



**Name in English:** Wing Luke  
**Name in Chinese:** 陆荣 [陸榮]  
**Name in Pinyin:** Lù Róng  
**Gender:** Male  
**Birth Year:** 1925-1965  
**Birth Place:** Canton, China  
**Philanthropy:**

**Profession (s):** Politician, Lawyer

**Education:** B.A., Political Science, University of Washington; B.A., Public Administration, University of Washington; L.L.B., Law, University of Washington

**Award(s):** 1944, named one of the nine most outstanding high school students in the US by the Secretary of Labor; Bronze Star from the US Army in the Philippines.

**Contribution(s):** The first person of color to hold elected office in the Pacific Northwest. Wing Luke showed such quality of leadership in high school that he was selected by the US Secretary of Labor as a high school consultant for a White House conference on juvenile problems in 1944. However, he was inducted into the Army halfway through his senior year of high school, and never went to the conference.

Wing Luke served as acting first sergeant and regimental S-1 sergeant in the 40<sup>th</sup> Division Field Artillery. He earned a Bronze Star while serving in the Philippines. After the war he attended the University of Washington and became President of his sophomore class, the U.W. YMCA, the Baptist Discipline Center, the U.W. Red Cross, the U.W. Young Democrats, and the committee chairman of A.S.U.W. Publications. After graduate and law school, he entered private practice.

In 1957, Wing Luke was appointed Assistant Attorney General of the State of Washington in the Civil Rights Division. He took a leave of absence from that position to run for Seattle City Council. His innovative campaign recruited over 1,000 mostly young people as campaign workers. Luke won the council seat by over 30,000 votes despite his opponent accusing him of communist ties and “fence-sitting.” On March 13, 1962, he became the first Asian American to be elected into public office in the Pacific Northwest.

As a member of Seattle’s city council, Wing Luke fought for civil rights, urban renewal, Indian fishing rights, and historic preservation. In the early 60’s, the civil rights movement was still young, and Wing Luke encountered a fair amount of resistance to his work. However, he was influential in the passing of Seattle’s Open Housing Ordinance (1963) which barred racial discrimination in real estate. In a 1965 Argus poll, Luke held an 80% approval rating. His popularity was such that he was strongly considered for future mayor of Seattle or congressman.

However, Wing Luke was tragically killed in a plane crash in 1965 when he was just forty years old. The Wing Luke Asian Museum was founded in 1966 in his honor, with the goal of preserving and teaching the culture and traditions of Asian immigrants, a goal Wing Luke had worked for throughout his short life. A Seattle elementary school has also been named after him.

**External Links:** <http://www.wingluke.org/home.htm>