

**Governor Ariyoshi (4/5/91)**

**Event: Gov. Ariyoshi is here as MLK visiting lecturer for Midwestern Asian American Student Union Conference. He is Law alum and will present public lecture entitled: Asian Americans and Political Leadership.**

**Format: Welcoming Remarks 3:30, Law School**

**Talk Points**

**On behalf of the University of Michigan**

**I am proud to welcome today**

Our very distinguished Law School alumni, Governor George Ariyoshi  
Our honored guests attending the Midwest Asian American Student Union Spring Conference  
UM Asian American colleagues and friends.

**I congratulate Asian American students**

for organizing this very significant meeting  
that brings together students from across the midwest  
to address your common concerns and to chart your own path  
towards common goals.

**This is also an important step towards greater visibility**

for Asian American students and their concerns--- especially here in midAmerica  
--where too often these issues and problems are overshadowed  
by those of other groups  
--where too often you may be seen by some as the 'model minority'  
people with no problems or whose concerns can safely be ignored.

**I know it is frustrating that Asian Americans**

are often held up as the so called minority "success story".

**Certainly it is true that a great many Asian Americans**

have achieved remarkable academic success  
in Americas colleges and universities

**It is also true that Asian Americans**

have contributed enormously to American society.

**But I recognize that these achievements and contributions**

can blind us to the painful reality that Many Asian Americans  
still face barriers and obstacles to success and prosperity  
both in our society and certainly in our colleges and universities.

**Some more recent immigrants and groups**

are struggling in poverty and face discrimination

**Some Asian Americans are finding**

that there is a "glass ceiling on advancement  
sometimes referred to as the higher the fewer phenomenon

**In higher education we know our policies and programs**

do not yet fully meet your needs.  
There are disparities in recruitment to disciplines and professions,  
a lack of support services for those who may need them  
a social, intellectual, and cultural life that is not fully inclusive  
to note just some of the issues we must give higher priority to in higher education.

**We know we have a lot to learn**

and we need to learn from you and with you  
so that together we can build institutions  
that are models for our entire society.

This is an urgent educational priority  
we must prepare all of our students to be able to function effectively  
in a multicultural American society and an internationally interdependent world.  
in which those of European descent are in a small minority.

**We will all look forward to your deliberations and to the outcome**

which I hope will help to guide us to do a better job of meeting your needs.

**Higher education is coming under a lot of fire recently**

because of our efforts to grapple with issues of discrimination, prejudice,  
and improving relations among groups in our society.

**Certainly, excesses have occurred on our campuses**

and extremists have discredited some of our efforts.

But at least educational institutions are trying.

We are trying because we recognize what many in our society choose to ignore.

Our society is being transformed.

Our population is changing

and very soon there will not be a "majority culture.

In fact in some states this has already happened.

In the face of this reality, our institutions simply must change  
we must struggle with the difficult challenges of multiculturalism

Fortunately, we do have some models to look to  
and I think of Hawaii as a leader, a pathbreaker.

And probably no one has done more to help lead the state of Hawaii  
to create a political culture that nurtures multiculturalism than our speaker today

**Governor George Ariyoshi**

who from 1973-86 served as the first Asian American Governor.  
of Hawaii.

**I cannot imagine a more ideal speaker**

to lead off your conference this weekend.

by talking about Asian Americans and Political Leadership.

**He wrote the book.**

**Best wishes to all of you for a successful meeting  
and I hope you get a chance to have a little fun, too.**