



PCDC was formed in 1966 to preserve, protect and promote Chinatown as a viable ethnic, business and residential community.
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May 2010 News

\$\$ Small Business Grant Opportunities \$\$

The recent recession has hit small businesses hard. With their limited manpower and higher overhead costs, such businesses are less able to shoulder through the economic downturn than their larger corporate counterparts. The recession has especially affected the small businesses in Chinatown, where restaurant and tourism industries dominate. Most Chinatown businesses are struggling to keep their doors open, and some have shuttered.

However, the recession can also be an opportunity for businesses to take a step back and reevaluate their business line, product, service and approach. There are many grant programs available to business owners to help streamline operations, update equipment and facilities, and improve façades.

PCDC has brought some of these grant opportunities to local businesses. Such grants include: The Merchants Fund façade improvement grant, Commerce Department's façade improvement grant, and The Enterprise Center's technical assistance grant.

These grant opportunities are available to help small businesses today. PECO electric company is promoting a rebate program for the purchase of commercial and residential energy-efficient equipment through their "Smart Ideas" program. If you are interested in learning how your business could qualify for grants, please contact PCDC's Main Street Program, at (215) 922-2156.

Save the Date

Chinatown Block Party

Save the date for the first Chinatown Block Party on July 3rd. The neighborhood will be celebrating America's Independence Day with a full day of festivities. The celebration will feature outdoor food vendors, performances, and games. The block party will be sponsored by WAWA Welcome America and organized by PCDC and partnered with Chinese Benevolent Association. For more information, contact Melody Wong at (215) 922-2156.

Community Event



PCDC partners with Philadelphia Zoo for Creatures of Culture Festival. Philadelphia Chinatown Development corporation was a sponsor of Creature of Culture at the Philadelphia Zoo celebrating Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month featuring Asian vendors and performances

on Mother's Day weekend
 Volunteer Jackie Wong and Main Street Manager, Melody Wong at the PCDC information table. May 8 & 9.

Accessing Service

The **Independence Blue Cross & Highmark Blue Shield Caring Foundation's** will be available on **Monday, June 7th and July 5th, from 10:00am to 1:00pm** to provide application assistance for health insurance to low-income families who do not qualify for Medicaid at PCDC. Please call Jennifer Lam at (215) 779-8954 in advance to schedule an appointment.

Accessing Service

Lauren Wen, Parent Services Specialist from Child Care Information Services (CCIS), will be at the PCDC office once a month on the 1st Monday from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, to assist families to apply for Child Care Assistance for those parents and caretakers that are eligible for assistance. Call Today for further information 215-271-0433 or 1-888-461-KIDS (5437) for further information.

Teen Club Member Receives Award

PCDC Teen Club member Wei Chen Receives Princeton Race Relation Award



Hon. Judge Moore congratulates Wei Chen and other award recipients.

Congratulations to Wei Chen, a South Philadelphia High School (SPHS) senior who received the Race Relations Award from Princeton University Race Relation Award Committee for his hard work addressing school violence

at SPHS. The Princeton Prize in Race Relations was established by Princeton University in order “to promote harmony, respect, and understanding among people of different races by identifying and recognizing high school age students whose efforts have had a significant, positive effect on race relations in their schools or communities.” A total of 26 students from 23 regions across the U.S. were selected and honored by Princeton University.

Wei Chen is a senior at SPHS. He immigrated to the U.S. in 2007. When he was 17 years old, he enrolled as an 10th grader at SPHS. Like many other immigrant students in Philadelphia, Wei began his schooling in the U.S. with multiple assaults both in school and on his way home. Unfortunately, his school didn’t do much to help as “everyone is getting beat up at SPHS, not just the Asian kids!”

Wei knew he wasn’t the only person suffering from school violence. He formed the Chinese American Student Association of SPHS so that the Chinese students could have a place to discuss the issues that the Chinese immigrant students face, communicate with students of other backgrounds, and try to find solutions for these problems. He serves as the president of the association.

Since October 2008, Wei has been working with myself and other community advocates on school violence at SPHS. In order to reduce tension and start dialogue among the students, violence needs to stop, or at least be reduced.

However, the school was not active on this issue. In October 2008 alone, there were dozens of anti-immigrant and anti-Asian violent incidents at SPHS. However, as of January 2009, only one or two were documented.

Wei helps his peers to report incidents to the school, and to the community advocates who document

(con’t) the incidents. In addition, Wei reaches out to students of other races to dialogue about the ongoing school violence. Even though he is an English-learner himself, he tries to communicate with other students, let them know that immigrant students would like to make friends with students from other backgrounds, and that they need time to learn, grow, and be accepted for being who they are. He also encourages members of the Chinese Student Association to reach out to other students and make friends.

Wei knows school violence doesn’t just affect the Asian or immigrant students. He has been working with PCDC, Boat People SOS, and Philadelphia Student Union to conduct workshops and organize meetings and rallies on the topic of school violence. Participants of these events include immigrant and U.S.-born students as well as students from many different racial backgrounds.

Wei deserves the award for his fighting spirit and determination to create a safer school environment for all students.

Property Tax Rent Rebate Program

PCDC is reminding low-income homeowners and renters to consider applying for Pennsylvania’s **Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program**. This program is designed to reduce payment towards property tax/rent for seniors and permanently disabled citizens living in Pennsylvania. The amount of rebate given depends on the income and the property taxes or the rent you paid during the 2009 calendar year. The earlier you submit your claim, the more likely your rebate check will be among the first the Department of Revenue will mail. Eligibility for the program:

- You were 65 or older as of December 31, 2009
- You were under age 65, but your spouse who resided in the same household was 65 as of December 31, 2009
- You were a widow or widower during 2009 and were 50 or older as of December 31, 2009
- You were 18 or older during 2009, you were unable to work because of a physical or mental disability, and your disability is expected to continue.

A new law increased the income limit from \$15,000 to \$35,000 for homeowners and boosted the maximum rebate for both homeowners and renters from \$500 to \$650. Renters must have a landlord-tenant relationship. Renters must make certain their landlords were required to pay property taxes or agreed to make a payment instead of property taxes on your rental property for 2009. The deadline is June 30, 2010. Please call Housing Counselor Wendy Lee at (215) 922-2156 for assistance.