Chinatown upper school sends first student to Harvard

BY LING-MEI WONG

Josiah Quincy Upper School (JQUS) senior Johnny Fang, 18, did not dream of attending the Ivy League schools.

“I wasn’t the best student until the eighth grade,” Fang said. “I struggled in school for a long time and didn’t get into the exam schools. That’s when I started paying attention.”

Today, Fang is class valenceditor and the first student in the school’s history to be accepted by Harvard University. Fang received a full scholarship, covering his tuition, rooming costs and living expenses for the next four years.

JQUS headmaster Richard Chang said, “Johnny is the first to attend Harvard, but we will have more to follow.”

Fang’s parents moved from China to Boston, where Fang has spent his whole life. They live in public housing, as Fang’s parents are unable to work due to health issues. When he was 4, Fang was put into foster care, placing him in English-speaking homes. Fang was reunited with his parents in less than a year, but has trouble talking with them due to limited Chinese skills.

“My childhood was unstable and there was no communication,” Fang said. “I’ve found my voice and a way to enter life’s conversation through writing essays and coding.”

Fang’s sister attended Boston Latin School, the most coveted school placement among Boston’s three exam schools. Quincy Upper was opened in 1999 by former Josiah Quincy Elementary School (JQES) principal Bak Fun Wong and only takes JQES students. The students come from low-income families — 96 percent of the student body — and are close-knit, as many have known each other since kindergarten. Fang’s graduating class has 49 seniors, compared to the Latin School’s classes of more than 250.

“What distinguishes Quincy Upper is cultural awareness,” Fang said. “Other schools are clique-y. It’s not like that here. I learned from people of all backgrounds.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Boston Marathon turns 120 amid sunshine

BY PAUL CLERICI

The Boston Marathon turned 120 this year, and for a number of those recent years, participation and interest in the race has increasingly grown from the most populous country in the world: China.

According to the race’s organizers the Boston Athletic Association, in 2014, there were 42 finishers from China; in 2015, 65 finishers; and in 2016, China fielded 144 entrants.

No male Chinese runner has yet to finish within the top 10. But for Chinese women, since 2000, when the country first cracked that echelon with a sixth-place finish by Dongmei Ai and eighth-place finish by Yingjie Sun, women from China have finished strong in the marathon, particularly in 2001 (Yanan Wei, eighth), 2002 (Sun, fourth) and 2010 (Weimei Sun, eighth). In fact, in 2013, Albertina Zuniga won the 70+ Women’s Division in a course record that stood for nine years.

Locally, many runners have some connection to the Chinese community, whether they be residents of Chinatown, are Chinese-American amateur athletes, or participate in the marathon to raise money for Chinatown organizations, such as the Lingzi Foundation or the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC).

This year, nearly a dozen runners from Chinatown received official bib numbers. Even more runners came out for the Lingzi Foundation and BCNC.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

WHAT IS "AFFORDABLE CARE ACT" - 可負擔健保法案

『可負擔健保法案』是一項全國性醫療改革，讓所有美國人得到醫療照顧保障。（圖片來自Flickr用戶Foungie）

MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR PROPOSES HIGHER INCOME TAX, LOWER SALES TAX

Gov. Deval Patrick’s plan goes through.

January 25 – February 7, 2013

Americans and Hispanics are higher than all proceeds going toward transportation.

The Cape Cod African Drum and Dance Group performed at the MLK luncheon on Jan. 11.

Hong Lok residents with Ruth Moy (second from right). (Image courtesy of Rogerson Community Services.)

Josiah Quincy Upper School senior Johnny Fang is the first student from the Chinatown public school to attend Harvard University. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)
Immigrants Day gathers hundreds

BY HONGYI GONG

Eva Millona, executive director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, said immigrants are a strong force of votes and notable contributors to the Mass. economy. She asked attendees to support MIRA programs covering citizenship, English education, employment and public safety. She also encouraged the public to ask legislators to support pro-immigration policies concerning safe driving, higher education equity, safer community and language opportunities for children.

"Immigrants are driving a great change, and legislators must respond to those changes," Millona said.

More than 600 people gathered at the Statehouse on April 11, joining the 20th Immigrants Day to support legislation benefiting the whole state. (Image courtesy of Hongyi Gong.)

Walsh discusses immigrants, broadband

BY SARA BROWN

Mayor Martin Walsh met with local Boston media on April 19 at City Hall. (Image courtesy of Sara Brown.)

Boston Mayor Martin Walsh met with members of the media during an ethnic media meeting on April 19 at City Hall.

Walsh said his administration just launched immigration centers at all Boston libraries. Boston residents can visit the library to learn more about becoming a U.S. citizen.

"This is a safe place for people to learn about their rights," Walsh said.

Walsh also said the Office of New Bostonians has changed its name to the Mayor’s Office for Immigrant Advancement.

"It’s not just a name change but really a mission change," Walsh said.

Along with the official name change, Walsh wants to add interpreters of different languages for services like 311, the Boston alert hotline. He also wants to do the same for the city website and newsletters.

The Clean Up Chinatown Committee met at the Asian American Civic Association on April 12. (Image courtesy of Sara Brown.)

Chinatown meeting roundup:

CCC, TCC ,CNC

BY LING-MEI WONG AND SARA BROWN

The Clean Up Chinatown Committee (CCC) met at the Asian American Civic Association (AACCA) on April 12. The CCC discussed reaching out to Boston's Department of Public Works to see how trash pickup is going in the Chinatown area. Public Works is scheduled to check on street barrels three times a day, every day of the week. However, some attendees doubted if that was happening, given the amount of trash in the streets.

Another issue discussed was educating the public about Boston 311, a city hotline and app for neighborhood issues, such as trash that needs to be picked up or sidewalks in need of repair. It is a free service that allows citizens to upload photos and mark the location of reports.

The Chinatown Business Association will purchase cigarette butt receptacles for member businesses, said president Steven Chen.

TCC

The Chinatown Coalition met April 14 at Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC). New American Chinese Christian Educational and Social Services (ACCESS) executive director, Pasang Drolma, introduced herself to the coalition. She said the job change has been a big transition for her but a good one.

"I am really passionate about this community and organization," Drolma said.

Drolma said that ACCESS has added new programs to help the senior population. It has conducted classes on fall prevention. Drolma said she has seen a difference in the seniors.

"They started off so timid, not talking to each other. Now, they have made friends and look forward to the class," Drolma said.

ACCESS has also started offering computer classes. A new Tibetan dance class is planned for May or June.

Fred Bennett, BCNC assistant director of adult education, gave an update on the agency's adult education program. Along with other classes, BCNC provides a program called Pathways to Success. Students can choose one of two focuses: Academics, with the goal of going to college, or a focus on career with the goal of landing a job.

Students learn about note taking, writing skills and group research. They also learn how to apply for a job, interviewing skills and how to keep a job.

To apply, students must have good English skills, complete an essay and be interviewed.

CNC

The Chinatown/South Cove Neighborhood Council met on April 18 at the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.

Gourmet China House at 55 Beach Street is ready to open, once it receives its Common Victualer license.

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Colonel Lovell’s Gate apartments

On Friday, April 29, 2016 at 12:00pm. Colonel Lovell’s Gate Apartments located at 148 Colonel’s Lane, Weymouth, MA 02189 will be closing their waitlist for all unit types. If you would like to apply before this deadline, applications can be sent to you via email, fax or mail upon request by calling 781-335-1293. Applications may also be picked up in person at the Management Office located at 148 Colonel’s Lane, Weymouth M-F, 9 am to 5 pm.

Completed applications must be postmarked, faxed to 781-331-5425, or delivered in person to the Management Office at the address below by 12:00pm, April 29, 2016.

Applicants must be determined eligible and qualified in accordance within the subsidy program.

For more information or if you require a reasonable accommodation during the application process, please call the Colonel Lovell’s Gate Management Office.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / FAIR HOUSING INFORMATION

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148 Colonel’s Lane, Weymouth, MA 02189
Event Calendar

China Education Symposium Annual Conference
April 23 to April 24
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
13 Appian Way
Cambridge, MA 02138
China Education Symposium will host its 2016 Annual Conference, “China’s Education in the 21st Century.” To RSVP, please visit http://ow.ly/YN8JL.

Community educational and information fair
Saturday, April 23
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
2 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116
Sampan will have speakers on health care, banking and imports will take place at the China Trade Center.

Japan Festival
Sunday, April 24
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Boston Common
Boston, MA 02108
The fifth annual Japan Festival will take place at the Boston Common, with food, performances and cosplay. For more information, visit www.japan.festivalboston.org.

Naturalization workshop
Monday, April 25
1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
The Asian American Civic Association naturalization workshop provides free instruction on filing naturalization applications, translated study material and much more. Please register with Melody Tsang at (617) 426-9492 x 0 or melody@aacu-boston.org.

Car buying workshop
Monday, April 25
1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
384th Street
Boston, MA 02111
Should you buy a car, or should you get a lease? What about used cars? Come learn about the basics of car-buying at this free workshop by Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) in English and Mandarin. Sign up with Shirley Doan at (617) 635-5192 x 1088 or shirley.doan@bcnc.net.

Free legal clinic
April 25
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
1509 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169
Quarter Asian Resources, Inc. will host a free monthly legal clinic addressing individual concerns over immigration law, landlord/tenant law, family law, personal injury and criminal issues. Please contact QARI at (617) 472-2200 or e-mail info@quincyanifestylesources.org.

AAAC job fair
Wednesday, April 27
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
26 West Street
Boston, MA 02111
The Asian American Civic Association will host a job fair at the SEIU Union Hall.

Transit workshop
Thursday, April 28
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
380 Oak Street
Boston, MA 02111
"Oh the places you’ll go on active public transit" community discussion will take place at the Metropolitan Community room. Dinner is provided. RSVP at http://ow.ly/4mHI0.

Poetry reading
Thursday, April 28
7 p.m.
949 Commonwealth Ave.
Boston, MA 02215
A poetry reading of APIA women, agender and mixed gender poets will take place at the Boston Playwrights’ Theatre. Suggested donation $3. RSVP at http://ow.ly/4mA9C.

Book signing
Friday, April 29
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
150 Harrison Avenue
Boston, MA 02111
A book signing and dinner for “Forbidden Citizens: Chinese Exclusion and the U.S. Congress” by Martin Gold will take place at the Birkhirk Auditorium, Tufts University.

YMCA Healthy Kids Day
Saturday, April 30
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
8 Oak Street West
Boston, MA 02111
The Wang YMCA of Chinatown will host its 16th annual Healthy Kids Day.

Surging Waves Symposium
April 30
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
730 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
The Surging Wave Symposium brings together descendants of the various waves of Chinese immigration to the United States at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies’ Tsai Auditorium. Registration is free online at http://ow.ly/109JG.

World Tai Chi Day
Saturday, April 30
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Chinatown Gate
Boston
A book signing and dinner for “Forbidden Citizens: Chinese Exclusion and the U.S. Congress” by Martin Gold will take place at the Birkhirk Auditorium, Tufts University.

Heart of the Community dinn and performances
Friday, May 6
7:30-11 p.m.
9 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
Join the Asian Community Development Corporation to kick off Asian Pacific American Heritage Month at its annual Heart of the Community Gourmet Dim Sum Breakfast at the China Pearl. For more information, visit http://asianadc.org/.

Newton-Taiwan Day
Saturday, May 7
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
90 Lincoln Street
Newton, MA 02461
Newton-Taiwan Day features performances and Taiwanese food at the Hyde Park Playground.

South Cove Manor annual dinner
Tuesday, May 17
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
237 Quincy Avenue
Quincy, MA 02169
South Cove Manor at Quincy Point will hold its annual meeting and dinner at the South Cove Pearls Restaurant. For more information, contact Carrie Peck at (617) 423-0590 or carrie.peck@southcovemanor.org.

AAPI mental health forum
Friday, May 20
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
85 East Newton Street
Boston, MA 02118
The seventh annual Asian American and Pacific Islander Mental Health Forum will take place at the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center.

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A community library opened at EMW Bookstore on April 9. Author Junot Diaz spoke at the event. (Image courtesy of Francesca Huynh.)

Community library opens in Cambridge

BY THE SAMPAン EDITORIAL TEAM

On a sunny afternoon on April 9, a line formed outside EMW Bookstore in Cambridge for the opening of a community library and to hear Junot Diaz, Pulitzer prizewinner and MIT professor. EMW Bookstore opened in 1998 as a Chinese bookstore at 934 Massachusetts Avenue and has blossomed into a community space that welcomes people from marginalized identities through an art gallery and a portfolio of arts, technology and science programming.

The community library houses a multimedia collection that highlights the narratives of marginalized peoples, confronts the problems of oppression through multiple angles, and seeks to create a just, liberated world. Audience members shared how important it was for them to have books, music, and film in which they saw themselves fairly represented. Diaz said, “The free lending library is perhaps the greatest democratic innovation that has been produced out of this country. The idea that absolutely anyone [regardless] of their immigration status, [regardless] of who they are, [regardless] of whether they have a home or not, whether they have any kind of money or not can come into this institution and avail herself of all their resources . . . you couldn’t give any greater gift to this community. It’s not to be underestimated what this means.”

Library and gallery hours are Wednesday 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday noon to 4 p.m.

The Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) received $10,000 from Wells Fargo on April 13 for its training of licensed Chinese child care providers. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

The funds will support the Family Child Care Career Ladder, the only Chinese family child care system and support network in the greater Boston area. BCNC helps train Chinese immigrants to provide licensed child care in their homes and supports professionals who are already licensed.

MASSFIELD HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PURCHASE PROGRAM

The Marshall Field Partnership is accepting additional applications from qualified applicants for grants to assist them in purchasing an existing market rate home or condominium in Marshfield. A deed restriction will be recorded on each unit purchased with a grant to secure affordability in perpetuity.

BCNC receives Wells Fargo gift for child care

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Chinatown crime blotter for April 8 to April 22

BY THE BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

All reports are submitted by the Boston Police Department. The time period is from April 8 to April 22 for District A-1, which includes Chinatown.

To report a crime or suspicious activity, call 911. Interpreters are available for Chinese speakers.

Fraud

April 8, 3:11 p.m.: The victim’s daughter reports her mother was approached by an unknown female on Tyler Street who tried to scam her out of some money. The suspect had left the area and the incident will be further investigated.

Sudden death

April 9, 9:57 p.m.: The victim was pronounced unresponsive at 5 Oak Street West by EMS. The incident will be further investigated by the District A-1 detectives.

Unarmed robbery

April 10, 8:21 p.m.: The victim reports while sitting inside of the coffee shop on Washington Street, the suspect grabbed his money and fled out of the shop down the street.

Assault and battery

April 11, 5:08 p.m.: The suspect was arrested on Washington Street on a charge of assault and battery. He punched an emergency nurse in the face resulting in a contusion to her right eye.

WALSH: City renames immigrant office

FROM PAGE 2

“This is about access to City Hall for everyone,” Walsh said. “We want to show that Boston is a welcoming city.”

Walsh said about 27 percent of Boston’s resident population is foreign born. Walsh said he plans on tackling the homeless crisis in the city by adding 11 new positions in City Hall with the new budget to focus on that issue alone. The city also plans on buying 10 new ambulances and new fire equipment.

“We are doing very well but we still have work to do,” Walsh said.

Walsh also spoke on the city’s recent deal with Verizon to provide better broadband access across the city. The deal will involve replacing its current copper-based infrastructure with the fiber optic network Verizon uses for its Fios network.

“It’s a pretty big deal for us,” Walsh said.

Walsh said this will allow for competition among providers, which often leads to more affordable rates for consumers.

FROM PAGE 1

East Main Apartments Norton, MA

1BRs @ $1,080, 2BRs @ $1,257, 3BRs @ $1,413

No Utilities included

East Main Apartments is a community that will be seven buildings with 188 units surrounding a separate clubhouse and pool for community use. Units include in-unit Washer and Dryers and fully appliance kitchens. There is free surface parking and garage spaces are available for a fee.

47 of the 188 apartments are affordable units that will be rented to households with annual incomes not exceeding 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) adjusted for family size as determined by HUD. The first affordable units will be ready in June/July 2016.

The 80% AMI Income Limits are as follows: $46,000 (1 person), $52,600 (2 people), $59,150 (3 people), $65,700 (4 people), $71,000 (5 people), $76,250 (6 people)

A Public Information Session will be held at 5:30 pm on May 9th, 2016 in the Norton Public Library (68 East Main Street, Norton MA)

Completed Applications may be mailed, faxed, emailed, or delivered in person. Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be received by 2:00 PM on June 1st, 2016.

The Lottery will be held on June 14th, 2016 at 5:30 PM in same location as the info session above.

For Applications and Details on the Lottery or for reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, call 617.782.6900 or go to www.e-s-b.com/lottery. For TTY Services dial 711. Free translation available.

Applications and Info Packets also available in the Norton Town Hall, and the Norton Public Library (68 East Main Street, Norton). Library Hours: M,Tu,Th 10-7, W 10-3, F-Sa 10-2.

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Get an inside look at vibrant retirement living! Tour our beautiful campus and maintenance-free homes. Discover dozens of exciting amenities, clubs, and activities. See the continuing care neighborhood, offering memory care, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, and skilled nursing care right on campus.

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Sunday, April 24, 2016
300 Linden Ponds Way, Hingham, MA

Independent living and continuing care tours
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Call 1-800-989-0448 for more information and directions, or to learn about other upcoming events if you can’t make this date.
The influenza virus causes between 3,000 to 49,000 deaths in America each year. (Image courtesy of Flickr user Glazy.)

NIH study finds new factors may influence influenza vaccine effectiveness

BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

The long-held approach to predicting seasonal influenza vaccine effectiveness may need to be revisited, new research suggests. Currently, seasonal flu vaccines are designed to induce high levels of protective antibodies against hemagglutinin (HA), a protein found on the surface of the influenza virus that enables the virus to enter a human cell and initiate infection. New research conducted by scientists at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, found that higher levels of antibody against a different flu surface protein — neuraminidase (NA) — were better predictors of protection against influenza and its unpleasant side effects. Neuraminidase, which is not currently the main target antigen in traditional flu vaccines, enables newly formed flu viruses to exit the host cell and cause further viral replication in the body.

The findings, from a clinical trial in which healthy volunteers were willingly exposed to naturally occurring 2009 H1N1 influenza type A virus, appear online in the open-access journal mBio.

“Each year between 3,000 and 49,000 people in the United States die as the result of seasonal influenza and its complications,” said NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci. “Annual vaccination against seasonal flu continues to be the most effective way to protect against infection, and this new study provides some interesting clues about how we might improve the level of protection that flu vaccines provide.”

Higher levels of HA antibodies in a person’s body have long been associated with greater protection against influenza infection. As a result, HA antibody levels have traditionally been used to guide vaccine formulations, “I learned a lot about myself — both physically and mentally — through running. I also learned a lot about life and things going on in Chinatown. I also like the smells of the food as I run by and like the people and things going on in Chinatown. I also like the people and things going on in Chinatown. I also like the people and things going on in Chinatown.”

One of the Lingzi Foundation runners was Wei Yao Xiao, 34, from Shenzhen, China.

“Lingzi and I share a lot in common in our background; for example, we both come from China to Boston University to fulfill our goals and dreams. It is truly meaningful for me to support Lingzi Foundation by running Boston Marathon, which is such an important goal in my life,” said Xiao, a BU doctoral graduate. “Running Boston Marathon has been one of my running goals since 2011. Qualifying Boston Marathon has always been my dream since then. I’m still working on it.”

For Xiao, however, running is much more than exercise.

“I learned a lot about myself — both physically and mentally — through running. I also learned a lot about life through running,” noted Xiao, who ran 3:37:35 on Patriots’ Day. “Boston is also the city where I started the journey of running since 2011. To me, running is far more beyond a way to exercise and stay healthy. It is a place for psychological and spiritual renewal. It enables me a new way to understand me and life.”

Raising money this year for BCNC was Sharon Cho, 27, who finished in 5:32:27; and Pamela Hung, 25, in 4:15:32.

In support of the Chinatown community, Max Alderman, 28, ran on the YMCA of Greater Boston Marathon Team for the benefit of area YMCA’s, including the Wang YMCA of Chinatown.

“I was able to witness firsthand the great work they do for the community,” said Alderman, who used to work for the YMCA. “Once I found out that there was an opportunity to run the marathon for the YMCA, I applied immediately and knew it would be a perfect fit.”

Alderman commutes through Chinatown and also trained at the Wang YMCA and throughout the neighborhood streets.

“The Wang YMCA has everything I need to prepare me well for marathon day. I take full advantage of the treadmills, ellipticals, stationary bikes, free weights and pool. The pool, in particular, is great for my joints and helping with cross-training,” said Alderman, who finished in 5:06:30. “I enjoy running through the streets of Chinatown on my outdoor runs in Boston. There are always so many interesting sights to see and things going on in Chinatown. I also like the smells of the food as I run by and think about what I will eat when I finish my long runs — it motivates me.”

Roger Horning, 31, who resided in Chinatown when he ran the 2015 Boston, finished this year in 3:26:52. It was his third Boston marathon and sixth overall marathon since he began running them in 2013. A challenging aspect of marathon training is wintertime training.

Compared to 2015, this year offered a calmer winter for training and a pleasant calmer winter for training and a pleasant calmer winter for training. The Lottery for eligible households will be held on June 21st at 4:30 pm at the Mashpee Commons located at the intersection of Rte 28 and Rte 151. 13 of these apartments will be made available through this application process and rented to households with incomes at or below 80% of the Area Median Income. Conceived within eight large buildings reminiscent of historic Cape Cod, these units will include all the comforts of home: Full kitchens with all major appliances, Hardwood floors; tile in the bathrooms, Washing machine and dryer, Energy efficient heat-pump HVAC; Large windows with copious natural light, Convenient parking.

MAXIMUM Household Income Limits: $47,550 (1 person), $54,350 (2 people), $61,150 (3 people), $67,900 (4 people)

A Public Info Session will be held on May 6th, 2016 at 3:30 pm at the Mashpee Public Library (64 Steele St)

Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be received, not postmarked, by 2 pm on June 6th, 2016

The Lottery for eligible households will be held on June 21st at 4:30 pm at the same location as the info session.

For Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.c-e-b.com/lottery or call (617) 782-6900 and leave a message. Applications and Information also available at the Mashpee Public Library on 64 Steele Street (M 10-5, Tu 12-7, W 10-5, Th 12-7, F+Sa 10-5)
BY DR. YEE CHUAN ANG

The evolution of medicine is fascinating. Due to advances in medical care, the average human life span is increasing. Along with improvement in health care, there have also been increased expectations of the capabilities of modern medicine. The unrealistic expectations of what medical doctors can accomplish have resulted in many people dying in ways they would have never wanted. This tragedy can be prevented if one has an advance directive. Advance directives are legal documents that allow you to spell out ahead of time what your health care providers and loved ones can help you make the right decisions.

About the author
Dr. Yee Chuan Ang is a geriatrician and internist at Tufts Medical Center. She is fluent in Mandarin. For an appointment with Dr. Ang, call 617-638-5400.

Offering extensive care to older patients with multiple chronic medical conditions, some illnesses such as advanced cancer or end-stage heart disease can be slowed down or stabilized by using modern medicine, but not cured. For terminally ill patients, full resuscitation may do more harm and prolong suffering.

In general, advance directives are important documents that help ensure that you get the medical care you want if you lose your decisional capacity. Having conversations with your health care providers and loved ones can help you make the right decisions.

April 22, 2016 Sampan

Saying goodbye: How to prepare advance directives

BY DR. YEE CHUAN ANG

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About the author
Dr. Yee Chuan Ang is a geriatrician and internist at Tufts Medical Center. She is fluent in Mandarin. For an appointment with Dr. Ang, call 617-638-5400.
The incidence of type 2 diabetes is rapidly increasing in the Asian population in America. A recently published national study suggests more than half of the Asian population in the United States either has prediabetes or diabetes. Uncontrolled diabetes can cause increased risks of losing eyesight, strokes, heart disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer’s disease and other complications to decrease lifespan. Therefore it is important that you know whether you have diabetes and how to control it.

1) One myth about diabetes is that only people who are overweight will get it. Chinese and other Asians are at high risk even at regular weight. China has one of the highest rates of diabetes in the world yet most of its people are not overweight. So it is important to ask your doctor to check for diabetes if you are overweight or have a family history of diabetes.

2) Another myth is about whether there is a need for early diagnosis and treatment. Patients often feel diabetes is not causing much discomfort to them, therefore treatment is not necessary. A patient once said that “My sugar level is not too bad, I will wait until it is bad then I will come back to see you.” Another said, “I feel fine, why do I need to take a drug which will make me feel unwell?”

It is true that many patients do not have significant symptoms and are found to have diabetes only during a routine blood test. The classic symptoms of increased thirst, increased urination and weight loss do not always occur in many patients. However, many patients with diabetes have already developed complications at the time of diagnosis. Therefore, having no symptoms does not mean the high blood sugar or fat levels are not doing damage to the organs.

Many large trials in the United States, China and Europe have shown that aggressive early control of diabetes reduced the rate of blindness, kidney failure, and heart disease by 25 percent to 69 percent in patients with diabetes. We have seen patients who realized the importance of controlling their sugar or fat levels only after they have developed multiple complications. Later on they have excellent control, which is great, but delays the further progression of the disease but the damage is already done and they struggle with symptoms of complications including blindness, dialysis and amputation. When we see those patients, we often wish we had seen them earlier or they had understood the importance of early sugar control years ago so they would not have advanced to that stage.

3) A big myth about diabetes is that there is nothing one can do to prevent or even reverse diabetes.

Multiple studies have shown that with healthy eating habits, including more vegetables like the traditional Chinese diet, good sleep, exercise (about 60 minutes every other day) and loss of 5 percent of one’s weight, diabetes can be prevented, controlled and even reversed.

4) Another myth is about taking medications for diabetes.

Some people say, “Medications are bad for me.” In order to control diabetes, very often multiple medications are needed. After having diabetes for a long time, lifestyle changes just cannot solve all the issues. Therefore medications are needed to get sugar under control and prevent complications. However, healthy eating habits, weight loss and frequent exercise are still important even for someone on diabetes medication since these lifestyle changes can help the body in ways medications cannot. Chronic high blood sugar is like a silent killer as it gradually damages different organ systems. According to the CDC, a leading U.S. government health agency, diabetes is one of the leading causes of death. Maybe it is time that diabetes deserves more attention from us.

To conclude, Asians have a high rate of diabetes which is a dangerous disease. However, it can be treated without too much difficulty when it is detected early. Recently the American Diabetes Association recommended that Asians be screened for diabetes at a BMI of 23 or at a weight much lower than all the other ethnic groups, in the hope of identifying those with diabetes at an earlier time so an effective intervention can be given. To maintain good health, it is time to ask yourself if you are at risk for diabetes, especially if you are over 40 years of age and have a family history of diabetes. If you already have diabetes, it is time to evaluate your health program to determine whether you are doing what is best for your health.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation invites you to attend a public meeting regarding:

Potential Redevelopment of
MassDOT District Office – 185 Kneeland St
and the
Veolia Energy Steam Power Plant – 165 Kneeland St.

TUESDAY, May 17th: 6 PM
at
Transportation Building – 10 Park Plaza
2nd Floor – Conference Rooms 1, 2 & 3

MassDOT is hosting our third community meeting to look into a potential redevelopment of MassDOT Parcels 25 & 26, located at 185 Kneeland Street, and the Veolia Energy steam power plant at 165 Kneeland Street.

At this meeting we will present and review the Draft Guidelines and outline for the Invitation to Bid (ITB).

If you have any questions, please contact:
Jim Kersten
Legislative Liaison, MassDOT
email: James.A.Kersten@state.ma.us

The meeting space is accessible to people with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation (such as American Sign Language Interpreters, assistive listening devices, handouts in alternate formats, etc.) and/or language assistance to fully participate, please contact Jim Kersten at MassDOT at 857-388-9041 or james.a.kersten@state.ma.us before March 22, 2016. Such accommodations will be provided free of charge.

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The candidate must be familiar with LIHTC program and HUD project based section 8 program. Certified Occupancy Specialist certification a plus. Must possess strong organizational skills and be detailed oriented. The Assistant will also perform general clerical tasks to included but limited to: answering telephone, filing and front desk coverage. Bilingual Cantonese/ Mandarin/ English preferred.

Resumes may be submitted by email to: wblaser@trinitymanagementcompany.com or by fax to 617-731-6481.

EOE
How to apply for insurance under the Affordable Care Act

BY SOUTH COVE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as ObamaCare, is a national health care reform signed into law by President Barack Obama. After the ACA was launched, citizens are required to sign up for health insurance coverage or face a penalty. Individuals can apply for coverage through the Health Insurance Market Place. Advance Premium Tax Credits (APTC) helps individuals with low or medium income to purchase affordable plans.

How to apply in Massachusetts

The Health Insurance Market Place is open for applications from November each year to the end of January the following year. Eligible applicants should be at least 19 with low or medium income, hold a green card for less than five years, be ineligible for MassHealth or Medicare, and not qualify for health insurance through an employer. Applicants can apply online at www.MAhealthconnector.org, by calling 1-877-623-6765 or by visiting a Health Connector office.

Application materials include:
• a valid email address,
• certificate of citizenship, immigrant ID number or an Employment Authorization card,
• Social Security Number,
• employer name and address,
• income proof,
• and tax forms (single individual, married or household) filed in 2015.

Applicants should state whether their employers sponsor health insurance and whether they need subsidies. For online applicants, once the system approves their applications after completion, they can apply for a Qualified Health Plan on the website, including subsidized ConnectorCare plans or nonsubsidized Health Connector plans.

Starting from February, only individuals who fit certain qualifications are eligible to apply for insurance coverage. Such individuals include those who recently moved to Massachusetts, got married, gave birth to children or lost their health insurance.

Tax credits

Subsidized ConnectorCare Plans use APTC to lower monthly health insurance cost. Applicants must file based on the number of household members under the coming year’s tax return and expected earned annual income. The government website will calculate the amount of tax credits households are entitled to. Applicants can use the credits to pay for monthly health insurance directly or to subsidize part of the family’s insurance cost. Thus, any changes in income must be reported to the government.

Members of subsidized ConnectorCare plans in 2015 will receive a Form 1095A in early 2016. Members must file federal income taxes in 2015 and use the Form 8962 — which is included with Form 1095A — to show they have used the tax credits for health insurance. Individuals who received tax credits must file federal returns, even if they have not filed in the past or their income is below the tax threshold in 2015. Failure to file or failure to include Form 8962 will result in the individuals being ineligible for APTC in the future.

Am I eligible for subsidized ConnectorHealth plans if my employer offers health insurance?

If your employer does not offer a health insurance plan, or your monthly health insurance cost is more than 9.5 percent of your household income, the plan is considered unaffordable under ACA terms. Individuals from low- or medium-income families are also eligible to use APTC for subsidized ConnectorHealth plans.

However, if your employer offers individual or household health insurance, which takes up less than 9.5 percent of the household’s income, the plan is affordable by ACA terms. Your family is ineligible to use APTC for subsidized ConnectorHealth plans, no matter what the cost of monthly health insurance payments.

The Affordable Care Act requires all Americans to sign up for health insurance so they are covered for medical emergencies. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)
Chinese director screens film at local festival

BY HONGYI GONG

“Frosting,” a short film by Emerson College ’15 alumna Yu Qu, was screened April 17 at the Paramount Center during the 2016 Boston International Film Festival.

The 13-minute film tells the story of a woman in her mid-thirties, who struggles to choose between her husband and lover. It is Qu’s first English film, which she made for her bachelor’s in fine arts thesis. The project raised about $5,000 on Kickstarter, a crowd-funding platform, and took about 10 months for production and post-production.

“We had a limited budget and met with many unexpected situations,” Qu said. “We were kicked out of our original filming location, and I had to sneak my whole crew into a hotel for the shooting.”

Actor David McCable said, “Qu did a great job keeping the crew together.” He attended the screening with lead actress Christine Hayden.

Qu wanted to discuss the financial and emotional independence of women in a combined background of Chinese and western cultures.

“I call myself a feminist,” Qu said. “My mother had an unpleasant marriage because she was not independent enough, and I’ve seen many around me share the same experience. That’s why I made a film with this theme.”

Qu is now working on an animated feature as social producer for Base FX and Titmouse in Los Angeles, Calif. She is dedicated to promoting communication between the Chinese and American film markets.

Adult learners celebrate graduation

Adult learners from the Next Steps Transitional English Program at the Asian American Civic Association celebrated graduation on April 15 at Tufts University. (Image courtesy of Natalie Ornell.)

Adult learners from the Next Steps Transitional English Program (Next STEP) celebrated graduation on April 15 at Tufts University at 145 Harrison Avenue.

Next STEP is a free English program at the Asian American Civic Association (AACA) that prepares intermediate English learners for college or job training. The program ranked No. 1 among 82 community-based agencies funded by Massachusetts for sending the most students to college from 2013 to 2015. The next class cycle begins May 3, with applications accepted on April 25 and May 2 at AACA.

Chinatown group celebrates spring banquet

Chinatown Resident Association had its lunar New Year banquet April 8 at Hei La Moon restaurant. CRA members pose with the Woo Ching’s White Crane Kung Fu School. (Image courtesy of Hongyi Gong.)

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