Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy, focus on at her Wah Lum Academy, is something that Sifu (Teacher) Mai Du focuses on. The balance, that of body and mind, is something that martial arts have found serenity in. Those who have practiced the different forms of martial arts have found that balance, that of body and mind. Such balance, that of body and mind, is something that martial arts have found serenity in. Those who have practiced the different forms of martial arts have found serenity in. Those who have practiced the different forms of martial arts have found serenity in. Those who have practiced the different forms of martial arts have found serenity in.}

On the early morning of November 12th, a 64-year-old Asian woman was kidnapped outside of Wollaston station while she was headed to work. She was bound and shoved into the back of a car. After being repeatedly raped and assaulted, she was left in the parking lot of a Brockton mall later that evening. She was able to attract the attention of a passerby who contacted the police. After the initial reports and capture of the assailant, a 26-year-old Christian Lynch, it was found that he had attempted to kidnap another Asian woman 10 minutes earlier at the same station, but she fought him off. Lynch was held without bail pending a dangerous hearing. He is also facing charges of lewdness after allegedly exposing himself to a woman on a walking trail in Quincy.

Life requires balance. It's an attribute that martial arts both promises and provides. Those who have practiced the different forms of martial arts have found serenity in balance, that of body and mind. Such a balance is something Sifu (Teacher) Mai Du focuses on. She works as an activist and a teacher to make a positive impact on the community. Mai commented on the situation in a recent interview with this reporter.

"I have been teaching community self-defense, women self-defense courses not only for the physical state and improvement of her students, but their mental state as well. Amid tragedies and crimes that occur in this world, including recent events in Quincy, home to one of her locations, she works as an activist and a teacher to make a positive impact on the community." Mai commented on the situation in a recent interview with this reporter.

Betting on an Alternative: How Boston is Helping to Alleviate the Problem of Gambling in the Asian-American Community

By Yiwei Zhao

Gambling has long been a problem in Asian American communities. A 2019 report by UMass Boston researchers, funded by the state and led by Institute for Asian American Studies researcher Dr. Carolyn Wong, featured interviews with approximately two dozen low-wage workers and retirees from Chinatown’s food and service industries. Recurring themes in their narratives revolved around “isolated lives in linguistically isolated neighborhoods,” a sameness to their jobs, and seemingly no healthier or more easily accessible alternatives for stress relief than gambling.

The need for evidence-based and culturally appropriate treatment programs to deal with gambling addiction in Chinatown and other Asian communities is clear. Sampan recently had the opportunity to explore the measures taken by Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC), a partner in the 2019 UMass Boston report, to deal with the problem of chronic gambling in the community. This reporter spoke with Yoyo Yau, who has been with BCNC since 2010 and is currently their Chief Program Officer.

Sampan: Could you briefly introduce BCNC’s major programs and partnerships?

Yoyo: We have three programs. Asian CARES (Center for Addressing Research, Education, Services) Research Project is a community-engaged research project on problem gambling in the Asian community. The research “Unpacking the Root Causes of Problem Gambling in the Asian Community” was conducted by Asian CARES, of which BCNC is one of the leading organizations. Asian CARES is partnered with Addressing Disparities in Asian Populations through Translational Research (ADAPT) under Tufts University.

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Clinical and Translational Science Institute. This program is funded by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

BCNC also leads the AAPI Empowerment Project, which aims to implement a comprehensive gambling prevention campaign and raise awareness of gambling addiction for the Chinese-speaking population in Boston, Quincy, and Malden. This partnership strengthens the relationships of organizations across these cities to provide resources for the community. BCNC disseminates the Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s (DPH) Office of Problem Gambling Services’ general brochure and a multilingual program gambling leaflet through its community network.

The Everett Community Level Health Project (CLHP) Project RISE (Resilient Immigrants Striving for Equity) offers a three-year, two-phased intervention that targets mental health for immigrant populations via the lens of racial equity and accessibility to culturally relevant resources. Asian American, Haitian, and Latinx immigrant groups are among those collaborating on this initiative.

Sampan: What was the reason for the launching of these programs?

Yoyo: Some of the families we’ve served have experienced gambling addiction-related problems: enormous stress in families, resulting in financial ruin/debt, spousal violence, child neglect, and even suicide. Because of their linguistic and social isolation, elders are especially vulnerable to gambling addiction. We want to lift up the structural causes that contribute to and exacerbate problem gambling as an important and urgent issue for families and the Greater Boston Asian community.

Sampan: Why is it important to you to solve the problem of gambling for the Asian community?

Yoyo: Families have immense potential to prosper if they can fully engage in society and receive the necessary assistance. We build trustworthy connections with families, get to know them, and serve as a valuable resource and case management, counseling, stress management, financial management, boundary-setting, and a safety plan.

We discovered that many of the problems mentioned in my previous response were caused by someone in the household having a gambling addiction, so it’s important to address the root cause by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services to respond to immigration stress and behavioral health issues. In Massachusetts, the gambling intervention and treatment services include hotline services, telephone gambling intervention, individual treatment and residential treatment.

Sampan: Among all the causes of problem gambling in the Asian community, as discussed in the Asian CARES study, which do you think is the most damaging?

Yoyo: Gambling occurs for a variety of reasons and causes. Immigration and the long-term impact of poverty, stress, and trauma generated by immigration are the structural, fundamental causes of gambling. In our research, some people viewed gambling as a shortcut for money, others wanted to escape from their job stress and language barriers. All the causes are interrelated: it is a systemic problem and we must collaborate with service providers, stakeholders, community partners, different cities, and state officials to address the structural and systemic issues.

Sampan: How is BCNC dealing with the free Encore casino shuttles that run from Quincy, Dorchester, Chinatown, and Malden, in predominantly Asian communities?

Yoyo: The three cities the shuttle buses depart from are largely working-class or have large populations of low-income Asian immigrants. The shuttle buses are making gambling addiction even easier for this community since it allows them to go to the casino easier. Many of our research interviewees find the casino to be welcoming and attractive. It gives people a sense of belonging, especially someone with limited English, feelings of being isolated from American society, and limited economic and wider entertainment opportunities.

The goal is to raise awareness of the buses’ 24-hour existence, as well as the murals and digital billboards that saturate the regions with a high concentration of young and at-risk populations. Besides this, we have talked with city and state officials to find out what regulations and restrictions for disproportionate marketing are possible.

Our common goal is to mobilize different city and state officials and community partners in dealing with this issue. Meanwhile, we are hoping there is more prevention education and the creation of linguistic and culturally appropriate messages sent out to people in the community.

Sampan: Problem gambling has not been focused on in the Asian community historically, and as a result there are few resources accessible and dedicated to non-English speakers or resources that are culturally competent. How does BCNC help with that?

Yoyo: We are working with a Massachusetts Problem Gambling Helpline (gamblinghelplinema.org or 800-327-5050). When people call them and ask for help, sometimes there is a language barrier. BCNC helps translate the messages from the caller. The caller will receive language support in this service.

Also, through the partnership with Civic Education Alliance, Chinese Culture Connection and Greater Malden Asian American Community Coalition, our AAPI empowerment project provides recreational activities including Ping Pong and Karaoke Night, monthly support groups, family field trips, and family wellness days in Malden, Quincy, and Chinatown. Our goals of AAPI Empower Project are to increase sense of belonging, cultural identity, knowledge and awareness of problem gambling as well as to decrease shame, stigma, social isolation and loneliness throughout the healthy and recreational activities that focus on families.

Sampan: Could you elaborate on the two phases of Project RISE, and how it is helping the community?

Yoyo: This project is funded by DPH’s Office of Problem Gambling Services, focusing on Everett and the surrounding towns on the North Shore. The first part of Project RISE is capacity-building, which includes planning and preparation time, workforce development of bilingual/bicultural community services, asset mapping, and community design workshops for health and resilience. The second Project RISE intervention stage encompasses services and activities that target all four levels of the social-ecological model: individual peer support, family support, community-level initiatives, and a systems-wide coalition. Now we are near the end of phase one and we will move into the implementation phase to address behavioral health, racial equality, and culturally appropriate services next July.

Sampan: The promotional poster funded by the DPH Office of Problem Gambling Services features social activities such as ping pong, karaoke, tea, and coffee chats. When did these activities start and are you seeing any improvement? Have they proven to be good diversions to gambling?

Yoyo: We started activities in 2022, and we have seen an enormous number of participants. We serve about two to three hundred monthly. Some participants share their experiences in these activities on social media like Facebook and WeChat. Now people talk about gambling prevention more and are spreading messages by word of mouth. We are even receiving referrals from participants so that we can reach out to more participants and help them and their families. We look forward to continuing to grow these efforts.
Sticker Shock for Eversource and Nationalgrid Customers

By Yiwei Zhao

The two major utilities in our area that deliver heating to our homes are Eversource and Nationalgrid. They purchase energy from different suppliers. Homes in New England are primarily heated by natural gas or by electricity that is generated by natural gas. Both companies have announced major increases in home heating costs this winter as demand skyrocketed in cold weather. Prices are going up on both the delivery and the supply side.

Eversource has requested the state Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to authorize an increase on the supply side of a customer’s bill that the firm claims will increase an average customer’s monthly electric bill by 23 percent. Customers who receive their energy supply from Eversource would see a change from 17.9 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to 26.8 cents per kWh in their basic service rate. If authorized, Eversource said the higher prices would be effective starting on January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023. Other fees such as delivery fees are expected to increase as well, but the rate has yet to be determined.

The request can be traced to the letter sent to President Joe Biden by Joseph Nolan, the CEO of Eversource.

Eversource has warned that New England may not have enough heating sources to heat a household this winter. On October 27, Joseph Nolan wrote a letter to President Joe Biden, sharing his worries about the energy shortage in New England. In his letter, he stated that though Eversource is investing in clean energy, which can alleviate dependence on natural gas electricity, the New England area remains reliant on natural gas to satisfy our electricity demands this winter and in the near future.

The reason behind this shortage is due to the Ukraine conflict. Imported LNG (liquid natural gas) is not available in sufficient quantities to satisfy the region’s demands this winter without putting further strain on European markets and the American economy. Furthermore, given the conflict in Ukraine, increased reliance on foreign-sourced natural gas poses a specific national security risk at this time.

He asked Biden to utilize the federal government’s emergency powers to guarantee that sufficient fuel supplies are available in the case of a colder-than-expected winter in New England.

“This represents a serious public health and safety threat,” he said. “Consumers in New England are already experiencing skyrocketing electricity and gas costs given supply constraints and global price pressures following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.”

He listed some emergency authorities that could relieve the risk to electric reliability New England faces this winter. He urged Biden to direct the Secretary of Energy to summon all relevant parties to create a strategy to ensure the region is prepared to meet the challenges that one or more extreme winter weather events would present, utilizing both market participants and the federal government’s emergency authorities.

Nationalgrid

According to the Nationalgrid, the monthly bill of a typical residential electric customer using 600 kWh will increase from $179 in the winter 2021-2022 season, to approximately $293 for the winter 2022-2023 season, or a 64 percent increase, driven by higher electric supply prices. These changes are expected from November 1 to May 1, 2023.

To help consumers cope with the increase in their electric bills, Nationalgrid launched Winter Customer Savings Initiative. The initiative recently committed $17 million in additional funding to help low- and moderate-income customers manage higher energy bills during this winter. It also highlighted some effective programs, such as discount rates; a forgiveness program that will reduce eligible patron’s past due balance; and energy-saving programs.

Eversource lists several payment programs on their website.

Other resources

Several other resources are also available for you to cope with rising energy prices.

With a $2,000 utility allowance, Boston’s Rental Relief Fund can assist tenants with past due bills (from March 13, 2020); current utility bills (including internet); and home energy expenses ($2,000 utility allowance). To be eligible for the program, you need to be a resident of the city of Boston; have an AMI (Area Median Income) of 50% or less; be at risk for homelessness or housing instability; be economically impacted by COVID-19; and NOT be a full-time college or graduate student. Immigration status is not asked.

If you are an Eversource or Nationalgrid customer living in Boston, Brookline, Newton, or one of the Mystic Valley cities and towns of Malden, Medford, Everett, Melrose, Winchester, Woburn, or Stoneham and receive ABCD Fuel Assistance services, you are also eligible for their utility bill advocacy program (sometimes known as "arrearage management"). ABCD can assist you in negotiating debt forgiveness and a reasonable payment plan so that you can make your monthly payments. Your debt may be forgiven up to $1,500-$2,000 per year if you follow a modified payment plan, depending on your circumstances.

Contact Nationalgrid at 800.233.5325 or Eversource at 866.315.2496 to take advantage of these programs.

MUSIC TO REFRESH & DELIGHT
A Season Of Remarkable Performances Awaits

MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
10 PARK PLAZA
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02116

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

The Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program promotes business opportunities for small business enterprises (as defined by the federal Small Business Administration (SBA)). The SBE Program is designed to create and sustain opportunities for small businesses to participate in capital construction projects at the MBTA, as well as stimulate the Massachusetts economy by providing sustained revenue opportunities to local small businesses. This is an SBE Program procurement.

Electronic proposals for the following project will be received through the internet using Project Bids until the date and time stated below, and will be posted on www.bidx.com forthwith after the bid submission deadline. No paper copies of bids will be accepted. Bidders must have a valid digital ID issued by the Authority in order to bid on projects. Bidders need to apply for a digital ID until the date and time stated below, and will be posted on www.bidx.com forthwith after the bid opening date.

Electronic bids for MBTA Contract No. BOS05335, On Call Asphalt Repairs 2, Systemwide, MA - NAICS CODE: 237310- and Project Value $950,000 can be submitted at www.bidx.com until two o’clock 2:00 p.m. on January 12, 2023. Immediately thereafter, in a designated room, the Bids will be opened and read publicly.

Electronic bids for MBTA Contract No. BOS07427, On Call Asphalt Repairs 2, Mystic Valley, MA - NAICS CODE: 237310- and Project Value $950,000 and can be submitted at www.bidx.com until two o’clock 2:00 p.m. on January 12, 2023. Immediately thereafter, in a designated room, the Bids will be opened and read publicly.

Work consists of repairs to asphalt busways, sidewalks, parking lots and maintenance yards across the MBTA system. Work locations will be determined on an as-needed basis and communicated to the Contractor.

Bidders’ attention is directed to Appendix 1, Notice of Requirement for Affirmative Action to Ensure Equal Employment Opportunity; and to Appendix 2, Supplemental Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, and Affirmative Action Program in the specifications.

To view the full Notice to Bidders, please see link below.
http://www.mmbta.com/business_center/bidding_solicitations/current_solicitations/

On behalf of the MBTA, thank you for your time and interest in responding to this Notice to Bidders Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Steve Pfeil
MBTA General Manager
November 30, 2022
Caring for your skin and heart 呵護您的肌膚和心臟

Dedicated to the health needs of Boston’s Asian community. 致力於波士頓亞裔社區的健康需求。

Cardiology 心臟科
Frederick Chen, MD 陳延稹醫生
Chief, Cardiac Surgery 心臟外科主

Masashi Kawabori, MD 心胸外科醫生
Fluent in Japanese 掌握語言: 日語

Liwen Tang, MD 唐莉雯醫生
Pediatric Cardiologist 小兒心臟科
Fluent in Chinese-Cantonese, Chinese-Mandarin 掌握語言: 中文-廣東話, 中文-普通話

Dermatology 皮膚科
Joyce W. Hoot, MD 鍾美卿醫生
Director, Contact Dermatitis Clinic; Dermatologist 接觸性皮膚炎門診主任;皮膚科醫生
Fluent in Chinese-Mandarin 掌握語言: 中文-普通話

Yong Zhan, MD 賈勇醫生
Co-Director, Aortic Disease Program; Cardiothoracic Surgeon 主動脈疾病計劃聨席主任;心胸外科醫生
Fluent in Chinese-Mandarin 掌握語言: 中文-普通話

Bichchau Michelle Nguyen, MD, MPH 媽咪阮醫生
Director, Mohs Micrographic Surgery 莫氏顯微圖像手術科主任
Fluent in Vietnamese 掌握語言: 越語

Clarissa Yang, MD 楊斐琄醫生
Chief of Dermatology; Dermatologist 皮膚科主管; 皮膚科醫生
Fluent in French, Chinese-Mandarin, Taiwanese 掌握語言: 法語, 中文-普通話, 閩語

Caroline C. Kim, MD 金嘉文醫生
Director of the Melanoma and Pigmented Lesion Program; Dermatologist 黑色素瘤和色素沉著病變項目主任; 皮膚科醫生

Learn more about COVID-19 testing and the latest vaccine information here: tuftsmedicalcenter.org/COVIDTesting. 詳細閱讀有關COVID-19測試和疫苗的資料：tuftsmedicalcenter.org/COVIDTesting.

If you are unable to pay, visit our website at tuftsmedicalcenter.org/financialassistance where you can review, download, and print information to learn about available financial assistance programs. Tufts Medical Center’s Financial Assistance Policy and Application are available free of charge on the website and through Financial Coordination. You may request to have one mailed to you. You can email financialassistance@tuftsmedicalcenter.org or call 617-636-6013.

若您無能力支付，請前往我們的網站：tuftsmedicalcenter.org/financialassistance，您可以檢閱、下載並列印所有有關可用財務補助計畫的資訊。塔芙茨醫療中心財務補助政策與申請書皆在網站上及透過財務協調部免費提供。您可以要求寄送一份至您的地址。您可以透過電子郵 件financialassistance@tuftsmedicalcenter.org或電話617-636-6013.
Sampan

Sifu Mai Du Offers Free Self-Defense Classes to Take the Weight of Fear off the Community’s Shoulders

Continued from Page 1

for years,” Mai explained, “but not consistently. It’s just when we feel we need to do something in the community because of something, I fit it into my schedule and then do it.” She held self-defense classes just after hearing of the tragedy, hoping to provide some relief before Thanksgiving, seeking to take the weight of fear off of the community’s shoulders. “I wanted them to know that at least they can get training, so they feel better going into Thanksgiving, being with families and feeling less heavy,” Mai added, “or the conversations can be less heavy. And that’s why I immediately did one for Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Now people are calling and asking, ‘When are you having the next one? Can you come to our senior building to do one specifically for us?’”

Sifu Mai Du grew up in Vietnam and is Vietnamese and Chinese. Her early exposure to martial arts beginning there when her siblings were taking their own classes. “When I was very young,” Mai recalled, “my siblings were doing some sort of martial arts in Vietnam. I found out later they were doing Judo and Aikido. Somehow I found out later they were doing their own classes. ‘When I was training there when her siblings were taking their own classes, I wanted to learn Kung Fu. And then I saw Vietnam…’”

Mai’s first school opened in Mal- den over ten years ago. She worked with her own Sifu and opened her studio. “I formally approached my Sifu. And I said, I would like to open my own school. I want to give back to my hometown. I want to give back to my community.” Mai did just that. As she continued to pour in her own core values of tradition, heritage, and respect, she began to attract members of different communities looking for support, strength, and balance. Her reputation in the community began to bring people to her. After some time in Malden, Mai opened another location in Quincy.

The initial shock of November 12th still saddens her. The fact that the first woman the assailant attacked was able to fight off the assailant furthered her belief that having the proper skills to defend oneself and get away from dangerous situations creates not only confidence and empowerment, but also peace of mind. Mai emphasized. “That’s so important. Oftentimes, students have shown that perpetrators pick easy targets because they don’t want to get too involved and they just want instant gratification… people need to know how to stand up for themselves.” Mai made it clear that she was in no way blaming the victim for what happened, but rather stressing that this situation shows that it is important to know how to get yourself away from a potentially life-threatening situation. “I’m just saying that more of us need to know or be exposed to and be imparted with the skills and knowledge and tips as to how to stay as safe as we can… we need to be there for each other.” Mai urges the use of creative self-defense as well, using what is around oneself to create distractions or use as makeshift weapons to defend and then leave. Once again, fighting isn’t the only aspect in her academy. It is a safe and reasonable defense, never going too far and becoming an assistant yourself, but learning how to use martial arts safely. She also emphasizes the need to continually sharpen one’s skills so that if the time ever comes to get out of a bad situation, the person knows they are capable of doing so. She understands that there is also still a lot of interest in her self-defense classes and is working on conducting more as needed.

Mai’s approach is built not only on the self-defense aspect of martial arts, but also the traditional part that speaks to heritage and culture. Every morn- ing she burns incense for past teach- ers, honoring them. Her passion for her craft and teaching has brought people of all ages to her studio, as well as those within the LGBTQ+ community and people from different ethnic back- grounds. “We support each other,” Mai said. “The energies, and inclusiveness, and safe space; that’s really important to me.”

MOH Income Restricted Rental Opportunity

The CHARLESTOWN

9 West School Street, Boston, MA 02129

48 Income-Restricted Units

# of Units in Building

Limited Income

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1. The Seaport will once again transform into “Snowport” for the holiday season November 11th, 8:00 am-February 26, 2023, 5:00 pm. 85 Northern Ave Boston, Massachusetts 02210 “Snowport has quickly become a favorite tradition for so many. As we kick off our 2022 season, complete with the return of the very popular rink at our market, we are thrilled to be able to welcome so many incredible small and local businesses to the neighborhood.”

2. Visit the Harvard Square Holiday Fair December 9th, 11:30 am-December 18th, 7:00 pm. 33 Dunster Street, Cambridge MA “The juried holiday fair is free to attend and features purveyors selling items like prints, pottery, photography, candles, t-shirts, jewelry, books, knitterwear, cosmetics, wooden utensils, vintage items, jams and jellies, and much more. Guests will also find music and community spirit at the high-energy holiday fair.”

3. Santa in the City Friday Nov 25th, 11am-Dec 24 8pm. Prudential Shopping Center800 Boylston Street Boston, MA 02199 “A free photo session with Santa in his workshop. Capture the magic of the holiday season by bringing the kids to visit Santa in his new home! We are thrilled to welcome the man in red back in person this year, every weekend from December 25th, 11am-Dec 24 8pm. Prudential Shopping Center.”

4. Ice skate on the Boston Common Frog Pond this season November 21 @ 10:00 am April 1, 2023 10:00 pm Frog Pond 38 Beacon Street Boston, Massachusetts 02108 “Skating on the Boston Common Frog Pond is an iconic part of winter in Boston and we’re happy to have the original rink back this year,” said Doug Zeghibe, CEO and executive director of the Skating Club of Boston, in a statement. “We’re excited to welcome back Bostonians and visitors from around the country to one of the most beautiful outdoor rinks in the country.”

5. Ring in the new year with First Night Boston December 31, 12:00 pm January 1, 2023, 12:30 am Copley Square560 Boylston St Boston, Massachusetts 02116 “Tens of thousands of guests flock to the city for the New Year’s celebration that started in 1975. This year’s schedule highlights include a puppet showcase theater in the afternoon, a parade from Copley to the Boston Common at 5:30 pm, a figure skating spectacular at the Frog Pond at 6 p.m., and bedtime-friendly fireworks at 7 p.m. for families of small children. Musical performers include Maddi Ryan, Sons of Levin, and The Sultans. At midnight, the countdown in Copley Square precedes a fireworks display over Boston Harbor presented by The Friends of Christopher Columbus Park.”

6. Comm Ave Mall Holiday Lights 2022 Thursday, Dec 01, 2022 8:00p -Saturday, April 1, 2023 11pm. Commonwealth Avenue Mall, 153 Commonwealth Ave “The City of Boston and the Friends of the Public Garden to light the trees on the Mall on December 1st at 8 p.m., immediately following the Boston Common Tree Lighting. Trees along the Mall will be illuminated through April 1 with elegant white lights made possible thanks to community support and private donations raised by the Committee to Light Commonwealth Avenue Mall.”

7. Experience ‘Christmas by Candlelight’ at Old Sturbridge Village November 25 ,2022 pm December 30th, 8:00 pm Old Sturbridge Village, 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road Starbridge, Massachusetts 01566 “There will be a nightly lighting ceremony, a Christmas Wish Bridge and Christmas Tree Trail to wander, visits with Santa, sweet treats to sample, intricate 500-plus piece miniature nativity scene, storytelling, and so much more. Wondering how your own decor measures up to other generations past? Check out the recreated Christmas splendor from the 1830s, 1850s, and 1870s, as you learn about the origins of many now cherished holiday traditions and watch demonstrations of classic Christmas projects like baking gingerbread, mulling cider, knitting Christmas stockings, and more.”

8. Of Many Minds Public Art Exhibit Charlestown Navy Yard Park, 1 Shipyard Park Boston, MA 02129 “Come to the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston to experience and enjoy a new sculpture exhibit by award winning Massachusetts artist Michael Alfano whose work is in private and public collections throughout the world. This free exhibit brings museum quality art to the public space and offers a welcome outdoor activity while walking, biking and enjoying views of the City of Boston skyline. Of Many Minds consists of 20 sculptures extending from the USS Constitution in the Boston National Historical Park to various sites along the Boston Harbor walk and ending at Mayor Menino Park at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital.”

9. First Night Boston 2023 December 31, 2022 Copley Square Boston, MA “Entertainment and special attractions will be focused in Copley Square and Back Bay. Many of the beloved traditions of First Night’s past will continue, including cultural and traditional performances in various indoor venues around the Back Bay, fantastic ice sculptures, light displays, the People’s Procession at 5:30 PM, and 7:00 PM Family Fireworks sponsored by The Mugar Foundation and the City of Boston-on-Boston Common. Join us for our signature midnight Countdown pyrotechnics and light show in Copley Square. A breathtaking fireworks display over the Boston Harbor will occur at midnight, brought to you by The Friends of Christopher Columbus Park.”

Please email ads@sampan.org to add events to the calendar.
The Impact of Our Daily Carbon Footprint

By Kristen Si

People have plenty keeping them busy on their morning commutes to work or school. One topic likely on the top of their minds is their daily contribution to global warming – a looming issue taking center stage in recent decades for its widespread impact on the environment. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 27% of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States are due to transportation – a good proportion of which comes from everyday morning commutes.

In recent years, global warming and climate change has taken a front seat in world politics, with the United States recently rejoining the Paris Climate Change Agreement in January 2021. The international agreement between nearly 200 United Nations members vows to take action in reducing carbon emissions in order to limit global temperature increase during the past century to 2 degrees Celsius, if not less. According to NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS), since 1975, 69% of climate-disaster related deaths occurred in LDCs. As people living in a country lucky enough to afford such a large stake in the fuel economy, Americans have the choice to both understand the size of and look to reduce their personal carbon footprint.

As transportation via gas-powered cars make up a significant contributor to global carbon emissions, many may think to start reducing their carbon footprint by first looking at alternatives to commuting by car. In fact, Dr. Joana Moody, a consultant with the World Bank's Transport Global Knowledge Unit, recently spoke with the Energy Initiative at MIT about how potential alternatives to car travel can be promoted. In this interview, the importance of developing sustainable transport infrastructure is emphasized, with Moody pointing out that, “The types of mobility systems that we invest in, the types of cities that we develop — they are gonna determine what those transportation emissions look like for the next 15 years.”

Moody states that increasing the convenience of travel alternatives by developing bus and bike lanes will promote commute alternatives to those who travel by car. When people have a multitude of commute options, they will likely take the most available one, so a potential solution is to simply increase the accessibility of public transport. Moody says, “Allocating our space on our streets better is a low-cost, near-term, within-our-jurisdiction way of really starting to change our different travel modes, to the most sustainable, the most socially responsible choice.” Considering common complaints over public transportation in cities such as Boston, these issues are major at worst. One could imagine a world where Boston improves upon its current bus transport infrastructure, building upon its bus lanes and increasing the area served so that residents may have a similar decrease in their daily carbon footprint.

The impact of reducing daily commute carbon emissions has already been shown in recent times, with transportation carbon emissions falling nearly 11% as a result of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the EPA. It may also be possible for several industries to develop support for longer-term virtual work opportunities, reducing the need for transportation to work at all. However, UNCTAD projects that world economic growth will slow to 2.5% in 2022 and drop to 2.2% in 2023. The global slowdown would leave real GDP still below its pre-pandemic trend, costing the world more than $17 trillion – close to 20% of the world’s income.

As for future research into policies that can best support changes in transportation infrastructure, projects such as MIT Energy Initiative’s Mobility of the Future study are currently underway. The project in particular looks to study potential transportation alternatives and methods of reducing carbon-based fuel consumption in the United States and China, which are the two leading light-vehicle markets over the course of three years. It is the hope of projects such as the Mobility of the Future study, as well as dozens of others across institutions around the world to come up with collective models and solutions in order to best optimize future modes of travel to provide globally sustainable alternatives for current travel methods.

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Chinatown and downtown Boston will be going through massive changes as the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) moves forward with preparing for construction in and around the area. Some plans are currently under review and others have been approved and are slated to be undertaken with the overall project set to end in the summer of 2023. Assistant Director of Communications for BPDA Brittany Comak, along with the Interim Director of Planning, Kennan Rhyme, met with this reporter to provide more information on the planning process, the constructions, and the ways in which the community can be involved.

After a two-year pandemic-induced hiatus, PLAN: Downtown has officially relaunched. The process is starting with planning and seeks to reunite community members involved in the process. Kennan Rhyme spoke to the goals of the study. “PLAN: Downtown was supposed to be a two-year study. Clearly it’s been lengthened a little bit.” She continued, “We were looking at providing more predictability for residents, the business community, almost everyone in the downtown community, around what they could expect to see with development. We would be taking this predictability into zoning. We are still intending to make zoning changes after the plans are complete in Chinatown and downtown. One piece we want to think about is how that zoning can help enable six themes that came up through the plan.” These themes include historic preservation, open space, affordable housing, mobility and transportation, climate resilience, and small business and retail activation.

An in-depth review of the plans as well as expectations for the future are set to be discussed in a public meeting planned for December 14th from 6 to 7:30 PM. Rhyme commented on past public input, as well as previous group meetings and ways in which the BPDA seeks to reach demographics that have been difficult to capture in the past. “We’re planning at that meeting to give a more formal overview of where we paused in 2020,” she said. “I feel like there is a pretty substantial amount of public input we received and taking next steps instead of taking steps back. With that being said, we are going to be revisiting certain topics. For example, social vulnerability was a really important topic that came up. Through the plan we are trying to play out with folks’ access to safe community space.” She mentioned that Chinatown specifically saw input from students, and they are also keeping public health in mind for these open spaces.

Chinatown is at the intersection of two of the most talked-about topics among the six themes mentioned for the plan: affordable housing and historic preservation, which have received the most feedback and concern. “The connection between the two – I think Chinatown is indicative of that,” Rhyme said. “There’s a desire to think about how we avoid displacement with future development by creating more affordable housing opportunities so as folks age or families expand, they can stay in Chinatown…we also heard a priority around historic preservation in terms of the cultural legacy. Chinatown is a place for immigrant communities. And so part of it is elevating that history but the other part is capital ‘P’ Preservation of the architectural aspects.”

Zoning is a large factor in this, and Rhyme expressed its importance in the plan. The BPDA is “making sure you can see the development but actually reinforces the preservation of the buildings you see in the historic part of Chinatown.”

Striving to keep the public safe in the face of living with the pandemic is also a concern, as well as providing enough ways for everyone to get around. Rhyme commented on the changes concerning transportation since COVID: “BPDA planned for more active transportation modes in 2020 that they actually built. Since that time, they have introduced new bus rapid transit lanes to help buses move through downtown and make a better connection from Roxbury through to South Station with improvements for both the bus lanes. They are also starting to do their own planning work around a North Station-South Station connection and have started an outreach process for that.”

Two of the six current projects have not yet been approved. Parcel P12C is in the disposition process. Assistant Director of Communications, Brittany Comak specified that the community will be invited to envisioning session with a goal of a new RFP. This parcel was identified as a high priority. The other project is under BPDA review. Parcel R1 is concerning a BPDA-owned site on Hudson Street and will produce 110 affordable residential units and around 17,000 square feet of civic space, ground floor, to be used by the Boston Public Library. It is set to go to the Boston Civic Design Commission for review in December.

Among the approved plans for Chinatown and Downtown is 125 Lincoln Street. This is in the surrounding area of the Leather District, the project seeking to convert a decaying building that now contains parking, retail, and office space into an 11-story research and development building with retail space and 50-60 income restricted units nearby at 79 Essex Street. Assistant Director of Communications Brittany Comak said, “The proposed 79 Essex Street development will be a renovation project, meeting one of the many goals of the PLAN: Downtown planning initiative of historic preservation, and preserving the urban fabric of Downtown and Chinatown.”

The 125 Lincoln Street project will also improve pedestrian conditions and contribute “$3.5 million towards design and construction for community-oriented retail businesses on the ground floor,” according to Comak. “The project is also contributing $200,000 to help relocate the Hei La Moon restaurant currently on site. In support of creating jobs, the project will contribute approximately $200,000 to MassBioEd, providing STEM education resources and a pathway to biotech and life science jobs for Boston residents. In addition, approximately $50,000 will go to the Josiah Quincy Elementary School for STEM education resources.” Therefore, in addition to the many changes happening to revitalize and improve Chinatown and Downtown, these pieces of the plan are meant to give back and help improve the community.

Another approved site is 150 Kneeland Street. This project will include 115 residential units. A project at 745 Atlantic Avenue has also seen approval. According to Comak, the site will “change the use of the existing downtown building to allow for lab space, research and development, as well as offices. The ground floor will also include food and beverage retail space.” Comak also commented on the contributions to both job opportunities and the community this project will provide. “This change in use is estimated to bring more than 600 new permanent jobs to the area, in addition to approximately 300 construction jobs. The project will also provide $791,700 toward affordable housing, as well as $145,551 toward workforce development in linkages fees, $75,000 to the City’s Bluebikes program, and $25,000 to the Leather District Neighborhood Association to fund Leather District infrastructure and streetscape improvements such as additional sidewalk repairs, new lighting, or street trees.”

Rhyme expressed her excitement in the continuation of the planning for the rest of Chinatown and Downtown, stating, “We’re just really excited to re-start. We owe everyone all this work, we put so much time and effort, we owe people the results of that work.” Rhyme also communicated the importance of the advisory groups and public meetings meant to inform and involve the public. In an attempt to reach more demographics present in the area, there are translators present at these forums as well.

The upcoming meeting addressing plans and changes concerning PLAN: Downtown is again, on Wednesday, December 14th, 6 to 7:30 PM, and can be registered for at https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIt-d02stToqEiyBAcwWtUb0/oFlv.z0_iqA. There is also a survey available, concerning these plans, available in both English and Chinese, available at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAlpQLSfmMB6bNDqykJLb07GS2M K-K_4l4jH9v0-NjhxW0JhP4aZoo1Q/viewform. As the Boston Planning and Development Agency continues to move forward with their plans for Chinatown and Downtown, the public is encouraged to participate and stay updated and involved in the process. Hopefully, as these plans come to fruition, the community can see positive changes and contributions working in tandem with their feedback of what they want to see in the city.
By Lydia Lowe

Some 45 years ago, I was a young Asian American college student in California, who worked with Chicano and Black students statewide to protest the first major attack on minority admissions. This grew out of a lawsuit by a rejected white applicant to UC Davis named Allan Bakke, who charged that he had suffered “reverse discrimination.” In 1978, so many Asian American college students realized that an attack on affirmative admissions programs would be a setback for Asian Americans that the struggle against the Bakke Decision was core to the founding of the California statewide inter-collegiate network called the Asian Pacific Student Union.

Today, the US Supreme Court is considering the cases of Students for Fair Admissions against Harvard University and the University of North Carolina, both brought by longtime anti-affirmative action activist Edward Blum, who has used the argument of protecting Asian American students as his rationale.

If you are an Asian American who cares about advancing equity and civil rights, what are important things to keep in mind as this story unfolds?

Asian Americans only entered college in large numbers after special admissions programs began. This fact was clearer to us in the 1970s, when we had attained a Bachelor’s Degree, compared to 15.3% of the Black and 12.2% of the Hispanic population.

Equity is a social, not an individual, concept, that focuses not only on the past but the present and future. Too often, Asian American students and parents may focus on one’s individual SAT score and Grade Point Average to argue that an individual deserves admission. But affirmative action or special admissions programs are needed to address worsening social inequalities and to keep in mind as this story unfolds?

What is a progressive approach to the apparent Bamboo Ceiling? A paradox of Asian American admissions at elite Ivy Leagues as compared to other colleges does indicate the presence of a “bamboo ceiling” in some of the elite colleges and universities. But why should Asian Americans oppose minority admissions, which paved the way for our communities’ entry to college and continues to open up opportunities for the underrepresented? Legitimacy admissions, which gives preference to the children of alumni, made up 29 percent of Harvard’s Class of 2021. The New York Times found that at 38 elite colleges, there are more students from the top 1 percent than from the entire bottom 60 percent of the economic ladder.

Asian Americans who are committed to civil rights and equity for all must keep our focus on fighting racial and economic inequality together with other communities of color. We cannot allow ourselves to be used as a wedge by conservative forces seeking to undermine educational access, employment opportunities, and a political voice for communities of color.

Lydia Lowe is a graduate of UMass/Boston, the only four-year Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution in the Commonwealth.

Opinion: Affirmative Action and Asian American Admissions

By Lydia Lowe

Perhaps it is simply a random moment when you were practicing yoga, taking a road trip, hiking, cuddling with your pets, or experimenting with a new recipe, or a new interest in writing, dancing, music, drawing, or arts and crafts that inspired you; or a book, poem, or song you spent time with, which gave you strength.

You may submit your subsmission in any format you choose. If you wish to share your thoughts in an essay, please keep the number of words to 500. If it is a video, it should last 2 to 3 minutes.
COVID-19 Update

By Aili Liu

You may still remember the omicron surge last winter. As the temperature drops, experts warn us of another winter wave of COVID. While COVID-19 cases and deaths in the U.S. have stayed relatively low since September, with about 37,000 new cases per day, it is hard to forget that more than 1 million Americans have died since the beginning of the pandemic. COVID-19 is still very present. The omicron subvariants have waned away, but the subvariant BA.5, dominant through October, has given rise to other subvariants such as BAQ.1.1, BF7, and BA.4.6.

Dr. Armando Meza, an expert from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center said that omicron and its subvariants tend to cause more upper respiratory symptoms instead of affecting the lungs. Hence, the new variants are likely less fatal because the virus tends not to burrow deeply into the lungs. Patients may experience congestion, sore throat, and loss of taste or smell. Patients may experience congestion, sore throat, and loss of taste or smell. Since many of the COVID-19 symptoms are flu-like, doctors urge people not to burrow deeply into the lungs.

The risk of a “tripledemic” is obvious: being infected by COVID-19 will not protect you from the flu, having a cold will not protect you from COVID-19, and having a flu infection will not protect you from COVID-19. RSV. This also means that a COVID-19 vaccine will not protect you from the flu, nor can a flu vaccine protect you against COVID-19. RSV. It causes about 14,000 deaths among adults over sixty-five and about 300 deaths among children under five annually, yet no vaccine is available. Fortunately, at least two potential vaccines are in late-stage clinical trials and may be very effective in elders.

Jessica Justman, a Columbia University infectious diseases specialist and epidemiologist, claims that while the pandemic is hard to forget that more than 1 million Americans have died since the beginning of the pandemic. COVID-19 is still very present. The omicron subvariants have waned away, but the subvariant BA.5, dominant through October, has given rise to other subvariants such as BAQ.1.1, BF7, and BA.4.6.

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Invitation for Bids for Arborist Services at Downtown Office Conversion

The Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") d/b/a Boston Planning & Development Agency ("BPDA"), by its Chief Procurement Officer ("CPO"), is pleased to issue this Invitation for Bids (the "IFB") for "Arborist Services at Downtown Office Conversion Study". The IFB is issued in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30, § 39M, as may be amended, and will include public works construction. This IFB package including requirements for this project will be available to download on the BPDA Procurement Portal. For more information, please contact our Procurement Desk.

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Arbella is proud to support the

Asian American Civic Civic Association

Arbella is committed to supporting charitable organizations that work so hard to positively impact the lives of those around them. We are proud to be local and to help our neighbors, individuals and families in our communities.
Asian American Elderly: Facing Poverty and Loneliness

By Aili Liu

People over the age of 50 who live alone are one of the fastest-growing demographics in the nation. Up from 15 million in 2000, this demographic booted to nearly 26 million this year. The causes may be connected to the changing perceptions around family and gender which resulted in high divorce and never-married rates in this generation. There were more women in the Baby Boomer generation who entered the workforce than ever before. There was also an emphasis on individuality that subverted traditional social boundaries.

In interviews conducted by The New York Times, representatives of this demographic claimed to be happy about their current lives and living arrangements. But studies by Dr. Markus Schafer, a sociologist at Baylor University, show that older adults living alone generally experience more loneliness than people who live with others. In addition, research conducted by the National Institute on Aging shows that social isolation and loneliness in older adults pose more significant health risks. Future planning has also become a problem for this demographic. Not only do some of them have to consider factors such as taking care of their parents, but those without children will also need to consider how they will get the care and support they need as they age.

The housing situation in America is not on their side. Even though the number of people living in single households has been steadily increasing, single unit households did not grow at the same rate. Instead, there has been a tremendous growth in the amount of four unit or more housing even when the demand for them is relatively low. This has created a gap between the low supply of housing and the demand, which drove up the price for smaller units and made larger units less valuable.

The dilemma is that older adults who want to move into smaller housing find their targets unaffordable, while younger couples who want to move into larger accommodations are unable to find them.

How does this demographic break down along lines of race and ethnicity? According to data provided by the American Community Survey, Black Americans are the most likely to live alone, and the percentage rises with the increase in age. Asian Americans are the least likely to be living alone for people 50 and over. However, they also face unique disadvantages when aging alone in America. Even though the model minority myth portrays Asian Americans as a high earning, highly educated, and a highly successful demographic, the harsh realities of poverty for some Asian American elders living alone are often obscured by these myths. In fact, a study by the Urban Institute shows that there has been an increase in the poverty rate among Asian seniors. In 2015, the poverty rates for Asian elders 65 and over was 12.7% whereas the rate for all of Americans in this demographic was 9%.

Mrs Lam faced poverty during the pandemic in silence and alone. Despite working two jobs, she was always living on the edge of deep poverty. She was 61 years old when lost her two jobs as a hotel housekeeper and as a restaurant dishwasher on the first day of the city’s lockdown. She was scared because she had no savings, no friends and spoke no English. She was totally alone. She lived in a rooming house with 5 other people in Chinatown. Her husband and 15 yr old son had died 20 years earlier in a train accident. After they died, she just had to keep working.

Location is often a factor that makes addressing poverty harder for Asian American seniors. Nearly half of Asian Americans live in America’s 20 most expensive cities. This is because many Asian American hubs are located in these cities, but some elders are forced out of these hubs because of high living expenses or rising rental costs. The Urban Institute study also shows that Asian American elders have limited access to a social safety net because of inability to understand English. Foreign-born elders are more likely to receive fewer Social Security benefits because they’ve worked fewer years in the States. Limited English proficiency also hinders Asian American seniors from accessing social services.

For example, according to the study, 94% of Korean American elders and 92% of Chinese American elders in New York City speak English less than very well. While the city offers a variety of programs in different languages, limited English proficiency discourages seniors from applying for financial services.

Research published by the American Board of Family Medicine demonstrated Asian American seniors had lower life satisfaction and a lack of social and emotional support compared with other races and ethnicities. Asian American seniors recorded only 54% life satisfaction compared with 80% for all other races and ethnicities, and 56% reported always or usually receiving social or emotional support compared with 80% for all others.

While researching the social problems of poverty and loneliness within the Asian American elderly community, 1 was also introduced to Amy Guen, a 95-year-old Boston resident, who is a 6th-generation American. She was born in Boston's Chinatown, moved to Cuba for 12 yrs before returning to the U.S. She lives alone. When I asked if she was happy with her current life, she emphatically answered “yes”! Amy told Sampan, “I am very thankful. I live in the center of town. Even with limited mobility, I am still able to participate in community forums with help. I am grateful that I am still aware of what is happening around me. I read the newspaper daily and get news from the T.V. I also have many great friends and relatives who can help me do the shopping. I have four children who communicate with me weekly by Zoom. I can go to the supermarket at least once a month and cook for myself, so I have a good diet. I can’t ask for anymore.”

Earlier in her life, Amy was involved in founding South Cove Community Health Center, the Chinese American Civic Association (now the Asian American Civic Association), and the Greater Boston Chinese Gold-en Age Center. Her training as a professional social worker and living as an Asian and an American helped her see the changes in aging in America as an Asian American. She told Sampan, “Asian elders need proper care, especially physical care. I started as an interpreter for Chinese elders in medical care to make sure old people had adequate medical care. It was mainly single old men at the time due to the immigration policies then and many needed interpreters. However, less and less immigrants now need interpreters, and the focus should be more holistic when planning for the care of Asian Americans who are aging. There are many services provided for the elderly through nonprofit organizations, affordable housing programs, and nursing homes. But even if you are in the workforce, you still need emotional support from family and others as well as other mental health services. During the pandemic, it was definitely proven that the lack of visitations from family caused lots of elderly to give up living. Their will to live has to be supported to make their lives meaningful, but if they cannot see their relatives regularly, they may easily become depressed. Families have the most responsibility for the well-being of their elderly.”

Ed has made a comfortable life filled with friends, families and importants. When he was 77 years old and retired, he has lived alone for nearly 20 years. He told Sampan, “I am not dissatisfied with the situation. There is enough available contact with friends, neighbors, and family that I have no sense of isolation. I have both biological family and ‘acquired’ family in the Greater Boston area.” Ed sympathizes, however, with the immigrant population in the U.S. “It does seem to me that older people in the U.S. are too removed from regular interactions with people who had been significant to them. In particular, they are apt to have less opportunity to experience the special pleasures of sharing the aspirations and accomplishments of young people. In other lands and societies beyond the U.S., my impression is that older people tend to be a more integral part of the full community. This is a model which should be valued and widely emulated here – to benefit of the young and old.”