

Current



Listening With the Heart

In today's fast-paced challenging world, so many relationships seem to be suffering. We connect more with technology, less with people, and even more sparingly with time to just *be*. Study after study has indicated that we are spending less time with our family members; are more stressed and impatient; and are busier than ever before. All of this puts tremendous strain on our emotions and our relationships. And it's profoundly more burdensome for the working poor who juggle many jobs in order to provide even the bare necessities for their families. Yet immigrants fare even worse, as they also face a lack of social and family support – and a cultural conflict with child rearing customs in America.

This is precisely where our Interactive Parent-Child Workshops come in. Conducted in Cantonese, these workshops help Chinese families learn problem-solving techniques, communicate their feelings and concerns constructively, and develop healthy coping strategies for the difficulties they face.

At the outset, parents learn that coming to the workshop is not like taking a Tylenol for a quick fix. Parenting is a life-long experience; and frequently, we need to create new habits and ways of seeing, thinking, and acting to cope with our changing world. Through the love and understanding of Ming Quan Chang and Lisa Chow, our trained staff facilitators, these workshops promote

that newness. The 8-week sessions are the beginning of a journey through which parents learn how to improve relationships, make better decisions, develop positive communication, and work through difficulties together. It creates a foundation that can be con-



tinually built upon: the awareness that change needs to come from within and that a healthier perspective of oneself and others leads to compassion.

Workshop topics range from parental emotional and conflict management to anger management for children. Every session begins with the instructional component for the parents, while the children are in a separate room, engaged in activities like computer and board games, diaphragmatic breathing,

and games of attention or self-control. Later, the parents and their children come together for joint activities, such as sushi making or bowling. These activities create opportunities for them to use the skills they are learning (i.e., praising their children or respecting their parents). Each session builds on the prior one, which helps reinforce what has already been taught while also incorporating the newer lessons. For example, after the session in which the parents learn the importance of cooling off before addressing a problematic situation, they are taught active listening – listening with the heart.

Another unique component to our workshop is a real-time teaching tool for the parents via a one-way mirror. In one room, a parent and his/her child read or play a game. The room has a comfortable couch and chairs, toys and books, and a wall with a one-way mirror. Using principles from Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, the child plays while the parent observes, reflects, praises, and imitates, setting limits only if absolutely necessary. During this play time, the parent wears a discreet earphone to listen to the instructor. On the other side of the mirror, in an adjacent room, the instructor and other parents observe the parent and child interacting. As the reading or playtime continues, the instructor gives recommendations and guidance to the parent, who immediately implements it. The parents in the

May's Corner

May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, a time when we celebrate and highlight the contributions that our Asian and Pacific Islander (API) brothers and sisters have made to our country. One such person is Wong Kim Ark, who brought a case before the US Supreme Court. To understand the value of his case, we need to take a brief look back in time.

The U.S. has a long record of anti-Chinese sentiment, which culminated during the late 1800's with legislation to this effect. During this time, more than 35,000 Chinese immigrated to America to work in California during the Gold Rush, many of them also worked on building the transcontinental railroad. The community grew throughout the West, and conflicts developed in the 1870's and 1880's when White workers viewed the Chinese immigrants as a great threat to their jobs and prosperity.

In 1882 Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, restricting immigration based on race and class. This action branded the Chinese as racially inferior and unfit to be part of American society. The Chinese fought back against such perceptions, as did others who supported them.

The legal exclusion of the Chinese lasted for 61 years and was not repealed until the Magnuson Act, on Dec. 17, 1943. The repeal, however, was still restrictive, limiting Chinese immigration to just 105 visas. It also prevented new Chinese immigration and did not allow existing Chinese

immigrants to naturalize as Americans.

This law included distributing identity cards for the Chinese. Those who traveled from the United States to China and back were often subjected to detention and extensive interviews upon their return at San Francisco's Angel Island.



Chinese Historical Society of America's "Exclusion/Inclusion" Exhibit

This brings us back to Wong Kim Ark, who was born in 1873, in San Francisco to immigrant parents with resident status in the U.S. Later, when his parents moved back to China, he visited them twice. In 1890, upon his second return to the U.S., he was denied entry based on the argument that he was not a US Citizen, even though he was born here. With support from the Chinese Six Companies, Wong Kim Ark fought his case all the way to the Supreme Court, which ruled that the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution granted birthright citizenship to all persons born in the United States regardless of race or nationality. The court ordered Wong Kim Ark to be discharged on the ground that he was, indeed, a citizen of the United States.

This important case has been at the center of many arguments regarding the rights of minorities born in the U.S. "This is the strongest legal precedent protecting the rights of citizens born in the United States even if they happen

to be a part of a group otherwise targeted for exclusion."¹

Today we are faced with history repeating itself. The Muslim ban is another example of legislation focusing on a group of people, based on their race and religion.

As a faith-based agency, the Cameron House mission is more important than ever. We have over 140 years of working with Chinese-American individuals and families AND recent immigrants to become full participants in, and contributors towards, a healthy society. We partner with other nonprofit agencies, as well as government and elected officials to help provide the services needed for both documented and undocumented people in need.

Having a healthy and strong community is integral to our work, and Cameron House will remain a safe space for those we serve. To learn more about the Chinese Exclusion Act, please visit our neighbor, The Chinese Historical Society of America, located at 965 Clay St. Their Chinese American Exclusion/Inclusion exhibit is fascinating. Consider a tour with family and friends after Church worship for the free program. More details can be found on their website: <https://chsa.org/exhibits/chineseamerican/>

Thank you for your efforts in helping to ensure that we continue to be a society that includes, not excludes, the Chinese and other immigrant families.

¹ http://encyclopedia.densho.org/United_States_v._Wong_Kim_Ark/

Serving Food and Love for 20 Years

It's a partnership that spans two decades, has distributed over 2 million pounds of food, and serves over 245 families each year. With the help of Alvin Low, Steve and Marian Fong, and the San Francisco/Marin Food Bank, our Food Pantry Program began 20 years ago, on December 2, 1997. Harry Chuck was instrumental in getting the grant for the program, and Ruth Leong volunteered for the very first grocery distribution (and remained a volunteer long afterwards). Every week for 20 years, rain or shine, our dedicated volunteers have worked tirelessly and selflessly. Initially, volunteers arrived at Cameron House by 10:00am to calculate allotments, set up tables, and prep the food. Now, they arrive before 1:00pm to decide their various roles in distributing the groceries. By 12:45pm, low- and extremely low-income Chinatown residents stand outside the chain-link gates on Sacramento Street, shopping bags in hand, waiting patiently. As the gates open at 1:00pm, everyone lines up and begins the process of signing in and receiving their portions of the fresh vegetables and fruit, eggs, and dried goods for the week. As the cost of rent and food in San Francisco soars, the food these families receive from Cameron House makes a huge difference. It not only alleviates their hunger, it incorporates healthful fruits and vegetables to their diets. And with the groceries, they receive a friendly smile, warm greeting, and the dignity they deserve simply because they exist. Thank you to the San Francisco/Marin Food Bank and to everyone who has dedicated their time to our Food Pantry during the past 20 years – you have brought hope, health, and happiness to thousands of lives!

A HUGE THANK YOU ...

to Mary and Dayton Leong, the two people who worked their magic behind the scenes. Coordinating all the details for this event took an incredible amount of time and effort, and Mary managed all of it while still staying on top of her regular work!

Dayton, in his usual style, prepared a fabulous meal of delectable salmon, salad, noodles, and fresh fruit. Thank you both for your herculean efforts – our Anniversary was a gigantic success because of you!

Go to our website (cameronhouse.org) for a complete list of our wonderful volunteers through the decades!





Looking Back on GALA

Check our website (cameronhouse.org) for more photos!



Inspiring Volunteer

It was an amazing night together with the support group participants and staff attending the Community, Soul & Elegance Gala. And it's my pleasure to participate in such a memorable event for the third time. I remember coming to know about Cameron House through a research project I was doing for my summer class seven years ago. I talked to Yulanda on the phone and learned about Cameron House's social services to the Chinese Community, particularly to domestic violence victims. Since then, I became part of the Cameron House Community as a volunteer and a friend. I am inspired by the dedication and compassion of this organization with a long history serving Chinese immigrants. And I am humbled to be friends with a group of courageous, caring, loving, and thriving support group members. - Jessica Cen



Reflecting With Beverly Lee

What part of the night meant the most to you and your family?
The videos with Jerry's school pals, his UPS boss, Mayor Ed Lee, and Norman Fong were touching and spot on. Our family was moved by the comments of Jerry's friends from his different roles in life, as a friend, employee, and community caretaker.



Of the many facets of Jerry's life, how would you like everyone to remember him?

The kids and I knew Jerry as his most relaxed being. Like Kenny Lee said, he was a jokester. He used to make me laugh, almost daily, until I had tears in my eyes. What he did and what he said was always nutty (like the time he reserved a rental car in Kuwait instead of Kauai for our vacation in Hawaii.) Others knew Jerry as an active community partner. Through his work as the Community Affairs Manager for UPS, he was proactive in getting corporate sponsorships and grants to many nonprofits in Chinatown, San Francisco, the Bay Area, and Northern California that focused on health and human services. He also pledged our personal funds to many of these agencies. I would like to have Jerry remembered as the person who responded to the needs of many in our community.



Why did you decide to set up a College Textbook scholarship?

I already make annual donations to some of the other agencies that Jerry supported in San Francisco. The funds donated went into their general funds and were not specific to a purpose. I tried to think of a way to give to Cameron House that would relate to the youth who are served. As many are high school students who will graduate and go on to college, it made sense to create an incentive for some of those kids to connect community service with a reward that will keep them going into their adult lives. I recalled the college expenses of my three children who all attended state universities. The tuition rose more and more for each child, but the most shocking expenses were the costs of the textbooks. With our youngest son, Bennett, at SF State, two times a year, we were stunned with book bills of \$700-\$800. You can imagine how this hits the pocketbook of many families.



IGNITE Senior Commission

"At our service trip in Orlando, Florida, we'll be helping the community by packaging food, working with families with children with lifelong illness, and associating with the Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church. It was my first time at Soul & Elegance. I



got to meet with the alumni and listen to how they got involved with Cameron House. Listening to them was really an eye-opening experience for me and a way to connect with the older generations of Cameron House as well as its history." - Charlie Ruan

"Our commission is going to Orlando, Florida for our service trip. There, we will be giving to the Orlando community by packaging food for the homeless and working with children with life-threatening diseases and their families. At Soul & Elegance, I had the opportunity to talk to Cameron House alumni and hear about their stories. I also helped out with the donations and was amazed by the generosity of the Cameron House community."

- Susana Chen

IGNITE is only \$1,425 away from being fully funded for their service trip. Visit their GoFundMe page to learn more about their service projects and how your gift can help: www.gofundme.com/ignite2orlando



Summers of Grace

When Susan* first started Summer programs at Cameron House, she was a decidedly different person than she is today. Very dependent on adult support and attention, she continuously needed to hold hands with a leader when the group traveled – and she would frequently cry when her Coordinator was not with her. She struggled to build relationships with peers, spoke very little, and was often withdrawn.

But her Coordinator spent ample time building a strong sense of community, facilitating a safe environment, and creating mutual respect and appreciation amongst staff, leaders, and campers. This helped Susan come out of her shell and grow more comfortable in the group. Through the course of the summer, we saw her gain independence while building new relationships with her peers. She became more talkative and engaged, and learned to do activities on her own (while enjoying them)! She particularly enjoyed an end-of-summer camping trip and a poetry workshop led by one of our staff members. During the trip she had fun with fellow campers, was relaxed spending a night away from home, and showed that she could take care of herself.

The following year she enrolled in our Bilingual Afterschool Program and continued developing relationships with her peers. Her former summer Coordinator is now her afterschool teacher, and they share a strong bond, but Susan is more independent. She's content working on her own or playing with kids her own age. She's becoming more confident and thriving.

Susan is one of countless youth who have benefitted from our Summer programs. While other programs provide academic, curriculum-based activities and learning experiences, ours provide those same opportunities - built on a strong foundation of community and a four-square, Christian philosophy. All of our youth are treated with dignity, and they are expected to learn how to treat others the same way. Many students who first came to our Summer programs keep returning because of the deeply rooted sense of community.

Our Summer programs also have an advantageous ratio of one leader for every three youth (most programs have one leader for twelve youth). This enables leaders to work one-on-one with their youth and ensures that students who have more specialized needs

are able to get those needs met.

Ultimately, our Summer programs provide youth a safe, caring, and structured environment where they can learn in a fun, hands-on manner; participate in new experiences (such as field trips, cook outs, camping, kayaking, hiking, and volunteering at other nonprofits); and contribute to the group and the larger community. Our Summer programs are also affordable, with financial assistance available so that any child who desires to attend is able.

Cameron House is a huge community – a family – that surrounds each person, whether young or old, with love, compassion, and encouragement. We want everyone who enters our 'home' to succeed, and we work on their success together. We provide support in the midst of challenges and opportunities for growth in a nurturing space. Our youth know that. Their parents say we make miracles happen. We say that it is God's grace working through our community, one person at a time.

Our Summer Registration forms are online! Go to cameronhouse.org, click on "Youth & Young Adults" and then the grade level of your child.



**The name and identifying details have been changed to protect privacy.*

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room with the instructor can hear her recommendations and see, in real-time, the effects they have on the child and parent's interaction. This kind of coaching is wonderfully positive and helps parents learn different methods of communicating with their children. Many of our parents volunteer for this role to get the hands-on practice and coaching, and through it, they have better success and more confidence implementing these tools at home.

Our workshops not only help the parents build better relationships with their children, it also helps them build a support network where they cultivate friendships, encourage, and support one another long after the classes end. And through the 8 weeks, they gain an awareness that they are a part of the Cameron House community.

At the end of the workshops, the parents always express gratitude. Sometimes, if space allows, they enroll in the sessions again as a refresher course and increase their knowledge and skills. And these skills can be used in extended family relation-

Family Harmony Project

Collaboration. Community. Consideration. These are all ways of expressing how Cameron House works with other nonprofits to best serve the needs of the people who come through our doors. As we work with the San Francisco/Marin Food Bank to serve groceries to extremely low- to low-income Chinatown residents (see story on page 3), we also work with other organizations to serve people who are experiencing domestic violence (DV). In 2013, North East Medical Services (NEMS) invited Cameron House to be a part of the Family Harmony Project. This project, funded by the Blue Shield of California Foundation,



Yulanda Kwong, Cameron House; Sai Ling Chan-Sew, NEMS; Ming Quan Chang, Cameron House; and Elizabeth Kirton, AWS

was a collaborative effort with Asian Women's Shelter (AWS) to train NEMS' medical service providers and administrative staff about domestic violence, as well as create and implement a screening tool to identify whether their patients are in DV situations. Cross references between the groups were developed to help a person or family in DV receive case management, shelter, counseling, and/or medical care.

The project was a huge success. What began as a two-year collaboration became a three-year one. During the first two years, Cameron House and AWS created two training videos and conducted two trainings for NEMS staff. In the third year, a report was produced to enable NEMS staff to continue learning about DV and providing resources for survivors. This project not only drew the medical and DV fields closer together, it also created opportunities to better assess DV and improve health care access systematically. Through these systemic changes and collaborative efforts, people in the Chinatown community are receiving better and more streamlined services.

On March 24, 2017, NEMS, Cameron House and AWS celebrated the success of the Family Harmony Project in Culbertson Hall. Also present was a representative from Blue Shield of California Foundation, who spoke about the initiative that supported the formation of this partnership. At the celebration, the collaborative members shared the lessons learned and challenges faced during their time together. A domestic violence survivor talked about her experience on how this collaboration positively impacted her life.

While the funding for this project has drawn to a close, the three agencies continue to work closely in serving the families and individuals experiencing domestic violence in our community. Thank you to everyone involved in this project!

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ships, the workplace, and other social settings. Healthy relationships take work and time; they can be 'messy,' and it's not always easy to get along. Changing patterns of thinking, seeing, and acting, is difficult, especially when those patterns are deeply ingrained. But through our workshops, parents gain the tools and confidence to be successful in their relationships; and

they realize that an entire community is walking this journey with them.

Workshops are open for parents, grandparents, or guardians of children from Kindergarten through 4th grade. The sessions run for 8 weeks, with each class lasting about 3 hours. In order to provide

the most focused help to participants, only 10 to 12 families are enrolled in each session. There is a fee of \$20 for the entire workshop, but that is waived for families who can't afford it. If you know someone who would like to attend, or for more information, contact Ming Quan Chang or Lisa Chow at 415.781.0401.



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events

upcoming

Date	Time	Event
Saturday, May 6	11:00am – 7:00pm	Cameron Carnival at Cameron House! <i>Don't miss out! Games, Activities, Jumper, Balloon Making, Senior Play, Jewelry, Entertainment, Therapeutic Massage, Food, and more!</i>
Saturday, Aug 5	1:30pm – 4:30pm	Ed Sue and the Cameron House Mural (see below)
Saturday, Aug 26	6:00pm	70's Party - <i>Cameron House Commission Reunion for Graduates of the 1970's! Reconnect with old friends and learn what's happening at Cameron House today! Save the date; more details to come!</i>
Tues-Thu, Aug 29-31	6:00pm - 9:00pm	Phone-a-Thon

ED SUE IS COMING TO CAMERON HOUSE!

You're invited to hear about Chinatown during the 1850's through 1950's, as seen through the eyes of Alumnus, Artist, and Architect Ed Sue. Discover how he was involved when our building was renovated after its return to the Presbytery of San Francisco. What's the story behind the mural at the entrance to Culbertson Hall? What and who did the artist have in mind while depicting the activities and people in the painting? What was Ed's role on Cameron House staff while he was going to Seminary? What helped him hear the call to be a minister? Join us on Saturday, August 5th, from 1:30pm to 4:30pm, and meet Ed Sue!



YOU CAN BE A LEGACY PHILANTHROPIST!

A charitable bequest is a gift made through a will that enables you to leave a legacy and make a significant contribution to the future of Cameron House. It costs nothing to make but can reduce your taxes and help benefit your family and Cameron House. Please call May Leong for more information (415.781.0401 x135). Thank you!