

Best Deal on Naturally Grown Fruits and Vegetables

Uncommon Good is selling the freshest, most affordable naturally grown produce in the Pomona Valley. Grown on our farm in Ontario, our vegetables and fruit are sold each Saturday morning at the Pomona Farmers Market. We use no pesticides or chemical fertilizers on our produce, exceeding the requirements of the organic certification program. Our prices are the lowest of any food grown organically of any farmers market or supermarket in the area. The proceeds are used to pay fair wages to our farmers, who are the fathers of children in our Connect to College program. Imagine: your food dollar can buy you delicious food, improve your health, create good farm jobs, and help preserve the environment by supporting our sustainable farming methods.

The Pomona Farmers Market operates on Saturday from 7:30am to 11:30 in the parking lot behind the business Pomona Flowers on the northwest corner of Pearl and Garey Avenue in the City of Pomona. Look for our farm stand with the Uncommon Good and Amy's Farm banners. ☑



Our farmer, Luis Salvin, and his family sell our produce at the Pomona Farmers Market.



Uncommon Good
435 Berkeley Avenue
Claremont, California 91711
909 625-2248
Nancy Mintie, Director

Credits: Design donated by DecisionQuest. Articles by Nancy Mintie.



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CLAREMONT, CA
PERMIT NO. 54

UNCOMMON GOOD

435 Berkeley
Avenue
Claremont, CA
91711

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

UNCOMMON GOOD

FOSTERING IDEALISM in EDUCATION, MEDICINE and the ENVIRONMENT

SPRING 2012 ■ VOLUME 9 ■ NUMBER 1

Student Wins Full Scholarship to Grinnell

When tiny fourth grader Karen Uribe entered our Connect to College program in 2003, she was extremely quiet and painfully shy. But there was more to this young lady than met the eye...or the ear. A Taekwondo student, over the years she fought all the way up to the provisional black belt level. Then, when our students were offered an eco-science trip to Costa Rica in 2007, Karen gamely signed up. With her fellow students she hiked and white water rafted eleven miles into dense primary Costa Rican rainforest to a base tent camp. There she and the other students spent a week exploring the jungle.

Her experience in Costa Rica, inspired Karen to become an advocate for the environment. She joined Teen Green, our youth environmental leadership and community service group. She helped to organize Southern California beach clean-ups, oak reseeded efforts in the Claremont Wilderness Park, a green business program called Earth to Office, promoted our Whole Earth Building, and helped to start a Junior Teen Green group at a Pomona elementary school.

Still, her shyness persisted and she recognized that this was holding her back. So she came up with a plan to overcome this obstacle. Her Uncommon Good mentor was a student at the Claremont Colleges. Karen had a number of questions that she wanted answered about college life. So she and her mentor composed a survey of all of Karen's college questions. Then her mentor took her to her college campus and Karen approached students and asked them if they would take her survey. This exercise helped her to become comfortable asserting herself and talking to new people, and gave her a lot of good insight into college life as well.

Now an articulate and poised young woman, Karen has received a prestigious four year Posse Scholarship to Grinnell University, her top choice school. There she will study a pre-medicine curriculum, though she also is open to learning about other fields. She is interested in becoming a family medicine doctor and returning to Southern California to open a practice. Perhaps someday she will return to us as one of the community medicine physicians in our MED Relief program.

When I asked Karen what she was most looking forward to in college, she flashed a dazzling smile and exclaimed, "Everything!" ☑



Karen Uribe (center front) white water rafting in Costa Rica, 2007



Karen Uribe

Photo by Costa Rica Extreme

Photo by Nancy Mintie

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

High School Scholars.....	2
Ode to Joy.....	2
Honor Roll of Donors.....	4
Whole Earth Building.....	7
Easy Way to Get Money.....	7
Best Deal on Naturally Grown Fruits and Vegetables.....	8

Child of War Becomes a Healer

It seems impossible, given what we know of our own frailty. And yet..... sometimes when Life deals a disastrous hand, an absolutely spectacular human being emerges. A miracle of a man. A wonder of a woman.

Dr. Charles Huynh began life on the other side of the planet in Saigon. Before the Vietnam War, this city built by the colonial French was so lovely that it was known as the "Paris of the East." Charles' father was the head tax collector for the government of South Vietnam, and family wealth insulated Charles when he was a small child from the effects of the war that was raging in his country.

All of that changed when Charles was five-years-old and Saigon fell. His father was arrested and Charles never saw him again. The family's home and all of their possessions were confiscated by the new government. His grandmother took them in and his mother began selling food in the street to support them. Little Charles took it upon himself to become "the man of the house" and helped to care for his two younger brothers, a three-year-old and a newborn.

The family spiraled further and further into poverty. Charles' mother realized that there was no hope for her boys ever to live a decent life in Vietnam because of their past affiliation with the defeated regime. And so she plotted to join the desperate hordes of "boat people" that were attempting to flee the country.

When Charles was ten, his mother learned of a boat that would be available to transport refugees who could pay for their passage. She scraped together the fare, but a terrifying obstacle remained. The family would have to get across the South China Sea without being detected in order to reach the escape boat. She got together with sixteen others and procured a fishing boat. She carefully coached her young sons that if they were apprehended by the border patrol they were to say that they were "just out fishing." In the dark of night they began their perilous journey.

At first luck was with them. They connected with the escape ship that was supposed to transport them to Malaysia. However, [continued on page 6]

High School Scholars

Our Connect to College program begins working with children in the fourth grade, assigning them individual adult mentors and tutors to help them to succeed in school and in their young lives. By the time they reach high school age, they must reapply to be transitioned to the High School Scholars part of our program. In this phase, they must demonstrate a willingness to work hard to master their studies and to aim for college. Part of the application process includes an essay. Here, in their own words, are some of our young applicants' reasons for wanting to be one of our High School Scholars.

Andrea: "I want all the hard work that my mother has done to pay off when she sees my diploma in eight years hanging framed on our Wall-Of-Achievements."

Heidi: "I am proud to say that I am in this program. No, not because I am a nerd, but because I want to be someone in life, not a person on the streets asking for money just because I did not get an education... To get somewhere in life, you have to tell yourself, "I want to have good grades, I want to live my life and be a good person, I want to support my family not become them."

Karina: "I do have difficulties with math. Any time I see that my grade is bad, I do feel like crying or in need of help. I now have a mentor, people to really help me out and understand the concept of what we are learning. You know that feeling you get when you have a friend and you know they will always be there for you with every problem or fun in life? Well, that's the feeling I get when I'm in Uncommon Good."

Jonathan: "I hope this program can improve me to become a vet or a doctor either helping the world, animals or us."

Diana: "I would like to stay in this program of Uncommon Good because: ever since I got my mentor I found out that the world is a much bigger place than I thought it was and there is much to explore, also because I am having a great experience in this program, and finally because I am learning about all the different kinds of colleges I can apply to in many places I never knew of."

Frida: "This program really is a life time opportunity... This is a journey for me of self-discovery as I go through life with inspirational positive people that are helping me to get to achieve my goals in life." 📧



Photo by Carlos Carrillo

Mentor Jori Saeger and High School Scholar Andrea.

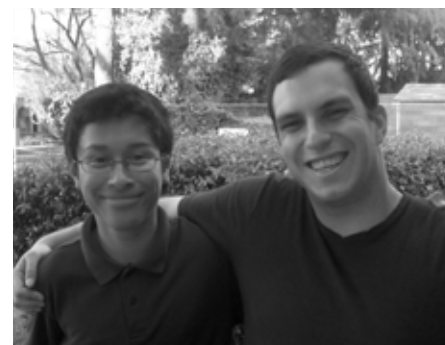


Photo by Carlos Carrillo

High School Scholar Jonathan and mentor Josh Choate.



Photo by Carlos Carrillo

Mentor Megan Petersen and High School Scholar Heidi.



Photo by Carlos Carrillo

Mentor Ariel Carpenter and High School Scholar Diana.



Photo by Carlos Carrillo

High School Scholar Karina and mentor Juman Nijim.



Photo by Carlos Carrillo

Mentor KC Mauter and High School Scholar Frida.

Ode to Joy

First up was the irrepressible seven-year-old Danny, who, despite the fact that his feet could not reach the pedals of the Steinway & Sons grand piano, played an enthusiastic rendition of Beethoven's Ode to Joy. It could not have been a more fitting opening to a most joyful evening.

The event was the recital for our students who had been learning to play musical instruments for the past seven months. Pomona College pre-med student and pianist, Gabriel Friedman, obtained a grant last year from the Donald A. Strauss Foundation to purchase musical instruments for the children in our Connect to College program. He then recruited fellow student musicians to be teachers. He and his recruits put on a music fair to demonstrate their instruments

to our children. After listening to the demonstrations, each child listed his or her top three instrument choices, and then matches were made with college students who would teach them. All of the boys put drums as their number one choice, but alas, there were only two drum teachers, so most of the boys had to be content with their second or third selection. But everyone was a good sport about it.

In addition to bringing music into the lives of our children, Gabriel was inspired by learning that musical instruction correlates with brain development. This is particularly the case for youngsters from low socio-economic backgrounds, such as the students in our program, many of whom have had no prior opportunity to learn to play an instrument. Low-income children typically lose



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Uncommon Good students and their music teachers from the Claremont Colleges.

ground academically over the summer months. Gabe's research showed this to be true with a control group of students who received no music lessons. Their verbal IQ dropped about 8 points over the summer. Imaging studies have confirmed that there is an overlap in the areas of the brain involved in language and music. This would explain why the students who were receiving lessons from Gabe did not lose verbal facility over the summer, and in fact showed a slight increase in their verbal IQ. They also demonstrated a 6 point jump in their performance IQ, which measures the intelligence involved in spatial puzzle solving and imagery matching.

When the big night of the recital arrived this past April, our students, their families, and their music teachers gathered at the Thatcher Music Building Auditorium at Pomona College. Thirty of the 45 students had elected to perform. Pomona College Dean Cecilia Conrad attended with other college notables, and representatives of the Strauss Foundation drove down from Ojai through a tempestuous rainstorm to be there. Gabriel's mother also flew in from Chicago, bursting with pride, and pronounced the evening the happiest night of her life.

Twelve students performed on the piano, ranging from six-year-old Abigail playing "Fuzzy Wuzzy" to nine-year-old Adrian (who had been taught by Gabe) who played the haunting and lyrical "Gymnopedie No. 1" by Satie and the theme from Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. Other instruments represented included the cello, violin, viola, saxophone, guitar (both acoustic and electric), flute, trumpet and voice. And yes, we did hear loud and clear, from the two lucky drummers, Eduardo who performed on the snare drum, and Javier who gave a riveting performance on a full drum set.

In his remarks to the audience, Gabriel shared some of his thoughts about the program that he had created:

"It has been incredibly gratifying to see not just the musical progress that has been made by the children, but also the friendships that have developed between the mentors and the mentees and their families. At the end of the day, music exists to bring people together in an effort that requires cooperation, devotion and patience. The music that we will hear tonight is a testimony to the bond that has united the college and the community over the past year."

The audience of parents and family members responded with cheers, tears and a standing ovation.

For me, however, the music program ended with a sigh. The week after the recital, Gabe stopped by the office to pick up some photos we had taken of the event. He talked about the pleasure he had received teaching the children, particularly the talented Adrian. Though graduation would be in a month, he exclaimed, "I don't want to leave because of Adrian!" He told me of his dream to become a doctor specializing in neuroscience who would care for patients and also do brain related research. Then unexpectedly, he asked if he could play me a song on the piano in my office. I was stunned when he began to play "Un sospiro" ("the sigh") which is a fiendishly difficult piano etude by Franz Liszt, a composer noted for music that is incredibly challenging to play. "Un sospiro" involves lightning fast arpeggios and the continual crossing of the hands. Only the most highly accomplished musicians can master such a piece. As he played, the rippling sound pouring out of the piano became for me a symbol of the infinite ripple effect of the music program that Gabe has created for our kids. He will never know all of the ways that the learning, accomplishment, joy and inspiration that he has given our students will continue to enrich their lives and the lives of their own children on through the generations. Words cannot really describe such a thing. But the music can.....Sigh! 🎹



Back row: Founding Trustee of the Donald A. Strauss Foundation Harrison Stephens, Strauss Foundation Trustee Sally Reeder, Tom Reeder, Shelley Randles of Uncommon Good, Carol and Gabriel Friedman. Front row: music students Xena, Freddy and Kira Perez.



Gabriel Friedman, founder of the music mentoring program, with his mother, Carol, and music student Danny.



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Eleven-year-old Ivan plays "Snake Charmer."



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Six-year-old pianist Abigail and eight-year-old violinist Evelyn.



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Seven-year-old Danny opened the recital playing Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Thirteen-year-old Javier plays the drums.



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Evelyn performs "Lightly Row."



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Nine-year-old Nathan solos on the trumpet.



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Eight-year-old Rocio with her flute.



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Seven-year-old Hayle with Camille Scheidt, an Urban Studies major at Scripps College.



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Eleven-year-old Andrea sings "The Climb" accompanied by her vocal teacher Amber Neaves, a Healing and Social Change major at Pitzer College.



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Nine-year-old Adrian plays a symphonic theme and "Gymnopedie No. 1" by Satie.

Uncommon Good Honor Roll of Donors:

January 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012



\$10,000.00 +

The Ahmanson Foundation
The California Wellness Foundation
GlobalGiving Foundation
QueensCare
Robert C. Fraser Fund of The California
Community Foundation
San Bernardino Community College
Saveri & Saveri, Inc.
Ralph and Shirley Shapiro
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

\$5,000.00 - \$9,999.00

Charles and Wendy Bayer
Robert and Jean Brazelton
City of Claremont
Timothy Dillon
Brian and Jill Glennon
Norma and Scott Grannis
David and Kimberly Meyer
Marsha and David Moutrie
Sidney Stern Memorial Trust
Southern California Edison
U.S. Bank

\$2,500.00 - \$4,999.00

Trinity United Methodist Church
Brian and Susan Cuff
John and Maxine Denham
Bill and Carol Grant
Suzanne Hall and Ken Corhan
Ben Hunsaker
Walter Johnson, MD
Larrimore Family Foundation
Andrew and Liisa Primack
Chic Wolk

\$1,000.00 - \$2,499.00

Raquel Arias
Norm and Pat Bortscheller
Beth and George Broyles
Claremont Presbyterian Church
Steven Clark
Michael Cobo
Ken and Eloise Dale
DecisionQuest
J. Michael and Emily Fay
Pam Ford and Ken Alford
Sarah Haskell Greene
Gary Kaplan
Janice Raithel and Stuart Kerridge
Roger Kohn
Stephen Kristovich
Irene Mecchi
Cristanne Miller
Dan and Eunice Randal
Reach Out
Miguel Ruiz
The Seattle Foundation
Theresa Woehrle, MD
Daniel and Kathryn Woods



\$500.00 - \$999.00

Martha Barcenas-Mooradian and Norm Mooradian
James and Carole Barrall
Robert Bell and Susan Krause Bell
Barbara Ann Blanco
Kenneth and Marian Brown
Ceslaus Carvalho
Walter and Suzanne Cochran-Bond
Sara and Daniel Domonoske
Scott and Maria Duncan
Stephen English and Molly Munger
Sharon Hartmann
Kathy Kerecman
Gloria Kolarik and Martha Krupa
Christine Larsen and Vincent Dopolous
Christine and Gary Limon
Dustin Luton
Nora Quinn
Steve Thomas
Linda Vogel
Carla Woehrle and Eduardo Pardo



\$250.00 - \$499.00

Alison Anderson
Marya Barr and Karol Schulkin
Maureen Brians
Terry and Mark Corwin
Janet and Ron Evans
Morishita Family
Christopher and Dawn Fleischner
Christian Church Foundation
Susan and Ed Hume
Grace Kim
Karen Lyman and Michael Viera
Hugh and Jean Menton
Paul and Frances O'Leary

John Oder
 Our Lady of Assumption Church Alternative
 Gift Market
 Sharon Oxborough
 Gerald and Donna Secundy
 Robert and Susan Settlege
 Rhodes and Lois Thompson
 The University Club of Claremont
 Wells Fargo Foundation
 I-Kuen and Chen-Wan Yen

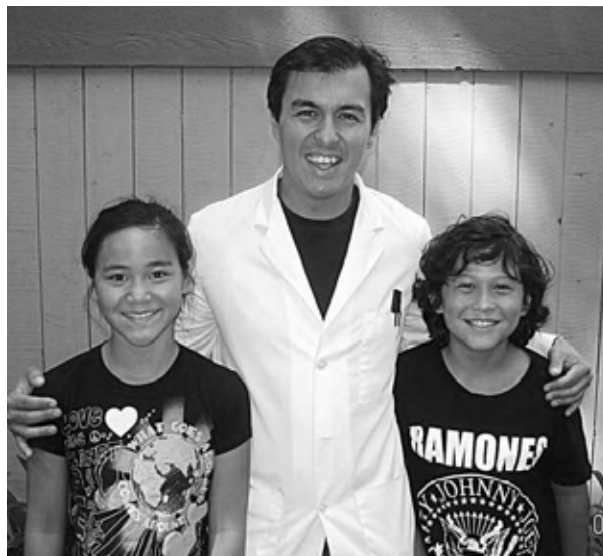


\$100.00 - \$250.00

Danny and Nicole Adrien
 Ruchi Agarwal
 Dixie Allen
 Thomas and Donna Ambrogi
 Nancy and Peter Ambrose
 Mr. and Mrs. Orville Armstrong
 Gretchen Augustyn
 Anne Bages
 Randall Bassett
 Fred Baumann
 Alvin and Ruby Beilby
 Adar Belinkoff
 Donna Blackstock and Annie Wu King
 Bradford and Mary Anne Blaine
 Bill and Gerri Brauneis
 Mary Brent Wehrli and Matrin Wehrli
 Nancy Sue Carlisle
 Jeanine Cavicchia
 Karen Chapman-Lenz
 Joel Cinnamon
 Barbara Coates
 John Cobb
 Occidental College
 The CSI Company
 Edward Copeland and Margaret Mathies
 Lawrence and Dinah Crispo



Ted Dane
 Patricia Dillon
 Marcus and Elin Dowd
 Steve and Amy Duncan
 Louie and Martha Duran
 Amy and Richard Fass
 Paul Faulstich
 Judith Favor and Pete Nelson
 Gary and Helen Feller
 Alan and Laura Felzer
 Eva Fleischner
 Kevin Flynn and Ava Bise
 Bob and Gigi Fossum
 California Agricultural Leadership Foundation
 Frances Genung
 Teresita Gomez
 Mario and Robin Gottuso
 Donald Gould
 Jeff Grant
 David Griffith
 Glenn and Kimberly Gunderson



Kristen and Stephen Hagstrom
 Hannelore Hansen
 Nancy Hamlett and Richard Haskell
 Caroline Heindel
 Antonia Hernandez and Michael Stern
 Sandra Hollenberg and Bill Daub
 Bryan Hull
 Bette Lee and Jay Jablow
 David and Betty Jamieson
 Judy Johnson
 Chuck and Leanne Kerchner
 Kit Kollenberg and Gary Blasi
 Louise LaMothe
 Ladies of the Columbus
 - Lady of the Foothill Council
 Michael and Kathleen Lamkin
 Carolle and David Lemonnier
 David Levering and Lillian Hanson-Levering
 William Lingle
 Robert and Donna Littlejohn
 David and Penelope Mann
 Jennifer and Richard Mawhorter
 Ward and Lois McAfee
 Paul and Jean Minus
 Robert Munroe
 Robert Myers
 Susan Nash and George Lundberg, Jr.
 Richard and Elaine Newton
 Bohdan and Bette Nichka
 Lloyd and Jane Nintzel
 Fernando and Heidi Olguin
 Jeffrey Osaka
 Patricia Patterson and Ruth Harris



Robert and Peggy Perry
 Ellen Phillips
 Bill Popko
 Aris and Sharon Protopapadakis
 Robert Pugsley
 Shelley and Scott Randles
 Marylee Requa
 Diann and Robert Ring
 Elaine Rodriguez
 Barbara Rugeley
 Michelle Russell
 Mark and Nancy Samuels
 Dan and Zahra Sauter
 Sue Schenk
 Henry and Shirley Schiff
 Joseph and Diane Schreiber
 Lorraine Schulmeister
 Bill and Ida Shaw
 Richard and Alicia Sheridan
 Gloria Slosberg
 Daryl Smith and Barbara Bergmann
 Jeff and Cris Stark
 Emily Starr
 Linda and Carl Stude
 Rodolfo Aguirre and Mary Tennant
 Traber & Voorhees
 Chris and Barry Ulrich
 Joe and Georgette Unis
 Teddie and Kent Warner
 Louise Webber
 Anne Weirich
 David and Ahlene Welsh
 Joseph and Suzanne Wojcik
 Michael Wolfram
 Dorothy and Stanley Wolpert
 Mark and Sharon Wood
 Mark Yoshida
 Dana and Sanford Yudovin
 Andrew Zanella



Child of War (con't) [continued from page 1]

the vessel's owners had gotten greedy and had crammed 1,000 refugees on board. When they arrived at their destination port, the Malaysian government balked at the thought of 1,000 desperate indigent people pouring onto its shores, and would not let them disembark.

And so the boat, inadequately provisioned and full of "illegal immigrants" no one wanted, set sail for Hong Kong. Twenty days later it arrived but was refused entry. It sat at sea for six months, as the passengers endured hunger and squalor. In desperation, some jumped overboard and tried to swim for shore. Finally the remaining people mutinied and cut the anchor loose. The ship drifted into shore and the passengers went onto land. At this point they could no longer be turned away and the government offered to take them by boat to a refugee camp. However, they were so traumatized by their six months of imprisonment at sea that many of them, including Charles and his family, refused to get on the transport boat and instead walked seven hours through rain and mud to the camp.

They subsisted in the refugee camp for another six months where little Charles and his mother performed manual labor to qualify for food. Still, there was not enough to feed the family. Describing his experience, Charles has said:

"This harrowing journey still brings back nightmares of human suffering, brutality, and hopelessness. For months my mother and I went hungry so my brothers could have a meal.

I witnessed children no more than five years of age fight over little crumbs of bread."

Charles' life in the United States began when he was about twelve-years-old when a Lutheran church provided his family with an apartment in Bellflower, a poor suburb of Los Angeles. His mother supported the family by working as a manicurist and at Knotts Berry Farm. Charles spoke only a few phrases of English and was put into a school in which he and his brother were the only two Asians. Predictably, he was bullied and teased. Yet his great intelligence asserted itself and he learned English so quickly that he was able to skip the 6th grade. He started working at age thirteen at McDonalds to help support the family. He continued to support the family all the way through college by working in a mall, in an ice cream shop, and as a gift wrapper.

Charles' early years of suffering and struggle ignited an inner refining fire that spurred him to help others. He explains:

"These life-changing experiences taught me that I could overcome any challenges, whether large or small. I learned to empathize with those who are suffering, those who are less fortunate, and those who are being oppressed."

He first found an outlet to address suffering when he was in college and joined the Pearl Project, which educated the public about the conditions in refugee camps and raised money to help Southeast Asian refugees, especially the "boat people." For "fun" he volunteered at a residential hospital for profoundly developmentally and physically disabled children. Commenting about that experience he said:

"When I had spare time I could go out and party or do something more fun like working with the kids at the hospital. It was really rewarding being able to teach them how to swim."

As the end of college approached, his long held dream of going into a healthcare profession started to seem possible. At first he took the dental school entry exam, but quickly decided that was not for him. After studying for the test and taking it, he realized, "I'm so sick of teeth! I can't look at teeth all day!"

So he took the medical school entrance exam and was accepted at Western University of Health Sciences. There he continued to look for opportunities to serve. He took frequent trips with the Flying Samaritans to deliver health care to rural Mexico, learning Spanish in the process. Since then he also has participated in medical missions to Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries.

A rotation through an AIDS ward in 1993 deeply affected Charles. "I saw people dying in a few days from this unknown disease that was still heavily stigmatized. Patients were dying and the family wouldn't let their partners in the room. We would sneak their partners in so that the patients could die in peace. There were treatments back then, but they were very toxic and new ones were needed." This experience motivated Charles to complete an infectious disease fellowship at Martin Luther King Medical Center in South Los Angeles, so that he could work with HIV/AIDS patients.

After finishing the fellowship, he went to work at the Jeffrey Goodman Special Care Clinic in Hollywood. There he struggled to repay nearly \$200,000 in educational debt until Uncommon Good came to his assistance with its Medical Education Debt Relief program (MED Relief). Our program helps him to repay his school loans so that he can continue to work at the community clinic, the lowest paying type of job in the medical profession. Charles' grant, and the grants for eight other doctors in our program, are funded through the generosity of the



Dr. Charles Huynh (center) of the Jeffrey Goodman Special Care Clinic with LVN Case Manager Isaac Victor and Deputy Director of Health and Science Tim Pusateri.

Robert C. Fraser Fund of the California Community Foundation. Other doctors in the program receive funding through generous grants from The California Wellness Foundation and QueensCare.

Charles is a warm and approachable doctor at the crowded Jeffrey Goodman Clinic which serves the homeless, street kids, immigrants, indigent families and AIDS victims. From his lighthearted demeanor, one would never guess that he had been a child refugee of war and that he spends his days serving desperate sick people. His sympathetic nature, ready laugh and sense of humor endear him to his coworkers and patients. At a recent visit to the clinic, a number of people pulled me aside to tell me how fond they were of him and how much fun he brought to what otherwise could be an overwhelming working environment. In a letter, the clinic's Medical Director commented:

"Soon after Dr. Huynh joined us, there began a steady stream of new patients from all over Los Angeles. It was surprising for me to learn that there was



Photo by Nancy Mintie

Dr. Huynh treats a patient.

such an unmet medical need in caring for HIV infected Southeast Asian refugees. Perhaps even more so than for other racial and ethnic groups, these patients have a deep need to keep their medical condition and sexual orientation from their families. Dr. Huynh's implicit understanding and acceptance of their situation gives them confidence to stay in care."

Charles explained to me that the stigma against persons with AIDS extends even into the Vietnamese medical community. Some of his patients come to him after being turned away by older Vietnamese physicians who are afraid of contracting the disease. These experiences have led Charles to become a spokesperson within the Vietnamese medical profession to educate his fellow doctors about the realities of AIDS and their responsibilities as physicians to treat HIV/AIDS sufferers.

Charles has 750 of his own patients and in addition takes all of the complex infectious disease referrals from the other staff. These are patients with both HIV and other chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, strokes, rheumatology disorders and Hepatitis C. His goal is not just to cure or manage their illness, but to help them reintegrate back into society. To this end, he coordinates their care with addiction counselors, rehabilitation centers, mental health professionals and social workers. Eighty-five percent of his patients are suffering from mental illness and can be angry, violent and abusive. But Charles doesn't take this personally and finds it very rewarding to see his patients' demeanor change as they get sober and begin to recover their physical and mental health.

Let's give Charles the last word. I asked him how he could do such difficult work day after day. He replied:

"I've been through it, so I cannot NOT be compassionate for other people. I experienced the loss of everything, and hunger, and deprivation. I realize the blessings that I've been given and I want to help others recover and change their lives, too." ☑

Easy Way to Make Money

There is a search engine, powered by Yahoo, that will donate money to Uncommon Good every time one of our supporters uses it to search for anything on the internet. The search engine is GoodSearch.com

To use it, you just go to its website at <http://www.goodsearch.com> and put Uncommon Good in the box that asks you to identify your charity. Then you register one time only, by putting in your name and an email account. A confirmation email is sent to you. Once you click on the confirmation email, the account is set up. Then every time you use the search engine, money goes into our account. You can also use the site for shopping if you wish, and that generates funds for us, too. Thank you!!! ☑

Whole Earth Building Update

Uncommon Good's historic Whole Earth Building (WEB) is taking shape under the dedicated hands of our construction crew and community volunteers.

We are calling this a Whole Earth Building, because our construction takes into account all of the elements of our ecosystem: air, water, soil, energy, plants, animals and human beings. Our WEB building is demonstrating how we can build in a way that contributes to the harmony and well-being of the web of life, rather than exploiting nature.

Our volunteers have included members of our Board of Directors, parents of children in our Connect to College program, members of the Claremont United Methodist Church, a team from Union Bank, U.S. Green Building Council members, students from the Claremont Colleges, the University of Redlands and Occidental College, and Uncommon Good staffers, among many others. We hope to move into the building in early September. We will not be able to install the landscape and the green roof until December, however, for we must plant the seedlings at the time of year they are most dormant in order for them to survive. We are grateful to the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden for making native plant seedlings available to us. We will let the landscape and roof garden get established and then have our grand opening celebration on April 20, 2013 to coincide with Earth Day. ☑



Photo by Valerie Verhamme

Can you find someone you know? Uncommon Good board members, staff, parents from our Connect to College program, students and community volunteers help our crew build our building.