



Friends of Children with Special Needs

華人特殊兒童之友

# FCSN Dream Builders

June 2015



Amazing & Incredible – Abilities Unearthed in Special Needs Got Talent Contest

Good News: Construction of New South Bay Center Has Started!!

Planning for the FCSN Coffee Shop/Gift Store on Track to Provide Vocational Training and Employment

Wow! Gold Rush for FCSN Athletes



Mexican Dancing in Special Needs Got Talent



Dream Seekers Performing in Special Needs Got Talent



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## FCSN Dream Builders

June 2015

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### Friends of Children with Special Needs

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### 2015 President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA)

Last year's PVSA program concluded with resounding success. To encourage youth to bring change to the world, FCSN has decided to continue this program in year 2015. Youth volunteers with more than 100 hours of service will be recognized with a personalized certificate of achievement and a congratulatory letter from the United States president. For details, please visit FCSN website, or contact Roger Leung at [rogeryuleung@gmail.com](mailto:rogeryuleung@gmail.com)

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### Contact us If you....

Have a story to tell. Do you have a moment that has made you laugh, cry, or feel joy about your experience as the loved one of a special needs' person? Are you a special needs' person who has a story to tell? Parent and writer Johnna Laird would be happy to help you tell your story and write it for an FCSN newsletter. She can interview you, write the story, and send it back to you for final approval. Let's celebrate the moments and inspire each other as we continue to grow our community. Contact her at [Aleena12@aol.com](mailto:Aleena12@aol.com)

# Content

## Feature Story

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- |                                      |              |   |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| • 2015 Special Needs Got Talent Show | Kenneth Song | 4 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|---|

## President's Message

---

- |                                    |           |   |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---|
| • Building FCSN's South Bay Center | Jim Chiao | 6 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---|

## FCSN Spotlight

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- |  |                 |    |
|--|-----------------|----|
| • Bringing Hope and Awareness Wherever We Go   | Johnna M. Laird | 7  |
| • Coffee Shop & Gift Store in the new FCSN SB Center                                     | Charlene Liao   | 8  |
| • Art Display at the Vision Clinic   | Johnna M. Laird | 10 |
| • Upcoming FCSN Events and Summer Camp Activities  | Anna Wang       | 11 |
| • FCSN Staff Appreciation Event  | Nayeli Toto     | 12 |
| • Nomination for FCSN Day Program to Receive the Bernie Graf Excellence in Service Award | Carol Selak     | 14 |
| • Special Needs Community in China vs the U.S.   | Anna Wang       | 15 |

## Consumer's Activities

---

- |   |                 |    |
|---|-----------------|----|
| • FCSN Athletes Swim for Gold           | Johnna M. Laird | 16 |
| • Riding the Rails                      | Johnna M. Laird | 16 |
| • Bocce: FCSN Athletes On a Roll        | Johnna M. Laird | 17 |
| • My Violin Teaching Experience at FCSN | Shannon Chiu    | 18 |

## Parent's Sharing

---

- |   |                                      |    |
|---|--------------------------------------|----|
| • Our Appreciation for Laurie's "Outlook in Life" that FCSN Has Given Her | Wilson & Alice Chu                   | 19 |
| • 拾穗-改變我一生的幾句話  | 葉淑芬 Sufen Wu                         | 20 |
| • Paradigm Changing Awakeners   | Sufen Wu<br>translated by Maria Kung | 21 |
| • 路邊的哲學家  | 葉淑芬 Sufen Wu                         | 22 |
| • Streetside Philosopher  | Sufen Wu                             | 23 |
| • Speaking Your Mind on TV  | Anna Wang                            | 23 |

## Feature Story

# 2015 Special Needs Got Talent Show

by **Kenneth Song**

FCSN Dream Builders Reporter

Why do we enjoy the sound of music? Why do we like to dance? These trivial combinations of sounds and movements of the body resonate deeply with some primal aspect of human emotion. Perhaps they are ancient artifacts of human imagination, reminding us to rejoice in the very act of being alive, flexing the muscles and vocal chords we were designed to have. But music can also stir feelings of sorrow in our breast. Dance can also be solemn and introspective. Indeed, it is difficult—daresay impossible—to put into words why we love to sing and dance, but I believe that there is one group of special individuals who have come closer to understanding the truth than the rest of us. For socially handicapped individuals, these talents are outlets for a train of convoluted thoughts and emotions they might otherwise not be able to express. I was powerfully reminded of this through my experience at the 2015 Special Needs Got Talent show.

As the lights in the theatre dimmed and the bustle of conversation hushed to a low murmur, I found it hard to believe how far these talented young students of FCSN had come in the span of a single year. I had seen many of these same young individuals perform

in March 2014 at the FCSN headquarters in Fremont; the sheer upscale of the preparations that had gone into this year's talent show had me feeling excited before the curtains even opened. Dressed in classy attire, more than 600 people packed into the beautifully-set theatre at the Santa Clara Convention Center. From a preliminary pool of 70 performers and groups from all across California, 12 finalists were chosen to compete in the final round of Special Needs Got Talent. Among the esteemed judges were Kitaro, a Golden Globe-winning producer and composer of new age music; Mimi Kwan, a vice president from ABC7 television channel; Senator Jim Beall; Assembly member Kansen Chu; and Santi J. Rogers, California State Director of the Department of Developmental Services. I was given the special privilege of going backstage before the show to capture the atmosphere of excitement among the performers.

Comedian Loren Moale was bubbling with excitement as he prepared to give the opening performance. Loren had traveled from Napa with his family so he could represent Everybody Is A Star Foundation, headquartered in Sonoma. Firmly grasping my hand, he startled me with his confidence but was happy to share all about his work as an announcer on several local radio stations. Loren's love of theatre and performance stems from his early experiences acting in a variety of



*Kimberly Rains Ballet*

plays at school, and his acting skills certainly showed as he commanded the stage alongside the master of ceremonies, ABC7 Television Reporter Matt Keller as they kicked off the show. Loren's dedication to the art of communication has given him a niche in society and certainly promises to further build his inspiring career in the future. Toward the start of the talent show, the audience was treated to a music video, sponsored by the Everybody Is A Star Foundation, starring Loren himself in "I Just Haven't Met You Yet." The production quality and Loren's performance were superb, reminding the audience that SNGT winners would also receive their own high-quality music videos produced. What Loren has managed to accomplish so far in his young life with the support of his family and friends is truly amazing and sheds a beacon for special needs individuals everywhere.

I also spoke with instrumentalist ChiLing Wu, whose mother shared that he had hummed along to every audible song even before he was able to speak at the age four due to autism. Luckily, his parents were quick to identify a hidden reserve of talent ChiLing had for music, and they could see the joy and purpose that music brings to his life. Extremely soft-spoken, ChiLing makes a statement with his proficiency on piano, drums, cello, dulcimer, and saxophone;



he regularly entertains as a pianist for Kaiser Permanente. Here is a shining example of how individuals with special needs can be nurtured into productive and valuable members of society. I can only imagine what comfort and companionship music and playing his instruments have brought to this 24-year-old prodigy as he deals with what can be a complicated and confusing world. Last year, ChiLing won a silver medal at the 2013 International Piano Festival for People with Disabilities in Vienna, a testament to his musical talents.

During the talent show, the audience was shown a video that gave an inside look at competitors and their incredible journeys during the preliminary rounds. When asked by the interviewers, many special needs performers had difficulties answering how much they practiced or describing what they planned to perform. They either struggled to comprehend the questions or were too shy to give an exact response. However, in the simplest yet most beautiful words I could imagine, several captured the profound significance that music and dance holds for them. One

young boy stated boldly: "Music has the soul inside of me." Another girl whispered to the camera, as if a precious secret, "Dancing has the energy to help me be cured." These short statements touched me. I quickly began to understand how these talented young individuals continued to improve so dramatically from year to year. They instinctively understood that music and dance hold the power to break down linguistic and social barriers that surround them. They were deeply in love with the talents they could perform as a means of truly expressing themselves to the rest of the world.

Each of the 12 finalists had something unique and exciting to offer the audience that night. The Magic Makers band with Tony Salazar on the keyboard, Andrew Wilson on the drums, and ChiLing Wu on the bass opened with a lively cultural performance of "La Bamba." Alice Jen enchanted with a piano lullaby "Autumn Moon on a Clear Lake" and 13-year-old William Dong impressed with a classical piano performance of a Mozart sonata. Dream Seekers' "Gentleman" and Resplandor Folklorico's *Jarabe Tapatío Corta* treated the audience to dances. The latter was a real cultural treat as young performers were garbed

in authentic Mexican folk dance costumes--males tap dancing and females twirling their dresses. Bernard Smith swept the theatre with his voice and piano performance of "They Can't Take that Away from Me." Greg Hebert and Michael Valcour rocked out on guitars, their deep voices set to the melodies of "Take Me Home, Country Roads" and "I Can See Clearly Now." Several more unique instrumentalists performed that night: Lawrence Wang with a saxophone rendition of "Desafinado" and David Ren with a soothing harp version of "Over the Rainbow." To round off the night, Jasmine Dana executed a well-timed choreography to a Bollywood dance in a mesmerizing white, green, and orange dress. The Dream Achievers band consisting of Lawrence, Alice, and Greg hit the last sweet note with their performance of "Rude" with full instrumentation and vocals by the young, talented group of three.

At the end of the night, the three top performances selected by the judges were David Ren with his magnificent solo harp rendition, the Magic Makers band, and the Dream Achievers band. All the participating groups and individuals involved went home with a trophy and a prize, so in the true spirit of the FCSN event, everyone involved was a winner. I continue to be impressed by the quality of care and instruction that FCSN provides to its students. Only one year ago, I was amazed by the incredible talent of these young individuals, and I will testify that their talents continue to grow exponentially with each passing year. I even unearthed something within myself at this year's annual talent show: a deeper appreciation for the power of music and dance.



David Ren, the harpist

## President's Message

# Building FCSN's South Bay Center

### South Bay Center Construction

It is great news that our South Bay Center construction is underway. After a long wait, we finally received the city's building permit in early April 2015. Within days, the construction company, ACON, completed the demolition of the building interiors. Then suddenly we were ready for the renovation phase. Demolition and total interior renovation are necessary to meet the design requirements of our South Bay programs. By the time we finish, we will have a brand new facility with classrooms, kitchen, multi-purpose room, offices, computer room, workshop, and a cafe/store--all customized to meet our current and future needs.

by **Jim Chiao**

President of FCSN

### South Bay Center Teams

The South Bay Center renovation project is a huge undertaking for our organization. Fortunately, FCSN gained some experience building the Dream Project in Fremont. To help direct the effort, we have formed many teams: a design team, a construction team, a store team, an IT team, and more recently, an interior design team. Over the past six months, working with the architect, the design team has finalized the floor plan. The

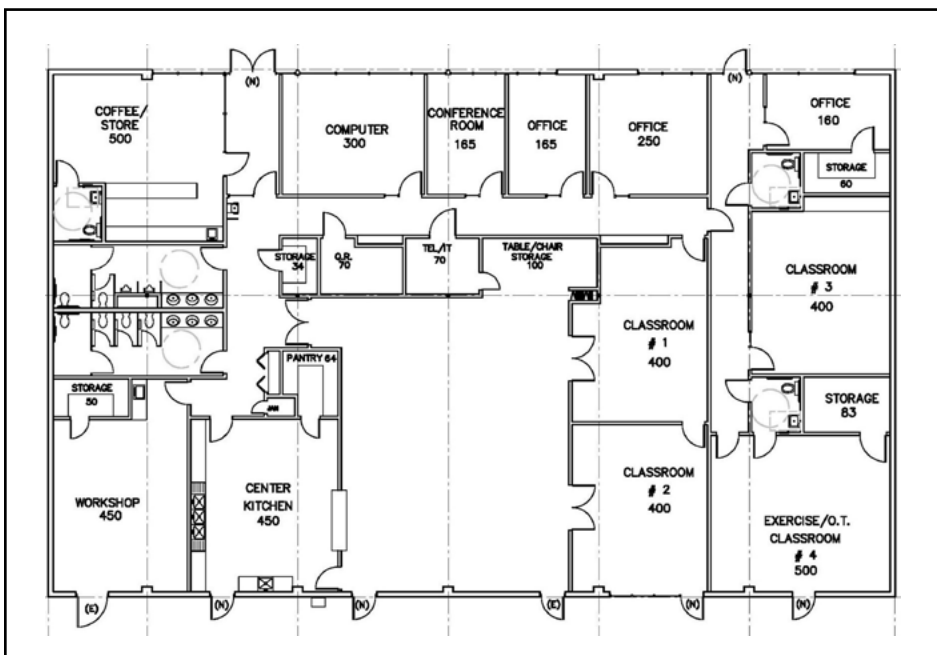
construction team, under David Tu, Stanley Woo, and Albert Wong, is now monitoring costs as well as construction progress, with regular on-site meetings. The store team has been working on cafe/store layout, the menu, and equipment list.

Our IT team has been busy defining the requirements for network connections, wireless routers, and telephones. Our interior design team also started a few weeks ago, with help from Mandy, a professional interior designer from MGI Interior Design. Other help came in unexpected ways. For example, through board member, Jason Wong, we have received some donated office furniture.

We are especially proud that many South Bay parents have joined our teams. It is with their involvement that we can ensure the success of local programs and the South Bay Center as a community center.

### First "Special Needs Got Talent"

Back in 2002, FCSN organized our first Chinese folk song concert at the Santa Clara Convention Center Theater, an event that was hugely popular in the Bay Area's Chinese community. Late last year, we considered repeating the feat by organizing another event at exactly the same location. The goal was to publicize our South Bay Center project, to involve special needs families, and to reach out to new audiences. FCSN Vice President Anna Wang came up with the idea of expanding FCSN's talent show, and "Special Needs Got Talent" was born. Soon, we attracted the attention of another non-profit organization, "Everybody Is A Star" foundation, whose founder, Howard Sapper, brought in the



Golden State Warriors and San Francisco Giants as sponsors. We also lined up several key people in our community as judges. For the February 2015 audition, we had judges with impressive credentials: Howie Morris, 10 times judge for the Grammy Award; Jinye Wang, founder of Artch Inc, and board member of California Music Teachers Association; and Jim Burton, Executive Director of Regional Center of the East Bay.

For the final performance and competition at the Santa Clara Convention Center, we had another impressive list of judges, with renowned musician and composer Kitaro, a Grammy and Golden Globe Award winner, heading the list that included: Mimi Kwan, ABC7 TV Vice President of Community Affairs; Jim Beall, Honorable Senator; Kansen Chu, Assembly Member; and Santi Rogers, Executive Director of Calif. State Department of Developmental Services,

News about our event spread to many special needs communities throughout Northern California. More than 70 entries with some

teams coming from as far away as Sacramento auditioned in February. The final performance on March 14th was a huge success. We had a variety of performances from comedy, dance, singing to musical instruments, all performed by special needs individuals from different ethnic groups. Many of us have attended “special performances” before, but this one was an eye opener. It swept the audience off its feet. The event achieved all the objectives we set and far exceeded our expectations. With this kind of success, we have pretty much ensured continuation of this event next year.

### Looking forward

It is hard to believe that our first staff joined FCSN in 2005. This year, for the first time, we have begun to recognize our staff with more than five years of service to FCSN. In addition, we also want to recognize our volunteers, many of whom have been with FCSN for more than 15 years. We truly appreciate their dedication, their passion, and their commitment to further our mission and cause.

With the start of construction of the South Bay Center, FCSN is on the way to build another Dream Center,

this time in San Jose; we expect completion by the fourth quarter of this year. However, with the rising cost of real estate properties and construction, the cost of the South Bay Center now totals \$4 million. Our original budget of \$2.5 million for the South Bay Center project looks very much inadequate. We are counting on raising \$1.5M to help with the project. Last year, with the huge support from our members, friends, and supporters, we raised over \$600K. We are setting a goal of \$500K for this year to close the gap between the budgeted and the actual cost.

FCSN has come a long way since the humble beginning in 1996. By the time we open the South Bay Center, we can further expand our programs and provide more support to the families in Santa Clara County. This is another big step in our journey to build a community and deliver happiness to special needs families and others in our community.



James Chiao  
FCSN president

## Bringing Hope and Awareness Wherever We Go by **Johnna M. Laird**

Wherever FCSN people travel, opportunities emerge to bring disability awareness to the community. On an Easter holiday cruise to Mexico with his mother and grandmother, Lawrence Wang packed his portable drums—for his own entertainment. When the ship’s social director announced a passenger talent show, Lawrence—fresh from his win at Special Needs Got Talent—was ready. His mother, Anna, introduced him as a young man with autism: “This month is International Autism Awareness Month. The prevalence of autism has increased 20 times in the past 20 years. Today, Lawrence would like to share his talent and remind us that people with disabilities can have unique abilities.” Also telling briefly how Lawrence covered his ears and was afraid of music for many years until a class at FCSN helped identify his musical talent at age 19, Anna encouraged people to never give up hope, even with their children with special needs.

Lawrence performed “What Makes You Beautiful,” singing and playing on his drums for the competition. As he was finishing verse one, the audience started clapping and tapping their feet. Lawrence received a standing ovation at the end of his song. Anna handed out all her FCSN cards to passengers who asked for more information for friends whose children had autism and who wanted to know more about FCSN’s programs and support. Eight individuals and groups competed that day, Lawrence was declared winner of the talent show.



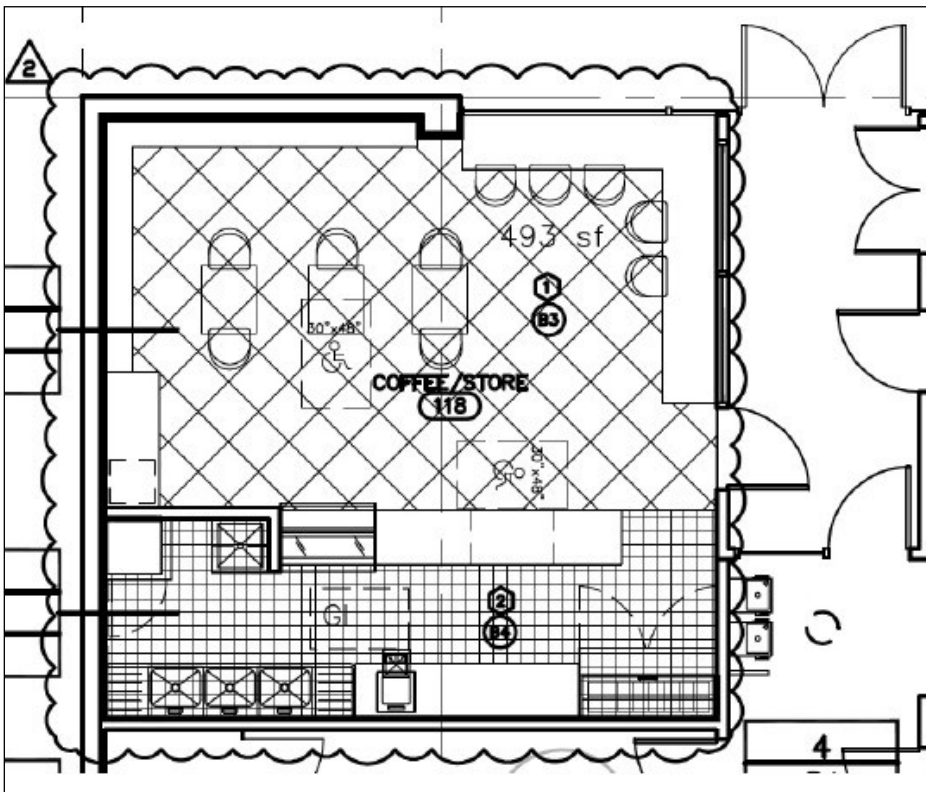
# Coffee Shop/Gift Store in the new FCSN SB Center

by **Charlene Liao**  
FCSN Store Project Lead

With the purchase of a new property to be converted to the FCSN South Bay Center, we have an opportunity to put together a retail coffee shop/gift store. Our vision is that this store will hire, train and empower people with disabilities in our retail food service business, where we also serve great food and sell FCSN gift items!

## 1. Store Space

Our Coffee Shop/Store will be located at the front corner of the FCSN SB center, facing Bascom Avenue and with customer parking spaces. The size of the store space is roughly 500 square feet. The Coffee/Store will have built-ins, paint, lights, moldings and other nice and modern decorations that convey attractiveness, cleanliness, and high quality.



## 2. Retail Food Services/ Coffee Shop

We will serve nutritious and delicious food with quality ingredients and quality services. Our offering of food and drink will not generally be available in chain stores or supermarket cafes. Due to the space limit and high cost associated with a licensed commercial kitchen, we opted to obtain a limited license to serve food without cooking. Of course, we can re-package and add our unique touch, as long as we use packaged food and flavors from other licensed suppliers. For example, we can buy baked croissants, cooked ham or turkey slices from Costco to make our own branded sandwiches. We can also make salad using fresh vegetables from local organic farms because it does not involve cooking. Below are some examples of the menu items:

### Organic Gourmet Salad

- Basic organic salad with three different toppings (Chicken, Tofu, and Crab Avocado)

### Sandwich (wheat toasts or croissants):

- 1 gourmet: Crab Avocado salad (possible tuna sandwich in the future)
- **3 cold-cut types**
  - Tomato, lettuce, 2 slices of hams, turkey breast, or roast beef,

### Tea (choose one style from below):

- Tea bags and sets from Tea Forte (<https://www.teaforte.com>) with excellent flavor and high-end appeal. Easy to handle by our Special Need employees.





- Loose leaf Lupicia brand, Earl Grey, Oolong, etc. Brew 1 teaspoon leaves in a small tea pot from Daiso, and offer the whole tea pot to customer; or simmer 5 minutes to transfer to a To-Go cup.
- Also could serve great fruit tea and/or Chinese style nourishment tea.

**Coffee** (Nestle Nespresso individual capsules):

- Easy to make to customer's taste; always fresh

**Bottled drinks** (water, juice, soda, etc), bagged chips (sorry about the popular snack food that is not so healthy!)

We are located close to the Valley Medical Center, some outpatient clinics such as a planned kidney dialysis center, a local high school (Del Mar), and the Bascom Library and Community Center. We expect a reasonable amount of foot traffic. Depending on the customer need and popularity, we may also add other menu items such as freshly baked muffins, donuts, cookies (from Costco or other licensed suppliers, as we may not be able to cook or bake under the limited license) and/or frozen yogurt.

### 3. Additional Use of Store

When it is not "open" hours, we can use the coffee shop as a gathering place for our own members. For example, at evenings or weekends when our kids are having lessons or Karaoke nights, we can bring our own food for a potluck dinner in the nice ambient atmosphere of our high-end café!

We also plan to build in shelves to display and sell FCSN products, such as organic soap and body products from our affiliated Sweetlink workshop, FCSN T-shirts and other cloth items, HW Spa products (from a donation) for fundraising, and other gifts and crafts made by our special children (including adult children, in the Adult Day Program) with love and care.

#### Gifts

- Organic soaps and body lotions
- Hand-made cards, gift tags
- Succulent plants
- Bath and spa items
- FCSN memorabilia/merchandise



#### 4. Store Operations

In terms of operations, FCSN intends to keep total ownership in order to better control the purpose, direction & quality of the store. We may consider a dedicated Store Manager (manages the clerk; coordinates shifts and cleaning; takes on the role of buyer, book-keeping, and QA) and a store clerk to maintain the routine store operations. ADP consumers or volunteers are supplementary or rotational in store operations.

To serve the purpose of vocational training, ADP consumers under ADP staff's supervision could learn to assemble sandwiches and conduct sales. Some well-trained ADP consumers could be paid as part-time staff to take on certain work shifts. In non-ADP time, the store manager or clerk will cover, along with FCSN special needs individuals (volunteer or paid part-time) under the supervision of their parents/guardians.

Other successful models of retail food service business include Ada's Café in Palo Alto ([www.adascafe.org](http://www.adascafe.org)). Ada's Cafe and Catering is a 501(c)3, non-profit corporation dedicated to hiring, training and empowering people with disabilities in its commercial food service business. Ada's will also engage local youth to participate in Cafe operations- as job buddies- alongside its cafe associates.



#### 5. We Need Your Help

We have many opportunities to be involved, including the following donation suggestions:

- Nespresso Coffee Machine (\$300 each)
- 1 Refrigerated display chest for bottled drinks
- 3-compartment sink
- 1 Tall refrigerator
- 1 Under-counter refrigerator
- 1 Ice maker
- 1 Microwave
- 1 iPad credit card register
- 1 Standard cash register
- 2 Hot water boilers
- 1 Tabletop oven/toaster for warming up bread and pastry
- 1 Flat toaster with press top for bagel, panini, or hot sandwich

We also appreciate your donation towards purchase of additional food service items such as mugs, plates, teapots, etc.

Please contact Charlene Liao ([xcliao@yahoo.com](mailto:xcliao@yahoo.com)) if you have any interest and suggestions about the FCSN SB Store.

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## Art Display at the Vision Clinic

by **Johnna M. Laird**

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FCSN art students from the supported living program are gaining public attention, thanks to Supported Living Case Manager Jenny Lin.

Jenny, who leads a weekly art lesson, made arrangements for students to have their work hang at the Vision Clinic at 39500 Liberty Street in Fremont. Works of four students were selected for the first showing, which lasts about two months and began in April.

An afternoon open house on June 4th honored the artists, who included: Chris, Jocelin, Kendra, and Laurie.

# Upcoming FCSN Events and Summer Camp Activities

FCSN's program goal is to provide fun, affordable and empowering social and learning opportunities for our special needs individuals and families. We have seen many positive results from the participation in our programs, including discovering talents and abilities, building permanent friendships and supportive community, improving health (both physical and mentally), and living a happier life.

Hurry. Enroll in all the camps before space runs out!! All info and registration forms can be found on our website at [www.fcsn1996.org](http://www.fcsn1996.org).

by **Anna Wang** FCSN Vice President of Local Programs

## 1) East Bay Ping Pong Program

(only \$20 for all the classes listed)

Dates/Time: 5/30, 6/13, 6/27, 7/11, 7/25, 8/8, 8/22, 9/ 12, 9/26, 10am-11:45am

Place: Alameda Ping Pong Club in the City of Alameda

## 2) East Bay Golf Program

Dates/Time: Sundays 5/31 – 8/2, 9:30-11:00

(in 30 min timeslots)

Place: Fremont Park Golf: 39751 Stevenson Place, Fremont, CA 94539

## 3) FCSN Annual Meeting/Family Day Celebration

Date/Time: Saturday 6/6, 4:30-8:30pm

Place: New Chinese Cultural Center: 100 S. Milpitas Blvd, Milpitas

## 4) South Bay Sports Camp

a) Basketball Camp – 6/9 – 7/7, Tue. 3-5pm

b) Soccer Ball Camp – 6/12 – 7/10, Fri. 3-5pm

Place: FCSN South Bay Center: 3675 Payne Ave., San Jose

## 5) East Bay Badminton Camp

Dates/Time: 6/15-6/26 (Monday-Friday)

4:00-5:30pm

Place: FCSN Fremont Center: 2300 Peralta Blvd., Fremont

## 6) FCSN – WBSS Summer Swim Camp

Date/Time: 6/22-8/13 (Monday – Thursday)

1:45-4pm (in 45 min timeslots)

Place: Club Sport Fremont

## 7) East Bay Summer Afterschool Program

Date/Time: 6/22-7/23, M-Th, 2:00-6:00pm

Place: New Hope Church, 2190 Peralta Blvd, Fremont

## 8) East Bay Soccer Camp

Date/Time: 6/22-7/2, M-Th, 3:30-4:30pm

Place: Club Sport Fremont

## 9) July 4th Independence Day Parade in Fremont

## 10) East Bay Basketball Camp

Date/Time: 7/6-7/16, M-Th, 3:30-4:30pm

Place: Club Sport Fremont

## 11) South Bay Full Time Summer Camp

Date/Time: 7/13-7/24, M-F, 9am-4pm

Place: FCSN South Bay Center: 3675 Payne Ave., San Jose.

## 12) FCSN Sports Day at Taiwanese Chinese American Athletic Tournament

Date/Time: Saturday, 7/25, 9am – 1pm

Place: Cupertino High School, 10100 Finch Ave., Cupertino

## 13) FCSN Fun Family Camping / Picnic Day at Yin's Ranch

Date/Time: Sat. 8/1- Sun. 8/2

Place: Yin's Ranch, 6319 Pleasants Valley Road, Vacaville 95688

## 14) Musical Drama Camp, *Toy Story*

Date/Time: 8/13-8/16, 10-11:30am for younger campers, 2:30-4pm for older campers.

Place: FCSN Fremont Center & New Hope Church  
FREE family show on Sunday 8/16 at 7pm at New Hope Church (2190 Peralta Blvd., next to FCSN Center).

## 15) East Bay Family Gathering

Dates/Time: 8/29, 9/12, 9/26, 10/10, 11.7, 11/21, 12/12, 4:30-8:00pm

Place: FCSN Fremont Center:2300 Peralta Blvd, Fremont

## 16) South Bay Family Gathering:

Dates/Time: 9/5, 9/19, 10/3, 10/31, 11/28, 12/5 at 4:30-8pm

Place: Westhope Presbyterian Church, 12850 Saratoga Ave, Saratoga.

## 17) Annual Fundraising Gala

Date/Time: 10/24/2015 (Saturday), 5:30-9:30pm

Place: Santa Clara Convention Center, Santa Clara, CA



FCSN Staff Appreciation has become one of my favorite events throughout the years. It is a very special day for staff from all departments to join together and celebrate one more year of hard work, dedication, and service to our consumers. In anticipation of this celebration, I experienced an overwhelming feeling of gratitude to those who come to work every day with a positive attitude, willingness to help and an open heart.

# FCSN Staff Appreciation Event

by **Nayeli Toto**  
FCSN Supported Living  
Services Manager

This year, our celebration was particularly unique due to the great turnout and the joie de vivre we all could feel. Employees from all departments, the management team and board members gathered in the FCSN multipurpose room for a cohesive and refreshing get-together. Participants have provided their feedback about how much they enjoyed the games the

management team prepared this year, including the “Balloon Shaving” event, in which partners competed in teamwork and communication by “shaving” balloons while one partner was blindfolded, and the “FCSN Trivia Game,” which tested teams of participants on their knowledge of random facts about FCSN’s operations and management team. Another highlight of the day was the raffle: everyone who attended was given a raffle ticket, and names were later drawn from the raffle box to be matched with amazing prizes. I appreciated FCSN Board of Directors who donated many valuable prizes so that every participant took a prize home this year. I saw many excited, cheerful and thankful faces across the room; it was overall a very successful event.



*Maria (L) & Claire (R)  
couldn't stop laughing*



*Team work is the key for  
blindfolded shaving*





*Lanisha & Limin,  
1st Prize Winner / Prize Donor*



*Maria & Albert,  
2nd Prize Winner / Prize Donor*



*Everyone had a chance  
to bring a prize home*

This important Staff Appreciation event was absolutely not an exception to our usual teamwork in making preparations and arrangements. All departments did their part. Sylvia came early in the morning to cook prime rib for lunch; Vivian prepared breakfast and even volunteered her husband, Chris, to make delicious porridge and vegetables for everyone; Kathy (ADP teacher) made delicious scones and cookies; and SLS CM team prepared fruit. From setting the

room, to preparing drinks and fruit to final clean up, everyone offered a helping hand even though this was a celebration for all of us.

I am thankful for such an amazing event and also for the hard work, dedication and willing hearts that everyone brings to the FCSN team.



*A BIG Family We Are*



# Nomination for FCSN Day Program to Receive the Bernie Graf Excellence in Service Award

Editor's Note: Great News to share - FCSN (SLS and ADP) won the Bernie Graf Excellence in Service Award this year

by **Carol Selak**, Case Manager, Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB)

I have worked at Regional Center for over 20 years and without question have not observed my clients as content and happy as those that attend FCSN's site based and community based Programs! I have 15 clients that attend FCSN and I have observed over the years FCSN's Program not only excite them to be involved in new learning experiences but engage them in meaningful, downright fun activity! The Program management and instructors put forth a great deal of creative energy to provide daily activities that fluctuate from day to day, week to week, so that the Program participants are energized and enthused in their participation!

They daily greet my clients with cheerful optimism, recognizing their giftedness and worthiness to take a step further in maximizing their God given gifts. Their classes of *math/money management, reading/writing, sign-language, computer/iPad, arts and crafts, dance/exercise, science, history/culture, and vocational training* are all given with an expectation from their instructors that each program participant has personal gifts that can be utilized and strengthened in order for them to realize their best self! This Program has an ability to bring out the very best in others, thus bringing them closer to feeling good about who they are and their abilities!

I have had two clients who have passed away over the past year, and FCSN honored their lives by providing a memorial service that included a video & time for sharing among staff & peers. At every client's Annual Meeting, FCSN creates a meaningful video, show casing them as "stars" as they engage over the year in some of their varied activities! I could go on and on as to why I would like to nominate FCSN for the Bernie Graf Excellence in Service Award! They are, without a doubt, a Program par excellence, very worthy of being awarded this recognition!

## About Bernie Graf Excellence in Service Award

In 1999, the Alameda County Developmental Disabilities Council established the Bernie Graf Award for Excellence in Service to honor individuals and service providers who have demonstrated programs of exceptional quality for persons with developmental disabilities in Alameda County. Besides Carol Selak, Claudius Rafayana and Janice Ochoa, both case managers of RCEB, are also the co-sponsors of FCSN's nomination for the award.

**Heart Alliance Autism Network of China** is comprised of more than 120 grassroots organizations founded by parents of children with autism from all over the country. For the last three years, Heart Alliance has sent 50 delegates to the San Francisco Bay Area to learn about autism programs and the U.S. social services system.

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## Special Needs Communities in China vs the U.S.

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by **Anna Wang** FCSN Vice President of Local Programs

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In April during International Autism Awareness Month, Heart Alliance celebrated its 10th anniversary by hosting an international autism conference in Beijing. I was humbled to be invited as a speaker to present FCSN's Dream Projects and talent exploration programs.

While I was there, I heard a speech from a representative of the department of education in China. I was shocked by her report that there were only 35,000 students in China's entire special education system. We have over 7 million students in special education here in the United States which translates to 200 times more special education students than China. China has 4.5 times the population of the U.S. I was shocked by the numbers and how the special needs population is receiving so little support.

It was heart-breaking for me to hear about the struggles and suffering of the special needs community there. Families are plagued with the cultural shame and stigma associated with having a child with special needs and with so little awareness of their disabilities. Many parents hide their children from the public eye and even from their own family members and friends. I have heard horror stories about families from villages selling everything they had to come to the big cities to learn about ABA to help their children. Some ended up in desolation and died in the city. It is also difficult for grassroots organizations to operate and provide the needed programs without adequate resource and support. The picture is very grim.

The Heart Alliance was founded on the concept of the award-winning, heart-wrenching movie, *Ocean Heaven*, which portrays a terminally-ill single father (starring famous action movie star, Jed Li) trying different solutions to provide life-long care for his son with autism. His first, unsuccessful solution was to kill himself and his son through drowning. Later, he sought help from the government and the education system which also yielded no results. He ended up relying on himself and his community to provide for his son. He used his personal connections with his neighbors, friends, and employer to put in place a daily

program for his son while training him daily for independence. He even took care of his son's life-time emotional needs in the short six months that he had to live. This movie shows the power of love and the power of a parent and the community.

Our situation here in California is not much better than China. We have experienced 13 years of budget cuts to health and human services. Now that the economy has turned around, the governor refused to restore funding to the special needs services, causing long-time service providers to close down. According to DDS, close to one-third of the service providers are no longer in business. Our system to support our special needs community is on the verge of collapse. Some individuals' lives are jeopardized by a lack of available help. Learning from *Ocean Heaven*, I see a lot of the solutions lie not only in the advocacy/getting help from the government, but in the hands of family members and friends who care about people with special needs. No one cares as much as we do!

No matter how hopeless the situation seems for China and the US, our love for children and friends with special needs will never cease. We are the voice, the hands and feet for them. FCSN families, staff and volunteers are working hard to create a brighter and happier future and bringing peace of mind for our community. The village of support where our special needs loved ones live, work, and play has to continue to expand to meet the growing needs of the community. It is a challenge for us. Unity is power. We Invite You to Dream the Impossible with Us!! To Change the World!!



## Consumer's Activities

FCSN swimmers suited up, hit the water this month, and came home with gold, silver and a lot fun from the May 17 Special Olympics Oakland Regional Competition held at Laney College.

Coach Megan McClain said she was “extremely pleased” with the athletes’ performance.

“We were nervous because we started practice midway through the season,” said Megan, who has been coaching for four seasons. “However, we powered through. We held intense practices that consisted of both land and in water training.

“All the athletes’ motivation and intense training allowed them to succeed.

“To see every athlete go home with a medal—and at least one first or second place medal—way to go East Bay Stingrays!” says Megan, who was aquatics manager for the City of Union City and became very passionate about special needs swimming lessons. One summer

# FCSN Athletes Swim for Gold



by **Johnna M. Laird**

she was working with a young man who had very limited range of motion. Her goal was to teach him survival swimming, but he surpassed all her expectations. Her supervisor saw her excitement and enthusiasm and encouraged her to volunteer to coach the East Bay Stingrays. While she left the aquatics program last year after seven years, she continues to return to coach the special needs’ swim team. A San Leandro resident with a degree in business administration, Megan currently works as a human resource specialist in the California Army National Guard.

Congratulations to the coach, FCSN staff who transported athletes to practices and FCSN athletes:

**Cynthia**, 1st place, Butterfly, 3rd place 50M Freestyle;

**Raymond**, 1st place, 25M Breaststroke and 3rd place 25M Freestyle;

**Kendra**, 1st places in 25M Backstroke and Freestyle;

**Kristin**, 1st places in 25M Backstroke and 25M Freestyle;

**Don**, 1st place 25M Freestyle

## Riding the Rails

by **Johnna M. Laird**

More than 100 FCSN teachers and students on May 14 boarded the Nilcs Canyon Railway for a field trip, traveling from the Nilcs station to Sunol and back. The trip on the living history museum that recognizes railroads’ heritage in developing California and the U.S. gave day program students an opportunity to sit back in train cabins and in the outdoor train seating to just enjoy the ride. Some joked about which destination vacations lay ahead, says Vivian “Wei Wei” Chao, Community Integrated Day Program Coordinator.

The field trip also gave students an opportunity to hold their own tickers as train personnel punched a hole in the ticket card. They also ate lunch and socialized as part of the day trip, out into the community. They heard short talks about the history of the train. Students also took pictures with train personnel and their conductor hats. Some students enjoyed the trip so much they plan to ask their families to take the trip with them on a weekend. They’re also asking what field trip will be next. Greg, a student whose hobby is trains, said it “felt good to ride this train again after so many years. I enjoyed listening to the horn and bell on the Southern Pacific 1423. All aboard! Toot, toot!”



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# Bocce: FCSN Athletes On A Roll

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by **Johnna M. Laird**

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FCSN athletes walked away with gold at the Special Olympics Bocce Ball competition in Martinez in May. WinStars, one of three Special Olympic Bocce Ball teams in Fremont, took home the top prize. Coach and FCSN parent volunteer Marie Cates reports the Meteors, a WinStar sub-team, also won silver; another WinStar sub-team, the Quarks, took fourth place.

Marie began coaching Bocce Ball after 2009 when her daughter, Kelly, became involved at FCSN.

“Bocce Ball benefits Special Olympic athletes as they age because they can still participate in sports. They do not have to run fast or jump high. It’s not hard on the joints.

“Most Special Olympics advertising shows cute little athletes running in track and field. Those athletes grow up to become my Bocce Ball players,” says Marie.

Marie, who also leads square dancing, named her team to remind athletes to reach for the stars, choosing galaxy elements for names. In addition to Meteors and Quarks, sub-teams include: Asteroids, Comets, and Novas. Fitting, since her husband, Bob, works for NASA.

Gold medals are nothing new to Marie. Her teams often win. One year, she had four individual teams and all four won gold medals in summer Bocce Ball games.

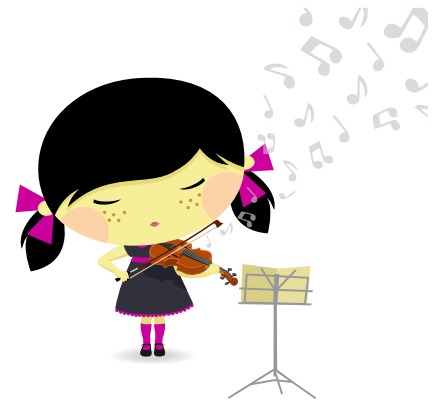
“It feels wonderful when as a coach you know that athletes now understand and can play without prompting. You see the pride in their eyes, the smile on their faces when they feel good about a particular throw. I love it when I see them ‘bank’ off the court wall to hit the opponent or use a less dominant hand to slow delivery. I also love that each athlete, each team always comes back to congratulate each other for a good throw or killer shot.”

“We need to keep our older athletes active,” says Marie. “We need to consider our older athletes in all sports with Special Olympics. Everyone has talent. Every person has value and every life matters.”

Congratulations to the coach and to the team members who are from FCSN: WinStars Meteors: Angela, Kelly, Kendra, and Maggie; WinStars Comets: Maria; WinStars Quarks: Jessica, Jose, Thomas, and Elann.



# My Violin Teaching Experience at FCSN



by **Shannon Chiu**

Compassion. Perseverance. Confidence. Humility. These are all qualities I have gained from teaching violin for FCSN's one-to-one music program. When I first learned about the program, I jumped at the opportunity to start the first violin class within FCSN. Although I had previously volunteered as a summer counselor, I wanted to devote my attention to each child at a more personal level. I embraced the challenge of adapting my own experiences to suit each student's needs, and I accepted the freedom of creating individualized lessons. Could I help these children learn to play the "king of instruments" – the violin, which is considered the hardest instrument?

Since I started teaching in my sophomore year, I have spent my Saturday afternoons in my classroom, filled with sounds of my students' enthusiastic violin playing. I have learned the best methods to teach each

one of my students. For example, I learned to "show" and not "tell" when students have difficulty processing verbal communication. When my students became anxious and frustrated, I set immediate, reasonable goals and used a timer that shows clearly when the lesson will end. Week by week, my students continued to make progress and build their musicianship, learning a new note here and an unfamiliar rhythm there, and at the same time, I became a better teacher.

Some of my favorite memories from high school were made during the FCSN one-to-one music recitals. I looked on proudly as my students played independently through their pieces, and they walked off the stage beaming as the audience and their parents cheered them on. My students had progressed from learning the basics of how to hold a violin to playing an entire solo. It has been incredibly rewarding giving back to these unique children the priceless experience of creating music. I feel an unparalleled sense of triumph when my students, through unyielding determination and hard work, prevail over their barriers. As I influence my

students' personal growth, my students simultaneously inspire me to become a compassionate individual who believes that progress can always be made, one small step at a time. I am extremely grateful to the FCSN community, my students – Ansley, Chi-ling, James, and Michael – and their parents for providing the opportunity for me to share the gift of playing violin.

## About the author

Shannon Chiu is FCSN South Bay's one-on-one music class teacher. She is the pioneer teacher who started this program. During the last three years, she has given great effort and made a strong commitment to teach our children violin. She also organized several music recitals to provide opportunities for our children of the 1:1 music class so they could go on stage and share their talent.

Shannon received admission to both UC Berkeley and Stanford University this year. We are going to miss her and will always appreciate her great effort and commitment to work with FCSN children. Best wishes for her college life!

# Our Appreciation for Laurie's "Outlook in Life" that FCSN has Given Her

by **Wilson and  
Alice Chu**

Hi, to all you folks at FCSN. We are thankful for Laurie's new found life of "Happiness" that's being experienced by her at FCSN, truly an organization for those with Special Needs and Disabilities.

Laurie came to FCSN in the summer of 2012, rather shy and not knowing what to expect of FCSN's lifestyle and what it had to offer her. With her autism learning disability, she was scared and had doubts of integrating into the FCSN CIDP program. One of her most difficult personal problems from her learning disability was her personal communication with other people. Today, Laurie is enthusiastic about all FCSN activities and is extremely happy. She enjoys her Dream Seekers Performance Group as a favorite activity. I remember traveling with Laurie and her friends to Reno for that special "Square Dancing Can-Do-It" contest event. As a "Dad" I had as much fun and enjoyment square dancing with Laurie and her friends as they did. Laurie and we, her parents, have also enjoyed other events, including this year's "FCSN's Special Needs Got Talent" Final Competition event held at the Santa Clara Convention.

Interestingly, the "Special Needs Got Talent" initial preliminary competition trials were conducted at FCSN's East Bay Center locally in Fremont; many of Laurie's FCSN friends performed their music or entertainment talent as did Laurie's Dream Seekers Group. More than 100 contestants were invited to compete and came from throughout the entire State of California. Because of the "Special Needs Got Talent Competition" success and popularity, the "FCSN's Special Needs Got Talent" event will now happen as an annual FCSN program entertainment event. Through these activities, Laurie's personality and communication with FCSN staff and friends has improved today to the extent that years ago I could not believe possible. Even during her past experiences with learning disability programs from grammar school through junior college and the special San Jose State tutoring programs that helped Laurie earn a degree in art from San Jose State, she has not

shown this kind of progress. In all these experiences, Laurie's personal communication with friends has never been better than it is today at FCSN with her Supported Living Service Program. She has improved especially in her expression, her learning, and her experience of daily life. This is the first time in Laurie's life where she has enjoyed and felt important as a person who can contribute to the lifestyles of those around her with "Special Needs". Laurie's educational Art Major and Sign Language skills have been put to good use with her friends, staff members and peers at FCSN.

We have enjoyed the bi-weekly FCSN's East Bay programs providing useful information that helps shed awareness for parents about how to address the needs of our dependents and children with special needs and disabilities. FCSN helps assure the goals and dreams we hold become a reality. Laurie sees FCSN (EAST BAY) as a place that she can truly call home, and she hopes it will be her "Life Time" future.

Thank You, FCSN

- Friends of Children with Special Needs,

GOD's GRACE be with us, all -Laurie's parents,  
- Alice & Wilson Chu



## 一。No Escape

1981年，我揮別還不到一歲的女兒，獨自飛往Boston和正在Harvard攻博士的先生團圓。由於生產後是公婆幫我照顧女兒，他們為我着想，建議我交給他們撫養，以免到國外不適應，大人小孩都辛苦。當時才二十幾歲的我也沒什麼勇氣承擔獨自帶孩子的重擔，就答應了。

隻身到了一個全新的國度，既興奮又新鮮。我很快地忙碌起來，曾經一天打三份工，每天奔走在餐館，旅行社，和幼兒園之間，還要煮飯照顧老公。雖然馬不停蹄，心口卻似穿了個洞，空蕩蕩，涼颼颼的。為了填滿空虛，我拼命往嘴裡塞東西，結果才幾個月的功夫，就重了20磅！

那時常常接到公婆寄來女兒的照片，有一天，我高高興興的拿出去向朋友炫耀，沒想到才說著說著，眼淚卻似斷了線的珠子，嘩啦嘩啦的流了下來。這才明白，原來思念正在啃噬我的心。

有一天，在先生的實驗室裏遇見一個學生，我稱讚他的充實和成就，他用溫柔的眼神看著我，感慨的說：“No escape！”

簡單的兩個字，不停的迴盪在耳裏，腦裏，心裡。”No escape, no escapenoescape.. “，聲音逐漸擴大，擴大，....

是了！我躲了這麼久！還要別人來提醒！是你的責任就是你的，躲得了嗎？

幾天後，我獨自搭機回臺，很溫柔很堅持的，把女兒接到美國來。

## 二。衝浪人生

1990年，在兩個女兒之後，我又懷孕生了老三，本來是歡天喜地的慶祝兒子的出世，他長得濃眉大眼，天庭飽滿，十足聰明相。沒想

# 拾穗-改變我一生的幾句話

by 葉淑芬 Sufen Wu



到到兩歲還沒有語言，繼而被診斷他患有自閉症。

之後的日子，像是一個初學滑水的人硬被丟下水，手裏只有滑板。我一路載沉載浮，腦子裡只有一個念頭：不能放棄，不能放棄！當浪頭打下來時，驚慌只會拉住你的腳，拖你下沈。經過了無數的掙扎，逐漸的，我找到了浮潛之道，當大浪當頭，務必屏息靜氣，全然放鬆以保持體力，再伺機而動，重新找到浪頭。

所以，人生像在衝浪，你可以推波逐水，站在浪頭，那一定是你最意氣風發的時候。冷不防，一個大浪打了下來，打得你信心全無，甚至找不到活下去的理由，這時，千萬保持冷靜，再來一次吧！”成功”不全是生命的目的，”奮鬥”才是生活的意義。

這個衝浪的假想，讓我維持了心理的平衡。

## 三。快樂，是你的選擇

兒子六歲以前非常難帶，動不動就要衝出門，把門鎖加高，他搬桌抬椅的竟然層層過關！那麼聰明的孩子卻屢教不聽，當時的挫折感真是難以言喻。有一天，”Son Rise”的作者Berry Hoffman (Berry是一個心理學家，也有一個自閉症的兒子，他把教兒子溝通的過程寫成書，就

是”Son Rise”，那是我的啟蒙書。)寫成的另一本書，”Happiness is a Choice”闖進我的眼簾，這句話竟像是甘霖，令我久旱的心靈得到滋潤。想想，我為什麼要這麼不快樂的過日子呢？沮喪於事無補，有一個特殊的孩子，並沒有，也不該被剝奪快樂的權利。為甚麼要讓哀傷來自絆腳石？重新思考，重新定位吧！

自此，我的人生全然改觀。人生非要是諸侯將相嗎？至少，不會是兒子。退一步想，充實他的每一天，將所學回饋社會，保持快樂，這才是他的人生目標。

每一天，看到兒子無邪的笑容，我也笑了。原來在忙碌的人生裡，許多人找不到的快樂，竟被兒子獨吞了。

年過六十的我，從來不敢有「我吃的鹽比你吃的飯多」的口氣，但至少顯然比年輕父母多很多的日子裡，我淘出了幾顆極盡金黃的稻穗，和你們分享。

寫到這裡，心裡竟是一片澄淨，讓我想到那個在海邊曬太陽的老漁翁。

現在，也請別擋住我的陽光！謝謝。



## 1) No escape

In 1981 I flew to Boston to join my husband who was completing his Ph. D. at Harvard. This meant leaving my not yet one year old daughter with my in-laws. It was their suggestion I should leave my baby girl with them, so I would not have to worry about the challenges facing me in acclimatizing to the new environment and care for the new baby. I was in my twenties, so I welcomed their proposal as I did not have the courage to shoulder the burden of taking care of the baby on my own.

In the beginning, it was exciting and exotic to be in a new environment. Very soon I was pre-occupied with my own life, doing three jobs at the same time, juggling my time between the restaurant, travel agency and nursery. I also had to take care of husband after work, preparing dinner for him. Even though life was so busy, there seemed to be an emptiness or a missing piece in my heart, to fill the void, I began to gobble all kinds of food and before I realized I had already put on 20 pounds.

My in-laws would often send me pictures of my daughter and one day while showing the pictures to my friends, tears started cascading from my eyes uncontrollably, like beads breaking off from the thread, and I realized my heart was torn to pieces gradually over time from missing my daughter terribly.

One day I met a student in my husband's laboratory and I commended him on his enrichment and achievement. He lamented on the fact and told me tenderly that "there is no escape".

These two simple words kept ringing in my ear, in my mind, in my heart "No escape, no escape, no escape..." and the words became more and louder.

Yes, I had been hiding like an ostrich for so long until I was awakened by somebody else. She was my responsibility, how could I shy away?

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# PARADIGM CHANGING AWAKENERS

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(the few sentences that changed my life)

by **Sufen Wu**  
translated by **Maria Kung**

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A few days later, I flew to Taiwan determined to bring my daughter back to USA.

## 2) Life is like a storm

In 1990 after having the two girls, I had a boy. After celebrating the birth of my son who had big eyes and thick eye brows – all the features of an intelligent boy. It was such a blow to us when he was diagnosed autistic at the age of two when we became concerned that he had not started talking.

The days that followed were like being thrown into the water by myself. There was only one thought in my mind "do not give up, do not give up". When you get hit by a big wave, the fear will only drag you down until you drown. After much agonizing, I gradually learned the key to floating. When a big wave hits, stay calm and take a deep breath and stay relaxed to keep your strength, while waiting for the right moment to face the next wave.

Life is like surfing, you can go with the wave, and you are really excited when you are at the top of the wave. However your confidence can be all washed away when a big wave hits you unexpectedly, and you cannot find a reason to live on. When this happens, stay calm and try again. "Success" is not the purpose of life, "survival" gives you the real meaning of life.

This analogy of surfing helps to keep my emotional state balanced.

## 3. Happiness – it is your choice

It was such a challenge to raise my son before his sixth birthday, he would run to the door frequently. To move open

the latch, he would go through several hurdles by moving a chair or a table. It was so frustrating to try to teach and then expect such an intelligent boy to listen to you. The setbacks caused my heart to wrench. Until one day I came across, Son Rise by psychologist Berry Hoffman, who also has an autistic child. The book Son Rise was written with the goal of revealing his communication processes with his son. This book became my enlightenment. His second book called "Happiness Is A Choice" was like water quenching the thirst in my heart. Why should I lead such an unhappy life? Being depressed will not make the situation better. Having a special needs child does not, and should not deprive me of the happiness I deserve. I decided to not let sorrow be a stumbling block and to shift my paradigm and reposition myself!

Every day when I see my son's innocent smile, I will grin to myself. I realize all the long lost happiness in many people's busy lives is all embedded in my son.

Being 60+ years old, I have decided not to talk down to young people with an attitude like "you are still wet behind the ears". I am more than willing to share with those young parents the lessons and experience I have harvested from my lush crops.

Now my mind is like a calm sea without a ripple and it reminds me of an old fisherman sunbathing on the coast!

Meanwhile, please do not block the sun rays shining on me. Thank you.

一早，OutReach 就來接季齡了。

“叮咚！”才一聲響，兩隻小狗就很盡職的叫了起來。

“How come you are so early today?” 我很驚訝地問。根據以往的經驗，OutReach 總是慢。明明約的是早上7:30 到8:00，司機常常會比預定時間晚，甚至可以晚一個半或兩小時。這對我來講倒是可以忍受，司機越晚來表示季齡可以練更久的鋼琴或揚琴，所以任何的 delay 反倒是他的提升機會。當然，偶爾偶爾，司機來得早些，或是意外地準時，趕緊穿鞋背包送上車，我也可以噓口氣，享受那意外的浮生半日閒。

# 路邊的哲學家

by 葉淑芬 Sufen Wu

“Well, I have no control, I was told wherever I need to go” 這個司機有些懶散，倚靠著門框看著我，嘴裡還叼著一根牙籤。對這麼一個不一樣的司機有些詫異，我不由得退後一步。往常的司機大部份和善有禮，不像這樣的一個怪咖。

不過，他說的沒錯，來得早，來的遲完全和司機無關，他們只是聽命行事，絲毫不握指揮權。

“So, do you enjoy this work?” 季齡正在穿鞋，我隨口問了一句，等待一般人一般會回答的回答。

“No”，他說。我驚訝地睜大眼睛，不可置信的望著他。“Why?” 我想問的是，為甚麼你不和一般人一樣，說說也許是敷衍的話？為甚麼你要說實話？那樣的閒聊比較花時間。更進一步，為甚麼你不喜歡這份工作？

“Well, I have no complain,” 他說。

“如果我問你，你快樂嗎，你會怎麼回答呢？” 挑戰似的，他拋給我這個問題。

好似被躲避球打中，我一下愣住了。我快樂嗎？向來自認如此的，可就是今天，我有些困惑。我快樂嗎？快樂在哪兒？好似一個我手中一直握住的東西，偶而放入口袋，從外頭拍拍，我可以感覺到他的存在。時日一久，口袋裡逐漸多出了一些東西，那是我日常生活的累積：幾張衛生紙，幾筆帳單，唇膏眉筆石頭貝殼... 滿滿的口袋堆積著，還生了灰。我的手在口袋裡搜尋，摸遍了四個角落，碰觸到所有其他的東西，就是找不到...快樂！

“Well, not exactly, but I am OK.” 試著掩蓋自己的慌亂，我的回答有些模糊。

“Well, you see.” 他留給我更多的沈思。

我的快樂在哪兒？我知道他在一堆亂七八糟的東西底下，就好像一本一直被我珍藏的書，逐漸淹沒在書海裡-只在此山中，雲深不知處。看著這幾年的堆積，我的書呢？它消失了嗎？

再往深處想，我真丟了那心愛的東西了嗎？不是的，我只是... 找不到而已。最近，我的心裏存藏了一些垃圾，有傷心，有懊惱，甚至憤怒，他們就像那個裝得滿滿的口袋，急需整理。

像書桌的抽屜，一打開，我可以找到十年前甚至更久以前的小東西，它們都是我從外頭帶進來的，日積月累下，一不注意，它們已經老舊生塵，變成雞肋。清理是唯一的方法。

仔細審視心裡的渣子，一個一個的擦拭，好的存起來，壞的往外一丟，這樣逐漸走到心底... 啊哈！“快樂”，正好整以暇的躺在那兒對我眨眼呢！

功夫不足以做到”本來無一物，何處染塵埃？” 那就”時時勤拂拭，莫使染塵埃”吧！

“You are a philosopher .” 離去前，我對他說。

# Streetside Philosopher

by **Sufen Wu**

“Ding Dong!” My two little dogs started barking.

“How come you are so early?” I asked. Last year and years past, OUTREACH was always late. I felt inconvenienced since I assumed they would be late. I had planned for Chiling to take this time to practice piano.

“Well, I have no control, I am told wherever I need to go,” the driver leaned on the door talking to me, a toothpick in his mouth. I felt a little discomfort looking at him.

I knew what he was telling me was true; drivers basically follow wherever they are told to go.

“So, do you enjoy this work?” I asked, searching to find something to talk about while Chiling was putting his shoes on.

“No!”

I reacted with surprise. I was predicting the stereotypical answer.

“Why?” I blurted out. I meant, why did you say so? Why didn't you say something that everybody would say? Or, why are you not happy?

“Well, I have no complaint,” he said.

Then he turned the questions on me: “If I ask you, ‘Are you happy?’, what would you say?”

That beats me! Am I happy? Particularly at this time, am I happy? I tried to search inside of me. Where is the happiness that I thought I always have?

“Well, not exactly, but I am okay,” I responded, trying to protect myself and speak the best truth that I could grasp in the moment.

“Well, you see,” he said and left me with a lot of thinking.

Where is my happiness? I knew it was buried underneath many things in my heart. I can visually see it, and I clearly know that I have to clear out the barrier, the junk emotion, to reach that.

It is just like looking at a precious book that I have been carefully keeping as a treasure. I think I have it the whole time until... Now I sadly find that I have lost it!

But to think deeper: Did I really lose it? Maybe I just couldn't find it in that moment since I have stuffed many other things in my heart: the criticism, the sadness, the anger to things and people? Those things have occupied the chamber of my heart, and I have made a big mess in it. These things simply covered and occupied the entire room.

Just like my drawer, my closet, even my house, can be dusty, stuffed with many things that I have brought in from the outside environment. Cleaning up is the only way to keep my rooms clear, accessible, and healthy.

Once I dump out the trash from inside of my heart, that little empty chamber is where HAPPINESS lies.

“You are a philosopher,” I told him when he left with Chiling.

## SPEAKING YOUR MIND ON TV

by **Anna Wang**



On 4-17-15, FCSN Dream Achievers Band (young musicians with autism) had a brief interview and live performance on KTSF, Channel 26 TV's talk show “Talk Tonight.” Before the show went live, band members were asked to play their song once for a sound check and balance. The filming crew members were very impressed and said Dream Achievers sounded just like a great band. They couldn't tell that band members had any disabilities. Then, the show went live. The host asked band members their names and to say something about themselves. Alice just said her name. Greg was very appropriate and introduced himself as the band guitarist and as a trainmaster since he takes special interest in trains. Then the host turned to Lawrence who said, “My name is Lawrence Wang, I am the best saxophone player in the world. I will go to the bathroom now!” The host said, “No, later.” Everyone was laughing so hard. The cameraman later told me that the brief interview distinguished Dream Achievers, setting them apart from all other bands and making the band unique and special ☺.





## “To Dream the Impossible Dream”

### Mission Statement

FCSN’s mission is to help individuals with special needs and their families to find love, hope, respect, and support through integrated community involvement.



FCSN Square Dance Group



Performance at SNGT Audition



Railway Field Trip



Lawrence playing Saxophone



SNGT Talent Show Performers on Stage at Closing Ceremony