



Friends of Children with Special Needs

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FCSN Dream Builders

June 2017



Center's Grand Opening on Bascom: A Dream Come True for South Bay Families

3rd Annual Showcase Brings A Variety of Talent to the Stage

Fun Times This Summer at FCSN Camps and Enrichment

Not Even Surgery Can Keep Him Away from FCSN



Ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Grand Opening of FCSN South Bay Dream Center on April 26th

FCSN Summer Camps, Programs, and Events



East Bay Programs

Badminton Camp:
June 19 - June 29 (Mon to Thurs)
3:30pm to 4:30pm
Location: ClubSport Fremont

Basketball Camp:
July 10 - July 20 (Mon to Thurs)
3:30pm to 4:30pm
Location: ClubSport Fremont

Soccer Camp:
July 24 - August 3 (Mon to Thurs)
3:30pm to 4:30pm
Location: ClubSport Fremont

Swimming (1:1 Sessions)
Offered from June to August
(Four 45-minute classes per session)
Location: ClubSport Fremont

Drama Camp: Monsters, Inc.
July 7 - July 9 (Fri to Sun)
Location: FCSN Fremont Dream Center
First 40 sign-ups with special needs
will be guaranteed a spot.

Music Camp (for singing, dancing, and
Instrumental)
Open to all school-aged children (5-22
years old)
June 30 - July 2 (Fri to Sun)
Location: FCSN Fremont Dream Center

South Bay Programs

Harvest Academy Summer School
July 3 – July 28 (Mon to Fri)
9:30am to 2:30pm
Location: FCSN South Bay Center

Harvest Academy Regular Session
Jun 12 – July 28 (Mon to Fri)
3:30pm to 6:30pm
Location: FCSN South Bay Center
www.harvestacademy.org



Summer Event and Activity Schedule

- 1) June 3rd - Annual Meeting/ Family Day, 4:30-8:30pm, at Chinese Cultural Center: 100 S. Milpitas - Free for FCSN members and special guests invited by the board of directors.
- 2) June 10 - 11, Family Fun Picnic Day or Camping at Yin's Ranch, for FCSN members, staff, and volunteers only, registration needed: \$25 per family of 4 and \$10 per additional person.
- 3) June 13, Disability Capitol Action Day, Advocacy in Action at State Capitol Building, Sacramento, FCSN 50 passenger bus leaves FCSN Fremont Center (2300 Peralta Blvd, Fremont 94536) at 8am and be back at 4pm. Please RSVP and join as One Voice for our voiceless special needs population and advocate for funding for the under-funded services.
- 4) July 2 - FCSN Music Camp Concert - Free to the public, 3pm at FCSN Fremont Dream Center: 2300 Peralta Blvd, Fremont 94536
- 5) July 4 - Independence Day Parade - FCSN Team, Free fun and ice cream, 9:30 am - 11:00am, Fremont. Route: Fremont Main Library to Fremont City Hall.
- 6) July 9 - Taiwanese Chinese American Athletic Tournament (TCAAT), special needs fun games and prizes, free fun and lunch for FCSN members only, 9:30am-1pm, Cupertino High School: 10100 Finch, Cupertino, 95014.
- 7) July 9 - FCSN Drama Camp presents MONSTER INC. - Free to the public. 7-8pm, New Hope Church, 2190 Peralta Blvd, Fremont 94536 (next to FCSN Fremont Dream Center)
- 8) August 12, FCSN Special Olympics Tournament at Club Sports, 1-3:30pm, 46650 Landing Pkwy, Fremont, CA 94538
- 9) August 26, South Bay Family Gathering starts, 4:30-8:00pm, South Bay Center: 1029 S. Bascom, San Jose 95128.

Contact Kelly at kellyko@fcsn1996.org for questions about events or camp



FCSN Dream Builders

June 2017



Friends of Children with Special Needs

2300 Peralta Blvd. Fremont, CA
94536

T: 510-739-6900

F: 510-739-6999

E: administration@fcsn1996.org

www.fcsn1996.org

Newsletter Crew:

Editors: Wei-Jen Hsia 夏維真
Johnna M. Laird
Roger Leung 梁汝坤
Cherene Wong 何佳玲

Reporters: Johnna M. Laird
Kenneth Song
Vivian Chiang

Art Editor: Valerie Lu

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Feature Story

TWO Years in the Making, Decades in Families' Hearts

South Bay Center Celebrates Grand Opening

by **Kenneth Song**

FCSN Dream Builders Reporter

Widely recognized for its successful community-based approach to support families with special needs individuals, FCSN achieved a significant milestone with the grand opening of its South Bay Dream Center. First envisioned over ten years ago, the San Jose center has been a demanding group project, long in the works. On April 26th, hundreds of esteemed guests including government officials, school board members, community partners, and sponsors from all over the Bay Area joined FCSN families, volunteers, and staff to commemorate this extraordinary occasion. Celebrating the organization's success in providing a stable growing environment for special needs individuals of all ages, the grand opening offered the greater community a clear message of hope for the future.

After weeks of planning and hard work, parents, volunteers, and staff arrived bright and early in the morning to help prepare a wide assortment of sandwiches, cookies, and other refreshments in the kitchen. Various displays of student-made art and products ranging from soaps and chocolates to paper-woven baskets and glazed pottery were set up throughout the building. In addition, Chi-Ling Wu, a client and talented musician, performed beautifully on the piano in the background—making the experience of just strolling through the facilities a wonderfully varied showcase of the incredible talents

being cultivated at FCSN.

When the guests arrived, they were invited to explore the facility on one of many guided tours, all led by excited clients and parents eager to show off their new home. From the multi-purpose auditorium where the guests initially entered to the various classrooms decorated with works from students, the computer room, conference rooms where family support seminars were held, and a big training room with utility for ceramic and soap making classes, it was evident just how much effort and care had gone into the design and construction of this 8,000 square foot building.

As everyone gathered outside for the ribbon cutting ceremony, the percussion band started off with a lively performance which put everyone in a festive mood. Nearly 30 VIP guests lined up behind the thick, red ribbon decorated with many flowery bows. Upon Chairman Dr. Chenming Hu's command, the grand opening red ribbon was cut amidst bombastic applause, and guests were ushered inside for the opening ceremony.

To start off the ceremony, Chairman Hu acknowledged all the various individuals, families,

and organizations that have made FCSN's success possible. A brief presentation with photos of the center during various stages of renovation took the audience through the center's transformation over the last two years. Awards were presented to key individuals from the project design and construction teams, accompanied by numerous rounds of applause from the audience.

The many individuals who spoke all shared a common feeling of deep pride for being able to support a community which has accomplished so much in the past twenty-one years. During his speech, President Yee-Yeen Wang emphasized how much FCSN has grown as a service platform for aiding parents in identifying the gaps in their children's learning abilities, and how FCSN has developed a solid foundation for setting up programs to address those issues. As the organization has always relied on the ideas and ingenuity of the parents who truly know their children best, FCSN will continue to strive to discover new and innovative paths in special needs education.

Chairman Hu concluded the ceremony by saying, "Our vision is to build a community for children and adults with special needs, and you are an important part of the community, and we look forward to continue the dream with you." This grand opening celebration was a huge success and great accomplishment of all members and friends of FCSN! ◇◇◇◇





Friends Coffee & Tea Cafe, located at the front entrance of the center, was without a doubt one of the most anticipated attractions on the grand opening day. The cafe drew in countless guests with its warm, cheerful interior and the enticing aroma of its coffee, sourced from SoDoI Coffee, a local Berkeley-based roasting company which specializes in organic coffees from all over the world. Guests who walked in were struck with a dazzling assortment of cookies, sandwiches, and fresh fruits on the tables and counters. While enjoying these delicious treats, guests also received previews of the various products displayed along the walls of the cafe, which included soaps and lotions hand-made by the talented students, tea cups, coffee mugs, and colorful FCSN-themed water bottles.

While it may only resemble a simple cafe from the outside, Friends Coffee & Tea Cafe holds a great deal of significance for FCSN. Not only does it provide opportunities for clients to gain valuable experiences serving the public and managing a local business, it also provides a sense of accomplishment for students advertising their own work.

Since it is open to the public and in close proximity to the library, community college, and town center, Friends Coffee & Tea Cafe should live up to its vision of providing a perfect environment for the community to meet and forge lifelong relationships with our families.



Parents working with their children and instructors in the Junior Lego Robotics class

A Village of Support

FCSN President Yee-Yeen Wang described the Fremont and South Bay community centers as “FCSN villages” during the grand opening ceremony, highlighting the role these centers play in building support-based services for special needs children and their families throughout their lives.

The South Bay Center hosts a full spectrum of programs for children, teenagers, and adults of all ages. For children between five and ten years old, group robotics, art, and dance classes on Sunday afternoons offer stimulating environments for parents to interact and play with their children. Arts and crafts classes on Saturday afternoons include activities such as ceramics, painting, and other hands-on skills such as stitching and beading.

The Life Empowerment Program (LEP) and Work Empowerment Program (WEP) are designed for teenage students. During each LEP class held on Tuesday afternoons, students develop their culinary skills in the center’s fully equipped kitchen. Complementarily, WEP classes focus on preparing students for employment by teaching them basic job skills such as office organization, working with computers basic finance, and time management.

Finally, Harvest Academy and the Adult Day Program are geared toward adult clients. Harvest Academy provides customized training curriculums in three areas: employment and job skills, tutoring, and community enrichment. In March, the Adult Day Program transitioned to a fully integrated community training program, W.I.L.L., for which more information is available in the article by Program Manager Vivian Chung.

With the opening of the South Bay Dream Center, our families look forward to utilizing this exciting platform and initiating additional support programs and services to best serve our special needs community.

W.I.L.L.? Will What?

by **Vivian Chung**

W.I.L.L. Program Manager

W.I.L.L.? How will FCSN and our clients embrace W.I.L.L.?

In March 2017, FCSN South Bay Adult Day Program transitioned to a fully, community-integrated training program: W.I.L.L. (Work, Integrate, Learn, and Live.) It was not an easy task with only a month to prepare, organize, plan, and train staff. On top of that, we had only moved to the new South Bay center on February 24, 2017. Fortunately, all our staffs were open-minded about the program change; they helped to pack and unpack for the move, and they have diligently learned the new program design and implemented it into their daily work. They gave their best in drafting plans to tailor each client's preferences, interests, capabilities, skills and needs. Kudos to our wonderful South Bay ADP staff and management team!

March 1, 2017, was the most anticipated date--the W.I.L.L. Adult Training Program's start at FCSN's brand-new South Bay Center.

A paradigm shift from traditional service planning that generally places the program into the role of authority, the W.I.L.L. Adult Training Program shifts the authority role to the clients. This focus enhances quality of life and puts the "client" into the expert role over his or her life. It allows for increasing self-determination because it emphasizes making choices in areas such as the kind of activities clients want to do and places they want to go for recreation and leisure. The W.I.L.L. Adult Training Program also supports clients' choices about career goals.

The W.I.L.L. Adult Training Program gives staff an opportunity to really know the client as a unique person beyond a diagnosis. It provides a way for staff to move out of our typical thinking that clients' opportunities are limited. W.I.L.L. focuses on the client's abilities versus disabilities; thus, it promotes inclusion with unlimited opportunities and choices. The client is involved in decision-making assisted by staffs and the client's circle of support. W.I.L.L. individualizes planning of what the client wants and needs while at the same time maintaining a 1:4 staff-client ratio. A benefit of W.I.L.L. is discovering clients' capacities, learning what they are good at, and training for abilities that can empower clients. Giving them the power over themselves enables clients to unleash hidden potentials and talents that were once untapped, due to lack of opportunities.

So far, clients have adjusted well, after going through the new W.I.L.L. Adult Training Program for little more than a month. They enjoy the opportunities to spend more times in community settings and being consulted; their opinions are sought and heard. They also love trying new and different activities like gardening, shopping for office and kitchen supplies, playing basketball and physical education in nearby community centers, visiting more places that enrich their knowledge and skills, and being among people without disabilities. The support staffs also have more time and authority to support their clients. Clients' parents have also provided positive feedback about how happy their adult children are returning home from the W.I.L.L. Program and how eager they are getting up next morning to explore life with FCSN staff and their peers.

Daily review and weekly planning between clients and staff serve as effective tools and components in implementing the W.I.L.L. program. Communication bridges the gap and breaks barriers in enhancing the quality of life of our clients. We, as staff members, are committed to providing the support our clients need so they thrive in their current environment. We are excited to be part of their journey as they discover new abilities and interests and develop future plans.

Supported Employment Program

Are you ready for innovation?

by **Claire Go Brady**
Program Manager

This year, 2017, will become a remarkable year for FCSN, not only because of the opening of the new South Bay Center but also for an innovative program that FCSN is launching to open more doors and broaden opportunities for our loved ones with special needs.

A program underway that will change the lives of special needs individuals is a Supported Employment Program (SEP). Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB) vendorized FCSN's SEP in March, 2017. Currently, the program is awaiting certification by the California State Department of Rehabilitation. FCSN will also pursue vendorization through the San Andreas Regional Center (SARC).

FCSN's Supported Employment Program is designed to assist adult clients in finding desirable, paid jobs in the community through sufficient support, training, and individualized coaching. When a client is referred and accepted into the Supported Employment Program, the FCSN SEP Coordinator will conduct an assessment and develop person-centered planning with the client to identify career goals, assess job skills, and determine training and support needed. Clients will then be scheduled to attend Job Clubs based on their person-centered planning to enhance their skills for employment. Job development begins after the Department of Rehabilitation's authorization. FCSN Job Developers will explore competitive employment as indicated in a client's person-

centered planning. Once a job-matched is obtained for the client, FCSN job coaches will provide 100% intensive training at the beginning so the client can learn essential and appropriate job requirements and duties. The job coaching services are expected to fade to 20%-25% of the total time the client works after three-to-six months of placement.

Through person-centered planning, career goals, meaningful job matches, job coaching, full inclusion in the workforce, and creative strategies that broaden employment opportunities, it will be possible for our special needs adults to get hired and stay employed in a career or job that is desired.

The purpose of FCSN's SEP is to assist clients who demonstrate interests, motivation, and skills for paid employment. Our FCSN families and funding agencies will work collaboratively to ensure quality job development and job coaching with the goal of providing supports within competitive work environments that empower SEP participants to obtain and maintain employment.

We are in the final stages of the program set-up with the Department of Rehabilitation, so it won't be long until we begin to provide services. We are excited to start this new chapter with the support of our families and friends; we look forward to FCSN SEP being a big success!



San Jose Mercury News Honors Anna Wang

by **Johnna M. Laird**
FCSN Dream Builders Reporter

The *San Jose Mercury News* honored FCSN's Anna Wang, Vice President of Enrichment Programs and Community Relations who works full-time as a volunteer. Anna was honored in March during Women's History Month. The newspaper's month-long series focused on inspiring women who may not make headlines but who make significant contributions. Published March 12, the article brought attention to Friends of Children with Special Needs, both in Fremont and in the South Bay. For the article, Anna recounted her experience, leaving her job as an engineer to work full-time and with nine other families launch FCSN. Written by Joani Woelfel, the article quoted Anna as saying that she "is motivated by 'the smiles on the faces' of the special needs kids and adults the community foundation supports. 'They keep me grounded. I feel like they are angels who keep us honest and remind us what's most important in life.'"

In April, Anna received another honor. She was notified of her nomination for a 2017 International Naturally Autistic People's Award, to be presented at the 8th Annual ANCA (Autistic Network for Community Achievement) World Autism Festival and Trade Show in September in Vancouver, Canada, for her work with Friends of Children with Special Needs.





Third Annual FCSN Talent Showcase

Brings a Variety of Talent to the Stage

by **Johnna M. Laird**

FCSN Dream Builders Reporter & Parent

Special Needs Talent Showcase kicked off Silicon Valley's best variety show with performances that ranged from vocals and instrumentals to original rap and Indian cultural dancing.

Nearly 600 people packed the theater at the Santa Clara Convention Center on March 18 for the third annual talent showcase sponsored by Friends of Children with Special Needs.

Emcee Matt Keller, an ABC Channel 7 News Reporter and Anchor, returned for his third year, introducing each performer and engaging them onstage with impromptu conversation before the live audience.



Emcee Matt Keller & his daughters

This year Keller brought with him two adorable show stealers, his young daughters, ages 4 and 3, dressed identically. Chris Showerman, the Hollywood actor who starred in *George of the Jungle 2* and performed at the 2016 FCSN Gala, was in the audience and joined finalist Lynn Angela Piscoon on stage when she pulled him from the audience as her dancing partner in "Bottle Pop." It was a moment that added to an evening full of surprises.

Event organizer Anna Wang recruited an impressive panel of judges to choose three winners. The judging roster included former California State Department of Developmental Services Director Santi Rogers; California's 25th Assembly District Representative Kansen Chu; Walt Disney animator Natasha Kopp; Conductor and founding member of Opera San Jose Dr. David Rohrbaugh; California Line Dance Association founder Kico Lin; and KGO-TV's Vice President of Community Affairs Mimi Kwan.

The evening featured 11 finalists, competing for cash prizes of \$500 each along with professional performance videos that winners can use for promotion. Claiming the top three prizes were: Govinder Rangan, who performed on a traditional Indian drum; Max Chan who played "Thunder in the Dry Season" on piano, and Music Camp Band with its lively rendition of "Hawaii Five-O."

Govinder, a 15-year-old, has studied South Indian drums, the mridangam, for three years. Max, a 16-year old, had already won the 2017 U.S. Open in the Treasure of Contemporary Composers Senior category, and seven performers came together for a six-hour summer camp in 2016 and found musical chemistry.

For the performers, the evening far exceeds a night to select winners. It is a night, according to Anna Wang, that creates a "platform to show talents to the world" and "encourage people with special needs to embrace who they are and hold fast to their dreams and make them come true."



Chris Showerman joined Lynn Angela Pisco performing "Bottle Pop."

Performers exuded enthusiasm just being on stage. They enjoyed the limelight so much some had to be coaxed off stage. The audience responded throughout the evening with rousing applause as special needs performers stood in the limelight.

Among the 11 finalists were Jasmine Dana, who performed "Man Mohinini Malheri," an Indian cultural dance; Spencer White aka Mastiff, a lyricist who performed an original rap, "Fly Away;" Tony Nakamoto performed "Bumble Boogie" on marimba; Ria Sachdev with "Breakup Song, and Rick Silva with "Fly Me to the Moon, both performed vocals while Julian Huang played "Chopin Waltz" for the piano. Greg Hebert ended the evening with his guitar and vocal, "God Bless America." Greg expressed gratitude for the evening and the community that FCSN has created: "Somewhere in time or somewhere down the line, I'll still have a family at FCSN because I consider the clients of FCSN my

brothers and sisters."

Winners from 2016 returned to entertain the audience as well: Lawrence Wang with his instrumental and vocal "Careless Whisper," Alice Jen with her piano solo "A Campanella," and Michal Valcour's inspiring "You Raise Me Up" vocal.

The evening was packed with entertainment since 10 performers or groups who earned honorable mentions grabbed moments in the limelight. Dream Seekers kicked off the evening with "Can't Stop the Feeling." Roderick Gomez had the audience gyrating in their seats as he performed hip hop to "Uptown Funk," and Kimberly Rains tapped to "One" from *A Chorus Line*. Carleen Bohlin charmed the audience with "My Own Little Corner" from *Cinderella*, Michael Erhardt inspired with his vocal of "Count on Me," and Luis Castilla energized with "Rebel Yell." Karen Lee and Baadal Dhingra played piano, "Fur Elise" and "Nocturne in F Minor," respectively. Yeah Jin Choi surprised with a Korean small drum dance.

Matt Keller deems the talent showcase his "favorite of the year."

"It was so great having several new acts from a rapper to instruments I had never heard or seen before. I was blown away by the performances," he said, adding: "It's always fun to see all my friends at FCSN and have so much fun interacting with them on stage."

"It's hard to name one favorite moment because all the performances are so unique," he says. "Where else can you see dancing, singing, rapping, bands, and even a marimba?"

As members of the audience filed out into the night air after an uplifting evening, one woman, smiling broadly and obviously inspired, leaned in to her husband and said, "I can't wait until next year!"

"That's right," adds Matt. "Can't wait to see everyone again next year!"



The talent show was a sold-out performance with an impressive panel of judges

Backstage at the 2017 Special Needs Talent Showcase

by **Vivian Chiang**

FCSN Newsletter Reporter

Five girls of a wide age range in bright yellow shirts sat in a row in front of the mirrors, munching on chicken wings and French fries. There was a light aroma of makeup and hair spray, and looking around, one could easily point out the row of costumes and shoes, completing the description of a dressing room.



Dream Seekers girls

Though no words were spoken, there was a natural sense of camaraderie among the girl members of Dream Seekers. In just an hour, these talented girls would stand on stage together, singing and dancing the song they've been rehearsing for hours on end.

In the boys' dressing room next door, the scene is almost identical, with the performers getting ready for the spectacular show to come. Julian Huang and Lawrence Wang ate in their suits and costumes, showing no signs of nervousness.

While many of the performers ate, Frank Prenot stood in a corner of the room, tapping his foot and air drums to the beat of a Beatles' song he was blasting on his phone. Prenot has been playing the drums for a very long time.

"I practically had [been playing] my whole life," Prenot said.

Starting from a guitar in his middle school friend's house, Prenot had a knack for music and rhythm at an early age. His father's friends urged Prenot's dad to buy a drum set for Prenot, which he initially didn't. But later on, Prenot became the drum player at his church.

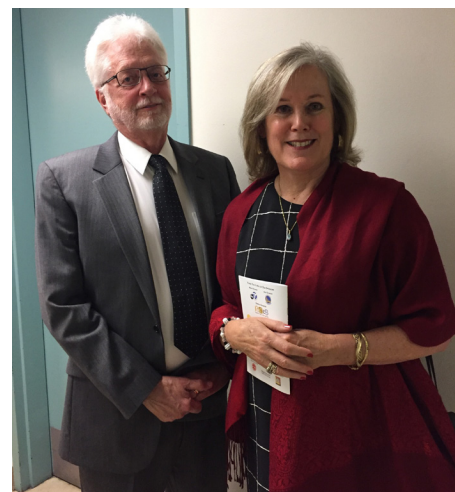
"[The church choir director] let me audition," Prenot said. "I impressed everyone pretty well, and I was invited back for another audition, but this time with the entire choir... That was when I got my first drum set."

As the performers got ready, the judges in a nearby room were just getting acquainted with each other. They sat around a dining table, some accompanied by spouses and children, chatting about miscellaneous things while dinner was served. For many, like Emcee Matt Keller and David Rohrbaugh, this was not the first Special Needs Talent Show in which they have been involved. Rohrbaugh's wife, Jennifer Sullivan, has worked with special needs children for many years as the Executive Directive for the Morgan Center for autistic children. Her work and dedication inspired both her husband and daughter to work and help alongside her.



Frank Prenot air drums to the beat of a Beatles' Song

"I came to these events because my wife is a special education teacher," Rohrbaugh said. "I come along for these – a family night out kind of thing. I think it's a great thing; my wife did this forever and ever, and we have a daughter who is a special education teacher in Sacramento."



David Rohrbaugh and his wife Jennifer Sullivan

Keller, a South Bay reporter for ABC News, is a long-time friend of Anna Wang, the founder of the talent show. He has been the Emcee for three years. Keller brought his wife and two young daughters with him this year, showing them this close-knit and warm community filled with skilled and talented children.

"It's so wonderful what FCSN does and just the opportunities that they give them," Keller said. "The chance to come out and perform on a stage and compete with so many musicians, dancers, artists here – it really is such a cool thing, and I just love it."

The doors to the dressing room burst open as the performers filed out in lines. The judges also finished their last bites of dinner and prepared to perform the hardest task of the night – decide who the three winners of the 2017 talent showcase will be. But no matter the outcome, everyone – the performers, judges and audience members – just wanted to spend this night listening and watching passionate artists of all ages sing and dance to their hearts' content.



The President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) Program at FCSN

by **Roger Leung**
PVSA Program Coordinator

Volunteerism is one of the cornerstones of shaping our community to be a better place to live. The call for volunteering can be best advocated in President Obama's proclamation of the 2016 National Volunteer Week.

"People of all ages can volunteer, and anyone can, through the smallest of acts, do their part to improve the lives of others. Volunteers help drive our country's progress, and day in and day out, they make extraordinary sacrifices to expand promise and possibility."

FCSN, being a Certifying Organization of PVSA since 2014, is pleased to announce the eight recipients of our 2016 PVSA award. They have all met the required volunteer hours to be qualified for this prestigious award, receiving the honor of presidential gratitude and national recognition. The eight 2016 recipients along with types of award received are listed below:

- **Manny (Man Li) Chang** (Certified Interior Designer) - Gold Award in Adults Group
- **Andrew Chiang** (BASIS Independent Silicon Valley) – Bronze Award in Teens Group
- **Vivian Chiang** (Monta Vista High School) – Bronze Award in Young Adults Group
- **Jenny Chin** (Monta Vista High School) – Gold Award in Teens Group
- **Brandon Fu** (Homestead High School) – Bronze Award in Young Adults Group
- **Daisy Yuan Ni** (Lynbrook High School) - Bronze Award in Young Adults Group
- **Nithya S. Tippireddy** (Mission San Jose High School) - Bronze Award in Young Adults Group
- **Jason Yang** (Lynbrook High School) - Bronze Award in Young Adults Group

Charged with designing the floor plan of our new FCSN South Bay Center, Manny has donated hundreds of hours to develop a design that is suitable for use by our special needs; he then followed the implementation from initial ideas to completion. Our volunteers often serve as a valuable teaching assistant to provide one-on-one care so that our special needs loved ones can enjoy and learn in classes of drama, drawing, yoga, games, computer, art, and crafts. Some of them offer their talents in music and computer knowledge to be a tutor, paying personalized attention to students in their exercises such as music note-reading, keyboard finger placement, and computer literacy, etc. Youth volunteers are also encouraged to take on management responsibility, an opportunity to gain organizational experience through activity scheduling and recital coordination duties.

Volunteers have the opportunity to interact with different kinds of people, to expand their horizon beyond their own surroundings, and to grow spiritually with faith of self-fulfillment and self-esteem. This is a rewarding experience that may benefit the giver of the volunteer work even more than our special needs loved ones.

Besides special recognition given to our PVSA recipients, we would also like to extend our thankfulness to all volunteers who have helped the running of FCSN - no contribution of time is too small. Be inspired and join FCSN as a volunteer to make a difference. Please contact us through our website www.fcsn1996.org.

"I can no other answer make, but thanks, and thanks." – William Shakespeare

Volunteers' Voices

My Volunteer Experience in FCSN Highlights of High School

by **Newman Hu**

Youth Volunteer

Crash, Clank, Yeee! A dozen or so children run around in a small church excited as they switch classes, going from singing to Legos to art. The excitement and enthusiasm in the atmosphere is tangible. Only my first time coming to FCSN to volunteer, I knew this was a community I wanted to be apart of. In the four years that followed, I found myself helping out at summer camp, Saturday gatherings, Taiwanese athletic tournaments, and QuickBooks. It was nearly therapeutic, my escape from the stress of classes and exams.

I love the infectious smiles that greet me every time I come to the see the students. Listening to Michael's first story time relating *Finding Nemo* was quite interesting and evenings with him only got better. Talking through *UP* and *Finding Dory*, he gave monologues about the movie that were perhaps more entertaining than the movie itself.

The volunteers I met are also some of the friendliest people around. The relationships I made at summer camps and through other programs have stayed with me. These volunteers older than I even gave me some glimpses into college; they are people I can always contact and go back to. Teaching and playing with the students are simply more fun when I am doing it with friends, the friends I have made at FCSN.

I hope I have taught the students something during my time here because they have certainly taught me. When the children dance and sing, they hold nothing back and simply enjoy the moment with the volunteers and classmates. Perhaps I also needed to enjoy being myself. Nevertheless, my experience here is one of my highlights of high school. FCSN was my opportunity to pull back into the present, learning about patience, resilience, and sincerity.



My Love for Teaching: From Three Students to 30

South Bay Family Gathering Art Classes

by **Austin Cai**

South Bay Youth Volunteer

When I first started teaching group art classes at FCSN last year, I was more than a little nervous. In my previous two years working as a one-on-one instructor, I had found my experience fulfilling precisely because I could individually spend time with my students, and therefore grow close to each. From Melissa's tendency to give quirky compliments, to Ansley's reliable cry of "I'm finished" at the end of each lesson, getting to know each student as a person endeared them to me. Moving to group classes, I feared, would change all this. In a room of 30 students, rather than one, I was afraid I couldn't connect with students, removing the element I loved most about teaching children with special needs.

Complicating matters was my lack of experience running a group class. Sure, I had taught crafts before, but never to more than three students at once. I spent days compiling a catalog of projects to teach, and over a few weeks made each project myself—testing to make sure these projects weren't too hard or easy. It wasn't until the day before my first lesson that I finally finished my preparations, running around furiously gathering enough pencils, glue sticks, scissors, and construction paper.

When I began teaching, I soon discovered that most of my trepidations were unfounded. Because of the obsessive planning I'd done, my lessons flowed as smoothly as in my one-on-one classes. My fears that my chosen project—a construction-paper caterpillar—would be too hard turned out to be false, and instead I was delighted to see my students eagerly playing with their craft as soon as they finished.

Perhaps more important to me, I found that switching to group lessons did not reduce the gratification I found



in teaching. Sure, I wasn't as able to know each of my students individually, but this loss was replaced by an opportunity to know my students as a community. Melissa's quirky compliments were replaced by Allen talking to his neighbors about *Star Wars*, and Ansley's "I'm finished" were succeeded by Amy and Emily helping each other throughout the lesson. I was proud to know that I wasn't just teaching art but also facilitating friendships. That thought made my work just as fulfilling as before.

As I gained more experience, I started modifying my lessons to better fit my students' needs. I began to choose projects with adjustable difficulty, ones that allowed each student to apply artistic creativity. For instance, teaching how to make a simple dreamcatcher meant all students could finish the project, but those who wanted could further decorate their piece with feathers and beads. Moreover, as I learned what my students liked, I also began choosing projects that I knew they would. Movement, for instance a ladybug that can flap its wings, is always popular, as are projects like maracas because of their ability to make sound. As the weeks went by, I began restoring the individualized connections that I had so loved before.

For all that has changed with my move to group lessons, my love for teaching at FCSN has remained constant, or even increased. After each class, I know that I have helped others, that I have nurtured friendships between my students, and that I have gotten to know my students as people. These takeaways have driven my service since I began years ago, and these takeaways power my commitment to the special needs community well into the future.



NIGHT *to Shine*

SPONSORED BY THE **TIM TEBOW** FOUNDATION™

by **Laurie Chu**
SLS Client

The Prom was a total phenomenon; I think all my friends loved it. My staff, Gizella, helped me get ready; she helped me with my make-up and hairstyle at my apartment with my roommates and two of my friends.

The PROM had all kinds of good food. I got to ride in the limousine upon arrival and walk the red carpet where everyone clapped. I got paired up with a volunteer, and I got my picture taken professionally by the staff at the event. My favorite part of the Prom was dancing and singing Karaoke. It was very fun. It was a real blast when I joined the Prom of 2017 "Night to Shine" with my peers. I loved it lots!



by **Raymond Hu**
SLS Client

The Tim Tebow Foundation put on a "Night to Shine" PROM celebration on February 20 to coincide with Valentine's Day. The event was held in Pleasanton, California, and it had many volunteers from the local churches.

Transportation to Pleasanton was provided by FCSN, but once there we were able to ride a limousine to the entrance of the event, provided by the Tim Tebow Foundation. All the volunteers were very nice to my peers and me; there were 11 of us total. Cindy and I had a very good time, even though we were assigned a volunteer partner, and we did not get to spend the whole time together. We enjoyed the food and entertainment, Thanks to the Tim Tebow Foundation for organizing this event.

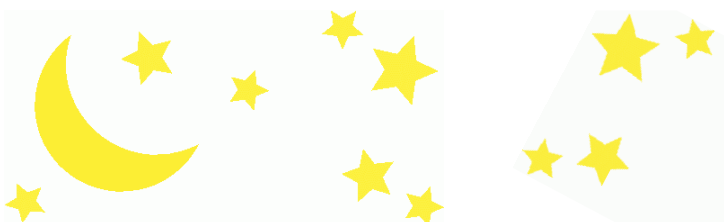


My Job at Walmart

Save money. Live better.

by **Hassan Ismail**
SLS Client

I work at Wal-Mart on Osgood Road two days per week. I really like my job and my new job Coach, Jennifer; she is also my CIDP teacher. I start work at 9:00am, and I am off at 1:00pm. My job is to fold clothing like T-shirts and pants, and sort out boys clothes. Jennifer's job is making sure I fold the shirts and that they are looking nice. It is a hard job to fold everything neatly but that is why I get money for the work I do. I also like Wal-Mart because I go with some people from my SLS group like Raymond and Brian C; Brian L also works with us. I get employee discount because I work there, and I can buy anything from the store at a discount! Sounds good to me. What makes my job hard is when kids are making too much of a mess in the clothing area. It is harder, but I still have to do it. What makes my job easier is my friends and my job coach. I also have other friends that work at Wal-Mart. My roommate, Andrew, works there, too, but he has an after-school schedule. I am happy for my roommate and me to be working at Wal-Mart.



Our Day Trip to Angel Island with FCSN

by **Richard Chiu**
FCSN Parent

On March 19, 2017, the last day of winter, my son Jeffrey and I hop on a chartered bus along with other Fremont FCSN families at the Marina Market on Warm Springs Boulevard. Jeffrey saw familiar faces as we boarded and was greeted cheerfully by Cosmo, Uncle Charles, and Auntie Jessica. We were then bound for Cupertino to pick up the South Bay families. As we began our trip to Angel Island on a cold and overcast morning, we were wondering if we would see rain that day.

When we arrived at the Marina Market in Cupertino, Roxana Chiu, the organizer of our field trip, came into the bus with boxes of hot pastries and goodies to warm our bodies and satisfy our tummies. While we traveled to San Francisco, Jeffrey gazed out the bus window and enjoyed a chocolate-filled bun and a mini-pizza.

Upon our arrival at Pier 39, the sky was partly cloudy and we began exploring the area while waiting for our ferry to arrive. We came across street musicians, lazy sea lions on the piers barking at us, and lots of interesting people from all walks of life. We, with our special needs children, blended right in.

When we boarded the ferry, Jeffrey wanted to be on the very top level to feel the breeze and see the sights unhindered. We huddled close to stay warm, and we saw famous landmarks like the Golden Gate Bridge from a

distance, Sausalito, and Alcatraz Island, a notorious former prison, up close. What beautiful scenery from the middle of the Bay. I sometimes wonder what goes on in his mind as we see and ponder on all these new sights. One thing I do know is that he records his experiences in his mind, and I hope these experiences will also enrich his life to some degree.

After we arrived on Angel Island, Roxana somehow managed to arrange a free tram tour of the island for our group. Unfortunately, we were only able to tour half of the island due to some roadways washed out from recent storms, but we did find a scenic spot to stop, have lunch, and take pictures with the San Francisco skyline and the Golden Gate Bridge in the backdrop. Some families hiked, exploring the island on their own. Later on, we found out that Angel Island was a detention center for immigrants coming from Asia, as its counterpart, Ellis Island, was for immigrants coming from Europe. A couple of hours later, we headed back to Pier 39.



Our next destination was the Ferry Building Marketplace for some good eats. It was about one mile from Pier 39, and by the time we got there we had worked up an appetite for snacks. Some bought hot chocolate and coffee from Blue Bottle and artisan bread from Acme Bread. That was a nice way to cap off our daylong trip under fair weather.

I've been participating in Roxana's field trips for more than three years now and enjoy them very much. It's usually an adventure for Jeffrey and me as we go to places near home but yet too far for us to make an effort to go on our own. I truly appreciate Roxana for organizing these trips for the FCSN families. It's an opportunity for a little adventure, a little exercise, to get some good eats, for our kids to socialize, to find teachable moments, and to get to know other FCSN members better. There are so many benefits from these trips that I try to make it to every one of them, and I hope you will too.



Gift of Life

by **Nicole Tintoc**

FCSN Parent

Everyday we prayed for Chris' health to improve when his first transplanted kidney began to fail after 17 years in November 2015. When the call from UCSF came in October 2016 telling us Chris was a match with an anonymous donor in a kidney pair exchange program, I couldn't believe it! Only when Chris was in surgery and the nurse updated me from the OR that the doctor was proceeding with the new transplant did I realize this was really happening.

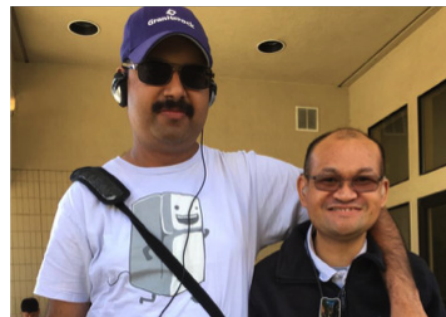
The transplant surgery and recovery went very well, and Chris and his new kidney continue to do well together. We thank God for sending us this miracle, and we feel Chris finally has his life back.

Despite all the rough patches, we learned a lot along the way.

Initially, we thought the transplant process would be a breeze, but we were wrong. The three family and friends who had volunteered to donate were ruled out one by one – the last one in the weeks leading up to the planned transplant. Of course, we were extremely disappointed and heartbroken. We often found ourselves questioning, "Why us?" God had a greater plan for us, but at the time we had no idea.

It was a very difficult process, but with the support and prayers and kind words of family and friends we made it through. Upon speaking to a social worker at the dialysis center – which we had been attending for quite some time – we learned, by pure coincidence, that Chris could be enrolled in up to three different kidney transplant registries at different transplant centers. Soon after, we received a call from UCSF. When all the doors seemed closed to us, God sent us an anonymous donor to save Chris.

We are very lucky and fortunate. Chris was a match out of 120,000 people on the waiting list. Currently, only about 31,000 people will be transplanted every year. Twenty-two people die every day while waiting, and the average wait time for a kidney is 3 to 8 years. The timing could not have been more appropriate. Chris was on dialysis three times a week. He would have had to undergo several surgeries and procedures had we not had the operation before the end of October.



Chris with his roommate Hassan



Chris is happy together again with brother Nick and sister Jenni

We are thankful to all the donors and families for their love, kindness, and generosity. In doing so, they have given us the gift of life – not just for Chris but for our family as well. They have allowed us to continue to live, love, and laugh again, and their generousities will stay with us forever.

We thank God for giving Chris the courage to get through this difficult time and to be brave and positive. Chris has soldiered on day-by-day and followed the doctors' instructions without a single complaint. On the day after his transplant, Chris told me that he is going back to FCSN; he is going to ride his Para Transit Bus and will live at the SLS Apartment again. I am so happy that Chris is feeling better, and I am glad to finally see the joy on his face upon eating long-awaited bites of chocolate ice cream. But, most importantly, I am grateful that Chris has his roommates, his friends, and his FCSN family and staff to look forward to spending his time with, and we hope it is going to be as soon as we speak.

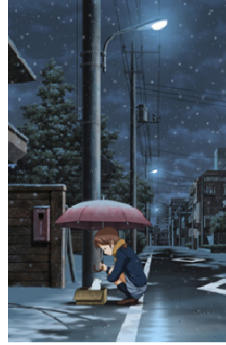
雪夜的書頁裡

by **Lucia Gan**

FCSN Parent

數年前，翻閱一幀插畫，非常喜歡。空寂的街頭，燈光朦朧，一個女孩走過來，給路邊一隻雪白貓咪撐著傘，身後大雪飄飛。為等着我的到來，你化成這白色的貓。你是墜入人間的精靈，在《雪夜》的書頁裡。

我來自童話世界，
在那遙遠的天邊。
輕歌曼舞千年，
戀戀這紅塵。
何時能飄落你的窗前？

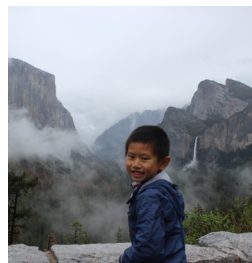


我不知何處尋你，
只好抖落一身雪裙，
幻成孤獨的精靈，
守著滿街寂靜，
等待你的靠近。

人生一帆風順。離開美麗的清華園，出國念書，博士畢業，留校任教。你在金秋的校園出生，和多年前你的媽媽和媽媽的媽媽一樣，所謂書香之家。秋，是我最愛的季節。每夜倚石階，看弦月如詩，秋穹似水。常感天下之美，盡在此一泓秋水，是以子夜出生的你，命名子泓。你一歲半時，我們海歸教書，多麼幸福殷實的三口之家。

從發現與同齡孩子發育不同，到最後放棄教授身份回到美國，我們開始漫長的征途與漂泊。以後發生的故事，每家雖有不同，卻也大抵相似。來到灣區後的上千個日子，原來是要經歷多少悲傷與風雨！有時候，甚至莫名自責，以前為什麼要寫那雪夜裡的精靈，寫那白色而孤獨的身影，這可是傳說中的一語成讖？疲於奔走在路上，我把我的哭泣，如席慕容，也夾在書頁裡。仿洛夫之《讀詩十二法》，曾做了幾句《如果》給你：

如果我用漁火寫詩，
請讀我以寒山寺千年的晚鐘。
如果我用流水寫詩，
請讀我以沁芳閣橋邊飄逝的落紅。
如果我用月色寫詩，
請讀我以長安城擣衣聲聲如夢。
如果我用雪夜寫詩，
請讀我以梅花如雨如你遠去的從容。



在你狀態的起起伏伏裡，我們膽戰心驚等待你的成長，等待著你的眼神能多些停留。心裡的愛原來這般沉重，有時甚至只想著從容遠去，想著何時回江南聽雨，或躲進深山裡，日悟禪意與風吟。在浮躁的年代，我就這樣焦慮地望著你，望著你平靜單薄的身影。這一場看似無止境的修行，是否你的宿命？！

互聯網科技的發達，很多家庭網上漸漸認識與分享。我一直給你尋找上課機會，經推薦參加了FCSN南灣 gathering。“溪回谷轉愁無路，忽有梅花一兩枝”。這句宋詩真是我們心里的寫照。有些人陸續走開，我們選擇了留下來，怎知其實有多幸運！Auntie淑芬帶來了二十年經典之拔蘿蔔遊戲。小朋友在地上連滾帶爬，甚至偶爾小胳膊小腿你來我往，卻又互相不搭理，好似仍在自己世界裡。夏日在淑芬老師家排演，你依然是只迷糊的小花貓，我們站在旁邊看著，微笑著搖頭。

接下來，我看到了難忘的片段。蹦蹦床上，有孩子正告訴他的爸爸，某某沒有脫鞋子；有個小朋友又碰到了你，你輕鬆說了句培訓師反反覆複教而你堅決不開口的“Stop”；沒有脫鞋的孩子，走到邊上，脫好後又回去接著跳；Tony哥哥看著弟弟妹妹們玩得開心，在旁邊快樂地躍躍欲試，你回頭看著他；季齡哥哥從屋裡出來，開始彈奏曲子，你從蹦蹦床下來，朝著他不停張望；哥哥彈奏完離開了院子，你直接沖過去，學著哥哥撫琴的樣子，玩了至少二十分鐘，而平日在家裡琴邊連一分鐘也呆不住。燒烤香味漸起，你坐在Anthony弟弟旁，邊吃著在家從不碰的食物。暮色漸濃，Uncle CK即興高歌，院子裡滿是掌聲與歡笑。迷人的夜色裡，我們回家去，肚皮鼓鼓的，腳步卻好輕盈。



從這天起，我開始悟到gathering更深層意義。你和小夥伴們，看似課堂獨行客，一年半載過去，友情的種子皆已悄悄播在心裡。你們是彼此的發小，這就是你的童年。當你們長大以後，也要唱著“池塘邊的榕樹上，知了在聲聲叫著夏天。操場邊的秋千上，只有蝴蝶停在上面”。

而我心裡的石頭，真的漸漸在放下。無論經歷多少往昔，前面有太多意義的事情要做。前輩們艱難起步，用二十年時間，創造FCSN的傳奇，蔭及後人。我們新二代的五六十個家庭，正積極加入平臺，攜手共進。

你是那雪夜書頁裡的精靈，與我有三生三世的約定。願今後愛護你的人，不僅是我們。Keep FCSN going，愛的火炬要永遠傳下去。

南湾特殊成人打擊樂團

葉淑芬

緣起：2013年，當季齡 (Chi-Ling) 滿23歲，順理成章地進了FCSN的Day Program。就在那年，我認識了Amy老師。

Amy是一位充滿愛心的鋼琴老師，一直不以教她那一大群品學兼優的學生為滿足，總希望他們除了充實自己的生活以外，還可以兼顧到其他的領域。於是，幫助弱勢團體就成為她生活規劃上的另一個目標。

於是我們一見面，立即擦出火花！音樂成為我們最大的交集。

2014 年暑假，Amy老師領著她的一群學生，幾乎每天都在Day program 裏，一對一的教一些對音樂有興趣的學生彈鋼琴。同時，她也特別願意教一些在音樂的表現較低功能的孩子，特別設一小組，教他們使用shaker，鼓棒，或其他簡單樂器打拍子。很多孩子需要更多的幫助，她又用poster board 寫下歌詞，增加視覺的input。就這樣不停的練習，一個禮拜至少花4 小時在教室裡。Amy總是買很多snack來獎勵孩子。一個暑假，她的初高中學生也是馬不停蹄的出現在教室裡，為這些特殊學生伴奏，以準備10月的benefit concert... 對的，他們要帶這群學生上台！

經過一陣緊鑼密鼓的訓練和準備，第一次為FCSN 籌款的Benefit Concert 在 10月中舉行，這個活動為FCSN籌到了三千多美金！同年聖誕節的音樂會又得到捐款四千。誰說特殊孩子沒有力量？

第二年，（2015）我們發現一對一教孩子彈鋼琴的效果不彰，無形中也給孩子不少的壓力。於是我們改弦易轍，多採用integrated的方式來減輕孩子學習的壓力。同時，以團體的學習為主軸。既然學習melody不可行，那麼...打擊樂器？這對學鋼琴出身的Amy是一個挑戰！於是她私下找老師學打鼓，一個月後，Dr. Hsieh 走進了我們的教室！謝老師有很多的ideas！他讓學生們學到的第一件事就是，音樂是無所不在的。身邊的東西如鍋碗瓢盆甚至垃圾桶都可以是音樂的素材。於是，我們暫時脫離了音符，而跳入打擊世界。

為了實習垃圾桶，我們把家裡多餘的垃圾桶都捐了出來，30加侖，15加侖，紅的黑的，高音低音，借的買的，全部集中起來，讓孩子們的手不得閒。於是，大的垃圾桶打bass，中小迷你的桶加洗衣板和掃把畚斗各有所貢獻，好像從前在鄉下的忙活，洗洗刷刷切切拌拌敲敲打打咚不隆咚的鬧成一團，但是細聽下來卻也亂中有序，好像一幅亂針繡，乍看不得其門，眯了眼放鬆肌肉則能一窺乾坤。這場表演也是花了老師 助教 家長很大的力氣，每個禮拜至少練習一次，一次至少一個小時。由於家長也跳進來做助教，讓

每一個學生都有老師督導，大垃圾桶打的bass 雖慢些，聽似容易，卻需要很多體力。中小型的桶子則打半拍或更快的四分音或八分音符，常常需要分組練習才能合拍。於是那一陣子我們走在學校裏好似一隊專門收垃圾的團體。這麼大的聲音最大的好處是，學生無法混水摸魚，而且一打錯拍子，連自己都無法原諒自己，必得一練再練才行。

接著，身體也可以是樂器！於是在老師的指導下，大家又劈劈拍拍的做自我按摩：從肩膀往下達到小腿，再由腳踝往上打到胸。按摩的功夫做到家的人如Amy老師，回家後總發現腿上青一塊紫一塊，只能安慰她是在幫助血液循環。我們都發覺這個音樂課其實也是體育課，除了練習眼睛耳朵的協調以外，大家七手八腳的似乎也用到了一寸肌肉，算是一舉兩得的功課！

“身體”力行以後，我們逐漸向前邁步：謝老師開始使用更多的樂器來豐富打擊樂。於是，沙鈴（shaker），tambourine，甚至timbale，floortom，Agogo bell... 大家同心協力，找來更專業的道具，於是，經過幾個月的練習，又成就了一個新曲：Samba Way，是讓人覺得腳尖發癢的巴西嘉年華的曲子，拍子與心臟共鳴，也馬上抓住觀眾的熱烈情緒，不知不覺和拍起舞，也讓觀眾體會到令人熱血沸騰的拉丁音樂。South Bay Percussion 於是在Family Day的表演一鳴驚人，讓FCSN家庭留下非常深刻的印象。

六月的Family Day 以後，我們繼續向前邁步，當拍子節奏成熟，就是加入音樂的時候！如此樂團就更像打擊樂團了。於是老師同學家長再次集結，所有可能找到借到買到的樂器都搬進教室：鐵琴（bell），高音木琴（xylophone）和木琴（marimba），才一個月吧，教室裡的氣氛從巴西飛往臺灣，“丟丟銅仔”的小調曲風瀾漫教室，而我們無所不能的謝老師更天衣無縫的將這兩首天馬牛不相干的曲子縫合，連接了熱情奔放和婉約純樸，音樂，如徐志摩（朱自清？）說，它有腳啊！乘著一列火車從細草微風岸的東方開到炙熱耀眼的拉丁美洲。這首“Take a Samba Train”繼續在FCSN 20年慶的Gala 大放異彩。

South Bay percussion 是由South Bay ADP class 的學生組成的音樂團體。學生程度極端不一，唯一的共同點是對音樂的興趣- 他們聽到音樂眼睛就亮了起來。

Amy老師和我們家長的共識是，只要對音樂有興趣而願意接收老師指導的人都可以參加音樂班，都有享受和學習音樂的權利。這是一個共融性的團體，每一個學生都可以根據他們不同的能力，去達到他自己的指標。在音樂的王國裡每人享受音樂的權利是相等的。如果我們採用精英制，只選

取我們覺得音樂功能較強的學生，那麼我們就永遠不會發現那個無法跟上指令也常常自出奇招的Alan，在表演時可以發揮這麼大的熱力和激情，在拍子結束那一剎那發出最熱烈的喝彩，他的solo永遠是他最精彩的自我。還有，Tony原先也是害羞叫不動的孩子，當他和Alan一起表演solo，他似完全脫胎換骨，展現出無比的驕傲和自信。最近，从来不与人互动的Christopher 才开始進來玩沙鈴(shakers)，虽然还是不说话，但是开始表达他的心声，音乐课一结束，Christopher 很积极地要帮我收拾鼓棒，蓋好木琴。這種由無到有的成就非常令人振奮，有許多家長因此而要求進入音樂課—讓音樂成為South Bay Day program 的亮點也是我們的目標之一。

今年，謝老師加進了更多的音樂元素，更複雜的節拍，我們音樂班的老師，孩子，家長正卯盡全力，每週兩次，和孩子們練習拍子，一個八分音符可以讓大人仰馬翻。我們不計

成果，錯了改正繼續，一而再，再而三，不到黃河心不死。可敬的家長如小曼，Lillian，和Jennifer，還把功課帶回家練習，只希望下次來可以表現得更好。以這樣的精神去披荊斬棘，相信今年的表演會更上一層樓，請大家拭目以待。

最後，我要向Amy老師致上最高的敬意，沒有她這一路的堅持相伴，總是像聖誕老人般帶上點心，甚至獎品來鼓勵孩子和老師們。幾年下來，她已經成為班上最受歡迎的義工。再一次謝謝Amy，沒有這位開山始祖，我們不可能組成這麼龐大的樂團，更重要的是，我們可以兼容並蓄的照顧到所有喜歡音樂的孩子，“Full inclusion”的可行性再一次得到證明。

Let' s go, SBADP!

FCSN South Bay Percussion Group

by **Sufen Wu**

FCSN Parent

(Translated by Paul Song)

The Beginning: When my son Chi-Ling turned 23 in 2013, he naturally entered FCSN's Day Program. That was the year I met Teacher Amy.

Amy is a piano teacher full of love. She is never satisfied with her teaching of many gifted and excellent students, and she always hopes that her students can accomplish more. In addition to enriching their own lives with music, she teaches them to also prevail in other areas. Therefore, helping disadvantaged groups became an important goal in her life plan.

Sparks ignited between us immediately when we met! Music was our greatest intersection.

Almost every day in the summer of 2014, Amy led her group of students in one-on-one piano lessons for FCSN students interested in music during the Day Program. Also she was particularly willing to teach some children with lower function in music; she even setup a special group and taught them to use shaker, drum stick, or other simple instruments for creating beats. For many students who required additional attention and assistance, she wrote lyrics on poster board to enhance the visual input. She spent at least four hours a week in the classroom so students could continuously practice. Amy always bought a lot of snacks to reward children. Throughout the summer,

her middle and high school students also continuously accompanied our special need students to prepare for the Benefit Concert in October. It was incredible how much they wanted to bring these FCSN students to the show stage!

After a burst of intense training and preparation, the first FCSN fundraising Benefit Concert was held in mid-October. This program raised more than three thousand dollars for FCSN! In the same year, the Christmas Concert raised another four thousand dollars. Who says special needs have no power?

During the second year, we found that one-on-one piano lessons were not as effective and unintentionally put a lot of pressure on the children. So we changed plans and moved toward an integrated way to reduce the pressure of learning. That is, we mainly focused on group learning. Since learning a melody the old fashioned way was not feasible or practical for these children, then how about percussion instruments? This was a challenge for Teacher Amy with her piano background! So she started drum-playing lessons on her own; and one month later, Dr. Hsieh was introduced into our classroom! Teacher Hsieh had a lot of good ideas! In the first lesson he made the students know that music is everywhere: all things around us such as pots, bowls, spoons, even trash cans be used as music

material. So, we temporarily got out of the music notes and jumped into the percussion world.

In order to practice playing with trash cans, parents donated excess trash cans from home; 30 gallons or 15 gallons, red or black, treble or bass, borrowed or bought, we gathered them all together so every student would have something to play. The big trash can was used for playing bass; the small, medium, mini-sized barrels, laundry pods, and even brooms all had their own contributions to our percussion program. This reminded us of the old days, doing busy works in the country side, people washing, brushing, cutting, mixing, knocking, tapping, and making all kinds of random sound. By listening carefully, on-lookers could actually find order within the chaos, just like a needle in embroidery work. With the first glance there is no regular expression; only by focusing the senses can one glimpse and grasp the true presentation of art.

One performance took the teachers, assistants, and parents a lot of preparation efforts- every week children practiced at least once and each time at least one hour. The parents eagerly participated as they became teaching assistants, so every student had individual supervision and guidance.

Big trash cans for bass play at slower beat; it may sound easy, but this actually requires great physical strength. Small and medium-sized barrels are used to play half notes or even faster quarter or eighth notes. Often we needed group practices for coordination. So for a while we walked in school like a group dedicated to garbage collection. The biggest advantage of such a big sound is that no one can relax or fake playing. A wrong beat can be so noticeable that anyone who makes such a mistake will feel embarrassed and difficult to forgive himself; this pushes everyone to practice harder.

Further more, we discovered that the body can also be an instrument! Under the guidance of Teacher Hsieh, every one used their hands to make sound by hitting their own body, from shoulder down to calf, then from ankle up to chest as if they were doing self-massage. The more sophisticated massage performers such as Teacher Amy, usually found herself with purple marks all over her thighs, and she could only comfort herself through exercise to help blood circulation. We all discovered that this kind of music class actually includes physical education at the same time. In addition to the practiced coordination of eyes

and ears, everyone used every inch of muscle, so it can be thought of as killing two birds with one stone.

After “full body” exercise, we gradually advanced further. Teacher Hsieh utilized more instruments to enrich our percussion music. So, shaker, tambourine, even timbalie, floortom, and AGoGo bell were used. Everyone worked together to find more professional props. After a few months of practice, we accomplished a new song, Samba Way. This song, from Brazilian carnival music, makes people want to dance involuntarily; the beat of this music touches and resonates within every heart. It immediately grasps the audience’s warm passions so they dance involuntarily, experiencing the exciting rhythm of Latin music. The South Bay Percussion made such a wonderful and impressive performance at the Family Day that our FCSN family was deeply impressed.

After the Family Day in June, we continued moving forward. When our team’s beat rhythm became more mature, this became the right time to add some music! So our band became more like a real percussion band. Then the teachers, students and parents once again assembled and worked together. We moved all the possible instruments (that we could find, borrow, or purchase) into the classroom: items such as bells, a xylophone, and a marimba. After only about a month, the classroom atmosphere changed from Brazil music style to Taiwan folksong, “Diu Diu Tong Ah (Taiwan folksong name: 丟丟銅仔)” minor tune style diffused classroom, and our mighty Teacher Hsieh merged two totally different styles of music together, combining both the passionate and implicit simple styles of each. Music, as described by either Xu ZhiMo or Zhu ZiQing who said, “It has feet!” It gave us a feeling of riding a train from the fine, grass and breezy shore of the Eastern world to the hot, dazzling Latin America. This song called “Take a Samba Train” dazzled during our FCSN 20-year Gala celebration.

South Bay percussion is a music group composed of many students from the South Bay ADP class. Since student music levels or attainment differ, the only thing they share is their interest in music –when their eyes light up hearing musical rhythm.

The consensus of Teacher Amy and our parents is that all children who are interested in and willing to accept the teachers’ guidance can participate in this music program. Everyone has the right to enjoy and learn music. This is



an all-inclusive group; every student can achieve his or her individual goal according to his or her different ability and devotion. The right to enjoy music in the kingdom of music is equal. If we took the elite system, and only picked the better performing students, then we would never have discovered that Alan--who could not keep up with the instructions--created strange but wonderful and marvelous sounds. He put such a great heat and passion in his performance; he burst out with most enthusiastic cheers at the end of a beat. His solo play presents his most excellent self. In addition, Tony was a very shy child who rarely responded to other people, but when he played solo with Alan, he suddenly transformed into a totally different person with great pride and self-confidence. Recently, we noticed another child, Christopher, who never interacted with other people. Yet, after he began to play the shakers, even though he still did not talk, he learned to express his voice. When music lessons were over, Christopher actively helped me pick up drum sticks and cover the xylophone. This achievement--turning from nothing to something--makes us very excited. This progress also made many parents want to enter this music program. This is our goal to make the music program the highlight of our South Bay Day Program.

This year, Teacher Hsieh has added more music elements and complex rhythms to our program. In our music class, teachers, children, and parents are making every effort twice a week to practice the beat with their children. We continue to correct all mistakes, over and over, until our goal is accomplished. Parents such as Xiaoman, Lillian, and Jennifer take homework home every week to keep up with practice, hoping that the next time their children could perform better. With such a spirit to overcoming all obstacles, I believe our performance this year will be even more incredible.

Finally, I would like to pay the highest respect to Teacher Amy. Without her company along the road, we never would have succeeded. Like Santa Claus, she always brings refreshments and prizes to encourage students and other teachers. During the past few years, she has become the most popular volunteer in class. Once again, our deepest thanks to Teacher Amy. Without an initiator like her, we could never have formed such a large band. Most importantly of all, we are able to provide opportunities for all children who enjoy music.

Let's go, SBADP!



East Bay Adult Day Program



by **Vivian Chao**
East Bay Adult Day
Program Manager

Over 100 people attended our first Parents and Caregivers Open House event for the East Bay Adult Day Program on April 27. After a short introduction, clients and families were invited to explore the facility as their tour guides showed off clients' work and activities. The kitchen had samples of foods made by students and their families; the library exhibited some Power Point slideshows made by clients; and each client got to take home a portfolio with examples of his or her work.

A group of parents helped to organize a small bake sale; the proceeds of the bake sale, over four hundred dollars, went toward updating FCSN's transportation system. Overall, the Open House was a huge success. Every family attended the event expressed interest in coming again next year!



FCSN Moms Received "Mother of Loving Heart" Award

by **Wei-Jen Hsia**
FCSN Volunteer

On May 7, Chinese Cultural Center hosted Mothers of The Year celebration, 愛心媽媽表揚大會, sponsored by the Chinese Nationalist Party. FCSN was invited to nominate five mothers to be honored at this event. Congratulations to our five wonderful moms for receiving "Mother of the Loving Heart" award; they are Alice Chu, Lucia Gan, Jean Chen, Jennifer Erhardt, and Pei Wang.

FCSN had two tables for our moms and their families as well as a couple of FCSN board representatives. The FCSN Dream Achievers, 圓夢先鋒, was also invited to perform at this event; they played "愛心媽媽Tequila", "I Just Called to Say I Love You", and "世上只有媽媽好."

We have nominated 愛心媽媽 for this event since 2002; so many deserving moms from FCSN have received this award. All moms with special needs children have overcome tremendous challenges to help their children, and all deserve to be recognized," says Anna Wang, Vice President of Enrichment Programs and Community Relations.

Alice Chu



李秀怡 育有二男一女。女兒現今15歲，患有自閉症，直至五歲才開始說話。由於女兒的自閉，在初中和高中時被戲弄和欺負。看到女兒的掙扎，李女士在心痛之餘，總是一直支援和鼓勵女兒攻讀大學學位，尋找一份工作，並參與課外活動。由於她持續的激勵，她女兒獲得聖荷西州立大學藝術學士學位。李女士為女兒提供了許多機會發掘和發展她的音樂及體育天賦，彈鋼琴、游泳，甚至贏得了跆拳道黑帶。李女士對她女兒在生活方面最深遠影響的事情之一是加入特殊兒童之友，幫她找到一份工作，開發她社交技巧和建立永久的友誼。

Lucia Gan



甘霖 畢業於清華，後出國念書獲得博士學位，留校任教。七年前愛兒子泓出生。兒子一歲半時，幸福的三口之家回國教書。自發現兒子發育不同，到最後放棄教授身份回到美國確診為自閉症，甘女士開始漫長的征途，膽戰心驚等待兒子的成長。2017年初，加入FCSN南灣中心做專業協調，邀請灣區50多個家庭，孩子平均年齡6至7歲，策劃周日家長互助專案。目前開課8節，35個家庭參與。設置巡迴爸爸制度，免費集體遊戲，嘗試課程品質改革，每月聚餐、參加籌款活動、talent show、SDC room parent、volunteer for art vistas等。

Jean Chen



陳維紅 育有兩子，長子24歲，大學畢業並已經工作。小兒子19歲，患有自閉症。陳女士是一個全職母親，白天忙於工作，晚上及週末則用於孩子的學習、課外活動和治療。她花了許多精力在小兒子的成長和學習上，同時也積極參與社區活動，支援FCSN，主動擔任了FCSN的課程協調員和志願者。陳女士希望能用她的一份愛心和努力去證明自己的孩子以及社區內其他的孩子們都有潛在的才能。她希望在她的愛心行動中和孩子們一起成長，用自己的努力盡最大的可能讓孩子們感受到自己生活在一個有愛的社會中。

Jennifer Erhardt



王嘉平 育有子女各一，女兒21歲，現讀研究院；兒子19歲，是產前26週出生的早產兒，體重只有2.5磅，需要依靠肺部插管呼吸，住院三個月。出院後六個月仍然用氧氣機輔助。數年後，兒子被診斷出患有高功能自閉症。他在成熟社交技巧及認知方面都要晚幾年。兒子十幾歲時開始發展為強迫症。面對那麼多的挑戰，王女士和她家人奉獻出很多時間照顧她的兒子，為他安排未來。王女士認為兒子是她們家人的福星。由於他，全家人變得更加親密，也更瞭解愛的重要性及生命的價值。在FCSN認識許多老師、家長，得到不少幫助。

Pei Wang



王培 三個可愛男孩的媽媽，9歲的Mudong，6歲的Muhua和3歲的Muyan。王女士是 Eureka Therapeutics Inc. 的 Project Management 負責人，研發免疫治療癌症患者的生物技術。2011年Mudong和Muhua被診斷患有罕見和漸進式的疾病，稱為Hunter氏症。它是一種先天代謝疾病，隨年齡增長，逐漸損害孩子的身體和大腦，預測的壽命為 15-20年。過去六年來，除了工作，王女士採取各種治療方法，包括每週半天輸液治療、生活自理治療、言語治療、行為治療及每月的臨床試驗治療和各種專業醫療。她頻頻出現CNN的超級父母的節目。

Music Empowers Special Needs Individuals



Talent Showcase winner Govinda Rangan performed mridangam, traditional Indian drum



Talent Showcase winner Music Camp Band performed "Hawaii Five-O"



Percussion Group performed at the Grand Opening Celebration of South Bay Center on April 26th



Talent Showcase winner Max Chan performed "Thunder in the Dry Season"



ChiLing and Alan had fun with a Samba solo performance



Harvest Academy's students performed for South Bay Family Gathering's after dinner shows



“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.



Dream Seekers performing “Can’t Stop the Feeling” at the Talent Showcase



South Bay Family Gathering – after dinner performance by volunteers from Hearts Organization and FCSN clients



2017 FCSN Staff Appreciation event held on February 4th. Board members had the opportunity to show their appreciation to FCSN staff for all their hard work and devotion.



Friends of Children with Special Needs

Headquarters: 2300 Peralta Blvd., Fremont, CA 94536 T: 510-739-6900 F: 510-739-6999

South Bay Center: 1029 S. Bascom Ave., San Jose, CA 95129 T: 408-725-8000 F: 408-725-8811

www.fcsn1996.org Email: administration@fcsn1996.org