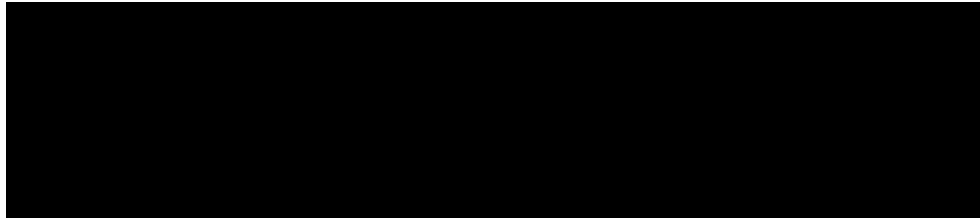




Vanita Louie



Born and educated in San Francisco, Vanita Louie is proud to call herself a native San Franciscan.

Vanita is a retired travel industry entrepreneur and pioneer with a nearly three-decade career. She has helped shape and level the competition in the travel business for many retail and wholesale travel operations since the 1980's. Having been featured in *Forbes* and *Business Weekly*, the company that she built South Pacific Express, Inc. has received numerous awards in tourism and performance throughout the years. Her work has assisted and increased education to the geographical wonders of travel to the islands and helped develop tourism beyond Australia and New Zealand. She has also held seats on various major travel and tourism boards, and her contributions to the airline business has helped pave the way for others, particularly for women and minorities in the industry.

Vanita has deep roots to the Chinatown neighborhood, having been born at Chinese Hospital. She is the granddaughter of Tong Yee Foo, a famous candy maker known for the Chinese coconut and melon candy celebrated during the Chinese New Year season. She was brought up around tradition and culture. Her mother Lillian Young operated a gift and antique shop on Grant Avenue for over 40 years. She moved with her family to the Richmond District and for the past 30 years has lived near the Western Addition neighborhood.

Vanita has been dedicated to the community and is always ready to roll up her sleeves to serve. In 2013, she joined The Rotary Club of San Francisco Chinatown, which brings together business and professional leaders to provide service through their passion for humanitarian causes that change lives in the community and the world. She became the Rotary Club President in 2016. Throughout her involvement with Rotary Club, she has embraced the sense of volunteer service and visions of "giving back." Her Club members regularly tutor at Chinese Education Center (now the Edwin and Anita Lee Newcomer School), a public school located on the border of Chinatown and the Financial District. When Club members realized that the entire student body was made up of newcomer students who are first time English learners, Vanita envisioned the Anita Fong Centennial Library and Language Lab, named for a long-time public health community advocate. This was dedicated in May 2017 with the help of the San Francisco

School Board, private funds and a generous executive at Salesforce. Currently, Vanita participates actively in many projects such as a park beautification legacy plan in Chinatown to better serve seniors and youth.

Vanita was awarded the 2017 Outstanding Community Service Award from Gum Moon Women's Residence Center and the Asian Women's Resource Center, a safe-haven and temporary resident's home for victims of human trafficking as well as offers a family-based preschool program. Also in 2017, she received the CEDAW Award for Community Building from the Friends of the Commission on the Status of Women.

She recently joined the Governance Council of San Francisco Hep B Free - Bay Area, a multicounty campaign to turn the San Francisco Bay Area into the first hepatitis B free area in the nation. San Francisco Hep B Free - Bay Area provides free and low-cost hepatitis B screening, testing, vaccinations and treatment for at-risk residents, particularly immigrant Asian and Pacific Islander families, which hepatitis B has a high prevalence.

Vanita attended St. Mary's School and Cathedral High School. She graduated from San Francisco State University with a degree in Business Administration. She has served on the parish council at St. Ignatius Church, which is located on the campus of the University of San Francisco. She has also been active in the Children's Faith Formation program as a First Communion teacher for the past 22 years.

Vanita is married to Austin Louie, and together have raised two grown daughters, Lindsey and Julianne. They have also adopted Moo Moo, a SPCA certified therapy dog, and for the past six years, Vanita has escorted Moo Moo on regular scheduled visits to comfort patients at local hospitals.

Having grown up in the City, Vanita has many fond memories when she has utilized many of the playgrounds, parks and programs that the Rec & Park Department has offered to residents. She has taken swim lessons at the North Beach Pool and attended summer programs and took guitar lessons at Chinese Rec Center (now named The Betty Ann Ong Rec Center), and played sports on the playground at Chinese Playground (now named the Willie "Woo Woo" Wong Playground). She practices yoga regularly and enjoys playing pickleball at Rec & Park's newest pickleball courts.