**U.S businesses eyeing China opportunity go to Hong Kong first**

By Natalie Ornell

According to the Director of the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office (ETO) in New York, Anita Chan, an influx of American companies are “pinning potential on markets overseas, and especially China.” She urged those who want to embrace China’s growth potential to use Hong Kong as a “springboard” because “there is no city so close to China and so open, free, and business-safe.”

Regional Senior Vice President & General Manager of Cathay Bank Johnny Ip welcomed guests and speakers at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Boston for a “Breakfast Talk” hosted by the Hong Kong Association of Massachusetts on November 19th to discuss opportunities for business in Hong Kong. Attendees included a small audience of bankers, educators, importers, and lawyers.

In her talk, Chan addressed the reasons why Hong Kong Trade Development Council Byron Lee.

York Anita Chan (left) and Director of the New York Hong Kong Trade Development Council Byron Lee. (Photo by Natalie Ornell)

**Interview with Sifu Mai Du, Founder and Chief Instructor of the Wah Lum Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy**

Dirctor of the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in New York Anita Chan (left) and Director of the New York Hong Kong Trade Development Council Byron Lee.

Sifu Mai Du’s driveway was the birthplace of the Academy. (Photo courtesy of Mai Du)

By Cody Yu

The Wah Lum Athletic School celebrates its 40th anniversary this April. The Wah Lum Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy, located in Malden, was founded by Sifu Mai Du in 2004 in her driveway. Today, the Academy is the stomping ground for over 100 students, the majority of whom are youth. The Sampan catches up with Du about her life experiences – everything from growing up in Boston to running a kung fu school in Malden.

Sampan: Tell us about yourself. Where did you grow up?

Du: I am ethnically Chinese, but am from Vietnam. My extended family members were refugees who escaped Vietnam after the Vietnam War in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. I came to Boston, MA on Halloween of 1984, a night full of goblins, witches, and vampires, at Logan Airport to begin our American Dream. Our family settled in Chelsea, MA for more than 5 years before we moved to Malden. Unfortunately, two months after we got to the U.S., my family was robbed in our first apartment in Chelsea, where my sister was held at knife-point. As you can probably tell, we had a rough start at the beginning of our American life.

I moved to Malden and started my high school education at Malden High. I obtained both a B.S. in American Studies and a M.A. E.D. from Tufts University for concentrations on Community Service Learning and Schools and Community Collaborations. I worked at Harvard School of Education with the Urban Superintendents Program for a wonderful year and then settled at the American Red Cross of Mass Bay for 8 years, having served as the Director of Youth Programs and Volunteer Resources. My work with young people at the Red Cross was most rewarding.

Through a rich and rewarding journey of Asian American and youth activism with the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY), I eventually claimed my stable racial identity as Chinese Vietnamese American. Through my life-changing experiences with CAPAY and other valuable civic organizations, such as the YWCA and AAGA [Asian American Civic Association], I hold a deep passion for youth leadership and empowerment work. I believe that we should be relentless in the work of instilling hope and inspiration in our younger generations so that they have self-motivation, life skills, and a vision to take their futures heads on. I have tremendous respect for young people, particularly for those who have good values and perseverance.

Now, as a kung fu and tai chi instructor, I continue to thoroughly enjoy having young people in my life and helping to guide them to develop strong values, life skills, and good health—mental, physical, emotional, and psychological—so they will lead a meaningful and productive life for themselves and others.

I do teach students of all ages and greatly appreciate the daily opportunities to teach and learn from them. My Wah Lum kung fu and tai chi school was a vision for me to build a strong and diverse community and I think it has these qualities.

Sampan: How did you get involved with martial arts?

Du: When I was much younger in Vietnam, my entire family was involved with different martial arts. My parents and sisters did tai chi for health in the very early mornings with a group of people. My brothers did Judo and Aikido at the recreational center. I was the youngest in the family. They didn’t even consider involving me in any of these activities. But I had a love for martial arts. I just knew it.

When I came to America, movies from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China, provided hours and hours of entertainment and connections to our ethnic roots. I was particularly obsessed with the kung fu movies. When I watched them, I always felt my blood rushing with excitement. I always loved the moral values and strong sense of social responsibility in many of these movies.

So one day, I asked my father if I could learn kung fu in Chinatown. He had declined before and said that because I am a girl, I should not learn kung fu. But this time, he just said, “Go ask your mom.” So I did. My mother said, “Go ask your dad.” I took it as a “yes” and that was the beginning of my martial arts life at age 12 in Chelsea/Boston, MA. I soon persuaded my two cousins and my sister to learn too. Without any research, the first kung fu school we saw, Wah Lum Kung Fu Athletic Association on Edinboro St. in Chinatown, became my second home for the next twenty plus years. My sifu (teacher) Bob Rosen, a man deeply devoted to martial arts and kung fu, became my second father.

Sampan: How long have you been active in Malden?

Du: I have been active in Malden since high school. I got really active through the VWCA Malden throughout my college years serving on the board. Soon enough, I got connected and involved with various Malden American initiatives.

SEE DU PAGE 7
Empty Bamboo Girl
by Lillian Chan

I think I'm gonna puke...

Who told you to finish off 4 loaded plates of food? And then continue through the weekend?

I can't help it. I see food in front of me and I HAVE to eat it.

Yu' know, Thanksgiving is gonna happen again next year.

November 18

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for more on Liltian Chan, a comic for at www.facebook.com/InTheComic

CHINATOWN

Free MCAS prep classes offered by AACA Youth Program. Free MCAS preparation classes offered by AACA Youth Program. Free MCAS preparation classes offered by AACA Youth Program. Free MCAS preparation classes offered by AACA Youth Program.

BCEC Christmas party
Boston Chinese Evangelical Church (BCEC) is hosting its annual Christmas Children's Party at 244 Harrison Avenue. BCEC is hosting its annual Christmas Children's Party at 244 Harrison Avenue. BCEC is hosting its annual Christmas Children's Party at 244 Harrison Avenue. BCEC is hosting its annual Christmas Children's Party at 244 Harrison Avenue.

Free flu shot and Hepatitis B Screening
Free flu shot and Hepatitis B Screening Free flu shot and Hepatitis B Screening Free flu shot and Hepatitis B Screening

EXHIBITS

MFA Fresh Ink: Ten Tobs on Chinese Tradition
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EXHIBITS

Mother
Mother
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Mother

Mother, Dec 4, 10:30 am
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Mother by Dong Joon-ho (2009, 129 min.). After a night of heavy drinking, Yoon Do-joon follows a girl home, intent on sleeping with her. She turns down his proposition, throws a rock at him, and chases him away. Found dead the next day, Yoon Do-joon is the key suspect in the girl's death, but his overprotective mother maintains his innocence and is determined to clear his name.

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Breatheless, Dec 11, 3 pm
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Breatheless by Yang Ik-june (2008, 130 min.). An extortion racket lands in the wrong hands. The police suspect Ran, a woman who claims to have no involvement. As the investigation proceeds, Ran realizes the truth, and is determined to clear his name.

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Breatheless by Yang Ik-june (2008, 130 min.). An extortionist and a gangster. Man-shik, Song-hoon has known violence all his life. Things begin to change, however, when he meets Han Yeon-heui. Victimized by her men, the nondescript southeastern Korean city where her husband, moves with her young son from Seoul to Miryung, the devastated young girl realizes the gifts were a feeble attempt to assuage her father's guilt. She must now learn to accept her new fate and prepare for her adoption by a foreign family.

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Quincy News

Quincy: A growing Asian community

By Diana Li

Quincy’s Asian population has shown a drastic increase over the years. According to the newly elected President of the Quincy Asian Resources, Inc (QARI), Wan Wu, the Asian population has increased 30 times since 1980 from approximately 700 residents. For nine years, QARI has provided assistance and support to the Asian community.

On November 17, 2010, QARI held their 9th annual meeting. A tribute was given to former President of QARI, David Yi Zou. Tackey Chan, State Representative of the 2nd Norfolk District and founding President of QARI, called David, “a guy who really cares.” Ms. Dorothy Li, State Representative-elect of 2nd Norfolk District, Tackey Chan, talked about his road to success. (Photo by Diana Li)

Diana Li is a Sampan correspondent.

Healthy East-Asian

Join our research study exploring the function of genes!

*CHINESE, JAPANESE, KOREAN

- No treatment involved
- Blood will be drawn at each visit
- Up to 4 visits/year over 5 years

Parking validation and compensation provided per visit

Contact us: GENESTUDY@Partners.org
(Strongly preferred)
617-525-4460

BRIGHAM AND WOMEN’S HOSPITAL

10 Brand New Homes from $169,300 to $278,000

A new green and affordable community!

Parkview Homes
Newton, MA

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Alta at Indian Woods Apartments
Affordable Housing Lottery
Stoughton, MA
www.s-e-b.com/lottery

39 New Affordable Apartments

1BRs @ $1,022/mo
2BRs @ $1,212/mo

Rent does not include any utilities except water and sewer

Alta at Indian Woods Apartments is a 154 unit apartment community located on Stagecoach Road off Washington Street. 39 of these apartments will be rented to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income.

The Maximum Income Limits for Households are as follows:
1 Person - $45,100
2 Person - $51,550
3 Person - $58,000
4 Person - $64,400

Units feature full-size washers and dryers; fully-applianced kitchens with ENERGY STAR dishwashers and refrigerators and built-in microwaves and disposals; large windows for ample light; carpeting in living rooms and bedrooms; wood-look flooring in kitchens and baths; and kitchen islands in some units. (see www.altaindianwoods.com for more info on the development).

A Public Info Session will be held on Jan 11th, 2011 at 7:00 pm in Stoughton Town Hall.

Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be received, not postmarked, by Jan 28th, 2011

The Lottery will be held on Feb 9th, 2011 in Stoughton Town Hall.

For Lottery Information and Applications go to: www.s-e-b.com/lottery or call (617) 782-6900 And Leave A Message.

Applications and Information also available at Stoughton Public Library (M-Thur 9 to 9, Fri-Sat 9 to 5) and the Stoughton Town Hall.
Mayor’s Asian American Advisory Committee connecting Asian residents with Quincy for three years

The Mayor’s Asian American Advisory Committee was formed to provide a bridge between the City and Asian American residents. It is composed of a dedicated volunteer group of Chinese Americans and long time Quincy residents who meet once per month to create a unified community environment.

By Natalie Ornell

The Mayor’s Asian American Advisory Committee convened on November 20th in the North Quincy Community Center to review the year’s accomplishments.

Encouraged by Quincy Mayor Thomas Koch, the committee was formed to provide a bridge between the City and Asian American residents. It is composed of a dedicated volunteer group of Chinese Americans and long time Quincy residents who meet once per month to create a unified community environment.

Committee member Betty Yau said, “We’ve been meeting since November 2007. It’s really wonderful that we keep up this monthly meeting.”

The committee has helped promote a cleaner and greener Quincy, worked to create a unified community environment.

Betty Yau. (Photo by Natalie Ornell)

The Mayor’s Asian American Advisory Committee Chairperson John Downey (left) and member Betty Yau. (Photo by Natalie Ornell)

Mayor’s Asian American Advisory Committee is seeking to employ case managers with bilingual fluency in English plus Chinese, including Cantonese, Mandarin or Toisanese.

Responsibilities: Conduct comprehensive needs assessment for elders to determine eligibility for services. Conduct initial and periodic re-assessments of elders’ physical, social, emotional and environmental status within required time frame.

Qualifications: B.A. or A.S. degree in Social Work, Human Services, Nursing or related field or equivalent in work experience. Experience in human services field. Previous experience with case management preferred. Computer skills required.

To Apply: Please send resume, cover letter and salary requirements to: hr@centralboston.org

CBES, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. www.centralboston.org

To submit an event listing, please e-mail news@sampan.org

Immediate Opening(s) Case Managers, bilingual Chinese

Central Boston Elder Services - is seeking to employ case managers with bilingual fluency in English plus Chinese, including Cantonese, Mandarin or Toisanese.

Responsibilities: Conduct comprehensive needs assessment for elders to determine eligibility for services. Conduct initial and periodic re-assessments of elders’ physical, social, emotional and environmental status within required time frame.

Qualifications: B.A. or A.S. degree in Social Work, Human Services, Nursing or related field or equivalent in work experience. Experience in human services field. Previous experience with case management preferred. Computer skills required.

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Page 4

SAMPAN

December 3, 2010

Quincy News

Mayor’s Asian American Advisory Committee connecting Asian residents with Quincy for three years

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Committee member Betty Yau said, “We’ve been meeting since November 2007. It’s really wonderful that we keep up this monthly meeting.”

The committee has helped promote a cleaner and greener Quincy, worked to create the Autumn Moon Festivals in Quincy, encouraged Asians to vote in elections, and has also started a Mandarin language program to bridge the Chinese speaking and English speaking communities of Quincy. Recently the committee has also worked to create surveys to better understand the experiences of Asian business owners and has distributed bilingual service handbooks that aid Asians in navigating the city of Quincy’s resources.

Since the committee began distributing the 2010 Service Handbook, the “Department of Public Works is receiving more calls from Asians,” according to Yau.

The Mayor’s Asian American Advisory Committee will continue to work on “moving the Asian Community into the Quincy Community” in the year ahead.

Natalie Ornell is a Sampan correspondent.
Littering
By Vivian Wu, a 12th grader at the Josiah Quincy School

Step outside and take a look around your community. What is the first thing you notice? The building across the street? Cars? People walking by? It seems that the majority of the human population is occupied with their wants instead of their needs. When you take a step outside, the first thing you should notice is the trash that is literally everywhere—no matter where you go, trash is bound to be seen.

Tossing rubbish at any place other than a trashcan is simply the act of littering. The word itself may not bear the burden of what it truly is. People must know that littering precedes all sorts of issues, so they must take action to help save the Earth now. Everyone can contribute by simply recycling reusable products and disposing of garbage in the trashcan. This is not a challenging request, so let’s start taking action for the Earth, for your community, and for yourself.

The problem with the majority of humans is that they do not think about the future enough. People must know that littering precedes all sorts of issues, so they must take action to help save the Earth now. Everyone can contribute by simply recycling reusable products and disposing of garbage in the trashcan. This is not a challenging request, so let’s start taking action for the Earth, for your community, and for yourself.

Littering contributes to global warming and global warming is a major issue that is quickly growing to become one of the major threats to continued life on Earth. One may think that throwing out one piece of trash is not a big deal, but multiply that by hundreds or maybe even thousands and consider again.

The Earth, for your community, and for the future enough. People must know that littering is abusive yet they choose to ignore that fact.

China Town is sadly contaminated with an immense amount of trash: cigarettes, paper, plastic bags, plastic bottles, etc. Regardless of the existence of trashcans, people are still thoughtlessly tossing garbage everywhere. No matter what kinds of methods are used to prevent further pollution, the issue still exists. Is throwing trash properly in the trash can difficult? Is harming the Earth not worrisome? Is living in a healthy environment not important? These questions are often neglected, leaving others no choice but to continue living in a polluted community.

It is ridiculous that organizations repeatedly propose solutions to littering yet a majority of them choose not to follow or even attempt to follow these rules. It is also very frustrating to see pedestrians constantly litter. Those guilty bunch are the ones who are not only endangering the earth, but other living things like animals and themselves. Pollution contributes to global warming and global warming is a major issue that is quickly growing to become one of the major threats to continued life on Earth. One may think that throwing out one piece of trash is not a big deal, but multiply that by hundreds or maybe even thousands and consider again.

Many Massachusetts companies and Fortune 500 companies have already taken advantage of Hong Kong as a means to expand business into China, according to Chan.

She noted also that Hong Kong is the largest Remmichi trade settlement Center for China, handling 75% of China’s global cross-border trade.

The influx of RMB businesses in Hong Kong will “benefit not just the large companies raising funds, the financial houses and asset management companies, law firms and accounting firms in Hong Kong, but also all companies using RMB for their business transactions and investors wishing to benefit from this increasingly important currency,” Chan said.

Chan outlined the business opportunities Hong Kong offers, noting that Hong Kong’s tax rates are among the lowest in the world, with no sales tax and capital gains tax and that Hong Kong remains a free and open society.
Learning about prostate cancer

The prostate is a small gland found only in men. A normal prostate is about the size of a walnut. The prostate sits below the bladder. There is a hole in the prostate through which urine passes. A tube called the urethra carries urine from the bladder though the penis and out of the body.

Located near the prostate are the nerves, blood vessels and muscles needed to achieve an erection and to control bladder function.

The prostate produces part of the fluid that makes up semen. The prostate normally gets bigger as men grow older. The growth of the prostate depends on the male sex hormone, testosterone, which is made by the testes.

The growing prostate makes the urethra narrower and this can change urinary patterns. This enlargement is called benign prostate enlargement. This is not cancer. Benign prostate enlargement usually begins on the outer surface of the prostate. It may cause the following symptoms:

- need to urinate more often, especially at night;
- an urgent need to urinate;
- difficulty starting to urinate, leaking or dribbling after urinating.

Prostate cancer develops when the cells in the prostate gland grow more quickly than in a normal prostate, forming a malignant lump or tumor.

Most prostate cancers grow slower than other types of cancer. Early (or localized) prostate cancer is growth that has not spread beyond the prostate. Some prostate cancers may spread to other parts of the body, such as the bones and lymph nodes. This is called advanced prostate cancer.

Causes

While the causes of prostate cancer are unknown, fatty foods are believed to play a role. The chance of developing prostate cancer increases:

- As you get older. More than two-thirds (70%) of all new prostate cancers are found in men over the age of 65;
- If your father or brother has had prostate cancer.

Symptoms

Early prostate cancer rarely has symptoms. This is because the cancer is not large enough to put pressure on the urethra.

If the cancer grows and spreads beyond the prostate (advanced prostate cancer), it may cause the following problems:

- pain or burning when urinating;
- pain during ejaculation;
- blood in the urine;
- pain in the lower back, hips or upper thighs.

These symptoms are common to many conditions and may not be advanced prostate cancer. If you are concerned, see your doctor.

Free Dental Screening Offered

January 05, 2011
4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Senior Dental Students Seeking Patients for Licensure Exam

Who might qualify? People with one or all of the following:

- Small Cavities
- Tartar (Calculus)
- Periodontal (Gum) Disease

People who have not been to the dentist in several years or more

Please contact Janet Markell at 617-636-0373 to schedule an appointment

Space is limited

Tufts University School of Dental Medicine is located at 1 Kneeland Street
Boston, MA 02111

Winter Valley Residences for the Elderly, Inc.

Winter Valley Residences for the Elderly, Inc., a 160-unit complex financed by HUD for those 62 or older and physically disabled, is now accepting applications.

Winter Valley Residences has studios, one and two bedroom and barrier free units. They are owned and managed by Milton Residences for the Elderly, Inc., 600 Canton Avenue, Milton, MA 02186

Contact: Sharon Williams, Manager
617-698-3005

Equal Housing Opportunity

New Seoul BBQ Buffet
(Korean BBQ Buffet)

$29.99—$24.99 (Mon - Fri, Sat, Sun BBQ Grill)
$13.99—$11.99 (Mon - Fri Lunch)

- All you can eat authentic Korean BBQ Buffet located in Canton, MA
- 6,000 Sq/ft Dining Room
- Spacious Parking lot

Lunch Buffet
- Mon - Fri Only ( $11.99 )
- 3 Meats Included (Marinated Beef, Pork, & Chicken)

Meat Buffet
- Weekly Dinner & All day weekends ( $24.99 )
- Large selection of fresh meat and seafood to grill

Business Hour
Mon - Fri
Lunch: 11:30 am - 2:30 pm
Dinner: 5:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Sat - Sun
Lunch: 11:30 am - 10:00 pm
Dinner: 11:30 am - 10:00 pm

Location:
100 Washington St, Canton, MA

Contact:
781- 828 - 8989

Article funded through the Asian Health Initiative of Tufts Medical Center

WINTER VALLEY RESIDENCES FOR THE ELDERLY, INC.

The prostate is a small gland found only in men.

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Article funded through the Asian Health Initiative of Tufts Medical Center
Can you give us a brief history of Wah Lum Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy?

Du: I had a family with three children who asked me three times over several years to teach their children kung fu privately. They didn’t want to take them to Chinatown. After I gave birth to my son, I told them I would teach them but they would have to do it in my driveway. My driveway was the birthplace of the Academy. In September 2004, I began teaching with 9 students and soon loved having students of my own. I was encouraged to open my own school and I pursued the idea and found the perfect location on Ferry St. in Malden. The Wah Lum Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy was officially established in August 2006. The school was always like a hobby. My work at the Red Cross and other community work was my main mental and physical engagements. The Academy grew and grew without my serious marketing and outreach. My own kung fu and tai chi family in Malden became more and more important to me. Due to many changes at Red Cross, I finally resigned after 8 very rewarding and successful years to devote more mental and physical time at the Academy. I thoroughly enjoy teaching and learning kung fu and tai chi. Through the Academy, I have found many ways to serve the communities in non-martial art activities. I have been very content.

What is your current role?

Du: I am the Founder and Chief Instructor of the Wah Lum Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy—the school’s sifu.

Why was Malden chosen to be the home for the school?

Du: My hometown has been Malden and my vision was to serve my home community. Sifu Bob Rosen was kind enough to give me permission to establish the school was always like a hobby. My work at the Red Cross and other community work was my main mental and physical engagements. The Academy grew and grew without my serious marketing and outreach. My own kung fu and tai chi family in Malden became more and more important to me. Due to many changes at Red Cross, I finally resigned after 8 very rewarding and successful years to devote more mental and physical time at the Academy. I thoroughly enjoy teaching and learning kung fu and tai chi. Through the Academy, I have found many ways to serve the communities in non-martial art activities. I have been very content.

Size and demographics of the student body?

Du: The Academy has a membership of more than 100 students, of which a handful is my nephews and nieces. About 65% of the student body is youth. The students’ ages range from 3 to 80 plus. We are quite racially diverse as the Malden community is one of the most diverse cities in the state. The majority of the student body comes from Malden but many are also from Everett, Chelsea, Winthrop, Boston, Arlington, Salem, Medford, Melrose, Pittsburg, Lynn, Revere, Quincy, and Braintree.

How are the youths drawn to the school?

Du: Firstly, the school is located at a very visible intersection near the center of town so many parents drove by and saw us. But for many young people, it’s really by word of mouth where their friends or relatives are a member of the school and they invited them to try out. For many, the parents enrolled them so they can exercise more and maintain healthy body weight. It’s great to see these students tone up and gain nice muscles, flexibility, and ‘appealing’ body structures.

The culture of the Academy is very traditional and family-oriented. The main feel of the school is basically fun and respectful hard work where individuals of all ages either bring or gain self-motivation to do their best and to challenge themselves physically and mentally. In the process, lots of sweat, laughter, community involvement, and great potentially lifelong friendships emerge. It’s really a family. We care about, and take care of, one another.

How has Malden changed over the years?

Du: Malden has become more and more diverse over the years. The school system is the most diverse public school district in the state, with a high population of Asian Americans. Just yesterday, I saw a McDonald’s ad in Malden in Chinese! I was pleasantly surprised. The city has a great feel and the civic organizations are very receptive and outreaching to the diverse communities within Malden. I feel that young working professionals actually stay in Malden and others move into the city for its convenient location of being close to Boston and for the MBTA Orange Line. Unfortunately, city government still remains predominantly white, males. Malden still has its many areas for growth and positive change. On a whole, it’s a city that has great people, neighborhoods, organizations, and caring citizens.

What resources are available for new Chinese immigrants who reside in Malden?

Du: I say there are some resources but not enough. There are: Asian Spectrum that produces the bilingual/Chinese local cable programs to inform the Chinese community about what’s going on and promote and address certain social and health issues; Chinese Culture Connections that has cultural and social services to involve kids in culture and languages; Immigrant Learning Center for ESL classes, opened to all groups; City’s Parent Information Center that has Chinese language representation; Malden’s Great Wall providing mental health services for Asian American males among other programs; MAPAC, Malden High School has several Asian American/Chinese teachers and staff who can help new immigrant students to adjust into school life, and Cambridge Heath Alliance that has been conducting various health initiatives to help address Asian American health issues. Despite the above, of course, it’s still not enough. I feel that social services that many organizations in Boston Chinatown have been providing for decades can extend their work into Malden, such as those of AACCA, CPA, AAW, and ACDC to just name a few. I truly hope we will find creative ways to make resources and services even more accessible to the Asian American residents of Malden.
Mount Hope Cemetery: Restoring history

By Diana Li

If you visit the Chinese Immigrant Memorial at Mount Hope Cemetery in Mattapan, Mass, you will notice that a lot of the headstones are in poor condition. This is due to aging, but it is also because of vandalism and lack of care for many years. Many of these headstones belong to the Chinese immigrants that created the Chinatown that we are able to enjoy today.

The first Chinese settlers of Boston Chinatown came from San Francisco, Ca, to North Adams, MA around the 1870s. These settlers consisted of about 75 workers who started working at the Sampson Shoe Factory in North Adams and later traveled to Boston. Chinese laundries and Chinese restaurants were soon established along Harrison Avenue. Over time, Chinatown slowly began to evolve to include many other infamous streets such as Kneeland Street and Hudson Street.

Like many immigrants, the Chinese Settlers came to the United States for a better life for themselves and their family. Unfortunately, many of the early settlers were bachelors who did not have families in the United States nor were they able to have a family before they deceased. Many of these settlers that passed away were buried in Mount Hope.

Without family members, these headstones remained in Mount Hope Cemetery for decades without proper care. Perhaps, it was fate for us to keep our history when the cemetery experienced financial burden which led the city to contact the Chinese Historical Society of New England (CHSNE) in 1989. And in 1992, when The Chinese Historical Society of New England (CHSNE) was established, they began the project to restore history. CHSNE and along with many efforts of volunteers had started a project in hopes to restore these burial grounds, build a memorial alter, and find a way to restore the damaged tombstones. With ambition and hard work, CHSNE and volunteers alike were able to raise an amazing amount of money.

On March 2007, the Chinese Immigrant Memorial was complete. Although the Chinese Immigrant Memorial is complete, many efforts are still involved in this project. Every year, a group of students from UMass Boston (UMB), led by Peter Kiang, Director of the Asian American Studies Program at UMB and co-president of CHSNE, try to maintain and clean the Chinese Immigrant Memorial. In addition, since the tombstones are privately owned by the descendants of the Chinese settlers, it is considered private property. Currently, efforts are being made to contact these descendants. However, if efforts have been made but failed, these tombstones could be replaced.

For more information or if you would like to volunteer, please contact CHSNE: (617)338-4339 or info@chsne.org.

Chinese Immigrant Memorial. (Photo by Diana Li)

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SAMPAN is seeking community correspondents, photographers, translators and columnists to help us provide coverage of major events and happenings in the Asian American community in Metro Boston. We are especially seeking Malden and Quincy correspondents to help us stay connected with these communities. Ideal candidates should have an interest in writing or reporting. We welcome students, working professionals, stay-at-home parents, retirees and all others who are interested in Asian-American affairs.

Anyone interested in contributing to SAMPAN should e-mail recruit@sampan.org.