A Golden Past, A Brighter Future... Celebrating 45 Years of Service

By Jenny O'Toole

On Lok celebrated 45 years of service to the community at its annual banquet on Friday, May 20th. The 45th Anniversary Gala, co-sponsored by media partners NBC Bay Area (KNTV) and the Nob Hill Gazette was held at the InterContinental San Francisco Hotel.

Emceed by actress and writer Amy Hill, the event honored the contributions of many in the community who have played a role in serving seniors across the Bay Area. Among those being recognized for their ongoing support of the nonprofit organization:

**ARCHSTONE FOUNDATION**

**OUTSTANDING PHILANTHROPIST**

**JIMMY HO**

**OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER**

**MBH ARCHITECTS**

**SWINERTON BUILDERS**

**OUTSTANDING ORGANIZATIONS**

This year's event also represented On Lok's transition in leadership from Robert Edmondson to Grace Li, who assumed the Chief Executive Officer role in April.

“This year’s gala represents a milestone moment for On Lok as we celebrate our ongoing mission of expanding and improving the lives of seniors,” said Li. “We understand the importance of staying independent and active for as long as possible. On Lok is recognized as a leader in senior care and has inspired innovative care models both nationally and internationally. Looking forward to the next 45 years, On Lok will continue to innovate new ways to care for seniors and allow them to age with dignity in the communities they love.”

“This year’s gala holds a particularly special place in my heart as my duties transition over to Grace as the organization’s new CEO,” said Edmondson, who recently announced his retirement after leading On Lok for more than a decade. “The work On Lok does for the community is so vital and important – and it impacts the quality of life for so many people. I have full confidence that Grace will take On Lok to the next level in order to improve the lives of even more seniors across the Bay Area.”

On Lok selected Amy Hill as the emcee for this event because of her connection to San Francisco. She started her career by working at the Asian American Theatre Company and is also known in the theater world as a respected performance artist, having written and performed a number of one-woman shows, including the trilogy of *Tokyo Bound, Reunion* and *Beside Myself*.

“I lived in San Francisco for many years and have fond memories of On Lok picking up seniors all over the City,” said Hill. “I’m proud to participate in this special evening by recognizing so many in the community who make a tangible difference in people’s lives every day.”

Guests were dressed to the nines and enjoyed the cocktail reception with music provided by popular San Francisco pianist, Dick Clark. The dinner program was complemented by Jeff Wessman, who performed Frank Sinatra songs with his five-piece band and 2015 Miss San Francisco Chinatown Desiree Choy, who sang traditional Chinese songs to end the entertaining evening on a high note.
Getting to Know Grace Li, Our New CEO

“I am honored and humbled by the confidence being placed in me to lead On Lok into the next 45 years. I am deeply passionate about this organization, and will work diligently to uphold what On Lok stands for as we continue to expand and improve the lives of more seniors throughout the Bay Area”, was the statement of Grace Li when she was appointed On Lok’s new Chief Executive Officer in April 2016.

Grace always had a passion for health care and decided to go into the health administration field because she felt it was a good match for her skills and career goals. She started her professional career as an administrative resident working for the president of Chesapeake General Hospital. Spending a year under his tutelage, she attended many senior management board meetings and worked with hospital department heads to learn about running a community based hospital; an experience that she knew was probably rare. Her first management opportunity came when she accepted the administrator position for the hospital’s 40-bed assisted living facility.

Eventually, she moved into the physician practice management field by joining Orlando Health Care Group where she worked for three years. In her role as the Health Care Administrator for this 95-physician primary care practice, she was instrumental in helping to build out an additional 16,000-square-foot health center in the west part of Orlando where she was responsible for services to support members of PruCare HMO.

Thereafter, UCSF’s Department of Orthopedic Surgery was looking for a Healthcare Practice Manager in San Francisco, where both of her siblings resided. She was offered the job and made the move to the city by the bay. In this role, she was responsible for transitioning every clinical practice on the UCSF campus into new buildings. After three years, she was ready for a new challenge beyond middle management.

In 2001, she heard about a Director of Program Operations position at On Lok, recognizing the name from a classmate who had interned at On Lok back in the 1990s. After meeting with several key team members about the organization and the role, she knew right away that she wanted to join On Lok. Jennie Chin Hansen offered her a position to join the Senior Management Team. Ten years later she was promoted to Chief Operating Officer of On Lok Lifeways, On Lok’s Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).

“At On Lok, we believe in rewarding excellence, and Grace has more than proven her strong leadership capabilities, both internally with strong skills in strategic management and administration, and externally promoting relationships that provide for the continued success of On Lok in senior care,” said Dr. Wellman Tsang, MD, chair of On Lok’s Board of Directors. “We were fortunate that an internal candidate with a history at the organization possessed all of the skills required to excel in this position, and are confident that Ms. Li is the right choice to fill On Lok’s highest position of leadership.”

One thing not many know about Grace is that she is an accomplished violinst. She began her training at three years old using the Suzuki Method, which is known around the world for applying the basic principles of language acquisition to the learning of music (also called the mother-tongue approach). She performed in chamber orchestras as well as the Durham Symphony while attending graduate school. Grace admits that teaching and mentoring as many as 20 of her own students, both group classes and individually, was a highlight and is definitely a part of who she is to this day.

Grace holds a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from the University of Florida and a Master’s degree in Health Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Legacy Corner

Helping On Lok’s seniors with a gift that pays you!

A charitable gift annuity provides you with:
• Guaranteed fixed payments for life
• An immediate income tax deduction
• Partially tax-free payments and capital gains bypass
• The satisfaction of making a gift to On Lok, Inc.

An example: Mary Lee, age 75, funds a $25,000 charitable gift annuity contract to benefit the elderly participants served by On Lok. Mrs. Lee’s annuity payment is 5.8% of her gift, giving her an annual guaranteed payment for life of $1,450; $1,124 of her payment is tax-free for 11 years. She also receives an immediate income tax deduction of $11,065.

A gift annuity is simple to create. You must be at least 60 years old when the payments begin and your annuity must be created with an amount of at least $25,000. Payment rates depend on the age of the annuitants.

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To find out about your tax and payment benefits, please email us at fundraising@onlok.org to receive a confidential gift annuity analysis with no obligation.
Proper nutrition is critical for health promotion, disease prevention, maintaining healthy weight, and overall well-being. With the help of 30th Street Senior Center’s nutrition program, seniors maintain proper health with hot, nutritious meals provided to them in a congregate setting or through the home delivered meals program. Each year, 30th Street serves over 83,000 meals at six dining sites in San Francisco and about 78,000 meals are delivered to homebound seniors.

A registered dietitian plans meals that are created with care and attention toward the nutrition of the older adult. All meals are prepared and packaged in the Center’s kitchen with low-fat diets in mind and include fruits and vegetables. They make all meals from scratch and offer a variety of ethnic foods, including Latin American, Asian and traditional American cuisine. A nutrition site coordinator is also on staff along with many volunteers who help serve the meals, most of whom are participants at the senior center as well.

This wonderful program is based on the idea that socializing while eating leads to healthier living and wholesome dietary practices. It is a lively space where seniors meet and have the opportunity to interact and make new friends, which is especially beneficial to seniors who live alone. The government reimburses about 55% of the cost of each meal, which means the Center relies heavily on donations and support from the community.

CONGREGATE MEALS
The Congregate Meals Program provides over 400 hot, nutritious midday meals for seniors at six dining rooms throughout San Francisco, all prepared in our 30th Street kitchen. Seniors aged 60 and older come together for meals in the dining room on the first floor of the 30th Street Senior Center, where two daily seatings are offered; one at 12:00pm and another at 1:00pm. Meals are served Monday through Saturday and all holidays on a first come, first served basis. Meals for homebound seniors are delivered Monday through Friday and include frozen meals for Saturdays, Sundays and all holidays with the exception of Thanksgiving and Christmas, when they are served on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively. Meals are delivered on Thanksgiving and Christmas, even if they fall on weekends.

Douglas Martin has been coming to the center a few times a week for over 10 years. He has an easy commute since he lives right next door — 88 steps away to be exact! As a retired construction worker and electrician, he found himself on a tight budget and decided to check out the center.

“I made friends right away and started taking classes like Spanish and piano lessons, but I didn’t get very far with them. Then I found the computer lab,” says Doug. He is now one of the monitors in that same lab so that he can help other seniors. Doug enjoys the lunchtime social aspect and has made many friends over the past decade. Doug says the greatest benefit he receives is the food. “It saved me,” he says.

HOME DELIVERED MEALS
The Home-Delivered Meals (HDM) Program is essential to homebound seniors who are unable to visit the center in person or prepare meals for themselves at home. The 30th Street Senior Center team delivers around 240 hot, fresh meals each weekday. Frozen meals for Saturdays and Sundays are included with Friday’s meal delivery. Therapeutic meals for seniors with special dietary needs are also available.

“You guys literally saved my life,” says Carol Johnston, 30th Street Senior Center HDM recipient. About three years ago, Carol faced a hospital stay and was scheduled to have hip replacement surgery soon after returning home. She knew she would need help with day-to-day needs so her doctor
reached out to hospital staff to learn about in-home services available in her community. That is when she found out about 30th Street Senior Center and its Home Delivered Meals Program.

“At first, I didn’t want to accept the food because I didn’t want to take the place of someone who needed it more,” says Carol. But a social worker convinced her to join the program and she is very thankful for that. “Even though I was already scheduled to have the surgery, my doctor postponed it because he was too nervous about my blood test results and said that they needed to improve before he could do the surgery.”

After receiving nutritious meals at home on a consistent basis, she saw amazing results in her lab tests for three consecutive months. In fact, her doctor teased her by asking, “Are you bribing the lab technicians—that can't be you! What are you doing?” Carol matter-of-factly explained, “I think a lot of it has to do with 30th Street.” Needless to say, she was delighted when her surgery was rescheduled for April 2016.

“I have no complaints at all. The food portions are the perfect size, which makes the doctor happy that I’m eating healthy and my blood pressure has returned to normal,” says Carol. She raves about her favorite meals, which include the turkey loaf with scalloped potatoes, and says the Center makes flavorful soups. “For the holidays they always serve a special turkey dinner and give us little holiday gift. It’s such a nice treat,” Carol says.

Another special reason she loves this program is the bond she has formed with her favorite delivery driver. Magdaleno Lara, who has worked at 30th Street for 16 years, always shouts out “Food!” as he enters through her gate so she knows he is on his way up the stairs. If another driver delivers her meals, she asks them about Magdaleno to make sure he is ok. She says looks forward to his visit each day.

To be eligible for the HDM program, seniors must be 60+ years of age, homebound and unable to procure food and/or cook on their own. Please visit www.30thstreetseniorcenter.org if you would like more information about these and many other wonderful services offered by 30th Street Senior Center.

Boomers and Beyond – A Celebration of Seniors and Tech

On Lok and 30th Street Senior Center, in partnership with San Francisco Business Times, launched the first annual BOOMERS AND BEYOND event on March 31st, a night focused on the aging community and emerging technology.

The event was held right in the heart of San Francisco at the gorgeous Herbst Theater located inside the War Memorial Building. The panel discussion was moderated by Katy Fike, PhD, co-founder of Aging 2.0, and featured a powerhouse group of innovative minds involved in emerging trends in silvertech. Panelists included Reg Kelly, OBE (co-founder, QB3), Gyre Renwick (Head of Health Care, Lyft), Scott Mauvais, (Director of Technology and Civic Innovation, Microsoft; Founding Member, San Francisco Tech Council), and Kami Griffiths (Executive Director and Co-Founder, Community Technology Network).

Much of the discussion surrounded how we as a community in today’s fast-paced world should not leave senior citizens out of the conversation. Many times, when we think about technology and how it will help advance systems currently in place, we tend to focus on a younger audience. This discussion panel helped to break the mold by turning their attention on care for seniors, jobs for retired individuals, and technology focused on helping people to live independently as they grow older.
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2016 Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
On Lok honored two of its Outstanding Volunteers at this year’s appreciation luncheon on Saturday, April 16: East San Jose Center volunteer Raymundo Lozada and Gee Center (Rose Team) volunteer Evelyn Liu.

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