

## **Children's Book Committee**

By Francis Eclevia, Cha Viloría, Alejandro Lopez, Sarah Mamaril, Chong Anh, Eurie Chung, Emily Roh, and Marc Loresto

In an effort to develop an alternative form of communication/media to promote awareness and understanding of the immigrant workers' struggle at Assi Market, this committee created a trilingual children's book in English, Korean, and Spanish. Throughout the process, many strengths of the group were displayed: artistic, writing, organizational, and logistical (to name a few). What really made the committee's efforts a success was the ability to have every member contribute whether it was coming up with the story-line, drawings, making hundreds of copies, binding the books, or presenting in the class or forum. The end result is a product that truly conveys a significant message in a form that anyone can understand. One amazing fact of the process is that the committee was able to finish the project without having spent a dime due to some of the members' resource connections. Throughout the process, all of the members really shined by stepping up to the plate and really driving our efforts to a complete and successful collective project.

### **Alejandro Lopez**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important because we are resourceful activists who can help end the social injustice that is taking place at Assi market.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill by striving to find similarities, by educating and learning from my committee peers.

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by sharing responsibility and encouraging members.

I also helped the work of the class as a whole by making a presentation to the following campus groups and classes about the Assi campaign: **At UCLA campus:** Chicana/o Studies M146, La Gente, Conciencia Libre, MEChA. **Off-campus:** Youth Organizing Committee, Inner City Struggle, University High School. I gained the endorsement of the following groups: Chicana/o Studies M146, La Gente, Conciencia Libre, MEChA

### **Ali Wong**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is crucial towards returning to the original Asian American Studies dedication to community. As UCLA students, we have so much to offer the immigrant workers' campaign. We have time, material resources, intellectual resources, connections to networks of other student groups, meeting rooms and fresh thinking. We could convene in the grad lounge after our classes, which is a convenience we take for granted. The fact that we all go to UCLA together and can easily meet in an accessible room five minutes after taking a midterm is an incredible privilege.

Members of non-collegiate groups usually have to drive to a far place and sit in traffic to meet. Our committee originally estimated that our whole project would cost \$150.00. It ended up costing \$0.00 because of all our material resource connections. I was able to provide all of the paper, yarn, markers and colored pencils. Alejandro used his work resources to make 250 copies of our book. That we were able to translate the book into Korean, English and Spanish attests to our intellectual resources. If we could not do it ourselves, we all knew people that could help us accurately translate the text. The UCLA campus is full of T.A.'s, professors and language majors. These people are only a hop, skip and jump away for us. By using my power as UCLA students for the immigrant worker's campaign, I have learned the value of learning from our current communities. After getting a fuller sense of the impact of the L.A. riots in Koreatown, I saw how important the immigrant worker's campaign was within the context of the racial tensions. Through learning about KIWA's work, I learned so much more about union organizing, history and politics. When Asian American Studies first started, students actively integrated their studies with community work because they wanted to create a two-way learning street. Some of us fear true exploration of our ethnic enclaves. The term "enclave" itself sounds like cave, exuding a sense of exclusivity and secretiveness where non-native speakers cannot participate. But we can absolutely make the choice to be a part of those communities by making use of our social networks and linguistic connections. We live and breathe the legacies of our histories that left footprints in "Strangers From a Different Shore" and march on in the picket line of the Assi supermarket. All of the posh Asian American Studies theoretical research is not worth much if we do not put those conclusions to good use. We cannot look at those "Strangers From a Different Shore" as extinct strangers who no longer exist, but rather see them as our mothers, fathers, grandparents and great-grandparents whom we have so much to learn from.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill (shared leadership) by learning how to trust in fellow committee members. I used to have a fear that if I did not oversee every single step and delegate every job, that my peers would not complete a project. But now I see that shared leadership is so much more effective because when everybody takes initiative and self-assigns responsibility, they are more likely to follow through. In shared leadership, people want to be there because they told themselves to be there. Instead of commanding that people maintain perfect attendance to every meeting, I found that it was much more powerful to make every meeting fun so that people would want to attend. I accomplished this by always bringing my best energies, humor and enthusiasm to each meeting. In the beginning, some committee members would email me personally to ask what was going on with this or that. Finding myself slipping into that head position again, I responded, "Email the assibook listserv and see what everybody else has to say."

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by encouraging Sarah, Cha and Francis to update the class on all the work we accomplished. I also promoted the concept of no-negation in the creative process. In the process of brainstorming, I emphasized the importance of accepting everyone's ideas and letting ourselves go overboard, because we could always retreat. Through this philosophy,

Chong worked on patience in understanding differences in others and Emily was able to let go of control tendencies. By simply contributing my own enthusiasm for the project, I helped Eurie and Marc stay motivated and excited about making change. Knowing that Alejandro was the kind of leader who needed positive affirmations, I made sure to compliment his drawings and translations on a regular basis.

I also helped the work of the class as a whole by making a presentation to the following campus groups and classes about the Assi campaign: LCC, PacTies and Asian American Studies 107A. I gained the endorsement of the following groups: LCC .

### **Cha Viloría**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important because what students and workers can potentially learn from each other can be applied to the work that we all do, and the struggles we all face. These struggles are what connect us, as students, to the workers, although this is not always realized.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill, staying motivated, by finding motivation in others. I realized that when I myself find it hard to stay motivated in the work I do, that I can look to others who are in the same position as me to keep me going.

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by practicing shared leadership. I think that concept is all-encompassing of our "skills we want to develop," whether it's staying motivated, not being too bossy, facilitating, or taking initiative.

I also helped the work of the class as a whole by making a presentation to the following campus groups and classes about the Assi campaign (give names of groups and classes). I gained the endorsement of the following groups: Pilipino Recruitment and Enrichment Program (PREP), which is a high school outreach program.

### **Chong Anh**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important because students bring awareness and knowledge from the classroom out to the real world.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill by listening more attentively to others and understanding their point of view without imposing my own thoughts first (leadership skill gained: patience and ability to listen to others ideas fully before discounting them).

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by encouraging others through positive reinforcement and by making them feel comfortable enough so that they would have the courage to bring out a new side of their leadership skills.

**Emily Roh**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important because as students, we have a powerful and legitimized voice that can bring awareness to issues that otherwise are ignored.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill (not trying to do everything myself) by learning to trust my other group members and having confidence that they will do what they said they will, instead of expecting them to flake out and leave me and few others to do all the work.

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by always trying to be open-minded and listening to what they have to say/suggest. Also, I tried not to procrastinate on my work because I knew that others were relying upon me so that they could work on the next portion of the project.

I also helped the work of the class as a whole by making a presentation to the following campus groups and classes about the Assi campaign (give names of groups and classes). I gained the endorsement of the following groups (give names of groups).

For this last question, I wasn't able to gain any endorsements, although I have emailed IDEAS about the picket and are trying to get some members to show up this Friday. I have spoken to friends about the issue and tried to get people to come to the forum.

**Eurie Chung**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important because we have the time and resources (financial, to make copies; people, to create and assemble; technology, to scan, do layout and preserve it in a digital format; etc.) to mass produce many copies of a children's book. The workers and KIWA staff seemed very happy and excited about the book and I realized how such a project could be easily disseminated through the community (and as one forum attendee pointed out, be given to libraries in the Koreatown area).

In my committee, I worked on developing more initiative by trying to take on more responsibility and volunteering for tasks. If I felt confused about something, I definitely spoke up and asked for clarification instead of waiting for answers.

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by trying to get people more involved. In areas where I had no/limited experience, like illustrating or layout, I allowed those groups to be responsible for those tasks. I took on leadership where I could so that others who felt like "dictators" or "micromanagers" would feel comfortable not handing all the details. I tried to offer support in any way that I could, especially if people seemed burnt out and offering encouragement to the group so that people felt that they could stick things out through the end. I hope that I pointed out

specific tasks that needed to be done so that people could see more clearly what needed to be taken care of and be able to volunteer for those tasks.

I also helped the work of the class as a whole by making a presentation to the following campus groups and classes about the Assi campaign aas200b, aas200c, ed253g (Asian American education), and Anthro 250. I gained the endorsement of the following groups AAS 200C, Anthro 250 (labor, race and gender seminar)

### **Francis Eclevia**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important because it strengthens the campaign for the workers. Any support, whether it's in the tens or thousands, is valuable. Having UCLA students' support means so much because it shows that the 'youth' is aware of the struggle and is actively making efforts to make the campaign a success. The 'youth' that we have is really a great thing because some struggles last for many years. Imagine if this campaign went on as long as the campaign for Filipino Veterans. This example might be stretching it, but it's that unknown that is always a cause for concern. For the strugglers, time can actually be something that works against them because the longer this struggle continues, the stronger the 'enemy' becomes because it's very tough to maintain the fire needed for a campaign to succeed as time goes on. But the great thing is that we have youth involved. If we can make sure that youth support will never run out, this campaign will go strong for as many years as needed because we have 'youth' to combat time. I also think that support from UCLA students and students in general can really bring new life to these immigrant workers because it's so easy for 'other' (students, people not *directly* associated with the campaign) people to become disconnected and have the fight only be between Daniel Rhee and the Korean/Latino community. UCLA in the name itself brings strength to campaign just by its reputation. It shows Daniel Rhee that there's a very important and popular institution going up against it. I think also our roles as students allow us to make bigger change. Although we have our academics to take care of, for many of us, not having a job won't make or break us. That's not the case for these workers. Assi market is their livelihood. I'm also betting that many have families to take care of. We, on the other hand, don't so much responsibility, in that context. That allows us to really dedicate our efforts, if we really want it and our support shows that we do.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill (developing leadership in others) by setting a good example. In comparison to most of my group members, I haven't been able to do as much as they have because I couldn't meet during the Wednesday meeting time or contribute fully until preparing for the forum (helping with the skits, binding the children's book). I try to take advantage of any opportunity to contribute (like with this summary of the committee) because there haven't been too many opportunities for me to do so (as mentioned above). So, I've tried to make the most of the things I could contribute to and do the best I can with what's presented for me. Anything I can do, however little (like being in charge of the lights at the forum, erasing pencil marks on the finalized book drawings, etc.) it may be, I take up. Hopefully my

committee members recognize that I've been doing that.

In my committee, I don't think I really helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills because of my limited opportunities to interact with them within the committee setting. Outside of the committee setting, I was able to interact with many of them during class and a bit outside of class. Since leadership is defined as an influence relationship among persons who intend real changes that reflect a shared purpose, I believe I've achieved the first step of that and that is the comfortability and ability to communicate well with my fellow group members. I made it clear to them from the get-go that the time conflict for the meetings would pose a problem for my contributions and I don't think there were any issues about that with them because they were clearly addressed about it. I did the best I could with the opportunities that were present.

I also helped the work of the class as a whole by making a presentation to the following campus groups and classes about the Assi campaign: SIOC (Student Initiated Outreach Committee) and S.P.A.C.E. (Samahang Pilipino Advancing Community Empowerment). I gained the endorsement of the following groups: SIOC

### **Sarah Mamaril**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important, because it shows that students can exercise their power and make a difference in their community/city/state/world they live in.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill of "fostering intra-group harmony and concept of teamwork." I tried to make sure that everyone was happy and felt involved/needed/wanted. Also, in the development of the story for the children's book, I found myself being brave in sharing my ideas. I tried to have confidence in my ideas, and when I did, I was given support by my peers. They actually used my idea! I was happy.

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by encouraging them and making them feel a part of a great team.

I also helped the work of the class as a whole by trying to make a presentation to student groups and classes about the Assi campaign. Although I did not get any endorsements, my efforts were there through e-mails, personal contact, and spreading the word about upcoming events.

### **Marc Loresto**

Through my work on the project of my committee, I learned that the support of UCLA students for immigrant workers' campaigns for justice is important because through our book "The Assi Tree," we can give the children of the community a means to understand this very important issue surrounding workers and their families.

In my committee, I worked on developing a new leadership skill, shared leadership, by working together as a team, meaning that we all helped each other out and at the same time we worked on each of our tasks and, at the end, came up with a great product.

In my committee, I helped each of my classmates develop their new leadership skills by getting to know each of them as much I could and helping to promote each of their talents while also listening to everyone's ideas and thoughts about how things should be done, which is just letting people take initiative in whatever skill they are trying to gain by giving them the means to.

I actually did not make a presentation or get any endorsement for our class campaign besides just passing out flyers and telling everyone I talked to in class, at the dorm, cafeteria, and on the phone. I probably would have been able to make presentations and get endorsements if I had a little more courage to.