



IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE  
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

who we are (who-we-are/)

MISSION, VISION & VALUES (WHO-WE-ARE/MISSION-VISION-AND-VALUES) HISTORY (WHO-WE-ARE/IRCO-HISTORY)  
 OUR UNIQUE LOCATIONS (WHO-WE-ARE/OUR-UNIQUE-LOCATIONS) CAREERS (WHO-WE-ARE/CAREERS)  
 ACCOUNTABILITY (WHO-WE-ARE/ACCOUNTABILITY) BOARD OF DIRECTORS (WHO-WE-ARE/BOARD-OF-DIRECTORS)  
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (WHO-WE-ARE/EXECUTIVE-DIRECTOR)

## IRCO's Executive

### Director: Lee Po Cha, MBA



IRCO is proud to announce the selection of Lee Po Cha, MBA, as our new Executive Director. Lee is succeeding IRCO's treasured former Executive Director, Sokhom Tauch, MBA, who is retiring after leading IRCO for the past 19 years.

Lee has served IRCO since 1981 in a multitude of leaderships roles, most recently as Associate Director and Director of IRCO Asian Family Center, which he helped found in 1994. He has also played a pivotal role in the development of IRCO Africa House, breaking new ground in IRCO's commitment to providing culturally specific services for the increasingly diverse communities living in Oregon. A tireless advocate, Lee provides a voice for these communities through his service on numerous commissions and boards, including the Governor's Commission on Senior Services, co-chair of the New Portlander Policy Council, the Home for Everyone Board, past president of the All Hands Raised Board, past president of the Hmong American Community of Oregon, and co-founder of the Coalition of Communities of Color. In addition to this service, he empowers African, Slavic and Asian immigrant and refugee community leaders to organize and mobilize through community building. Lee, who speaks Hmong, Lao, Thai, and English, has worked with numerous refugee and immigrant communities in various other capacities, including behavioral counseling of delinquent youth, gang-involved youth, teen parents, youth with anti-social behavior and their families.

A former Hmong refugee from the country of Laos, Lee came to Oregon in 1978 and received his Master's degree in Business Administration from Marylhurst University. He embodies the vision of IRCO as an organization committed to helping each immigrant and refugee family achieve their full potential in their new home. When Lee is not working, he enjoys participating in community activities and spending time in nature with his wife and five children.

Please join us in welcoming Lee Po Cha as IRCO's new Executive Director!

Today: 13 May, 2015

#### Upcoming Events

**Region 3 Parent & Child Development Classes**  
May 13

[MORE > \(news/calendar-of-events/\)](#)

**Senior citizenship classes**  
May 18

[MORE > \(news/calendar-of-events/\)](#)

**Senior Loaves & Fishes Lunches**  
May 19

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**Asian Pacific Islander Parent & Child Classes**  
May 19

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**African Parent & Child Development Classes**  
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SEE ENTIRE CALENDAR

(NEWS/CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS/)



#### Voices of IRCO

After living my whole life in my country, Ethiopia, my father, my sisters and I left for the United States in October 2009, in quest of a better education and opportunity. [MORE > \(who-we-serve/success-stories/\)](#)

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Mission, Vision & Values  
([who-we-are/mission-vision-and-values/](#))  
Find A Location ([who-we-are/our-unique-locations/](#))  
Success Stories ([who-we-serve/success-stories/](#))  
IRCO Staff ([who-we-are/behind-irco/](#))  
Our History ([who-we-are/irco-history/](#))

Behind IRCO  
([who-we-are/behind-irco/](#))  
Annual Reports  
([Who-we-are/accountability/](#))  
Board of Directors  
([who-we-are/behind-irco/](#))  
Contact Us  
([contact-us/](#))  
Home ([/](#))

#### IRCO PROGRAMS

Children, Youth, & Family Services  
([programs/](#))  
Employment Services ([programs/](#))  
Health & Community Development  
([programs/](#))  
Senior Services ([programs/](#))  
Economic Development  
([programs/](#))  
Training Services ([programs/](#))

#### SERVICES WE OFFER

International Language Bank  
(<http://ilb.irco.org/>)  
Interpretation Services  
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Calendar of Events  
([news/calendar-of-events/](#))  
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### **Ronault LS Catalani, Vice President and Secretary**

Ronault (Polo) LS Catalani, Vice President and Secretary, has served on the Board since September 2009. Polo's family was expelled from Indonesia, resettled in Amsterdam, then resettled again in Salem. He is the second of his Manado mother and Catalan father's four sons.

His daughter Dr. Caricia E.C. Veneziale Catalani teaches at UC

Berkeley and practices public health in India; his son Edan S.O. Catalani paints and exhibits in San Francisco and Portland. Polo and his artist wife Chompunut Xuto are new grandparents. Polo's work includes immigrant community economic and social integration on the West Coast and political extraction in Southeast Asia. He is a fellow of the Human Rights Institute of the International Court of Justice. Polo's essays are published in The Asian Reporter and The Oregonian, and his work has been broadcast by Oregon, Wisconsin, and Minnesota Public Radio; he is author of Counter Culture: Immigrant Stories from Portland Café Counters. Polo has been associated with IRCO since 1983.



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### **Claudia Burnett, Treasurer**

Claudia Burnett, Treasurer, joined the Board in September 2012. She has lived in the Northwest, Midwest and Northeast of the U.S., as well as in Latin America. After graduation from college, she served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Brazil for 3 ½ years, most of that time spent in the Amazon. She has traveled extensively in Latin America and has been fluent in Portuguese and Spanish. She has a Master's in

Business Administration from Cornell University. Her work experience

spans 15 years in progressive financial management positions, including Corning Glass Works, Floating Point Systems, and Cascade Steel Rolling Mills, followed by over 15 years working with nonprofits in senior financial management positions, including the Oregon Symphony and OHSU School of Nursing. She served as Board Member and Treasurer of the Regional Arts & Culture Council from 2004 to 2010.



### **Nhu To-Haynes, Board Member**

Nhu To-Haynes, Board Member, currently serves as the State Outreach and Integration Coordinator for the Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program. She has been with the Office of Family Health at the Oregon Health Authority for over 10

years. She holds a BS in Nutrition Food Management with a concentration in Community Health from Oregon State University. Nhu has had a variety of public health experiences, including working with the Oregon State Immunization Program as a health educator and trainer. Early in her career she was a certifier and nutrition educator for the Washington County WIC Program, and served 2 years in the U.S. Peace Corp as an HIV/STD coordinator in Kingston, Jamaica. Nhu has worked in many cross-cultural and diverse settings and enjoys bringing communities together through community health issues. Nhu completed her Master's in Public Administration at Portland State University in December 2010.

**Laura Rojas, Board Member**



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## Meet IRCO's Board of Directors



### Chanpone Sinlapasai-Okamura, President

Chanpone Sinlapasai-Okamura, President, is an attorney with Marandas & McClellan. She represents clients regarding general immigration law matters including visas, citizenship issues, consular processing, deportation defense and appeals. Ms. Sinlapasai-Okamura focuses her practice in assisting children who have been abused, abandoned and neglected, survivors of domestic violence, serious crime, and human trafficking. Ms. Sinlapasai-Okamura

received her J.D., from Northwestern School of Law of Lewis & Clark College in 2002 and is a member of the Cornelius Honor Society. She earned her B.A. (English & Philosophy) from Santa Clara University in 1998. She is an active member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA Oregon) and currently serves as the liaison for Immigration Custom's Enforcement. Her volunteer work includes chairing the DOJ's Immigrant Crime Victim's Rights Enforcement and membership in the Victims of Crime Act Advisory Committee for the State of Oregon, DOJ's Crime Victim's Rights Compliance Project Advisory Committee, F.B.I. Multicultural Committee, Oregon Minority Lawyer's Association, and Oregon Women's Lawyer's Association. She has been involved with the immigrant and refugee community most of her adult life, both in Oregon and California. In addition to her immigration law experience, she has firsthand knowledge of the challenges an individual or family can face when coming to a new country. Her family resettled in the United States as refugees from Laos in 1980.

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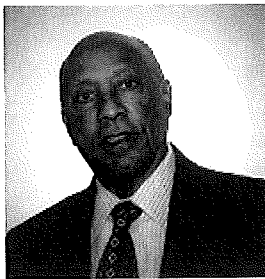
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(who-we-serve/)

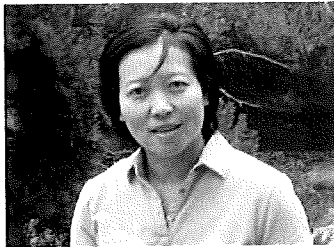
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### Taye Yemeru, Board Member

Taye Yemeru, who joined the Board in July 2014, was born in Ethiopia and has worked for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) since 1990. His FAA management role includes administering, investigating and enforcing safety regulations for aircraft operation and airworthiness, as well as overseeing air carrier evaluation of flight crews and aviation mechanics for proper training and qualifications. He also collaborates with the National Transportation Safety Board in investigating accidents and incidents involving air carrier industries. Prior to joining the FAA, he worked in the airline industry for more than 25 years in several aviation management positions. Through his career in aviation safety and administration, Mr. Yemeru lived in Kenya, Nigeria and India before immigrating to the United States. A dedicated humanitarian, Mr. Yemeru witnessed a flood of Ethiopians arriving in Kenya as refugees and, in response, volunteered to assist them in finding food and shelter. While living in India, he sponsored two young women, providing employment and funding educational and vocational trainings that led to self-sufficient careers. He and his wife also funded their dowries, enabling them to marry. While in the United States, Mr. Yemeru has sponsored a number of African students pursuing education in this country and has been recognized for his mentorship.



### Abby Liu, Board Member

Abby Liu, Board Member, was born in China and came to the United States for advanced study in 1996. After earning her MS degree in electrical and computer engineering at Louisiana State University, she has worked in engineering, consulting, and financial services industries. She is currently a marketing manager with Capital One Corporation and had been with HSBC Corporation since 2003, prior to the acquisition. Previously, she worked as a manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP for five years and provided technical consulting services for corporations in litigation and business turnaround needs. In her early careers, Abby worked at Baxter Healthcare as an IT consultant and also worked at FMC Corporation, where she helped design and deliver a real time Automatic Guided Vehicle control system. In her spare time, Abby enjoys volunteering with her two daughters at the Goose Hollow Family Shelter, Girl Scouts, and with other local communities.

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Find A Location (who-we-are/our-unique-locations/)  
Success Stories (who-we-serve/success-stories/)  
IRCO Staff (who-we-are/behind-irco/)  
Our History (who-we-are/irco-history/)

Behind IRCO (who-we-are/behind-irco/)  
Annual Reports (who-we-are/accountability/)  
Board of Directors (who-we-are/behind-irco/)  
Contact Us (contact-us/)  
Home ()

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Children, Youth, & Family Services (programs/)  
Employment Services (programs/)  
Health & Community Development (programs/)  
Senior Services (programs/)  
Economic Development (programs/)  
Training Services (programs/)

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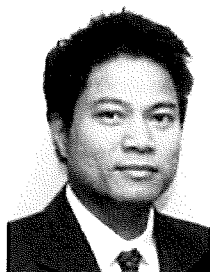
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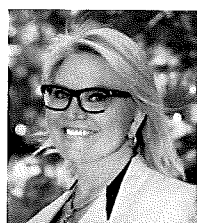


Laura Rojas, Board Member since January 2014, is the Planning Strategy and Process Director at Nike. Laura was born and raised in Colombia, where she earned a BS in Economics. She has nine years of professional experience in the private sector in Latin America and the US, mainly as a business consultant and process director in multiple firms, including Azurian, Dicorp, and Nike. During her college years, Laura cofounded FNVPT, a nonprofit organization that served low income children and teenage mothers in the slums of Bogota. She was an active volunteer with the organization for over 11 years and served as a Board Member for 3 terms. Laura came to the US for a Master's degree in Nonprofit Leadership at the University of Pennsylvania in 2011. Soon after, she worked as a Fundraising Consultant for CCS Fundraising where she worked in creating the social return on investment model for Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia and planned, designed and led a 5M capital campaign for the Kirby Center – a performing arts center. Laura moved to Portland in 2012 and volunteered for Mercy Corps as the Latin America, Caribbean, Balkan and Caucasus Desk Support Intern before joining Nike. Laura has always had a passionate interest in youth and education programs and is keenly interested in supporting immigrant communities.



#### **Trinh Tran, Board Member**

Trinh Tran, Board Member since May 2014, immigrated to the United States as an unaccompanied minor, arriving in Portland in 1984. He is currently a contract administration manager for the Oregon State Lottery. Previously as a lawyer in private practice, Mr. Tran specialized in corporate finance, intellectual property, mergers and acquisitions, and venture capital. He also served as foreign legal advisor to a Tokyo law firm. As a deputy city attorney for the City of Portland, Mr. Tran provided advice on business and finance transactions, including real estate development, and on strategic economic partnerships, public records law, and other municipal law issues. Mr. Tran earned his law degree, magna cum laude, from Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland and his undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago. He has served on the board of the Oregon Law Foundation and volunteered for Legal Aid Services of Oregon.



#### **Tatiana Youseff, Board Member**

A Board Member since July 2014, Tatiana Youseff is a refugee from Russia with strong connections to Portland's Slavic community. A former refugee resettlement case manager for Lutheran Community Services, Tatiana continues to work with immigrants and refugees as a congregation leader at New Beginnings Slavic Church and through her work as a real estate broker, helping immigrant clientele seek and finance housing. She is also a volunteer talk show host on Russian Radio 7. When Tatiana came to this country as a refugee, she was generously assisted in becoming a successful U.S. citizen, a debt she is now able to repay by helping other newly arrived refugees in their own transitions.



Lynda GROW <lynda.grow@multco.us>

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**can you shoot a list of the IRCO Board to us so I can print it and put it in front of Chair Kafoury???**

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**Sophorn Cheang** <sophornC@irco.org>  
To: Lynda GROW <lynda.grow@multco.us>

Wed, May 13, 2015 at 3:11 PM

The people who are sitting in the front row will include other Coalition of Communities of Color organization members in addition to the IRCO board. Here are some of the names of people who plan on being there:

Lee Po Cha, IRCO ED  
Julia Meier, CCC ED  
Gerald Deloney, SEI  
Matt Morton, NAYA ED  
Carmen Rubio, Latino Network ED

these are the CCC board members.

Sent from my Windows Phone

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**From:** Lynda GROW

**Sent:** 5/13/2015 2:56 PM

**To:** Sophorn Cheang

**Subject:** can you shoot a list of the IRCO Board to us so I can print it and put it in front of Chair Kafoury???

[Quoted text hidden]

