Babies Shouldn't Smoke!
By Leslie Pilder

Sounds funny, doesn't it? We'd never give a cigarette to a baby! But infants and toddlers who live with smokers suffer from many problems that are just as bad as if they were smoking themselves. Children's bodies are smaller and developing, which makes cigarette smoke more dangerous to them than to an adult. And infants and toddlers breathe faster than adults. That means they are taking in more smoke per minute than the person smoking the cigarette! It is very important that if you cannot stop smoking, that you do not smoke in a room or a car with a child. Children who spend time in smoke-filled rooms miss more days of school than other children. They have more asthma and more ear-infections and are more likely to die from SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) than other children. They have more pneumonia and more bronchitis. There is even evidence that some behavior problems may be due to second-hand smoke and that children exposed to smoke may have some learning difficulties too. Children from smoking homes scored lower in math, reading, logic and reasoning tests, according to some research.

It's Time to Quit Smoking

Tobacco use is the most common preventable cause of death in the United States. About half of the people who don't quit smoking will die of smoking-related problems. Quitting smoking is important for your health and provides many benefits. Soon after you quit, your circulation begins to improve, and your blood pressure starts to return to a normal level. Your sense of smell and taste return and breathing starts to become easier. In the long term, giving up tobacco can help you live longer. Your risk of getting cancer decreases with each year you stay smoke-free.

In this special Medical Edition of the Sampan, we’ll explore tips on how to control your cravings once you decide to quit smoking, we'll look at the appropriate way in which to use the nicotine patch (how much to use, what dosage is appropriate for you), and how much tobacco-smoking is costing you every year. Also in this special issue, we’ll explore a variety of different diets to help you shed some weight, and introduce you to superfoods. Finally, we’ll look at how recent studies have found that diabetes affects cognitive function in old age.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5
Josiah Quincy Elementary Principal Wins Pirandello Lyceum

Josiah Quincy Elementary School Principal Simon Siu-Wah Ho has been awarded the President’s Award from the Pirandello Lyceum, an educational institute aimed at encouraging a greater understanding and appreciation of Italian culture among all people. Principal Ho is one of eight I Migliori in Mens et Gesta (The Best in the Nation of Italian culture among all people. Principal Ho at encouraging a greater understanding and appreciation of Italian culture among all people. According to Chiao-ning Lee, AAGLC’s Executive Director, this unique service provides mutual benefits to both the youth and children.

“Through mentoring a young child, the youth will learn how to be responsible and show compassion towards others. At the mean time, the children can learn from the big brother/sister who grew up in an immigrant family like theirs,” he said.

Along with giving the teens in the community a voice, the Youth Council teaches the teens the fundamentals of making a change that affects the larger community, according to Mary Chin. “We found from our research that parents [in the community] were starving for tutoring opportunities for their children, but couldn’t afford it,” said Chin. “The Teen Tutoring program gives our Youth Council members the chance to learn how it feels to help somebody. There are a plethora of opportunities for youths in the current community, but our program is unique,” said Principal Ho.

Principal Ho is a native of Hong Kong, China, where he completed his secondary education. Simon moved to Italy where he would live and study for four years. There, he learned the language and culture of Italy. But the award, according to him, means a lot to him because it shows an understanding and appreciation for other cultures - something he brings with him to work everyday at Josiah Quincy Elementary School.

“Our school is becoming more and more diverse,” said Ho in a phone interview. “Even though the school is 56 percent Chinese, it is great to understand other cultures.”

SAMPAN is New England’s only biweekly bilingual English-Chinese newspaper. It is nonprofit and nonpartisan. Founded in 1972, SAMPAN is the official newspaper of the Asian American Civic Association. SAMPAN is distributed free in China Town and the Greater Boston area. All donations to the publication are tax deductible. Subscriptions: $60/year (1st class mail); $30/year (3rd class mail).

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Smoking Cessation

Tobacco use is the most common preventable cause of death. About half of the people who don’t quit smoking will die of smoking-related problems. Quitting smoking is important for your health and provides many benefits. Soon after you quit, your circulation begins to improve, and your blood pressure starts to return to a normal level. Your sense of smell and taste return and breathing starts to become easier. In the long term, giving up tobacco can help you live longer. Your risk of getting cancer decreases with each year you stay smoke-free.

Quitting is not easy, though. You may have short-term effects such as weight gain, irritability and anxiety. Some people try several times before succeeding. There are many ways to quit smoking. Some people stop “cold turkey”. Others benefit from step-by-step manuals, counseling or medicines that help reduce nicotine addiction. It is always best to contact your healthcare provider to talk about methods to quit.

Did You Know?

A pack-a-day smoker who pays $7.50 for a pack of cigarettes spends $52.50 a week. That’s $2,730.00 a year!

The Nicotine Patch: What You Need to Know

How to determine the strength of patch to use:

The patch comes in three strengths or steps: 21mg, 14mg, and 7mg.

- If you smoke less than 10 cigarettes per day, start with the 14mg patch. Stay on the 14mg patch for 6 weeks, then step down to the 7mg for 2 weeks. You should also start with the 14mg patch if you weigh less than 100lbs.
- If you smoke 10 to 20 cigarettes per day, stay with the 21mg patch. Stay on the 21 mg patch for 4 to 6 weeks, then step down to the 14 mg for 2 weeks and then to the 7 mg for 2 weeks, for a total of 8 to 10 weeks on the patch.
- If you smoke more than 20 cigarettes per day you may also benefit from an intermittent nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) (like the inhaler, lozenge or gum) to use as a supplement to the 21 mg patch.

If you truly only smoke occasionally, you may want to use just an intermittent NRT and not use the patch at all.

How to apply the patch:

Step 1: Choose a non-hairy, clean, dry area of your skin. Acceptable sites include upper outer arm, and upper torso including abdomen, chest and back. You should avoid any irritated skin, tattoos, or scars.

Step 2: Cut open the patch with scissors, being careful not to cut the patch.

Step 3: Remove the backing and immediately apply the sticky side of the patch to your skin and press firmly for 10 to 20 seconds. Make sure it sticks well to your skin, especially around the edges.

Step 4: Wash your hands when you have finished applying the patch.

Remember to:

• Apply each patch approximately the same time everyday. Morning is preferred. As the nicotine will peak 2 to 6 hours after application. It is not advisable to apply at night. If you need to start in the evening you can always change the patch the next morning.

• Rotate the patch application site for the 7 days (upper torso, upper inner arms, back).

• Be sure to remove the old patch when applying a new one.

Daily Activities and storage of the patch:

• Continue with your daily routine.

• If the patch loosens you may crisscross adhesive tape over it or apply a new patch.

• If you patch gets wet, simply pat it dry.

The patch is designed to be worn under all normal living conditions (i.e. showering, swimming, exercising, etc.).

• Unused patches must be stored at room temperature. Do not store patches in the refrigerator or leave them in a hot car.

Removal of Used Patches:

Step 1: Gently grab a corner of the patch and pull it away from you arm.

Step 2: Dispose of patch safely. If adhesive residue remains on the skin after you have removed the patch, use a small amount of mineral or vegetable oil (such as corn oil) on a tissue and wipe off the residue. Do no scrape the area as it may irritate the skin.

IMPORTANT: You can not smoke while using the patch.

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College Fair Provides Insight into Higher Education Possibilities

On March 30, the Asian American Civic Association (AACA) hosted seven local colleges and universities, as well as an educational documentation agency, in a college fair aimed at showcasing the kinds of education the organization’s Next Steps Transitional English Program (STEP) students can look forward to after graduating. More than 70 students attended.

“I study at the AACA and I really want to go to college,” said Yueswen Tian, a student in AACA’s Next STEP English Program.

Tian, who holds a degree in pharmacy in her homeland of China, hopes to go on to get a degree in English once she has completed her Next STEP education to make full use of her previous experience. “I got a lot of information [today],” she said.

Shinoim Ando, Academic Advisor at the AACA, hopes that the college fair will entice students to enroll in September or January.

“We want to make them aware of the choices that they have, the options that they have,” Ando said. “We hope as many students as possible [enroll in September or January], and we expect around 25 to 30 will do so.”

“Many of our Early Childhood Education classes are taught in Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin and English,” said Jane Doloff, Admissions Recruiter at the Urban College of Boston, highlighting the ways in which many higher education institutes cater to the needs of an immigrant population.

Along with the Center for Educational Documentation, the higher-education institutions at the fair were Roxbury Community College, Bunker Hill Community College, University of Massachusetts – Boston, Cambridge College, Urban College of Boston, Quincy College, and the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology.
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The Four D's to curb your cravings

Once you’ve decided to quit smoking, you will have to begin to control your cravings. One of the best ways to control your desire to have a cigarette is with the four D’s. Remember to perform these four tasks and you’ll slowly wean yourself off of those cravings!

Delay
Wait out the urge to smoke. It will pass in a few minutes.

Deep Breathing
Breathe in slowly and as deeply as you can, then breathe out slowly. Repeat this five times.

Drink Water
Sip water slowly and hold it in your mouth for a little while.

Distract
Talk to a friend, focus on the task you are doing, or get up and move around. Do something that takes your mind off smoking for a few minutes.

The Preschool Corner

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By Leslie Pilder

Sounds funny, doesn’t it? We’d never give a cigarette to a baby! But infants and toddlers who live with smokers suffer from many problems that are just as bad as if they were smoking themselves. Children’s bodies are smaller and developing, which makes cigarette smoke more dangerous to them than to an adult. And infants and toddlers breathe faster than adults. That means they are taking in more smoke per minute than the person smoking the cigarette!

It is very important that if you cannot stop smoking, you do not smoke in a room a child sleeps in, walks in, or a car a child rides in. Children who spend time in smoky spaces miss more days of school than other children. They have more asthma and more ear-infections and are more likely to die from SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) than other children. They have more pneumonia and more bronchitis. There is even evidence that some behavior problems may be due to second-hand smoke and that children exposed to smoke may have some learning difficulties too. Children from smoking homes scored lower in math, reading, logic and reasoning tests, according to some research. [http://www.helpwithsmoking.com/passive-smoking/passive-smoking-and-children.php]

Even if you have banned smoking from your household, the consequences of smoking can impact your child’s health. How often does your little one stand near someone smoking on the street? How often have you spent time in a room a child sleeps in, walks in, or a car a child rides in? Or handed your child to a person whose clothing clearly indicated that they had been smoking? Scientists are referring to this as “third hand smoke” and they are finding that it poses many health problems for young children.

Third hand smoke exposes all of us to toxins (poisons) that can cause long-term health problems. A baby crawling around a room that smells of smoke is picking up chemicals through her skin and when she puts her fingers in her mouth. A child who rests his head on the coat of a smoker may be coming in contact with deadly toxins. [http://quitsmoking.about.com/od/secondhandsmoke/a/thirdhandsmoke.htm]

This third-hand smoke is a reason for supporting smoke-free zones in public spaces.

Smoke is also dangerous for unborn children. Pregnant women should never smoke as their babies have lower birth weights, which puts them at risk for many medical conditions. Their babies may be born with abnormal lungs and may have life-long problems with learning. [http://pediatrics.about.com/cs/pediatricadvicet/a/second_hand_smk.html] But even if mommy isn’t smoking, breathing in the smoke of others can hurt the growing fetus. These babies have more learning disabilities than other children and are at greater risk for having cerebral palsy, a very serious condition that robs children of their ability to walk, talk, and learn normally. [http://quitsmoking.about.com/od/secondhandsmoke/a/smokeandhealth.htm]

It’s spring time! Open the windows, wash the carpets, launder the curtains, and get the smoky smell out of your house. Keep your children away from smoky environments. And if you smoke, for the sake of your babies, stop! Visit this website for some free resources to help you quit. [http://quitsmoking.about.com/c/ce/cf/6.htm]

Love your children enough to stop!

NOTICE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING LOTTERY

Clay Pond Cove Apartments, located just south of the Bourne Bridge – 101 Harmony Hill Drive, Bourne, Massachusetts. This is a newly constructed rental community. The unit mix will consist of 33 one-bedroom units and 12 two-bedroom units all beautifully appointed with custom kitchens and baths. Other community amenities will include a management office, on site storage and laundry facilities, library, garden patio, and walking paths.

All units are subject to the IRS Section 42 tax credit program. 11 units are subject to the HOME Program requirements with 8 of those subject to HUD Project Based Section 8 program. In addition, 5 of the Project Based Section 8 program units will be Community Based Housing (CBH) Units (leased to Persons with Disabilities).

Clay Pond Cove Apartment is anticipated to be ready for occupancy in July 2012. There is a Local preference for residents as well as preferences for those 55 and older and 62 and older. All are strongly encouraged to apply!

Workshop will be held on April 3rd and April 24th, 2012; the first session will be at 11:00 a.m. and the second at 6:00 p.m. at:

JONATHAN BOURNE PUBLIC LIBRARY
19 SANDWICH ROAD, BOURNE, MA 02532

Application for Housing will be available on the day of the workshop.

Deadline: In order to be eligible, all applicants must be submitted with required documentation by 4:00 pm, May 9th, 2012.

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For more information on the development please visit www.BarrowsBrookVillage.com
Researchers Identify Link Between Diabetes and Cognitive Impairment in Older Adults

A BIDMC research team explains how diabetes leads to memory loss, depression and other cognitive impairment in older adults.

Many complications of diabetes, including kidney disease, foot problems and vision problems are generally well recognized. But the disease’s impact on the brain is often overlooked.

For the past five years, a team led by Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) neuropharmacologist Vera Novak, MD, PhD, has been studying the effects of diabetes on cognitive health in older individuals and has determined that memory loss, depression and other types of cognitive impairment are serious consequences of this widespread disease.

Novak’s team has identified a key mechanism behind this course of events. In a study published in the November 2011 issue of the journal Diabetes Care, they report that in older patients with diabetes, adhesion molecules – sVCAM and sICAM – and several other markers of altered vascular reactivity in the brain.

To test this hypothesis, Novak’s team recruited 147 study subjects, averaging 65 years of age. Seventy one of the subjects had type 2 diabetes and had been taking medication to manage their conditions for at least five years. The other 76 were age and sex-matched non-diabetic controls.

Study subjects underwent a series of cognitive tests, balance tests and standard blood pressure and blood glucose tests. Serum samples were also collected to measure adhesion molecules and several other markers of systemic inflammation. To determine permeability (blood flow) measures in the brain, patients also underwent functional MRI testing, in which a specialized imaging technique known as arterial spin labeling (developed by BIDMC MR physicist David Alsop, PhD) was used in conjunction with a standard MRI to measure vascular reactivity in several brain regions and to show changes in blood flow.

As predicted, the scans showed that the diabetic patients not only had greater blood vessel constriction than the control subjects, but they also had more atrophied brain tissue, particularly gray matter. The results also showed that, in the patients with diabetes, the frontal, temporal and parietal regions of the brain were most affected.

Similarly, the team’s measurements of serum markers confirmed that high glucose levels were strongly correlated with higher levels of inflammatory cytokines.

“It appears that chronic hyperglycemia and insulin resistance – the hallmarks of diabetes – trigger the release of adhesion molecules [sVCAM and sICAM] and set off a cascade of events leading to the development of chronic inflammation,” says Novak.

“One chronic inflammation sets in, blood vessels constrict, blood flow is reduced, and brain tissue is damaged.”

This discovery now provides two biomarkers of altered vascular reactivity in the brain. “If these markers can be identified before the brain is damaged, we can take steps to try and intervene,” says Novak, explaining that some data indicates that medications may improve vascoreactivity.

But more important, she says, the new findings provide still more reason for doctors and patients to focus greater attention on the management and prevention of diabetes.

“Cognitive decline affects a person’s ability to successfully complete even the simplest of everyday tasks, such as walking, talking or writing,” says Novak. “There are currently 25.8 million cases of type 2 diabetes in the United States alone, which is more than eight percent of our total population. The effects of diabetes on the brain have been grossly neglected, and, as our findings confirm, are issues that need to be addressed.”

This study was supported, in part, by grants from the National Institute of Aging, the National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the American Diabetes Association, and the National Center for Research Resources.

Study coauthors include BIDMC investigators Peng Zhao, PhD, Brad Manor, PhD, Ervin Seidic, PhD, David Alsop, PhD, and Medha Munsli, MD; Amir Abduljalill, PhD, of Ohio State University; Paula Roberson, PhD, of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences; and Peter Novak, MD, PhD, of the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

“This article was contributed by Beth Israel Medical Center

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CareMadeEasy.org
Five Diets To Try

The Atkins Diet
The goal of the Atkins Diet is to switch the body’s metabolism from metabolizing glucose as energy and, instead, use the body’s stored fat as its source of energy. To do this, a person limits their intake of carbohydrates.

Despite the diet’s popularity, the effect remains a subject of a lot of debate. Some studies have said that the Atkins diet helps prevent cardiovascular disease, lowers the bad cholesterol (LDL) and increases the amount of good cholesterol (HDL). Other studies have suggested that the diet could hurt the human body by contributing to osteoporosis and kidney stones.

The Dukan Diet
The Dukan Diet is one of the most popular diet plans in France. It is a protein-based diet designed by French nutritionist and dietician, Pierre Dukan. Although Dukan has been promoting his diet for over 30 years, its popularity has grown since 2000.

The DASH Diet
The DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) is a dietary pattern promoted by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (part of the NIH, a United States government organization) to prevent and control hypertension.

The DASH diet is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy foods; includes meat, fish, poultry, nuts and beans; and is limited in sugar-sweetened foods and beverages, red meat, and added fats. In addition to its effect on blood pressure, it is considered a well-balanced approach to eating for the general public. It is now recommended by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) as an ideal eating plan for all Americans.

The Gluten-Free Diet
A gluten-free diet is a diet that excludes foods containing gluten. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, and triticale. It is used as a food additive in the form of a flavoring, stabilizing or thickening agent. A gluten-free diet is used in the active treatment of celiac disease.

Additionally, some derivatives of a gluten-free diet may exclude oats.

The Vegan Diet
Veganism is the practice of abstaining from the use of animal products. Ethical vegans reject the commodification of animals and the use of animal products for any purpose, while dietary vegans or strict vegetarians eliminate them from their diet only. Another form, environmental veganism, rejects the use of animal products because some believe that the industrial practice is environmentally damaging and unsustainable.

Any plant-based dish may be vegan. Common vegan dishes prepared without animal ingredients include ratatouille, falafel, hummus, veggie burritos, rice and beans, veggie stir-fry, and pasta primavera. Ingredients such as tofu, tempeh, and seitan are widely used in vegan cuisine. Plant cream and plant milk—such as almond milk, grain milk, or soy milk—are used instead of dairy milk. Many vegan recipes will use apple sauce, ground flax seeds, mashed potatoes, soft or silken tofu, or commercial starch-based egg-substitute products, instead of eggs.

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Completed applications must be returned by April 27, 2012.
Low fat or fat-free plain yogurt is higher in calcium than some other dairy products and contains a great combination of other nutrients, like protein and potassium. It can also be enhanced with other good-for-you substances.

Eaten regularly, superfoods help you satisfy the recommendations of the U.S. government's 2005 Dietary Guidelines, giving you nutrients that are typically missing from American diets. According to the Guidelines, Americans need to eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products. Here is a list of a few superfoods!

**Broccoli** is one of America’s favorite vegetables because it tastes good and is available all year long. It’s a rich source of vitamin A, vitamin C, and bone-building vitamin K, and has plenty of fiber to fill you up and help control your weight. You can eat broccoli raw, lightly steamed, stir-fried, roasted, or grilled. Eat it as a side dish, or toss into grains, egg dishes, soups, and salads for a spectacular meal.

**Sweet potatoes** are a delicious member of the dark orange vegetable family, which lead the pack in vitamin A content. Substitute a baked sweet potato (also loaded with vitamin C, calcium, and potassium) for a baked white potato. And before you add butter or sugar, taste the sweetness that develops when a sweet potato is cooked. They are delicious. Other dark orange vegetables that are good sources of nutrients include pumpkin, carrots, butternut squash, and orange bell peppers.

**Berries** pack an incredible amount of nutritional value into a small package. They’re full of antioxidants, phytonutrients, low in calories, and high in water and fiber to help control blood sugar and keep you full longer. And their flavors satisfy sweets cravings for a fraction of the calories in baked goods. Blueberries are the most recommended because they are among the best source of antioxidants and are widely available. Cranberries are also widely available fresh, frozen, or dried. All can add flavor and nutrition to numerous dishes, from salads and cereals to baked goods and yogurt. Frozen berries are just as good as fresh for those who cost conscious.

At the U.S. Supreme Court deliberates over the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, the law modeled after Massachusetts’ Health Care Reform, the Commonwealth is moving on to its next phase. Since the 2006 landmark health care reform law passed, the Commonwealth has achieved near-universal health insurance coverage (95%) of its residents, and almost all of its children. The goals ahead are maximizing efficiency, encouraging preventative measures, and rechanneling the payment system. But the inclusion of many documented immigrants was only recently affirmed after a long struggle.

The flash point in one of the most politicized Supreme Court cases in recent memory is the so-called “individual mandate.” This wonky jargon has become a proxy for debating the size and role of government. Ironically, it was a pragmatic and bipartisan negotiation and policy innovation forged first in Massachusetts, under then-Governor Mitt Romney. The logic was that more people are required to get coverage, the more solvent and sustainable the system will become, while avoiding a scenario of bankruptcy because of a lack of insurance. To offset those costs of buying insurance, although some might feel no need, the state created a new subsidized plan (Commonwealth Care), required more employers to offer insurance, reformed the private insurance industry, and expanded its Medicaid programs. After all, everyone uses the system at some point, so any uncompensated cost would be borne by the system in the long run and costlier for the taxpayer.

This experiment has overwhelmingly positive results for a majority of residents in Massachusetts, including many immigrants. That was a short-lived reality, when over 30,000 immigrants were excluded in 2009 from buying into the Commonwealth Care program. This not only contradicted the logic of incentivizing more people to create a more balanced risk pool, it increased the possibility of catastrophic costs for more people and providers.

According to the legislature, it was done in the name of saving money. This justification, referred to as “Aliens with Special Status,” were mostly immigrants with legal permanent residency for less than five years, and other documented status. Those without lawful status are ineligible. The category exists with such complicated barriers based on federal laws established in the 1990s. Fortunately, Governor Patrick moved the initial group to a different plan, known as Commonwealth Care Bridge.

However, new enrollees still were not able access CommCare Bridge, and the program had higher co-pays and different hospital options, and was close to being eliminated at every turn of subsequent budget deliberations. Meanwhile, immigrant and health care advocates joined forces to challenge the targeting of this population in the state’s highest court. Victory was short lived past January, when the court ruled that the exclusion was an unconstitutional act of discrimination that violated immigrants’ right to equal protection under the law. Repealing the exclusionary provisions alone cannot justify discriminating against immigrants.

This was a unanimous legal decision that affirmed the rights of immigrants by ensuring that the Commonwealth’s tax-payers, it is only fair for these individuals to access the system which their labor and contribution underwrites. Immigrants who qualify for the Commonwealth Care program (if they meet status and income requirements). When Massachusetts’ law was implemented, and before certain immigrants were cut off, many immigrants felt a sense of civic duty by enrolling in health care. In fact, the process became a channel for immigrants to integrate into the system by contributing and participating. Complex laws on immigrants are the case because of generations of wrestling over who deserves to be considered American and who are considered residents, which still may equal access to critical institutions such as higher education.

The lessons of health care reform in Massachusetts are clear: residents paying taxes should have access to public-funded programs; customers enrolling in insurance should be guaranteed care. This way, immigrants are recognized as people. After all, our pre-dicaments are interdependent, at least in our social contract of taxation and insurance that takes care of each other, in sickness and in health. If only our immigration and citizenship law ensures that principle of shared responsibility, as opposed to exclusion.

**Affordable Apartments in Watertown**

Several Metro West communities are jointly establishing a list of “Ready Renters” who would be interested and income-eligible to rent affordable apartments in these towns.

**Income Limits:**

- 1 person $45,500
- 2 person $52,000
- 3 person $58,500
- 4 person $65,000

**Maximum Rents:**

- 1 bedroom $947 – 1,183
- 2 bedroom $1,126 – 1,316


Or call Robyn at Metro West Collaborative Development, Inc. at 617-923-3505 x 5.
Mental Health

What Does Self Esteem Mean to You?

"I think Self-Esteem depends on what kind of person you are. I think everybody should have some sort of good self-esteem because it affects how a person thinks, does things, reacts to things, etc. For some people, it is more hard-work. For others it is more on doing something you like. For others it's based on who you are as a person, whether you are a [good person or a bad person]. Everybody takes pride in self-esteem because it represents who you are as a person that makes you special."

-- By Kevin Huang, AACA Youth Council Leader

"I think self esteem in teens helps boost their self-confidence and affects their willingness to do activities."

-- By Philip Young, AACA Youth Council Leader

"Self-esteem is what you believe in and not what others believe in. It is all on yourself. I feel like sometimes other people's words can bring a person's self esteem down and sometimes up. One thing is for sure, if you don't have good self esteem, you won't be able to be successful."

-- By Terry Young, AACA Youth Council Leader

"Self-esteem is really important in a person. If a person is not confident about him or herself, then whatever he/she does will be looked badly upon by others. If one does not believe in one's self, it is hard for others to do the same. Similarly, if a teacher does not believe in the method she or he is using, then it is hard for the students to believe them too. No matter how good a person is, their self-esteem will decrease their goodness because they will portray themselves in a different way."

-- By Lili Roang, AACA Youth Council Leader

"Personally, I feel that I have a pretty high self esteem and that comes from the achievements that I have made academically, athletically, as well as other special-curricular activities. Whenever, I have failed to reach a standard that I have set for myself, it is not the end of the world for me, because I push myself to keep going until I reach the goal that I have set. For other teenagers, I don't think this can be the same. I feel that factors such as failing school academically or athletically or other special-curricular activities. No matter how good you are, your self-esteem will decrease their self-esteem because they will portray themselves differently."

-- By Eugene Szeto, AACA Youth Council Leader

"Self esteem? No matter what, NEVER think low of yourself. Be brave and do what you believe in. Never follow others because you will be a copysubstitute of other people. No matter what you do, you will not be your own self. You should think good about yourself, ignore what others think about you and BE YOU because this is what makes others to accept you! Always believe in yourself because whatever you believe in may come true one day. Trust yourself, be yourself, this will lead to your success in the future."

-- Jenny Wu, AACA Youth Council Leader

Effects of Quitting Smoking After:

20 minutes – Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.

12 hours – The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

1 to 9 months – Your circulation improves, and you lung function improves.

1 year – The excess risk of coronary artery disease is half that of a person who continues to smoke.

5 years – Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus (swallowing tube) and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2 to 5 years.

10 years – Your risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking. The risk of cancer of the larynx (voice box) and pancreas decreases.

15 years – Your risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker.

These are just a few of the benefits of quitting smoking for good. Quitting smoking lowers the risk of diabetes, lets blood vessels work better, and helps the heart and lungs, to name but a few. Quitting while you are younger will reduce your health risks more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.
An Interview with Yul Kwon

The Sampan had the opportunity to sit down with Yul Kwon, winner of “Survivor: Cook Islands” and host of PBS’ new show, America Revealed, prior to the show’s first episode screening in Boston. Here is a part of our conversation, the rest you can view online at sampan.org.

SAMPAN: Could you tell us a bit about the new show and this opportunity?

"When I got this opportunity, it occurred to me that, I don't think there's ever been a national series about America that has been hosted by an Asian American man. I think from the perspective of our community that is something that is helpful, that can help change the perception that other people have of Asian Americans, to see us more as Americans first and foremost, rather than perpetual foreigners."

"And it was interesting because over the course of filming I'd go to parts of the country that I've never been to before, like the deep South or Midwest or Alaska, and everyone was very friendly and very nice, but I think a lot of people were very surprised when they were told that I was a host. There were a couple instances where people were like 'Oh, where are you from?' Well, I'm actually from San Francisco. And a couple times they told me, 'Wow, you speak English really well!' Thank you, I've been practicing really hard for a whole year!"

"My hope was that by doing this show, it would help people understand that we are Americans and I was hoping that maybe the next generation of people in our community, if they see me then they can think I can do the same thing, too."

"When I was a kid, I never would have imagined that television or media was an option for someone like me. It was the farthest thing from my mind. And it took me a long time to develop the confidence that I needed to do it, and I was proud of my Asian American heritage, but also to imagine myself doing something like this."

"What I'm hoping is that kids, today, will see more images of Asian Americans doing interesting things and it won't take them as long to develop the self-confidence to do something like what I'm doing today."

SAMPAN: What were you expecting to get out of hosting the show?

"I have to say, I think I was sort of naive about a lot of the stuff [going into the show]. I was on Survivor but it's a very different style. Being a host is actually more like a high-pitched squeal. I thought I'd have this manly roar, but it turns out I'm not so sure."

"Half of the stuff we filmed was either up in the sky or in confined in these really tiny spaces. So you know for most of the filming I was literally on the verge of having a panic attack, and I felt like I was being forced to go through immersion therapy to confront all of my fears and phobias, so it was really hard on a personal level. But I feel like because it was so hard, I've grown a lot, intellectually and as a person."

"One thing that was scary was jumping out of the airplane. There was kind of a communication. The guy who was strapped on my back asked me a question when we were up in the air. I thought he asked me if I was feeling OK, but it turns out he asked me if I was ready to jump. So he just jumped and pushed me out. And I thought I'd have this manly roar, but it was more like a high-pitched squeal."

SAMPAN: What did you do with the winnings? ($1 million)

"Not a lot. I was generally a fan, but I was more interested, I think from an intellectual and social standpoint because I took a lot of classes on psychology and sociology, and it's really a fascinating social experiment about how people work with each other and how to rebuild society. So I always thought it was really interesting from that perspective but I never had any desire or thought I'd be on television myself."

"But I got recruited to be on the show because they needed more Asian Americans for that season, because it was a war of the races theme. And they didn't actually tell us that until we got on the island. But for me I wanted to go on the show for a few reasons, one because I felt that there was a lack of representation especially for Asian Americans, I wanted to get away from some of these negative stereotypes that I'd grown up seeing when I was a kid."

"For me, I always thought it was an opportunity to try out all the things I'd learned at school and in my career about how to work with people, about how to work with teams, and so it was, do you want to sign up for this crazy social experiment and try all this stuff out? And I did, and it turns out that a lot of the stuff actually works."

SAMPAN: Was there a point when you knew you were going to win?

"No, I mean, for most of the time, I thought there was no chance that I was going to win, because there was this one point in the game where people from my alliance mutinied and so it looked like there was virtually no chance that I would get to the end. But it wasn't until pretty close to the end that I thought I might have a chance at winning. And I also didn't think I was going to do that well because I wanted to represent our community in a positive way, and I knew I wasn't going to do anything that was really dirty or underhanded, and I was very conscious about not doing or saying anything that could be taken out of context to reflect negatively on Asian Americans. So I didn't know if I could win Survivor by playing a clean game. But that's one of the things I was hoping to do, you don't have to play dirty and you can still win this game."

"I donated some of the money to a number of different charities, including the Asian American Donor Program, and just did a lot of charity work. The rest of the money, I gave some of the money to my parents, and I invested the rest. And I paid my taxes."

SAMPAN: What did you do with the winnings?

"I don't think I've told anyone yet. I've been practicing really hard for this interview."

Harvard Students Present Views at Symposium on Chinese History

A group of Harvard students, from different regions in the world, presented their studies in a symposium discussing the 1989 protests at Tiananmen Square, at Harvard University’s Vennging Auditorium on March 27. At the symposium, co-sponsored by the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Freshman Seminar Office and Harvard University, 14 students gave 10-minute multimedia presentations that highlighted what they had learned during the seminar taught by Rowena He, a lecturer at the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations. Each presentation was an amalgamation of personal experience and the knowledge they picked up on the topic of the events that happened on June 4, 1989. "I think the students did a brilliant job," He said in a phone interview. "I'm very proud.

"When I got this opportunity, it occurred to me that, I don't think there's ever been a national series about America that has been hosted by an Asian American man. I think from the perspective of our community that is something that is helpful, that can help change the perception that other people have of Asian Americans, to see us more as Americans first and foremost, rather than perpetual foreigners. "

"Even though the class is a history class," He said. "It's really a class on humanity." This year was the second time the symposium has taken place. Many prominent China-watchers and professors were in attendance to watch the presentations. As a result of taking the class "many of the students have said that they will not take freedom for granted," He said. "Even simple tasks like being able to Google something for interest of anything."