



Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander HERITAGE MONTH

Nwe Oo- Program Director at Community Health for
Asian Americans



How do you identify within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community?

I identify as Rakhine, an ethnic group from Burma/Myanmar

How did you find your way to the Bay Area?

My children and I resettled as refugees in the Bay Area through a refugee program. We are grateful that our USA resettlement program under the Refugee Act allowed our family to find a new and safer home in the Bay Area.

How has your heritage shaped the person you are today?

My family has greatly influenced the passions I hold today as most of my family held great interest in community service and humanitarian work. I learned these values early in my childhood -to serve others so that they can get the resources they need. Growing up, we were surrounded by war and the generational trauma and the political turmoil that came along with it. This taught me resilience and the increasing need for safety and mental health care. This is why I am committed to mental health care and reshaping the service to meet the needs and cultural values in the communities we serve.

Who are the role models or mentors that have influenced you or helped guide you?

My mother always shaped us to be independent and compassionate as well as to practice healing through altruism. The women in my life were strong role models and were leaders in a matriarchal society who have shaped my passion for leadership and commitment to social change.

What brings you joy about your heritage and culture?

I am a weaver and I mostly learned my skills of the trade from my mother. It has given me and others opportunities to preserve and spread this traditional method of weaving as well as having another means for economic stability. I now have employed hundreds of weavers in the Bay area and Asia to work and propagate this heritage we share. It also has helped guide me through my own healing process.



**Behavioral Health
Department**
Alameda County Health