

## Hope with Feathers Inspires and Connects Communities

A virtual cultural gala by the Howard County Chinese Cultural Center

By Howard County Chinese Cultural Center\*, June 2020

In the pleasant Friday evening on June 12, 2020, the Howard County Chinese Cultural Center (H4C) presented *Hope with Feathers* to every household around Howard County, Maryland and beyond with stupendous performances virtually via YouTube and Facebook, aiming to inspire and sooth all with quality performances.

The spring of 2020 is silent. The humankind globally has been enduring unprecedented challenges in the modern era due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Nonetheless, it is not hopeless.



*“Hope’ is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops - at all -  
.....”*

*(Emily Dickinson - 1830-1886).*

Silent spring<sup>1</sup> is challenging. Nevertheless, communities demonstrate compassion and sincerity. With the worldwide outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home executive mandates



at state and local levels, the Chinese community in Howard County, Maryland has instantaneously established a core team of volunteers to support frontline healthcare professionals and first response personnel with donations of \$100,000 and 20,000 pieces of personal protection equipment.

The Howard County Chinese Community is a collective alliance including the Howard County Chinese School (HCCS), Chinese American Parent Association of Howard



County (CAPA-HC), Chinese American Doctors Association, Peiyong Chinese School, the Students & Scholars Associations and Carey Business School of the Johns Hopkins University, and Chinese American volunteers of U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Ms. Cao Hui, a Johns Hopkins employee, and her friends as well as Mr. Fan Yang of Exelon, on behalf of the Alumni Association of Huang Gang High School, China also provided a significant amount as part of the Chinese community contributions.

Monetary donations and personal protective supplies were timely delivered to medical institutions in the Baltimore metropolitan region in teeming a prolonged yet unknown period of the COVID-19 pandemic. Charitable contributions from the Howard County Chinese Community have earned them acclaimed recognition and commendations countywide and in the metropolitan region. In April 2020, *The Baltimore Sun* published an article commending the endeavor of humankind of the Chinese community in entirety, by its title of "Howard County Chinese community coming together to provide resources during coronavirus pandemic".



In addition, the Clarksville Youth Care Group, in conjunction with the Students Government Association and Parent Teacher Association of HCCS produced 4,160 heavy-duty face shields and donated them to 92 hospitals, urgent care centers, or clinics in seven states.

Some other Asian community organizations have joined the selfless effort as well, contributing significantly to the regional hospitals. The collaboration among all Asian communities in Howard County has become the most superlative way to celebrate the Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May but also has won commendations by elected and appointed officials at the state and county levels.

Social distancing separates people but unites us all in humanity. H4C's *Hope with Feathers* virtual cultural event on June 12, 2020 expressed indebtedness to honor contributions of the Chinese community organizations. *Hope with Feathers* further extended our wholehearted

appreciation to healthcare professionals and first response personnel who together have been tirelessly combating COVID-19 to protect safety, health, and welfare of everyone.

*Hope with Feathers* unveiled Chinese traditional music, dance, singing, Taichi, and various other performances that convey courage, peace. It reminded, “in the midst of hardship, beauty can remain”<sup>ii</sup>. This cultural event successfully bonded with people regardless of who they or we are, “letting music inspire, comfort, and sooth the soul”<sup>iii</sup> during this exasperating epoch. There have been more than 2,400 views on YouTube and 520 on Facebook respectively.

Sponsored by the Howard County Chinese School (HCCS), a state Census 2020 grantee, and Howard County Arts Council CAD Grant, *Hope with Feathers* featured several renowned musicians in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region including Bo Li, Chao Tian, and Du Tang and his Chinese traditional instrument orchestra. The internationally notable Gina Ling Chinese Dance Chamber, regionally acclaimed Ellicott City Taichi Health Club, and other performing artists at all age cohorts highlighted their magnificent performances to diverse people culturally and geographically.

During the pandemic impact, the Chinese community further realized the importance of Census 2020. Census data are essential for allocating federal dollars for community benefits including public health programs as well as emergency preparedness and responses.





Another group highlighted at the *Hope with Feathers* cultural gala is the Asian American Healthcare Center (AAHC). A community-based volunteer clinic, AAHC is committed to servicing Asian American residents who are low-income or have no insurance. Ms. Mei Du, AAHC executive director, during the gala, introduced the new COVID-19 hotline and website supported by the Howard County COVID-

19 emergency fund, which has had a considerable increase of requests right after the gala. The physicians and staff of AAHC have made their best effort to keep the clinic operating during the pandemic. Call the AAHC COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-993-8826 or email to [aahchc@yahoo.com](mailto:aahchc@yahoo.com) if you would feel sick with flu-like symptoms.

An hour long *Hope with Feathers* beautifully concluded with the heartfelt and prevalent song, *A World Filled with Love*. Via YouTube and Facebook, *Hope with Feathers* will continue to inspire and comfort all the people and let everyone lean into humanity<sup>iv</sup>. The *Hope with Feathers* program remains on several medium platforms as the follows for anyone to take pleasure in:

YouTube: [youtu.be/uTmB\\_ID0uE0](https://youtu.be/uTmB_ID0uE0)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/HoCoChineseCulture/live](https://www.facebook.com/HoCoChineseCulture/live)

YouKu: [https://v.youku.com/v\\_show/id\\_XNDcxODAwODQ4NA](https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNDcxODAwODQ4NA)

*\*Authors: Kui Zhao; Dr. Guoyi Fu, Director of H4C; Dr. Jiabei Wang, Maryland Census 2020 Grant Principal investigator for HCCS; and Ms. Wei Guo, Chair of Board of Directors, HCCS.*

<sup>i</sup> This idea emerged from the award winning classic book, *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, an internationally renowned environmentalist in the 1960s.

<sup>ii</sup> *Terp Magazine*, University of Maryland at College Park, Spring 2020 Edition.

<sup>iii</sup> The 2020 Commencement, University of Maryland at College Park, May 22, 2020.

<sup>iv</sup> Trent Day Hall, Howard County Office of Human Rights, June 2020.