

Media Relations

UNH Professor Receives Prestigious Fulbright To Study In Hong Kong

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Monica Chiu, professor of English at the University of New Hampshire and Fulbright Award recipient. Photo Credit: Perry Smith, UNH Photographic Services

DURHAM, N.H. – Monica Chiu, associate professor of English and director of the University Honors Program at the University of New Hampshire, has received a prestigious Fulbright Award to teach and conduct research in Hong Kong during the 2011-12 academic year.

Chiu will teach courses and give lectures in Asian American literature and American literature in the American Studies department at Hong Kong University.

"The Fulbright offers me the opportunity to practice what I constantly encourage among all of my students: live, study, and work abroad. I look forward to

teaching non-native speakers of English, honing a skill I haven't used since I lived and worked in Tokyo in the late 1980s, and to exchanging ideas and papers with faculty from Hong Kong University, the City University of Hong Kong, and other citywide universities and centers, including the Hong Kong-America Center," Chiu said.

According to Chiu, Hong Kong is well suited for her current research interests, including researching the travel narrative of Edmund Roberts, a Portsmouth native who brokered the first trade agreement between America and Siam in 1833. She also is working on the journal of Harriett Low, a former resident of Salem, Mass., and one of the first two American women to live in Macao in the early 1800s. At the time, Macao was the only place western women and children were allowed in China, with Canton being reserved for western men involved in trade with China.

This will be Chiu's third experience living overseas and the second time in an Asian country. She attended the Collège Internationale de Cannes for a semester of undergraduate study in French and worked in Tokyo for Yamatake-Honeywell from 1988-1990.

"My children will have an exciting international experience in an international school, and we all hope to learn some Mandarin. We plan to travel to Beijing over the long winter holiday," Chiu said.

Established in 1946, the Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to "increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries." With this goal as a starting point, the Fulbright Program has provided almost 300,000 participants—chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential — with the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.

"The college is very proud and pleased that Professor Chiu has been recognized with this distinguished award. This is a wonderful opportunity for Professor Chiu to enrich her scholarship and, in effect, to establish a dialogue between UNH and Hong Kong University. She will be a worthy ambassador," said Kenneth Fuld, dean of the UNH College of Liberal Arts.

Chiu's most recent book, an edited collection called "*Asian Americans in New England: Culture and Community*" (2009, University Press of New England), disrupts the Pacific-centered paradigm of Asian American studies by focusing on the rich materials gathered by New Englanders in Asia and extensive connections forged between New England and Asia from as early as 1824. The collection explores a 19th

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century Chinese American friendship album, Japanese American acrobats, the 20th century influence of Boston's Museum of Fine Arts on regional and national Asian arts collections, contemporary Vietnamese American community art, and the construction of Asian Indians and religion in New England, among other topics.

The collection highlights a broad range of Asian American communities and historical experiences. From the poignant writings of a young Chinese immigrant to the influence of hip-hop in a New Hampshire Lao American community, the collection seeks to establish a regional template for the study of Asian American lives and art far from the West Coast. The essays provide a record of particular achievements, as well as an understanding of the rich Asian American culture in New England, along with an analysis of the depiction of New England Asian Americans, one of the fastest growing minority populations in the region.

Chiu specializes in Asian American literature, criticism, film, popular culture, and 20th century American literature. She also is the author of "Filthy Fictions: Asian American Literature by Women" (2004), an editor on a forthcoming collection about Hmong Americans, and is working on a monograph on surveillance and contemporary Asian North American fiction.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

PHOTO:

Monica Chiu, professor of English at the University of New Hampshire and Fulbright Award recipient.

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