Chinatown's hospitality during times of change

In 1992, the began working as the executive producer and host for Boston Chinese Radio Program (BCR), a Cantonese radio show based in Quincy which covered Asian affairs. During those fourteen years working on the show, she was responsible for market research, marketing, planning and management. "I didn't choose to work in radio as it was not the opportunity came and I grabbed it," she said. After no longer involved in radio, You found a new passion in community broadcasting. She is the executive producer of the TV show Eye on Quincy; a mainly Cantonese language program launched in 2009 which airs on the first and third Monday of every month through Quincy Access Television (QATV). The show aims to create an interactive and immediate communication platform and also to promote civic engagement and critical thinking on pressing social issues. She said that you work experience working with the radio show helped her in her role as executive producer of Eye on Quincy. She noted that the challenge of the TV show is how to "retain it" and "successfully introduce the concept to the City."

You has worked on developing bilingual material, a service booklet with information about voting, a "good neighbor handbook" translated in Chinese and other materials that inform Quincy's growing Asian community. "Information is power. To empower is to share power. Providing the information is an empowerment process. We try to provide information," she said.

After many people had approached her with questions on how to reach out to a growing Asian population, You launched You's Marketing Services in 1994 where she now serves as principal consultant, a firm which according to www.boston-chinatown.org, has "helped companies tap into Boston's Asian consumer base."

Her website informs potential clients that "Asian American is the fastest growing minority group in the United States" and that "Visual components can be used broadly as a means of overcoming language barriers." Some of her clients have included Tufts Medical Center, Partners Healthcare, Mass Electric/National Grid, and Quincy Asian Resources, Inc.

You said that today she is "still an activist but in a different way" and that the focus is working on "ESL classes, citizenship classes, and survival skills" and getting the word out by "producing a good media outlet."

She said that she has seen great improvements in Quincy during the last couple decades, citing both voter registration and bilingual candidate forums as examples.

You said, ""The language separates us; it takes a lifetime to learn English, but eventually we can have one community."

She added, ""If I had the opportunity to do everything over again, I would do the same thing. I would say 'yes' to the radio program and say 'yes' to providing basic services.""

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Dreams will defy recession

By Samuel Tsoi

Record unemployment, cynical public discourse, and partisan gridlock have curtailed already-challenging prospects for comprehensive immigration reform during these past two years. President Obama marked the midway point of his first term by lamenting the defeat of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act) in the US Senate. He should be disappointed. Despite an unexpected level of bipartisanship—especially from civil rights (repealing the ban for gays to serve in the military), to global security (nuclear disarmament treaty with Russia) that surfaced during the last few weeks of Congress, the nation missed another critical opportunity to invest in talented young people who are ready to serve our national interests and rejuvenate our economy.

Passed in the House, the DREAM Act was blocked by a majority of Republicans (some were early co-sponsors) and a handful of spineless Democrats. The decade-old DREAM Act would have provided qualified undocumented US high school students who are ready to serve this country as students and young soldiers. Among other provisions, the DREAM Act would have granted DREAM Act beneficiaries a pathway to permanent residency for undocumented students of individuals with no criminal background or conviction. Mr. Obama has the power to realize that an enforcement- and border-focused strategy to bolster support toward the 11 million undocumented immigrants has not borne fruit. Mr. Obama has so far deported more immigrants than his predecessor. His push for flawed programs such as “Secure Communities” is also counterproductive in screening out dangerous criminals from talented migrant youth, since Homeland Security’s own data shows more than half of all detainees via the program are of individuals with no criminal background or conviction. Mr. Obama has the power to significantly limit the harassment of otherwise law-abiding immigrants, and redirect federal power toward curbing violent crimes, trafficking and other security threats.

Second, Massachusetts can become a bellwether state for immigrant integration. Governor Patrick promises to be. As the Census data indicate, immigrants play a disproportionately large role in the workforce, and are growing beyond state and urban gateways. Moreover, immigrants are starting businesses, creating jobs, and revitalizing Main Streets. State and municipal law enforcement can ensure communities of all ages and origins can feel safe to report serious crimes such as human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault and workplace abuses—regardless of immigration status. A fiscally strapped Commonwealth need not take on immigration enforcement roles while jeopardizing public safety by breaching distrust between the police and immigrant communities.

Third, we must invest in our young people on the state level. In Georgia, a recent law banned undocumented students from its most popular public universities. Conversely, California’s Supreme Court recently ruled unani mously to protect its in-state tuition policy (which 10 other states including Texas already uphold). Massachusetts can join states such as Texas and California, which have benefited from the tuition revenue and a better educated population, to allow undocumented graduates of its high schools to pay the in-state rate at public colleges and universities (not to be confused with receiving subsidies/scholarships). This is not only consistent with the spirit of the DREAM Act and Plyler v. Doe, a 1982 Supreme Court ruling that guaranteed public K-12 education for undocumented children, but it will also add $2.5 million in revenue per year for the state by the most conservative estimates. (Mass. Taxpayers Foundation)

Only innovative, sensible and smart policies can fuel our Commonwealth and nation toward a full economic recovery—not protectionist and mean-spirited political posturing. Jobs will return, and America can prosper again. To that end, Massachusetts must provide flexible and accountable English Language Learner instruction in the K-12 level, and afford some of those students a more affordable way to earn a college degree.

Education, the primary avenue for upward mobility and realization of individual capabilities, has always been at the heart of the American Dream. Generations of immigrants before crossed great lengths to offer their children a better life that they can only dream of. This next generation, in turn, add to America’s promise and success. In Massachusetts, generations of immigrants have brought and continue to bring much-needed entrepreneurial, creative and earnest energies to propel the state toward leadership in innovation and economic growth. Recessions are always opportune times to reinvest in education and renew the commitment to our youth. Let us work towards realizing the promise for the next generation of American Dreamers.

Samuel Tsoi is a policy associate at Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition.
Diabetes in pregnancy – gestational diabetes

What is it?
Gestational diabetes is a particular type of diabetes which some women develop during pregnancy. It usually disappears after the birth, and does not mean that the baby will be born with diabetes.

Who is affected?
Although it happens to women from all communities, it is especially common among women of Asian, Middle Eastern, Filipino or Pacific Island origin, and is increasing.

What causes gestational diabetes?
Gestational diabetes is caused by hormonal changes in pregnancy which can change the body’s ability to use a substance called insulin. Insulin is important because it helps keep blood sugar at a healthy level. Whilst all women undergo hormonal changes, only some women develop gestational diabetes.

Why is it a problem if a woman develops gestational diabetes?
Although gestational diabetes usually goes away after the birth (when hormone levels return to normal), it still needs to be taken seriously.

The main concern is that it can increase the baby’s weight, and have other health effects on the unborn baby.

- If the baby becomes very large (four kilos or more) it may be necessary for the woman to have a Caesarian delivery, or for the doctor to induce the birth a little earlier, before the baby grows too big. But this can usually be avoided.

- Women who develop gestational diabetes have a greater risk of developing Type II diabetes later on.

Type II Diabetes, which is increasingly common in people over the age of 40, is a chronic disease which has to be carefully managed with healthy eating and regular physical activity. Sometimes long term medication is also needed. If Type II diabetes is not controlled it can cause serious health problems including heart and kidney disease, and eye problems.

What do pregnant women need to do?
During pregnancy women need a number of health checks, including a blood test to check blood sugar levels at around 28 weeks of pregnancy. If you’re not sure if you have had gestational diabetes in a previous pregnancy if you have a family history of gestational diabetes or diabetes if you have given birth to a baby weighing four kilos or over.

What if a pregnant woman is found to have gestational diabetes?
It can be managed by -changes to the diet -physical activity -regular blood sugar checks – it’s important for a woman to regularly check her blood sugar herself at home, to make sure it stays at a normal level. The hospital will usually lend her a special blood sugar monitor to use during her pregnancy -ongoing regular checking of blood sugar level - although the problem disappears after birth, women who have had gestational diabetes need to have their blood sugar levels checked six to eight weeks after delivery, and then at regular intervals every two years - in some cases, medication may be needed. It’s very easy for mothers to become so busy with looking after their new babies and the rest of the family, that they overlook their own health needs – but these tests are very important for a woman’s future health.

Can you reduce the risk of developing gestational diabetes?
People who stay at a healthy weight and are physically active are less likely to develop both gestational diabetes and Type II diabetes.

**All must be native speakers of Mandarin and fluent in English.**

**Qualifications/Requirements:**
- Infant, Toddler, Pre-school Teachers: 4 ECE courses (AS degree preferred), 1 year experience and ECE certification. $18,000 – $25,000
- Toddler Lead Teacher: Associates Degree in ECE (BS preferred), 3 years experience and ECE certification. $28,000 – $36,000

**Salary:** commensurate with experience and education. Full benefits package.

**To apply:** send resume and cover letter by to: HR Department Asian American Civic Association 87 Tyler St, 3rd Floor Boston, MA 02114 Email: hr@aacaboston.org

AACA is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Opening Doors to Opportunity

By J. Keith Motley, PhD, UMass Boston Chancellor

For many people, the holiday season is a time for reflection, a time to count their blessings, review the year that has gone by, and think about the possibilities that the New Year will bring.

As chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Boston, I always find this season particularly rewarding. I reflect on my daily interactions with our students, and I’m heartened by their stories, their commitment to building better lives for themselves through education. I’m humbled when I recall my interactions with our devoted staff and our faculty’s dedication to teaching and learning, their devotion to research that provides opportunities for student involvement, and their commitment to engaging with our surrounding communities and beyond.

I was particularly mindful of this when the university recently announced and celebrated a new $13.7 million grant to extend our partnership with the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center. This grant – the National Institutes of Health evaluated our proposal as the nation’s best – allows us to continue important research in cancer treatment while addressing health disparities in minority populations and increasing community outreach and education. From its beginning, UMass Boston has pledged that it will serve its communities’ needs beyond education, forge ties between research and service, and open doors for populations who have been denied these opportunities.

Equally important, UMass Boston’s partnership with the world-renowned Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center opens doors to opportunities for hands-on cancer-focused training, outreach, and research for our minority students, post-doctoral fellows, nursing PhD students, and faculty. For example, Judith Alonzo, a senior biochemistry major, recently participated in the Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (CURE) program, which introduced her to the world of cancer research by placing her in a laboratory at Dana-Farber for a year.

Another former student, Lisa Barros, graduated from our Urban Scholars pre-collegiate program and participated in the CURE program four years ago while earning a nursing degree. She is now a staff nurse at Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Hematology/Oncology Bone Marrow Transplant unit.

These are just two examples of the many opportunities we strive to provide for our students here at UMass Boston, whether they are in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, College of Science and Mathematics, or any of our other six colleges and graduate schools. We believe that the best education happens not only in the classroom, but also in the hospitals, schools, nonprofits, and businesses where our students are getting hands-on experience.

At UMass Boston we have a commitment to being the student-centered urban public research university of the 21st century. And looking back at the past year, I would say we are on course.

I encourage you to visit www.umb.edu for more information.

Toddler Lead Teacher, INFANT AND PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS

Primary Duties and Responsibilities:
Care for children utilizing Reggio Emilia approach in a Mandarin Immersion setting.

QUALIFICATIONS/REQUIREMENTS:
- Toddler Lead Teacher: Associates Degree in ECE (BS preferred), 3 years experience and ECE certification. $28,000 – $36,000
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www.umb.edu
By Sharlène Desire

I slipped, she whimpered, help me. He crushed and reached for her hand.

Give me your hand, I’ll pull you up.

Diamond tried to let go, but felt she slipping immediately. I can’t, I'll fall.

No, you won’t.

He gripped her hand from the branch and clasped it tight. But now he was slipping too. He pulled with his little seven-year-old muscles as much as he could to continue to slip. His efforts were futile; he didn’t have the strength to pull her up. Diamond noticed.

Dami, you’ve got to let me go, Di said, tears dripping down her caramel face. Her best friend stared at her in incredulously.

Are you crazy? I can’t let you fall! Dami said to her.

You’ll die, Diamond. I can’t—He couldn’t finish, he was slipping again. The dirt was sliding from beneath his knees. He fought her, holding tighter than ever.

Dami, if you don’t let me go, we’re both going to die. I won’t let you die on account of me. Let me go, please!

She was hysterical now. Tears poured from her eyes like rivers.

I have to. I’m sorry, Dami, I’m sorry. Tell my mom and my sister I’m sorry. She clasped it tight. But now he was slipping too.

I can’t. I’ll fall.

So what did you trade? Di asked.

Who, Dami? Diamond asked. And so Dami told her the whole story, for she seemed to forget everything: the fight with her mom, the cliff, everything.

What’s that? Di asked.

I don’t know, but I’m so happy you’re alive! He reached out to hug her. An invisible wall seemed to slam into him. He tried to touch DI’s shoulder, but again the wall stopped him.

What’s the matter? Di asked. She tried to touch him but the wall blocked her too. Her eyes widened in fear. Dami, what’s going on?

It’s what Lilith took! I can’t touch you!

Di, it’s what Lilith took! I can’t touch you! I’m a fairy, of course! Didn’t you notice the wings?

No, No. Diamond. I can’t. I won’t. But he knew she was telling the truth. He couldn’t hold on much longer. She began pulling her fingers from his and slid from his face as well. Stop! Don’t!

I have to. I’m sorry, Dami, I’m sorry. Tell my mom and my sister I’m sorry. She clasped it tight. But now he was slipping too.

Dami said Di, Who are you talking to Damion?

But what did you take? Damion called.

Fine, said Lilith. She thrust out her tiny hand.

Anything at all?

I have to. I’m sorry Dami, I’m sorry. Tell my mom and my sister I’m sorry. Her hands slipped from his and she went falling to the ground.

She was hysterical now. Tears poured from her eyes like rivers.

I have to. I’m sorry, Dami, I’m sorry. Tell my mom and my sister I’m sorry. She clasped it tight. But now he was slipping too.

I can’t. I’ll fall.

No you won’t. He pried her hand from the branch and clasped it tight. But now he was slipping too. He pulled with his little seven-year-old muscles as much as he could to continue to slip. His efforts were futile; he didn’t have the strength to pull her up. Diamond noticed.

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And it was confirmed. For when they held their hands up to each other three fingers stood between their palms.

After the shock, both children made their way back to the village where their anxious parents waited. They told the tale to incredulous ears but proved it simply by trying to touch. No answer could be given about Diamond and Dami’s predicament. And after a while it was simply accepted that Diamond and her best friend Damion were physically unable to touch. And so begins our story.
HOSPITALITY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

darin.

Over the years, this trend can be seen in the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church (BCEC). In addition to Cantonese and English ministries, BCEC houses a vibrant Mandarin ministry that primarily serves newer immi-
migrants, foreign students, and the elderly in Chinatown. “It is difficult for singles and young families to find housing in China-
town... and many new immigrants do not
want to live in Chinatown due to security and
pricing issues,” said BCEC Mandarin minis-
try’s Andy Su.

In the past, Mandarin-speaking immi-
grants from Mainland China or Taiwan came
to Boston through the 1965 Hart-Celler Im-
migration Act, which attracted immigrants
with specific technical skills. Many of those
skilled immigrants settled in the suburbs and
in universities along the high-tech belt. As
more Mandarin speakers arrive today with
limited English skills and connections with
more-established Chinatown residents, it is
difficult for them to find housing initially.

Oftentimes, rental units in Chinatown are
filled through word of mouth. Landlords of
housing buildings, many of which have
been family-owned for generations, prefer
continuing over screening new potential
residents. Moreover, affordable units such
as those at Tai Tung Village and Mass Pike
Towers have very low turnover rates. “As
immigration quotas expanded in the recent
years, options are fading [for recent low-
income immigrants]. Many are settling in
South Boston, Dorchester, Malden, Quincy,
and Brighton,” said Richard Chin, Director of
Economic Development at the YMAA.

Some immigrants do eventually become
homeowners in areas with competitive
schools. As estimated by a study by UMass
Boston, approximately one in six householders
in Massachusetts is headed by a person of
color, a two-fold increase within the past two
decades. From 1990 to 2000, homeownership
saw a tremendous increase among mi-
nority groups.

Owning a home is often touted as an
anchor for the middle class. During the post-
World War II era, the Federal Housing Au-
thority instituted the unprecedented 30-year
10-percent down-mortgage, still the most
common today, which led many families to
ward homeownership.

Dreams of homeownership have long
attracted immigrants. However, this vehicle
towards financial stability and assimilation
was largely unavailable to many minorities
and immigrants through decades of discrimi-
natory practices such as redlining and preda-
tory lending, leaving void in the tax base
in many urban centers. Thus, where you live
does determine your education and social
mobility.

Recent patterns of urban renewal, tran-
sit-oriented developments and gentrification
bring a new set of challenges for immigrants.
In many ways, Chinatown is at the cross-
section, as symbolized by such luxury develop-
ments as the Archstone and W Hotel.
Moreover, the real estate market, in the
form of speculative and risky subprime
loans, was a main instigator of nightmares
for many households and triggered the cur-
rent global financial crisis.

Relative to other groups, Chinese home-
owners have not been as devastated by fore-
closures. “If there were foreclosures among
Chinese homeowners, it would have hap-
pened a year ago,” said Sue Cheng, manager
at Chinatown’s Sun Mortgage, which primar-
ily serves Mandarin and Cantonese clients. “I
have never introduced a subprime mortgage
to my clients,” she said. “Also, since there is
a strong cultural value for saving, many Chi-
nese families try their best not to foreclose,
plus the fact that they usually have at least
20 percent down payment and help from
extended family.”

Despite avoiding foreclosures, the ripple
effects of the economic downturn have led
to difficulty in paying mortgages in the midst
of job loss and sluggish business. It is also
dearer for immigrant families to qualify for
a mortgage. “Because of tightening lend-
ing guidelines, banks are becoming extreme-
ly cautious in verifying income, regardless of
down payment,” Cheng pointed out.

Meanwhile, Chinatown continues to un-
dergo urban renewal. Even as communities
such as Quincy and Malden become subur-
ban hubs, Chinatown is still unmatched as
the center for Chinese immigrants in terms
of access to affordable housing, transporta-
tion, jobs, services and gathering spaces.
Between the limited century-old brick
tenements and public housing, the options
are few. Mixed-income units, spearheaded
by the Asian Community Development Corpora-
tion, such as the Metropolitan with 115 af-
fordable units and future mixed-income de-
velopments on Parcel 24 on Hudson St. hope
to keep Chinatown a place where immigrants
can live, gather, in-
teract and be proud
of. Future luxury
apartments such as
the $195 million
Kingston Street’s
Dainty Dot devel-
opment will also
result in affordable
rental units devel-
opments elsewhere
in the neighbor-
hood. One such
fully affordable
development with up to
200 units is underway
between Oxford Street
and Ping On Alley, lead
by Chinatown
Economic Develop-
ment Council.

Even as afford-
able units attract
low-income fami-
lies from various
erthnic groups and
luxury condos deter
low-income immi-
grants, Chinatown
remains one of the
few remaining eth-
nic neighborhoods
in Boston. With the
demographics and cultural dynamics contin-
ually shifting and the current economy hurt-
ing many low-income families, it is crucial for
Chinatown to balance the commercial and
the residential, renewal and affordability.

From the concentration of faith commu-
nities and cultural associations to businesses
and community service providers, the neigh-
borhood needs to expand its capacity as a
gateway toward assimilation and success in
order to sustain the dynamism, ingenuity
and perseverance of many immigrants in the
uncertain times ahead.

Samuel Tox is a Sampan correspondent.
Beijing, continued from page 1.

...art by how much money it will make, not by how good it is." Though there is international interest in Chinese contemporary art, only the artists who become famous truly get international exposure. "The Western galleries that come here are interested in Chinese contemporary art, but it is also clear that by highlighting a specific trend in Chinese art, the international art world has disenfranchised other aspects. The pressing problems of the Beijing contemporary art scene’s development, including gallery infrastructure and critical presence, have been ignored. These are problems that must be confronted in the pursuit of independence for Chinese contemporary art.

Kyle Chayka is a Sampan correspondent.