

Current



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Yo's Two Cents: The Party Is Not Over Yet

By Interim Executive Director Yulanda Kwong

The party is not over yet! Let us continue to celebrate and to put our faith in action in raising our voices for justice. March 2, 2019 was a very special day where our Soul & Elegance event was a space for creating opportunities and building community. Our theme was "Faith in Action: Raising our Voices for Justice." It was a time and place for sharing amazing stories of struggles and accomplishments; honoring Minami Tamaki LLP, Philip P. Choy, and Angela Chan from Asian Americans Advancing Justice/Asian Law Caucus who have given the community faith and trust in helping raise voices for justice; introducing Cameron House to people who have never heard about us at all; reconnecting with people who we have not seen for a while; and supporting a meaningful cause.

With our deepest gratitude, we thank everyone who came to the South San Francisco Conference

Center that evening to our gala. We also appreciate those who could not attend, but supported us as well. Without a team approach and community effort, our event would not have been possible. We give thanks to the planning committee, event co-chairs (Sherman Gee and Ken Ho), board members, staff, volunteers, sponsors, and our 400 guests.

We raised almost \$155,000 that evening, not quite reaching our fundraising goal for the event. Nonetheless, these significant funds will go towards our greatest need – operational funds for our programs and services. It is not only about the financial support people give us, which is extremely important, but it is also the belief, the trust, and the faith people have in us. However, it is crucial to continue and sustain Cameron House programs and services that are offered to the vulnerable and underserved Asian immigrant community. We began in the late 1800s as a mission home

that rescued girls who had been trafficked to the United States. We have since evolved and today we provide a wide array of services to meet the changing needs of children, youth, adults, and seniors in our community.

Regardless of how our political climate is and how there may be constant changes in this world, our dedication and ministry in serving the community remain constant. Along with Cameron House, YOU are also a part of this movement in making a difference in people's lives by supporting our organization and your community in many different ways.

We hope that you left our Soul & Elegance event feeling inspired and more knowledgeable about the important work that we do at Cameron House. We hope your continued faith and support will carry us so that we can provide invaluable services now and for generations to come.

NEW SPACE ALLOWS PARENTS TO PROVIDE MUTUAL SUPPORT

The group of ten adults sitting in a circle started out as strangers with one thing in common: they are all parents of teenagers. For the past seven months, they have participated in the Parent Support Group, where they have shared laughter and tears, triumphs and setbacks, memories of the past and hopes for the future.

At the group, each parent has the opportunity to share things

they might not normally tell their friends or family. Participants might be more hesitant to share so candidly with their closer relations because of the Chinese cultural norm of saving face. In order to save face, many Chinese American families, consciously or not, place an emphasis on presenting a rosy family image to the outside world, sharing only the positive and repressing challenges. This practice

can cause serious personal harm however, leaving painful issues unaddressed until they approach a critical breaking point. But rather than showing weakness, openly acknowledging life's challenges requires both strength and courage. Ada Lee, the leader of the group had to create several rules to encourage sharing, including maintaining

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SOUL & ELEGANCE GALA 2019 FAITH IN ACTION: RAISING OUR VOICES FOR JUSTICE

Follow @CameronHouseSF on Facebook and Instagram for regular photo updates!



Clockwise from top left: A pair of dessert dashers plant their flag to claim a princess cake. This year's silent auction featured over 160 items and was a favorite place for catching up with old friends. The night ended with a packed dancefloor. The spread of candies and snacks at the 梅 (mui, dried plum candy) bar included dried fruits, haw flakes, sour candy, and fragrant dried squid. The saxophone section of Jest Jammin' kept the dancefloor bouncing with everyone's favorite tunes. Fan dancers from Friends of Cameron House prepare for their grand entry.

COBRAS AND ANGELETTES STICK TOGETHER!

Senior Commission from 1972 Staying Strong 47 Years Later

By Byron Ho

Like many of the baby boomers at Cameron House, the majority of our club members grew up in Chinatown and North Beach, with the rest coming from various parts of San Francisco, and as far as Bayview. Some had long histories in the youth program beginning with Day Camp and Best Day of the Week, while most joined Cameron House in middle or high school. We were friends at our respective schools, but our experiences at Cameron House created the bonds which remain today. These shared experiences going on mini-caravans, putting on the variety show, and camping at Westminster allowed us to form friendships with people from other age groups. The skills and Christian values gained at Cameron House helped us understand the need for service and giving. The breadth of our career choices run the gamut of service areas: health, law, education, high tech, retail, entertainment, government, and beyond.

Key people such as Darien Louie, Penny (Lee) Sue, Lubert Lam, Bonnie (Toy) Lim, Cheri Choy and countless others organized our reunions and initially took place at five-year intervals. The restaurant and home venues were great but



The Cobras and Angelettes pose for a group photo at the Cameron House 1970s reunion held in 2017.

we eventually returned home for our 30-year reunion dinner at Cameron House shortly after the seismic retrofit. Some close members generously underwrote the gathering where donations were encouraged by attendees. This setting in Culbertson Hall promoted attendance, evoked memories, and stimulated giving. Darien Louie created a "Contact/Slam Book" for several of our gatherings, which allowed us to catch up with members, whether or not they were to attend. More recently, our gatherings have piggy-backed on fundraising events, including the Cameron House Gala.

Most of my best friendships grew out of our involvement at Cameron

House. Our common and different experiences allowed us to grow independently as time passed, so we could catch up where we left off. We look forward to many future reunions – after over 47 years, we're still going and growing!

We would like to thank the Cobras and Angelettes who have raised over \$3,000 this year for our programs that support low-income and immigrant Chinese families.

Keep the tradition of giving back alive! If you would like to organize a commission reunion to benefit Cameron House, we can help! Contact Associate Director Cody Friesenborg Lee at cody@cameronhouse.org or (415) 781-0401 ext. 115.



Saturday | May 4, 2019 | 11am-7pm
920 Sacramento St | San Francisco | CA
Free Admission

SUMMER REUNION

Calling all Cameron House alumni!

We will be hosting an afternoon of camp-themed, family-friendly fun on Sunday, July 14 from 2:00pm to 5:00pm in the lower yard!

Come enjoy campfire songs, s'mores, and most importantly, catch up with your Cameron House friends and commission members!

CONNECTING ELDERLY AND YOUTH THROUGH HEALING FOODS

If you come to the kitchen in Culbertson Hall on a Friday afternoon, you will see a flurry of activity as a team of dedicated volunteers pick, chop, peel, grate, steam, fry, boil, and bake their way through a heaping pile of fresh, organic ingredients. Using traditional Chinese recipes, the volunteers of the Kitchen Medicine program provide a balanced and nutritious meal for 75 elementary and middle school students from the Bilingual Afterschool Program who come to Cameron House for afterschool care and tutoring.

Before each meal, the Kitchen Medicine volunteers lead the youth in activities that encourage both healthy eating and cultural

connection. Together, the volunteers and youth name the ingredients in English and Chinese, learn about the health benefits of their food, and add some finishing touches to each dish. Nationwide, nearly one in five children qualify as obese. Limited access to fresh food and fading knowledge of traditional recipes are some of the factors contributing to this epidemic. Food is medicine in its own right according to traditional Chinese healing, and the Kitchen Medicine volunteers are equipping young people with the skills and experiences they need to lead healthy lives in the future. Longtime Kitchen Medicine volunteer Norma Chan notes, "It's exciting to see them get excited [about the ingredients] ... and for them to find out that 'Wow, we can have yummy snacks' and they don't need to know if it's healthy or not healthy."

Although Kitchen Medicine currently cooks meals for the Bilingual Afterschool Program once per week, Kitchen Medicine founder Chris Jeong hopes to recruit more volunteers and expand the program. Volunteers enjoy many benefits,

not only gaining traditional food knowledge, but also getting to enjoy each other's company as well as their own specially prepared meal. And some volunteers have seen a dramatic shift in their own health, with one volunteer's arthritis and inflammation no longer requiring opioid pain medications.

Kitchen Medicine is part of a larger project known as Urbdoc Academy. Urbdoc Academy empowers community members with knowledge of traditional healing arts, so that they can take charge of their own health, and contribute to the health of people around them.

If you are interested in joining the Kitchen Medicine team as a volunteer cook, please contact david@cameronhouse.org for more information.



Experienced hands chop up a 勝瓜 (sing gwa) to make 小炒 (siu chow).



Serving 小炒 (siu chow) with lettuce cups to Bilingual Afterschool Program students.



Future master chefs perfecting their knife skills on some green onions.



Kitchen Medicine uses fresh, organic ingredients and Chinese recipes to prepare nutritious meals.



Two big thumbs up for 小炒 (siu chow)!

DAISY, JIAN, JULIA, AND RACHEL JOIN THE TEAM!

Cameron House gains four new full-time staff members

My name is Daisy Fung, and I am a Domestic Violence Case Manager at Cameron House. I was born and raised in Hong Kong, but left for college. I miss all the street food, especially the cheong fun



Domestic Violence Case Manager Daisy Fung.

(腸粉) in sweet sauce! When I am feeling down, I enjoy working out and playing music on the piano and guitar. I've been working at Cameron House for three months, and I love the environment. My work involves supporting Chinese-speaking women and children who are in domestic violence situations by helping them find legal services and shelter, as well as providing translation and emotional support. The work was challenging at the beginning, but it provided me opportunities to learn, try, and explore. I look forward to more positive changes in the families I serve, and I am proud to assist survivors through their difficult times.

We are excited to have Jian Yi Zhao join our staff as our full-time custodian after working with us part-time for over seven years. Born in Guangzhou, Jian immigrated to the United States in 2009. He has two older brothers still living in China who are now retired. Jian enjoys travel and has been to Beijing, Shanghai, and Las Vegas. His daughter, who is in the seventh grade, would like to visit New York City someday. In his spare time, Jian

likes to catch up on sleep and watch sports, including basketball, soccer, and ping pong. His favorite teams



Custodian Jian Yi Zhao.

include the Golden State Warriors and Manchester United. During last year's FIFA World Cup he rooted for Brazil, and mourned their loss to Belgium in the quarter-finals.

My name is Julia Lin and I am a true native to San Francisco. One of my fondest childhood memories involves getting lost in Chinatown when I was five years old. After searching frantically, my



Youth Engagement Programs Coordinator Julia Lin.

dad found me standing by a dim sum restaurant's window, staring longingly at the ha gow (蝦餃). I missed my home city dearly when I left for four years to pursue my undergraduate degree in Washington State. During this time I was forced to confront my identity and question how that affects the way I navigate the world – which led me to working in the world of admissions, civic engagement, and

now Cameron House! My work thus far has focused on building programs that support both equity and access for youth of all ages, so I'm excited to be doing this work as the new Youth Engagement Programs Coordinator. I'll be working with Bilingual Afterschool Program (BAP), training our incoming summer coordinators, and overseeing the Girls on Fire program.

I'm Rachel Ng (伍子莊), Youth Engagement Programs Coordinator. I was born in Melbourne, Australia, and grew up in Hong Kong before my family immigrated to the East Bay, and I've always loved how each of my three hometowns has a beautiful coastline. I believe in food's power to bring people together, and whenever I visit my dad in Hong Kong, we have a tradition of eating



Youth Engagement Programs Coordinator Rachel Ng.

at Chuen Cheung Kui (泉章居), where the salt-baked chicken always reminds me of our father-daughter time. Additionally, I'm happiest whenever I visit my mom at home, open the front door, and smell her delicious Cantonese soup (老火湯, lou fo tong) throughout the house. I look forward to using my skills and life experiences to help our youth grow, whether at Friday Night Club, Westminster Woods, Kitchen Medicine, or beyond! I felt like a nomad growing up, so I'm excited to be part of a constant community for Cameron House youth.

Parent Support Group, Continued from page 2

confidentiality and not passing judgement over others. With time, the group members built trust with each other, and were able to dive deeper and deeper into their worries.

Being able to share means that parents are finally able to unload the burden of their bottled up anxieties as well as hear stories similar to their own that make them feel less alone in their struggle. In this way, every participant both receives and provides healing in the group. Ms. Lee has observed that the greatest power of the group is the way that parents support one another as peers, and how individuals arrive at their own conclusions about how they need to make changes in their personal lives to create the life they want for their family. Says Ms. Lee, "It is not about how much they have changed their children or their own spouse, it is all about how they themselves have changed internally. We always emphasize the uniqueness of each family and there is no one secret formula that would work for every family."

The Parent Support Group is a collaboration between Cameron House's Social Services and Youth Ministries, and connects parents whose teens participate in Youth Ministry programs with a trained counselor from Social Services Ministry. Although Ms. Lee has since moved on from her social services position at Cameron House, she continues to lead the group on a volunteer basis. This first cohort of the Parent Support Group will continue to meet through the summer, and Ms. Lee and other staff are hopeful that the group can be continued in the future.

WE WILL ALWAYS BE HERE FOR YOU

Are you or someone you love struggling?

No one should have to face life's challenges alone. Whether it's work-related stress, a relationship in need of healing, or recovery from a traumatic experience, our highly experienced counseling team is ready to provide confidential help. Contact info@cameronhouse.org for more information.



Our counselors speak fluent Cantonese, Mandarin, and English. No one is turned away for lack of funds.

LEAVE A LEGACY AT CAMERON HOUSE

Please consider making a lasting difference for our future generations through your estate plan. As a member of the Cameron House Legacy Society, your planned gift will ensure that the legacy of love, service, and community at Cameron House will live on for the next generation of clients and youth.

Your gift to the Legacy Society helps to:

Enhance and maintain the programs. Your planned gift will directly benefit Cameron House youth and social services clients. Larger donations are invested in the Cameron House Foundation, earning interest and supporting Cameron House long-term.

Support the infrastructure. Your gift assists with repairs, upgrades, and improvements to the facilities of our over 100-year-old historical building.

Set an example. Your gift sets an example and increases the likelihood others, who are considering making a legacy gift, will also enroll in the Cameron House Legacy Society.

If you are interested in leaving a legacy at Cameron House, we're here to start a conversation with you at any time. Please reach out to Associate Director Cody Friesenborg Lee at cody@cameronhouse.org or (415) 781-0401 x115.





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events

upcoming

| Date | Time | Event |
|-----------------|------------------|---|
| Saturday, May 4 | 11:00am - 7:00pm | Cameron Carnival - Welcoming all community members for food, fun, and prizes! Featuring the world-famous Dunko tank, jade waffles, and silent auction. |
| Monday, June 17 | 9:00am - 5:00pm | First Day of Summer Camp - Get ready! Branches, Ventures, and Solid Ground begin this day. |
| Sunday, July 14 | 2:00pm - 5:00pm | Cameron House Reunion - Join us for a camp-themed extravaganza, featuring tons of family-friendly fun, including crafts and weenie roasting! |

STAY IN TOUCH!

Don't forget to update your contact information by visiting our website at www.cameronhouse.org/contact-us/update-my-info or with the QR code to the right. Additionally, if you would like to receive a paper or electronic annual donation summary, please contact Annie Luu at annie@cameronhouse.org or (415) 781-0401 ext. 123.

