

## Pina Vyas Elected as Next CAPA President



Dynamic, empowered, and with a passion for service - Pina Vyas is the next leader from the APA community to take over the mantle of President of the Council of Asian Pacific Americans! She succeeds Ryan Rosario in this role, whose term concluded this past December.

A member of CAPA since 2013, Vyas first served as Publicity Chair for the organization before taking on the additional role of Marketing and Communications Chair. In subsequent years, Vyas was asked by Bob Riparip to be CAPA's Executive Director and was elected to this position. During the presidency of Dr. Aneesa Rashid, Pina became her President-Elect but unfortunately, a hiatus from the organization became necessary when Vyas was assigned a role at DTE's Fermi Nuclear Power Plant. Currently, Pina is Manager of Joint Use Operations at DTE Energy where she is responsible for facilitating telephone and cable companies attaching to DTE assets and infrastructure.

Of East-Asian descent and having lived in England, India, Singapore and now in the United States, her international experience embodies CAPA's background of diversity and cultural exchange.

"I wanted to get more involved in the community and especially strengthen and deepen my connections with the South East Asian community here in Michigan, having been transplanted here," said Vyas. "I joined the AIWA board and ran an entire summer program teaching basic computer skills and how to use their computers to connect with loved ones to seniors in the Asian American community. I participated in a leadership summit hosted by CAPA at the GM Tech Center; Arcie observed me present and she was also in the same breakout room I was in. She must have seen something she liked because she approached me

right there to see if I would attend a CAPA Board meeting. I was very impressed by the people on the board at the time and was drawn to CAPA's mission and I joined the board; the rest, as they say, is history."

"During my time at CAPA, my favorite signature events have been the SOE and the Leadership Summit - one because it is a beautiful celebration of talent and the other because it shows our community that we can lead, coach, nurture and teach," she continues. "Dr. Aneesa Rashid had initiated a series of networking events that supported local ethnic restaurants while also educating the community at large about the APA culture and drawing in new members - this quickly grew to my list of favorite events."

Pina has many ideas planned for her 2-year presidency which will culminate at the end of 2022. She plans to fill the vacant Director and Committee Lead positions on CAPA's Board of Directors as well as conduct a Strategic Planning by next month to shepherd the organization in the right direction and keep members informed of future plans. Pina wants to get commitment dates for CAPA's Signature Events and attract the talent of our APA youths.

"By building upon our signature events to create strengths that can be leveraged by the corporations that sponsor and support CAPA - for example, focusing on inclusion, diversity, cultural education and community service," Pina said when talking about Splendor of the East, CAPA's annual cultural showcase which was cancelled last year because of the pandemic.

"Another thing I want to focus on is helping the APA small business community. When Dr. Aneesa Rashid was CAPA President, she had initiated a very successful series of networking events that took us to APA restaurants across the tri-county area and helped build our membership and culturally educate and immerse our members. With the challenge of things being virtual, I'm hoping to do something similar through a CAPA's Kitchen series featuring small restaurant owners and driving business to them."

"Those are just some of the ideas. I don't want to get ahead of myself," Pina adds, stressing that she wants the BOD and CAPA members to weigh in and share their thoughts in the planning process." When I proposed the theme of "Better Together" to Ryan for our holiday event, I was not just thinking of that event; we are definitely BETTER TOGETHER and together, we will make our APA community stronger."

When not working at DTE or the Council of Asian Pacific Americans, Pina enjoys hobbies that include reading, cooking, photography and working out. She loves spending time with her husband-to-be and playing with her two adorable puppies.