americans do about it?



# Workshop Block III

3:45PM-5PM

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## APALA, Unions, and AAPI Labor History

Vivian Chang and Mai-Thy Tyler | Room 383

APALA is a 31-year national organization that builds power of AAPI workers, unions, and uplifts their intersecting issues of economic justice. This workshop dives into the history of APALA's grassroots work and critical historical moments in AAPI labor history. Participants will learn the fundamentals of labor unions and collective action in the workplace, focused on how AAPI students can participate as equal members.

## Find, Make, and Speak Your Truth

Keidai Lee | Room 338 | Virtual Presenter

## On Radical Acceptance and Love as Intersectionality

Victoria Shueng | Room 368 | Virtual Presenter

# CLOSING CEREMONY

## OPENING REMARKS

Estelle Kim and Gordon Shi  
*2023 Co-executive Conference Directors*

## SPEAKERS

Minh Phan  
Manjeet Sarkar

## INTERMISSION

## PERFORMERS

V Major  
Wushu Club  
APEX Dance Crew  
jason chu  
Ektaal Acapella

# GUEST SPEAKERS



## Minh Phan

Chef, Artist, Founder of PHENAKITE Restaurant, porridge + puffs, and PKite Studio, a multi-disciplinary studio. As a 20 year veteran of the culinary arts as well as a decade-long experience in film, Phan's practice oscillates between conceptualization and execution of the uniquely exceptional and exceptionally unique. More than what the eye can see, her art brings in all the senses especially taste and smell, and what she calls the sixth sense, "the gut." Rooted in technique, playfulness, and thoughtful studies of nature, humans, their relationships, she juxtaposes time and space, at once questioning and honoring their value via ephemerality.

Her most recent project PHENAKITE has held a Michelin Star since its inception (2021, 2022), named 2021 LA Times Restaurant of the Year, James Beard semifinalist, and included in Art Forum's Top 10 list for 2022 (as an art installation and experience). Named after a gem formed under pressure and destruction, PHENAKITE was born under similar circumstances during the Covid pandemic. Collapsing the space between commodity and art was Phan's thesis when she founded PHENAKITE Restaurant. In this space, Phan has been able to explore art and her work without limitations, developing a personal and intimate narrative using food as her primary medium.

While she explores, tinkers, and leads in unconventional and whimsical ways, she continues to hold space for community at her other acclaimed project and restaurant porridge + puffs, where accessibility and engagement, alternative programming are core values. Phan's activism is shown through her collaborative work and ability to expand the proverbial table.

## Manjeet Sarkar

Manjeet joined the entertainment industry when he discovered his love for creating art, and he stayed for the stories.

He spent the past five years making people laugh and connecting them with a range of experiences through stories. He believes storytelling is the most powerful way to connect with people-- and his own story was the best place to start.

In November 2022, Manjeet launched his first national tour, Untouchable. It is not only his first national tour, but the first national tour done by a Dalit comedian.

Manjeet Sarkar helps people connect with themselves and the world through relevant storytelling go to <https://www.manjeetsarkar.com/story> to learn more about Manjeet and his work!



# PERFORMERS

## V MAJOR



V Major is a Chinese Arts Performing Troupe founded by UVA students in 2010. Fellow fans of Chinese traditional music are brought together for lively and enjoyable sharing of musical experience. The ensemble performs frequently at various cultural events in Charlottesville throughout the year, bringing diversity to the community. Today, they're gonna present a song called "Chinese wedding" and 3 solo pieces on traditional Chinese instruments, including Erhu, Guzheng and Dizi, with the accompaniment of piano.

APEX was the first K-Pop dance crew established at the University of Virginia. Founded in 2014, APEX's goal has always been to introduce K-Pop and other East Asian music genres to the dance community at UVA. As a non-audition group, APEX is open to dancers of all levels, and strives to create a positive, enjoyable environment for everyone.

## APEX DANCE CREW



## EKTAAL A CAPELLA



Founded in 1999, Ektaal A Capella is UVA's premier gender-inclusive South Asian a capella group. They strive to promote South Asian culture and art through mashups and medleys of Western and South Asian music in a variety of languages. They perform at concerts and local events at UVA as well as competitions against other a capella groups across the nation. You will be getting a sneak peek of the single they are releasing on Spotify later this summer!

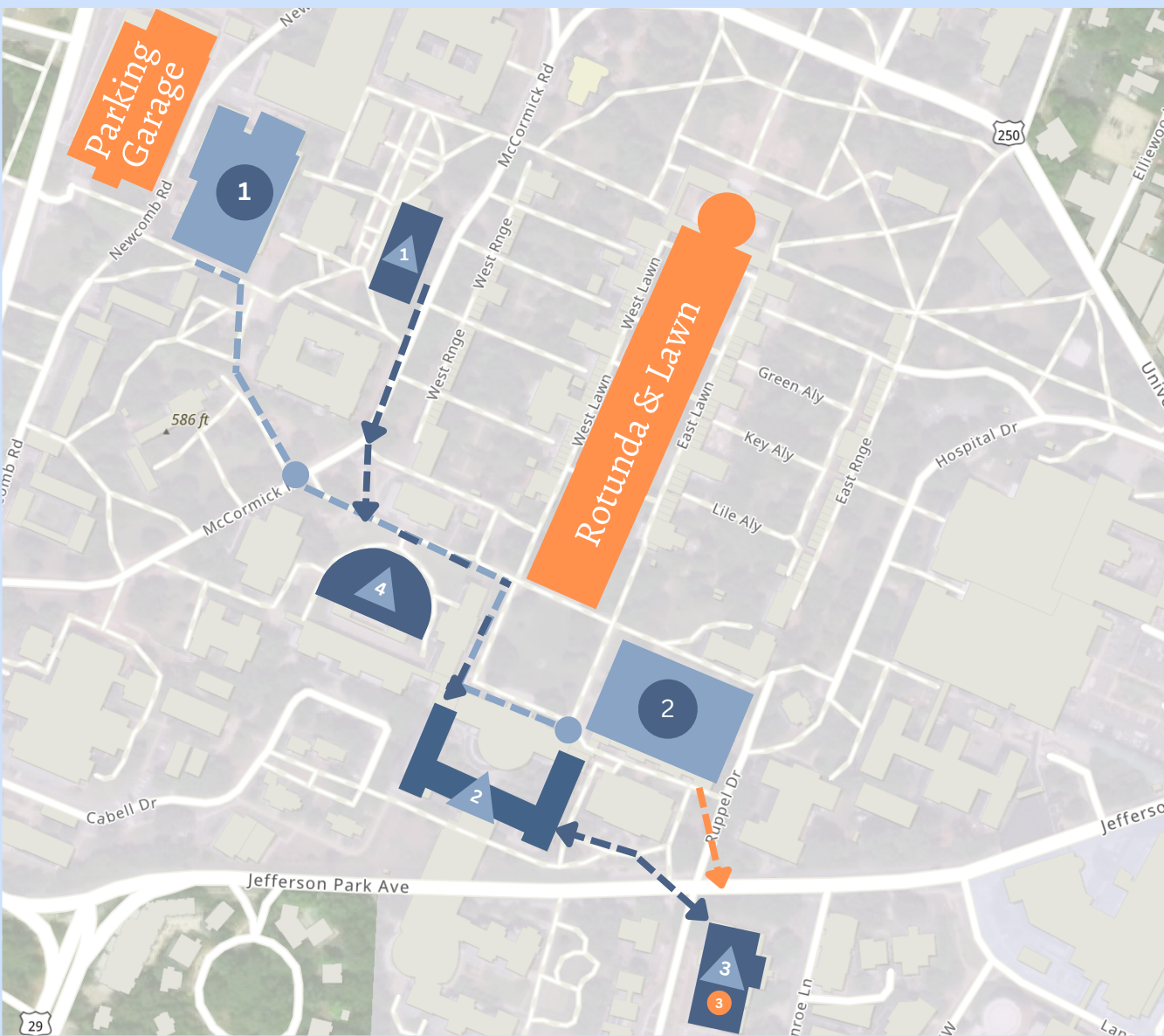
## VIRGINIA WUSHU CLUB



Founded in 2001, the Virginia Wushu Club continues a 20+ year tradition of being the home to a tight-knit community of students dedicated to training body and mind through Wushu.



# CAMPUS MAP



## FRIDAY


Location	Event
1 Newcomb Hall	Registration Check-in
2 Wilson Hall	Opening Ceremony
3 (Rec.) Rideshare Pickup Location	Address to book rideshares to: 400 Brandon Ave.


## SATURDAY

1 Peabody Lawn	Breakfast, Lunch & Networking Fair
2 New Cabell Hall	Workshop Blocks
3 Student Health Building	Workshop Blocks
4 Amphitheater	Dinner

 Saturday

 Friday

 Optional

 Both Days

# Thank You to Our 2023 Conference Sponsors!

IA Impact



Japanese American Citizens League

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Conference Sponsors!**



# **Thank You to Our 2023 Conference Sponsors!**



**Asian American Legal Defense  
and Education Fund**