



News Release

PHOTO RELEASE:

Comptroller Lierman Recognizes Business Owners and Community Organizations During Inaugural AAPI Heritage Awards

Fifteen recipients honored with Community Champion and Public Service Awards for their impact in Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (May 28, 2025) — Maryland Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman today presented the inaugural AAPI Heritage Awards to 15 Asian American and Pacific Islander business owners and community leaders for their contributions to the State of Maryland and the business community during an Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month event at the Louis L. Goldstein Treasury Building in Annapolis.

During her remarks, Comptroller Lierman noted that more than 420,000 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders live in Maryland, and the state has over 14,000 Asian-owned firms that employ more than 118,000 people.

“The AAPI communities in Maryland are culturally rich, help drive economic activity, and serve as sources of leadership to strengthen our state. You uplift and enrich our communities, solidifying Maryland as a culturally rich place where everyone is welcome to live, raise a family, start a business, and thrive. We are proud to support and celebrate you,” Comptroller Lierman shared.

The Community Champion Awards honorees were chosen for their positive influence on their communities, engagement in community service and mentorship, inspiring others to work to reach common goals, and demonstrating good stewardship. The Public Service Award was presented to organizations and individuals who have created or advocated for sustainable advancement in the AAPI community.

Small Business Community Awards

- Gopinath “Gopi” Swamynathan, owner, [Dosa & Chaat Indian Restaurant](#) (Montgomery County)
- Xiaonao Liu, PhD, CEO, [NanoBioFAB](#) (Frederick County)
- Venkat Subramanian, founder, president and CEO, [ANGARAI](#), (Prince George’s County)

Emerging Leader Awards

- Stephanie Yu, founder and general partner, [Sunwater Capital](#) (Montgomery County)
- LieAnne Navarro, founder, [Dear Globe Coffee Roasters](#), and arts advocate, Cotyledon Arts, (Baltimore City)
- Jessie Su, Associate Director of Development at Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore City)

Business Leader Awards

- Bangalore Shivacharan, founder, [Turning Point Global Solutions](#) (Montgomery County)
- Peter Chang, chef and restaurateur, [Peter Chang Group](#) (Montgomery County)
- Elizabeth Chung, executive director, [Asian American Center of Frederick](#) (Frederick County)

Public Service Awards

- [Indian Cultural Association of Howard County](#) (Howard County)
- Korean-American Senior Citizens Association of Maryland (Montgomery County)
- Linda Han, founder and first president, Korean American Women’s Chamber of Commerce (Prince George’s County)
- Shahan Rizvi, advocate for AAPI civic engagement (Howard County)
- Archana Thakker, Comptroller’s Faith Leaders Advisory Council (Montgomery County)
- [Maryland Secretary of State Susan Lee](#), who is the first Asian American to serve as the Maryland Secretary of State.

[View photos from the AAPI Heritage Awards event.](#)

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