



The Library
UC SAN DIEGO

Brian Crie Oral History

February 28, 2024
58:46

Interviewee: Brian Crie
Interviewer: Mira Gupta

Transcribed by: Mira Gupta, Samantha Pagdilao

[Generating and Reclaiming our Wisdoms \(GROW\):
A Collection of AAPI Community Stories at UC San Diego](https://knit.ucsd.edu/grow/brian-crie-oral-history/)
UC San Diego Library Digital Collections
<https://knit.ucsd.edu/grow/brian-crie-oral-history/>

Copyright: Under copyright (US)

Rights Holder(s): Brian Crie, Mira Gupta

Use: This work is available from the UC San Diego Library. This digital copy of the work is intended to support research, teaching, and private study.

Constraints: This work is protected by the U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.). Use of this work beyond that allowed by "fair use" requires written permission of the copyright holder(s). Responsibility for obtaining permissions and any use and distribution of this work rests exclusively with the user and not the UC San Diego Library. Inquiries can be made to the UC San Diego Library program having custody of the work.

Time	Transcription
0:02	Mira Gupta: It's recording. Okay, hello.
0:05	Brian Crie: Hello.
0:07	Mira Gupta: Hello! Okay...[They laugh.] Okay, I will start. Hopefully we can edit this. I think we will, we could probably just...
0:22	Brian Crie: Probably, yeah.
0:23	Mira Gupta: Yeah, yeah yeah just cut the...
0:27	Brian Crie: -or we can leave all the awkward in.
0:29	Mira Gupta: Yeah! Even better! Okay are you ready?
0:39	Brian Crie: Yeah!
0:40	Mira Gupta: Okay. Hello. [They laugh.] My name is Mira Gupta, she/they series pronouns, and today is Friday, February 9, it is almost 6:40pm, and today I'm interviewing Brian Crie through a Zoom call for the University of California, San Diego Generating and Reclaiming Our Wisdoms project or GROW project. Before we begin, do you agree to grant the university permission to archive and publish this interview for educational purposes?
1:20	Brian Crie: Yes.
1:22	Mira Gupta: Cool. So just for folks that are listening, just wanted to address the fact that we know each other already, and we work together for APIMEDA Programs and Services Office. And some of the questions I may already know the answer to and so I will be clarifying that throughout this interview process. Yeah, so I guess we'll just get started. Could you please introduce yourself? Tell us your name, pronouns, and any identities you feel important to share?
2:06	Brian Crie: Yeah, so, again, my name is Brian Crie. He/they series pronouns. I'm an alum, obviously, I graduated 2014. I was going to think about it. Yeah, I graduated 2014. I did my undergrad. So, I was a UCSD undergrad student from 2010 to 2014. Which I think is important context for the time that I was a student. I identify, I'm an Asian American, mixed race. So my dad is white. My mom is Chinese, Vietnamese and Vietnamese. I was trying to make that distinction because I think that people make assumptions when I say just Chinese, Vietnamese. I'm from San Diego, born and raised. I always try to represent San Diego. Like, I feel like people bash on it unwarrantedly. So I try to make sure to

	rep San Diego as much as I can. And I really like music, hip hop specifically, I feel like for me, that was a big thing of helping me kind of like find ways to talk about certain things. Being first gen and you know, not really having like an idea of what things were like. I was also not always as socially conscious as I am now. I was problematic when I was a first year, second year student, even third year. But, you know, I think some of my experiences in undergrad helped me kind of grow out of that for sure.
03:45	Mira Gupta: Great! Thank you for sharing. And yeah, so next we're gonna sort of transition to, like you said, your experience at UCSD. As you mentioned earlier, you're a UCSD alum and are currently working as the Programs and Operations Coordinator for the APIMEDA Programs and Services Office. During your time as an undergrad at UCSD, how were you involved within the UCSD community? And why did you decide to get involved in... whatever you did?
4:23	Brian Crie: Yeah. So like I said, my first couple years I was a really shy person. Like I was the kind of person who would like take out my phone, which was a flip phone at the time and be like, try to send someone a text then before I actually hit send, I would just not send it and then I would just go study in the library. So I was very socially awkward. But I did want to like give back like I was really focused on trying to be an active person. Like I said when I was a first year student, I was like, Oh, I'm going to join student government but I don't like student government. So I didn't do that. And then I applied to be an orientation leader, and I didn't get it because, I'm not connected to anything. And I was like, Yeah, that makes sense why I didn't get it. So in my second year, I joined this organization that was called Multicultural Coexistence or something. The only reason I joined it was because they had a high school tutoring component to it. And I was like, I like tutoring people, and I can do that. And that was pretty much it. The organization, there weren't really GBMs [general body meetings] there weren't really... I joined as like a board member. But the board meetings were not really anything beyond just, Oh, hey, we're like organizing tutors to go to this one high school. But then I was an orientation leader; I applied again and I got it. And when I was reaching out and welcoming in this new class of students, I was like, Oh, you got to find your community, you got to find people you vibe with. And then I was like, orientation was over. And I was like... I don't have that. [They laugh.]
5:56	Brian Crie and Mira Gupta: [They laugh.]
5:57	Brian Crie: So I was going into my third year. And I was like, I'm being a hypocrite, you know, I'm telling people to go find this and I don't have this thing for myself. So I was like, Okay, now I realize I'm on a mission, right? So I was looking at stuff again, I was really into tutoring people. That was kind of what I did in high school and that was where I felt like I would have, footing, I could

kind of break out of my shell a little bit more. And so I was looking up, Oh what are some ways that I could like, give back to high school students or whatever. So I think I literally was just like, High school students, UCSD student organization or something. And one of the first ones that came up was the Asian Pacific Islander Student Alliance, or APSA. And they had, there at the time, they were doing high school conferences. And their high school conference was in the fall. And I was like, Whoa, that's really cool. I didn't know high school conferences were a thing. You know, bringing x number of students to campus and having them do workshops and kind of expose them to higher education, it was like, Yes, I'm on board. Give me that. So I sent an email to I think, the general APSA Gmail, and it was like, Hi, I'd like to get involved with high school conference. This was in like August, I think. Maybe early September. And so I got an email back like a couple of days later like Oh, yeah, hey, come to our first GBM. And you can learn a little bit more about it. So I went to the first GBM, it was like an ice cream social. I went by myself. I didn't know anybody. This was a completely new organization. But because, it was something that I was interested in. And in my head, I was like, I really want to connect with other Asian American people I didn't have so it was, kind of a nice mix, right? Because I didn't really have a great language for how to talk about my identity.

I always knew there was, stuff that I needed to figure out, especially being mixed. Like, I was the only mixed person in my family for a really long time. My cousins are twins. And they were the next mixed people to become part of my family. And they're like eight years younger, and I don't think they ever really thought about their identity in that way. So I knew that, I want to like get more in touch with my Asian American side. So APSA kind of fit that nicely. It was like a joint of my interest as well as like, I feel like I could start like putting words to experiences that I had. And so I got more involved in APSA in that way. So that was my third year. First quarter, I was like, regular GBM-er person. I think winter quarter of my third year, I applied to be the Access Coordinator for APSA, which was again, like working with high school students. Looking back on it, I didn't really do anything access related because high school conference was already over. And like there was an APSA LEAP Coordinator, like the access component for SPACES, right? But, that was their job to do access stuff. And they were doing things. So I was like, I'm Access Coordinator, but I'm just kind of here like a General Board Member basically. And at the time, it was like a much smaller board. I think, when I joined I was the eighth person on board, basically. And knowing what I know now, they just wanted new people on board. Like they didn't really care. They're like, Yeah you're Access Coordinator sure whatever. Just be a board member. That was their preference. And that really kind of helped me learn a little bit more about myself and social justice things. My fourth year, I ended up being the Vice President, Internal. There were vice presidents at the time and it's Vice Chair now. And I think the only reason I didn't go for

President oops, I was like, I'm not qualified for that position. But most people were like, Brian you should just do that. And you know, I probably should have but because...the board was so small anyway that I like we had to function as like kind of more of a leadership role anyway. But yeah, so that was my fourth year.

Fourth year was a lot of involvement. So, because I was so invested in high school stuff, (access work) I was like, I'm going to be vice president internal. But I'm also going to co-coordinate the high school conference with like two other people. We were, we were tri-co high school conference. And I was like, it'll work out because high school conference is fall, and once it's over I can focus on other things. The other biggy event that APSA had at the time was talent show. And there was no talent show coordinator. So the *making air quotes* board *making air quotes* was coordinating. And by *making air quotes* board *making air quotes*, it ended up being *me*. The other board members definitely did work. But I feel like I put in a lot of the work. And when we did the debrief of talent show, I was like, I feel like I did a lot of the work and the rest of board's like Yeah, you did, Brian.

So my fourth year I was in a leadership position in APSA and coordinated two of the hugest events that APSA did. So by the time spring quarter rolled around, I was kind of burned out. And that was spring quarter was when they started talking about, or maybe they were talking about it more. But it was the first time it was getting on my radar of the Coalition for Critical Asian American Studies, or CCAAS. I think I went to one meeting, and they were talking about how it was like, Oh, we don't have Asian American Studies. And again, I was so burned out. And so out of my element that I was like, Yes, we don't. But also, I don't know if I have energy to attend more of these meetings. So I think I went to one. And then I was like, Okay, my role will be to get other people to go meeting instead of me. And then if there were other things that were being talked about that was related to that, I would try to go, right. Like, one of the first things that they are not first thing, but one of the things that CCAAS, at the time had been talking about was there was like this community forum, it was a collaboration with CAPS. And I don't know if it was APSA, I don't know who the collaboration was with, but CAPS was doing this thing where Asian American mental health people were really just having a space and is open call for people to come. And I was like, Okay, this is so important to have, because that was not something that we had before. The Asian American counselors, were like, intentionally making the space for it. So it was me, and maybe like one other person that went really consistently to go to that. And that was, part of why I wanted to go because it was like, Okay, no, see, CCAAS said that this was an important thing to go to. And, you know, I want to see if we can, continue to maintain that this is a program that could continue to exist, basically. That was a lot of stuff that I just

	said. I'll take a pause from there. And I don't know if there's more that we want to talk about.
13:12	Mira Gupta: But no, that was a great start. Let's process that really quick. Yeah. Okay, you did touch on this a little bit. But, I did want to, you know, hear you expand on it more. How was being a part of APSA helpful for you in understanding your identity? And what did you learn about the UCSD community? Or what did it or what it means to be an Asian American person at UCSD from being a part of APSA?
13:52	Brian Crie: Yeah, yeah, I kind of just like skirted over that by summarizing.
13:57	Mira Gupta: It's okay. We'll come back. We'll come back.
14:00	<p>Brian Crie: But yeah. So I think part of it was, there was a lot of stuff that I did growing up that was just like, I didn't know if that was my family, or that was, what Asian American people did, or if it was like a combination of both, right? And so going to GBM for APSA really helped me understand kind of, a little bit more about myself. My intention was like, I wanted to get more in touch with my culture. But APSA, I didn't really talk about culture stuff in the same way. Right? It was more of just like, like model minority myth, and like, what it means to be Asian American and Asian American representation in the media and stuff, right? And so while I wasn't getting the culture, really explicit culture stuff that I wanted out of it, I was like, Wait a minute, I do feel guilty if I don't excel in all of my classes and stuff and like, wait a minute, you know? I was having a lot of these like, wait a minute lightbulb kind of moments by talking about the kind of like, high impact issues that impact Asian American students or college students specifically.</p> <p>And I was like, Damn, this is good, I should keep comin' to this stuff so I can see what else I can learn, you know. And so I think it really cemented my understanding of not only myself, but also like I said before, it gave me words to things that I didn't know, I had before. And I had never taken an ethnic studies course at the time, I was a Chemical Engineering student. And like, for most of my life, my family was like, Yeah, you're gonna be an engineer, and then you're gonna go be a job. So like, your goal with with college is to get a good job, right? And so, taking classes outside of the scope of what I was, quote, unquote, meant to take was not really in the plan, right? Plus, would engineering like, you have such little flexibility in your four year plan? That's like, try, maybe, but like, probably you're not going to take extra classes. So I never took a single ethnic studies class, I took two education studies classes. One was a practicum class so that I could be a tutor for OASIS, the Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services. And the only reason I did that was because I was doing study groups of people for one of my engineering classes, and they were like,</p>

	<p>You should probably be a tutor, because you know how to explain stuff for the class that you're currently in. Like, you could probably be really good at that for the intro math classes. And I was like, Okay, I actually wanted to apply to OASIS as a first year, but the application was like, Oh, you need two references to, write you not even like an actual letter recommendation was literally like, three lines of just like... What do you think of this person? And I was like, I don't have someone that can write me that. And then the other reason that I wanted to be an OASIS facilitator was because the chair of APSA at the time, Maggie, I think had forwarded an email or sent an email out to people that was like, OASIS needs people. And I was like, Okay, this is two signs that OASIS needs people, I guess this is the universe telling me, I should probably do it. So I went and applied and got a position there. And I do think that always has really helped encourage a lot of that like personal growth also because they have a strong, social justice, critical pedagogy kind of mindset. That kind of again, really was like, these are good points.</p> <p>I remember there was one thing in a practicum that the coordinator at the time his name is Jeremy was like, Oh, who has biases? Probably phrased more elegantly that but that was essentially it. And no one was speaking. And I was like, Okay, I'll share I was like, I tend to use more slang when I'm around like, black and Latino people. And I was like, I should probably like, not do that as much. And he's like, Well, wait a minute. He's like, In your high school, what was your high school like? And I suppose it's like, a lot of like, pretty diverse mix of people. But ... we had a table of black and Latino people that I hung out with all the time. And he was like, Well, maybe that's just who you are, and you put on when you're talking to like faculty and stuff. And I was like, Jeremy, you're right. I do put on when I'm talking to faculty like, that is not me. I like definitely code switch, right? And he didn't even say code switching and I probably didn't know the words code switching at the time but like, yeah, I totally do that, right? So that plus stuff that we were talking about in APSA I really it was just like a perfect mix, I'm learning so much about myself and I think that really helped me kind of feel more comfortable and realize that part of the reason why I was shy was because I didn't really know myself, right? Like I couldn't- I didn't feel comfortable putting myself out there because I didn't know myself.</p>
19:15	<p>Mira Gupta: Real. And yeah, I think like even- well for myself, for folks that are listening, I also was an APSA and that's also why we were able to bond over this too. Yeah, I think like APSA was a- is a really cool space to be able to kind of explore your identity but in a more like social justice based way. Yeah. And then continuing on with APSA a little bit. How did you being mixed or like, if at all, did your mixed identity like impact your experience in APSA or like in UCSD as a whole?</p>

20:02	<p>Brian Crie: I think it did. I don't think it was like a really big, prominent part of my identity because, I didn't interact with a ton of mixed people, at least it didn't seem like it, right? Like, there were, like a couple people here and there who were in APSA who were mixed, but it wasn't like we talked about it specifically in that way. But I did feel a little... not embarrassed, but I felt like I had a lot to prove, right? Because part of the reason why I joined APSA was like, I wanted to get a little bit more in touch with the cultural aspect of myself, right? Because I didn't feel like I had a lot of that, it was just my mom's side of the family when we would do, certain things. And growing up, I spent a lot of time with my dad's side of the family, like we would visit my grandparents like every week, basically, because I'm from San Diego, and all of the family is in San Diego, right? Not that I didn't visit my mom's side of the family, but like, it was just not as frequent. And most of the time when we got together, it was during holidays, or Lunar New Year, right, like, which is the holiday, that was like the big one that we went to, right? And so there were things that I was, I don't know that much about my culture. My mom is not someone who is really big about talking about that kind of stuff. Because she's just like- when I was growing up, she was like, You'll marry a Vietnamese woman. And then she'll teach you things. And I was like, That's not really how it works. And life- now I'm married to a Filipino person.</p>
21:42	<p>Brian Crie and Mira Gupta: [They laugh.]</p>
21:43	<p>Brian Crie: So like, not what happened, mom.</p> <p>But yeah, so like, part of me being in APSA, was trying to learn about culture, and then really realizing that like, one APSA doesn't really focus on it and that way, but also two, I feel like I had to, kind of prove my Asian-ness to people, because I was mixed because I didn't have like the *making air quotes* typical, or like the other Asian American things that people were experiencing because, that's just not what I experienced. And so, I did feel a little bit, not necessarily, out of place, but I was like, Okay, how can I like, show like, I'm hip, I'm in or whatever. Not hip but like, I'm feeling old by saying that-</p>
22:34	<p>Brian Crie and Mira Gupta: [They laugh.]</p>
22:35	<p>Brian Crie: -but like, trying to fit in more than that, I feel like I probably needed to, felt like I was trying really hard. And that probably didn't come off that way. But in my head, I was like, I need to, really make sure, feel like I fit in, you know. And I do think because... when I was a student, as far as I know, there wasn't a Mixed Student Union, like mixed identity was not something that was talked about a whole bunch. So I didn't feel like I got to experience and I had to do a lot of self reflection to understand that about myself, right? Like, Oh, okay, this is kind of why I think about it in this way.</p>

	<p>So there's a lot of self analyzing of my mixed identity, and then seeing how it fit in with some of the things that I was involved with, or just UCSD as a whole, right? Like, someone would say something be like, I wouldn't really outspokenly say it, but I'd be like, process, Okay, Asian Americans do this for me, and then the rest of it would be like, That doesn't apply to me, you know? And then I would, again, I wouldn't say it because I was just, Okay, they're, they're making a generalization, but I understand that, I don't need to not necessarily rock the boat. But, I don't need to make a big deal out of this not applying for all Asian American people because I know, I'm mixed and I know that like, that was meant for me to process it differently, right? I mean, maybe it wasn't, but that's just how I took it when I would hear things like that.</p>
24:03	<p>Mira Gupta: Thank you for that answer. [They laugh.] This is not really on script. But I guess a follow up to that would be like, a lot of this, like you said was kind of more an internal processing thing. Did you at any point, talk about your mixed identity like with other APSA board or like, what was the culture of the board? Like, was it... was it something that was touched upon? Or was it just kind of like, That's just Brian, you know, was it-</p>
24:40	<p>Brian Crie: I think it was more of just like a That's just Brian honestly. APSA at the time too was just really fiending for people. It was not on the cusp of dying but I think it was, they were really impressing upon like trying to get new people trying to stay true to like the social justice values of APSA. So that was like a very external kind of thing. And I will say that I can give as like an Internal Vice President/Vice Chairperson who probably should have done a better job checking in on people. I did not do that good of a job checking in on people. And I do think that when I was at least Internal it was very, like felt like a job almost right? Like, not in that bad way like not a I hate my coworkers kind of way, right? Like I enjoyed working with the board. But I feel like we didn't have as close of a personal relationship as we probably could have. So we're talking about that stuff, like, just hanging out in general or whatever, not at a board meeting or not an APSA like, would have felt it came up more naturally. Like, if we were talking about stuff, it was usually, what event? Are we trying to plan or like, you know, Hey, what do we need to do for this, right? The other thing that I forgot to mention is that when I was Internal, there was no retention person in SPACES, there was no APSA RISE. So we would like, people were doing a lot of double duty, right? The board was small, there was no RISE position, right? Spring quarter, the person who was president or chair or whatever, graduated, and it was like, Well, you're not a student, you can't be the chair. So it was, you know, there was even more double duty then, right?</p> <p>So yeah, it was like, it wasn't a thing that was talked about a lot. I do think that if I did end up talking about my mixed identity, that was something that probably happened in OASIS, because like, that was like a big mix of people, right? Like,</p>

	it wasn't just Asian American people. It was like everybody. And that was that there would be moments where I could be like, Oh, okay, you do that, I did a little differently because, whatever the reason was, right? And it felt a little bit more casual to be able to talk about it in that way.
27:06	Mira Gupta: Mm, interesting. [They laugh.]
27:11	Brian Crie: It's a very different dynamic, for sure.
27:14	Mira Gupta: Yeah, yeah.
27:15	Brian Crie: And I am saying these things with like, now, a few years of distance from them. And I'm like, Yeah, this is probably the reason why that happened. Right? Like, in the moment, that is not how I saw things right? But looking back on it, it's like, Eh, yeah, that probably is the reason why that happened.
27:32	Mira Gupta: That makes sense...Okay, this is kind of like a slightly awkward transition, but I do want to circle back to CCAAS because we were headed there.
27:45	Brian Crie: Yeah yeah and then we went back. Yeah.
27:47	Mira Gupta: Yeah. So just for the listeners, can you just briefly talk about like, what is CCAAS? And what your- well, you already talked about your involvement, but-
28:00	Brian Crie: I mean, I could go into it some more.
28:02	Mira Gupta: Yeah. Yeah, yeah yeah.
28:03	Brian Crie: Yeah. So again, CCAAS is the Coalition for Critical Asian American Studies. It was kind of I think, when it was first brought up to me, it was like, This is important for APSA that people go to, and I wasn't really given context as to what it was. The first meeting was a lot of like, explaining of, why Asian American Studies is important, why not having it on campus is like a big deal, right? Like, there's a large population of Asian American people at UCSD, Asian American Studies is like, present at other UC campuses, right? And so I was like, Okay, yes, this is important. It was probably a little bit more detail-oriented than I had the capacity for at that time. I was like, Ooh, this is important, but this is a lot of information that I know, I'm gonna have to learn, right, to be like, really invested, right because at the time, I didn't know that much about Asian American studies. I didn't know that much about, like, what it meant to make a course, right? I didn't know that much about the history of the fact that Asian American Studies was the thing that was tried in the 90s. And then, didn't materialize, right, there was a lot of stuff that I didn't know. And I was like, Man, I

	<p>want to be a part of this, but I just don't have the knowledge to feel comfortable to help advocate in the same way that some of the other folks who felt they had a little bit more than knowledge or were positioned to do that.</p> <p>So like I said, when it came to CCAAS stuff, I was like, I can encourage people to go to this and, elevate these events that I know are happening. I just don't have the ability to be there. I was already, I think I joked slash maybe truthfully said that I was averaging four hours of sleep in my last year because I was, an engineer trying to like do all my engineering classes and then with how involved I was with APSA like I literally dropped a board position for my, like, major student org like my chemical engineering student organization, because I was like, I just don't have the time for this. And that was before fall quarter even started, I was like, Yeah, I'm not gonna be able to do this, y'all I'm sorry. Like, I wish you would have told us sooner. And I was like, Yeah, me too, but I did not know until fall quarter was popping off that I was like, that was not gonna happen. Yeah, by the time, CCAAS stuff got on my radar, I was like, Okay, I can do...helping elevate other things, right. And so, I do think that, I probably could have been more involved, but I wouldn't have been, I feel like I've gone to meetings, but I wouldn't have gotten anything out of it. And I would just spend like another body to be like, Yes, I agree with what, so and so said, you know, without like, fully processing what was being said.</p>
31:01	<p>Mira Gupta: Right. And that's valid, because I think, with the work that CCAAS was trying to do, it would have been like, I think you understanding your position and your capacity was good in that moment.</p>
31:15	<p>Brian Crie: And I guess I'll just add to that, too Mira, that, it felt like there was a lot of like, Okay, part of what we need to do is CCAAS is, connect with a lot of, faculty, connect with staff, find people that will help support us and I was just like, I have only been involved in APSA, a year and a half at that point, like two years-ish, right? I didn't feel like I had the connections to the, to the big players, right. And so I was like, This is not my skill set. Like, I'm not going to be able to do these things. But I can help you get more people. I can encourage the second and first years to go, because that was another thing we were talking about. Like most of the people involved in CCAAS were like, on their way out. They were graduating. So it was like, Well, I am also graduating, so me being super invested is probably not that helpful. So I'll try to get like second and third years, first years to be interested in this thing. And by that time, again, this is like spring quarter that a lot of these conversations were happening, maybe like late winter. Actually, it was late winter, because it was February. So yeah, it had to have been winter. Damn. It probably felt like spring quarter at that time because I was just so burned out by things. But yeah, I was like Okay, it's- I'm nearing the end, I'm also graduating soon, like how can I get people interested in this. And because I was, super into APSA. Like for new people coming in I made sure that</p>

	<p>they got talked to by either me or like another board member and then they- Like I was really hell-bent on, making community for new people because that was what I wanted when I was a student. I realized that I was like, Oh, I just needed some people to talk to and feel like I had people in my corner. So I'm going to help create that for people.</p> <p>So like, if it was their first GBM and they needed to go walk back to their dorm, I would walk them back to their dorm. Like, there were two people, one living in Revelle one lived in Warren. I went to Revelle to walk the person back. And then I went to Warren and walked that person back like, I was there. And I was one with the car. So if we had off campus events, I was driving people. It was like, by that time, people were like, Okay, Brian is like looking out for me. And, like, the stuff that he's talking about, like, okay, like, that's probably important, right? So I was able to use my influence, and that sounds bad, but like, use the kind of like favor that I was currying in APSA to be like, The CCAAS stuff is important, please go do it. Like, Oh, yeah, I'll probably go. And the people who were like, not that into it, they just didn't go as often, right? Like, they went to the first one, like Eh, this isn't really for me. And then they left but like, I was able to get at least a couple other people to stay and realize, like, Oh, this is something that's probably important.</p>
34:21	<p>Mira Gupta: That's really cool. And I don't I don't think that's a bad thing. I would have probably done the same thing. I think like, that's literally what the work is of coalition building anyway, is being with the community and then being like, Hey, do it for me. Yeah, you know, um, so, yeah, I guess you did touch on this a bit in terms of like your role within like getting people to go to CCAAS and to be a part of it like for other folks outside of APSA, or, I guess outside of the folks that ended up sending the open letter, were they aware of the work that CCAAS was doing at all? Like? Or like, from what you saw or what you knew? Like, were...were folks able to do that further outreach beyond just whoever signed the open letter?</p>
35:20	<p>Brian Crie: So I will say at the time, it felt like CCAAS was like, If you know, you know, right? Like, it felt like a very, like small pocket of people. If you said CCAAS to somebody, the chances were they probably were like, I have no idea what that is, unless they were like, invested in it. They're like, okay, yes. CCAAS. Cool, right? So I don't think the acronym was known very well, right. But like the work of like, Asian American Studies stuff, I think, because there had been work in the 90s, and they were like, faculty who were kind of interested and staff who were like, trying to help make it happen, I think that was a little bit more known, right. Like, I think if you had said CCAAS, you probably wouldn't get as great of a response. But if you said something around like Asian American Studies, you'd be like, Okay, I kind of have a feeling for what it was. And so at the time, like, for me, it was like, again, it was just, like, get the word out there, like, get people to</p>

	<p>know about it, right. And so I think because of that, it felt like not that many people knew about it, because it was like, so important to like, get new people into it. It was, again, it was probably a little bit more known than that, because I know that like CCAAS was like presenting stuff to AS. And, you know, like, you can't be an unknown if you're on the agenda for AS meetings, right? Like, the people have to know something. Right. And so, to me, it probably felt like the work that CCAAS was doing was not that well known. But it was probably a little bit more understandable, right? Or, like, more prevalent for kind of, like, outside of the scope of what I understood it to be.</p>
37:00	<p>Mira Gupta: Right. And do you feel like, once the open letter was drafted and signed, and presented, do you feel like that change at all? Like people's awareness of CCAAS or like, yeah. Like, what was the impact of the open letter, do you feel like?</p>
37:22	<p>Brian Crie: Yeah, so I would say that it definitely. It definitely encouraged more people to get involved, I think. Like, I think, once the open letter went out, and once they kind of like had a little bit more of a following for it, it did feel like I didn't have to, like, campaign as hard for people to go, like, there were already people who were like, Okay, I'm down. Like, this is interesting stuff. Like the people who had more knowledge who were like the second and third year people who are going to be here for a little bit of time to like, take over some of that work, like that foundation had been set up. And I was like, in some senses in my head, I was like, Cool, my job is done. Now my job probably wasn't done, but in my head, I was like, My job is kind of done, like, they're taking what they need to do and running with it, right? And so, I do think that open letter helped a lot. And also at the time, there was a lot of like, anti Asian slash, like Asian fetishism going on, right? I don't think- I think it's like referencing the open letter for the CCAAS open letter.</p> <p>But UCLA had like, just had like, a really big, anti-Asian incident happen. And so it was like, just, you know, UCLA is not that far away, right. UCLA also has like, a little bit of a stronger history, like Asian American activism, you know, in terms of like, big scale type of things, right? And so it felt like... Okay, this is time to call it out at not only there, but also like, if they're calling it at UCLA, like, we should be calling it out at San Diego, especially because we don't have Asian American Studies, especially because, we just get kind of glossed over a lot of the time, right. And so I do think that context for why the Open Letter kind of happened is more than just like We wanted Asian American Studies, it was like, there was other stuff going on in the world, that kind of helped galvanize people to be like, we need to do something, right? And so the people who wanted to do something, had a call for people to be like, Oh, these people are trying to do something and so there were more people trying to get into CCAAS in that way.</p>

39:37	<p>Mira Gupta: That's really cool. Since the open letter, this is now transitioning into like, where we are now, what was that process like, you know, from since you kind of lived through the development of CCAAS, the Open Letter, and then now working at APIMEDA Programs and Services like how, how did you get involved with the creation of the APIMEDA Programs and Services Office?</p>
39:37	<p>Brian Crie: Um, I don't know how involved I was with the creation of the office, but once it existed, I was like, Okay, this is important, right? Like, kind of similar to what I was doing with the community forum, right. I was like, Somebody needs to go, somebody needs to help with stuff right. And, and I had already known Windi, right? So Windi Sasaki is the inaugural staff person for the office, right? And so I think when it was announced, or like, maybe Windi had also sent out an email, I don't really remember at the time, but like, I was working in OASIS. And I saw that Windi has been announced as the Program Manager for the office, and I was like, probably within a day, at the very least, maybe within like the hour of when I saw the email, I was like, Windi if you need anything, I will help you out with something. I don't know what it is, but I will help out. And because she came on in, like the summer time, right? There was probably a little bit of building, right? But there were events that she was like, Oh, I need like a staff person for this. And like she was, I think, knowing what I know now she's probably like building out a list of contacts. So anytime she would email out like an email blast, or like, Hey, this is what I was like, if I was free, which I tried to be, I was like, I'm there, like Tell me what you need me to do I will help out, right? So like, I was one of the first speakers for ASCEND, which is like the Welcome Event for incoming students for APIMEDA Programs and Services. And I think part of it was because like, Windi is also the Summer Bridge alum. Right. So it was like Oh, easy, like, we can get someone to talk about OASIS. And Brian has already expressed interest in wanting to help out right. There were like people who were in academic advising, right.</p> <p>So it was like really intentional outreach. But I would just like, even if she didn't want me to speak, I was like, I'm coming. Like, even if I'm not a speaker, I'm coming to help you out. And so that was a lot of what I would try to do. Just like there would be like a staff mixer and I was like, I'm going to that right? Talking to people that I either knew or didn't know, or I like, I knew them, but I didn't know them super well. So then I went and... there was someone from The Zone who went to one of those. And I ended up creating a program with her because I was like, We're kind of doing something similar to what you're talking about with the Women's Center. And I was like, I could just do this with the Zone too. And she was like, Oh, cool. So there was like a program that came out from like a mixer that Windi held for staff, and I went. And so that was like the big reason for why... part of the reason why I reacted that way I think was because like, I knew how important the office existing was right? Like, it was not there when I was a</p>

	<p>student and I was like, This is something that I want to make sure has a good foundation, so whatever I can do, I'm going to try and do something for it.</p>
43:19	<p>Mira Gupta: Wow. So full circle. Full circle vibes. Well, that leads me to my next question, which is, how has your experience with APSA and I guess CCAAS liaison influenced your work now as the programs and Operations Coordinator at APIMEDA Programs and Services?</p>
43:45	<p>Brian Crie: Yeah, I mean, I think part of the reason why I wanted to work with the office in the first place when the job kind of opened was I was feeling like, Oh, I want to try and reach out to students in kind of a different way. And I think because I was a student leader, I understood some of the challenges of what it meant to be like a student organizer, someone like trying to, get things done. And I was like, In my role with OASIS, I was able to kind of help people learn how to be better educators, kind of give them help on like, more of like, the academic side of things, because I worked in the math and science tutorial program. And not that I only talked about academics with folks, right? Like, I definitely touched on some of the like, personal side of things, right, but I never really felt like I had the opportunity to kind of share about how to be active and be a student organizer. Because that was just not something that came up that often right in my previous role.</p> <p>So part of what I wanted to do, as the Programs and Operations Coordinator, was like, Okay, I have some experience, like I know how to kind of support some things, and because I have a background and like how to facilitate things like, there are challenges with leading a student organization because there's no playbook, right? There's no like, Step one of how to be a student leader, right? And even if there was, you can't read it with, you have to read it with like some critical eye, right? Because like, it's not going to apply to everyone the same way. And so I wanted to help out in that way because I had experience, I had a strong background in knowing how to facilitate things and run events, right? I knew how to help people feel engaged, because that was my job. And so being able to bring some of that into APIMEDA Programs and Services was something that was important to me. And, I don't know if my CCAAS involvement had a strong influence on what it is that I do, but I like, knew what was going on, right. And so like, understanding that, like, this office is kind of a result of the Open Letter wanting to be a thing and like, it just felt nice to be like, Oh cool, I can kind of like see through some of the things that I know, were being asked for back when I was a student, and help create a space, an environment that I know that I would have wanted, when I was a student, because that was a big thing of what I tried to do, right?</p> <p>Like, when I was an undergrad, I felt like I didn't, and this is a wrong assumption, but I felt like I didn't have people that I could go to for advice or input, right. And I think this is like, one of the things that I experienced as being first gen. Like I</p>

	<p>didn't know who to reach out to, so I felt alone in like, my struggles and like knowing what, who to reach out to and what resources to utilize, right? And again, I didn't really get involved until my third year, I felt like I was doing a lot of catching up on things. And so I was like, Okay, if I can create a space where like, people don't have to feel like that know, there's at least one person who's in my corner. And one of the things that I tried to do is like, If I don't know how to help this person, I'm at least gonna try and point you in the right direction or connect you with a person who can, right? So like, I don't know anything about public health, but I know people who do and I'm going to connect you with that, right? I don't know anything about being a med student, or medicine, but like, I can write you a letter of rec in talking about how your experience that in how I know, you applies to, how you might be a doctor in the future or something, right? And so, because that was my mindset for trying to help out people, I was like, Okay, if I can just be someone for this office, like, maybe we can have a good foundation for that, and then we can build it up from there.</p>
47:48	<p>Mira Gupta: Well, I mean, as someone that , is working with you, I would say that like, Yeah, I think your experiences with APSA and CCAAS, like literally like you describing how you would just encourage people to like go to meetings, or like how you just have that enthusiasm to connect with people and build the community that you want it for yourself. It clearly transfers over to the way that you are now as like our supervisor and I feel like like, you know, yeah, like getting us involved with, with things going on with other, you know, campus resource centers, and also like, fostering that sense of community like with our own cohort, which is like, new and expanded, I think is something that has carried through so give yourself credit for that for sure.</p>
48:42	<p>Brian Crie: Yay! Um, yeah, it's interesting that you say it like that Mira, because that does make me think like, Oh, yeah, when I was in APSA that was like, a thing that I tried to do. Like, I was so hell bent on going to other people's stuff like MEChA's High School conference, I helped out at it. BSUs High School conference I tried to help out at I don't think it was free at the time, but KP's High School conference, I was there, right? Like I was trying to be in the other student orgs right? I think like SAAC (Student Affirmative Action Committee) being an entity was something that was important that I saw the value of it because it was a coalition of people, right. And so I think that's the other thing that that really helps with, like, building across people who are different from you is something that I knew and valued really highly. And so I wanted to train and take that with me also, which I guess it sounds like it's translated. Yeah.</p>
49:33	<p>Mira Gupta: Yeah! [They laugh.] Most definitely. Um, and I feel like I see a lot of similarities and also the way that like, I tried to be a leader and APSA like making sure that we rebuilt those connections with mentioned BSU like post-totally being online with the pandemic. Yeah I think that those things are</p>

	<p>important. And I think like, yeah, like, reflecting on everything that you've said, it's like you were literally built for this job like, I love hearing people's stories about how, you know, they might have started out in one direction, and it just completely went a different way. And I feel like your story is one of those stories where it's like, you kind of had to go through those, those transitions and, and get involved and try new things to get to where you are now, because it's like, you are literally meant for this job and like, the position that you're in now.</p> <p>Okay, I'm gonna go off on a tangent. I'm gonna stick to the script, but I'll talk about it with you later. But yeah, yeah, I think the answer to this question is, Yes, much of all these experiences, clearly, in a lot of weird ways, the universe was like, Yeah, this is this will, this will help for sure. And I think a lot of students, I mean, I can just speak for myself, like, really benefit from your mentorship and like, I've learned a lot about leadership and community building literally just from like, seeing how you are and how you work and just like being around you. So it's really cool to hear about all of this.</p>
51:20	Brian Crie: Ugh, I don't take praise well.
51:23	Mira Gupta and Brian Crie: [They laugh.]
51:25	Mira Gupta: It's all good. It's all good. So wrapping up. In the coming years, what do you want to see come out of APIMEDA Programs and Services? And for the students who are ready to continue to address the demands of the open letter? What would you say to them?
51:47	<p>Brian Crie: So for the first question, what do I want to see come out of the office? I feel like we're in such a big transition point now. So at this time of the recording, right, we're still trying to get furniture for the office, right? So I think, when I like forecast in the future, I see something of like, students coming in and enjoying the space and like, making it kind of their home, right? Like I think about, like how the Cross-Cultural Center, or like, the other resource centers, exist as like, places for students to go to hang out, it doesn't necessarily had to be like a big like, Oh, they're going to like a specific workshop, like, maybe they're just hanging out. And like that's something that I want for the office for sure. Just have it be a place where students feel comfortable to come and, and connect with each other. Whether it be like talking about, like, whatever happened at the Grammys, or, you know, like trying to organize for, you know, more stuff, right, like, and trying to advocate for things, right, like, I could see both of those things happening in the space. I would want to see both of those things happening in the space, right? Because I think that like the existing as like, kind of how the other resource centers do would be cool, right?</p>

	<p>And again, that's kind of like part of the reason why I wanted to work with the Office, right, like helping it get to those parts. I think I think of the Cross-Cultural Center a lot because like, I hung out there a lot as a student, but also it's like one of the oldest resource centers on campus, right? So like, if we can get to like mirror that, I think that would be cool.</p> <p>In terms of like, for students who want to continue to address the open letter, there's a few different steps. So like, one, read the open letter, right?</p> <p>Like, I think that's like-</p>
53:58	Mira Gupta: [They laugh.] Hehe, yeah.
53:59	<p>Brian Crie: -part of it. But like, when I say read it, don't just like read it, but like, look at what has happened, and how it exists differently, right? So like UCSD has Asian American Pacific Islander studies, AAPI studies, right? It's a minor, right? That's not really what they wanted from the CCAAS Open Letter, right? And there are some things that are different, right? So they wanted it [to be] Critical Asian American Studies, right? And it's Asian American Pacific Islander studies, right? And part of that is like, with the intentional inclusion for Pacific Islander people, right? Great. Love it, right? Like, please do that. But if it's only a minor, right, like, how can you, as a student, try to help advocate to get towards a major or a full fledged department, right? I think, too, the big part of like, being a student activist is recognizing that, students have a ton of power, it doesn't necessarily feel like it all the time, right?</p> <p>Like, it feels like Ah, the administration and people way above me are the ones that have to get this stuff done, right? But students have so much power and are able to create change on campus that like I think that just getting out of the, Ah I have to wait for other people to help make this change. Like, students can push things forward and make things happen way faster than if we had to, wait around for the admin people to make the changes, right? And sometimes, the perfect moment happens when there's student activism, and like a helpful faculty or admin or staff person, like kind of merged together at the right time, right? So, like, the more active people are, the more likely you are to like, have those moments, right, where you have someone's like, You know, I can help make that happen, right? I don't know if that's a good two minutes, like a 1a for first steps, right? I think the second thing would be, like trying to connect with staff and faculty. I think especially faculty, right, because there's a lot that I've learned in my role with working with APIMEDA Programs and Services that I just didn't really understand about faculty. There are some faculty who were like, really down, really want to help out the work, but similar to students, they are just strapped for time, like, they do not have the time for certain things, right? So like, getting to know who the people are, and then finding ways for them to like, be in</p>

	<p>positions where like, okay, I can I can do this, right? Like, this is important to me, and I maybe don't have time, but I can figure out a way to like, talk about this in a meeting and get somebody else to realize that this is important, also, right? And then I'll just do a third step. And there's, there's probably like 10 other steps that can happen for how to address the demands of the open letter.</p> <p>But I think that if people want to see more, right, I think it's, there has to be a little bit more research, right? But also, like, go to other people's stuff. And when I say other people's stuff like, like, do the actual work that a coalition is, right? Like, not just Asian American people need to be a part of the CCAAS Open Letter thing, right? Like there were non-Asian American people who were a part of CCAAS. And even if they didn't sign the open letter, like, they did some, like badass work, right? Like they, they did the things to help put it in the position to exist. So I think that not only like going to other people, other communities stuff to like, support their things, obviously, right, but like, seeing how things can be organized from other perspectives I think is really valuable and beneficial to the cause of what the Open Letter wants to do. Because it's already a coalition space, it's already something that like, Asian American is a coalition term, right? Like, expanding it out and seeing how to leverage some of the things that already exist in like the badass department at a campus, right, like African Diaspora Studies, right? Like, understanding how that has been positioned, right, like maybe there's similar alignment that can happen for AAPI studies, right? And that you might need to know those things and talk to people who are in those places so that you have an idea of how to structure it for Asian American studies or AAPI studies, right.</p>
58:27	Mira Gupta: I think that was the perfect ending to this interview. Um, yeah, thank you so much again, Brian for your time. And... that's it. Alrighty, let me-.