

# Current



The smell of grilled hamburgers wafted through the open windows and permeated the hallways of Cameron House. Within moments, young men's voices, muffled at first, exploded into laughter. Ahhh, the familiar scents and sounds of the Boys2Men class.

Boys2Men is one of our newest ventures, formed to help our boys interact with positive male role models, discuss issues most relevant to them, and learn how to maneuver through the difficulties they'll face as they become adults. The participants, ranging from high-school freshmen to seniors, are thirsty for knowledge. They're beginning to engage in the world around them and are daunted by the struggles they see. They lack confidence in their future and are eager to learn the skills they'll need to be successful.

This 10-week program addresses issues they don't necessarily learn in school – or even at home. They learn about a wide variety of topics, from cooking for college to personal finance to caring for the environment. Every session begins with a discussion, and afterwards, they prepare and enjoy a meal together.

Sherman Gee and Casey Chow lead the program, tailoring it to the needs

and desires of the participants. Both of them were surprised at how responsive the boys were and how willing they were to open up and engage in the discussions, even difficult ones.

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The quality of our lives is dictated by the quality of our relationships.

— Sherman Gee —

In one class, they talked about healthy relationships, not just romantic ones, but friendships and family relations, as well. Sherman explained to the boys how the quality of our lives is dictated by the quality of our relationships. Not only did they learn ways to create and sustain healthy relationships, they discussed challenging issues like domestic violence. It was an engaging conversation, lasting substantially longer than normal. While classes usually meet from 4:30 until 7:00 pm on Wednesdays, that night they were here until 9:00 pm.

In another session, Bonnie Chu, one of our Marriage and Family Therapist Trainees, opened a discussion on the subjects of loneliness and anger. While the boys already understood the differences between being alone and loneliness, they all learned new facts about anger. There's a common misperception that when we get angry, punching an inanimate object will help

release our anger. In actuality, though, not only does that not help tame our anger, it increases it. What *does* seem to help is using mindfulness as a means of calming down, distracting ourselves, or behaving in a manner that counteracts the anger. It's important to note that these methods do not suppress our emotions; rather they use them to take a different action, one that is healthier and more productive.

The Boys2Men pilot program was highlighted in our March eNews, and it didn't take long before some of our Alumni – Byron Ho, Dr. Stanley Hui, Judge Newton Lam, Dr. Don Ng, and Fred Wong (retired FBI Special Agent) – contacted Josh Chuck to see if they could reach out to the group and help. Sherman and Casey are hoping to see more guest speakers step up to lead a session, especially Alumni who can help the boys see that even in difficult situations, they can succeed. With smiles on their faces, Sherman and Casey tell me that they're looking forward to the day these young men will come back and say, "I was a member of Boys2Men, and now I want to give back. Let me show you my office."

For more information about Boys2Men, please contact Casey Chow at [casey@cameronhouse.org](mailto:casey@cameronhouse.org).

"Cameron House is a place I find peaceful and more of a home than my physical home."  
B2M participant

"Cameron House has changed everything in my life."  
B2M participant

"Talking about relationships was the most memorable part because I had never talked about this subject with my friends."  
B2M participant

"They helped us learn to be more responsible by shaping us boys into young men."  
B2M participant

# May's Corner

This April 1st marked my third year anniversary with Cameron House as Executive Director. Gee, how time flies when you're having fun!

Since 2013, we have undergone a number of amazing changes at Cameron House: increased programming and a deeper array of services to meet the changing needs of today's youth and families; investment in infrastructure to increase our capacity to serve, and improvements in our communications and outreach efforts to help increase funding and support for the Cameron House mission.

These endeavors, which have allowed us to serve more people with quality, wrap-around care, can be credited to the hard work of our Board, staff, volunteers, alumni, funders, partners, elected officials, and government agencies who see the value of our mission. As an anchor institution in San Francisco's Chinatown for over 140 years, Cameron House is truly blessed with a strong tradition of alumni support.

What has amazed me is the addition of support from donors and volunteers who did not grow up in our programs. One example is renowned MSNBC day-side anchor, Richard Lui, who grew up

at the Chinatown Y in San Francisco. In spite of his super busy work as a journalist, traveling the world to report on current events and working on his many community and charity endeavors, he still finds time to support Cameron House by generously donating a special NBC Studios Tour and Lunch package for our annual Gala Auction.



NBC Studio Tour and Lunch with Richard Lui (Maeve MacLysaght, May, and Richard).

Another example is Richard Zuckerman, a former Bay Area law-firm partner who specialized in union-side labor law. Thanks to a neighbor, Richard found out about Cameron House and has been volunteering at our Bilingual After School Program. Working with middle-school students, he helps them finesse their academic writing skills. He enjoys his discussions with the youth, listening to them talk about their writing subjects, and then encouraging them to incorporate the details of their conversation into their work. Even during the short time that he has been with us, he is seeing a difference. The students show him their finished essays - in which they've incorporated more structure and richer details. When

asked about his observations, Richard said, "They (students) really care about their work, and that makes you feel good." He appreciates the opportunity "to make an impact, and that feeling is satisfying."

Whether it's helping our youth develop their skills, teaching ESL to adults, cooking for our volunteer youth leaders, or assisting at one of our events, we could not accomplish our mission without our valuable supporters and donors - that's you! It has been a privilege to serve the Cameron House Community for these last three years, and I'm

looking forward to the next three - and more. While we have been able to make great strides in our capacity to serve, we still have more work to do.

August marks the end of our summer programs and the beginning of Phone-a-thon, our biggest annual fundraiser. We hope that you will continue to value the impact we are making and give generously, so that together we can keep providing the breadth and depth of services to our youth and families. With your help, they can continue to learn, heal, and thrive.



# Where Are They Now?



This quarter's Alumni Spotlight features a well known and much loved friend and supporter, Shar Hall, who has been with Cameron House since 2nd grade. Compassionate, hard working, and a long-time Church member, she cares deeply about her faith, her family, and Cameron House.

Prior to being named Cameron House, the Presbyterian Mission Home at 144 Wetmore Street was where I first met Miss May Wong. She taught Bible stories in the garage space every week, using paper cutouts of Jesus and others on the flannel-graph board. My girlfriend and I were 2nd graders then. After that we bounced around the YWCA and Chinese Baptist Church.

I joined the Chickadees girls club in 7th grade in 1949 and participated in the "Four Square" program—Friday night was club meetings, Sunday morning was church school, and Sunday night was the 7:30 pm worship at Presbyterian Church at 925 Stockton, followed by fellowship back up at CH.

Seeds of Christianity were planted by many leaders, seminarians, and pastors on staff. Back then CH and church were a "yoked ministry," so learning leadership skills, singing hymns, and studying the Bible was just as important as knowing how to lead games and fun songs!

As I grew up in the program, I became a club leader and church-school teacher to "my" girls, from junior high through high school. I was about two years older than they were!

I also went to Presbytery- and Synod-sponsored camps/conferences at Westminster Woods, Lake Tahoe, and Pasadena. We were encouraged to go away for school or "caravanning" in different places so that Caucasians would get to know Chinese Americans.

I attended the Presbyterian Women's Annual Gathering at Purdue as a delegate representing CH as part of the National Missions Mosaic Choir, made

up of different youth of all races. I was one of two other Asians among Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans. Many of the older Caucasian women asked me, "What tribe are you from?" having not seen many Chinese or Asians back then in the early 1950's.



Shar Hall

Al came to CH from the YMCA with the Cherokee club and Dick Wichman in 1948. The Cherokees helped with the renovation of CH from its prior use by Hip Wo Chinese school. His family (grandpa was an elder) were all very active members of the church.

We knew of each other throughout our youthful years at CH/Presbyterian Church in Chinatown—and had different friends. He went to college and pharmacy school while I worked in retail fashions for Joseph Magnin stores.

We were both active singing in the choir and got to know each other better when we were in our early 20's. When our engagement was announced at worship service there was an audible gasp and everyone was surprised! We got married (after Al graduated from UCSF Pharmacy School) on June 21, 1958 at evening service with

a reception at Victory Hall. It was the longest day of the year (summer solstice) and I didn't have much to eat then—meeting and greeting all the guests—so I was pretty hungry after it was all over.

Over the next 40 years, we bought our home (partnered with the Hees & LJ Wongs), bought our Hall's Pharmacy, and raised our kids, Julie and David. They also participated in the CH club programs, Day Camp, and went to Westminster Woods. We supported CH financially and volunteered wherever and whenever we could back then and still do.

At present, Al is helping BAP kids with homework or reading, I help with Sharona's ESL class when needed. We help cook for leaders when Jon Hee calls and, of course, we work all day at Cameron Carnival. We served on the Soul & Elegance committee (2014 and 2015) and I am serving on the CH/PCC Healing committee.

I'm grateful for the experience, skills learned, and the nurturing I received as a youth; for the people who were my role models; and the wonderful friendships that developed, which I still enjoy today in my 8th decade! That's why I continue to support CH.

My hope for the future is that Cameron House continues to be a safe place for all who walk through the doors of 920, with enriching programs that develop leadership skills, services that fulfill wholeness of body and spirit, and occasions to meet new needs of the community with vitality and innovation. CH must be intentional in expressing that our faith as Christians is the reason for our actions since 1874!



# ★ Where the Fun Begins: Cameron Carnival ★

372 volunteers donated their time and talent



Thank you for making the 68th Annual Cameron Carnival a **huge** success!

Over 1,000 visitors and supporters came to revel in the delicious food, fun games, good music, and great company!



Over 1,000 prizes were won



746 bonus packs were redeemed

469 chicken meals were served

We received 74 generous sponsorships



385 dunks were made on dunko



## Q&A with an ESL student

Recently, our ESL Instructor, Sharona Cheung, took her class to the California Academy of Sciences. Afterwards, she sat down with one of the students. Here is a snippet of their conversation:

*What have you learned through the ESL classes?*

I now know how to greet others, what to say when I pick up the phone, how to fill in forms, ask for directions, and order food. When I take the bus, I am not scared to ask others for directions.

*How has learning English affected your life?*

It's a lot more convenient to be able to communicate with others, and I am more confident. I won't shy away when I see Americans; I can confidently say hi to them and communicate with them very basically.

*You have taken four ESL classes at Cameron House already. Why do you continue taking our class?*

If Cameron House lets me and I have the ability, I will continue taking ESL classes. I don't know how to speak English, so I will continue to learn slowly, learn one topic this class and learn another next class. You learn little by little but it becomes a lot after a while. For example, I didn't know how to read the notices posted in our senior apartment, but now when I look at them, at least I have a general sense of what it is about and the location of the event. Learning enriches my life.

*What did you enjoy about visiting the Academy of Sciences today?*

In the past when I went to the Academy of Sciences by myself, I didn't know anything. I just briefly scanned each exhibit; but today, volunteers led us in small groups and explained the exhibits to us. For example, I learned the words "penguin," and "snake." One exhibit was dancing to the movements on a screen. The exhibit is actually about imitating how an animal moves by dancing with the movements on the screen. I learned a lot from this experience.

*Can you say something in English?*

"My name is Xiu Ying Zhen. I like Cameron House."

## Visitors from Hong Kong

We were honored to have six members of the Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service group visit us in April. The group is from Hong Kong (they learned about Cameron House from Tina Shum), and they were excited to learn about our extensive Social Services programs. Daniel Chu, the head of the Family Services Division, contacted Ming and asked her to give them a tour of our facilities and explain how we assist domestic violence survivors. They were especially interested in how we help the women - and their children - through the entire process of finding safety, shelter, work, and legal assistance while also offering counseling, support groups, ESL classes, food pantry services, and accompaniment to the various legal appointments they need. They were impressed that our clients have a sense of belonging to Cameron House. The one and a half hour meeting was fruitful for everyone involved, and it helped create meaningful connections with our peers in Hong Kong - so much so, that Ming will be combining work with her vacation in October. She'll be volunteering at the Yang Memorial Senior Center in Hong Kong and will be teaching Domestic Violence 101 at the Can Tho University in Vietnam! Way to go, Ming!



"When we could closely learn the differences of the US system and your passion on helping the victims of domestic violence, it helps us to reflect on our current system and practice in Hong Kong and how we could improve our service." ~Daniel Chu




## Helping Youth Reach Their Potential

Our Social Services Ministry and Youth Ministries Departments work closely together to ensure that our children, youth, and families learn healthy ways of identifying and expressing their emotions and managing stress. Recently, two groups arose organically, as our BAP and SSM Staff recognized the needs of our youth and worked together to solve the problem!

Bonnie Chu, one of our Marriage and Family Therapist Trainees, is a quiet, reflective person. While her office is on our Social Services floor, she sees far beyond those four walls. A few months ago, she noticed that we didn't have a small peer group for our teenage girls to connect with one another, express themselves, and discuss the things going on in their lives. So she brought it up with Sherman Gee, and it didn't take long for them to assess the need and move forward.

Our newly formed Girls' Group is a teen support group open to high-schoolers. The structure is flexible and the forum is open, which helps create a safe setting in which they are comfortable sharing with one another. The girls discuss topics that are relevant to their lives and share the struggles they face at school and at home. Facilitating the group, Bonnie helps them develop strategies to better handle their stress. Through their interactions with one another, the girls are aware that they're not alone. They share their ideas and feelings with one another and see their peers experiencing similar situations. They know there are people they can rely on when they encounter difficulties. And they are learning new and healthy ways of coping with the struggles and stress we all face in life.

"Right here and now," Bonnie says softly, "I want the girls to develop the safety of knowing they have people they can turn to."

For more information about the Girl's Group, which is held on Fridays from 5:30 to 6:30 pm, please contact Bonnie Chu at [bonnie@cameronhouse.org](mailto:bonnie@cameronhouse.org). 

A circle of hands quickly arose.

"Share," one girl responded.

"Be kind," replied another.

"Mindfulness."

The 3rd and 4th grade girls have been asked what they have learned over the past eight weeks of meeting in this Social and Emotional Skills group.

"Breathe."

Over the course of this school year, our Bilingual Afterschool Program (BAP) staff noticed a group of elementary school girls who needed help developing healthy relationships and communicating better with one another. So they met with Rebekah Kao, SSM Individual and Family Counselor and Mental Health Consultant for our BAP Program.

When told about the girls, Rebekah readily met with them to observe the dynamics of the group. Along with Bonnie Chu, our SSM Marriage and Family Therapist Trainee, she created a tailor-made, eight-week program specifically targeted for the areas in which the girls needed help.

"Be nice."

Wanting to foster self-esteem and help the girls develop social and emotional skills, Rebekah and Bonnie developed activities that would encourage them to pay attention to their emotions and thoughts, to regulate them, and to express them appropriately. "Helping the girls develop social skills now," says Rebekah, "will benefit them throughout their lives." During one session, the girls were asked to identify and talk

about what feelings might come up in different situations at school, at home, or at Cameron House. In other sessions, art, movement, and mindfulness games were used to cultivate an awareness of their emotions and the ability to regulate their thoughts and actions.

They learned different types of deep breathing exercises and used 'glitter jars' as means of regaining composure and calming their minds and senses. Glitter jars are tools that help children refocus when they feel overwhelmed. The jars are filled with water and glitter – the water representing our minds and the glitter, our thoughts. When children begin feeling anxiety, frustration, or anger, they grab their bottle, shake it, and take deep breaths while watching the glitter slowly fall to the bottom of the jar. When the glitter has finally settled, the youngsters, too, are more settled and calm; but if the jars need an extra shake (which in and of itself is a great way to handle stress) that's fine, too.

"Before we finish, can I give you a hug?"

At the conclusion of the eight weeks, Rebekah and Bonnie are excited about the girls' progress. They are happier and more confident, better able to negotiate friendships, and more willing to get along with one another. "My hope is that the girls will be happy, compassionate, in healthy relationships," Rebekah says, "and will be able to fulfill their potential and dreams." With Rebekah, Bonnie, and our BAP Staff at the helm, those hopes will become a reality.



## A Day to Remember

On June 11th, our Chinese Cancer Support Group and Women's Support Group spent the day visiting the Jelly Belly Factory in Fairfield and the Nut Tree Premium Outlet in Vacaville. Approximately 75 participants enjoyed their escapade in the lovely weather of Solano County.

"I am so glad to join this outing. Usually I am busy working and have no time to take my son out. We had a great bonding time, and I am so happy to see him being so joyful today."

~Women's Support Group Member

"I had so much fun at the outing. It was my first time seeing how chocolate is made. I was also amazed by the Jelly Belly factory. I got to see from candy making to packaging. There were so many flavors, and I got to try a few at the Sample Bar."

~Cancer Support Group Member

"I was so touched by a cancer support group member. He accompanied another elderly support group member throughout the outing. He held her arm when she walked up and down the stairs." ~Cancer Support Group Member



## SUMMER Leadership

We have an addition to our Summer Leadership Program this year - interns! Sherman Gee sat down with me to explain how this internship development will benefit the program, the leaders, and the youth:

**How does a high schooler become an intern?**

Interns are required to submit a separate essay application and have an in-person interview for the eight available spots. We are hoping to expand to 10-12 full-time interns in the upcoming years. Each intern is given a \$600 stipend for their added roles.

**How will this help the interns?**

Interns will be given more responsibility and professional and personal training, like planning for the summer carnival and the end-of-the-year Summer Worship. On top of their normal leadership responsibilities, interns will be given additional training prior to the summer and during the weekly check-in meetings. They all will also be given extra support for their roles this summer.

**How will this help our summer program?**

It will give more responsibilities to leaders and interns and help them support the goals of each department. By bringing in new weekly ideas (devotions, cookouts, songs, games, etc.) and becoming a mentor figure and peer-to-peer supporter for each leader, they will be assisting the leaders in reaching their goals while also continuing to create a higher quality program.

**Why did we decide to start giving stipends to our summer interns?**

We realized we needed to move into the next level of our leadership programs and create an internship opportunity for our summer leaders. This internship enables them to continue challenging their personal and professional growth through additional responsibilities. The past two summers, we've also had a few of our youth go to another Chinatown

youth agency that offered stipends for summer youth work. The reality is that our young people also need to have some sort of income – to either help their families or to save for their academic and personal needs.

**Will this be something we continue in the future, or is it a one-time thing?**

We plan to build on what we learn and experience this summer. Our strategic plan for youth leadership development is to create opportunities for youth and young adults to experience servant leadership within a faith community. This is a facet of that plan.

**How are we funding these stipends?**

Half of this summer's stipends were raised by incoming high school Senior and IGNITE Commission member, Fefe Chen. The rest will be covered by a one-time grant from UPS - a gift from the last cohort of executive interns that Josh and Harry Chuck hosted.



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## upcoming events



- August 30th - September 1st ..... Phone-a-Thon
- August 7th - 12th ..... Westminster Woods
- February 18th (2017) ..... Community, Soul & Elegance Gala



### **Cameron House and The San Francisco District Attorney's Office Victim Services Division**

On April 14th, Cameron House was the third site in San Francisco to host the National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Peter Huynh, Elder Abuse & Domestic Violence Advocate, and Delia Montiel, Supervisor, were present to honor our own Ming Quan Chang and Karen Chu for their work in assisting survivors of Domestic Violence. During the ceremony, Delia thanked Cameron House for enabling the DA's Office to come here once a month and assist anybody who has been a victim of crime. She explained that victims do not always feel comfortable coming to the DA's office, so this collaboration is vital. "We cannot do this work alone," she said, "We served 7,000 victims last year. Each person [in the DA's Office] carries 700 people on their caseload. Without a collaboration, the victims would not get what they need. Cameron House is the backbone of the work we do to get victims through the Criminal Justice System."

Peter Huynh speaks Cantonese and has been assisting victims of crime for over two decades. Ming has been helping Domestic Violence survivors since 1986, and Karen started in 2013. Through the partnership of the DA's Office and Cameron House - which began back in 1987 - our two organizations have been building trust and restoring hope to the people of Chinatown who have experienced crime. Thank you Delia, Karen, Ming, and Peter!