Vol. XXXX June 24 - July 7, 2011

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Giant tents were put up on a sunny Father's Day for the largest outdoor worship service in Chinatown. Over 1500 congregants of the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church (BCEC) celebrated its fiftieth anniversary on the basketball courts adjacent to the Quincy Upper School. Adult and children choirs, a string ensemble and a band filled praise music through the balloon-lined block. "We have seen many challenges and witnessed tremendous blessings since our humble beginnings," Lee added. "At State Street, we believe that the best way to positively impact our comm

CONTINUED PAGE 3

By Kane Carpenter

The Harvard Veritas dragon boat team just before they head off onto the Charles River for a race. (Photo by Kane Carpenter)

By Cody Yiu

June 9 – Themed "Their Courage to Be New," the Asian American Civic Association (AACA) in its 2011 Gala celebrated the courage of new immigrants, who exemplify spirit and resilience. Held at the historic Boston Park Plaza Hotel, the benefit successfully raised over $180,000 in one evening through corporate sponsorships, raffle ticket sales and silent auctions.

AACA, publisher of the Sampan, was founded in 1967 as the Chinese American Civic Association (CACIA). As its clientele expanded beyond just Chinese immigrants, in 1992, the organization was renamed the Asian American Civic Association to better reflect its wider role in supporting immigrants and refugees from across Asia. Today, AACA serves a global clientele, which includes immigrants and refugees from Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. The mission of AACA is to provide education, occupational training and social services to limited English-speaking and economically disadvantaged people to enable them to realize lasting economic self-sufficiency.

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BCEC celebrates 50th anniversary with outdoor tri-lingual worship service. (Photo by Samuel Tsoi)

By Samuel Tsoi

Sampan Correspondent

The Harvard Veritas dragon boat team just before they head off onto the Charles River for a race. (Photo by Kane Carpenter)

AACA Celebrate the Courage of Immigrants at 2011 Gala

By Cody Yiu

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BCEC Celebrates 50 Years of Good News

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Sampan Correspondent

The Harvard Veritas dragon boat team just before they head off onto the Charles River for a race. (Photo by Kane Carpenter)

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On a day marred by cloudy, chilly weather, hundreds of spectators crowded the banks of the Charles River to catch a glimpse of the performers. Lota some of the food, and cheer for their favorite teams in the dragon boat races on Sunday, June 12.

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Impact Day at AACA

A volunteer conducted a mock interview with an AACA student. (Photo by Cody Yiu)

By Cody Yiu

On the early morning on June 10th, 17 volunteers from Deloitte & Touche LLP arrived at the Asian American Civic Association (AACA) in Chinatown. Their mission was to put on a blue shirt and dedicate their whole day to community service. All of them got to be painters for one day, white-washing AACA’s classrooms. Having consultants and accounts listed as their day jobs, these Deloitte & Touche employees were surprisingly hands-on when it came to handling those paint brushes and rollers. Several volunteers also conducted mock interviews with students from AACA’s office skills training program, the facilities maintenance job training program, and employment center.

“The whole firm comes together for one day every June to be actively engaged in community service. This year, our time at AACA has been very interesting as we spent time conducting mock interviews and painting classrooms. We look forward to coming back to AACA again next year!” Madhur Dabeeru, class of 2011, said.

A newly created project at the University of Massachusetts Boston, named Asian American Student Success Program, seeks to integrate the educational, cultural, and linguistic expertise of faculty, staff, students, families, and local communities to build, assess, and sustain an ongoing holistic program that effectively supports the college access and persistence of Asian American students. The two specific goals of the project at UMB are: 1) To increase college access for Asian Americans who are low in income or first generation college-goers and for traditionally under-represented Asian American ethnic populations, and 2) To increase Asian American retention, persistence, course completion, and graduation rates.

This exciting project, funded by an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is committed to addressing the urgent needs of under-served, low-income and traditionally under-represented Asian American students.

For more information, contact: Dr. Patricia Nellon: 617-287-3823 or patricia.nellon@umb.edu.

CHINATOWN

Chinatown Main Street Festival
When: Saturday, June 26th, 2010
Where: Chinatown (Rose Kennedy Greenway Park, Hudson, Tyler, Harrison and Beach Streets)
Time: 10 am – 5 pm
The meeting will take place at 145 Harrison Avenue, Sackler 114W. We welcome members of EPA and conversation (12:00-2:00 PM) with some of our community partners.

Community Conversation with Dr. Chau Trinh-Shriver

Dr. Chau Trinh-Shriver, a consultant from NYU, will be in Chinatown on Tuesday, June 28th, from 9:30 to 11:30 AM. Please join us for lunch and conversation (12:00-2:00 PM) with some of our community partners.

The meeting will take place at 145 Harrison Avenue, Sackler 114W. We ask that those who plan to attend RSVP to edwaxson@tuftsmedicalcenter.edu.

Chau Trinh-Shriver, DrPH is the Director and one of the original founders of the NYU Center for the Study of Asian American Health. Dr. Trinh-Shriver is also the Director of the NYU-Health and Hospitals Corporation Clinical and Translational Science Institute’s Office of Community Engagement, a co-PI of the NYU Health Promotion and Prevention Research Center, and Assistant Professor of Research at the NYU School of Medicine.

PUBLIC SERVICE AD

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SAMPA N

A Publication of the AACA
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SAMPA N is New England’s only bimonthly bilingual English-Chinese newspaper. It is nonprofit and nonpartisan. Founded in 1972, Sampan is published by the Asian American Civic Association.

This year’s dragon boat race spectators were the Vitasoy Metro Athletics Dragon Boats from New York, who beat our teams representing the Arizona Gila Dragons, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, State Street Golden Dragons, and BCA Dragon Smoke.
Gov. Deval Patrick Makes Appearance at China Pearl

By Kane Carpenter

Sampan Correspondent

Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick made an appearance in Chinatown at an event titled, “An Evening with Gov- ernor Deval Patrick” on June 20 at Chi-na Pearl Restaurant (9 Tyler Street). More than 100 people attended the gathering, where many got the opportunity to shake hands and speak briefly with the Governor. Also arranged at the event, co-chaired by Christina Chan, Francis E. Chan, Helen Chin Schlichte, Paul W. Lee, Richard P. McBrien, Eugene Welch, Leverett Wing, Chi Chi Wu, and Michelle Wu, was a buffet dinner serving Chinese food, soft drinks, beer and wine. During his address to those in attendance, Gov. Patrick placed an emphasis on “generational responsibil- ity” as well as his stance on the “Secure Communities” or “S-Comm” scheme.

Anna Tse, former journalist and inter- preter for the evening, summed up the ambi- ence of those in attendance at the event. “Bos- ton is small,” Tse said. “But it is very political.”

A few notable members of the Chinatown community in attendance were the Chinatown Resident’s Associations’ Henry Yu, and House of Representatives member Tacky Chan. According to the event pamphlet, Gov. Patrick is “the Commonwealth’s first African-American Governor” and he “came into office with a grassroots mes- sage of hope, community, and hard work.”

BCEC CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Later, it constructed the current building in 1979 and multiplied its bilingual service into separate Cantonese and English min- istries. In 2003, it acquired a larger church building in Newton to accommodate two more services in Chinese and English. Cur- rently, programs such as elderly fellow- ships, English classes, worship services and youth programs overflow beyond its Chi- natown facilities into neighboring schools. Each Sunday, the two buildings and the rented Quincy Elementary audito- rium gather believers and visitors in six worship services offered in three lan- guages. At the anniversary, all of the con- gregations combined for a tri-lingual service, including a Mandarin-Cantonese sermon with simultaneous interpretation via conference call for English-listeners.

“We are thankful that BCEC is a place for spiritual growth for immigrants, [foreign] students, families and the next generation – reshaping our values and worldviews... to recognize its far better to give than to receive,” prayed Pastor Daniel Chan, one of the Chinese-speaking pastors. “May God continue to use BCEC to spread the Gos- pel, edify believers, and serve the needy.”

Senior Pastor Steven Chin serves with the eleven men and women on the pastoral staff and the many hundreds of lay- people who facilitate ministries and build relationships that impacted thousands of lives through the decades. He described the “evangelical” identity of BCEC, which means “proclaiming the good news” in Greek. “[The Gospel] includes both bad news and good news.” Chin said. “The bad news is that we have fallen far short before God and deserve to be punished for our sins, and the good news is that Jesus Christ paid for our debts so if we believe in him we can have a restored relationship with God.”

According to Chin, the area’s Chinese population is about 5% Christian, and its BCEC’s goal to share the good news to this population is about 5% Christian, and its BCEC’s goal to share the good news to this population is about 5% Christian, and its BCEC’s goal to share the good news to this population is about 5% Christian, and its BCEC’s goal to share the good news to this population is about 5% Christian, and its BCEC’s goal to share the good news to this population is about 5% Christian, and its BCEC’s goal to share the good news to this population is about 5% Christian, and its BCEC’s goal to share the good news to this community of New England, was honored with multiple declarations from various mem- bers of local government for his work in bi-lateral ties between the Taiwanese and American communities in New England. After an elaborate Kung Fu demon- stration by the Wah Lum Kung Fu Acad- emy, a bevy of Kuomintang (ROC) Veterans sang choral tunes to conclude the event.

Taiwan’s 100th Anniversary Celebrations Held at Josiah Quincy

By Kane Carpenter

Sampan Correspondent

The Chinese Community of New Eng- land sponsored celebrations of the 100th Anniversary of the Republic of China with a concert by professional and amateur performers alike, at the Isaiah Quincy El- ementary School on Saturday, June 11. Among the festivities, which included performances of traditional Chinese in- struments such as the Erhu, Guzheng, Pipa, and Yangqin, was a singing performance from Boston City Councilor Bill Linehan. Linehan, who arrived at 1:30pm dur- ing the preceding dessert reception where a large cake was shared amongst those in attendance, appeared jovial and sang “America the Beautiful” and the Bee gee’s classic “Massachusetts.”

The church also continues sustain- ing Asian American communities, and its members and alumni totaling $8.4 mil- lion over a three-year fulfillment period. This year BCEC members gave $18,000 toward helping AIDS victims in Africa and $27,000 to- ward helping earthquake victims in Japan. Through Chinatown’s immigrant heri- tage, the metro area’s growing and broad- ening Asian American communities, and recent and ongoing urban renewal pro- cesses, BCEC served as space to worship in culturally and linguistically relevant contexts, whether it is in a church build- ing or a school, at basketball courts or a future multi-use building. It continues to strive to outreach to next generations and all social groups, and be a holistic Chris- tian influence for many passing through Greater Boston for days, years and decades.
NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Sealed bids for MBTA Contract No. S09CN10, BLUE LINE MODERNIZATION PROJECT – ORIENT HEIGHTS STATION, EAST BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS (CLASS 1, GENERAL TRANSIT CONSTRUCTION – PROJECT VALUE $27,852,649.00) will be received by the Director of Contract Administration at the Contract Administration Office, 6th Floor, Room 6720, Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, Massachusetts, 02116-3975, until two o’clock (2:00 p.m.) on July 19, 2011. Immediately thereafter, in a designated room, the Bids will be opened and read publicly.

Work consists of the demolition and reconstruction of Orient Heights Station and associated Train Operations Building, including two above-grade platforms with canopies, all wayside and building systems, overhead catenary system relocation, installation of vertical transportation and site improvements.

This Contract is subject to a financial assistance Contract between the MBTA and the Federal Transit Administration of U.S. Department of Transportation. FTA Participation 80 percent.

Each prospective bidder proposing to bid on this project must be prequalified in accordance with the Authority’s “Procedures Governing Classification and Rating of Prospective Bidders.” Copies may be obtained from the Contract Administration Office at the above address. Requests for prequalification for this Project will not be accepted by the Authority after the tenth (10th) day preceding the date set for the opening of bids. Prequalified bidders may obtain from the Contract Administration Office a “Request for Bid Form” which must be properly filled out and submitted for approval.

Bidding documents may be obtained from the Contract Administration Office at the address above from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., beginning on June 24, 2011, Monday through Friday, at no charge. Copies of the Bidding Documents will be available in electronic format (CD). Contract Specifications shall be available in portable data file (.pdf) format and Contract Drawings shall be available in Tagged Image File (.tif) format. If requested, Bidding documents will be shipped for a fee of $25.00, made payable by check to MBTA. For overnight mail service, a completed mailing label, with an approved carrier account number (i.e. Federal Express), must be included. All bidding documents requested by check will be shipped via U.S. Postal Service. NONE OF THESE CHARGES ARE REFUNDABLE.

Bidders’ attention is directed to Appendix 1, Notice of Requirement for Affirmative Action to Insure Equal Employment Opportunity; and to Appendix 2, Supplemental Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, and Affirmative Action Program in the specifications. In addition, pursuant to the requirements of Appendix 3, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Participation Provision, Bidders must submit an assurance with their Bids that they will make sufficient and reasonable efforts to meet the stated DBE goal of 17 percent.

Bidders will affirmatively ensure that in regard to any contract entered into pursuant to this solicitation, minority and female construction contractors will be afforded full opportunity to submit Bids and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin in consideration for an award.

Bidders will be required to comply with Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Regulations and the President’s Executive Order No. 11246 and any amendments or supplements thereto. Bidders will also be required to comply with the Governor’s Executive Order No. 481, prohibiting the use of undocumented workers on State Contracts and any amendments and supplements thereto.

Authorization for the Bidders to view the site of the work on the MBTA’s property shall be obtained from the Project Manager, John Favorito, 500 Arborway, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130, 617-222-4330. The Authority will conduct an inspection tour of the site on June 29, 2011. Bidders are required to be present in front of the outbound platform at Orient Heights Station, East Boston Massachusetts, at 10:00 a.m. to participate in the tour. Bidders are advised that they should have representation at this tour as no extra visits are planned.

A predub conference will be held on June 30, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the MBTA Construction Directorate Conference Room #2, 500 Arborway, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. Any request for interpretation of the Plans and Specifications should be submitted in writing at the same time.

Bidders will be required to certify as part of their bids that they are able to furnish labor that can work in harmony with all other elements of labor employed or to be employed on the work.

This Contract is subject to Federal wage and hourly laws and minimum State wage rates as well as all other applicable labor laws.

Bidders are advised that the “Buy America” provisions of the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (Pub. L.97-424) as amended, apply to any Contract, procurement or agreement which results from this solicitation.

Bid Guaranty shall consist of a bid deposit in the amount of five (5) percent of the value of the bid, in the form of a bid bond, cash, certified check, treasurer’s or cashier’s check.

The successful Bidder shall be required to furnish a Performance Bond and a Labor and Materials Payment Bond each for the full amount of the Contract price.

The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all Bids, to waive informalities, to advertise for new Bids or proceed to do the work otherwise, as may be deemed to be in the best interests of the Authority.

This information may be viewed at the MBTA website:

http://www.mbta.com/business_center/bidding_solicitations/current_solicitations/

MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Date: June 22, 2011

By: Jeffrey B. Mullan
Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of

Richard A. Davey
General Manager of the MBTA & Rail & Transit Administrator of MassDOT
What is your need for Money?

By Michael Tow
Sampan Contributor

Do you ever feel that your grip on your money and how it affects your life is slowly spinning out of control? Many people, whether they know it or not, are letting their lack of true understanding of their relationship with money and their need for money dictate who they are. Whether it's a person living on paycheck to paycheck under a mountain of debt, or the CEO who can't slow down and smell the roses while life passes by, don't let money take hold of your life. You need to understand it, be in control of it, and the world will become much less stressful and much more fulfilling.

One of the best ways to take control and improve your financial life is to look at your financial situation first from the short term view. Their answers are usually associated with buying materialistic things with their money. I want to buy a new Cartier watch, a BMW or take an Alaskan Cruise. That's the short term view of money. What I suggest to my clients, is to do the exact opposite. Start by looking at the long term and big picture, now see the same question differently through different lens. Try it through the lens of your retirement. Surprisingly, you too will probably have a much different answer.

Many people respond that their need for money is not to buy everything they desire but it is to have financial security for their family. They also want to make sure they have enough money saved up for retirement, and if they can do both of these, then they would like to pass something to the kids to help them give an easier life.

If these goals are similar for yours, then you need to quit spending for today and start saving for tomorrow. How much should you save? Easy answer, save as much as you can. Make sure you have a will or a trust. Having a will or a trust will insure that your assets are going to the right people and can reduce taxes, probate costs, etc. so that more of your assets will go to your heirs.

Too often, we are consumed by the daily short term monetary needs, but with a change in context then hopefully it is clearer how money can be helpful for what is truly meaningful to you, and then the next steps are to make sure it happens.

The End of An Era

By Clifff Wong
Sampan Contributor

This was supposed to be an article to commemorate an era, the end of an era. The Knight’s 50th anniversary. So join me in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Knight’s. BCEC (Beacon Canton Education Center) is coincidentally celebrating its own 50th anniversary. So join me in celebration and support your local organizations. Reggie would have wanted it that way.

Banh Mi-a tasty and cheap meal!

By Anna Ing
Sampan Contributor

Go to any Asian community and you are sure to find one of the top famous Vietnamese food item besides pho (beef noodle soup) and it is the beloved banh mi (Vietnamese sandwich), which is sold at small shops, food courts, and bakeries all over. This simple Vietnamese export is a delicious and inexpensive meal for under $5, plus it blends the best of both worlds: from the French and Vietnamese together. Under French Colonialism, the Vietnamese took the French’s simple sandwiches using bread, butter and simple pate (ground liver with spices), meats or cheese into a savory feast with their twist. Overall freshness matters with making a delicious banh mi sandwich: first take a crusty French bread (using rice flour for extra crunch), then slather the condiment-mayo, fish sauce (nuoc mam), or soy sauce based sauce, then put on your desired protein: grilled pork, beef, chicken, fried egg as well as tofu or headcheese, veggies (cianatra, mint, basil, onions), chilies and pickled carrots and dailion for added crunch.

Boston’s own Chinatown has two places that sell banh mi. One is New Saigon Sandwich at 696 Washington St (between Kenosland and LaGrange Streets 617-542-6296) in Chinatown across from Dumpling Cafe. They provide eight different sandwiches from the Vietnamese Cold Cut (banh mi thit), Shredded pork (banh mi bi), Tertyaki Beef (bo xo), BBQ Beef (ho nuong), Tertyaki Chicken (go xo), Vegetarian Tofu (dau hu), Carry Chicken (ca ri ga) and Banh Mi Xiu Mai (Xiu Mai). Also there are a few box meals available if you are not in the mood for a banh mi.

One block away is 163 Vietnamese Sandwiches and Bubble Tea at 66 Har- rison Avenue (617-542-7903), which also has a similar banh mi menu. But they have also offer bun (vermicelli), spring rolls and as well as a wide vari- ety of boxed meals with a choice of rice or noodles topped with eel, bbq pork chop among a variety of tasty options. Also they have an extensive beverage menu with plenty fruit shakes (with or without bubbles (chevy tapioca pearls). At both shops, the most expensive banh mi is only $3.25 (even with tax).

Now there is a food truck called Bon Me (www.hometruck.com) that sells banh mi as well as Monday through Friday at Boston’s City Plaza from 11:30am-3pm in addition to going to places all over the city. Don’t fret, you can also go to Kam Man’s food court in Quincy or go to Allston at Pho Viet at the Super88 food court. Why not try a banh mi the next time you want something different from the ordinary ho hum peanut butter and jelly sandwich?
LOW-PRICED Home Sales in Newton and Waltham

The Towns of Natick, Newton, Waltham and Watertown are currently establishing a list of "Ready Buyers" who would be interested and income-eligible to purchase deed-restricted affordable homes in the participating towns.

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- 1 bedroom: $141,000
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Applicants will be notified of available units as they come up for sale. Studio, 1, 2 and 3-bedroom units are expected. For a pre-application and additional information contact Robyn at Watertown Community Housing 617-923-3505 x 5 or visit this website: www.watertowncommunityhousing.org

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Minimum Income per Household

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<th>Household Size</th>
<th>60%</th>
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munity is by supporting non-profit organizations – to give people an education and skills need to succeed,” said Joseph A. McGrail, Vice President of State Street Corporate Citizenship and State Street Foundation. State Street Corporation was the event’s underwriter. “Last February, we opened Buds and Blossoms Childcare. We’ve been providing ESL and skill training and social services. We are now able to serve the entire family,” said Chau-ming Lee, AACA Chief Executive Officer in giving an update of AACA’s highlights in 2010.

Other highlights included the Sustainable Chinatown, a partnership between the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the AACA, and Chinatown businesses. Funded by the Barr Foundation, the project offers energy efficiency upgrades to small businesses in Chinatown. “This is [the moment] that we honor the successes of our clients. Nothing speaks more to our work than our students and our clients. Tonight’s gala celebrates their courage to be new. We have six student ambassadors. These six individuals embodied that courage,” in introducing Sunny Schwartz, AACA Chief Operating Officer.

The program honored six students who are unsung heroes of the immigrant community. Tsai, a graduate of the State Street ASCENT program, was offered a full-time job as condition report writer. Sunny Schwartz, AACA Chief Operating Officer.

Noman Ali, a refugee from Sudan, first arrived in Boston in 2006. After completing AACA’s The Building Efficiently Effective Maintenance Skills (BREMS) program, Noman Ali, a refugee from Sudan, first arrived in Boston in 2006. After completing AACA’s The Building Efficiently Effective Maintenance Skills (BREMS) program, he was able to move from low-wage, low-skill jobs such as cashier and driver to working full-time as a maintenance technician. Minnie Huang, a former elementary school teacher in China, decided that she was able to become a teacher in the U.S. due to her limited English skills. A graduate of the NEXT Step Transitional English program at AACA, Huang will graduate with an Associate Degree in Education in 2012. Maria Teixiera, a Cape Verde native, was a single mother who was unable to complete high school. Through Tufts Medical Center Workplace Education Program, Teixiera received a promotion within the hospital and is working as an Endoscopy Technicians.

Faith Xu signed up for a visa to come to the U.S. when she was pregnant. She was awarded a visa. She gave up her job at the Bank of China and came to the U.S. alone. Xu worked long hours for low pay in restaurants. After preparing Accounting Skills, Computer, and English Training (ASCENT) program, Xu is now working full-time as a bank teller at Bank of America.

Juan Soto, a Boston native, struggled to complete high school, and found himself unemployed after serving in the military. He was working minimum wage temp cleaning and was laid off. As a father of a young son, he wanted to be able to better provide for his family. Enrolled in Partnership for Automatic Career Education (PACE), he was offered a full-time job as condition report writer. "Jenny (a pseudonym)" emigrated from the U.S. to China. She was the mother of a girl and pregnant with her son when her husband died, leaving no financial support for the family. Before seeking help from AACA, Jenny was evicted with no place for her family to live and was unemployed. With the assistance from AACA's Multi-Service Center, Jenny is now living in public housing and receiving food stamps, and referred to job training.

"I would like to bring a citation from the House of Representatives to AACA, in recognition of the 44 years of exceptional service to the immigrant community," State Representative Donald Wong said. "On behalf on Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Reverend Cheng Imin Tan, Director of the Mayor’s Office of New Bostons, a huge congratulations to AACA from Mayor Menino.

AACA also presented community service awards to Chef Ming Tsai and Stanley Chen. Both Tsai and Chen are unsung heroes of the immigrant community. Tsai, host and executive producer of SIMPLY MING, offers his culinary skills at countless community fundraisers. Chen was a pioneer in providing affordable housing for Chinatown’s senior citizens at a time when such housing was nonexistent. His two major Chinatown projects – Quon-Tower in 1978 and South Cove East and West in 1992 – are important elements in keeping Boston’s Chinatown a vibrant community for people and families.

The night’s program ended with a beautiful performance by musician, composer and singer Grace Kelly, accompanied by Harvey Diamond Group.

Sampan
Special Interview with BCNC: Exercise and Healthy Living

By Diana Li
Sampan Correspondent

Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, BCNC, serving over 2,900 people in the Asian community consists of 8 programs, including child care services, after-school programs, youth center, enrichment programs, adult education and family service. BCNC is one of the five recipients of the Tufts Medical Center’s Asian Health Initiative, AHI, grant funding. AHI was established in 1995 and BCNC is considered a veteran in receiving this grant.

According to Yoyo Yau, Director of Family Services at BCNC, “Under AHI support, Family Services was able to reach out to immigrant families from the BCNC community and the larger Chinese community. FS recognizes the immense need of supporting immigrant parents as they nurture and educate their children. The US culture presents both opportunities and challenges to these immigrant families when it comes to facilitating the education of their children.”

Family Service gives parents support and knowledge on the educational system and curriculum. It allows parents to be more involved with their children’s education, particularly children with special needs. For instance, Family Services teaches parents about IEP and their educational rights.

Eager to share a success story, Yau spoke of a woman named Mrs. Chiu-wan Chow. Chow came to the US with no knowledge of the U.S. education system and two of her children required special education. She went to BCNC for guidance and attended one of the many workshops offered, Parents Solutions 2: Special Education. BCNC’s workshop gave her the knowledge to be more involved. Consequently, she was elected as the Boston Public Schools’ Special Education Parent Advisory Council. What makes Chow’s story a success story is not because she was elected to be on the parent advisory council, but the ripple effect. BCNC’s services helped one individual and that one individual went on to help many other individuals. Chow makes herself available to help others at all times.

For AHI 2011, BCNC implemented a health cooking class called “East meets West,” a children fitness group targeting children aged 8-12 called “Rock Your Body,” and health education workshops focusing on diabetes awareness and nutrition, “Nutrition 101.”

“The healthy cooking class teaches parents how to prepare a healthy meal on a daily basis. Some parents request western style meals, so we showed them how to shop the healthy ingredients, prepare, cook and serve. It is a lot of fun and work.” Yau spoke with enthusiasm because she says that the programs have already been proven to be a success because parents raved on how much their children loved the recipes.

For the children fitness group Rock Your Body, BCNC will have a physical trainer on site to meet with each family to cater their needs by making individual exercise plans. To ensure that there is progress, participants will fill out weekly exercise logs and in each session, one child will be rewarded for their hard work. Yau says, “We want to support the children and their family to learn and to make change in a fun and supportive environment.”

When Yau was asked if she believes that diabetes, tobacco, and diabetes was a growing problem in the Asian community, Yau commented, “I do believe that there is an increase in the areas of diabetes, obesity and tobacco use. According to the data in the ‘status of childhood weight in Massachusetts, 2009’ report represents data from 80 school districts in the Essential School Health Services program collected during the 2008-2009 school year on 109,674 students. There are 43.6% children are overweight in the Boston area. When we consult with the local pediatrics, they indicated that half of their patients are overweight. These are very significant statistics.”

Yau also believes that tobacco usage has increased due to the stress environment of restaurant work. Restaurant workers consume a lot of tobacco because it is the only time when they can go on a break from their hard, long, and tedious day. With the alarming statistics, BCNC has selected diabetes and obesity as their main focus. “Being overweight and obese can put a child at risk for certain health problems. A child who is overweight or obese has an increased risk of developing serious conditions, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and orthopedic problems. Obesity and diabetes are co-related to each other,” says Yau.

Expanding at a substantial rate, BCNC devised Strategic Plan 2011-2014. It makes one wonder if good health is something the BCNC plans on promoting continually. Yau assured that health education is definitely something that is part of the plan. “One of BCNC’s priority areas during this strategic plan is to adopt a more family-centered approach to the way we deliver services. That means we want to consider a person’s whole range of needs when they come to us for services. So an immigrant may come to learn English, but we also want to support them as being good parents, and to be more civically engaged, and to be a better neighbor, or to set and follow a plan to develop their career. Part of this also means supporting the needs of our constituents when it comes to health-related issues. We want to provide the education, resources, and support for families to lead healthy lifestyles and make smart informed decisions about their own well-being.”

In a recent event, BCNC expressed how unfortunate it was for them to have to turn away some people because of capacity limitations. Another question that was asked was whether or not BCNC will provide services to growing Asian communities like Malden and Quincy. Yau affirms, “Many of our constituents come to us from other neighborhoods of Boston and from outside Boston. We believe their needs are just as important, but also different. BCNC is currently exploring the ways we can serve our community from places like Quincy in a more impactful way, tailoring our services to really meet the needs of the communities outside Chinatown. No matter where they live, BCNC is committed to providing the highest quality programs to all.”

Article funded through the Asian Health Initiative of Tufts Medical Center