

Dressing the Petite for Success

Thai American launches clothing line for women 5'2" and under

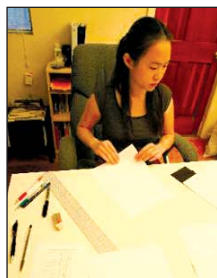
BY MICHELLE-LINH THUY NGUYEN

OAKLAND, Calif. — For fashion designer and entrepreneur Sunny Suppa, the frustration of finding well-fitting business attire meant only one thing: Do it yourself.

Last year, with the guidance of local entrepreneurship training programs, she struck out and started her own clothing company specifically for women 5 feet 2 inches and shorter. Appropriately, the company's name is "5ft2in."

Suppa (shortened from Suppakijumnong) will be launching 5ft2in at the Ignite! New Business Expo on June 6 at Frank Ogawa Plaza in downtown Oakland, along with 20 other new businesses. The event will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is free to the public.

The talented designer spent her first 10 years in Bangkok, Thailand, after which she and her family



Sunny Suppa at work

moved to Florida. She earned a degree in fashion design from the International Academy of Fashion and Technology, and a second degree in a p p a r e l manufacturing

management from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. After graduation, she worked for Gap, BCBG and a private label, making apparel for Arden B., Anthropologie and Frederick's of Hollywood.

Though Suppa's resume continually grew, it wasn't until she enrolled in CEO Women, an Oakland-based entrepreneurship training program, that she became serious about starting her own enterprise. Suppa acknowledges the program

pushed her to finally get her business off the ground.

Emphasizing that continual learning is an important factor to being a good entrepreneur, Suppa also enrolled in Urban FIRE, an entrepreneurship program offered through Oakland Adult and Career Education and created by the social justice education program Urban VOICE.

Today Sunny Suppa has built a niche clothing company that discards traditional clothing sizes for petite women, a system that merely scaled down sizes. Her first line of pants, she said, was developed from and tested on 5-foot-2-inch women, resulting in a superior fit.

Boku Kodama, who founded both the Urban FIRE program and the Ignite! Expo, said that entrepreneurship is a critical skill set that needs to be made available on a broader scale.

For more information on Ignite!:
boku@urbanvoice.org

Breaking the Glass Ceiling

Asian American women talk work challenges at leadership forum

BY STEFFI LAU

SAN FRANCISCO — Betty Yee, a daughter of Chinese immigrant parents who ran a laundry for 30 years, never dreamed of running for office. But when she had to translate for her parents, she learned the value of being a voice for those who can't express their concerns.

Now Yee is vice chairwoman of the California State Board of Equalization and advocates for underrepresented communities.

Yee, as keynote speaker of the National Association of Asian American Professionals-San Francisco's inaugural Women's Leadership Forum on May 31, stood as motivation to the 60 attendees to make themselves heard and break beyond the glass ceiling.

"It is difficult, but not impossible for Asian Pacific Islander women to get into management ranks," said Kathy Doan, vice president of program development for NAAAP-S.F. "Although there is a perception that Asian women are not assertive, we are extremely fortunate to have many API women [in leadership positions] who all took risks to break through these stereotypes."

The forum included two panel sessions featuring eight Asian American women at the forefront of companies, and three breakout sessions. In planning for a year, the

event was sparked by a Catalyst study that examined how Asian women are less likely to hold high-level positions than other minority women.

Because of the cultural value of respect, Doan said at the forum, Asian women tend to ask for permission too often. "Trust yourself," she advised. "I trust you. If you think this is the right thing to do, just do it."

That message resonated with Teresa Leong, an attendee who works in human resources.

"I'm tired of working by myself and doing what I'm told," said Leong, adding she learned from the forum a number of strategies to apply at work. "I know I need to change myself — but I still can't find the right niche and how to put myself out there."

Yan Yang, a business architect for Wells Fargo, agreed that it is difficult for Asian American women to ascend the ranks. "It's good to hear perspectives from people with a similar cultural background," she said.

NAAAP-S.F. is already planning its second forum, and Doan hopes this year's attendees will turn into next year's success stories.

"I am waiting for the day when I attend a Women's Leadership Forum and learn that one of the panelists had attended the very first one, which motivated her to break barriers and go beyond," Doan said.

MAY SALES

Single Family Homes

SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

DISTRICT NUMBER	GEOGRAPHIC AREA	SOLD PROPERTIES ON MKT	AVG. # DAYS	AVG. SALES PRICE	HIGH SALES PRICE	LOW SALES PRICE	AVG. PRICE/SQ FT MO/08	AVG. PRICE/SQ FT MO/07	% CHANGE
1	Northwest	15	37	\$1,456,763	\$2,960,000	\$650,000	\$615	\$722	-17.41%
2	Central West	33	38	\$865,800	\$1,900,000	\$550,000	\$617	\$578	6.32%
3	Southwest	7	48	\$612,000	\$765,000	\$480,000	\$452	\$530	-17.36%
4	Twin Peaks	17	34	\$1,073,005	\$1,600,000	\$665,000	\$638	\$633	0.78%
5	Central	26	26	1,480,442	\$3,350,000	\$775,000	\$804	\$866	-7.62%
6	Central North	0	-	-	-	-	-	\$874	-
7	North	9	43	\$4,784,444	\$8,950,000	\$2,400,000	\$1,094	\$709	35.15%
8	Northeast	2	118	\$3,670,000	\$6,400,000	\$940,000	\$985	\$887	9.98%
9	Central East	11	30	\$955,682	\$1,350,000	\$460,000	\$577	\$633	-9.80%
10	Southeast	22	39	\$595,864	\$800,000	\$380,000	\$446	\$500	-12.15%

Map of San Francisco geographic areas

Betty Sun Wong, CRS, PMN
Broker-Associate

California Realty
One Daniel Burnham Court, Suite 260 C
San Francisco, CA 94109
Office 415 929-5820 ext. 206
Toll Free 1-(888) BETTY-WCR
Fax 415 567-8069
E-mail: BettyWCR@aol.com
Web: www.prurealty.com/BettySunWong

An Independently Owned and Operated Member of The Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.

Inspiring Across Generations

EVENT: Ascend Leadership Conference

DESCRIPTION: Ascend will be hosting its annual leadership conference and gala dinner, and warmly extends its appreciation to its sponsors for their support. Over 600 emerging managers and seasoned professionals are expected for an interactive day of learning and networking to enhance the presence of Pan-Asian professionals.

DETAILS: \$300, June 7, 8:30 a.m., Four Seasons Hotel, 757 Market St., San Francisco.

CONTACT: (415) 633-3000, naasasf@gmail.com, naasa.org

'Paths To Leadership: Managing Up'



EVENT: "Paths to Leadership"

DESCRIPTION: San Francisco chapter of the National Association of Asian American Professionals, with the generous support of Oracle Corporation, invites you to an evening of networking and discussion with like-minded professionals.

DETAILS: \$10-25, June 11, 6-9 p.m., Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 1700 South El Camino Real, Suite 100, San Mateo.

CONTACT: judy.ngai@naaapsf.org, naaapsf.org/Events.do?id=6146