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# SFPD Mourns the Passing of Retired Sergeant Herbert “Herb” Lee 17-173

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The San Francisco Police Department extends its condolences to the family of Sergeant Herbert “Herb” Patrick Lee, 84 years old, who passed away peacefully on November 1, 2017.

Born in San Francisco in 1932, Lee attended St. Mary’s School and Polytechnic High School. After serving in the Navy, Lee in 1957 became the first Chinese-American to become a full-time San Francisco police officer. Sergeant Lee was soon enlisted to help recruit minority police officers, many of whom went on to leadership positions in the department.

In addition to serving as a mentor for many SFPD officers, Sergeant Lee’s greatest impact was as the Executive Director of the department’s Police Activities League, where he oversaw athletic, fishing, police cadet and other programs for thousands of underprivileged young people. He was known for his generosity, his calm, humorous demeanor and affirmative coaching style. Many of Sergeant Lee’s PAL cadets later embarked on police careers with SFPD and other law enforcement agencies.

“Sergeant Lee was a true pioneer,” said San Francisco Police Chief William Scott. “His efforts to recruit more law enforcement officers of color helped make SFPD one of the most diverse police departments in the country. His countless hours of work with youth in our PAL program had an enormous impact on the lives of San Francisco children. He was a beloved friend, mentor and colleague to many SFPD officers and we will hold him as a shining example of how one person can make a positive difference for so many people.”

Services will be held on Saturday, November 11, at Duggan's Serra Mortuary, 500 Westlake Avenue in Daly City. The viewing is at 10:00 AM with services to begin at 11:00 AM.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests [contributions in memory of Herbert Lee may be made to the Chinatown YMCA](#).

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