A Culture of Employee Appreciation
Adcotron EMS, Inc.

It is not difficult to understand the cheerful feeling one gets when entering through the glass doors of Adcotron EMS, Inc. Not only is the environment spotless - the pearly white walls visible all around the 35,000 square foot lot the company occupies in South Boston's Marine Industrial Park - but in a supremely organized manner, highly-automated equipment place components on boards with precision and efficiency. However, neither the sophisticated machinery nor the complex products are the true reason of Adcotron’s success, as the company’s Chief Executive Officer and President Agnes Young would suggest. Patrolling, pushing buttons, checking components, turning dials, peering through microscopes all throughout the facility, clad in blue, anti-static overcoats are the true success: the employees.

“Our employees are more important than anything,” said Young, who herself wore a blue, anti-static overcoat during a tour of the facility. Young’s connection with her employees is unmistakable – every employee turning to greet her as she made her way around explaining the intricacies of each machine and station.

Adcotron, a premier Electronics Contract Manufacturing service (EMS) provider that specializes in manufacturing low to medium volume complex electronic assemblies and systems integration for a broad range of industries including medical, military, industrial, telecommunication and alternative energy, sits in a Boston Redevelopment Authority-owned building along Boston’s beautiful waterfront district and boasts a story few, if any, businesses around can claim.

Born out of the closure of a previous company, Adcotron got its start in 2005. When Advanced Electronics, a company that had been around since 1978 decided to close its doors in October of 2005, Young, who led the management team in acquiring all of the assets from Advanced Electronics, Inc., formed Adcotron EMS, Inc.

AACA Graduates Next STEP Classes

On Friday, December 23, 2011, the Asian American Civic Association held a graduation ceremony for more than 70 Next STEP students. The Next Steps Transitional English Program (NextSTEP) provides free ESL classes for immigrants in the Greater Boston area.

“The students really appreciated being honored for their hard work,” said Melanie Marcus, Next Step & ESOL Instructor. “It was fun teaching the students,” said Alan Philips, Next STEP instructor, who also left his students a work of advice. “The more they speak English outside of the classroom, the better they will learn inside the classroom.”
It's happening closer than you think. Human beings are being exploited for profit every day across the world and in our midst. Individuals are being held against their will as sex workers, sweatshop laborers, field hands, restaurant workers, and even domestic maids, more than when there were slaves in the 19th Century—somewhere between 12 to 27 million worldwide.

On January 11, National Human Trafficking Awareness Day will have a more potent meaning in Massachusetts. After years of being among a handful of states with no distinct criminal penalties for enforced sex or labor, a new state-level anti-human trafficking bill was signed into law at the end of 2011. It created a more intentional and apt set of laws to combat this problem.

Samuel Tsui's

INalienable Rights

Ending Slavery in Massachusetts

Samuel Tsui is the Policy Associate at the Mass. Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition.
Tips to keep your 2012 Financial New Year’s Resolutions

By CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Michael C. Tow

Happy New Year! This is the time of New Year’s Eve parties, watching the ball drop, buying new 2012 wall calendars and of course New Year Resolutions. One of the most common resolutions to make is to go to the gym regularly. Of course most of us know how long that resolution lasts: about two weeks.

Since every year I write about Financial Resolutions that people should think about making, this year I thought I would change things up a bit. Rather than giving you ideas for financial resolutions, focus more on how to keep the resolutions you make yourselves.

Here are my tips for raising your chances of keeping your 2012 financial resolutions:

1. Be Realistic. Many people make resolutions to get out of debt, but if you look at their discretionary income/debt it may not be realistic to do it in one year. You don’t want to set yourself up to fail from the beginning so make your financial resolution reasonable and build on that.

2. Stick to it. It takes 3 or 4 weeks of doing something to become a habit, so do what you can to stick with your resolution until that time. If you can get through the first month, it will be a lot easier to continue throughout the year.

3. Write it down and let people know. Put pressure to keep yourself accountable by writing it down and letting as many people know as you can. Put it on your personal blog, tweet it, put it on your Facebook status, or email it to some of your friends. I use my Facebook status to keep me accountable for my workout program and it really helps keep me inline when I want to skip a day.

4. Outline your plan. If your resolution is to save more money this year, you need to do more than say it to have it happen. Outline a strategy to achieve your plan. So if your financial resolution is to save more, a plan to execute it could be to set up a spreadsheet to analyze your spending and then create a budget.

5. Track your progress. Set up an excel spreadsheet to keep track of your progress. While your resolution is for the whole year it helps to monitor where you are throughout the year. There are some great applications for your iPhone, Android or Blackberry that help you keep whatever your resolution is.

6. Reward yourself. Break your financial resolution goals into smaller increments. When you hit each increment reward yourself for a job well done. If your resolution was to keep better track of your financial documents and receipts throughout the year, after doing well for a few months then reward yourself with a night out with friends.

To practice what I preach, here are my personal 2012 financial resolutions:

1. Reduce those costs that I am unnecessarily paying but have too many laid to address.
2. Get my spending and budget onto Excel.
3. Refinance my mortgage.

Good luck with your financial resolutions and if it helps, shoot me an email with your resolutions to keep you accountable. Happy New Year!

If you have a topic that you would like me to discuss in a future article please email me at mtow@newbostonfinancial.com.

CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Michael Tow is President of New Boston Financial. He is a registered representative of, and offers securities and advisory services through Commonwealth Financial Network: a member firm of FINRA/SIPC and a Registered Investment Adviser. He is located at 58 Harvard Street in Brookline and can be reached at 617-734-4400 or www.newbostonfinancial.com

CD REVIEW

Ruhan Time To Grow

When a Grammy award-winning composer says of an artist, “she is a wonderfully gifted singer, capable of producing a wide range of sounds and emotions,” listeners should take notice. And that is exactly what Christopher Tin, who won the two Grammy awards at the 53rd annual ceremony earlier this year for Best Classical Crossover Album and Best Instrumental Arrangement Accompanying Vocalists, has praised Jia Ruhan with. On her delightful new 12-track album, “Time to Grow,” released on November 21, the classical-trained Ruhan charmingly unites the East and the West. The opening track, titled “This is the Time”, is an easy-listening ballad that resembles much of the entire album, the graceful fusion of Chinese pop sensibilities and the orchestral range typically found in Western production. Each track on Ruhan’s album is an emotional rollercoaster, with heartbreaking troughs of mellow moments and stomach-turning crests filled with hope and glamour—a testament to Ruhan’s vocal abilities.

BOOK REVIEW

Dumpling Days by Grace Lin

Pacy is back! In this follow up to her award-winning novels The Year of the Dog and The Year of the Rat, Dumpling Days, a new novel by Grace Lin out on January 10th, features the same beloved characters and whimsical artwork that her fans adore. Based on the author’s own childhood, this heartwarming story brings the sights, sounds, and tastes of Taiwan to life.

Pacy is excited to visit Taiwan with her family for the first time. While preparing for their grandmother’s 60th birthday celebration, Pacy and her siblings meet many relatives, try new foods, take classes, and explore the city of Taipei. Pacy enjoys many of her adventures—especially eating all the varieties of dumplings!—while other things are harder than she thought they would be. She doesn’t speak the language, she has trouble following her art teacher’s instructions, and she is a little worried about hungry ghosts. But before the trip is over Pacy realizes that being Taiwanese American means that both countries will always be part of who she is.

Deftly weaving together family anecdotes, keen observations, and simple line illustrations, Dumpling Days is a timeless story celebrating family, travel, and food! Grace Lin is the award-winning author and illustrator of many notable books for children, including Where the Mountain Meets the Moon, which earned a 2010 Newbery Honor.

City of Quincy to Celebrate Life of Martin Luther King

Quincy will celebrate the life and work of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at its 16th Annual Breakfast on Monday, January 16, 2012, which marks his birthday in 1929. Dr. King was a Baptist Minister and Social Activist, who led the Civil Rights Movement in the United States from the mid 1950’s until his assassination in 1968.

Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. His life had a seismic impact on race relations in the United States. Dr. King was a complex figure, yet a visionary leader, deeply committed to justice for all via a peaceful agenda.

Celebrate the life of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. January 16, 2012, at The Germantown Neighborhood Center, 333 Palmer Street, Quincy, MA, beginning @ 9 AM. There will be a small donation for the event.
Applications for Waitlist Now Being Accepted

Mary Colby Apartments
20 Deven Street
Charlestown, Massachusetts 02129

Seeking applicants for 1 & 2 bedroom affordable HUD subsidized apartments. Applicants must be at least 62 years of age or disabled. Qualified candidates will meet strict income limitations.

Pick up an application in person at 20 Deven Street, Charlestown, MA 02129 from the management office Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

www.bowersbrook.com

or the Harvard Town Hall, or by calling (781) 834-1051. Applications will be received by Feb. 3, 2012, to participate. Income restrictions apply.

Harvard Town Hall Meeting Room. Initial assignment of units will be by lottery. Applications must be completed in person.

A lottery will be held on Thursday, March 8, 2012 at 7:00 PM at the Marshfield Town Hall, Hearing Room # 2, to select grant recipients.

Saturday, February 4, 2012, 10:00 AM: Marshfield Town Hall, Hearing Room # 2, 780 Moraine Street, Marshfield.

For additional information or to receive an application contact either the Marshfield Housing Authority (781-834-4333) or the Marshfield Housing Coordinator (781-834-1051). Applications are also available at the Marshfield Town Hall.

To Place Your Ad

Call (617) 426-9492
Fax (617)482-2316
Email ads@sampan.org

“GET REAL!”
with Mildred Wong
Drama-Free Real Estate Advice

MYTH: It is not a good time to sell my home during the holidays and winter months.

FACT: Seasonal trends no longer apply today with the Internet, smart phones, and tablets. Buyers are ALWAYS looking for properties online. The home market is no more affected during the holidays than during other “busy” periods of the year.

True, there are typically fewer homes for sale during this time, which means that as a seller, there is less competition for the homes that are on the market. Since buyer activity slows down, I should take a break from the selling process too. GET REAL! The buyers who are looking are that much more serious, and are likely facing some sort of deadline. They could be downsizing, transferring to the area for work. Or they may have finally sold a home that had been on the market and must get into a new home. Or they may have been searching all year and are finally ready to put money down. Whatever the motivation, there can be an increase in demand at a time when inventory is traditionally low. Take advantage. Make sure your home is accessible and welcoming.

Deck the halls! Decorated homes show better as they lighten the mood and cozy up the interior, so make the most of this unique time by setting the perfect scene. But don’t overdo it—decoration is an enhancement, not a distraction. Make sure the tree does not dominate your living room, and the stockings do not hide your beautiful fireplace. Enable buyers to linger in your home with seasonal scents. Everyone loves the smell of fresh baked chocolate chip cookies!

And don’t forget curb appeal! Keep your walkway and driveway safe and free of snow and ice. Some tasteful decorations and fun pom poms will keep the outside looking bright and cheerful, and a festive wreath is always inviting. Have buyers feel like they are guests at a party.

I’m overwhelmed and stressed and can’t be bothered during the holidays, so I’ll wait until the Spring. GET REAL! Sell your home after New Year’s Day. There is something about the new year that excites people. It could be a New Year’s resolution to finally stop spending money on rentals and invest in property. Make it YOUR resolution to get your home sold. If your home has been on the market for a while, buyers and their agents will see it as stale or overpriced and disregard it. Use this opportunity to re-evaluate your strategy. Lower the price, or interview new agents. You can benefit as you will have access to the best agents since most part-time agents take the winter months off. Motivated buyers will certainly notice.

Remember, buyers are always looking for properties, so don’t wait. Get a head start on the rush of homes that typically hit the market in the spring. Winter is one of the BEST times for your home to hit the market.

CALL TO READERS: In the process of buying or selling and have questions? Call or email and your topic could be the next discussion. Mildred Wong is a Licensed Real Estate Agent at City Central Realty, LLC. She can be reached at 617-236-2030 or mildred@citycentralre.com. Follow her on Twitter: @Get-RealMildred.

RESOLVED BAD CREDIT? BANKRUPT? NEED A LOAN?
WE OFFER LOANS UP TO $500,000 WE HELP YOU RE-ESTABLISH YOUR CREDIT.
WE ARE OPEN 24 HOURS
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NEW, AFFORDABLE CONDOS FOR SALE IN BROOKLINE
at 109 Sewall Avenue, a 4 unit condominium in Coolidge Corner
walking distance to MBTA Green Line, parking space included

1 Bedroom: $115,750 (estimated $80 monthly for condo fees & real estate taxes)
2 Bedroom: $174,900
3 Bedroom: $256,000

$1195 (2 bedroom) conveniently located off Route 2 at Exit 38 at 196 Ayer Rd., Harvard, MA

Proudly announces a brand new 58-unit condominium located off Route 2 at Exit 38 at 196 Ayer Rd., Harvard, MA.

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To Call or Email and your topic could be

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ADCOTRON

Adcotron with fewer than 20 employees. “Today it has grown to over 60 employees.

“My boss at the time told me not to get into the business,” said Young. “He said there was no money to be made and that the market was too competitive.”

But Young and her top management saw the situation in a different way. Not only would she adopt a different business model but also focus on high-complexity, low volume manufacturing and prototype building.

“Boston is number one in the nation for new technology,” said Young. “With M.I.T just across the river and so many new start ups, building prototypes is a good business.”

Young’s Adcotron had also obtained an important manufacturing certification ISO 13485: 2003, which enables the company to manufacture medical devices and military products.

In 2012, Young aims to expand the company’s system integration operations which will encompass more electro-mechanical assemblies upon which will encompass more company’s system integration operations.

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Cable Terminal, Military and Medical devices. The company brings in roughly $10 million to $12 million a year nowadays, however times haven’t always been so prosperous. According to Young, the first few years of business were a struggle to break even.

“The first few years were extremely difficult, we struggled to reach $5 million a year in revenue,” said Young. “We picked up smaller contracts to stay afloat but at the end of the year our quality and customer focus paid off.”

And it is perhaps the company’s early struggles that were a catalyst to the strong bonds that Young has with her employees. Ninety-five percent of Adcotron’s employees are of Asian heritage, and the company makes sure to promote that fact. The first line of text on Adcotron’s brochure reads, “Minority and Women Owned”.

“It’s something we’re very proud of,” said Young. “We try to hire within the community. The company helps the community that way.”

Along with office hours (8am to 4:30pm) that are built around a working-immigrant’s lifestyle, the company offers very competitive American benefits.

“The hours are perfect for our employees and mothers, who can be home in time for their children,” said Young. The company’s location is also extremely convenient for those living in Chinatown, or outlying suburbs, as it is serviced by the silver line.

“[Adcotron] may be small,” said Young. “But we’re very capable.”

And it is the company’s capability – whether it is Young’s leadership or the employees on the floor of the company’s manufacturing facility – that appears to stand Adcotron in good stead as the economy looks to pick up and takes a turn for the better.

SHIKI -
Shines All The Time!

When Shiki (aka Four Seasons in Japanese), located at 9 Babcock Street, Brookline ([617-739-0200]), opened up a few years ago, it filled a much needed void. While in the highly competitive Brookline area riddled with Japanese places, they still deliver delicious food and different Japanese food from the mainstream Japanese sushi houses. This is one of the few places around where I always hear Japanese spoken amongst the patrons. This is a sure sign of a winner! After discovering Shiki as a great homey izakaya style establishment (Japanese pub food) that had an extensive sake (Japanese alcoholic beverage made from rice) selection coupled with delicious food and their amazing, beautiful kaisetsu (multicourse or haute cuisine) lunches (one of their trademarks!), I was ecstatic. Are you a sake lover? Then you should try their sake sampler flight too! This was not another ho-hum Japanese place with only the usual menu choices.

A burnt orange colored sign is outside of this garden level restaurant space (about 8 steps down). The lower level is welcoming with a few chairs and tables, soothing autumn colors and simple décor. Shiki is closed on Mondays, but is open for lunch and dinner from Tuesdays to Sundays.

Their extensive menu has some favorites such as tempura, tonkatsu, unagi, sushi and even the much maligned but also beloved fermented natto beans (stinky smelling and gooey texture), which is not for everyone, even some Japanese. One can eat a variety of delicious dishes and explore or just stick to the basics. Plus their bountiful menu choices range from a few dollars up until the teens, so depending on what one eats, it doesn’t have to be a break-the-bank experience.

Next was the Sea Eel Millefeuille that had layers of sea eel and naganimo (Japanese yam) topped by a poached egg in a light broth. The texture of this dish might not be for everyone, but the flavors with the soft marinated eel, crunchy yam, runny egg with the broth makes for a pleasant and interesting texture and taste combination.

We ended our meal simply with ice cream-one scoop of green tea and one scoop of red bean. Both flavors were delicious and not overpowered by sugar while maintaining a great balance of green tea and red bean flavor respectively. The other two dessert choices - the green tea and red bean flavor respectively. The other two dessert choices - the green tea and red bean flavor respectively. The other two dessert choices - the green tea and red bean flavor respectively.

Still, the Sea Eel Millefeuille that had layers of sea eel and naganimo (Japanese yam) topped by a poached egg in a light broth. The texture of this dish might not be for everyone, but the flavors with the soft marinated eel, crunchy yam, runny egg with the broth makes for a pleasant and interesting texture and taste combination.

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