

## CHINA HAND

## Gary Locke: China hand extraordinaire

By YU DENG in Seattle  
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He is a man of many firsts: the first Chinese-American US ambassador to China, the first Chinese-American Secretary of Commerce and the first Chinese-American governor of the State of Washington.

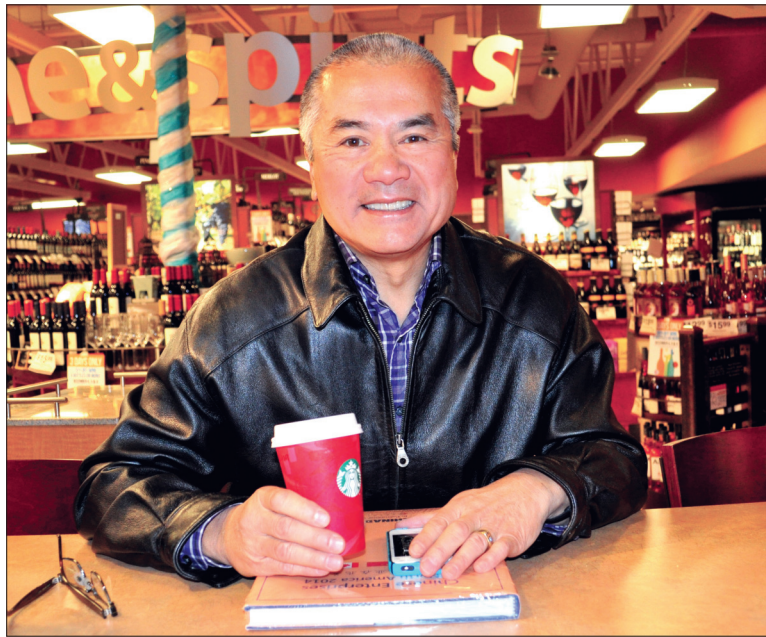
He wears a leather jacket and drives his own car; he loves Starbucks and proudly shares photos on his smartphone of him playing the planking game with his children and he said the ambassadorship to China was the experience of lifetime and unforgettable for his entire family.

He is Gary Locke, who was nominated by President Barack Obama to be the tenth ambassador of the United States to the People's Republic of China, and assumed the duties of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to China in August 2011.

Stephen Orlins, president of the National Committee on United States-China relations once commented, "America could not find someone better prepared to be ambassador to China."

"Unfortunately my father passed away few months before I became ambassador, but I believe he would have been prouder than anything to see me become ambassador to the land of our ancestors," Locke said.

Locke was born in 1950 in Seattle, Washington, and spent his early years living in the Yesler Terrace public housing project. Locke's grandfather immigrated from Taishan, China to Washington State in the 1890s, ini-



Former Ambassador to China Gary Locke, holding his favorite Starbucks coffee, talks to China Daily about his work and life after back to Seattle at the café inside the Quality Food Center (QFC) store in Bellevue, WA.

tially finding employment as a servant, working in exchange for English lessons.

His father, James Locke, also born in China, was a small business owner, operating a grocery store in Seattle where young Gary worked while going to public schools in Seattle.

"I come from a family with very humble beginnings. I washed clothes, prepared and cleaned the cloth diapers for my little brothers and took the bus to the store where I worked part-time," he said.

Regarding his ethnicity, he said, "I'm proud of my Chinese

heritage. I'm proud of the great contributions that China has made to world civilization over thousands of years. The Chinese people and the government officials are so friendly and gracious."

As ambassador, Locke's low-key, unassuming style charmed the Chinese and made him a favorite of the Chinese media when he was in China.

"It is an American style or Seattle style rather than a so-called Gary Lock style," he said.

He said he completely understands how people in China sometimes expected him to

"represent China" because of his Chinese heritage.

"But I'm thoroughly American. I'm proud of the great values that America has brought to the entire world and all that America stands for. My job is as a representative of the US government in China," Locke said.

Locke paid regular visits to his family village in Taishan in southern China. "The number six uncle of my father still lives there and the place is my roots," Locke said. On Dec 16, 2013, in his final days as US ambas-

## BIO

GARY FAYE LOCKE

Age, 64

## Education

- BA in political science from Yale University (1972)
- Juris Doctor, School of Law, Boston University (1975)

## Career

- 10th United States Ambassador to China (2011-2014)
- 36th United States Secretary of Commerce

(2009-2011)

- Runs leg of Olympic torch relay in China before Beijing Olympics (2008)
- Works to bring Chinese President Hu Jintao to Seattle to meet with state and business leaders (2006)
- Becomes partner in Davis Wright Tremaine law firm in Seattle (2005)
- 21st Governor of Washington (Jan 15, 1997 - Jan 12, 2005)

sador to China, Locke paid one last visit to his relatives at his ancestral village.

During his tenure as ambassador he had a full agenda. "I had many priorities: increasing US exports to China; expanding the cultural and people-to-people exchange between the US and China; improving visa processing; and increasing Chinese investments to the US," he said.

As the keynote speaker at the fourth annual China 2.0 conference hosted by Stanford Graduate School of Business on October 3, 2013, he pointed out that for many global issues, neither China or the US can solve them alone, and must work together to make progress.

"I am optimistic as I really see so much more higher-level interaction between our companies, our scientists, our researchers, political people and everyday people," he said.

"China and the United States have to be involved together and indeed the world is looking for leadership from both the United States and China to solve the tough challenges and problems," he said.

One month later, in November 2013, the ambassador announced that he was stepping down to rejoin his family in Seattle.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei commented on Locke's job in Beijing. "Since taking up the American ambassadorship to China, Mr Gary Locke has worked hard to promote the exchange and cooperation between China and US. We appreciate it."

"Throughout his successful tenure, Ambassador Locke devoted enormous personal energy to opening Chinese markets to American companies, promoting Chinese tourism and business travel to the United States, and advocating greater respect for human rights," the US State Department said. "Under his leadership, the growth of American exports to China averaged two times the growth of US exports to the rest of the world, and the value of Chinese investment in the United States increased significantly."

He reduced the waiting time

for Chinese to get US visas to three to five days from as long as 100 days when he came in. Locke said the improvement had "significantly increased Chinese business and travel tourism to the US."

On November 10 at the 2014 APEC summit in Beijing, US President Obama officially announced a new visa policy mutually agreed to by the US and China. Both governments put the policy into effect immediately to increase business and tourist visa validity to 10 years and student validity to 5 years.

"The new visa policy means there will be more people-to-people exchange between the two countries, which will build a base for a stronger bilateral relationship between the US and China," Locke said.

Locke married his wife, Mona Lee, a television reporter with NBC affiliate KING 5 television in Seattle and a former Miss Asian America, in 1994. Lee's parents immigrated to the US from Taiwan and were originally from the China mainland, her paternal side from Shanghai and maternal side from Hubei. The Lockes have three children: Emily Nicole, 17, Dylan James, 15, and Madeline Lee, 10.

Locke said it was not a sudden decision to resign from the ambassador post. "My family actually made the decision almost one year before I left. We suddenly realized my daughter would start her junior year in high school and we wanted to have her last two years of high school in the United States. We would never just send her back to the United States to go to school all by herself. We will always move as a family," he said.

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A model of the Xinglong Lake area, which is under development in the Tianfu New Area in Chengdu.

LI YULONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

## All-in-one proves appealing

By PENG CHAO  
and SONG MENGXING

Tianfu New Area in Sichuan province, China's newest national-level development area, is leading the way as the city pursues a development path that puts people at the heart of a modern metropolis.

Located at the intersection of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Yangtze River Economic Zone, two of China's key national strategies, Tianfu New Area was approved by the State Council in early October as the country's 11th national-level development area.

But while following in the successful footsteps of other new areas such as Shanghai Pudong New Area and the Chongqing Liangjiang New Area, Tianfu has also sought to blaze a new trail as it promotes opening-up in the western regions, enhancing economic growth in the inland regions and pushing forward the country's economic restructuring.

"Different from the other 10 new areas, we were well aware that we wanted to strike a bal-

ance between industrial development and improving people's living environment and lives," said Liu Limin, a planning officer for the area.

The area was established in 2010 and consists of 37 town-level districts in Ziyang city, Meishan city and Chengdu, the capital city of southwest China's Sichuan province.

It covers 1,578 square kilometers, 82 percent of which are in Chengdu.

China's fast growth over the past three decades has led to a boom in new towns across the country.

These new areas are often characterized by impressive construction projects, but they are usually plagued by traffic jams, environmental pollution and a shortage of housing.

Tianfu New Area, however, has adopted a new model of urbanization to try and avoid these urban diseases, Liu said.

It consists of 35 "all-in-one city units", each of which covers 20 to 30 square kilometers with a population of around 250,000. Each unit is like a small city, featuring not only company head-

quarters, research and development facilities, production plants and outsourced services providers, but also retail and leisure facilities such as shopping malls, cinemas, and restaurants.

The Tianfu New Area in Chengdu also features several famous schools, hospitals and large-scale commercial complexes, along with international standard exhibition and convention venues, a financial center and luxury hotels.

The Singapore-Sichuan High-tech Innovation Park in the Chengdu part of the New Area brings industry, culture and nature in perfect harmony with one another.

Jointly developed by Singapore and the Sichuan provincial government, the park is planned to cover 10.34 square kilometers and house 120,000 residents, and is expected to attract a total investment of 100 billion yuan (\$16.3 billion) from 2012 to 2020.

The park focuses on eight pillar industries - IT, biomedicine, service outsourcing, new digital media, precision machinery, environmental technology,

finance and training - but it also embodies and embraces modern life for living.

"Residents' convenience was the first priority when planning the park," said Cui Wei, CEO of Sino-Singapore (Chengdu) Innovation Park Development Co Ltd, which is responsible for overall planning, construction and marketing of the park.

"People don't need to drive far for a walk, for example. They can just park their cars in the underground lots and walk into the green areas just outside their homes after dinner," he said.

Cui said the park is also planned to be an environmentally friendly community. The planners of Tianfu New Area hope it will accelerate Chengdu's development toward a modern, international and environmentally sound metropolis that is conducive to finance, trade and living.

A variety of high-end industries have already been introduced to the new area, and the park's office in San Francisco is recruiting new IT companies and leading biomedical businesses headquartered in the

United States to move to Tianfu New Area.

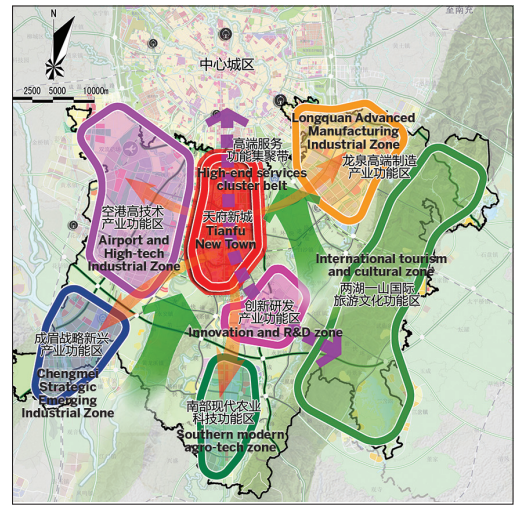
Tianfu Software Park, which mainly focuses on the IT industry, has already attracted more than 400 companies, including 33 Fortune 500 companies, such as IBM Corp, Philips NV, Siemens AG and Huawei Technologies Co Ltd.

While Longquanyi district has become an important production base for the automobile industry with FAW-Volkswagen, FAW Toyota, Volvo and Zhejiang Geely Holding Group Co Ltd all having investments in the area.

"European companies have rich experience in developing high-tech and eco-friendly industry.

"There is great opportunity for the cooperation between Europe and Tianfu New Area," said Antti Peltomäki, deputy director-general of the European Commission's Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General.

Peltomäki said he will pay close attention to the development of Tianfu New Area and introduce appropriate Euro-



The overall plan for Tianfu New Area.

PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

pean companies to invest in the area.

Raymond Greene, the new US consul general in Chengdu, said he has recently met more than 100 American companies from the American Chamber of Commerce, most of which already have offices in the Tianfu New Area.

"Tianfu New Area is quite attractive to US companies. I believe Chengdu will become a city as prosperous as the highly-developed eastern cities."

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