



Contact: Andrea Allen / Shirley Wersinger
(585) 473-7720, ext. 3032 / 3020
aallen@mag.rochester.edu / swersinger@mag.rochester.edu

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• **Press Release**

MEMORIAL ART GALLERY HONORS ASIAN AMERICAN LEADERS



Pictured are Memorial Art Gallery Community Programmer Debora McDell; Mrs. Toribara; Dr. Whang; and Mimi Lee, representing Dr. Gupta, who was unable to attend. Photo by Gary Graham.

ROCHESTER, NY — Three area residents were honored for their contributions to the community at the Memorial Art Gallery’s Asian Pacific American Heritage Family Day on May 6. **Masako Ono Toribara, Dr. Brijen K. Gupta** and **Dr. Tae Byung Whang** received 2007 Arts and Education Awards, which recognize Asian Americans 65 or older.

Masako Ono Toribara, 81, served as lecturer in voice at the Eastman School of Music from 1965 until her retirement as Professor Emerita in 1999. At the national level, she performed as a soprano soloist with the Ars Antiqua early music ensemble and sang operatic roles including Papagena in the Opera Under the Stars production of Mozart’s *Magic Flute*. As an educator, she won Eastman’s 1999 Eisenhart Award for Excellence in

Teaching and saw many of her students win positions in such national companies as the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, Houston Grand Opera and San Francisco Opera. She was nominated by Dr. Ralph Locke.

Brijen K. Gupta, 77, is a co-founder of Rochester’s India Community Center, which in 1997 honored him with a lifetime achievement award. Born in India, he earned a master’s degree from Yale and a PhD in international relations from the University of Chicago. Author of numerous books and scholarly articles, he has been a professor of history at Columbia University, Brooklyn College and the University of Rochester. Dr. Gupta is also a co-founder of two medical facilities in Hyderabad, India—the LV Prasad Eye Institute, a non-profit hospital and research center that has been cited by the World Health Organization, and the privately funded Usha Mullapudi Cardiac Care Centre. He was nominated by Mimi W. Lee.

Retired anesthesiologist **Tae Byung Whang**, 77, worked at Rochester General Hospital for 23 years and Park Ridge for 10 years. A native of Korea, he is a past board member at the Greater Rochester Korean American Association. Dr. Whang is an elder at Third Presbyterian Church, where he and his wife run the food cupboard. For a number of years, until Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church purchased its own building, he arranged for area Koreans to hold their own worship service in Third Presbyterian’s chapel. A Literacy Volunteer since 1999, he is fluent in three languages—English, Korean and Japanese. He has also been active in fund-raising for the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. He was nominated by Byoung Baek.

Asian Pacific American Family Day was sponsored by Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics, a Johnson & Johnson company, and the Marie C. and Joseph C. Wilson Foundation, with additional support from Canandaigua National Bank & Trust.