

Advocates cautiously optimistic about Biden's immigration policies

By Shira Laucharoen



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

President Joe Biden on Inauguration Day with his wife Jill Biden.

City representatives and advocates have said that president Joe Biden's newest immigration policies have brought them hope, but that there is still skepticism in the community. While Biden's sweeping reforms have appeared bold, it will likely take time for the former Trump administration's actions to be reversed.

One of Biden's first steps was to sign a memorandum on January 20 that ordered the attorney general and the secretary of Homeland Security to preserve and fortify the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy. Executive director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition Eva Millona said that while this was an important move, change will not be immediate.

"We are very excited that immigration is on top of the agenda. But we do remain concerned about the timing of this. It's going to take time to undo the damage and reverse 400 changes, practices, and regulations," said Millona. "It's an enormous task. It's incredibly challenging. ... We also call on our state legislature to act on

an immigration agenda that serves our Commonwealth. It is a divided Congress; it will take time to reverse and eliminate those policies.

Biden has also proposed the U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021, which, if passed, would create an eight-year path to citizenship for undocumented people. This path consists of two phases. During the first phase, individuals would be granted temporary legal status, with the option of applying for permanent residency after five years. In this phase, they would be allowed to work in the United States, pay taxes, and clear background checks. In the second phase, green card holders would have the chance to apply to become citizens. The act would also make Dreamers eligible to apply for permanent residency.

The president has also issued several other executive actions aimed at reforming conditions for immigrants in the U.S. He is creating a task force that will identify children separated from their parents under the former

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Douzo老闆Jack Huang 堅持不懈地渡過疫情

林映彤 報導



照片由Douzo提供

"亞洲餐館實際上受到了很大的衝擊。總體而言，酒店及餐飲業已被摧毀。"

在COVID-19疫情期間，波士頓唐人街的餐館是受災最嚴重的企業。一些地方已經關閉，不知道是否會再次開門做生意。許多企業以為一年前可能會暫時關閉，直到今天仍然存在。Douzo Sushi店主Jack Huang說："亞洲餐館實際上受到了很大的衝擊。總體而言，酒店及餐飲業已被摧毀。"儘管如此，Huang的業務一直堅持不懈，他在接受舢舨採訪時分享了他們如何保持開放的態度。

Huang將疫情描述為令人震驚的見證。"我認為99%的人永遠不會真正相信這一百萬年流行會持續這麼長時間。[...]在美國，這幾乎就像是一場來自『了不起蓋茨比』的聚會，接下來在你意識到之前就變成大蕭條。一切都被封城。因此，影響是蠻大的。"他說。"對於我們公司而言，我們的收入從原來的一百五十萬到突然下降到50萬美元。"

在疫情初期，Jack Huang也暫時關閉了他的餐館。"我們不得不

關閉並處理我們遇到的所有問題，我們不知道會發生什麼事。……起初，我非常樂觀，希望這種情況將在幾個月或幾週內消失，直到幾個月，再到幾個月成為幾年。"

對於Huang來說，這是一次全新的體驗。自80年代末以來一直在波士頓，他說沒有什麼比疫情的影響更可比了。Huang說："波士頓是一個非常活躍的市場。無論如何，您始終有大约300,000名學生和員工成為為經濟做出貢獻的消費者。但是這次不一樣。"

Huang說，由於他的一些餐館今天仍關門，他們的生產和創收能力是以前的一半。"從250-300名[員工]，我們縮減到只有84人。那些不想工作的人，我們真的沒有強迫他們，因為每個人的期望都不同，"Huang說。"我也正在與所有員工一起應對不確定性，我毫無頭緒。"

鼓勵那些在疫情期間選擇不

下續中文第六版

Phase 1-Eligible Senior Home Residents Reflect on Overcoming Vaccine Hesitancy

By Christine Mui

For weeks, a coalition of local organizations and medical professionals have urged Governor Charlie Baker to prioritize the state's minority and immigrant communities during COVID-19 vaccine distribution. Further slowing vaccination efforts, vaccine hesitancy stemming from historical health inequities persists among eligible seniors in those communities.

Two Chinese residents of the Brown Family House, who received the COVID-19 vaccine as part of Phase 1 of Massachusetts' rollout plan, spoke to Sampan about the experience and why they overcame their vaccine hesitancy. The Harold and Ronald Brown Family House in Brookline is part of 2Life Communities, a senior housing provider in the greater Boston area. It was one of

the first senior homes in the state to administer the COVID-19 vaccine to elderly residents.

Lai Chin, 74, said that initially, she had concerns about vaccine safety and would have preferred to "wait it out" — a more prominent sentiment among minority groups. A state survey of around 300 residents of color found that 36 percent were unlikely to ever get vaccinated or would wait a long time before doing so. More people fell into this category than the 25 percent of "early adopters," who said they wanted the vaccine as soon as possible.

"I really doubted. Well, they do it so fast, who knows the long-term effects? That's what we were afraid of," Chin said. She explained that over time, her fears slowly began to dimin-

ish after discussing with friends and listening to Dr. Fauci explain on T.V. how the vaccine uses mRNA, not a live virus.

Chin also said that hearing about state-wide shortages incentivized her to get the vaccine while she had the opportunity. CVS administered her the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine on Jan. 16, and the second dose on Feb. 6 right outside her door. One floor at a time, Brown Family House residents were instructed to place a chair in front of their doorway half an hour before their appointment. Then, CVS staff knocked on each door, instructing residents when they could come out to receive the shot.

Residents were monitored for side

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PPP: round 2 changes geared towards small businesses

By Carey Lin

Since the pandemic began, local economies and neighborhoods have seen devastating challenges as businesses struggle to remain open or adjust to this new environment. The hospitality industry took the worst hit, with the number of open businesses decreased to 54.6% and a 64% decrease in revenue for small businesses in the industry. In Boston Chinatown, Relationship Manager at Citizens Bank, Herb Wong said, "I know a lot of business owners, they are struggling. They asked me, 'Hey should we close this restaurant?' They're one of the larger restaurants in Chinatown."

The CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) Act was first enacted by the federal government in the spring of 2020 to provide economic relief. It included support for small businesses through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) implemented by the Small Business Administration (SBA).

Previously, Sampan reported on the PPP in relation to the second stimulus bill as a whole. We learned how Kwong Kow Chinese School was able to stay afloat. In light of the "Second Draw" of PPP loans available as of January 13, Sampan sought to further understand the program and how it differs from its predecessor.

"It is technically a loan from the SBA," said Spencer Klein, CFO of the Asian American Civic Association. The application and the money is processed by the banks. Although it is a loan, a portion of it can be 'forgiven' and does not need to be repaid if it falls under certain categories of spending. "Specifically, it's used for salaries, and employee benefits, and

then also some operating costs specifically around rent, or mortgage fees. [...] Within the proper time period, [a portion of] the amount of money that you borrowed will be forgiven, and the rest turns into a loan that you'll have to pay back to the SBA," said Klein.

The amount of money that has to be paid back, however, can be done so with very low interest rates. CPA Richard SooHoo said, "even though you have to pay it back, you don't have to pay any taxes on it." Loans do not get taxed, but do include an interest rate. Specifically for the PPP loans, SooHoo said "They start off as loans. And you have to pay it off with a certain interest rate [over a period of time]. The interest rate on the PPP loan is 1%."

Nonprofit organizations are eligible for PPP loans as well. Senior Vice President at Eastern Bank, Yongmei Chen said, "The CARES Act specifies how nonprofit organizations may qualify for a PPP loan, which has opened up important opportunities for the nonprofit community." AACA is one such organization that was able to successfully apply for the PPP. However, Klein notes that "If a person is being paid for, by a federally funded program, then you shouldn't be using PPP money to pay for their salary at all." Hence, the calculations for nonprofits applying for the PPP must be careful. If the nonprofit's operations are covered by government grants, then they do not qualify for PPP loans. (And instead, if you apply for those then it becomes part of the loan that you need to pay back.)

When the PPP funds first became available, banks did what they could to help process as many loans as pos-

sible within the time frame set by the SBA. Vice President Abby Nguyen-Burke said, "When the first day of PPP funding opened last year, like now both businesses and banks alike were faced with applying the SBA's guidelines even while they were continually changing and being updated." Despite their efforts, the money ran out in two weeks. Klein said, "A lot of big corporations snapped up PPP money right away, yes, they were able to do it."

To avoid the same problem from happening, the SBA and federal government established further guidelines and policies for applicants of the loan. Whereas the loan program was unavailable for those self-employed, it now is. The worst-hit hospitality businesses also now qualify for more funds. Owner of Douzo Japanese Restaurant, Jack Huang said "The second PPP, for restaurants it is 3.5 times your average monthly salary payroll [compared to the 2.5 times from the first round of PPP]." This has significantly helped Huang's business in supporting his employees during this time.

Referring to spending the money towards employee salaries and benefits, this is important for the 'forgiveness' section, which businesses must apply for later on. Klein explained that "whenever you use your money up, you have a 10-month time frame to apply for forgiveness, and they determine whether or not you qualify for forgiveness depending on where you had spent the money."

"No matter what loan an organization qualifies for, it's important for business owners to familiarize themselves with the documentation that's required and to prepare in advance," said Nguy-

en-Burke. "For example, a significant piece applicable to some components of PPP is understanding how to calculate eligible payroll expenses including health and retirement benefits. We encourage businesses to reach out to their banker or lending institution and to research information through the SBA to confirm the requirements."

For minority business owners, and those worried about the language barrier, both Eastern and Citizens bank have partnered with local nonprofits in order to better service the community. Wong from Citizens Bank said, "[For some,] it's the language. English is their second language so they're discouraged and in applying for the PPP because they don't understand it." Wong has partnered with Gilbert Ho from Chinatown Main Street to better service the community.

Nguyen-Burke said, "We recognize that language barriers can be a challenge for some businesses as they seek to understand and apply for PPP. It is why we have taken several steps to be of help. We have partnered with nonprofit support organizations, including AceNextGen in the Asian community and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in the Latino community, and have designated bankers who are available to assist members of these organizations." One can also access their services online or simply inquire about it at Eastern Bank.

Despite the PPP loans, small businesses are still struggling. Wong said, "Even though the PPP is helping maintain their employees and helping pay for their paychecks, rent is expensive in Boston. So I think that's where they're struggling too."

Beware of Telemedicine Offers From Unfamiliar Medical Providers!

Telehealth or Telemedicine refers to a patient's visit with their medical provider via computer, telephone, or another electronic device. They are particularly helpful for those who are housebound and during inclement weather. Telehealth appointments are not meant to replace all in-person visits. Deciding to take a telehealth appointment should be a discussion between you and your doctors.

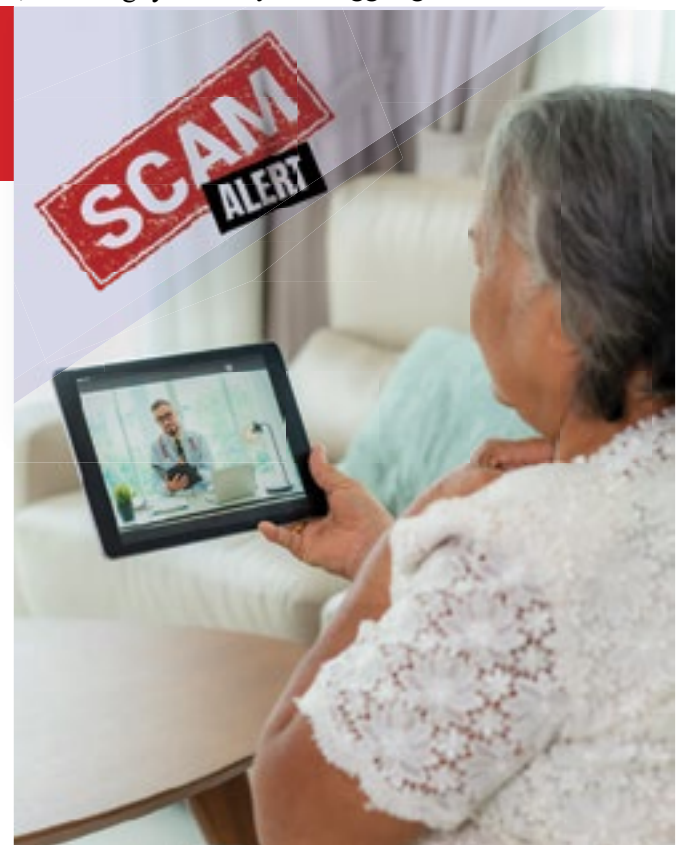
As a result of the novel coronavirus pandemic, telehealth services have expanded exponentially. Medicare extended coverage of telehealth services to allow beneficiaries to access their providers from the safety of their home. Telehealth visits are billable, and we all need to do our part to better understand how telemedicine works.

As telehealth expands, so does the potential exposure to fraud.

- If you are contacted by anyone other than **your medical provider** offering you a telehealth appointment, free testing, treatment or supplies, hang up. It is a scam! Be sure your telehealth appointment is being scheduled by one of your medical providers.
- Be sure to **write down** all your telehealth appointments in your MA SMP Personal Healthcare Journal so you can **review and compare** them to your Medicare Summary Notices, Explanation of Benefits, and other billing statements. To order your free personal healthcare journal call 800-892-0290 and ask for the MA SMP Program.
- Be sure to report any suspicious telemedicine offers or improper billings to the MA SMP Program's Report-A-Scam Line at 1-978-946-1243 or at ReportAScam@MASMP.org.

Remember: Never give your Medicare number, your bank account information, your credit card numbers, your Social Security number, or any other personal information to anyone you do not know and trust.

For additional guidance call the Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program at 800-892-0890 or visit www.MASMP.org.



Sam Wah Kee: Chinatown's wealthy merchant turned fugitive

During the late 1880s and 1890s, Sam Wah Kee was the most wealthy Chinese merchant in all of New England, a leader of the Chinese Free Masons, and the uncrowned king of Chinatown. His ultimate fate is unknown, as he fled from federal authorities and apparently was never apprehended. It's a fascinating tale of the rise and fall of an influential Chinese merchant in Boston's Chinatown.



Richard Auffrey

Sam Wah Kee, whose family name was actually Ah Moy, was born on October 1, 1856, in Canton, China, and came to San Francisco in 1868, when he was 12 years old. Sam Wah Kee would later become his business name, and the name he was most commonly known by. Sam likely came to San Francisco with other members of his family. The Moy family was very powerful in the U.S., and by 1890, there were more members of the Moy family than any other Chinese family in Boston's Chinatown.

Upon his arrival in the U.S., Sam spent five years in Salem, Oregon and a year in Chicago before he moved to Boston, around 1875. Sam was first mentioned in the local newspapers in 1883, as part of a historic event. The Morning Journal-Courier (CT), November 19, 1883, printed that, "The first child born to Chinese parents in Boston, a girl, came into the world here at No.33 Causeway street. The happy parents are Mr. and Mrs. Sam Wah Kee. Mrs. Sam, who is only sixteen years old, is the only pure blooded Chinese woman in the city." This was actually Sam's second wife, his first living

in China.

Around this time, Sam was a laundryman, although he might have been involved in other businesses as well, and already seemed to be making good money. The Daily Chronicle (TN), June 5, 1884, noted that Sam's wife had "...elaborate wardrobe of Chinese silks, heavy with embroidery and fastened with ornamental clasps of native gold, while the wardrobe for the baby comes from a prominent Chinese house in San Francisco."

In 1885, Sam was noted as helping 22 Chinese who had been arrested for gambling on Sunday. During the next fifteen years, Sam Wah Kee often appeared to help bail out and assist Chinese who had been arrested. He used his wealth to pay bails and fines, to help the people of his community.

It was also in 1885 that Sam was known as a local importer and merchant, including in the tea trade. By 1887, he owned a grocery store at 36 Harrison Avenue, and that building also became the center for the Chinese Free Masons, of which Sam was the leader. And in 1888, it was estimated that Sam was worth \$18,000 to \$20,000 (roughly \$500,000 in today's dollars).

On December 2, 1888, Sam's wife, who was now one of only two native Chinese wives in Boston, gave birth to the first Chinese baby boy born in Boston. A grand feast, attended by about 700 Chinese was held for this occasion, and their son received two names. His Chinese name was



Photo courtesy of Boston Globe, August 4, 1889
Sam Wah Kee

Moy Poy Hem and his American name was Ames Hart Kee. A second feast was held in early January at the Parker House, and a number of non-Chinese were invited and the Boston Globe, January 9, 1889, claimed, "It will be the dinner of dinners in Boston this winter."

The Boston Globe, June 30, 1889, stated, "The wealthiest Chinaman in Boston and probably in all New England is Sam Wah Kee, who is at the head of the Wah Kee Company in this city, and one of the acknowledged leaders of the New England branch of Chinese Free Masonry." It was also claimed his wealth was estimated to be at least \$100,000 (about \$2.8 million in today's dollars).

In May 1894, Moy Toun You, Sam's elder brother and business partner, who lived in Canton, became very ill. Sam traveled to China to see his brother, who unfortunately died before Sam reached him. While Sam was gone, there were allegations that he was involved in the illegal immigration of Chinese over the Canadian border into Vermont, although Boston officials didn't believe that allegation.

Sam returned to Boston around March 1895 but had left his wife and children behind in China. However, he arrived with a third wife, whom his first two wives had chosen for him. For the next nearly six years, Sam continued his life in Chinatown, running his mercantile empire and helping his community.

Everything fell apart in January 1901, when Sam was arrested in Maine, alleged to be involved in illegal immigration. After several days in jail, Sam made bail but then failed to show up for his next court date. Evidence against Sam mounted, alleging he had assisted over 1000 Chinese illegally enter the country. A year later, Sam had still not been apprehended, and his third wife then vanished from her home at 8 Oxford Place.

From the king of Chinatown to a wanted fugitive, Sam amassed much wealth in the U.S., and it doesn't appear that U.S. authorities ever tried to seize any of that wealth beyond his \$1000 bail. Sam's ultimate fate is not known, though he apparently eluded U.S. authorities, and he might have eventually traveled back to China with his third wife.



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COMIC

empty bamboo girl by Lillian Lee



Immigration Policies

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administration and reunite the families. He will also be suspending the “Remain in Mexico” program, which had directed approximately 60,000 migrants to stay in Mexico until their court date in the U.S., which had left numerous asylum seekers in dangerous conditions. Biden has also come up against challenges, as a federal judge in Texas has temporarily blocked the administration’s 100-day moratorium on deportations of undocumented immigrants.

Director of legal services at Rian Immigrant Center Tony Marino said that while many immigrants they work with are relieved, there is still a great amount of uncertainty in the community. Marino said that he is heartened to hear that DACA has been restored but that it is still very much a “temporary pause in enforcement,” or a band-aid solution.

“It is meaningful that the administration has recommitted to DACA,” said Marino. “That’s great news. But in very real, practical terms, people with DACA are in the same position that they were on January 19. They

still don’t have a pathway. They’re still unable to protect their families. They’re still not quite allowed to be full members. These are all people who have grown up here. This is the home that they know.”

Marino said that he hopes Biden’s plans will eventually go farther and that there remains room for improvement. He said that he would like to see a rethinking of detention practices and a functioning asylum system in place. He also expressed his disappointment that the DREAM act was never passed and that immigrants whose talents continue to be put to use are still scape-goated in society. There has been positive rhetoric, he said, but many are waiting to see what will be put into practice.

“We, as advocates for immigrants and people who care about the immigrants in our community, have been very cautiously optimistic about the Biden administration and how far they’ve been willing to go,” said Marino. “His actions have allowed us to continue to be optimistic, without really fixing anything yet. ... The CDC

COVID pretextual ban [Order suspending the right to introduce certain persons from countries where a quarantinable communicable disease exists] that allows border officers to deny due process to asylum seekers – that’s still in place.” He added, “People who have been forced into refugee camps in Mexico, they have not been invited to file their applications or to enter.”

Marcony Almeida-Barros, director of community engagement in the attorney general’s office, said that there is still fear in the immigrant community that he hopes the Biden administration will address through policy. While economic recovery and a response to the coronavirus will be at the top of the president’s agenda, he said that he hopes the administration will enact change around immigration soon, as well.

“For someone who has gone through this process, you are not a hundred percent comforted and secure until you have a green card or become a U.S. citizen,” said Almeida-Barros. He added, “There are many things that they cannot do. It is an uncertain time, even though they are way more relieved than they were before.”

Vaccine Hesitancy

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effects 15 minutes after getting inoculated and received another check-in later that day, according to Chin. As for side effects, Chin was surprised she “did not feel anything,” not even the arm muscle soreness she experiences after the flu vaccine. The same procedures were used when administering the second dose.

Another Brown Family House resident, Jeanette Moy, 64, expressed doubts about the vaccine at first too. “I didn’t really want to take the vaccine yet because there’s not enough data, and I wanted to wait until April.” Moy said that because she lives in an elderly housing complex and the virus’s severity, she agreed to for herd immunity reasons. “Because this is a virus, and it can kill you — that’s why I’m taking it. But normally, I don’t take other vaccines, like I don’t take the flu shot because when I take it, I get very sick for three weeks,” Moy added.

Moy was fatigued for a few days following her first dose. After receiving the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, she said she experienced stronger flu-like symptoms, such as a migraine, dizziness, and slight fever.

All Brown Family House residents were given a consent form beforehand and allowed to opt out. Approximately 90% of residents and all staff members

chose to take the vaccine.

Workers and residents of congregate settings, including senior residential facilities, were considered a priority group within Phase One, according to the state’s vaccination plan. However, Brown Family House was able to complete their vaccination series sooner than other senior homes because residents were extremely active in calling and writing letters to Gov. Baker’s office, requesting for their prioritization.

Chin said she felt fortunate to get the vaccine before her other relatives living in senior housing even received notifications. “They asked me, ‘When did you get it? How can I get it?’” Chin said. “At the same time, people are having difficulties making appointments on the computer. So that makes me say, ‘Oh I am lucky.’”

Those in the current Phase 2 roll-out have been plagued with barriers to getting vaccinated like limited doses and the state’s reportedly not user-friendly website. To address some of these concerns, the Baker administration announced a new call center for assisting residents 75 and older with scheduling vaccine appointments. The 211 hotline offers translation services in 100 languages.

Literature regarding vaccinations

has also been proliferated by the Department of Public Health in a variety of languages, including Chinese, Councilor Ed Flynn told Sampan in a statement. In Boston, the city’s Age Strong Commission worked with local partners at the Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center, the Chinese Progressive Association, and Boston Senior Home Care to reach out to and navigate vaccine access for Boston’s Chinese seniors 75 and older.

The commission has scheduled on-site vaccine clinics for several senior-living buildings in the city. Moreover, Boston residents age 75 and older can request assistance with vaccine enrollment by calling 311 and asking for the Age Strong Commission, or by calling the State at 211.

Still, Moy points to another potential barrier for those not living in senior homes: the lack of vaccine sites near Chinatown, a problem plaguing many other Boston neighborhoods and towns across the state. Currently, the closest mass vaccination site is the Reggie Lewis Center in Roxbury. “Are they going to have a site for Asian people to get the vaccine someplace nearby?,” Moy asked. “Some places are hard for them to go to because some don’t have transportation.”

Moy said the vaccine has not

changed her life much, and she still takes precautionary mask-wearing measures. She believes we will only start to see some return to normalcy once “80% of Americans get the vaccine, but some are still reluctant to take it.” For Chin, although receiving the COVID-19 vaccine has not made a substantial difference, “it does make me feel more secure.”

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SAMPAN is New England’s only biweekly bilingual English-Chinese newspaper. Sampan fosters cultural understanding and celebrates global diversity. Founded in 1972, Sampan is published by the Asian American Civic Association. Sampan is distributed free in Chinatown and the Greater Boston area. All donations to the publication are tax deductible. Subscription: \$65/year (1st class mail).

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Tech companies must address hate speech aimed at BIPOC

By Jun Li

As tech companies have grown increasingly prevalent, moderation, especially in regards to hateful or discriminatory content, has as well.

While most tech companies have policies that clearly delineate what is free speech and what is hate speech, for some — such as LinkedIn — enforcing those policies is what has become problematic.

Edward Hsieh, chief operating officer of the Asian American Civic Association (AACA), said he received a harassing message from a LinkedIn burner-profile accusing him of being a “spy from a foreign country” and threatening to “report [him] to the officials.”

In their community policies, LinkedIn states that they prohibit content that “incites or threatens hatred, violence ... or discriminatory action” because of “race, ethnicity, national origin caste, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or disability status.”

Additionally, LinkedIn prohibits creating false profiles, clearly stating,

“We don’t allow fake profiles or entities.”

When Hsieh reached out to LinkedIn to report the two violations, however, LinkedIn dismissed the case, stating, “There’s nothing there.”

Hsieh said that after receiving LinkedIn’s initial response, he reached out to their Safety Center to further clarify why the message was harassing.

“I gave him some context, and I think the biggest problem is that there were no clear words in there saying ‘Asian’ because the person was smart enough not to say anything about ‘Asian,’” Hsieh said. “Instead, they abbreviated AACA and used the term foreign.”

Hsieh also pointed out the current “high levels” of anti-Asian racism due to the pandemic, but even after this second message, LinkedIn closed and dismissed the case again.

“Even when I took the step of explaining to him that this is not just me being mad at a potential spam [message],” Hsieh said, “they still close it down.”

Hsieh reached out one last time, this time pointing out the current state of racism in social media — specifically with sites like Parler becoming widespread.

However, unlike the other two times, Hsieh said he received a message from LinkedIn asking for “as much details” as possible.

Despite LinkedIn finally acknowledging the hateful message, Hsieh still expressed disappointment at the long process it took to get there.

“The fact is that it took me three messages before they even acknowledged there might be a problem,” Hsieh said.

According to Amy Zhang, an assistant professor at University of Washington, focusing on social computing and human-computer interaction, most tech companies typically rely on a combination of algorithms and human moderation to detect hate speech.

Zhang emphasized, however, that companies most likely rely on human

moderators over basic algorithms, because detecting hate speech is “highly subjective, contextual and cultural.”

Zhang also said that for companies, determining what is free speech or what is hate speech is a difficult matter to resolve.

“Where do we care more about societal harm and helping marginalized people versus respecting people’s individual freedoms?” Zhang said.

In Hsieh’s case, his last message where LinkedIn asked for more details about the message most likely went through human moderation rather than a default algorithm designed to quickly determine whether the content was hateful or not.

Despite this response, Hsieh said his biggest problem with the company was their inability to enforce their own policies.

“They are, by all measures, [individuals] of private corporations, meaning they can set their own terms,” Hsieh said. “But the fact is, they’re not even following their own terms, based on what I saw.”

Pamelyn Chee on being an Asian actress and upcoming film “Boogie”

By Carey Lin

Singaporean actress Pamelyn Chee fell in love with acting when she was seven, playing her first role as a duck in a performance with a Chinese Dance Troupe.

“I really enjoy the kind of feeling where you’re just 100% there. Acting is the only sort of thing that provides that feeling of being present,” said Chee. “It was 99% foolishness and 1% determination to never give up. ... This was truly what I wanted to do, and I was okay with failing, and I failed so many times that my skin is so thick, it no longer bothers me like it did initially. ... I was foolish enough to never give up, and here I am.”

Being an actor, like any gig-based career, is entirely dependent on the project you have had the opportunity to work with. Chee said, “What I’ve learned is to have zero expectations, because everytime I have a big project coming out, I think that I’m going to do so well, and then this whole thing crashes ... And then things that I had like no expectations of, sometimes they just do really, really good.”

Chee stars in Eddie Huang’s soon to be released film, “Boogie”. Premiering on March 5, the film follows a talented Chinese American high schooler who dreams of playing basketball in the NBA. From the film’s trailer, it is revealed that Chee’s character is a ‘mom who is responsible, but doesn’t believe in [her son].’

Auditioning for the role was a no-brainer for Chee. She said, “I grew up with eight aunts on each side. ... So I kind of just mixed and matched that to present who I think this woman was. The moment I read the script, I knew who this woman was. Because we all have this crazy auntie back in Asia right?”

Just a couple of weeks later, Chee signed the contract to play the role. Curious as to why she was casted, Chee asked the writer-director himself.

“There are so many actresses here that can play this role. How is it even me?” said Chee. “He said that there’s

nobody in the intersection of East and West as much as you. Because when he gave us the lines of the script, it was in English, but because this character speaks in a way that she mashes both languages all the time, so I had translated the script to a way in which I thought she would speak.”

When asked about how Asian audiences might feel about portraying such a strict ‘tiger mom’ on screen, Chee responded with a smile. “This is the thing. Eddie taught me something very important, which is to be proud of who you are,” she said. “... I think Eddie shows the good, the bad, and the ugly. And you guys can decide what it is. He’s not trying to be defensive about the image of the Asian mom, and I definitely did not try to salvage that kind of proper, ‘she should be this type of way’ ... Let the audience decide. We’re not here to tell you what to think.”

In the Western entertainment and film industry, there has always been a lack of Asian representation. Even when there is an opportunity for Asians to be cast, the role would oftentimes be given to a white counterpart.

“Now it seems that the casting people want somebody that is completely Asian when they’re looking for ‘Asian’. Whereas like 10 years ago, or when I started out, they preferred somebody who is like half-Asian to play these Asian roles,” Chee said.

For many, finding similar opportunities in Asia was equally hard. In Asia, some also preferred to cast half-white individuals for lead roles. Chee spoke to what frustrates her the most.

“You’re never Asian enough to the Asians, and you’re never white enough to the whites. Even if you’re just right smack in the middle of that intersection of being Asian and white... I feel like this is kind of why [Huang] made this film. To show where he is,” said Chee. “[When working on “Boogie”] I think everybody went in excited, because they finally got to do a story that was not white-washed. That they could be themselves and be in the universe which was real to them.”

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Middleborough Housing Authority - Lottery Agent

Income Limits apply

Household Size	Maximum Income
3	\$68,550
4	\$76,150
5	\$82,250
6	\$88,350

Applications may be obtained at:

Middleborough Housing Authority (MHA) 8 Benton St Middleboro, MA 02346

MHA website: middleboroaha.org under Links/Applications

For more information, request an application or reasonable accommodation, please contact MHA at 508.947.3824 or send email to housing@middleboroaha.org

Informational Sessions will be via Zoom meetings; Logins are:

Saturday January 30, 2021 @2:00pm ID # 995 6317 8345 PW 122712
Thursday February 4, 2021 @ 6:00pm ID # 947 2040 7781 PW 047123

Deliver application to:

Middleborough Housing Authority 8 Benton St, Middleboro 02346

Lottery Applications due or postmarked no later than 2:00 pm March 22, 2021

The Developer and the Lottery Agent do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, disability, age, ancestry, children, familial status, genetic information, marital status, public assistance recipient, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran/military status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP): MHA encourages applicants with diverse backgrounds to apply. For those with Limited English Proficiency, MHA will utilize a Language Line Service which will provide translation services in a multitude of languages. MHA will call the service to explain the need and an interpreter translates the information to the applicant



Plymouth Affordable Housing Lottery Sandy Pines www.sebhousing.com

\$288,000 for a 2BR duplex (HOA fees are \$42/mo); \$320,700 for a 3BR single family (HOA fees are \$42/mo)

The affordable homes will be ready for occupancy in Summer of 2021

This is a lottery for the 10 affordable homeownership units being built at Sandy Pines in Plymouth, MA. Of the 10 units, six are 2BR duplexes, and four are 3BR single family homes. These ten homes will be sold at an affordable price to households with incomes at or below 80% of the Area Median Income. Homes will feature unfinished basements, vinyl siding and shutters, double hung windows, white cabinets in the kitchens and bathroom, granite countertops, in unit laundry, and large closets, and will contain between 1,296 and 1,632 square feet of living space, and come equipped with 1.5 bathrooms, a yard, and a driveway. The community will feature tree lined streets, an open field area for games, picnics, and neighborhood events, and a playground, and is located just minutes from the highway.

Maximum Household Income Limits:

\$67,400 (1 person), \$77,000 (2 person), \$86,650 (3 person),
\$96,250 (4 person), \$103,950 (5 person); \$111,650 (6 person)

The Maximum Household Asset Limit is \$75,000.

Completed Applications and Mortgage Pre-Approvals must be received, or postmarked, by 2 pm on April 6th, 2021. Applications and Pre-Approvals postmarked by the deadline must be received no later than 5 business days from the deadline.

A Public Info Session will be held on March 10th, 2021, at 6pm via YouTube <https://youtu.be/h2tUFtCCCC0> (or just search for SEB Housing) and via Conference Call – (425) 436-6200. Code: 862627

The lottery will be on April 19th, 2021 at 6pm via YouTube at <https://youtu.be/GW4vOtIAu1w> (or just search SEB Housing) and conference call – (425) 436-6200. Code: 862627

For Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.sebhousing.com or call (617) 782-6900 (x2) and leave a message, or postal mail SEB Housing, 257 Hillside Ave, Needham MA 02494. Free translation available. Traducción gratuita disponible



The Reserve at Spring Hill 47 Spring Street, Rehoboth MA Affordable Housing Lottery www.sebhousing.com

Eleven 2BR Single Family Homes for \$206,000
w/ (\$87/mo HOA fees)

The first affordable homes will be ready in Summer of 2021.

This is a lottery for 11 affordable units being built in the first 4 Phases at Reserve at Spring Hill. These 11 units will be sold at affordable prices to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income.

Reserve at Spring Hill will have a community center with a full working kitchen, gym and patio/barbeque area. Homes have 2 full baths, 2 bedrooms, kitchen, great room, dining room and a study. The home will come with a 2-car garage and concrete paver driveway to fit approximately 4 cars. Homes are built on a slab and have a concrete covered patio area in the rear of the home. Lawns come with underground sprinkler system. Front walkway is concrete pavers. Central A/C, gas fired forced hot air heating. Navien tankless hot water system. Vinyl flooring in the kitchen, bathroom and laundry areas, carpet in the great room, bedrooms and study areas. All counter tops will be laminate. All colors/style are from builder selections. Appliances are refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher and electric range. Washer/Dryers are not included.

Maximum Household Income Limits:

\$48,750 (1 person), \$55,700 (2 people), \$62,650 (3 people), \$69,600 (4 people)

The Maximum Household Asset Limit is \$75,000.

For more information on the Development, the Units or the Lottery and Application Process or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, please visit: www.sebhousing.com or call 617.782.6900 x2. A Public Info Session will be held on March 17th, 2021 at 6:00pm via YouTube at <https://youtu.be/YTDesuQ-1z0> (or just search for SEB Housing) and via Conference Call – (425) 436-6200. Code: 862627. The lottery will be on April 26th, 2021, at 6 pm.

Applications and Required Income Documentation must be delivered, not postmarked, by 2 pm on April 12th, 2021.



Affordable Housing Lottery The Val 164 Lexington Road, Billerica, MA

25 1BRs @ \$1,376*, 23 2BRs @ \$1,500 *, 5 3BRs @ \$1,638*

Tenant pays utilities: gas heating, gas hot water, electric cooking, electricity, water and sewer.
One parking spot is included in the rent.

Maximum Household Income Limits:

\$54,950 (1 person), \$62,800 (2 people), \$70,650 (3 people),
\$78,500 (4 people), \$84,800 (5 person), \$91,100 (6 people)

The Val will be comprised of 211 rental units in one 6-story building, situated on over four acres of land with tremendous visibility along the intersection of the Middlesex Turnpike and Lexington Road. 53 of the units will be rented to households with annual incomes not exceeding 80% of AMI adjusted for family size as determined by HUD. Tenants will enjoy first class amenities including fully-enclosed garage parking with direct covered access into the building, an expansive southerly facing courtyard featuring a pool, barbeque grills, fire pit, and lounge seating, a two-floor fitness facility featuring state-of-the-art strength and cardio equipment, coworking spaces, a library lounge, clubroom, storage, and other amenities consistent with a full-service apartment community. There will be 2,750 sf retail space on the ground floor level fronting the intersection.

Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be delivered, or postmarked, by 2 pm on March 29th, 2021. Applications postmarked by the deadline must be received no later than 5 business days from the deadline.

A Public Information Session will be held on February 22nd, 2021 at 6:00pm via YouTube at <https://youtu.be/v0eQUTGuuZg> (or just search for SEB Housing) and via Conference Call (425) 436-6200. Code: 862627.

The Lottery will be held on April 8th, 2021 at 6:00pm via YouTube at https://youtu.be/dFAmrlZ_9I (or just search SEB Housing) and via conference call (425) 436-6200. Code: 862627

For Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.sebhousing.com or call (617) 782-6900x1 and leave a message or postal mail SEB Housing, 257 Hillside Ave, Needham MA 02494. For TTY Services dial 711. Free translation available. Traducción gratuita disponible.



Affordable Housing Lottery Dwell85 85 Plymouth Street, Bridgewater, MA 02324

1BRs @ \$1,298*, 2BRs @ \$1,545*, 3BRs @ \$1,771*

*Rents subject to change. Tenants will pay own gas Heat, gas Water Heating, Electricity (cooking is electric). Water and sewer are included.

Dwell85 is a transit-oriented multifamily residential development consisting of 58 units. The project is located in downtown Bridgewater, steps away from Bridgewater State University and the Bridgewater MBTA commuter rail station. The project features four residential levels and surface Parking. All units have full kitchens including stone countertops, stainless steel appliances and high-quality cabinets. The living areas have been designed to feature oversized windows, 9-foot ceilings and wood LVT flooring. All materials will be high quality and durable. The common areas are designed to be multi-functional throughout the day providing for a variety of uses and social gatherings. Built-in booth seating and communal tables drive collaboration and community building, with common area elements selected both for their durability and their upscale design.

MAXIMUM Household Income Limits:

\$53,350 (1 person), \$60,950 (2 people), \$68,550 (3 people)
\$76,150 (4 people), \$82,250 (5 people), \$88,350 (6 people)

Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be received, not postmarked, by 2 pm on April 9th, 2021.

A Public Info Session will be on March 3rd, 2021 at 6 pm via YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Pig6oIG8bAs> (or just search for SEB Housing) and via Conference Call – (425) 436-6200. Code: 862627. The lottery will be held on April 21st, 2021.

For Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.sebhousing.com or call (617) 782-6900 (x1) and leave a message or postal mail SEB Housing, 257 Hillside Ave, Needham MA 02494. For TTY Services dial 711. Free translation available.



Wen-hao Tien wields metaphorical meanings in *Home On our Backs*

By Mandy Sun

“We believe mountains can be moved, that worlds exist within a rock, and respond emotionally to the color red.” These metaphorical words perfectly exemplify Wen-Hao Tien’s new exhibit at the Pao Arts Center: Home on our Backs.

Originally, Tien is trained in calligraphy and monochrome works, but she has recently taken a turn into colorful art that expresses particular community concerns. “I wanted to reveal what’s less visible to outsiders,” remarked Tien. Given the amount of discourse that emerged from COVID, she wanted to use her platform to create understanding, authenticity, and connection through relatability.

As Tien only immigrated to Chinatown 30 years ago from Taiwan, she always viewed herself as an outsider to the old Chinese community. It was only through the guidance of community members like Eugene Mahr, Nancy Lo, and Tunney Lee that she was able to catch a glimpse of what life was like as an Asian American within Chinatown. While she was able to visit the family association of Chinatown, she felt that, “[she] was only able to have access to that because of the community members. It was a privilege.”

Despite that access, she struggled to engage in conversation with many members, believing that “much of the men in Chinatown weren’t talkers, they were doers.” This privilege of meeting these long lineages of Chinatown residents but never truly fitting in, created this phenomenon, which Wen Hao likes to call an “accepted outsider”.

This newfound perspective as an “accepted outsider” influenced her exhibition heavily. She feels that “it provides a comparative understanding and leverage to speak and feel” that many Chinatown residents struggle with.

Each of the five art pieces serves as a portion of her migration and self-reflection story in relation to those of the community residents. Each is carefully created and selected by Tien, who foraged for each specific material used within her artwork. The Red Dress is made out of red plastic bags that bore a similar resemblance to the ones at Chinese supermarkets. To Tien, they are a familial metaphor to her parents.

Not only is this red color prevalent within the dress, but it is seen within the statues of Guan Yu. These statues were molded and created with transparent resin so that the insides could show red string and chili pepper. These symbols were purposed to bring out an emotional attachment to home as well, as Tien sees Guan Yu as a link to loyalty and family to Taishanese people.

With the fast-paced changes of gentrification and displacement, the Chinatown of 30 years ago is much different from the Chinatown today that’s filled with boba tea shops and luxury condos. She hopes that the exhibit will allow outsiders and young people to catch a tiny glimpse into the lives of traditional Chinatown and connect with it.

“Certain things that I picked out from these 5 to 7 works were things that I felt in common with the Chinese people. There are things that we can all relate to, and I wanted to use these few works in the exhibition to create abstract objects that different groups of

people could relate to. That was the purpose of the work. Nobody really owns the work,” Tien expressed.

The exhibition is best experienced in person. Some of her works are even interactive. Dusts to Mountain is a box built for explosives and filled to the brim with sawdust. It symbolizes the story of the Chinese contribution to the Transcontinental railroad and a traditional Chinese folklore where a man claims to move a mountain. As immigration to America can be seen foolish to some, the folklore man could be seen foolish for his word.

However, Tien twists the meaning into a positive optimistic one. When people visit the exhibition, they can shake the box and see sawdust drop through the box’s holes and into the ground. Eventually, sawdusts soon collect into a mountainous shape. “This is supposed to represent the grassroots efforts of Chinatown. By shaking

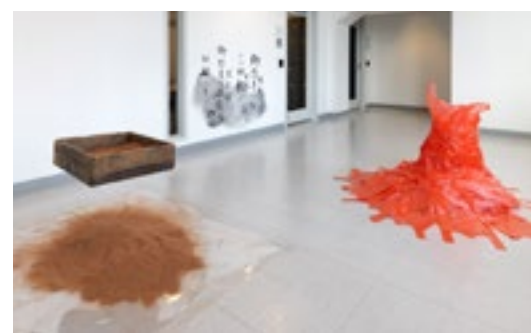


Photo courtesy of Warren Patterson Photography
Wen-hao Tien's Home on Our Backs: Dust to Mountains, Red Dress, and Nostalgia at the Pao Arts Center 2021.

the box, one can build a mountain through each singular effort,” stated Tien.

Home on Our Backs opened last Thursday and will stay open until June. One can check out the virtual exhibition on Pao Art’s website or book an appointment to see it in person. Hopefully, this visit could foster conversation and self reflection about the status of Chinatown today and the urgent care it needs for the future.

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Informational Zoom meetings will be held on February 23, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. and March 6, 2021 at 12:00 pm.

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Priority will be given to applications received on or before the lottery deadline: Friday, April 2, 2021. Applications must be postmarked by this date at 5:00 p.m. The lottery drawing will be held on Friday, April 9, 2021. | Applicants do not have to attend the lottery to be entered.

Income limit	*Maximum Gross Annual Income for Eligibility (per Household Size)					
	Number of Household Members					
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
30%	\$20,300	\$23,200	\$26,100	\$29,000	\$31,350	\$35,160
60%	\$40,620	\$46,380	\$52,200	\$57,960	\$62,640	\$67,260

*Monthly Rental Rates		
Number of Bedrooms		
1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
**Rent based on Income		
\$1,087	\$1,305	\$1,507

Notes: *Rates & Income limits subject to change.
** Applicants for three (3) 30% MRVP units and eight (8) 30% Section 8 PBV units must meet selection criteria and eligibility for subsidy assistance through Housing Assistance Corp (HAC)
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Douzo owner Jack Huang on persevering through the pandemic

By Carey Lin

Boston Chinatown restaurants are some of the worst-hit businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Several places have closed down without knowing if they will reopen again. What many businesses had thought would be a temporary closure a year ago still remains today. Douzo Sushi Owner Jack Huang said, "Asian restaurants actually took a big hit. In general, the hospitality industry has been destroyed." Despite that, Huang's business has persevered, and he shared in an interview with Sampan how they managed to stay open.

Huang described the pandemic as devastating to witness. "I think that 99% of people would never really believe in a million years that the pandemic will last that long. [...] In the US, it was almost like, from a Great Gatsby party, and the next thing you know it became the Great Depression. Everything was locked down. So the [impacts] are huge," he said. "For our company, we went from a million and a half in revenue to suddenly dropping down to \$500,000."

Early in the pandemic, Huang also temporarily shut down his restaurants. "We had to shut down and deal with all the problems we had, and we did not know what was going on. ... At first, I was very optimistic that hopefully this will go away in a couple of months, or a couple weeks, becoming a couple months, a couple months became a couple of years."

This is a completely novel experience for Huang. Having been in Boston since the late 80s, he said nothing compares to the impact of the pandemic. Huang said, "Boston is a very dynamic market. No matter what, you

always have approximately 300,000 students and staff as consumers contributing to the economy. But not this time."

With some of his restaurants still closed today, Huang said they are operating at half the production and revenue-generating capacity compared to before. "From 250-300 [employees], we downsized to only 84 people. The people who didn't want to work, we really didn't force them because everyone has different expectations," said Huang. "I'm dealing with uncertainty with all my employees as well, I have no clue."

Those who chose not to work during the pandemic were encouraged to apply for unemployment benefits while others switched to working part-time. Those paid on a salary, including managers, "we fund their salary 100% throughout, including bonuses, allowance, whatever that needs to be. Basically [...] I'm trying to make this as normal as possible even during the pandemic," said Huang.

Moreover, he has chosen to take the time to prioritize the wellbeing of his employees further. He said, "The first thing I thought is: What can I do to make them feel a sense of security?" When employees brought up the concern about taking public transport, Huang decided to subsidize their trips via rideshare apps. In addition, with some help from PPP loans, he has been able to pay for 100% of his employees' health benefits since the pandemic began.

"Our philosophy of operating business is a principle of family. So you ask me, who am I? I'm the head of household. I'm the father," said



Hongyu/Sampan

"Asian restaurants actually took a big hit. In general, the hospitality industry has been destroyed."

Huang. "I always believe the wellbeing of my employees is my responsibility, not the government's. Because they are in a much better, happier place, guess what? Their productivity becomes better."

Most importantly, Huang believes that they can get through this by adapting to the situation as they change. "It's really how you adapt to

situations. So throughout this time we correct ourselves to state and local government guidelines, laws, and then how to have our people comply with it," he said. "The point is, the one who is able to survive us today you will come out better and stronger. So my advice is I think that everybody needs to reinvent themselves, and adapt to the situation and hang in there."



Photo courtesy of Douzo

ENROLLMENT FOR SEPTEMBER 2021 IS NOW OPEN Application Deadline is February 28th

Boston Renaissance is a Pre-K through Grade 6 charter public school open to all students in Boston. Enrollment is open to students entering K1-Grade 4, and is determined by lottery, which will be held on March 9th, 2021. To enter the lottery, please visit <https://bostoncharterschools.schoolmint.net/welcome>.

Boston Renaissance integrates high-quality academic instruction with excellent visual and performing arts programs, including piano, violin, chorus, dance, visual arts, physical education, and technology classes. BRCPS proudly welcomes and serves all students, including those with special education and English language needs. With high academic standards and a well-rounded curriculum, we help students develop the confidence, character, and skills to succeed.

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