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# FCSN Dream Builders

January 2015

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## Dear Friends,

Come Enjoy, Support and Participate in our 2016 Special Needs Talent Showcase.

Come watch as special needs individuals take to the stage and reach for the stars. In the showcase platform, all individuals with developmental disabilities have the chance to display their talent and to enjoy an extraordinary experience! Auditions were held in late January to assemble a night of musical acts, dancing, comedy, magic acts, martial arts, and acrobatics. Every contestant will receive participation medals.

Please mark your calendars so you can be in the audience: Saturday, March 19th at 7 p.m. Location: Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Pkwy Santa Clara, CA 95054

There are 11 finalists and 10 honorable mentions that will perform on March 19. The top three finalists will win a promotional video and \$500 cash; other finalists will receive \$100 cash.

The 5 judges are: Hollywood celebrity, Christopher Showerman, famous for his role in George of the Jungle 2, acclaimed virtuoso pianist, Stephen Prutsman, and Senator Jim Beall, Assembly member Kansen Chu, and ABC7/KGO Vice President of Public Affairs, Mimi Kwan.

Tickets are \$20. For tickets, please visit our website at <http://www.fcsn1996.org/>. or call Steven at (510)739-6900 ext. 3305.

## East Bay & South Bay Family Support Gathering

Our family support gatherings are designed for the whole family. Special-needs children, their families, volunteers, and friends are gathered together for fun activities. Family Support Gatherings are held every Saturday alternately in Fremont and in Saratoga.

In the first 2 hours, while parents attend seminars, children will be divided by age groups to participate in three 40-minute classes. These classes are dancercise, arts & crafts, and games. After the Seminar/Children classes, a sumptuous homemade dinner is prepared for the whole family. Last, parents join support groups and family fun activities.

**Join us as one big family to build a brighter future for our children together, register now.**

South Bay Dates: 2/6/2016, 3/5, 4/2, 4/16, 4/30, 5/14, 5/21

**at West Hope Presbyterian Church, 12850 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga.**

East Bay Dates: 2/13/2016, 2/27, 3/12, 3/26, 4/9, 4/23, 5/7

**at FCSN Center: 2300 Peralta Blvd, Fremont**

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## Feature Story

# From Taiwan to FCSN: Angie Wang's Journey to a More Fulfilling Life

by **Kenneth Song**,  
FCSN Dream Builders Reporter

If you're well acquainted with FCSN's current president Yee-Yeen Wang, chances are that you've also met his energetic daughter Angie. In fact, it's quite near impossible to miss her loud booming voice and happy go-lucky expression when placed together in the same room. Now just twenty-five years of age, Angie's become something of a poster child for the older students who are just beginning to transition into a more independent lifestyle. Between attending the FCSN adult day programs and working her part time job at a local TJ Maxx, Angie has shown a tremendous level of growth in personal responsibility over the past few years. Her life's journey before and after becoming a part of the

FCSN family is a heartwarming tale that highlights a few of the organization's key qualities.

Although Angie may seem a bit shy at first, it becomes perfectly clear ten minutes into our interview that she can speak passionately about the topics which are most important to her. One such personal story she wanted to share was how her family came to join FCSN. When Angie was in the third grade, her parents made the big decision to move from Taiwan to the United States in search of a better environment for their daughter. More than just a huge culture change for the family, the move caused Angie to leave behind close friends and relatives in Taiwan. Despite an initial period of rough adjustment,

she began attending Collins Elementary School in Cupertino. Over the next few years, Angie and her parents struggled to find the ideal education for her needs. She eventually graduated from Hyde Middle School and enrolled into a special needs program at Lynbrook High. Although she made several Christian friends in her classes, Angie quickly realized that the normal teenager kind of lifestyle was not for her. Unable to find a sense of social belonging among her peers, Angie admits to having stayed at home for lengthy periods during this time of her life.

After graduating from Lynbrook, Angie continued her education for another four years at the Wings Learning Center in Cupertino. She recalls her time at Wings with some fondness, telling me about the vocational training classes and close friends she had made. But while the curriculum at Wings paid much closer attention to her unique needs, Angie says that she still "felt like an outsider". She was never able to get very close to her teachers or many of the other students because instruction was usually held in a rigid class environment. Looking back today from her place in FCSN, which she fondly describes as a second home, Angie emphasizes family culture as the main difference







between the two organizations.

In many ways, Angie's personal story sheds some real light on the strength and mutual support of FCSN's members. Her family has always been deeply involved in the community since they joined early on in 2000. Mrs. Wang, who had assumed the position of lead editor for the newsletter team, would always accompany Angie to her weekly classes. Immersed in the tightly-knit community of everyday families, Angie's social confidence flourished as she got to know her peers and instructors alike. But things came screeching to an abrupt halt when, a few years ago, Angie's mother tragically passed away from lung cancer. Like a switch had been suddenly flicked off, Angie stopped attending FCSN altogether for weeks, which stretched into months. Since her mother had played such a pivotal role in her FCSN experience, Angie would have to let the scars and memories heal before she made her return.

Although it was a slow and painful process returning to the

FCSN adult day program, her father's encouragement eventually persuaded Angie to give it another try. Day by day, she rebuilt her bridges one step at a time, opening herself back up to the love and support of the community. While Angie still stayed home every now and then, she was actually excited about learning and making friends once again. Ultimately, it was the tremendous support from her friends and teachers at FCSN which finally pulled her out of the pits. Her newfound perspective has been shaped by this organization, which Angie aptly refers to as the "new milestone for her life". When asked about the most valuable skill FCSN has taught her over the years, Angie answers without hesitation, "It has taught me that friendship is valuable and incredible."

Since then, Angie has put her newfound social skills to great use. When she began working part time under a TJ Maxx supported employment program earlier this year, Angie remembers being terribly nervous. Not certain if she would get along with her boss and coworkers, she nevertheless

channeled her courage and made the effort to get to know them. As a result, she now has an outstanding relationship with her supervisors and many friends at the workplace. Through the FCSN day program, she's also made two new best friends whose families just moved over from China. Now that the roles have been reversed, Angie has the wonderful opportunity to bring others into the FCSN family, just as she was welcomed in so many years ago.

As FCSN moves into its next stage of growth, I can see the anticipation painted across Angie's eyes. While she does express a bit of sorrow at how many of FCSN's teachers have been coming and leaving over the past few years, Angie understands that such is a necessary process. With all the friends still out there to be made and new faces to join her massive family, there's much work to be done. I can feel her tangible excitement as she leaves us with one last statement, "A big thank you, especially to the teachers for letting me stay in FCSN. It makes my life happy and teaches me things I don't know. Happy New Years!"

## President's Message

# Looking Back and Looking Forward

## 回顧與展望

by Yee-Yeen Wang President of FCSN  
王一尹 (華人特殊兒童之友會長)

Six months ago, I was elected by the FCSN board to serve as president. Looking back, over the past nine years, under previous presidents Tsai-Wei Wu, Jim Chiao, and the management team, I see that FCSN has established a firm foundation for the organization, which prepared us for another growth phase. First of all, after years of site search, we purchased the Bascom property in April 2014 and construction started in April 2015. We expect to complete the renovation project by the end of the first quarter 2016 and open the South Bay Center in the second quarter of 2016. Modelled after the Dream Center in Fremont, this Dream Project is our second building creating a community center to provide more complete services for our South Bay families. We thank all of our members, friends, and donors for their numerous contributions and generous support.

In 2015, FCSN continued development of many enrichment programs. Through various local programs, we have helped many special needs individuals to learn and grow in a friendly and supportive environment. All these accomplishments are possible because of the devotion of many of our parents and volunteers. FCSN has received numerous awards for our Adult Day Programs, our Supported Living Service, and for our community services. These awards are a reflection of the quality of service and dedication of our staff and parents.

Looking forward through 2016, FCSN will soon start its 20th year. We have come a long way, but there still is a lot of work for us to do to move ahead. Most of all,

we need to complete the South Bay Center construction on time; this is paramount for us to open the center in the second quarter of 2016. Secondly, we will continue to expand our services and improve the service quality -- to fulfill our members' needs. Last but not the least, given our limited resources, the FCSN board has set an objective to look for opportunities to improve our operating efficiency.

Based upon our beliefs and values, FCSN has the goal to help special needs children and their families, creating a community where we offer love, hope, and respect in a supportive environment. It is also our job in 2016 to bring members closer to each other and closer with the surrounding communities.

FCSN is a big family. The founding families had nothing but a belief when they started the organization in 1996. Today, many of us are reaping the benefit as part of this big family. As FCSN celebrates its 20th year, we will continue moving forward based on the same belief and mission.

With all of us working together, we will create a better tomorrow for our children and families.

時間飛逝，2015年已經馬上進入尾聲。一尹蒙 FCSN board members 的看重，從6月起委以會長重任。回顧以往，FCSN 在才偉，喬立兩位會長和所有管理團體成員歷年來所奠定的基礎上，自 2015 積極準備邁入另一個成長階段。

首先，經過多年的尋覓，我們在2014年底，買下位於 South Bascom Ave. 的物業作為未來的南灣中心。並於今年4月正式進行內部整建，預計在2016 第二季能開始使用。這是 FCSN 繼東灣中心後，再一次在

全體會員和社會善心人士的共同支持下，讓FCSN 對南灣的家庭能提供更完整和便捷的服務。這個中心也啟動了FCSN 第二個築夢計劃。從今年的 Gala event 中，我們再一次感受到大家的支持和期許。

其次，FCSN 在2015年也持續推動多項家庭的enrichment 計劃，藉由各種local programs，協助SN 的家庭在快樂，互助的環境裏幫助特殊孩子們學習和成長。這些成果都是因著熱心的父母和義工們，無私的付出，才一點點的堆積而成。

FCSN 在今年也得到多項由 Regional Center和社區團體所頒發的獎項，以表彰我們在 Adult Day programs, Support living, 和社區服務傑出的表現。這些都是服務的同人和家長們，本著愛心，和服務的信念，為幫助這些逐漸長大的特殊孩子們得到的肯定。

展望2016，FCSN 將邁入第20個年頭，我們有很多的工作要同心協力的去推動。

首先，要如期完成南灣中心的改建工程，以順利開展南灣中心的服務運作。

再者，我們也會持續的在 FCSN 服務項目和品質上加強，以涵蓋更多會員們的需要。當然如何在有限的資源下使整體的運作更有效率，也是我們一直努力的目標。

FCSN 一貫的信念和目標是幫助特殊的孩子和家庭藉著參與社區而打造一個有盼望，有尊嚴，彼此關懷的幸福環境。所以如何加強會員彼此的連結，和與我們週遭的社區建立更多的互動，也是我們在2016 的工作。

FCSN 是一個大家庭，當年創始家庭憑著單純的信念，使我們享受到今天的成果；FCSN 即將步入第廿個年頭，我們仍然秉持著相同的信念和目標繼續前進，大家一起共同努力，為我們的孩子和更多的家庭打造美好的未來。

最後 一尹謹祝所有 FCSN members, 和服務同仁，新年快樂，事事順心，身體健康，闔家平安。

## FCSN Spotlight

# Construction Update of FCSN South Bay Center

by **Jim Chiao**  
Vice President of FCSN

In April 2014, after several years of search by our site search committee, FCSN acquired the commercial property at 1029 S. Bascom Ave. in San Jose. Soon after, the FCSN design team worked with the architect firm of Ron Chang to develop renovation plans. In February 2015, FCSN signed the contract with ACON Builders Construction. FCSN chose these two firms because we have worked with them before during our Dream Center Project in Fremont. In April 2015, the South Bay Center construction began.

Besides our own staff and members, we are very fortunate that our teams have assembled volunteers with excellent construction/design expertise to help us manage the project. In our construction team, we have Stanley Woo (Silverstate Development Corp.), and David Tu who once managed the renovation project for San Francisco Asian Art Museum. In the design team, we have Mandy Chang (MGI Interior Design). The construction team meets with ACON at the job site every other week and keeps the project on track.

At this point, the constructions

are roughly 70% complete. Recently, the building passed the plumbing, electrical, and sheetrock inspections. In January, the contractor began work on the drop ceiling, with flooring to start next. There is still a long list of things to do in areas such as water, gas, appliances, doors, painting, cabinets, and security, among others. If everything runs smoothly according to the current plan, construction will finish by the second quarter of 2016.

## Wheels Go Round on New FCSN Buses

by **Sylvia Yeh**



I am very excited to share great news with you- FCSN received TWO BRAND NEW BUSES in August 2015 from a Caltrans grant. The wheels on FCSN's buses go "round and 'round" transporting students throughout the Bay Area to activities and events.

FCSN's acquisition of two Ford E-450 Starcraft mid-size buses is a result of a \$134,000 grant from the Federal Transit Authority (TFA,

fiscal year 2012-13, Session 5310 Program). Each bus can transport 12 mobile passengers, plus two wheelchair passengers. There are electric wheelchair lifts on the buses. The vehicles help to sustain FCSN's dream to provide fulfilling lives for people with special needs and integrate them into their communities

FCSN also submitted another grant project (GREAT- "Go Reliable, Easy, Accessible, Transportation) in November 2014 and was approved for two vans from FTA (FY 2013-14). We expect to receive the vans in 2017. We will then have four vehicles for transportation services to FCSN students.

FCSN has been relying on staff members to use their private vehicles for all kind of excursions, then receive reimbursement for mileage. The buses are a start for FCSN to transport our students more efficiently and professionally, reflecting the standards of FCSN and increasing awareness of FCSN in the communities we serve.

The buses will transport children and adults with special needs who participate in FCSN's programs (Adult Day Program, Living Services, & Children's Program) for community integrated activities, such as to-and-from FCSN East Bay Adult Day Program, vocational training, field trips, baseball games, museum visits, or Special Olympics practices/competitions.

With the arrival of the buses, FCSN launched a campaign to raise \$5,000 to put FCSN's logo and theme ("Building a Brighter Future") on the buses, making them easily recognizable and a friendly reminder of FCSN's presence in the Bay Area as we work to build a community of love, hope and respect for all people with special needs. The buses let Bay Area residents see that special needs people are active participants in their communities.

# Spreading Our Dream: An Evening at the Gala

by **Kenneth Song** FCSN reporter

On a cold and windy evening in October, I cut a path through the dark parking lot of the Santa Clara Convention Center, slowly making my way toward the warm glow of lights inside. Though I can feel a dim sense of excitement for the festivities that lay ahead tonight, my mind is preoccupied by the leftovers of a long and grueling week at work. It's been a busy fall season, and last-minute project-after project has spared me little time to stop and appreciate the holiday mood. Truth be told, as I pull the entrance doors open and shuffle into the building, I want nothing more than to be done with it all and rush home where I can blissfully collapse into bed. Brushing off the chill that has settled onto my shoulders, I push these nagging thoughts to the back of my head and make my way toward the heart of the convention center. The inviting warmth and the distant sound of music are welcome guides, pointing me toward my final destination.

Tonight, the building is packed with attendees of four different events; the mood is appropriately electric. The convention center's hallways are littered with a jungle of signs pointing every which way, people waving and shouting at each other from the floor to the balcony and back. After wandering through organized chaos for the better half of an hour, I know I've finally arrived when I run into a bustling crowd gathered just outside one of the ballroom auditoriums. The sight instantly fills me with an indescribable sense of occasion. Like one big family reunion catching up before dinner, the boisterous sounds of laughter mix with pleasant conversation to echo

vibrantly across the room. I am spotted through the crowd by my gracious host, Yee-Yeen, who welcomes me with a hearty slap on the back and invites me to partake in the pre-gala festivities.

Just outside the ballroom, rows of lobby tables are stacked high with tantalizing prizes and gift baskets, all to be given away as prizes for the raffle at the end of the night. Intricate carvings of jade, milky pearls, and gorgeous paintings by the artist Shu Yu Lin have also been put on open display for the silent auction. Off to one side, there is a shop run by students and volunteers of FCSN, selling delightful handmade items such as soaps and chocolates. As I peruse through the merchandise for sale, I cannot help but stop to appreciate the immaculate presentation of seemingly store-quality products. I can see the flash of pride and joy in the students' eyes when I purchase a bar of chocolate made by their own two hands.

Set up just around the corner in the atrium court, the Lobby Musicians spark up the mood with a lively tempo. Satisfied with my share of the excitement so far, I decide to sit back and just enjoy the music until the ballroom opens for dinner. I catch the trio of two pianists and a cello player halfway through their upbeat rendition of the Dallas tango, finding myself mesmerized by their perfect counterpart. After the songs end, the musicians switch gears completely and show off their skills by playing a dark, yet rapturous, canon. Although the somber classical music clashes slightly with the festive mood of the noisy

background, it somehow strikes me as oddly beautiful. What a perfect place to be pleasantly surprised by the unexpected. While the hustle and bustle of the crowd continues, a small gathering of people who have similarly pulled themselves off to the side, seem in content agreement.

Eventually the ballroom doors swing open, and hundreds of guests who have come for tonight's gala file in and take their seats. Among the attendees this evening are esteemed city council members, mayors, doctors, and foreign representatives, all who have come to share in the support of better special needs programs for our communities. Two decades ago, Friends of Children with Special Needs was founded by just ten Chinese American families who were looking to support each other. As I look across the room at a sea of colorful faces, the active membership of FCSN today reveals FCSN's tremendous growth in cultural diversity and offers a testament to how much this organization is needed. During a period of great political and cultural conflict around the world, it is therapeutic to see that different peoples can still bond together for the greater good. It warms my heart, for there are few things in life so magical as sharing a meal with a stranger in good faith.

As dinner wraps up and the last rounds of dessert are brought to the tables, the master of ceremonies for the night, Diana Li, takes the stage and stirs up the crowd with her enthusiastic personality. With an explosive opening performance of drumming by the South Bay Percussion Ensemble, the murmuring of dinner conversation all but dies down and the gala program is finally ready to commence. After introducing the gala event committee, Diana brings President Yee-Yeen out on stage for the yearly address. Through his humbling speech, we learn that the purpose of tonight's gala is to raise the necessary funding to equip FCSN's new South Bay Center with the tools and infrastructure it requires to serve hundreds of families. He reminds us that



although we have made incredible progress in recent years and have much to be grateful for, the road ahead is still long. Founded on the principle of everyday families mutually supporting each other, FCSN has not strayed far from its roots, drawing on the strength of its community rather than its leaders.

With the president's message still resounding in our hearts, Diana and Chairman of the Board Albert Wang begin the night's fundraising with the Fund a Need Auction. Although it takes the audience a few minutes to warm up to the plate, shortly enough, open donations are flooding in from all across the room. Tonight's daunting goal of half a million dollars grows a little closer with each family's support. Just when the action seems to be dying down, one of the guests named John announces that he will match any donations of one thousand dollars or less. His incredible generosity is met by another huge influx of inspired donors who begin to raise their cards faster than Diana and Albert can even announce their numbers. As the dust settles and donations trickle to a close, the audience falls to a quiet hush with announcement of the evening's special VIP guests. Chairman Albert recognizes each of the organization's top contributors over the past year, each of whom is awarded plaques. Taking the stage, state assemblymembers from San Jose and Sacramento present FCSN with a number of distinguished awards for its pivotal role in revolutionizing special needs care. It is a proud and momentous day for FCSN and its founders, marking two decades of hard work and dedication.

As the gala formalities come to a close, a team of volunteers sets the stage for the highlight of the event: the FCSN children's and adults' performances. While sipping on a fresh cup of hot coffee, I sit back and watch as the Chinese Music Ensemble wheel their assortment of oriental instruments onto the stage. On the conductor's cue, the delicate sounds of the erhu, yangqin,

percussions, and dizi float across the auditorium as a pair of dancers in traditional Chinese dresses spin to the music. Their elegant version of "Moonlight over the Lily Pond" is flawlessly executed, no easy feat for a band featuring so many exotic instruments. Next up is the drama camp with its creative, wacky rendition of Toy Story. I enjoy a good laugh while watching Buzz Lightyear dance to a medley of pop culture songs and playfully sing along to the words I know. With a fitting last choice of "You Got a Friend in Me," the drama camp finishes and takes one final bow before a cheering audience.

I immediately recognize the next performer, David Ren. for his amazing harp playing from past talent shows, but tonight he surprises me by choosing to play an ocarina instead. Taking his position center stage, David grips the tiny piece of painted clay in his hands and begins his melody. Although his choice of "The Swan" is gentle and smooth like a lullaby, each note carries a robust strength that pushes it to the ends of the room. Amidst a roar of applause, David bows shyly and clears the stage for the next performance, a choreographed fitness dance. Breaking it down on stage to the Chinese song "Little Apple", the young members of the Co-Ed Dance Group show how they fuse dance and exercise. As the end of the night draws near, the Dream Seekers company of dancers and singers perform their brief rendition of "My Heart Will Go On." With multiple groups of dancers each performing their own unique roles, the dance company offer a thrilling and

complex performance that quickly captivates the crowd. After the song ends, the Dream Seekers reassemble to show the evolution of FCSN with a fun medley of different music and dance styles. The evening culminates as the Dream Achievers Band of Greg, Lawrence, and Alice play Pharrell Williams' iconic song of "Happy." As they rock out on stage with full instrumentation and vocals, the catchy, upbeat tune spreads like a wildfire through the audience who can't wait to get out of their seats. By the time the song has finished, half of the audience is up and dancing along to the beat.

So concludes another gala and another great year for FCSN. As the raffle prizes are drawn and the lucky winners make their way onto the stage, I absentmindedly catch myself grinning. I think back, just a few hours ago, when I'd first arrived at the convention center, defeated and tired. Now as I stretch out my sleepy legs, I feel my heart and soul refreshed. Being involved with FCSN never fails to remind me about the importance of compassion and gratitude. Witnessing the unrelenting dedication of the parents and volunteers, seeing the honest joy in the students as a response, I experience my faith renewed and deepened each time I participate in this lovely dynamic. FCSN is an organization rich with individuals of the highest caliber when it comes to the qualities of patience and acceptance. I am inspired and glad to be part of such a wonderful family. In the end, Gala turned out to be quite the uplifting evening after all.



# Wake-up Call: Advocacy Needed Now

## An Interview with Anna Wang

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**By Johnna Laird,**  
**FCSN Dream Builders Reporter**

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Supporters of increased funding for people with special needs rallied on the steps of the State Capitol following Governor Jerry Brown's release of the California State Budget in January.

Were you there?

In the 13 years since Anna Wang, FCSN's Vice President of Enrichment Programs and Community Relations, has considered herself an advocate for people with developmental disabilities, she says she has seen less involvement by parents in the political process and as a result, less commitment by legislators. "Legislators and parents alike have grown numb to the issues facing people within the developmental disabilities community," says Anna.

"There is less engagement by parents, which is the opposite of what happened when five parents refused to leave the State Capitol until they were guaranteed passage of the Lanterman Act," Anna explains.

Anna thinks complacency may partly be due to age. "Parents today weren't around to remember when people with developmental disabilities were housed like animals in institutions," she says.

The Lanterman Act, first passed in 1969, followed by subsequent related-legislation, changed that. The Lanterman Act guaranteed people with developmental disabilities the right to get services and support they need to live in the community like people without disabilities.

"The spirit of the Lanterman Act started when a handful of parents went to Sacramento to advocate for their children. Parents didn't like the living situations their children were in and wanted a better life for them. Those parents won rights and benefits for all people with special needs, not just their own children. Now it's the law that the state of California has responsibility to take care and support the lives of people with developmental disabilities so they can live in the community and have a real life," Anna explains.

Instead of seeing the global picture of eroding services, parents often take the Lanterman law for granted, says Anna, while state officials keep trimming back funds, refusing to grant raises for more than a decade. This makes it difficult for organizations that provide services through the Regional Centers to operate. Locally and statewide, more than one third of programs have closed while the special needs population has doubled. (That's two-thirds of the providers giving services to a population that's 200 percent of what it was 10 years ago.) Gone are Lynn Center in Contra Costa County that served more than 500 preschoolers with special needs, Harambee Kinship Center in Hayward that served special needs adults with severe behavioral challenges, and CARH in Castro Valley that served the special needs community for 42 years.

"It's apparent when we see legislators getting less and less sensitive to the needs and the sense of urgency that the entire support system is collapsing, that parents need to get involved," she says

"It is the government's responsibility, but the government can change. Parents can become too dependent on the government. There's still a lot we as parents can do within our families to enrich and make a fulfilling life for our special needs loved ones. There is low-hanging fruit that could be picked to help our children.

"When governmental services collapse, I don't think we will know what to do. This is disheartening to see, especially here in Silicon Valley where there is so much brain power and so many resources. Not every parent feels powerful, but when parents team up together as a group they can move mountains like the pioneering parents of the Lanterman Act. Together, parents become powerful advocates. Ours is a government 'of the people, by the people and for the people,'" says Anna. Without parents putting pressure on legislators, the situation facing people with developmental disabilities looks grim, she adds.

"Legislators are ignoring people with special needs. We don't have dedicated lobbyists like other industries. We have an advocacy problem."

*continued on next page*

What are the first steps Anna suggests parents take? “For the future of our loved ones, families need to be relentless. We need to persist, so the Lanterman Act does not go away. Going to Sacramento might be difficult for many of us, but visiting our State legislators’ at their local office to voice our concerns is just as effective. At the same time, we parents can’t put all our eggs into the Lanterman basket. We need to plan our own children’s future. Our children need

places to live. They need employment and interests to help them live more fulfilled lives. We are the voices to secure their future. We have to facilitate the future now so it will be on autopilot when we are gone. Be sure to join us at the next FCSN Dream Project meeting. Now is the time. It’s our call to action.”

## Board Vice Chairman Chenming Hu to Receive National Technology Medal



Dr. Chenming Hu, Vice Chairman of the FCSN Board, has been named a recipient of the National Medal of Technology and Innovation, the highest honor for achievement and leadership in advancing science and technology in the United States.

In the spring, President Obama will present the medal to Dr. Hu in Washington, D.C. The medal was established in 1980 by the U.S. Congress to recognize lasting contributions to national competitiveness and quality of life, strengthening the national technological workforce.

Seen as a microelectronics visionary, Dr. Hu has made contributions leading to smaller, more reliable and higher-performing microchips. Since 1996, the transistor models he developed have served as world standards. A new 3D transistor structure that he developed is used in high-end computers and Apple and Samsung phones, replacing 2D transistors used for the last 50 years.

*AsianScientist* reported that “hundreds of billions of dollars’ worth of microchips have been designed” using Dr. Hu’s models that “he provided free to the

industry.”

“Science and technology are fundamental to solving some of our Nation’s biggest challenges,” President Obama said in a statement. “The knowledge produced by these Americans today will carry our country’s legacy of innovation forward and continue to help countless others around the world. Their work is a testament to American ingenuity.”

An author of five books and more than 900 research papers, Dr. Hu has been a professor of electrical engineering and computer sciences at the University of California at Berkeley since 1976.

Margaret and Chenming are parents of Raymond, an adult in FCSN’s supported living and day programs. Raymond, an artist, loves to brush paint animals and birds with distinctive, in some way abstract, expression of their eyes. Raymond’s work has won numerous awards and has been exhibited widely. Margaret and Chenming have served as FCSN Board Members for the last eight years. They have contributed energy and time to serve on various program sub-committees. Both are active participants and supporters of FCSN events and activities.



## A Fun Day at FCSN Summer Camp

By Johnna M. Laird

When I called to inquire about FCSN's summer camping experience last July, I was surprised and a bit in disbelief.

"You must come! It's camping's equivalent to Disneyland," I heard over the phone.

A Disneyland version of camping? Really? I was certain that this was oversell, yet I was working to find ways to involve our family more in FCSN events. I signed up my family--not for an overnight--but for the day. All I could envision was heat, dirt, and walking miles to a bathroom.

I confused the times, so instead of arriving late, my husband, Kendra and I showed up an hour early. My mouth dropped. Among summer brown Vacaville hills lay a green oasis, complete with authentic Ronald McDonald benches, a pond for fishing, basketball courts, a swimming pool, bikes and a full-sized gymnasium. There were paved roads and walking trails and expansive lawns for tents.

A potluck luncheon overflowed the tables inside the gymnasium. Bathrooms were indoors. Outside, FCSN guests were treated to McDonald's hamburgers, right off the grill. They never tasted better!

Organizers, Jim and Linmei, had planned fun family relays that left many of us laughing and grateful for full involvement of all ages. When we weren't eating and racing, people played ping-pong and air hockey on the full-sized equipment inside the gym.

In the afternoon, some headed off to the pool to swim and others to the pond to fish. FCSN Southbay's volunteer dance teacher led simple line dances even I could mostly do.

After staying for dinner and laying lazily on the grass, my family packed up to head back to the Bay Area around 7 p.m., an easy hour's drive to our home in Fremont.

What a glorious day it had been! So relaxing, a real getaway close to home.

More than 100 people had attended. I had met new people and had great conversations, gotten some exercise, played fun games, and experienced a Disneyland version of camping, thanks to the generosity of C.C. Yin and his wife, Regina, who own 26 McDonald's in 11 cities in five counties. They generously allow non-profit organizations, like FCSN, to use their 40-plus acre property where they also have their home. Their property is an oasis, tucked a few minutes away from the freeway and five minutes or so from the Nut Tree and Vacaville's Premium Outlets with more than 100 shops.



## Drama Camp: Who Wants to Be A Star?

by Johnna M.Laird

Plans are already in the works for the fifth annual FCSN Drama Camp.

Shh! Don't tell anyone, but camp leaders may have narrowed play choices to *Despicable Me* or *Madagascar*.

The fourth annual camp presentation, *Toy Story*, in August 2015, drew more than 30 special needs students to act on stage, plus 27 youth and 15 adult volunteers. A packed audience attended the evening performance at New Hope Church Community Church, next door to the FCSN Dream Center in Fremont. Dancers from the event performed again on stage at FCSN's Gala in October.

Twenty-one year old Kelsey Findlay made her directing debut with *Toy Story*. A veteran of the theater, Kelsey has a stack of playbills from her performances in school and with Star Struck Theater, most recently as Ursula in this winter's production of *The Little Mermaid*.

Previous Drama Camp productions have included *The Lion King* (2012), *The Wizard of Oz* (2013), and *Finding Nemo* (2014).

For anyone not yet caught in the excitement of a three-day camp (translate that to less than eight hours of rehearsals) with production on the fourth day, videos are available on YouTube.

Plan to attend either *Despicable Me* or *Madagascar* this August. The price is right—tickets are free.

# Voices of The Consumers – Telling Daily Life With Their Own Words

## My New Job and My Supported Living

By: Mike Hammonds

After Volunteering for more than 3 years at the Oakland A's coliseum, I am finally a paid employee of this place.



My SLS trainer, Stephanie helped me prepare for my interview and went with me. I also already went to orientation with my Case Manager, Matt and I received my uniform. I am happier now with this job than I have ever been at any other job. It's a job I enjoy, and it is even more fun now that I will get paid. Hopefully I work in October because that month was fun last year. I am more excited than nervous. I hope I do well this season.

Fcsn I like because I live on my own. I have good roommates and I think David and Gideon and the best guys I have lived with. I think that moving to E1 was a good idea, I like it here I am happy. I got gifts for the boys at the mall where we will go see star was and we go to the restaurant like BJ's we have fun, wake up and go to school. I even go on the bart in the summer time to work at the A's stadium. And in the winter I go to school. I love my job with the A's I am getting paid for my own work. I make my

own choices and do my own chores like laundry. Over all I enjoy and I am happy with my roommates and staff.

## Special Needs Got Talent

By: Kristin O'Rourke



I was wearing a black dress, black tights, and black heels. I got on the stage and danced of course. I was watching all the different performances. My experience was EXTREMELY awesome and fun this

is because I danced with my boyfriend Rod Gomez as well as my friends in Dream Seekers. While on stage, a lot of people were watching us and I was the center of attention, all eyes were watching me. My parents were cheering me on and my staff Gizella too. I was a shining super star on that stage. I felt famous of course. I felt popular. My mom took a video of me on her cell phone and she put it on Facebook and my dad took the video and put it on a disk so that I could watch it on a computer. I was so proud of myself that I got on stage and I was so happy about it. After that, I went home with my parents. I had so much fun at the special needs got talent. Thank you! I hope my experience next year is that I sing for my grandma and grandpa who have passed.





# A Jocelyn tale

by Jocelyn Chen

I have lived in FCSN SLS Peralta apartments since Sep 2006. I have 2 roommates and have a lot of friends in the weekend. I go grocery shopping, attend birthday parties, square dancing social skill and art class. During the weekend I go to the Costco, Chinese restaurant, watch movies and nutcracker ballet in Oakland. I like all my friends and staff. I enjoy living in here very much.



# A Lot of Fun Things To Do

by Cinday Chau

I learn a lot in SLS, because I know how to do laundry and keep the apartment clean. I even love to cook meals with my staff. I learn to clean the apartment, my room, and bathroom. Supported living teaches me to be social meeting new friends and have fun. Now I enjoy going to movies, concert and more. I want to learn more new things, like reading more difficult books for fun, or dancing to music and singing songs too. I even love coloring, arts and crafts.

(in the picture: Becky (left), Jocelyn (middle), and Cindy (right))

# “Tip a Cop”



By: Jessica Montecinos & Kelly Kirk

Our staff Maria took us to P.F. Changs, where we were invited to join the Special Olympics “Tip a Cop” event. We wore our WinStar tops as well as our medals. We were surprised and excited to see the Fremont Police Department and the Fremont Police Explorers. The manager of the restaurant was sweet enough to treat us with their delicious food. After we ate, she gave us a tour around the bar and the kitchen. Also, we got to experience how it was like to set up the tables and we greeted their costumers to their tables. Then the policemen took over, they helped the costumers and talked to them about what Special Olympics s and how it benefits when money is raised. It was nice to see the cops take a different job for the night. Afterwards, we took pictures with one policeman; he was very kind and open to talk to us for a little while. Overall, it was amazing to be part of such a great event. (Kelly – left in the photo; Jessica – Middle)

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# David Ren: Mastering Music and Life with the Help of Family

By Johnna M. Laird

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**Alex Ren**, who works long hours in San Francisco for a start-up and commutes from San Jose, rises very early on weekdays.

So does his brother, David, best known in the FCSN community for his musical abilities, playing several instruments.

An award-winning harpist, David isn't up early to practice music.

He's up early to fix breakfast for Alex. David has taken on a number of household responsibilities, from cooking to housecleaning to taking out the trash and locking up the house at night, making certain the security system activates.

At age 22, David is an active family member, helping his

family's household operate smoothly.

"He's really mastered cooking, helping my mom shop and prepare ingredients. He actually cooks and cleans the dishes, the entire cycle. He helps with laundry, and can even write checks for the bills," explains Alex.

"When David was growing up, my mom made many sacrifices, now David helps us," Alex says.

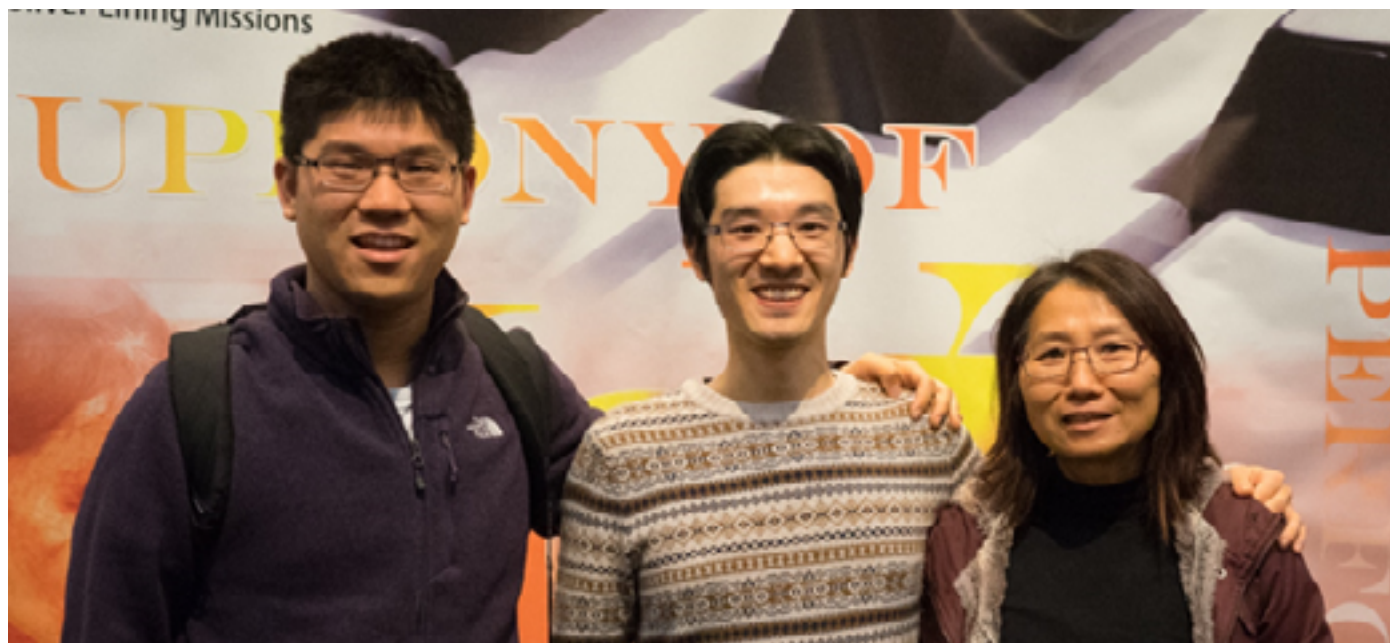
Encouraged to learn to operate a camera when Alex explored photography in college, David now goes everywhere with a camera in hand.

"He is the most social one in the family. He meets someone and if they get along--and David gets

along with everyone--he takes a picture with them. He takes down the person's name, phone number, and email address. Then he emails the picture of them together. People like it. They write back their thanks. David has become the family secretary, keeping track of the people we meet." On Facebook, David has about 1,000 connections.

David's success in music, supported by his family, has given him confidence. He launched a YouTube channel three years ago, posting videos of some performances and creating others specifically for YouTube. He has developed a connection with people in Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America.

Two and a half years ago without



help from his brother or mother, David used the Internet to locate a teacher for ocarina—a vessel flute traditionally made of clay or ceramic, part of a family of instruments dating back 12,000 years. When he found a teacher in Texas through her YouTube channel, David asked Alex to help him set up a PayPal account to send payment for weekly lessons. Now, David has lessons through Skype video chat with his teacher and, with her permission, records the lessons to review later. In December 2015, David posted a “Christmas Medley 1” for quartet where he plays all four ocarina parts.

“I think I saw my brother differently after that,” explains Alex, who is two years older than David. “No one told him to find a teacher, he just did it.”

The experience showed Alex that David has his own ideas.

“He may be autistic, but he found a way to conquer communication barriers with Skype and with a very caring teacher,” says Alex.

Alex says David has blossomed through music, which their mother, Jennifer Chen, required of them. Jennifer believed music lessons would create a challenge for David, and showing no favoritism, she provided music lessons for both sons.

After years of lessons and dozens of awards, David came to the realization that music could make him a star—seeing others who had a thousand views on their YouTube videos.

David takes ownership of his music, creating “covers” of video game theme songs—interpreting the music for harp, piano or ocarina—and sending it to the original artists, whom David connects with on Facebook. David is in charge of the entire



video production process, from setting up the microphone and camera to editing the footage with Final Cut Pro and uploading to YouTube. A number of artists have sent David messages of appreciation, recognizing his performance as the highest form of flattery.

Diagnosed with autism when he was four-and-a-half, David could not even hold a pencil. Today, he creates impressive Chinese calligraphy that requires fine hand-control. Weekly, David practices calligraphy two to three hours at a time, imitating the masters’ works. When his mother takes him along for business, he carries his iPad and practices calligraphy on a digital canvas. To keep up his talents, David has to utilize his time very wisely!

Alex gives credit to his mother for decisions she made that positively impacted David’s life. She bought books; she read everything she could find. She placed David on a strict diet to control food allergies, ignoring opinions that diet had no

effects on autistic symptoms. She prepared his meals at home for more than six years to avoid gluten, dairy, soy, seafood, artificial colors, preservatives, and any foods that agitated his system. On rare occasions when the family ate out, Jennifer brought David home-cooked meals. After years of a restricted diet, treatment with herbs and acupuncture, David now enjoys regular food, as long as it follows an organic and natural diet.

Seeing her son’s experience in kindergarten and recognizing that he would not get the individual instruction he needed, Jennifer opted to homeschool David, bolstering her program with tutors and teachers. She organized David’s time to pack his days full with English, art, music and other academic subjects.

“Dave’s brain is kind of like a leaky bucket. If you keep filling the bucket, little by little more gets in there and stays,” says Alex.

Alex believes homeschooling was a particularly wise choice for David.

“Kids can be really mean. We chose to put Dave in an environment with mature adults, where the focus was on helping Dave develop a healthy self-image and learn at his own pace.”

Some professionals had advised Jennifer to accept David as he was born—delayed in speech, lacking social instinct, and flapping his arms. They excluded the possibility of external influences on autism like environment and diet. While she was told that some children with autism might improve over time, they would be autistic for life. Jennifer accepted David, but she also put her focus on what one doctor told her. “David is ‘teachable.’” She latched on to the word and never let go.

Jennifer made sure that Alex felt included in helping David. David’s weak muscles led her to sign up both boys for Tae Kwon Do. Alex earned pocket money reading with David, which involved him in David’s education, creating a bridge between the brothers.

“I wasn’t ever neglected,” says Alex, as some siblings of autistic children feel. “Every opportunity David had, I was given. If David was taking classes, so was I.” Alex plays both piano and harp. He says his technique is not as good as David’s, but Alex is better at musical expression and can coach Dave for his performances.

Hand-eye coordination was challenging for David. When David began learning piano, he had private lessons as many as three times a week. Alex says he still remembers the day David played the piano with two hands at the same time. “We were all so proud of him,” says Alex. David now plays harp, piano, guitar, Chinese zither (guzheng), flute, ocarina, and

recorder.

When Alex was 16 and David nearly 14, their father, an engineer who worked long hours and supported the family, died suddenly of liver disease. The family recoiled in shock. Later, they sold their house and moved to a smaller home. Alex and his mom needed David to take on more responsibilities, not just for himself, but for the family as well.

Jennifer, who latched on to “teachable”, still works to open new arenas of learning for David. She and Alex are creating with David pathways to independence, starting with music as a way to gain more financial freedom through performance and teaching. They hope that David can one day run a café and perform music for his customers and sell his calligraphy pieces.

While some may think that music is David’s greatest achievement, Alex says it’s “coming out of his autistic shell to become a polite and kind gentleman with a love for all people and a desire to help kids with special needs.” When he discovered that his new harp teacher has a child with autism, David volunteered, “I want to be his aide.”

The tense, unhappy preschooler who could not put together a four-piece human-face puzzle and spent his days flipping light switches, spinning around and avoiding people has become a young man who looks for ways to help others and contribute to the world.

“Dave not only takes care of himself, but he also helps to take care of my mom and me,” says Alex. “He takes care of the home and still finds time for video games, playing music, and chatting on Facebook. He’s the brightest star in our lives, and he is always smiling.”

Jennifer gives credit to friends and teachers for their influence

on David. She received encouragement from FCSN and its seminars.

“David has truly been blessed to have so many wonderful teachers and friends who appreciate him for who he is.”

To check out David’s YouTube channel, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/user/davidrenmusic>

To see his ocarina quartet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqU95NeJ1go>

### David Ren’s Awards

One of three winners of the first Special Needs Talent Showcase in March 2015, David Ren has been recognized with state and national awards. He was named the Gold Winner of the Yvonne La Mothe Schwager Harp Competition in May 2013, held at the San Francisco Conservancy. He served as a Golden State Youth Ambassador for the California State Fair the same year. He earned Second Place in the U.S. Open Music Competition Instrumental Solo Senior Event in 2014.

Performing 13 musical pieces on three different instruments in May 2015, David helped raise nearly \$5,000 for children with special needs. His public appearances throughout the South Bay have included events at Canada College to benefit Silver Lining Missions in January 2016 and at the Lunar New Year Banquet in 2015.

He has also demonstrated calligraphy at the Taiwan Culture and Economic Office.



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# Andrew Chiang: On the Move at Work and in Sports

by Kenneth Song, FCSN Reporter

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To say that Andrew has had a colorful record of achievements throughout his life would be a gross understatement. As I sit down to meet with him at his family's home in Newark, Andrew greets me with a cool smile and confidently grips my outstretched hand. Since his family became a part of FCSN back in 1998, Andrew has experienced a number of unique opportunities that many of us will never get the chance to experience. Although he's now a regular member at the East Bay adult program, Andrew admits that he's never really been able to stay in one place for long. Through his love of sports and traveling, Andrew's exciting adventures over the past two decades are certainly worthy of documentation, meant to guide and

inspire future FCSN students for many years to come.

Recently turned thirty-three, Andrew is something of a self-proclaimed sports fanatic, both on and off the field. Extremely passionate about both basketball and baseball, he speaks with abundant knowledge about both subjects. When he was in middle school, Andrew attended a basketball game in Orlando where he witnessed the legendary Michael Jordan play. The Bulls all-star quickly became one of Andrew's main role models, and he's been deeply attached to the sport ever since. After moving to California and enrolling at Lynbrook High School, Andrew continued his involvement with basketball by becoming the school's

team manager. Andrew's favorite activity out of a huge selection of classes at the FCSN adult day program continues to be basketball. Despite being a Warriors fan, Andrew sincerely wants every team to win a championship at least once while he's alive. This interesting philosophy, to say the least, only reinforces his maturity and sense of good sportsmanship.

In 2009 Andrew participated at the Special Olympics World Winter Games against thousands of representatives from around the world. Having trained for months with the US team across snow-covered mountains of Denver and Boise, Andrew returned at the beginning of February to Idaho where the competition would be held. He competed in several different events for both snowshoeing--similar to track and field but on the snow--and cross country skiing. Determined that his training would yield results, Andrew outperformed competitors to earn several medals across his schedule and won gold in cross country skiing. Andrew considers this an important experience in his life and still keeps in close touch with his teammates using online social media. Later that same year, Andrew traveled to Taiwan for a golf tournament, where he traveled around the country and spent time with relatives. Utilizing his passions for sports as a springboard, Andrew clearly jumps at any opportunity to travel the world and expand his boundaries.





During a normal week at the adult day program, Andrew takes a variety of instructional classes such as reading, writing, and science, as well as recreational sports and activities like cooking. Among a variety of different classes offered throughout the week, basketball, math, and writing make



Andrew's list of favorites. Some of Andrew's fondest memories with the program are field trips to Disneyland and the Silent Film Museum. His involvement with FCSN has also increased since Andrew started living at the Supported Living Services apartments, behind the Dream Center in Fremont, with two other roommates and a staff member. Although he

returns to stay with his parents in Newark for part of each week, Andrew appreciates this new-found balance between independence and family.

Since mid-2006, Andrew has worked part-time at a Walmart in Fremont where he initially started off processing returns for the apparel department. With time on the job, Andrew's responsibilities have increased, ranging from answering phones to managing inventory. With supportive managers and coworkers who help him stay organized, Andrew looks forward to continuing his career with Walmart. Andrew is also currently enrolled in a special DSPS program at the College of Alameda which teaches students a variety of useful subjects from working with computers to advising others. Every Monday and Wednesday, Andrew takes a combination of BART and transit bus to their campus on Foothill. The College of Alameda's unique curriculum uses computers as a tool for improving cognitive skills, while also training in skills necessary to seek and maintain employment.

When asked about what he looks

forward to the most in the upcoming future, Andrew seems set on one thing for sure. To keep on learning and exploring more of the world. There is no doubt in my mind that Andrew, having developed a strong foundation of teamwork and communication skills, will go on to achieve whatever his heart desires. Still a young adult, he has garnered a list of impressive accomplishments, with a sunny disposition that welcomes new opportunities and challenges.



# Portrait of FCSN Trainer Bella del Rosario

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by Johnna Laird

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A staff trainer at FCSN, Bella del Rosario finds joy in growth, whether nurturing people or plants.

Bella joined the staff at FCSN's Supported Living Services' program two and a half years ago and discovered work where she felt fulfilled, guiding and mentoring consumers. Having studied nursing in her native Philippines, Bella wanted employment that was personally satisfying.

"At FCSN, people appreciate what I do. Other jobs pay more, but when I came here, I was looking for a job I enjoyed, where I could make a difference," she says. "Here I feel like I have found what I was meant to do."

The mother of an adult son, Bella says she enjoys fixing "my girl consumers' hair" since I don't have a daughter.

For the last FCSN picture day, Bella arranged her time so that she could "fix all my three girls' hair and put some make up on them. The pictures turned out really pretty. The day really paid off when I saw their pictures."

"I can see the difference I make for some consumers. They are more sociable. I've worked with them so they are taking better care of themselves."

Bella, who grew up helping her mother plant and pick in the family garden, started plantings at FCSN

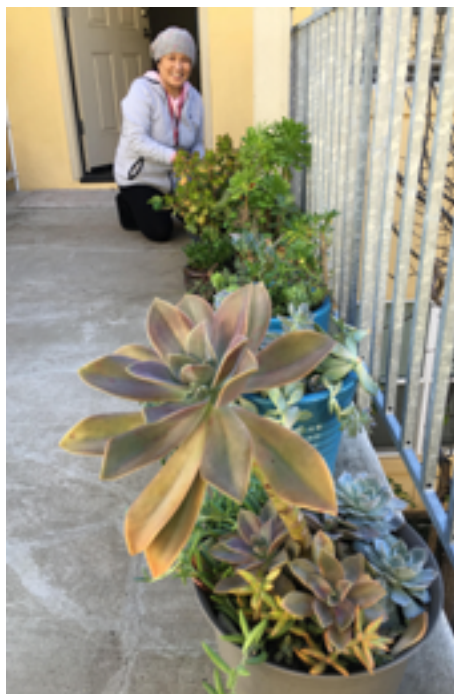
as a way to de-stress. Instead of keeping the plants to herself, she asked facilities' officials if she could share her plants with others.

At the apartments behind the Dream Center in Fremont, Bella has begun planting succulents beside the entry sidewalks. Upstairs along a balcony, she cultivates nearly two dozen plants to add greenery to the walkway and later transplant. While Bella's green thumb works on all plants, she cultivates primarily succulents at FCSN. They are drought-tolerant and well-suited for the San Francisco Bay Area's semi-arid climate.

Since succulents just require sunlight and little water, they are easy to grow, she says.

"Growing plants gives me joy and happiness," says Bella. "Gardening is like therapy. I forget any problems when I am planting."

Beyond her love of working with people and plants, Bella enjoys ballroom dancing. She took lessons for three years. Her grown son, Darryl del Rosario who works as an FCSN Supported Living staff member and as a Day Program teacher, developed a love of dancing from her, she says, but not her green thumb.



# A Solution to Sensory Overload

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by Anna Wang

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A lot of autistic kids have sensory issues. One of our kids, Andy, is hypersensitive to sound and smell. His classmate, Carl, likes to sing, but unfortunately he sings out of tune. Whenever Carl would sing during recess, Andy became extremely agitated and yelled: "Stop, Stop, Stop Singing." The teacher on duty at the playground reprimanded Andy for screaming out. Andy was bitter about this and complained to his mom after he went home.

His mom, knowing Andy's sensitivity to noise and smell, asked him, "When we drive through El Camino Real, what bothered you?"

Andy replied, "There was a dead skunk on the road."

Mom further asked, "Why did the dead skunk bother you?"

"It stunk," explained Andy. "But it got better after we drove further away from it."

"That's what you have to do when Carl sings," said Mom. "When you go further away, it won't bother you anymore."

The next day, Carl started singing at recess again, and Andy dashed to the farthest corner of the playground.

The teacher stopped him and asked, "Where are you going so fast?"

Andy answered, "I am running away from a dead skunk."

# 永不放棄

## Wait! There's got to be something I can do

葉淑芬 Sufen Wu

### 前奏

有一天，你走到一個荒郊野外，猛一抬頭，看到遠處一片金光燦爛，卻找不到路可以通達。眼前無處可下腳，不是泥濘就是大石嶙峋。可是你是那麼的希望走進那片金光中……放棄？不甘心！繼續走？沒路！“There's got to be something I can do!” 你大喊……

這是我與季齡在學習過程中的寫照，在此分享我們的故事……

### 一. 鋼琴

鋼琴是季齡最早起步，也算是最有成就的項目。即使如此，他在學習過程中還是有很多困難需要解決。

剛起步時，由於手指頭力氣不夠，



圖1

很難彈得大聲。要解決這個問題，他只好用整個手臂來彈。這也是一般初學鋼琴的學生很容易犯的毛病，彈琴時須用手腕向下壓來取得更大的聲音。主要原因是因手指頭的小肌肉還不成熟，無法使力所致。

為了訓練小肌肉，除了OT的協助外（例如用手指頭撿小珠子或銅板），我用一根原本是給孩子玩的limbo stick（見圖1）橫擺在他和鋼琴之間，高度和琴鍵相當，這樣一來，季齡彈琴的時候，由於一根塑膠棍橫互於前，他無法壓低手腕彈琴（因為我要求他不可以碰到棍子），只好勉為其難的用手指的點力彈琴。到現在這根長長的，有彈性的PC pipe 還是和季齡長相左右，隨時提醒他。

同時，季齡的識譜能力很有限，彈簡單的歌曲基本上都是靠聽力，可是碰到古典音樂的大曲子如貝多芬，蕭邦，如要彈得好是不可能只靠聽力-大約有20%是要按譜細細彈。五線譜和上面的“豆芽菜”讓他眼花，可是我如果寫上音名如CDEFG，他即可馬上反應過來。於是在每一個音符豆芽菜旁邊寫上英文就變成我的工作。這樣他才能彈出貝多芬的月光曲（Moonlight Sonata）全部樂章，或是舒曼的Impromptu這種難度的曲子。

### 二. 笛子

季齡自小就有流口水的毛病，因為他臉頰肌肉張力不夠。所以在音樂方面，我們很少考慮吹奏型的樂器。他曾經試著吹直笛，結果笛子一入口，另一端變成打開的水龍頭，還沒吹出一個音，口水已滿襟。只好放棄這個餓主意。

到了高中，由於參加樂團，看到管樂的學生繃緊嘴唇和臉頰吹奏，再次覺得這是一個有用的therapy。於是又把直笛拿了出來，心想，這次非成功不可。看到流出的口水越來越多，濕了手，濕了衫，更濕了褲…眼看洪水正氾濫，咋辦呢？腦子裡突然靈光一現，我順手拿起一個小塑膠袋，紮在直笛尾端，心想，“流唄！”，很快的，口水果然入了袋，總算解決了這尷尬的問題。大概換了兩次sandwich bag，季齡便掌握了音階，而可以吹出任何他熟悉的歌。

後來季齡參加了一個樂團，吹薩克斯風。和直笛不一樣的是，流的口水不會馬上流出來，而是累積在薩克斯風裏面。在聲音變成水波聲以前，我總是很勤快的替他倒出來，所以樂團練習室的地毯絕對是充滿口水的地方。不論是喇叭，伸縮管，或高，中，低音薩克斯，學生們動不動就拔開樂器的管子，往地上倒自己吹出來的spit，季齡只是其中之一，真正是“萬’管’如



海一身藏”

我曾經在FCSN 的South Bay Regular Gathering 教過孩子們直笛，發現大部份特殊孩子的臉頰和手指頭肌肉比較鬆弛，所以笛子一入口，不但水龍頭開了，笛子上的每一個洞都是流水潺潺。所以單單紮起笛子尾端還不夠。我想了想，這些孩子一次只能做一個動作，而吹笛子，除了用嘴吹氣，還需要用手指按住洞才能發出聲音。我已經解決了口水的問題，但手指要同時按住5個洞，對還孩子們還是太難。於是，我用膠帶將整支笛子包了起來，只留最上面的一個洞。這樣一來，他們拿著笛子，只要吹得出氣，就會發出一個音階。吹成功以後，再打開第二個洞，練習用一個手指頭按住洞口，只要按得住洞口，下一個音就出來了。最後 有幾個孩子可以吹出簡單的曲子。這就是”

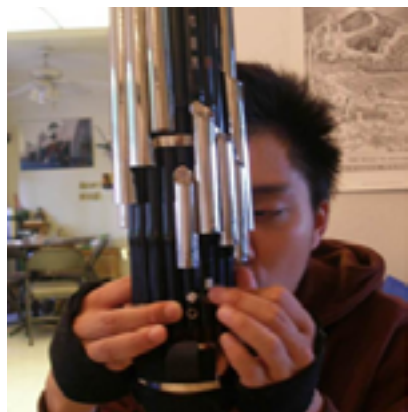


圖2

simplify the task” ，將一個台階砌分成幾個小小的步子，（想想baby學習不也是如此嗎？）特殊孩子才有機會成功。

### 三. 笙[sheng]

吹笙，需先雙手合攏抱住笙，再用手指頭按住不同的音孔來吹出音階。吹出音階對季齡並不是難事，難的是當他的手指按住孔洞，合攏的雙手就不自覺地分開。結果是... 笙就滑落下來。與往常一樣，季齡一次只能做一件工作；不是握住笙，就是按住洞。按住洞才能取得聲音，那當然是比較重要。那麼，如何讓他握住樂器呢？想了想，我找了一個手套，剪

掉五個手指頭，所以帶上手套後十隻手指頭仍可以活動。再將手套的手心上縫上Velcro，同時把笙的底部也貼了另一半的Velcro（圖2）。這樣一來，他的雙手捧住笙的時候，velcro就牢牢地粘黏起來。固定了雙手，等於讓十個手指可以自由活動而不必擔心掉了笙。

### 四. 大提琴

弦樂器一直是最難學的。好在季齡有絕對音感，彈起來至少不會走音。可是上課以後，才發現問題還是在手指頭小肌肉的運用。一般人可以用三個指頭來駕馭琴弓，可是季齡不行，他無法單單用三指來握住弓，甚至連五指都用上了。最後變成一個拳頭抓弓，手一緊，聲音就硬，根本無法拉琴。

所以，我的第一個工作就是想辦法讓他的三個手指停留在弓上而不致滑落（slip）。怎麼停留？又不能用膠黏住。曾經聽說有一位老師使用velcro把手指固定在弓上，我也試過，但兩三下季齡指頭就脫了韁。於是，我在家裡尋尋覓覓，終於看到在掃把頭的一個圓形的塑膠套筒，大小正好可以放下大拇指。我請老公用點小技巧，將這個指套固定在弓上，如此一來就把大拇指定了位（圖3），另外兩指則用velcro（見圖4）補強。三個手指定了位，季齡就不必死命的抓住弓，只為了不讓弓滑脫。經過幾年的訓練，指力增強使季齡bow hold 進步了很多，於是拉琴就比較容易了。

最近更發現了一種新的材料叫”shape lock”的塑膠，它遇熱就軟冷即硬，你可以塑成任何device來幫助學習，從前季齡的OT也用過。我作device的觀念就是從OT學來的。

### 五. 打鼓

說到打鼓，應該是最容易了，只要節拍對，那有什麼難的？季齡在初中時曾是樂隊的鼓手，打鼓對他並不難，可是他的動作比較僵硬，因為他是用

手臂打，而不像一般學生是用手腕的力道，打得輕而快。

想想看，一般人打大鼓，必須用到整只手臂，如果是打小鼓，基本上只需要用手腕和手肘就可以了。要打得輕而快，即所謂的掄音（tremolo），得完全靠指頭和腕力，肌肉越是放鬆，掄得越好。可是“放鬆“這兩個字對季齡卻是個大難題。所以即使他可以掄音，他用的還是上臂的大肌肉，而不是手腕和手指的小肌肉。所以練琴讓他的上臂長出兩隻小老鼠，好像舉重的選手。

有一次，他只需要拿手腕轉動鼓棒他居然用整隻手臂，連肩膀都聳了起來，我知道那是因為不懂得isolation的道理。所以一方面我握住他的上臂和手肘，讓他只可以動手腕，另一方面拿筆在他的手心寫1，手背寫2，然後要他”look at 1” “look at 2”。在輪番看手心、手背時，他已經在轉動他的手腕，然後我再要他逐漸加快速度。於是，本來不會做的動作因為幫他isolate手腕的肌肉而完成正確的動作。

就這樣，我不停的砌階築路，只因為相信季齡的能力。我的原則是”Put my feet into his shoes”，拿不好琴弓，我來拿拿看，為甚麼對我很容易的動作他卻做不出來？是哪一個部位出了問題？找到問題的癥結，再做出矯正的device，或是simplify 整個task。只要不放棄，我們走的每一步都是成就。邊學習，邊奉獻，季齡孩子，我們為你驕傲。

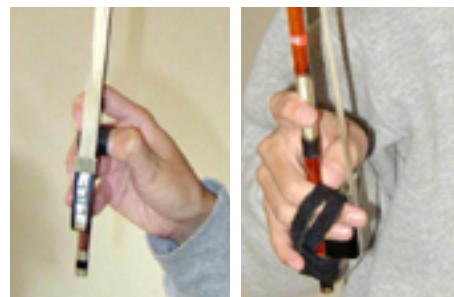


圖3

圖4

# The power of one-on-one

## 一對一的力量

葉淑芬 Sufen Wu

Iris 穿著美麗的銀色長禮服，長髮高貴的往後梳，興奮而不失優雅的走上臺，這已經是她第三年的表演，她謹慎的坐在鋼琴前面，小心的調整座位和琴譜，帶著滿臉笑容的彈出她準備的曲子，“the Twelve Days of Christmas”。媽媽說她前幾天感冒生病在家，很擔心會錯失這個表演的機會，Iris每天都要和媽媽說，“我今天覺得好了一點！”鋼琴的recital對她是多麼的重要。

Michael在去年表演的時候，還是面對觀眾很害羞，眼睛都不知道往哪兒擺的大孩子。今年竟然脫胎換骨似的，一口氣學了四個音樂課。除了去年的小提琴和鋼琴以外，他又加了長笛和唱歌。長笛雖是初學，音準，聲量全到位。在唱那一首很長很長的歌時，還要一直用手勢和表情告訴觀眾，“且慢拍手，下面還有！”，和觀眾的互動竟是那麼自然。這個孩子竟出落得像春花乍開，令人驚豔！

James還是帶著他的耳罩，因為他的聽覺過於敏感。可是到了台上，不但需要矇住耳朵，還可以把小提琴放在耳邊，拉出動聽的音樂。更別提彈鋼琴了。再一次證明，耳朵過於敏感的人也可以學音樂，也有成為一個傑出音樂家的潛力。

Anseley已經學了幾年的鋼琴和小提琴，算是一個小師兄。他總是滿面笑容，很興奮地走上來，高高興興的彈鋼琴，拉小提琴。表演完畢更是滿意地的嘉獎自己：“I did it!”一個標準正面哥。

有幾個平常不怎麼坐得住的大孩子今年第一年學琴，很難想像他們也可以坐得下來，結果很驚訝的發現，在老師的陪伴下他們也可以中規中矩的彈出他們所學！

更有的學生學的是中文，當場表演認字或讀書。或是展示他們的畫作，都是和一對一的小老師學來的。有的還很害羞，像Shanel，但是經過幾年一小步一小步的努力，終於跨出了他們人生第一步。

FCSN South Bay從幾年前開始，延攬了一群高中學生來教特殊孩子。最初開的不外是鋼琴，小提琴等一般課程，有了一些成效以後，進一步的根據孩子的興趣和性向，又加開了中文等其他課程，只要學生想學的項目，從跳舞唱歌到魔術卡通，可愛的曼卿阿姨（Auntie Mannching）和清玉阿姨（Auntie Chingyu）都會神通廣大的找到高中學生來教。

一對一教學的魔力就和ABA（Applied Behavior Analysis）的效果一樣，由於是一對一，所以學生即使有很多的障礙，不能專心，也會因為老師就在眼前，他不得不跟從老師的指引。也由於有一個recital擺在這一段學習的終點，（as a short term goal）連爸媽都要加進來幫忙，表演可是一件大事！所以回家一定會練習。由於所學是孩子比較有興趣的項目，所以學習動機較強。小老師也會知道因材施教（否則會教不下去），為學生砌出小小的台階，讓學生可以跟上腳步，（這就是ABA裡的Simplify

the task），有這樣的精神和目標，學習一定有成果。

任何事只要真正用心，都會造成一個良性循環，FCSN的孩子有幸找到這麼好的小老師，這麼好的機會，來學習這麼有趣的項目，達成這麼好的學習效果。從另外一個角度來看，我們這些認真盡責的高中老師們，因為這個機會而接觸了我們的特殊孩子，在他們原本是“標準模式”的生活中（標準模式概括：出身好家庭，吃穿不用愁，只需勤讀書，父母做馬牛）注入了西藏高原的空氣。從此，他們心中的理念不一樣了！放一粒小種子在小老師們的心裡，這就算是我們的特殊孩子對老師的一點貢獻吧！



ENGLISH  
TRANSLATION COMING  
IN NEXT ISSUE





## “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.



Duet in Special Needs Talent Showcase audition



Martial Art of Sword in Special Needs Talent Showcase Audition



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