PRESS RELEASE

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Changing Tides Upstream Gala Celebrates Inaugural Therapy Stipend Program for AAPI Young Adults, Announces Upcoming Initiative

LOS ANGELES, December 20, 2022 – The 4th annual Changing Tides (CT) gala returned on November 27, 2022 at the Palos Verdes seaside estate of Carolyn Elliot. With this year’s event themed Upstream, the intimate gathering of supporters celebrated the successes of this young adult-driven Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC) program which has seen substantial growth since its inception in 2018. Through initiatives, events, outreach, education and open conversations, Changing Tides took great strides in 2022 towards its mission to destigmatize mental health in the AAPI community.

“Typically in Asian cultures, you don’t talk about mental health. I think younger generations are starting to change that, and I think it’s so important to talk about it and destigmatize it and give people opportunities they may not have access to otherwise,” said CT supporter and attendee, Sarah Fukui.

The multigenerational crowd of supporters, staff, donors, friends and family at Upstream included the Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles, Kenko Sone, as well as 2022 Nisei Week Queen, Kristine Yada, who selected Changing Tides as her philanthropic platform. Following a catered lunch by Katsuya, attendees were invited to engage in open dialogues about mental health as they listened to personal journeys from speakers including filmmaker and two-time cancer survivor Paul Goodman, and Dr. Ned Sasaki who lost his son Kevin to suicide earlier this year. As Dr. Sasaki shared details of Kevin’s painful battle with bipolar disorder, he reminded the room of friends, family and supporters to have the difficult conversations and embrace vulnerabilities. “It’s okay,” he urged.

“If you’re concerned with talking about mental health or your struggles with mental health, then [Changing Tides] can help,” shared speaker Paul Goodman. “It’s inclusive and everyone is friendly, and we love to explore those topics and be more educated and open about who we are.”
The *Upstream* event additionally celebrated the inaugural year of the CT Stream therapy stipend initiative which successfully provided free therapy sessions to a total of 64 AAPI youth, aged 16-25, with pre-screened culturally-sensitive therapists in our referral network.

The gala concluded with a heartfelt musical performance by Miya Stepanhoff followed by closing remarks from Changing Tides Outreach Coordinator, Matthew Yonemura, who announced the upcoming launch of CT Anchor, a new initiative which will provide free suicide prevention trainings to college clubs, church groups, community organizations and interested individuals in the new year.

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ABOUT CHANGING TIDES Changing Tides (CT) is a program of Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC) and aims to normalize mental health in the AAPI community through events, outreach and education, and open conversations. What started in 2018 as an idea by a group of college friends has grown to become a program that reaches 5,000 AAPI young adults and families through various workshops, forums, activities and events. [thechangingtides.org](http://thechangingtides.org)

ABOUT LTSC For over 40 years, Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC) has provided a safety net of social welfare and community development services to empower people and communities in need. Starting with its home in Little Tokyo, LTSC preserves and strengthens the unique ethnic communities of the Southern California region where people, culture and collective future matter. [www.ltsc.org](http://www.ltsc.org)