

## Dear CASL Family and Friends...

After 38 years, I am writing my last message to you, as now I am an official retiree. As I was cleaning out my office, I reflected on the many framed pictures adorning my office walls. They tell a long and fruitful story about how the Chinese American Service League began in the back of a dentist's office and became a beacon of hope for over 11,000 Chinese Americans and Chinese Immigrants every year.

The pictures also tell a story of the countless people that provided vital support to CASL over the decades, as well as the amazing mentorship I have received from many of you—including my fellow founders, board members, staff both past and present, donors, our community, and partner organizations. Your friendship, wisdom, an advocacy of CASL—as well as my growth as a leader—have been instrumental in our success.

I have been incredibly blessed to lead CASL for almost four decades. As a Catholic, such met my spiritual calling to help those less fortunate. As an immigrant, it is gratifying to know I did my share to fight for the benefits of my community. As a social worker, I am happy to have secured valuable resources and relationships for our community. This has indeed been my dream job, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

As CASL moves forward into its next stage of service to the community, I leave behind a dedicated and accomplished board, loyal leadership staff, and a passionate CASL family that I have every confidence in. My wish is that you continue to show the same level of support and commitment to CASL and its next leader. You are what makes CASL a beacon within Chinatown, Chicago, and the Midwest. Continue to feed that light so that it may grow and shine ever more brightly!

All the best,



Bernie Wong

Co-Founder and Retired CASL President



### In This Issue...

- ◆ CASL Leadership Transition Update
- ◆ Cooking Up a Career
- ◆ Posse Scholarships Awarded to CASL Youth
- ◆ Pizza Party with the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation

# CASL Leadership Transition Update...

*Stronger than ever before, we embrace exciting changes!*

**Esther Wong**

Co-Founder and Executive Director  
estherw@caslservice.org



As many of you know, I continue to serve as Executive Director during this transition, and have assumed the duties of the CEO as well. CASL's leadership team has also stepped up as planned, and has assumed additional duties to ensure that we continue to run smoothly.

As CASL moves forward in our search for our next leader, DHR International has been working diligently to source potential candidates from all over North America, and has begun conducting first-round interviews that include candidate leadership assessments. At the same time, CASL's leadership staff have been working to prepare the team for this transition.

## Experience + Emotional Intelligence = Excellence

Research shows that 54% of an individual's workplace persona is easily measurable and is the focus of decisions to hire candidates. This includes variables like education, experience, and skill sets. The other 46% constitutes workplace behavior and communication style. With CASL's family-like work culture, we recognize that 54% isn't enough to create a strong leadership team. For us, the ability to connect and nurture people of all kinds is a crucial skill for our CEO and leadership team to have.

## On to Phase Two

Extensive work has been done, and will continue to be done, during this transition process to address the other 46% and strengthen CASL's entire leadership team. CASL's three directors, four program managers, and myself have been working with The Oliver Group to assess our workplace characteristics, identify our individual and group strengths and challenges, and improve communications among the team members. In addition, we brought together our entire supervision team in a full day retreat to discuss change management.

The first phase of that work has been completed, and we now prepare to move into phase two. This phase will focus on implementing the knowledge gained from the insightful trainings and in-depth analysis to improve the overall effectiveness of the team. In addition, those assessments are also being carried out on CEO candidates. Both sets of assessments will be used in the search process to create an ideal match—not just in experience and credentials, but in character and workplace behavior.

In the meantime, the CASL Family can count on me for strong leadership and unwavering support as we forge ahead into an innovative and bright future!

## Cooking Up a Career

Chef Training Program ♦ Stacy\_Huang@CASLservice.org ♦ 312.791.0418 x3611

Pamela Estwick was born and raised on the south side of Chicago. Armed with a Bachelor's Degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management, she has spent over a decade in Project and Communications Management roles. But eventually the call of the kitchen led Pamela to CASL's Chef Training Program and the education she needed for an exciting new life in the culinary world. During her very first visit to CASL, Pamela felt a connection and knew that the program was the right education for her!

### What were the most exciting aspects of being a student in the Chef Training Program?

The most exciting things were learning about the food of different cultures, exploring new flavors, and learning techniques for being a neat and organized cook. I also made some friends in the program and got to know people from backgrounds that were much different than mine. I truly looked forward to being in the kitchen and learning something new every day from my dedicated and amazing teachers.

### What was one of the most useful techniques you learned?

Learning the technique and history of making soups, stocks, and sauces made the deepest connection with me. After picking up a book called *The Saucier's Apprentice* at the recommendation of Chef Instructor John Claybrooke, things seemed to open up for me in a different way. I find myself at home now making soups a few times a week. The delicate balance between salt, fat/butter, and herbs can take a regular dish and make it taste extraordinary.



### What advice can you give those entering CASL's Chef Training Program?

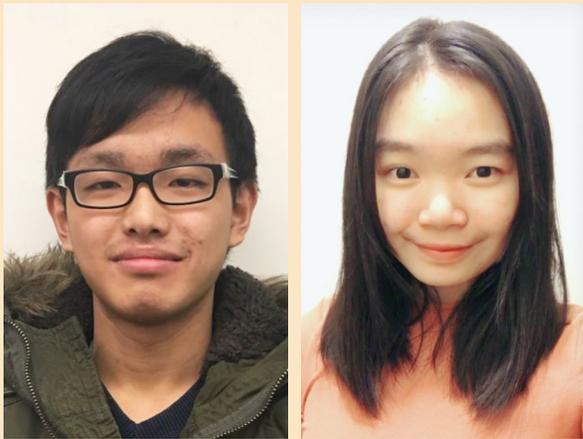
Take very good notes, keep an open mind, be ready to explore a new lifestyle—the life of a cook/chef is much different than any other field you may have been in previously. The program changed my life and took me from an office worker to a full time cook in a very short amount of time. I'm very grateful for that. I had excellent teachers and support at CASL. I'm so very glad that I have the foundation of what I learned at CASL. I would not be employed or surviving at work without that knowledge.

## Posse Scholarships Awarded to CASL Youth

High School Youth Program ♦ Kevin\_Kwong@CASLservice.org ♦ 312.791.0418 x3602

Since 1989, the Posse Foundation has identified public high school students with extraordinary academic and leadership potential, and has given these students the opportunity to pursue personal and academic excellence by placing them in supportive, multicultural teams—"posses". Advancement through the competition leads to intensive leadership activities in Posse groups, and then a final selection of Posse Scholar awardees. Upon months of student evaluation, Posse partner colleges and universities select "Posse Scholars" to receive four-year, full-tuition leadership scholarships.

Out of 2,800 Chicago-area nominees for 2016, 120 students were awarded—including Ming Tao Chen and Aiping Li of CASL's High School Youth Program.



Ming Tao Chen (left) has been ranked first in his grade since his freshman year at Thomas Kelly High School, and is an esteemed member of the National Honor Society. He will be attending Denison University and studying mathematics and economics.

Aiping Li (right) is the secretary of the Student Council and the treasurer of the National Honor Society at Curie Metropolitan High School. She is also a member of the Senior Executive Board and the National Chinese Honor Society. She will be attending DePauw University and studying economics.

*"In 2011 and 2014, CASL's High School Youth Program congratulated our own students as Posse Scholarship recipients. For 2016 we congratulate Ming Tao Chen and Aiping Li as recipients who demonstrate the exceptional leadership skills and academic excellence our High School Youth Program advocates."* —Kevin Kwong, Youth Development Program Coordinator

## Pizza Party with the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation

Foundation and Corporate Giving ♦ Dustin\_Quebedeaux@CASLservice.org

Over the holidays, members of the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation learned hands-on what it's like to be students of CASL's unique Chef Training Program—by taking a pizza-making class! As a longtime funder of the program, the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation enjoyed seeing, experiencing, *and* tasting how their funding has helped thousands of culinary jobseekers learn not only hard skills in the kitchen, but also skills in communication, marketing, and landing the jobs of their dreams. Thank you Lloyd A. Fry Foundation!



### Dear CASL Family and Friends...

The American news cycle has recently been dominated by stories of human migration. At our southern border, tens of thousands of children, sent by their parents to find a better life in America, are held in crowded and unsanitary conditions. In Southeast Asia, Rohingya Muslims fleeing persecution in rickety boats are stranded at sea when denied entry by their prospective hosts. Across the Atlantic, Syrian refugees seeking asylum in Europe are instead met with xenophobia and racism.

These are stories that absolutely demand public attention. Just as important, however, are the thousands of stories of those whose migration is not forcible, but rather aspirational, who move to find better jobs, or to be reunited with their families. In the United States, Chicago has long been a destination for these individuals, and our city has been fortunate enough to have the resources and infrastructure to receive them.

Unfortunately, these amenities are in grave danger due to the ongoing Illinois state budget crisis. Immigration services have been among the first to be slashed, and subsequent cuts to other services, such as childcare, will make their resettlement in Chicago even more arduous.

Here at CASL, we process over 300 visa applications annually. Every year inside our doors, over 200 people take the United States citizenship exam, with 80-85% passing on their first try. In Fiscal year 2015, CASL programming helped 189 individuals find living wage jobs, 33 new immigrant families purchase homes, and assisted 137 more in beginning to save for one of their own. Without funding, many in our community will go without the services they need to become productive, fully-integrated members of society.

The story of Chicago is the story of immigrants. It's our diverse make up that keeps our city vibrant and healthy. Our elected officials in Springfield should keep this in mind as they continue their deliberations.

All the best,



Bernie Wong  
CASL President and Co-Founder



### In This Issue...

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- ◆ Chef Trainees Cook Up Pasta Perfection
- ◆ Child Development Center Turns 30
- ◆ Clients Receive Housing Relief
- ◆ Event: *Winter Night Chic*
- ◆ Zhou Brothers Street Naming

### CASL in the Community...

*Esther Wong, CASL Executive Director and Co-Founder*

As many of you know all too well, the Illinois state budget crisis has left countless organizations—and those individuals and families they serve—facing tremendous difficulty in readjusting, rebudgeting, and renewing their sense of purpose. At the Chinese American Service League, we have chosen to face adversity with resounding revitalization, and to address the needs of our clients and community with utmost positivity. Here are just a few of the countless ways CASL is reaching out to uplift the community:

#### Chinatown Community Vision Plan

Aligned with CASL's mission to empower citizens to thrive and contribute to society, the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC) *Chinatown Community Vision Plan* likewise seeks to improve our growing Chinatown community with long-term goals, civic sustainability, and Chicago-wide implications. One of the many ways CASL, a CBCAC member, has been working on the *Chinatown Community Vision Plan* is in examining the environment of our community and focusing on ways to enhance safety, housing, traffic, and public spaces. Through surveys, the needs and concerns of Chinatown residents can be heard loud and clear.

#### Chicago Public Library's New Chinatown Branch

Opened August 29, 2015 with a partially covered "living" roof, Feng shui-influenced interior design, and expansive views of the city, the new 16,000 square foot library is now a destination hotspot for CASL's Family Learning & Resource Center. Our parents, grandparents, and children love story time at the new library! We look forward to working with our new library on community literacy initiatives.

#### Community Clean-Up

CASL staff and youth gathered together on Veteran's Day to tackle the trash that had been polluting our streets, and also rake leaves. The CASL Community Clean-Up Day proved to be an excellent way to teach youth the importance of caring for our environment, and to clean up our community at the same time.





## Chef Trainees Cook Up Pasta Perfection

*Chef Training Program* ♦ [Stacy\\_Huang@CASLservice.org](mailto:Stacy_Huang@CASLservice.org) ♦ 312.791.0418 x3611

NBC-7, WGN-TV, and The Chicago Tribune are just a few media giants who have recently featured CASL's Chef Training Program. Sumptuous spaghetti accentuated by ratatouille is just one of countless culinary delights mastered by our trainees.

The 16-week intensive Chef Training Program offers western-style cooking instruction and Vocational English as Second Language (VESL), equipping students with knowledge and skills for entry-level food service positions— including placement in major hotels and restaurants. The program includes six months of follow-up services to ensure job retention. It's never too early to inquire about our next class, and never too late for a culinary education!

## Child Development Center Turns 30

*Child Development Center* ♦ [Jane\\_Cecil@CASLservice.org](mailto:Jane_Cecil@CASLservice.org) ♦ 312.791.0418 x1110

Thirty years of early childhood excellence means three decades of yielding confident, responsible, English and Mandarin-speaking individuals ready to take on the world and succeed in global society. A warm, heartfelt congratulations to Brenda Arksey, Director of CASL's Child Education and Development Services, for cultivating our nationally accredited, multilingual, and multicultural Child Development Center from the very beginning!

Today's children are tomorrow's life-saving doctors, breakthrough scientists, successful employers, and outstanding leaders. Contact us to enroll your child, or donate and invest in the future of your community.

## Clients Receive Housing Relief

*Housing & Financial Education Department* ♦ [Ben\\_Lau@CASLservice.org](mailto:Ben_Lau@CASLservice.org) ♦ 312.791.0418 x3605

Like so many of us, Ms. Savage was struggling to pay rent after being laid off. She came to CASL for guidance, and was referred to our Emergency Rental Assistance program, which is funded through the Illinois Attorney General's Office. Ms. Savage completed a financial education class, and received a check to assist with rent during this difficult time. Through CASL she also received a ComEd gift certificate to help pay her ComEd bill. CASL's Housing and Financial Education Department helps hardworking Chicagoans with any housing and financial difficulties they may face, and empowers them to persevere.



# Winter Night Chic

December 4th, 2015 ♦ Bridgeport Art Center

Rustic glamour and sweeping skyline views, supercharged celebrity tweets and chic club lounges—at the beginning of December, CASL turned up the heat! With internationally known DJ Orion Roswell mixing up a sultry mood in the Bridgeport Art Center's "Skyline Loft", over 500 guests networked with media celebrities, corporate leaders, and local philanthropists to raise over \$130,000 to support CASL's programs.

Co-Chaired by the **Sue Ling Gin Charitable Foundation** and the **Chinatown Parking Corporation**, Winter Night Chic was about friends, festivity, and food. Several Chicago restaurants catered in a delicious assortment of Asian cuisines, and the full open bar kept all in the holiday spirit. Asian-inspired ginger and lemongrass cotton candy—on rainbow LED sticks—enhanced the excitement as CASL's Interest Class Dance Group performed the mesmerizing "Pi-Pa Dance" with traditional Chinese "pi-pa" string instruments.

Via hashtag and photo booth fun, over a hundred party selfies were shared on large screens throughout the night. A silent auction and raffle of airfare, theater tickets, restaurant certificates, and other glamorous prizes kept all engaged in the spirit of giving.

Winter Night Chic's goal to host an upscale social event for many long-time friends—while introducing CASL to many new friends—was a success. Thank you to all who made our Winter Night Chic our most spectacular winter benefit yet. We can't wait to show you what we have in store for you next!



## Honorary Zhou Brothers Way

ZhouBrothers.com ♦ Press@ZhouBArtCenter.com

On October 16th, 2015, Mayor Rahm Emanuel dedicated "Honorary Zhou Brothers Way" as an opening to the Zhou B Art Center's *City of Big Dreams Fest*, a fundraiser to support organizations that bring art to at-risk youth. CASL would like to congratulate the Zhou Brothers on this monumental achievement, and thank them for all they do for our community!



Photo by Mike White Photography

## Summer 2016 Newsletter

### Dear CASL Family and Friends...

One of the great tenets of being a citizen of the United States is the right to vote. It is a freedom, a privilege, and a symbol of democracy that minority groups have spent over a century fighting for.

On February 3, 1870, African-American men were granted the right to vote with the ratification of the 15th Amendment. The amendment, however, did not include women. It wasn't until fifty years later, on August 26th, 1920, that the 19th Amendment was passed in response to the Women's Suffrage Movement. Yet voters' rights were not fully recognized by the American electorate until the 36th President of the United States, Lyndon B. Johnson, signed the federal Voting Rights Act in 1965. This piece of legislation changed the face of American politics by prohibiting voter discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity and gender. By 1975, the Voting Rights Act was amended so that assistance would be provided to eligible voters with limited English proficiency. The Voting Rights Act marks the United States' recognition of equal voting access. We've come a long way as a country, but there is still much more to do.

It is not always easy to see how voting can transform our community, our society, our city, and our nation. But when we combine all of our individual voices as one, the result is tremendous societal impact for the better. It is vastly important that each and every citizen of this country exercises their right to have a voice—to have a say in the decisions that affect our individual lives and our communities. Immigration, economy, criminal and social justice, health care, privacy and data security, and many of the freedoms we are entitled to—all are voted upon by the American people in addition to the candidates running for various legislative seats.

This presidential election could be one of the most significant during our lives, but there is much more to voice your opinion on during election day. Educate yourself on the other political seats to be filled, and make informed decisions on legislative issues—fill your ballot out in full. Register to vote, and vote with conviction on November 8th!

All the best,



Bernie Wong  
CASL President and Co-Founder



### In This Issue...

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- ◆ Yuling Wu, New Manager of Children's Programming
- ◆ Middle School Youth Create Their Summer
- ◆ Event: 2016 Winter Social—A Legacy of Compassion
- ◆ Volunteer for THE Party of the Season!

## CASL in the Community...

*Every voice matters, every vote counts!*



Esther Wong

CASL Executive Director and Co-Founder

In 2008, six million Americans didn't vote because they missed a registration deadline or didn't know how to register. By resolution of the National Association of Secretaries of State, **National Voter Registration Day** is now the fourth Tuesday of September—on the 27th in 2016. Led by volunteers, celebrities, and organizations from all over the country, this initiative of coordinated field, technology, and media efforts aims to amplify awareness of voter registration opportunities. While the struggle to increase the number of registered and active voters in our own community continues, we in Chinatown have come a very long way.

### CASL and the **Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (est. 2001)**

- ◆ Chinese American Service League
- ◆ Chinatown Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Asian Americans Advancing Justice (Chicago)
- ◆ Pui Tak Center
- ◆ Chinese American Civic Council
- ◆ Chinese Mutual Aid Association
- ◆ Asian Pacific American Advocate
- ◆ South-East Asia Center

One of CASL's focuses as a member of the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC) has always been civic engagement—proactively engaging in candidate forums, the recruitment of more bilingual election judges, early voting campaigns, voter registration, voter education, poll monitoring, and presenting long lists of new voters to elected officials in order to show the growing political power of the Chinese community. Over the course of a decade—and in partnership with other organizations—CBCAC succeeded in registering over 5,000 new voters. Most notably in 2011, CBCAC began expanding its collaboration to include other minority communities by working closely with State Senator Kwame Raoul—Chair of the Senate Redistricting Committee—and the Asian Americans Advancing Justice (Chicago) to pass the Illinois Voting Rights Act of 2011. This resulted in the Greater Chinatown community in Armour Square, Bridgeport, and McKinley Park being established as one state district.

### Get Out The Vote

Now in this 2016 presidential election year, CASL's "Get Out The Vote" campaigns are stronger and more aggressive than ever—yielding 2,500 voters in the last election. High school youth play a critical role in the future of our community's voting power by not only preparing to become active, educated voters themselves, but also by inspiring older generations to care about our community's future and feel confident about having a voice. It is imperative that everyone in our community be educated on their rights and responsibilities as citizens of this democratic country, and for those on the path of citizenship to likewise keep themselves informed on the politics that shape their world. Register to vote NOW if you haven't already, and we'll see you at the polls!

## Gardening with Goldman Sachs

Adult Day Service ♦ Winnie\_Lam@CASLservice.org ♦ 312.791.0418 x1120

In 2015, 54 Goldman Sachs offices partnered with over 900 non-profit organizations on nearly 1,600 projects worldwide. More than 25,000 Goldman Sachs staff, family and friends joined together to contribute over 150,000 hours to communities around the world. And for the past 4 years, Goldman Sachs Chicago has been making a meaningful difference for our seniors here at CASL. In particular, one product of this outstanding partnership has been the gorgeous garden beautifying the senior's patio year after year!



"They helped us repaint the corridor that we never had time and resources to manage ourselves. Now we can hang up all of our awards and accomplishment letters on the bright, clean white wall! And without their help, we would not have a beautiful patio for clients to do their therapeutic gardening work. We look forward to Goldman Sachs coming back next year!"

—Winnie Lam, CASL Adult Day Service coordinator

"We were thrilled once again to partner with CASL for the fourth consecutive year through *Community TeamWorks*, our signature volunteer initiative. Goldman Sachs is committed to giving back to our community and helping to promote social wellbeing and healthy lifestyles. The opportunity for me to spend the day with the Adult Day Service clients—especially the many elderly who came to the U.S. from Taishan, my parents' birthplace and home in China—provides such a powerful cultural connection to my Chinese heritage."

—Bonnie Fong, Vice President of Investment Banking at Goldman Sachs

## Closing on a House and a Home

Housing and Financial Education ♦ Ben\_Lau@CASLservice.org ♦ 312.791.0418 x1120



In late spring of 2015, Mr. and Mrs. Liu came to CASL seeking financial education. They then attended our homebuyers workshops to better position themselves as informed buyers, and finally moved on to the one-on-one counseling that would accelerate their dream. Now—only a year and three months later—Mr. and Mrs. Liu have closed on their beautiful new home!

You're never alone on the path to success. Contact CASL today for the resources you deserve to make your dreams come true!

## Yuling Wu, New Manager of Children's Programming

Child Education and Development Services ♦ [Yuling\\_Wu@CASLservice.org](mailto:Yuling_Wu@CASLservice.org) ♦ 312.791.0418 x1105

Having been CASL's School Age Coordinator for nineteen years, Yuling Wu was the obvious choice as our new manager of Child Education and Development Services. Yuling received her Masters Degree in Education—Instructional Leadership—from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and she also holds the Illinois Directors Credential (Level I). During her previous nineteen years at CASL, Yuling was a school age program trainer for 5 years, a school age quality advisor for 2 years, a leader in promoting school age program quality, and instrumental in having the program accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

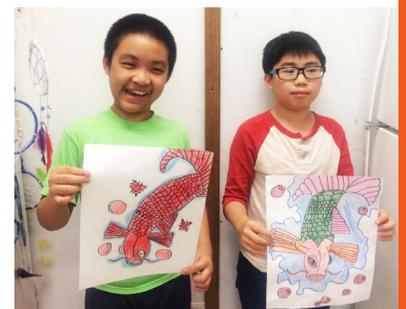
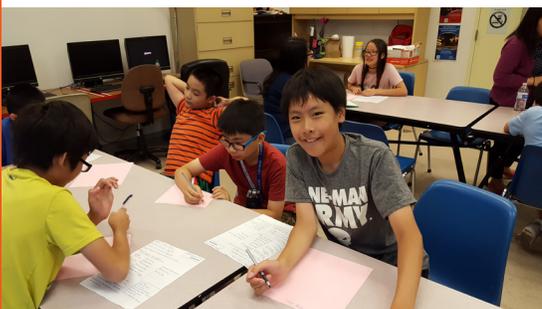
"Children are moldable and can be nurtured and educated to their full potentials. This is achieved by staff implementing developmentally appropriate activities in a bilingual/bicultural environment, and by encouraging parents to create a home environment in which children can practice what they've learned." —Yuling Wu



## Middle School Youth Create Their Summer

Youth Development Program ♦ [Cindy\\_Zhang@CASLservice.org](mailto:Cindy_Zhang@CASLservice.org) ♦ 312.791.0418 x2103

Grid drawing techniques, watercolor, basic quilling, and story-writing are just some of the many creative activities that middle school youths enrich their summer with in CASL's Youth Development Program. But as the new academic year begins, youths come to CASL after school for homework tutoring, computer training, field trips, community service, mentoring and counseling, and workshops on transitioning to high school.



# 2016 Winter Social

*A Legacy of Compassion*

December 2 ♦ 6:30 - 10:00 PM ♦ Bridgeport Art Center

This past summer, it was with immense joy and celebration that the CASL Family announced the retirement of both Bernie Wong and Esther Wong—two of our founders. The transition— spearheaded by a committee of board members and CASL leadership—has been carefully planned in order to honor Bernie and Esther’s wishes to retire at the end of 2016.

It is important for the community to know that this hallmark change—and the solidarity it has created among boards, leadership, and staff—means an escalation of CASL’s strength, vitality, and investment in the Chicago community.

That said, it’s time to celebrate!

View the sparkling Chicago skyline from cozy club lounges, sample delicious hors d’oeuvres experiences, enjoy the full open bar, and dance to internationally-acclaimed DJ Orion Roswell’s hottest mixes—CASL will return to the Bridgeport Art Center on December 2nd to celebrate the legacy of Bernie and Esther in the utmost style.

Once you’ve tweeted at-event photos of yourself with local celebrities, then get to know the names and faces of the extraordinary board members and staff leadership who are piloting CASL into an innovative and exciting future. We’d love for you to be a part of this unprecedented celebration, so don’t miss this chance to honor Bernie and Esther, share your ideas with us, and party like never before!



## Volunteer for THE Party of the Season!

Catherine Wanandi, Volunteer Coordinator ♦ 312.791.0418 x3905

There is no CASL event like our annual Winter Social, and you need to be there. What type of volunteering could be more fun than a chic holiday kick-off celebration overlooking Chicago’s glittering skyline?

Volunteer opportunities for this event are easy, fun, and a great way to get to know CASL in a relaxed party environment. Register with us NOW to secure your ideal position!

### Dear CASL Family and Friends...

"Gentrification" is a word I am sure many of you have seen in the news lately.

In Chicago, we associate it with the rapidly changing character of neighborhoods like Pilsen and Logan Square, where longtime Latino residents have been forced out by rising rents and property taxes. Over the past few decades, Chinatowns across the country have undergone similar changes. Increased living costs have pushed longtime residents to other parts of the city, even out to the suburbs, leaving only the remnants of what once were vibrant immigrant communities.

Such is not the case in Chicago's Chinatown, which is the only one in the entire nation whose Chinese population has *increased* over the past 10 years. Our streets are abuzz with commuters, business owners, customers, and residents—most of them newly arrived or originally born in China. Many of the individuals I met and befriended when I first arrived over 45 years ago still live and work here today.

The reasons for this steady growth are many, but not insignificant is the way CASL has adapted to support our growing and ever-changing community. Our Chef Training Program has helped thousands secure high-paying jobs to help pay for rising rents. Our Housing and Financial Education Department assists dozens of families every year in making an investment—the purchase of a home which affirms them, undeniably, as Chinatown residents. CASL Senior Housing provides affordable units for fixed-income seniors hoping to stay in the neighborhood, surrounded by their language, their food, their friends and family.

As our community has thrived, so has CASL. It has been our honor to live and work alongside this community—to share in both its struggles and successes—now for over 37 years. And, I hope, for 37 more.

All the best,



Bernie Wong  
CASL President and Co-Founder



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by Honoring Helen Wong

## CASL in the Community...

*Chicago's Chinatown thrives as others decline*



Esther Wong

CASL Executive Director and Co-Founder

Upon the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act that prevented further Chinese immigration, those Chinese who were already in the U. S. faced overwhelming racism that led to the creation of Chinatowns as ethnic sanctuaries. Over time, and as racial tensions eased, Chinatowns have become popular tourist destinations. But in the past few decades, most Chinatowns have been experiencing population deterioration as gentrification, economic downturn, and other phenomena shape the urban landscape. Chicago's Chinatown, however, is an exception as its Chinese population surges past 26,000 residents in the Greater Chinatown Area of Armour Square, Bridgeport, McKinley Park, and beyond—even as the city's total population declines.

### Our Past

Located in the heart of the country, Chicago was known to be a destination for those Chinese fleeing racism almost 140 years ago—particularly those who could not find solace on the West Coast where the first Chinatowns were conceived. Established by such West Coast Chinese, the first Chicago Chinatown was located in the Loop and in a hotbed of seemingly inescapable discrimination as well as economic pressure and overcrowding. But once moved to its current location on the Near South Side, Chicago's Chinatown proceeded to flourish as a safe bet for incoming Chinese immigrants. And for the past 37 years of Chicago Chinatown's one hundred years on the Near South Side, CASL has been a critical component of Chinatown sustainability—opening its arms and doors to all in need, and actively engaging the community in sustainability initiatives.

### Our Present

Ping Tom Memorial Park, Leonard Louie Fieldhouse, the new Chinatown library, expanded water taxi service, Divvy bicycle sharing stations, and the new Jaslin Hotel—these are just a few of the recent community enhancements that economically benefit Chinatown residents and attract the continuous stream of incoming Chinese immigrants seeking the utmost security and stability. But long before the ground broke on these enhancements, CASL's total service numbers swelled over 17,000 people assisted annually. As Chinese immigrants—and others in need—flock to CASL for the comprehensive services they need to thrive and contribute back to the community, CASL must continue to innovate and be an active part in planning for the community's future.

### Our Future

Collaboration is critical for the welfare of community organizations such as CASL, and critical for the wellbeing of the community as a whole. In partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Alderman Danny Solis, CASL, and other Chinatown organizations, the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC) has produced the *Chinatown Community Vision Plan*—a comprehensive document realizing a dream for a robust future. Safety, transportation, residential areas, economic development, education and workforce, parks and public spaces, future developments, and long-term capacity building are integral components of a healthy and sustainable future here in the heart of Chicago as well as the heart of the country. Visit [CASLservice.org/Chinatown](http://CASLservice.org/Chinatown) to view the plan.



## Senior Art Show *Conduit* Makes a Statement

Adult Day Service ♦ Winnie\_Lam@CASLservice.org ♦ 312.791.0418 x1120

One of the most fundamental human behaviors is expressing oneself, and so the therapeutic qualities of making art are being explored by senior programs across the country. According to an article by *USA Today*, seniors with Alzheimer’s disease and other ailments of aging can awaken brain functions and enhance memory by engaging in artistic activities that allow them to express their deepest thoughts and emotions. CASL’s Adult Day Service program—in addition to providing safety, refuge, and companionship for Chinese seniors—takes the concept of art therapy to another level.

Lanterns, dragons, firecrackers, messages of fortune, and even turkeys—all intricately made of paper—hung from the ceiling of CASL’s Grand Hall as Adult Day Service’s *Conduit* Art Show opened its doors to the public. Over 200 guests enjoyed skill demonstrations, calligraphy souvenirs, and elegant piano music as they walked through the many displays of healing artwork that spoke about various concepts the seniors valued. A legacy of industriousness, memories of family, healthy living, taking root in the United States, peace and harmony, merging of cultures, instilling virtues, giving thanks, upholding traditions, embracing individuality, contributing to community—these are just some of the messages senior artists conveyed through their colorful works of art.

Adult Day Service is much more than the powerful statements its senior artists make about expressing themselves, taking control of their aging, and living meaningful lives with dignity. It is a community of strength and friendship that anchors the CASL Family and spreads its wisdom throughout Chinatown. Visit them today to enjoy some art therapy, and be forever changed!

## Spring Cleaning on World No Tobacco Day

Youth Development Program ♦ Thieu\_Dang@CASLservice.org ♦ 312.791.0418 x2103

CASL Youth and the Coalition for Asian Substance Abuse Prevention (CASAP) gathered to honor World No Tobacco Day by cleaning up cigarette waste and other litter throughout Chinatown. Youth were also encouraged to let their friends and family know about World No Tobacco Day, and to ask them to give up smoking for at least one day. CASL is dedicated to the health and safety of our community.

CASL’s Youth Development Program provides a safe, supervised, and welcoming environment that supports the holistic development of Chinese immigrant youth 5th to 8th grade. Through academic tutoring, structured recreation, life skills workshops, parental involvement, and community service activities, our youth learn leadership skills, experience a sense of belonging, and are ready to make smart life choices for themselves.



# CASL Kids to Host 3-Program Open House

Child Education and Development Services ♦ [Yuling\\_Wu@CASLservice.org](mailto:Yuling_Wu@CASLservice.org) ♦ 312.791.0418 x1105

Recently re-accredited for its preschool and school age programs, CASL's Child Education and Development Services will be hosting an unprecedented 3-program Open House on **July 28th, 2016**—welcoming infants, toddlers, school children ages 5 to 12, and their families to experience our holistic early childhood education programming. Two sessions will be held to give parents and grandparents a chance to attend; the first during the day from 10:00 to 11:30 AM, and the second in the evening from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. In addition to re-accreditation, CASL's preschool has yet again been awarded the *ExceleRate Illinois Gold Circle of Quality*. Come visit this award-winning program and staff!

Thirty years of early childhood excellence means three decades of yielding confident, responsible, English and Mandarin-speaking individuals ready to take on the world and succeed in global society. Today's children are tomorrow's life-saving doctors, breakthrough scientists, successful employers, and outstanding leaders. Contact us for more information on our Open House, to enroll your child in CASL's preschool today, or donate and invest in the future of your community.



Chef John Claybrooke teaches culinary fundamentals and refinements



Graduates prepare and serve hors d'oeuvres at CASL's May galas



President Bernie Wong proudly offering hors d'oeuvres to Mayor Emanuel

## Chef Training Fulfills a Critical Need

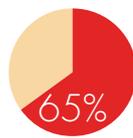
Chef Training Program ♦ [Stacy\\_Huang@CASLservice.org](mailto:Stacy_Huang@CASLservice.org) ♦ 312.791.0418 x3611

According to an article by *Fortune*, too many restaurants and unrealistic career expectations are causing a drought of chefs and culinary professionals across the country. Moreover, according to an article by the *Chicago Tribune*, this drought has long since hit home. Chicago restaurants are in desperate need of skilled culinary professionals. Yet would-be culinary trainees are faced with the prospect of staggering tuition costs for a culinary education—the same as any aspiring professional.

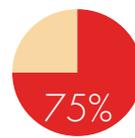
CASL responded to this need 30 years ago when the Chef Training Program was established to provide 16-week intensive training in food service skills, kitchen etiquette, and culinary arts. Embracing students of all ages, races, ethnicities, and backgrounds, the Chef Training Program places graduates in top restaurants and hotels around the city such as: Peninsula Chicago, Four Seasons, Hyatt Group, Langham Chicago, Hilton Group, and Trump Tower. It's never too early to inquire about our next class, and never too late for a culinary education!



90%  
program completion



65%  
placement in food service



75%  
job retention for at least 6 mo.

**\$693,000**

in annual economic impact in the form of living wages

# 27th Annual Dinner Gala

May 11, 2016 ♦ The Field Museum

In the midst of Asian American Heritage Month, CASL treated friends old and new to a regal experience dining with *China's First Emperor and His Terracotta Warriors*.

As ten Chicago media personalities expertly worked a celebrity photo booth, over 600 civic leaders, local philanthropists, and esteemed CASL supporters poured into The Field Museum's chic east entrance for a reception unlike any other. The guests who enjoyed an open bar, dynamic networking, and photos with media celebrities eventually found themselves beholding the terracotta warriors in all their ancient splendor.

Co-Chaired by **Norman Bobins, Virginia Bobins, David Cotton, John Rowe, and Michael Tang**, the gala raised over \$750,000 to support CASL's vital community programs. As CASL's children enchanted audiences with their "Kung Fu Fan Dance" and "Dance of the Thousand-Handed Goddess", guests enjoyed a multi-course gourmet meal among corporate executives, city and state politicians, and local media celebrities. A live auction featured a packaged trip to China to see the terracotta warriors, and an informative, live "WCASL" newscast courtesy of media celebrities set the tone for an exciting paddle raise.

**Michael Ferro**, Chairman and CEO of Merrick Ventures LLC, was presented the Golden Lion award for his excellence as a philanthropist throughout Chicago.

Many thanks to all who made this year's gala extraordinary!



Photos by Ana Miyares Photography



## Remembering Sue Ling Gin by Honoring Helen Wong

May 11, 2016 ♦ The Field Museum

During CASL's 27th Annual Dinner Gala, the first *Sue Ling Gin Award of Excellence* was presented to Helen Wong by David Cotton and John Rowe. While Helen and her family were exemplary clients who utilized many CASL programs over the decades, Helen is now an immensely successful attorney in the Division of Financial Practices at the Federal Trade Commission—specializing in consumer protection laws and financial technologies. Like Sue Ling Gin, Helen is an advocate for citizen rights, and she is an incredible civic leader. CASL congratulates Helen on her many achievements!