**Youth vaping creating next generation of nicotine addicts**

**BY LING-MEI WONG**

While most teenagers wouldn’t be caught dead with a cigarette, vaping has surged as an acceptable form of nicotine. An increase in e-cigarette use among U.S. youth, coupled with no change in use of other tobacco products during 2017 to 2018, has erased recent progress in reducing tobacco product use among youth, according to the CDC.

“People don’t understand the dangers of vaping,” said Amber Pelletier, director of health promotions for the American Lung Association in Massachusetts. “They think it’s just water. They think whatever product they use is different.”

E-cigarettes contain chemicals that can cause irreversible lung damage and alter teenage brains, such as formaldehyde, which is known to cause cancer. Another ingredient is acrolein, which is used as a weed killer and can cause irreversible lung damage. Nicotine is addictive and exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain, according to the American Lung Association.

Pelletier recently visited a middle school that gave three-day suspensions for students with tobacco. Out of a class of 25, 17 students were suspended for vaping.

“As I’m on stage presenting on what these products are and what’s in them, I heard people say ‘But it tastes so good!’ and ‘I love Juuling,’” she said.

Companies such as Juul target young people with flavored tobacco, such as pineapple and mango, which have been banned by the Food and Drug Administration. E-cigarettes made for youth are designed to look like USB drives and Sharpie markers, allowing the addicted to take discreet puffs throughout the day.

The FDA has approved nicotine patches or gum for cessation, which provide a stable dose of nicotine over time. E-cigarettes are not regulated, so someone could get a small amount of nicotine one time but a much higher dose another time.

“The biggest thing is to educate everyone on why these products are so dangerous,” Pelletier said.

Most people do not realize how much nicotine is in “e-juice,” as a single pod can contain as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes. It also contains diacetyl.

“Popcorn lung” is the nickname for bronchiolitis. It’s damage to the lung’s smallest airways that make you cough and short of breath,” Pelletier said. “The condition is called popcorn lung because people who smoke are burning a microwave popcorn with diacetyl.”

Massachusetts has raised the legal age of using tobacco to 21 in 2018, so vaping is illegal for youth.

**International students face added emotional stress**

**BY BELLA CHEN**

Li started to feel anxiety attending class. “I wanted to avoid any possibility to encounter that professor, I felt awful, but I didn’t know who he could talk to at that time,” she said.

Li’s situation is not rare among college students. A September 2018 study from Boston University School of Medicine found “among college students with clinically significant mental health problems, half of white students received treatment in the past year, compared to one-quarter of African American students and Asian American students, and one-third of Latinx students.”

Many of the stresses international students face are the same for domestic students — academic workloads, unfamiliar environments, homesickness and tuition burdens. However, Chinese international students face extra stress from cultural factors.

“Most Asian cultures tend to be more collectivist in nature, so family or the group is considered more important than any kind of one individual,” said Heather May, a psychology professor at Emerson College. “The mindset that comes with that is if there’s a problem, we take care of it in the family, we don’t talk about it with others.”

Massachusetts General Hospital psychiatrist Justin Chen led a 2016 study on depression among Chinese Americans. He said, “Traditional Chinese communities greatly stigmatize mental illness in part due to the concept of ‘face,’ which reflects a person’s or a family’s moral standing within the community.”

On-campus counseling centers and mental health consultation services help students academically and mentally.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**
Alejandra St. Guillen working to become Boston’s first Latina councilor

BY LING-MEI WONG

For Alejandra St. Guillen, she is no stranger to community work. She led the Mayor’s Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA) and was state lawmaker. During her tenure she worked on the Boston City Council. "Chinatown is perfect example of a community that’s being really constrained by economic forces," St. Guillen said. "I grew up in Mission Hill, which is going through similar issues for gentrification and displacement."

St. Guillen’s younger sister Imette was murdered, a tragedy that propelled her community activism. "The best way to honor her memory is to make sure people are living the lives she didn’t get to live," St. Guillen said. "They live in a home they can afford. They’re not choosing between rent and food. Schools are healthy environmentally and culturally and they have the resources they need to be successful students.

Chinatown wants to see sustainable climate action, as different parts of Boston are affected differently. And as the mother of a toddler, she wants to see better child care and Pre-K options for families. "The city is at a crossroads about what type of city we want to be," St. Guillen said. "The council plays a critical role in policies to put in place.

Guillen said. "The council plays a critical role at policies to put in place. Boston is the engine where people from all over the world study, work and be part of health care.

The at-large council seat was vacated by Ayanna Pressley, who won the Seventh Congressional District seat. Runner up Aletha Garrison is serving before the next councilor is elected. Julia Mejia is also running for the at-large seat.

Chinatown meeting roundup: TCC, CNC

BY LING-MEI WONG

The Chinatown Coalition met April 11 at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Council.

Tufts Medical Center conducted an annual community needs assessment. A presentation on the sex trade and sex trafficking was given by Rev. Bonnie Gatchell of Route One Ministry and Boston Police Department Lt. Detective Donna Gavin of the Human Trafficking Unit and Crimes Against Children Unit.

Downtown Boston has two strip clubs and labor trafficking takes place in Chinatown.

Route One works to serve women sexually exploited and trafficked by the commercial sex industry. The group has partnered with Boston Chinese Evangelical Church in Chinatown.

STRESS: Overseas students suffer in silence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I don’t think there are big issues, to be honest. They are just not confident enough," said Ellie Bosteng, a first-year graduate student working in the Boston University writing center.

However, students may not be familiar with these services or feel scared about accessing them.

In Li’s sophomore year, she joined Emerson’s international orientation group.

“Feel like with my experiences, I could be the bridge to help more students like me to overcome their problems,” Li said.

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IN THIS NEW EIGHT UNIT DEVELOPMENT IN MEDFORD.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES, RENTS AND APPLICATION PROCESS

To be included in the lottery, applicants must be income eligible and must submit a complete, signed application with all required documentation prior to the application deadline. Maximum income includes gross annual income from all sources for all adult (18 years or older) members of the household. Rents listed do not include utilities, which will be paid by the tenants. These units are not subsidized. Applicants must be income sufficient to pay rent and utilities or have a rental subsidy that will assist with rent.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

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Information Session: April 24, 2019, 6:00 PM
Lottery Drawing: May 22, 2019, 6:00 PM
Both events to be held at Medfield Town Hall
2nd Floor Meeting Room
459 Main Street, Medfield

Applications are available at Medfield Public Library and Medfield Town Hall and may be requested by phoning at 617-388-1331 or emailing housinglottery@cohonco.com

APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 20, 2019 at 12:00 NOON

Developed by Medfield Holdings, LLC

Translation Assistance is available at no cost upon request.

BOSTON Water and Sewer Commission

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

CHINATOWN

CCBA · 90 Tyler Street
Thursdays, 11 AM - 1 PM
MAY 9 - JUNE 13

Come meet with Boston Water and Sewer Commission staff in your neighborhood and learn why it’s important to scoop the poop when taking your dog for a walk.

You can also pay your water bill with a check or money order, talk about billing or service problems, and more.

WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

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For Information

www.bwsc.org 617-599-7300
390 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02119

BOSTON Water and Sewer Commission

April 19, 2019
Event Calendar

Anime Studio
April 19 to 21
900 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116
Anime Studio, the Northeast’s largest Japanese animation convention, will take place at the Hynes Convention Center and Sheraton Boston Hotel. Register at www.animeboston.com.

Chinese chat group
Fridays, Tuesdays
6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
677 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
A Cantonese conversation group will meet Friday at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, Kenzie 201 on 2F. A Mandarin chat group will meet Tuesday. RSVP at www.meetup.com/bostonchina/.

First-time homebuyer classes
April 20 to 21
38 Oak Street
Boston, MA 02111
ACDC offers HB101 classes.

Free Easter meal
Sunday, April 21
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
Bread and Life will serve a free Easter meal at First Baptist Church. To volunteer, email info@breadandlife@medMen.org or call (781) 397-0404.

English for college or job training
Monday, April 22
8:30 a.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
Attend testing for the AACA’s English classes for college or job training. For more information, call (617) 426-9492 x 250 or email information@aacaboston.org.

Wives and mothers of smokers group
Monday, April 22
2 p.m. to 3 p.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
A group for wives and mothers of smokers will take place at the AACA.

Health Symposium
Tuesday, April 23
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
1 Kneeland Street
Boston, MA 02111
The AACA’s 5th annual Health Symposium will take place at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine. Register at www.tufts-ci.org/events/5th-annual-asian-health-symposium/.

Free health care service
Every Tuesday
6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
First Church in Malden
184 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
The Sharewood Project offers free, unscheduled health care to the medically underserved populations of the greater Boston area.

Financial aid assistance
Wednesdays
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
Seek free assistance on college planning and applying for financial aid towards higher education. Service offered in Mandarin, Cantonese and English. To make an appointment, call (617) 426-9492 x 0.

Breakfast seminar
Thursday, April 25
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
120 Shawmut Avenue
Boston, MA 02111
Join the Boston Transportation Department project team to learn about traffic calming plans in Chinatown at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. Learn more at boston.gov/slow-streets/chinatown.

Love Your Block
Saturday, May 4
9 a.m. to noon
Chinatown will participate in Boston’s citywide annual spring cleanups. Register by April 26 as a volunteer at bit.ly/2019-loveyourblock.

Traffic meeting
Tuesday, May 7
6:30 p.m.
855 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02114
Join the Boston Transportation Department project team to learn about traffic calming plans in Chinatown at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. Learn more at boston.gov/slow-streets/chinatown.
Author Vanessa Hua visits Boston

BY LING-MEI WONG

Author Vanessa Hua held a reading of her debut novel “A River of Stars” April 4 at the Pao Arts Center. Hua is a columnist at the San Francisco Chronicle, winner of the Asian Pacific American Award for Literature, and author of “A River of Stars,” which was published fall 2018. It features a pregnant Chinese woman who escapes a maternity tourism center, makes her way to Bay Area, and stakes a claim to the American dream.

“It’s about immigrants who leave their homelands and have to reconcile with their adopted homeland,” Hua said. “A number of lovers are parted and over the course of the novel, they find each other as changed.”

Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Yang held a campaign rally on April 10 at the Boston Common. Hundreds of supporters joined Yang despite cold weather. (Image courtesy of Valerie Li.)

Presidential hopeful Andrew Yang draws hundreds to Boston Common

BY VALERIE LI

Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Yang held a campaign rally on April 10 at the Boston Common. Hundreds of supporters joined Yang despite cold weather. In a crowded field of Democrats seeking the 2020 presidential nomination, Yang offered an innovative solution to end poverty.

“I want to give everyone age 18 and older $1,000 a month,” Yang said. “And big tech companies will pay for it.” Supporters traveled from Portland, Maine, to hear Yang.

“I first got into the automation thing in 2012. So few candidates brought it up and Yang is the first candidate who talked about it and made it a main issue,” said Acton-Boxborough Regional High School student Benjamin Lin.

Public Meeting

Join Us!

Chinatown Neighborhood Slow Streets Meeting

Date: Tuesday, May 7, 2019

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location:

BCYF Quincy Community Center
885 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111

Contact: VisionZero@Boston.gov | 617-635-1347

Join the Boston Transportation Department project team to learn about traffic calming plans in the Chinatown neighborhood. We will present design plans for your review and feedback.

Cantonese interpretation and Simplified Chinese translation will be provided at the meeting. If you need other translation and interpretation services, contact us at: nahmah.fong@boston.gov and 617-635-1347.

Learn more at: boston.gov/slow-streets/chinatown

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How smoking affects your teeth
BY ALIA OSSEIRAN, TUFTS UNIV. SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE

Smoking stains teeth, causes bad breath and increases infection risk. (Image courtesy of Alia Osseiran.)

Before smoke travels to your lungs, it passes by your teeth, tongue, gums and cheeks. Your mouth gets hit with concentrated smoke, which wreaks havoc on your health.

Smoke stained teeth
Imagine you are going on a first date or a job interview. You want to present your best self, including a bright smile.

If you smoke, you might see a different picture. Over time, tobacco builds up on your teeth. Nicotine and tar slowly dull your smile with each use, causing a yellowing then brown, resulting in a poor first impression. This damage is the source of bad breath and even diminishes your ability to taste and smell.

Cancer
If you smoke, it’s more likely that you will get cancer. As the smoke fills the mouth, everywhere it touches is more likely to develop cancer. The smoke travels to the backs of the throat, increasing the risk of cancer there too. Every year, thousands of smokers die from these and other cancers. You can significantly lower your risk of cancer by quitting.

When do I go to the dentist?
Help your dentist spot problems early by getting regular check-ups. It will be up to you and your dental team to determine how often you should visit.

Not only will your dentist look for cavities, but he or she will also check your cheeks and tongue. If you are serious about quitting or just want to know your options, talk to your dentist.

Unhealthy consequences
The discolored and foul smell might be your body’s way of saying there’s an infection. While you are smoking, your teeth are drying out and a bacteria-rich forest can sprout on your teeth. This bacteria forest, or plaque, creates a haven for bacteria to grow causing swollen gums, or gingivitis.

When your gums are diseased, it might cause teeth to loosen or become sensitive, restricting your ability to eat properly. If you rely too much on one side of your mouth, the extra stress might cause the few healthy teeth left to break.

With each cigarette, your gums are deprived of nutrients that help them heal. Smokers take longer to rebuild and repair parts of their body. For example, if a smoker and a nonsmoker have a tooth pulled, usually the smoker needs more time to recover. Tell your dentist if chewing is painful and if you smoke.

Health care laws to undergo changes in 2019
BY IVY HUANG

Health care reform has been a hot topic and can get confusing. If you’re confused about what will happen in 2019, you’re not alone. Let’s take a look at what’s changing for your health insurance in 2019.

No more penalty for going uninsured
In 2018, the penalties for going uninsured was greater than $695 per person or 2.5 percent of household income. Beginning with 2019, you will no longer have to pay a tax penalty if you are uninsured. But you might still be subject to a state tax penalty.

There was a lot of news last year about repealing the ACA. Was it repealed?
No. Two bills to repeal the ACA were introduced to the Senate but they did not pass. The ACA is still in effect.

Premiums are lower
For the first time since the exchanges opened in 2014, the average rate for the benchmark silver plan will dip. The monthly premium will slide to $405, down from $412 in 2018. The rate changes depend on the state.

Price protections for the subsidized
One benefit of the rate hike for 2018 plans was that federal premium assistance jumped too. The average monthly subsidy jumped to $558, up from $393 a year earlier.

How can I get help if I have questions?
There are free tools on HealthCare.gov. Marketplace call center representatives are available to help all day, every day at 1-800-318-2596.

455 Harvard Street
Affordable Housing Lottery
Brookline, MA

Two 1BR @ $884*, One 2BR @ $1,041* One 3BR @ $1,187*

*Rents subject to change in 2019. No utilities included except Water and Sewer. Tenants will pay own Gas Heat, Gas Hot Water, and Electricity (cooking is electric). NO PARKING spots are included, and parking is estimated to be an additional $250/month.

MAXIMUM Household Income Limits:
$37,750* (1 person), $43,150* (2 people), $48,550* (3 people), $53,950* (4 people), $58,250* (5 people) and $62,550* (6 people)

* subject to change in 2019

455 Harvard Street is a 17 unit development in Brookline. 4 units in this building will be made available through this application process and rented to households that have incomes at or below 90% of the Area Median Income. Units will first be available in September 2019. Residences will have high-end finishes. The apartments feature nine-foot ceilings, central air conditioning, washer and dryers, refrigerators, microwaves, dishwashers and garbage disposals. No parking spots are included, but the building is located near in Brookline’s Coolidge Corner, steps to public transportation, restaurants, and parks.

All units are 100% smoke-free.

Completed Applications and Required Documentation must be received, not postmarked, by June 4th, 2019

A Public Info Session will be held at 6 pm on May 9th, 2019 at Room 103 in Brookline Town Hall (333 Washington Street). The Lottery for eligible households will be held on July 1st, 2019 at 6 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.a-e-h.com/lottery or call (617) 782-4930 (v1 then #2) and leave a message. For TTY Services dial 711. Free translation available. Applications also available at Brookline Public Library on 361 Washington Street (Library hours: M-Th 10-8, F-Sa, Fri-Sat 10-5, Su 1-5)
Quit smoking during the tax season

BY THE ASIAN SMOKERS’ QUITLINE

It seems that tax season, smoking and health care costs are all related to one another. However, this may not be the case financially. April is usually one of the busiest months of the year when the tax filing deadline is approaching. If you are a smoker, do you know that there is a hidden tax when you are getting a refund? It doesn’t matter whether you have to pay an additional amount for your income tax or you are qualified for a tax refund, you actually end up with paying much more accumulated tax than you can see from your tax form if you smoke.

According to data provided by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, “the average retail price of a pack of 20 cigarettes (full-priced brands), including federal and state retail prices, ranged from about $5 to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The Office on Smoking and Health, “the average retail price of a pack of 20 cigarettes, including federal and state excise taxes, ranged from about $5 to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.” The chart uses $5 as an example. See the chart to $11 in the United States in 2016.”

Weekly cost Yearly cost

$5 $260

$10 $520

$20 $1,040

$30 $1,560

$50 $2,600

The Chinese Smokers’ Quitline is a free nationwide Chinese smoking cessation service funded by a grant from the CDC. ASQ counseling is free, easy, convenient and has been clinically proven to double smokers’ chances of quitting for good.

Smokers can receive a free two-week supply of nicotine patches while supplies last. Call 1-800-838-8917 or visit www.asq-chinese.org, smokers are connected to free tobacco cessation counseling service in Chinese.

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Smokers can receive a free two-week supply of nicotine patches while supplies last. Call 1-800-838-8917 or visit www.asq-chinese.org, smokers are connected to free tobacco cessation counseling service in Chinese. Smoking can be an expensive habit. Save money and help your loved ones by calling the Asian Smokers’ Quitline. (Image courtesy of Adobe Stock.)
The cast of “The East Side,” which was performed April 11 to 14 at Farkas Hall. (Image courtesy of Angela Kim.)

“The East Side” is an original musical written by Julia Riew, Jared Leong and John Lim, and presented by the Harvard Asian Student Arts Project. Its protagonist is a young Chinese-American man grappling with his identity as Chinatown undergoes change around him. The musical addresses the gentrification of Chinatown and the colonization of Asian food by Caucasian chefs. “The East Side” succeeds in tackling societal issues with humor and heart, though its characters’ objectives and motivations aren’t always clear.

The musical opens in New York City’s Chinatown. A 17-year-old Ryan Chen (Jason Yoo) laments he has to spend the summer helping out at his family’s restaurant, Chen’s Dumpling House, and being stuck in an SAT prep class with his friends Patrick (Phiroze Parsaom) and Vera (Ramona Park). Chen’s Dumpling House is struggling financially, and a mysterious celebrity chef has offered to buy it. The decision falls on Ryan because his mother doesn’t read English well, and he is torn between remaining loyal to his family’s restaurant, or to use the considerable sum offered to pursue his real passion: painting. Meanwhile, Ryan develops a relationship with Michelle, a Caucasian woman he meets at the Dumpling House, and his newfound romance threatens his friendship with Vera and Patrick.

When Patrick and Vera visit a restaurant in K-Town purchased by the same celebrity chef, they discover the beloved neighborhood joint has become unrecognizable, to hilarious and insightful effect.

When a dejected Ryan asks his mother to teach him how to make dumplings, their conversation about happiness and the meaning of the restaurant moved me to tears. The musical ends on a hopeful note about the resilience of immigrants.

BY LIVIAN YEH
‘Vietgone’ busts stereotypes of Asian immigrants

BY LINDA CHIN

Greater Boston theater audiences, time to buckle your seat belts and get ready for a rollicking ride across 1970s America. Company One Theatre’s “Vietgone” by Marvel Studios writer Qui Nguyen opens April 26 with the Pao Arts Center. Knowing the artists involved, they will tell truths and touch our hearts. Set around the fall of Saigon in 1975 the subject matter is serious, but the playwright’s irrepressible and irreverent style promises a hilarious road trip.

“Vietgone” is a hip-hop rom-com, based on the mostly-true story of Nguyen’s parents. Quang (played by Quentin Nguyen-duy) and Tong (played by Christina Mei Chen) are Vietnamese refugees who meet at a relocation camp. They then head ‘west’ together on a motorcycle, meeting a cast of characters in the United States in search of asylum. Their family story, the story of a mother, father, son and daughter, is a story of history and personal experience and perspectives to the work. Nguyen wrote “Vietgone” with his lens as a Vietnamese American man whose parents had their reasons for fleeing Saigon, and as a parent whose children were curious about their family history.

For director Michelle Aguillon, her connection to “Vietgone” is professional and personal. “Vietgone” is the third play set in war-torn Vietnam that she has helmed, starting with “GR (Graveyard Registration) Point” for Hovey Players in 2003, and Turtle Lane’s “Miss Sai-gon” in 2005. Aguillon’s Philippines-born parents moved to the American to be with a child. Her father served in the Vietnam War, but never came home. He was on the first flight of Operation Babylift to leave Saigon, and did not survive the plane’s emergency landing. Aguillon was 8 years old when he died, and more than four decades later, the story of “Vietgone” will reflect her truth as well.

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Are there stereotypes that “Vietgone” will successfully bust? Yes, if you’ve never seen Vietnamese (or Asian) men and women’s sexy, savvy and badass sides portrayed on stage before. As for the play’s historical truth, everyone brings their individual experience and perspectives to the work. Nguyen wrote “Vietgone” with his lens as a Vietnamese American man whose parents had their reasons for fleeing Saigon, and as a parent whose children were curious about their family history.

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“Vietgone” takes the audience on a journey of laughter, music, emotion and a related historical truth. The play is about their families, their travel, their growth, their challenges and their successes. The play is about the joy and the heartbreak, the pain and the hope.

To learn more about Chinese dining culture and Chinese American immigration, we went to Gourmet China House, a restaurant in Boston’s Chinatown to interview its owner, Michael Zhang.

Zhang emigrated from Taiwan to the United States in 1990. As his family members in China had a connection to Shanghai’s Xinhua bookstore, his first job in America was open a Chinese bookstore in Boston. In 2017, Zhang purchased a former a convenience store called “Zhonghua Hang” and renovated the space for a restaurant. To honor the former store, he named the restaurant “Jingdian Zhonghua” in Chinese.

Zhang and his employees offer thoughtful service, delicious food and a happy experience. Gourmet China House gives Boston’s Chinese community a taste of home.

Restaurant profile: Gourmet China House

BY SEATON HUANG AND CHARLOTTE BAUGHAN

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