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## **What Motivated Them to Assume Leadership Roles: Content Analysis of Interviews With Former CALA's Presidents**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the motivations of former presidents of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) in assuming leadership roles within the organization. Through inductive thematic analysis of interview transcripts, the study identifies key motivations that drove these individuals to engage in CALA's leadership, as well as the impact of their experiences on their professional growth and development. The analysis, supported by generative AI tools (ChatGPT 4o mini and Claude Haiku with concise responses), reveals nine core themes, categorized into three overarching groups: Professional Development and Personal Growth, Advocacy, Influence, and Responsibilities, and Organizational Culture. These themes encompass factors such as professional development, career advancement, cultural empowerment, mentorship, and a desire to give back to CALA. The findings offer valuable insights for fostering leadership engagement within CALA and similar professional organizations, highlighting the desire for giving back and culture connections and empowerment. Additionally, the study reflects on the use of generative AI in qualitative research, demonstrating its potential to enhance the efficiency and rigor of thematic analysis.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Motivation, Librarianship, ChatGPT, Claude, CALA

### **INTRODUCTION**

To mark the 50th anniversary of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) in 2023, the authors conducted interviews with nine former CALA presidents to gain insights into their experiences with the organization. A striking observation from these interviews was that nearly all the interviewees had not initially sought leadership roles when they first became involved with CALA. Most began as members, gradually assuming leadership positions within their chapters before eventually being nominated and elected to serve as president. The presidency of CALA is a four-year commitment, consisting of the Incoming Vice President/President-Elect, Vice President/President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past President roles. Even after completing their terms, many of these leaders have continued to play active roles in CALA's operations and initiatives.

This raises the central question: what motivated these individuals to take on leadership roles within the organization for such extended periods? Understanding their motivations can

provide valuable insights for current and future CALA members, fostering a deeper appreciation of the organization's leadership and inspiring greater engagement among new members. Additionally, these insights may serve as a useful model for other professional organizations seeking to encourage member participation and leadership development.

To address this question, the authors conducted an inductive thematic analysis of the interview transcripts, identifying key factors that motivated these former presidents to assume leadership roles and remain actively involved in CALA. The study also explores the use of generative AI tools in thematic analysis, presenting both the findings on leadership motivations and reflections on the process of using AI in qualitative research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of librarians has evolved significantly in recent decades, expanding beyond traditional responsibilities to include leadership roles within professional organizations. Librarians are increasingly called upon to assume leadership positions in these organizations, which offer opportunities for both personal growth and professional development. Understanding the motivations that drive librarians to take on such leadership roles is crucial, as it involves a complex interplay of personal aspirations, career advancement, and the desire to advocate for issues within the library and broader community. Existing literature identifies several key factors that shape these motivations, including the pursuit of personal growth, the need for professional development, a sense of responsibility to advocate for the profession, and the influence of organizational culture and leadership styles.

### Personal Growth and Professional Development

Personal growth is a significant motivator for librarians pursuing leadership roles. Many librarians view leadership positions as opportunities to enhance their skills and expand their professional expertise. Studies have suggested that engaging in leadership roles provides librarians with the chance to develop competencies such as emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, and communication, which are essential for career progression (Gao et al, 2023; Le, 2016; Martin, 2018). Leadership roles can also increase job satisfaction, as they allow librarians to achieve personal and professional goals while contributing meaningfully to their institutions.

Professional development is closely intertwined with personal growth, as aspiring library leaders seek experiences that bolster their qualifications and broaden their knowledge base. Leadership opportunities typically offer access to mentorship, training, and networking - all of which are vital for career advancement (Shahzad & Khan, 2023). Professional organizations offer leadership development programs to potential leaders, for example, ALA Emerging Leaders, the ALA Spectrum Scholar Leadership Institutes, and the ACRL/Harvard Leadership Institute for Academic Libraries. Freedman and Freedman (2020) argue that structured leadership development programs, such as the seven stages of leadership development, can significantly enhance librarians' leadership capabilities. The drive for continuous learning and skill enhancement is a central theme in motivating librarians to take on leadership roles, as it allows them to acquire new insights and approaches that improve their professional practice and leadership effectiveness. Le (2015) suggested that those taking leadership roles in professional organizations appreciated opportunities

to effectively network with other library leaders at the state, national, and international levels as well as sharpen their leadership skills, which have been of great importance in their career.

### **Advocacy, Influence, and Responsibilities**

Advocacy plays a central role in motivating librarians to assume leadership positions. Many librarians are driven by the desire to advocate for causes related to information access, equity, and social responsibility. Leadership in professional organizations provides them with the platform to influence the direction of these causes and shape policies and practices within their organizations and communities (Le, 2016; Martin, 2018; Shahzad & Khan, 2023). By assuming leadership roles, librarians can work toward effecting positive change in areas that align with their professional values and commitments.

Moreover, the responsibility associated with leadership roles often resonates deeply with librarians who feel a strong duty to their profession and community. This sense of responsibility empowers them to influence policies and practices that improve service delivery, enhance user experiences, and promote the mission of the library (Martin, 2020). Leadership positions, therefore, provide librarians not only with the authority to make decisions but also the opportunity to serve as advocates for their profession and to represent the interests of their communities. The intersection of advocacy, influence, and responsibility is a critical motivator for those who take on leadership roles, ultimately shaping their effectiveness as leaders in the library field.

### **Organizational Culture and Leadership Styles**

The organizational culture of professional associations plays a significant role in motivating librarians to pursue leadership positions. Research suggests that a supportive, inclusive environment that values diverse perspectives can encourage librarians to take on leadership roles (Shahzad & Khan, 2023). Le's study (2015) suggested that several participants considered mentor support played a pivotal role in their career. They were successfully mentored by people of different genders and other races. Conversely, organizations with rigid hierarchies or autocratic leadership styles may discourage potential leaders from stepping forward, as they may perceive that their contributions would not be recognized or valued.

Librarians tend to thrive in environments characterized by democratic leadership styles, which emphasize shared decision-making, open communication, and collaboration. Leaders who foster a sense of belonging and empowerment within their teams are more likely to inspire others to take on leadership roles (Shahzad & Khan, 2023; Martin, 2020). A leadership style that is inclusive and values contributions from all members enhances both motivation to lead and the overall effectiveness of leadership within the organization. Thus, the alignment between organizational culture and leadership style is key to attracting and retaining strong leaders within professional associations.

### **Complex Motivations for Leadership**

The motivations for librarians to assume leadership roles within professional organizations are diverse and multifaceted. Personal growth, professional development, advocacy, and organizational culture all play significant roles in inspiring librarians to lead. The drive to develop new skills, contribute to the advancement of the profession, and make a positive impact on their

communities is often accompanied by a strong sense of duty and responsibility. Additionally, the organizational environment in which these leaders operate, including leadership styles and cultural values, further shapes their decisions to engage in leadership roles. Understanding these motivations is critical for fostering future library leaders and ensuring the continued success of professional associations like CALA. Future research should continue to explore these motivations, particularly within the changing landscape of librarianship, to better inform leadership development programs and strategies for cultivating the next generation of library leaders.

### **Using Generative AI (GenAI) in Content Analysis**

This study also employs GenAI tools for conducting inductive thematic analysis, an emerging approach in qualitative research. Since the introduction of generative AI tools in 2022, a growing number of researchers have integrated these technologies into content analysis to enhance efficiency and deepen insight. Prescott et al. (2024) explored the use of GenAI tools, specifically ChatGPT and Bard, to conduct both inductive and deductive thematic analysis of SMS text messages in digital health interventions. They compared the consistency and reliability of GenAI-driven analyses with those performed by human coders. Their results indicated that GenAI performed similarly to human coders in terms of theme consistency (greater than 80%) but showed lower reliability in coding (around 40%). Despite the lower reliability, GenAI required significantly less time than human coders. The authors advocate for hybrid approaches that combine human judgment with AI tools to optimize the accuracy and depth of thematic analysis.

Perkins and Roe (2023) examined 28 academic publishers' guidelines on AI usage and highlighted the importance of human oversight in the content analysis process. Their findings suggest that while AI tools can efficiently process large datasets and identify subtle themes, human researchers remain essential for interpreting the data and ensuring the integrity of the analysis. Christou (2024) discussed the challenges and benefits of using AI in thematic analysis, offering practical advice on integrating AI tools while maintaining the critical evaluative role of human analysts. Christou emphasized that AI should complement - not replace - human analytical skills, ensuring that AI enhances the depth of qualitative analysis without overshadowing human insight.

Similarly, Yan et al. (2023) recommended designing research processes that improve human-AI collaboration, particularly in qualitative studies where trustworthiness, contextual understanding, and accuracy are crucial. These studies underscore the importance of thoughtful integration of AI in content analysis to leverage its strengths while addressing its limitations.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Inductive thematic analysis is a qualitative research method widely employed in the social sciences and humanities for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within textual content. This systematic approach facilitates meaningful interpretations of textual data, making it an invaluable tool for researchers and practitioners in various disciplines, including librarianship. Librarians and library practitioners often use thematic analysis to derive actionable insights from qualitative data, for example, analyzing interview or focus group transcripts to identify common themes in user preferences and frustrations related to library services, examining social media interactions to uncover effective messaging strategies and engagement techniques for diverse user groups, and studying user comments or survey responses to understand patrons' perceptions of

library services and resources, revealing underlying values and expectations. While traditional qualitative analysis is robust, it can be labor-intensive, requiring substantial time and expertise to analyze large volumes of text. Moreover, content analysis tools like NVivo and ATLAS.ti are not only expensive but also have a steep learning curve, especially for users new to qualitative data analysis software. Recent advancements in generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), particularly through large language models (LLMs), present opportunities to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of qualitative research methods like thematic analysis. LLMs can significantly reduce the effort and time needed for data analysis while maintaining analytical rigor.

For this study, the authors analyzed interviews conducted with nine former presidents of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA). Seven predefined questions were posed, and the responses were transcribed for analysis (CALA, 2023). The analysis focused specifically on responses to the following two questions:

- Q3: What inspired you to take leadership roles at CALA
- Q5: Did your experience at CALA impact your professional career and leadership development? If yes, how?

The dataset for analysis consisted of 4,370 words. To identify themes, the authors utilized two popular and easy-to-use generative AI tools: ChatGPT 4.0 mini from OpenAI and Claude 3.5 Sonnet / Claude Haiku with concise responses from Anthropic. The following standardized prompt was applied to both tools:

*Conduct an inductive thematic analysis of the interview transcripts from nine former presidents of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA). The goal is to identify the key factors that motivated them to take on leadership roles within CALA. Present the findings in a table format, which should include the following columns: theme, description, and at least two examples from different interviewees that illustrate each theme. Additionally, provide a text summary of the results, suitable for inclusion in an academic journal, that discusses the main themes and insights derived from the analysis.*

Due to token limitations of both tools, the transcripts were divided into two parts, corresponding to each question and its responses. Each part was analyzed independently by both ChatGPT and Claude to ensure consistency and reliability of results. When Claude 3.5 Sonnet experienced temporary unavailability due to high demand, Claude Haiku was used as a backup, offering concise responses and the capacity to process the entire dataset for this study.

To enhance rigor, multiple iterations of analysis were conducted with both tools, and the consistency of the identified themes was evaluated. This approach ensured the reliability of results and demonstrated the potential of GenAI tools in supporting qualitative research methods like thematic analysis.

## FINDINGS & RESULTS

The thematic analysis generated codebooks using two different AI tools, which were presented in markdown table format. Two example codebooks, one from each tool, are included as Appendix A. The generated codebooks contained 14 themes from ChatGPT and 5 themes from Claude, with many of the themes appearing consistently across different iterations. The authors reviewed all descriptions and verified that the provided examples were relevant to the corresponding themes

and accurately reflected the dataset. All examples were sourced directly from the dataset; however, it is worth noting that ChatGPT often paraphrased examples, while Claude included a combination of both direct quotations and paraphrasing.

Some examples, however, were misclassified or did not align perfectly with their assigned themes. These include:

- “I want to make CALA a home organization for members and provide opportunities for others.” This was classified under “Influence of Mentorship,” but it more accurately aligns with “Desire to Give Back” based on the context.
- “I learned a lot of stuff... so, when there's an opportunity, I think I can share my expertise.” This example was categorized under “Professional Development,” but it fits better with “Desire to Give Back.”
- “Through CALA, I learned how to establish endowment funds and complete necessary registrations, which helped me a lot in my career.” This was classified under “Organizational Impact and Responsibility,” but it is more relevant to “Professional Development.”

ChatGPT analyzed responses from questions Q3 and Q5 separately due to prompt length constraints. After reviewing the descriptions and examples, the authors consolidated the 14 themes generated by ChatGPT into 9 final themes as follows:

- **Professional Development** encompasses the original themes of Professional Development, Skill Development, and Leadership as a Learning Process.
- **Mentorship and Inspiration** combines Influence of Mentorship and Mentorship and Inspiration.
- **Organizational Impact and Responsibility** merges Desire for Organizational Impact and Organizational Impact and Responsibility.
- **Cultural Empowerment and Community Visibility** combines Ethnic Pride and Representation with Cultural and Professional Identity.
- The following themes were retained without modification: **Sense of Belonging and Support, Desire to Give Back, Career Advancement, Professional Networking and Visibility, and Confidence and Empowerment.**

A comparison of the themes generated by ChatGPT and Claude highlights both similarities and differences between the two AI tools:

**Table 1**

*Themes Generated by ChatGPT and Claude*

Themes from ChatGPT	Themes from Claude
Sense of Belonging and Support	Personal Growth and Development
Desire to Give Back	Sense of Belonging and Community
Mentorship and Inspiration	Professional Networking and Visibility
Professional Development	Mentorship and Inspiration
Organizational Impact and Responsibility	Representation and Empowerment

Cultural Empowerment and Community Visibility	
Confidence and Empowerment	
Career Advancement	
Professional Networking and Visibility	

While both tools identified some overlapping themes, differences in the specificity and breadth of the themes were apparent. ChatGPT's themes were more nuanced, with broader categories, such as Professional Development and Mentorship and Inspiration, while Claude's themes were more concise but still captured key aspects of the motivations identified in the interviews. All of Claude's themes could be incorporated into ChatGPT's themes as follows:

- Personal Growth and Development from Claude fits within Professional Development and Personal Growth.
- Sense of Belonging and Community aligns with Sense of Belonging and Support.
- Representation and Empowerment is integrated into Cultural Empowerment and Community Visibility.
- Professional Networking and Visibility and Mentorship and Inspiration remain unchanged.

Furthermore, these nine themes can be further grouped into 3 overarching categories that align with the literature:

#### 1. Professional Development and Personal Growth

- Professional Development and Personal Growth: CALA leadership positions offered opportunities for professional growth, including skill development and the chance to cultivate leadership and management abilities.
- Career Advancement: Leadership roles within CALA contributed to interviewees' career progression, providing opportunities for recognition, promotion, and visibility at local, national, and international levels.
- Professional Networking and Visibility: Serving in CALA leadership roles expanded professional networks and provided increased visibility within the library profession.

#### 2. Advocacy, Influence, and Responsibilities

- Organizational Impact and Responsibility: Serving in leadership roles enabled interviewees to contribute to CALA's growth, shape its direction, and leave a lasting impact on its initiatives.
- Cultural Empowerment and Community Visibility: Interviewees were motivated by the desire to advocate for the visibility and empowerment of Chinese American librarians, ensuring their representation and contributions within the broader library profession.
- Desire to Give Back: A strong sense of gratitude for the opportunities CALA provided motivated interviewees to take on leadership roles to give back and support the organization and its members.



### 3. Organizational Culture

- **Mentorship and Inspiration:** The encouragement and guidance provided by past CALA leaders and mentors played a significant role in motivating interviewees to assume leadership roles.
- **Confidence and Empowerment:** Leadership roles within CALA helped interviewees build self-confidence, overcome personal limitations, and develop a greater sense of empowerment in their professional lives.
- **Sense of Belonging and Support:** A strong sense of community within CALA motivated interviewees to connect with the organization and take on leadership roles.

## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

### Motivations to Lead

The findings of this study align with existing literature, confirming that the motivations for librarians to assume leadership roles within professional organizations are diverse and multifaceted. Personal growth, professional development, advocacy, and organizational culture all play crucial roles in inspiring librarians to take on leadership positions. The sub-themes identified in this study provide insight into both the characteristics of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) and the motivations of its former leaders.

Although Chinese American librarians have been active in the American Library Association (ALA) and other professional organizations for decades, they felt a lack of a network to engage with their ethnic colleagues on common interests. Additionally, they believed that ALA did not adequately represent them, offer opportunities for their involvement in decision-making, or respond effectively to their needs (Liu, 2000). In response, they established their own professional organizations, which eventually merged to form the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA). CALA's mission includes: 1) enhancing communication among Chinese American librarians and with other librarians; 2) serving as a network for discussing and advancing professional interests and development opportunities; 3) promoting Sino-American librarianship and library services; and 4) collaborating with organizations that share similar or allied interests (CALA, 2019). While CALA's Constitution welcomes individuals or organizations that align with its mission, it is not surprising that most of its members are of Chinese nationality or descent, particularly foreign-born Chinese American librarians (Yang, 1996). Cultural connections have played a significant role in attracting Chinese American librarians to CALA and these ties have also been crucial in motivating members to assume leadership positions. As CALA is primarily composed of individuals of Chinese ethnicity, cultural empowerment and community visibility have emerged as key factors in encouraging members to take on leadership and volunteer roles. For example, several participants expressed a strong sense of belonging and connection to their cultural heritage. One described CALA as her "home organization," highlighting how the shared cultural background within CALA deepened her ties to the group. Another participant emphasized that his leadership development was closely tied to staying connected with his cultural roots. Both were motivated by a desire to demonstrate the significant contributions of Chinese American librarians to the profession, taking pride in representing CALA internationally. To succeed in American society, a Chinese American librarian must meet career expectations through peer

recognition, adjust their social consciousness, and engage in dialogue to resolve misunderstandings. Chinese American librarians have enriched librarianship by bringing their unique cultural backgrounds into the profession (Liu, 2000; Ruan & Xiong, 2018).

Another key motivation expressed by several former CALA presidents was a strong sense of gratitude and a desire to give back to the organization. Many of these leaders, particularly those in the early or middle stages of their careers, had benefited from mentorship, guidance, and trust provided by CALA's leaders and members. These experiences not only played a pivotal role in shaping their professional development but also inspired them to contribute to CALA's growth and create better opportunities for future generations of members. This sense of gratitude often led them to pursue leadership roles within the organization. As they stepped into these roles, they found that their involvement not only benefited CALA but also had a positive impact on their broader professional careers.

The desire to give back was clearly expressed in the following quotes:

- "I learned a lot... so, when there's an opportunity, I think I can share my expertise."
- "I personally benefited from CALA's opportunities, and I want to make these opportunities available for others and make CALA a more welcoming organization."
- "I have received a lot from CALA... so, I wanted to give back."
- "I decided to run for the campaign... to help CALA further."

Several psychological studies (Mendonca et al., 2017; Su et al., 2024) suggest that Chinese people often express connective gratitude, which creates a cycle of reciprocity that considers the needs and desires of benefactors. This highlights how gratitude can be influenced by culture. To express connective gratitude, people typically engage in behaviors that promote a sense of relationship, reciprocity, and emotional connection with others, employers, or organizations. These behaviors include offering support in return, engaging in heartfelt communication, making frequent and ongoing expressions of thanks, and performing acts of kindness and thoughtfulness.

In this context, the participants in CALA actively put their gratitude into action by volunteering and taking on leadership roles, contributing to the organization's progress to repay the opportunities, mentorship, and support they received from CALA.

While this study focused on responses to only two key questions out of a broader set of interview questions, it is possible that other motivations for assuming leadership roles were mentioned in other parts of the interviews. Due to the length restrictions imposed by the free versions of GenAI tools, not all responses could be analyzed. Consequently, some valuable insights may have been overlooked. However, the responses to these two questions clearly highlight emotional connections, cultural empowerment, and community visibility as central motivations, alongside other factors such as professional development, organizational culture, and advocacy.

### **Reflection on Using Generative AI in Inductive Thematic Analysis**

This study also demonstrated the potential of GenAI tools in identifying both major and subtle themes within qualitative data. GenAI was able to uncover themes that were distinct yet related, such as "Leadership as a Learning Process." While this theme could fall under the broader category of "Professional and Personal Development," it specifically emphasized the process of acquiring leadership skills through active engagement and contribution. Comparing the use of ChatGPT and

Claude, breaking up the dataset into smaller sections proved effective in revealing these more nuanced themes.

A common criticism of GenAI is its tendency to generate “hallucinations,” or inaccurate outputs. In this study, the prompts specifically requested two examples to support each identified theme to minimize hallucination. A review of the AI-generated codebook showed that the majority of the examples were accurately drawn from the dataset, though a few were not entirely relevant to their respective themes. While this study did not compare GenAI analysis with human coding, comparing the outputs from two different GenAI tools and manually reviewing the results against the original dataset provided an additional layer of validation and adjustment.

It is important to continue exploring how AI tools and human expertise can complement each other in qualitative research. Understanding how to effectively integrate the strengths of both - AI's ability to quickly process large volumes of data and human analysts' ability to interpret complex, context-rich nuances - could significantly enhance the efficiency, validity, and relevance of thematic analysis. Further research in this area holds the potential to improve how thematic analysis is conducted using AI tools, making the process more robust and reliable.

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## Appendix A

### Results from ChatGPT 4o Mini and Claude Haiku

#### Results from ChatGPT 4o mini

Q3:

Table: Key Themes Identified in Motivation to Take Leadership Roles at CALA

Theme	Description	Examples
Sense of Belonging and Support	A deep sense of community within CALA that made interviewees feel connected and motivated to contribute and lead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CALA embraced me warmly... gave me a sense of belonging and accomplishment.</li> <li>- I wanted to be a part of the leadership who cares, helps, supports, and promotes young Chinese American librarians.</li> </ul>
Desire to Give Back	Feeling a strong sense of gratitude for the opportunities CALA provided, leading interviewees to want to give back through leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have received a lot from CALA... so, I wanted to give back.</li> <li>- I decided to run for the campaign... to help CALA further.</li> </ul>
Influence of Mentorship	The inspiration from previous leaders and mentors who encouraged and guided interviewees into leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I want to make CALA a home organization for members and provide opportunities for others.</li> <li>- I had little knowledge about non-profit organizations, but [name removed] gave me the first important lesson.</li> </ul>
Professional Development	Motivated by the professional growth and development opportunities CALA offers, whether for personal career advancement or as a platform to develop leadership skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CALA has provided us with an excellent platform for our librarians to grow, develop, and excel in every aspect.</li> <li>- I learned a lot of stuff... so, when there's an opportunity, I think I can share my expertise.</li> </ul>
Desire for Organizational Impact	A wish to help CALA move forward, often in terms of structural change, policy development, or revitalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There were many works that needed to be done... to help CALA structurally re-organize.</li> <li>- I thought CALA was at an inflection point... I wanted to be part of that great transformation.</li> </ul>
Ethnic Pride and Representation	A desire to advocate for Chinese American librarians and ensure their representation and contribution to the broader library profession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I want to prove that Chinese American librarians can do well... we can do it as well.</li> </ul>

		- I was inspired by leaders like [names removed]... they still cared so much for CALA and Chinese Americans.
Leadership as a Learning Process	Viewing leadership as an opportunity for both personal and professional growth through active engagement and contribution.	- Serving in CALA helped me grow as a better member and a better leader. - I noticed all the work that people put in... so, when there's an opportunity, I think I can also share my expertise.

### Text Summary for Academic Journal

This inductive thematic analysis of interviews with nine former presidents of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) reveals several key factors that motivated them to take on leadership roles within the organization. The themes that emerged from the data suggest that the interviewees were primarily driven by a combination of personal fulfillment, a sense of responsibility, mentorship, and the desire to contribute to CALA's growth.

A prominent theme was **a sense of belonging and support** within CALA. Many leaders expressed how CALA provided them with a community that nurtured personal and professional growth, which in turn motivated them to take on leadership roles. This sense of connection was highlighted by leaders like [name removed], who mentioned that CALA gave them a sense of accomplishment and belonging, and [name removed], who noted the importance of being part of a leadership team that cared for and supported young Chinese American librarians.

The theme of **giving back** was also central to the motivations of several leaders. Many interviewees, such as [names removed], spoke of their deep gratitude for the opportunities they had received from CALA, which motivated them to serve in leadership positions as a way of giving back to the organization and its members. This sense of reciprocity was also reinforced by the influence of **mentorship**, with many interviewees pointing to previous CALA leaders who encouraged, guided, and inspired them. Mentors like [names removed] played a significant role in shaping the leadership aspirations of those interviewed.

Additionally, **professional development** emerged as a key motivator, with several leaders citing CALA as an excellent platform for enhancing their skills, gaining visibility in the profession, and advancing their careers. This was particularly evident in the experiences of interviewees like [name removed], who appreciated the leadership training opportunities CALA provided, and [name removed], who mentioned how much he learned from working with others in CALA.

Leaders were also motivated by the desire to make a tangible **organizational impact**, contributing to CALA's structural development and strategic direction. This was evident in [name removed]'s description of his work to reinstate CALA's status with government offices and in [name removed]'s recognition of CALA's growth potential.

Another strong theme was the desire to promote **ethnic pride and representation**. Several leaders expressed a commitment to advocating for Chinese American librarians and ensuring their voices were heard in broader professional contexts, as highlighted by [names removed].

Finally, many of the interviewees described leadership as a **learning process**. They viewed taking on leadership roles as a means to continue growing, both personally and professionally. [name removed]'s reflection on how CALA leadership helped him become a better member and leader, and [name removed]'s desire to share his expertise, emphasized how leadership within CALA was viewed as an opportunity to contribute while also learning from others.

In conclusion, the motivations to take on leadership roles at CALA were multifaceted, combining a sense of community, professional growth, ethnic pride, and a deep commitment to the organization's success. These insights highlight the complex interplay of personal fulfillment, mentorship, and professional responsibility that drives individuals to serve in leadership capacities within CALA.

Q5:

### **Inductive Thematic Analysis of Interview Transcripts: Motivations for Leadership in CALA**

Theme	Description	Examples from Interviewees
Skill Development	CALA leadership roles offered opportunities to develop and practice essential professional skills such as project management, budgeting, and leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through CALA, I learned a lot of skills that I did not have opportunities to learn in my job as a librarian.</li> <li>- CALA is like a training ground – we can make mistakes; we can try a lot of ideas and CALA is right there to support.</li> </ul>
Confidence and Empowerment	Leadership roles within CALA boosted interviewees' self-confidence, allowing them to overcome personal limitations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I'm really grateful for the trust that CALA leaders gave me. This really prepared me and proved my ability to take leadership roles.</li> <li>- CALA makes me more confident and gives me a supportive network.</li> </ul>
Professional Networking and Visibility	Leadership positions in CALA expanded professional networks and provided visibility at national and international levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As CALA's president, I represented CALA at the Library Society of China and IFLA. That makes me feel very proud.</li> <li>- CALA has certainly provided me the opportunity to develop and sharpen these skills and broaden my professional network.</li> </ul>
Mentorship and Inspiration	Previous CALA leaders provided guidance and encouragement that motivated interviewees to take on leadership roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People who have served in CALA presidency were really supportive... So, I wanted to give back and support CALA's future.</li> <li>- I was inspired by CALA leaders like [names removed]. Their passion for CALA encouraged me to do the same.</li> </ul>
Organizational Impact and Responsibility	Serving in leadership roles allowed individuals to contribute to CALA's organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through CALA, I learned how to establish endowment funds and complete necessary registrations, which helped me a lot in my career.</li> </ul>

	development and have a lasting impact.	- During my presidency, CALA had virtual Cafe times for members to share concerns... I valued that practice, especially during COVID.
Career Advancement	CALA experience contributed to career progression, providing leaders with opportunities for recognition and promotion.	- My experience at CALA in return advanced my career – I was promoted from Library Director to Area Library Director. - I'm going to apply for Full Librarian next year. One of our requirements is national impact, which I got through CALA presidency.
Cultural and Professional Identity	CALA helped interviewees maintain a strong sense of cultural identity while integrating into the broader professional community.	- CALA is my best association. It's near my heart because culturally, we have so many people who came from the same background. - CALA is a platform for me to practice and improve my leadership development while staying connected to my roots.

### Summary of Findings

This inductive thematic analysis of the interviews with nine former presidents of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) revealed several key factors that motivated them to take on leadership roles within the organization. The main themes derived from the analysis reflect the multifaceted impact CALA has had on both their professional careers and personal growth.

**Skill Development** emerged as a prominent theme. Several interviewees cited the leadership opportunities in CALA as a means of gaining crucial skills, such as organizational planning, project management, budgeting, and mentorship—skills that were not always available in their day-to-day work environments. [name removed], for example, acknowledged how CALA helped her acquire leadership skills she did not have opportunities to learn as a librarian, particularly in areas such as project management and delegation.

Closely tied to skill development was the theme of **Confidence and Empowerment**. Many interviewees highlighted how their CALA leadership roles enhanced their self-confidence, especially as they navigated challenges and gained positive feedback from peers and colleagues. For example, [name removed], an introvert by nature, felt more confident in her professional abilities due to her experiences within CALA, which provided her with the necessary support and encouragement to take on leadership roles.

**Professional Networking and Visibility** was another critical theme. Several former presidents emphasized how CALA leadership roles provided visibility at national and international levels, significantly enhancing their professional networks. [name removed], for example, felt empowered by her representation of CALA at prestigious events like the Library Society of China conference and IFLA. This visibility not only boosted their careers but also opened doors to new opportunities within the broader library community.

**Mentorship and Inspiration** were crucial to the motivation of many CALA leaders. Several interviewees attributed their leadership aspirations to the guidance they received from



previous CALA presidents. [name removed]'s comment about receiving support from senior leaders like [names removed] illustrates the role of mentorship in motivating future leaders. These mentors instilled confidence in their leadership potential and encouraged them to take on more responsibility within CALA.

The theme of **Organizational Impact and Responsibility** was also significant. Interviewees expressed a strong desire to contribute to CALA's growth and impact, which in turn impacted their personal development. [name removed] highlighted how the leadership role in CALA allowed her to implement support systems for members during the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, [name removed] spoke about how the responsibilities he took on in CALA helped him develop a broader understanding of non-profit management, which further influenced his professional career.

**Career Advancement** emerged as a direct result of CALA leadership roles. Several former presidents noted that their time with CALA led to career promotions or recognition at their home institutions. For instance, [name removed]'s leadership within CALA led to a promotion to Area Library Director, a move he attributed, in part, to the visibility and leadership skills he gained through CALA.

Finally, **Cultural and Professional Identity** played an important role in motivating leaders to engage with CALA. The organization offered a unique space for interviewees to connect with others who shared their cultural background, while also enabling them to integrate into the broader professional community. [name removed] emphasized how CALA's cultural affinity made it a more supportive environment for him, compared to other organizations, while [name removed] saw CALA as a platform where he could grow as a leader without losing touch with his cultural roots.

In conclusion, the leadership roles taken on by the former presidents of CALA were motivated by a combination of professional development, personal empowerment, mentorship, and the desire to contribute to the organization's legacy. Their experiences within CALA provided them with not only essential career skills but also a sense of belonging and cultural identity, which helped shape their leadership trajectories both within and outside of the library profession.

### Results from Claude Haiko with Concise Responses

Theme	Description	Examples
Personal Growth and Development	Motivation to develop leadership skills and gain professional experience through CALA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CALA provided a platform to "practice, learn, improve aspirations in leadership development</li> <li>- Opportunity to practice management and leadership theories learned from MBA</li> </ul>

Sense of Belonging and Community	Feeling embraced by CALA and wanting to contribute to the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CALA “embraced me warmly” and gave “a sense of belonging”</li> <li>- Noticed the organization’s energy and how “everyone was trying to help each other”</li> </ul>
Mentorship and Inspiration	Encouragement from previous leaders and role models within CALA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encouraged by previous presidents like [name removed]</li> <li>- Inspired by founders like [name removed] and leaders like [name removed]</li> </ul>
Professional Advancement	Using CALA leadership as a pathway to career growth and visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gained national and international visibility</li> <li>- Improved professional reputation and was promoted to Area Library Director</li> </ul>
Representation and Empowerment	Desire to support and promote Chinese American librarians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wanted to prove “Chinese American librarians can do well”</li> <li>- Wanted to be part of leadership that “supports and promotes young Chinese American librarians”</li> </ul>

## Summary

The analysis reveals that motivations for leadership in the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) are multifaceted. Key themes include personal and professional development, a strong sense of community, meaningful mentorship, career advancement, and a commitment to representing and empowering Chinese American librarians. The interviewees consistently emphasized CALA as more than just a professional organization—it was a supportive network that provided opportunities for growth, skill development, and meaningful connections. The organization served as a “training ground” where individuals could develop leadership skills, gain confidence, and contribute to their professional community while simultaneously advancing their personal career trajectories.

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