2022 VIRTUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Reflecting on the past, sharing today's experience, and building for tomorrow



WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2022 United Hmong with Disabilities National Conference! We are so pleased for you to join us today.

The mission of United Hmong with Disabilities (UHD) is to build a movement within the Hmong community to create a future that is inclusive of Hmong people with disabilities. This year's conference theme is "Reflecting on the past, sharing today's experiences, and building for tomorrow" to amplify the voices of disabled Hmong across the country and to spearhead a more equitable advocacy and disability justice within the Hmong and mainstream community.

Today, our keynote speaker, Ya Yang will share his perspective about language and Hmong culture and understanding around disability. We will also be joined by a panel of community leaders with lived experiences, caregivers, and medical experts sharing their stories. We also have three workshops today on education, advocacy, and capacity building.

We hope you enjoy today's conference and come away with some wonderful insights and takeaways that can help you better understand disability and how together we can create changes to be more inclusive and welcoming of our Hmong disability community.

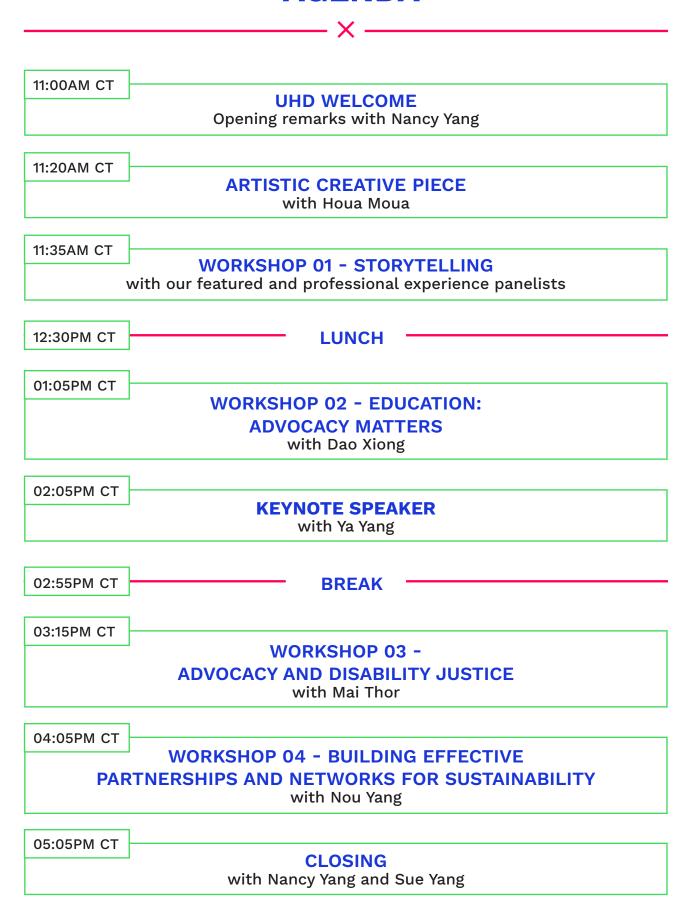


CYNTHIA YONGVANG
Co-Founder



SUE YANG
Conference Planning
Committee Chair

AGENDA



TECHNOLOGY AND ACCESS INFORMATION

MICROPHONES WILL BE MUTED — but we encourage you to turn your cameras on. Questions and engagement will take place in the chat, feel free to ask questions.

ASL INTERPRETATION — ASL Interpretation is available, and we will spotlight the interpreter



CAPTIONS — to access live captions, click the CC button below.



HMONG INTERPRETATION — to access Hmong audio interpretation, click the "Interpretation" Globe Icon at the bottom of your screen. Select the language you'd like to hear.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

WORKSHOPS

All workshops are 50 minutes total.

Presenters will have a 30 minutes presentation followed immediately by a 20 minutes live Q&A.

The purpose of the e-workbook and workshop topic descriptions is to help the audience and workshop presenters understand what the topics are about.

This will also help participants how to process and gauge their experience, take away points, interactive sessions, and conversations.

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OPENING REMARKS

REFLECTIVE QUESTION

What are you hoping to learn or take away from this conference	??

ARTISTIC INTEGRATION

REFLECTIVE QUESTION

WORKSHOP 01 - STORYTELLING

(Live group Q&A for this particular session will take place during the lunch session as an optional for attendees)

WORKSHOP'S DESCRIPTION: Developing a tapestry of empowerment and inspiration through a collective of interwoven stories thus encourages people to identify their personal strengths and boost their areas of weakness. Storytelling is the heart of this journey no matter what space you are speaking from to show others they are not alone to give hope. Hope, that if you start down this path, perhaps they can as well to build a bond of solidarity.

The storytelling workshop is a panel consisting of two individuals with disability lived experiences, one parent/caregiver, and one professional. The purpose of the storytelling workshop is for panelists to share their experiences with disability when thinking about the conference theme: "Reflecting on the past, sharing today's experience, and building for tomorrow."

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1) What are some situations where being Deaf would be beneficial?
2) What is deaf or Deaf?
3) What are some prejudiced views that parents with a disability may face in the Hmong community?

4) How can we, as disabled parents, overcome those kinds of prejudiced views?
5) How can we be more involved as parents/family/caregivers and professionals to
help ensure that an individual with disabilities is protected and has access to services he/she needs to maintain his/her health & safety, while still honoring an individual or their family's personal preference to privacy?
6) How do we try to determine a person's best interests?
7) How can we best support an individual with disabilities to live the most dignified
life?

- 8) How has the perception and attitudes of disability in Hmong culture evolved over time?
 - What has been the history and experiences of how Hmong culture has understood or thought about disability?
 - What is the disability experience like today in the Hmong and broader community?
 - What is the hope and vision to achieve disability in Hmong culture and community?



WORKSHOP 02 - EDUCATION: ADVOCACY MATTERS

WORKSHOP'S DESCRIPTION: This interactive workshop will explain Where we were, where we are now, and how to move forward regarding education in the Hmong community. Explore tools and processes designed to use personally and professionally on essential services that are mandated under the Federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act for k-12 and higher education.

This workshop will explore topics such as:

- What is the Federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act.
- Professional skills and qualities development growth.
- Technique and tools for advocacy and leadership.
- Navigating communities and teams.
- How and who to access services for People with disabilities and special healthcare needs to have equal quality of education.

1) What is Special Education?
2) What is an advocate and how can I participate effectively?
 3) Do you know the transition processes from high school to college? IEP/504 plan in k-12 school grade but in college (depending on the institution) medical documentation may be required. FERPA and the involvement of parents is limited. Disabilities/accommodation needs can occur after the k-12 school system as well, knowing who to reach out to (Self advocacy).

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

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WORKSHOP 03 ADVOCACY AND DISABILITY JUSTICE

WORKSHOP'S DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the Advocacy and Disability Justice workshop is to create transformational change within the Hmong community by centering a disability justice framework. The workshop will introduce the disability justice framework as a tool that can be used for collective liberation. We will discuss the 10 principles of disability justice: intersectionality, leadership of the most impacted, anti-capitalist politics, commitment to cross-movement organizing, recognizing wholeness, sustainability, commitment to cross-disability solidarity, interdependence, collective access, and collective liberation.

This workshop will give tools to answer questions such as:

- How do we bring in the ten principles of disability justice (by Patty Berne and Sins Invalid) to enhance our work and daily lives?
- How do we understand disability justice as a way to move our community forward, as a dream for the future?
- How do we get everyone in our community to be on board with the dreams and goals that disability justice has for our disabled folx and for us all?

1) What is ableism and how does oppression of people with disabilities (pwds) result

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

from it?	 	,,	·

2) What are actions or steps that Hmong people can take in order to be anti-ableist in their everyday lives?
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WORKSHOP 04 - BUILDING EFFECTIVE
PARTNERSHIPS & NETWORKS FOR SUSTAINABILITY
WORKSHOP'S DESCRIPTION: Build and maintain effective and constructive relationships, networks, and partnerships with people who are, or might someday be, instrumental in achieving desired goals. Removal of silos leading to success for both you as an individual and organization. Networking skills and building supportive peer relationships to get people to believe in your cause and become involved in your needs, group, and/or organization.
REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS
1) What are some hardships Hmong people with disabilities go through?

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

GET TO KNOW OUR GUEST SPEAKERS



YA YANG KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Ya Yang is an Epidemiologist with interests in health disparities, infectious diseases, and health policy. He completed his bachelor's with degrees in Public Health and Psychology at the University of California, Merced. He obtained his Master of Science in Global Health from Georgetown University. Yang is a Hmong refugee of the Wat Thamkrabok Camp. He has hearing loss and wears hearing aids. Yang is passionate about promoting

diversity through his workplace and community. His interests in working with marginalized communities led to his work experiences at both the national and international levels, such as the State Department of Health, Consortium of Universities for Global Health, National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association, and Capitol Hill. He was a former UCDC Presidential Public Service fellow and has accumulated over \$20,000 research grants.



NANCY YANG CO-FACILITATOR SPEAKER

Nancy Yang (they/she) is a mad queer HMoob womxn and psychiatric survivor. Her personal experiences and intersectionality make her passionate about advancing disability justice, neurodiversity, and gender and racial justice. Nancy loves to spend their time doing whatever feels right in the moment. For them, that can be lying around while listening to music, spending time with their family, and napping. Currently, Nancy is the



Education and Programs Assistant at Autistic Women and Nonbinary Network (AWN). Nancy is also working on her Masters of Arts in Disability Studies at the City University of New York School of Professional Studies.



SUE YANG CO-FACILITATOR SPEAKER

Sue Yang (she/her) is a disability advocate from greater Minnesota with lived experiences. She has guided those around her to have a deeper understanding about generalized disability consciousness. This led her to become an activist in bringing more disability awareness and education to our community. She has competed in pageants and was crowned Princess Miss Amazing MN 2015 of Miss Amazing Inc. Pageantry that aims to

provide opportunities for girls and women with disabilities to build self-confidence in a supportive environment. Furthermore, Sue was crowned National Queen 2017 of American Majestic Ms. Diversity Pageantry that aims to shine light on everyone's abilities. She now supports other participants as an ambassador.

Sue's advocacy and volunteer work include time committed towards such efforts as giving back to her community through Northpoint Health and Wellness Center, appearances at the MN Special Olympics, guest MC and speaker at multiple venue events plus more.



NANCY YANG PANELIST FACILITATOR SPEAKER

Pang Chaxiong is a co-founder of the Facebook group Supporting all Abilities Welcoming all Voices (SAWV) and is a graduate student in Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota. Her work focuses on understanding Hmong families' experiences with autism and ways to improve autism identification and connection to services/supports.





HOUA MOUA ARTIST SPEAKER

Houa Moua is an advocate for disability justice in her community. As a Hmong American with a disability she has lived experience navigating multiple layers of marginalized spaces. Because of this she has developed an outgoing spirit and a desire to be a helping hand to others. A lifelong admirer of the performing arts, she enjoys going out to plays and other local events to support her immigrant community.



MAI N. VANG LIVED EXPERIENCE PANELIST

Mai N. Vang identifies herself as a Hmong Deaf woman. She was born hearing then became Deaf around 2 years old. She was raised in two different cultures Hmong and Deaf. Mai is in her final year at Metropolitan State University for Human Service Family Studies and she is aiming to receive her Bachelor of Human Services degree. Mai currently working at ThinkSelf, a non-profit organization that serve adult education and Domestic



Violence/Sexual Assault for Deaf and Hard of hearing community. In addition to her job at ThinkSelf, Mai is Deaf Mentor with Deaf Mentor Family Program and has been working for 6 years as a Deaf Mentor. Mai believes learning American Sign Language is part of our communication access, language foundation, and part of who we are to express ourselves. Mai is grateful to be one of co-founder for United Hmong with Disabilities. She believes that sharing her identity as a Deaf to the Hmong community is a huge step forward and hopes for a change within Hmong community. Mai knows what it is like to struggle with disability in Hmong community, especially being Deaf. She is aware that communicating in Hmong community is always difficult for her throughout her life. She always finds a way to communicate with her Hmong family and hearing peers. The most challenging thing she ever encountered was language as she doesn't speak Hmong. Lastly, American Sign Language (ASL) is our most language access and part of our language foundation. Mai is looking forward to sharing her story with Hmong community and spreading awareness about Deaf in Hmong community.



KATHY THAO-SHADA LIVED EXPERIENCE PANELIST

Kathy Thao-Shada is a stay-at-home mom to 3 of her children. The first one is five years old, the middle is 2, and the 3rd is 9 months. She was born in Saint Paul, MN. She have cerebral palsy since birth. She graduated with her bachelor's of science in Corporate Finance in 2011.

KA XIONG & LONG YANG PARENT/CAREGIVER EXPERIENCE PANELIST

Long Yang and Ka Xiong are immigrant parents that came to the U.S in 1994. They were Californian residents in Fresno for 3 years and moved to Minnesota in 1997. They have 10 children and 16 grandchildren. Long is a secret war veteran and was commemorated for his services with the Vietnam War. Long is currently retired and enjoys involving his time doing community work. Ka is a homemaker and enjoys sewing and embroidering as a



pastime. She has nourished and cared for her children and grandchildren throughout the years and enjoys being surrounded by them. With the growth of their family, they continually share the stories of their past and their journey to America.



KATHY THAO-SHADA PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PANELIST

Xeng Her has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a minor in sociology from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. She has over 20+ years of experience in social services and worked for Ramsey County Human Services for over 13+ years as a Child Protection Case Manager, Developmental Disabilities Case Manager,

Elderly Waiver Case Manager, and as a Certified MNChoices Assessor. Xeng also has personal family experience as a caregiver and has spent over 20 years taking care of family members who have been diagnosed with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI) as well as physical disabilities.

Xeng is currently self-employed and has worked for the past 5+ years as a Certified Support Planner, working with individuals with disabilities who receive waiver services and are enrolled in the Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) program. Xeng's experiences as a social worker, support planner, and caregiver has given her many insights on how to navigate, access, and manage social service programs as well as building cultural competency as a Hmong professional. Xeng believes that informed decision making and taking a person-centered approach is necessary to ensure that all individuals with disabilities and their families are involved with service planning that will meet a person's health and safety needs, quality of life, and allow them to live the most dignified life. Xeng is married and has 4 children. She lives in Minnesota.



DAO XIONG WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

Dao Xiong, a parent advocate at PACER Center since 1992, provides workshops, written materials, and individual assistance to Hmong and Asian families to help them advocate for their child's learning needs. He also provides consultation for professionals on how to work with Hmong families of children with disabilities.



Dao is a father of 7 adult children and has a daughter with intellectual disability and depression. He is also involved as an advisor with various community organizations and schools.



MAI THOR, 2021 BUSH FELLOW WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

Mai seeks to embed disability justice in the work of larger justice and equity movements. As a person living with a disability and as a leader who has helped design more accessible and inclusive systems for people with disabilities, she sees that social justice movements often leave disability out of their efforts. She wants to transform these movements to be completely accessible and inclusive so that every march, rally or

community meeting is informed by a disability perspective. To grow her capacity to lead, she will study ableism and disability culture, history and law. She will also convene a network of social justice and disability justice leaders to build understanding and greater solidarity.



NOU YANG WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

Nou Yang is a Hmong-American refugee woman. She is passionate about creating spaces for collaborative learning and dialogue around issues of identity, cross-cultural leadership, youth development, and gender equity. She values co-creation, sharing power, being courageous in action towards positive change, being transparent, practicing self-awareness and reflection, storytelling, listening, engaging those



most impacted in decision making and generating solutions. Nou has 20 years of professional experience in community engagement efforts, leadership development and management. Nou is a 2011 alumnus of the Marshall Memorial Fellowship, a transatlantic leadership program focused on fostering connection between the United States and Europe. Nou graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a Master's of Science in Human Development and Family Studies.

MEETTHE TEAM

MEET OUR CO-FOUNDERS



CYNTHIA YONGVANG CO-FOUNDER

Cynthia Yongvang is a Hmong woman with a disability, a graphic and textile artist, and a social justice and disability advocate. She is also the executive director of the Hmong Association of WA, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the Hmong community in WAII the co-founder/chair of the Hmong Impact Giving Network, a national Hmong philanthropic organization. The co-founder of the United Hmong with Disabilities, a

national Hmong disability organization serving Hmong people with disabilities in the US∏and a business owner as the founder and CEO of the CYNTHIA YONGVANG™ brand in Washington state, a textile and fashion company inspired by art forms from her Hmong culture and other cultures around the world.



Mai seeks to embed disability justice in the work of larger justice and equity movements. As a person living with a disability and as a leader who has helped design more accessible and inclusive systems for people with disabilities, she sees that social justice movements often leave disability out of their efforts. She wants to transform these movements to be completely accessible and inclusive so that every march, rally or



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community. In addition to her job at ThinkSelf, Mai is Deaf Mentor with Deaf Mentor Family Program and has been working for 6 years as a Deaf Mentor. Mai believes learning American Sign Language is part of our communication access, language foundation, and part of who we are to express ourselves. American Sign Language (ASL) is our most language access and part of our language foundation. Mai is looking forward to sharing her story with Hmong community and spreading awareness about Deaf in Hmong community.



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KATHY THAO-SHADA

CO-FOUNDER

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MAI SHOUA MOUA CO-FOUNDER

Mai Shoua Moua was born at a refugee camp in Bangkok, Thailand. Her family and she immigrated to Minnesota in 1989. At four months old Mai Shoua got really ill. When she first attended school her 1st grade teacher noticed she was not engaging in conversations about school work when being spoken to. It was brought to the attention of her parents that she may have a hearing loss. Her mother took her to an audiology specialist and was identified as a hard of hearing person.



Her parents and she had no prior knowledge about hard of hearing. Mai Shoua encountered many difficult challenges growing up in middle school through high school. Some teachers were not very supportive or respectful towards students with disabilities. While other challenges included her struggles of being bullied by other students because of her disability.

In the beginning of her journey Mai Shoua thought that her disability would limit her career options, however she has been successful. Mai Shoua has 10+ years of experience working as a PCA-- providing care for individuals with disabilities which include dementia, Alzheimer, cerebral palsy, physical, intellectual or learning, cognitive, neurological disorders, etc. She has had experiences as an Assistant Program Manager for mental illness clients, deaf and blind individuals. She is currently working with the State of Minnesota.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS



SUE YANG COMMITTEE CHAIR

Sue Yang (she/her) is a disability advocate from greater Minnesota. She lives with her parents, who are from the older generation that didn't know about the needs of disability awareness and knowledge. She taught her parents about generalized disability consciousness that led her to become an activist to bring more disability awareness and education to our community.



PA NHUE VUE MEMBER

Pa Nhue Vue (she/her) is from WI and currently resides in MN. She received her Bachelor of Sciences in Rehabilitation Psychology with a certificate in Global Health from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is passionate about doing equity work to amplify the voices and experiences of underrepresented populations. She has served the disability community for over three years with her latest experience being in disability advocacy services and outreach in the Hmong community.





NANCY YANG MEMBER

Nancy Yang (they/she) is a mad queer HMoob womxn and psychiatric survivor. Her personal experiences and intersectionality make her passionate about advancing disability justice, neurodiversity, and gender and racial justice. Nancy loves to spend their time doing whatever feels right in the moment. Currently, Nancy is the Education and Programs Assistant at Autistic Women and Nonbinary Network (AWN). Nancy is also working

on her Masters of Arts in Disability Studies at the City University of New York School of Professional Studies.

A picture of a Southeast Asian person with short, teal hair with lavender highlights. They are smiling into the camera. They are wearing a white tank top, sunglasses, and long dangling earrings with Hmong paj ntaub cloth at the ends.



TONG KOU LOR MEMBER

Tong Kou Lor, pronouns are he/him/his, and identify as a first-generation Hmong male. He was born in Thailand and immigrated at the age of 2 to and grew up in Sacramento, California. He currently resides in Minnesota and he works as an Access Consultant at St. Catherine University located in St. Paul. His journey to Higher Education and Student Affairs started with personal experiences with his older brother, who is Deaf, and his



familial culture. Deciding to attend school at the community college to learn American Sign Language (ASL) for better communication skills, resulted in an exposure to impactful stories from his sibling. His initial plan was to be an ASL teacher at the elementary levelphowever, those plans changed as he felt he was able to work better with college students than younger students. Tong looks forward to bringing more awareness of disability in the Hmong community.



YOUA LEE MEMBER

Youa Lee is an alumni from St. Catherine University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health with a Health Educator concentration and a minor in Psychology. She is from MN. Youa is a Program Director at PICS - Partners in Community Supports, offering financial and technical support for individuals with disabilities and families who self-direct care. She worked with Hmong families on Consumer Support Grants (CSG) and

Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) to understand program policies and procedures and provide support while they keep their independence in their own home and communities. You have a passion for education, social responsibility, and community reach. I love to connect, learn, and bring awareness around disabilities.

FLO, FLEURINE YANG

MEMBER

Flo, Fleurine Yang, is a first generation Hmong - American immigrant, oldest of 6 kids. She spent the majority of her life in MN but last year moved to Denver, CO. By trade, she's a Program Manager for a Fortune 500 company and is highly organized, dynamic, and results-driven. Disability is something that affects everyone and not always something easily identifiable. In her life experience, she's experienced mental disability through trauma and physical disability within her family. In her free time, she enjoys networking to meet new people, reading, personal development activities, and has a love of different ethnic foods. She is an advocate for mental health, literacy in children, immigration, and diversity.



PA NYIA VANG PROJECT MANAGER

Pa Nyia Vang (she/her) is a parent to six wonderful children with three having special healthcare needs, disabilities, and complex acute chronic medical needs. She is a community philanthropic advocate and individual freelance contractor developing platforms and contents into fruition where she focuses on providing direct assistance and justice works in the Special Healthcare Needs and Disabilities communities

(Children Youth Special Healthcare Needs (CYSHN)).

As a parent with children with multiple visible and invisible special health care needs, she understands the complications of raising and navigating the systems of a child and youth with special health care needs, as well as how to navigate Hmong culture, traditions, beliefs and stereotypes. She has formally connected families to resources and assistance both inside and outside the community, hospital and school settings. Pa Nyia provided leadership and been on several community/organizations boards, committees, councils, cohorts, and groups including the founding of a grassroots group called, Hmong with Special Needs, for Hmong families in collaboration with several CYSHN organizations. She received the 2015 Ramsey County, Minnesota Public Health Awards at the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, the award was honored for exceptional contributions to improving the health of individuals, families and communities in the county.

CHEE LOR M
CRISTY YONGVANG MEL

CYNTHIA YONGVANG

FLEURINE YANG

HOUA MOUA

MAI SHOUA MOUA

MAI THOR

MELAINE YANG

NANCY YANG

PA NHUE VUE

PANG CHAXIONG

SUE YANG

SUSUN XIONG

TONG K. LOR

TSUA XIONG

YOUA LEE



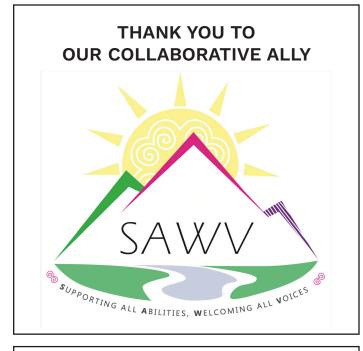
Our mission is to serve our community and people with disabilities as we live and work together.

DR. MAI TRUE LEE

Health and Wellness Chiropractic Clinic, P.A.













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