

In Her Words: February



Lucy Chen



“We have absolutely no control over what happens to us in life, but we have paramount control over how we respond to those events.”

Every woman has a story. But some stories shake rooms, open doors, and redefine what’s possible. In Her Words is SAR’s series spotlighting trailblazing women who lead with courage, shape community with intention, and inspire the next generation through purpose, resilience, and grace.

Lucy Chen’s story is one of resilience forged through movement across borders, careers, identities, and expectations. An immigrant from China, a mother of three, a former risk executive, an award-winning author, and now a speaker and executive coach. Lucy’s journey reflects what is possible when women choose not to shrink, even when the world quietly asks them to.

Lucy immigrated to the United States in 1994, arriving with what many immigrants carry: hope, ambition, and an unspoken need for safety. “Back then, success meant stability, a degree, a green card, a good job, money, safety,” she shares. “As an immigrant, there is always a quiet insecurity in your heart.” Like many immigrants, her drive was rooted not only in aspiration, but in the desire to belong and to build something lasting.

That early definition of success was rooted in survival. Language barriers, cultural adjustment, and the vulnerability of starting over shaped Lucy’s early years in this country. She recalls

moments of embarrassment and isolation from misheard words in restaurants, to being mocked for her accent in a professional setting. “I cried for a week,” she admits. “I almost quit my job. I questioned if I belonged here.”

But Lucy stayed.

What followed was not a straight line, but a powerful evolution. She pivoted careers from environmental engineering to finance, then from financial analysis to risk management, eventually spending nearly sixteen years at Wells Fargo and rising through leadership roles. Later, she stepped into the clean energy space as Deputy Chief Credit Officer before making another bold transition leaving corporate leadership to build a purpose driven life rooted in empowerment and impact.

Over time, Lucy began to understand that her voice itself was a form of leadership. Through years of practice, mentorship, and public speaking, she learned that confidence does not come from perfection, but from presence. “The more I practiced, the more confident I became,” Lucy reflects. “I realized the power of my voice.” Finding that voice became not only about personal growth, but a commitment to visibility for others who rarely see themselves centered.

Today, Lucy describes herself as being in her peak. Rather than viewing age as a limitation, she embraces experience as expansion. “I’m in my 50s, and I feel like I’m at my peak,” she says. “The more experienced I become, the more I can give to society.” With each chapter of life, her capacity to give back has deepened, shaping the way she leads, mentors, and shows up in community.

Her definition of success has transformed alongside her journey. What once centered on stability and achievement now centers on impact. “Success is no longer about title or money,” Lucy explains. “It’s about making an impact in the immigrant community, the women’s community, and communities of color.” Her work extends beyond personal milestones into community leadership and coaching women to claim their voices with confidence and clarity.

Writing has become another extension of that purpose. Through her books and publishing work, Lucy helps preserve stories that might otherwise be lost. “None of our stories are ordinary,” she says. “Sharing them is how we build a legacy.” She believes deeply that storytelling is an act of both courage and generosity.

At the heart of Lucy’s work is a belief in visibility, especially for immigrant women and women of color. In cultures where women are often taught to stay quiet or shrink themselves, Lucy models what it looks like to step forward with strength and intention. “Being visible is not about being loud,” she shares. “It’s about showing up fully.”

When asked what she hopes others take from her story, Lucy returns to a simple truth. “Break your limiting beliefs,” she says. “If I can do it, you can do it too.” Confidence can be built. Growth is learned. And resilience already lives within each of us.

At SAR, this is why conversations like this matter. Stories like Lucy’s do more than inspire; they affirm possibility. Especially in moments of uncertainty and fear, immigrant stories remind us that growth, leadership, and belonging are still within reach.

This is Lucy. This is SAR.

By Hector Zamora



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