



Cynthia Ashton (SFSU 2013)

Alice Fong Yu

Educator

Alice Fong Yu (1905-2000) was born in a mining town in California. She grew up being bullied in the schoolyard because of her Chinese heritage. Her parents taught her Chinese and to be proud of her Chinese heritage. Alice always wanted to be a teacher because she likes taking care of her family. Alice was not allowed to go to San Francisco State Teacher's College because Asian Americans were not allowed to teach in public schools. Alice was only allowed to go to school in 1921 because she told University President Burke that she wanted to get her education and return to China and teach English there. The new principal of Commodore Stockton School, now known as Gordon J. Lau elementary, was in need of a Chinese speaking teacher; luckily Alice just graduated from San Francisco State Teacher's College in 1926. Alice was hired immediately. Commodore Stockton elementary is located in San Francisco's Chinatown and most of the students were Chinese. Instead of going to China, Alice is the first Chinese American public school teacher in San Francisco. She taught English and translated in Chinese. The nation's first Chinese Immersion School located in the Sunset District is named Alice Fong Yu Alternative School in 1996 in her honor. Alice is a pioneer of bilingual education.