



**2015 Honoree
Outstanding Individual Who Contributed Significantly
to the Asian American Community**

Akie Naito Gears
Emerita Board Member of the Suffolk County Asian American Advisory Board

Born in Tokyo, Japan, Aki has always been passionate about learning about people and cultures all over the world. Aki developed her business sense by watching her father, a successful textile businessman, and her mother, owner of several restaurants in Tokyo. Aki finished her education in Toyoeiwa Jogakuin College, studies in English language and English literature in Japan and continued studies at London University, studies in English Literature and History as Exchange Student, England. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology at Universita Perugia in Italy and continued studies in Psychology at Bremen University in Germany. Aki spent 15 years working in the airline business and traveled the world.

Aki married an American man, William Gears, President of Product Sales Associate Inc., and had one son, Patrick, who studied at the Harrow School in England. While raising Patrick, Aki established her own business in Japan where she advertised and coordinated marketing strategies on behalf of large companies including Japan Airline, Matsushita, New Ohtani Hotel and the Bank of Tokyo. For the past 18 years, Aki works in Product Sales Associate where she is the Director of International Department and Liaison for Japanese manufacturers. Her clients include Universal Studios, Astro-dome, Superdome, and Nassau Coliseum. In the past year, Aki established a new company, PSA Enterprise Inc. which provides exterior and interior design to homeowners. Aki's business endeavors are stimulated or inspired by the interest in people, culture and creating closer communities in the United States and abroad. In addition, she has taught Japanese culture and history course in two West Hempstead public schools for the past five years.

Aki was appointed to serve on Asian American Advisory Board upon its creation because of her outstanding credentials, advocacy and leadership within her community. In December 2008, she was elected to be the co-chairperson of the Board. Over the past several years, Aki has faithfully fulfilled her duties as a member and the co-chairperson of the Board. She participated and organized Lunar Year Celebration, Health Fair, Jou-Tian Drumming Group Performance, Naruwan Cultural Performance, Economic Seminar, Chair of the inaugural Asian-Pacific celebration on Long Island at the Wang Center and Dancing with the Community Fund Raiser for the Haitian Relief Earthquake victims.

Aki has played an instrumental role in promoting the missions of the Board and has had great success in benefiting the people of Suffolk County through various project and community programs.