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

By Interim Executive Director Yulanda Kwong

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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 for immigrants 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 confidence in the group, allowing people to feel safe in sharing challenges.

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 (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.
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 and giving. The width of our career choices 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 and giving.

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

By Byron Ho

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, including volunteering to make a difference in 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.

Two big thumbs up for (siu chow)! Future master chefs perfecting their knife skills...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.

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

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!

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

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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 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.

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 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.

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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 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.

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## Upcoming Events

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, May 4</td>
<td>Cameron Carnival</td>
<td>11:00am - 7:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, June 17</td>
<td>First Day of Summer Camp</td>
<td>9:00am - 5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, July 14</td>
<td>Cameron House Reunion</td>
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### Cameron Carnival
- Welcoming all community members for food, fun, and prizes! Featuring the world-famous Dunko tank, jade waffles, and silent auction.

### First Day of Summer Camp
- Get ready! Branches, Ventures, and Solid Ground begin this day.

### Cameron House Reunion
- Join us for a camp-themed extravaganza, featuring tons of family-friendly fun, including crafts and weenie roasting!

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### 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.