

Meet Board Member Tracey Jen



Name? Tracey Jen

Board Position? Education Coordinator, Planning Committee

What Do You Do for the Board?

- Education Coordinator:
 - Help coordinate, plan, supervise Heritage Education Programs for all ages
 - Develop thoughtful lesson plans with our team of Heritage instructors and volunteers
 - Teach art and culture lessons
 - Photograph art projects and activities

- Planning Committee:
 - Help brainstorm and implement ideas for camp as a whole
 - Help lead family bonding activities at camp
 - Organize feedback from campers to improve camp programs for the next year!
 - Update CFC website

Why Are You On the Board?

During my Curatorial Practice graduate studies at Maryland Institute College of Art, I curated my thesis art exhibition "[Crossover](#)" about the spectrum of hybridized Chinese identities, which showcased camper [Beth Lo](#)'s ceramic artwork about her Chinese American identity. At the time of planning my exhibition, I went through a lot of struggle

trying to find artists that would fit such a personal theme. One day, I saw Beth's artwork online and immediately resonated with it. I reached out to her through email and was surprised to find out that we were both born and raised in West Lafayette, Indiana and we were both artists born to engineer fathers and artistic mothers, and each had an older sister. Even more of a coincidence, after her father retired from being a professor at Purdue University's Aeronautical and Aerospace Engineering program, my father entered the same school and department as a PhD student. Our parallel lives more than a generation apart has been such a gift in my life. After graduation, Beth introduced me to her sister [Ginnie Lo](#), her cousins Allen and Vevan Yang, and her childhood neighbor Pauline Shen. Through them, I was fortunate to meet the extended Camp family. The 1st year I attended camp was in 2020 at the 1st Virtual CFC, where I gave a presentation about my MFA Thesis. I naturally became involved in helping camp plan Pre-Teen Heritage Programs for the 2nd Virtual CFC in 2021, which was the year I was invited to join the CFC board. Joining the board gave me the opportunity to continue a mission dear to my heart. My first time attending physical camp was in 2022 at Cedar Lake. Although I didn't attend CFC when I was a child, I grew up in the Purdue Chinese School community, which shared the same family values.

*Please click on hyperlinks to watch videos, describing more in-depth stories.

What have you learned about CFC during your involvement?

Although Zoom and the technology at our fingertips are very convenient, it cannot replace live human interaction, which has a powerful effect. There is something precious about a community physically being together, seeing campers naturally willing to help each other, learn from each other, and hearing the sound of laughter. Camp is successful, because it is a combined effort from all participants, who contribute their knowledge and skills to enhance the camper experience. CFC has taught me the importance of supportive teamwork and how sharing the same values makes solving problems and the overall workload feel like an easy flow.

Favorite Story or Memory about Camp?

Hearing a gentle "hello" or "do you need some help?" really warmed my heart. There have been so many considerate words and gestures that I've experienced my first time at camp. It's hard to pick just one story, but below is a summary of my mahjong experience:

In the middle of a mahjong game, suddenly Uncle Allen puts on the most Chinese sounding Gu Zheng background music. You can see young kids playing with elders. You can hear a half Chinese and half English conversation going on. And perhaps, when you have these different mixed dynamics around the square table, this ancient Chinese game

of Mahjong will bring out a different side of you that will make your parents surprised. This is a true family gathering.

What's Next for You at Camp?

Preserving the Camp legacy and the kind, giving, family spirit of camp for future generations of Chinese descendants and their families to enjoy. I will continue to share more Chinese Culture through education programming, while creating a harmonic atmosphere for all campers to come home to.



"Welcome to the In-Between" is a painting by [Tracey Jen](#)