

**Seattle Chinese New Immigrants Center 1st Year Anniversary
Columbia Tower Club (76th Floor), Seattle
March 28, 2015 (as prepared)**

First of all, congratulations to the Seattle New Immigrants Center on your one year anniversary of service, and especially to Fritz Luan for all the hard work you and the board did to get it to this point.

We especially welcome our new friends from China to the greater Seattle area and hope that, with the help of the center, your transition to life in America has been both a smooth and productive one. You will find this region very welcoming. I trust the new immigrants are making many new friends and taking advantage of new business opportunities as they are being presented.

This center is set up for new immigrants, but in truth our great nation was built by immigrants. Most of us who live here now are descendants of immigrant families.

Chinese immigrants have been coming to the Northwest long before we were even a state, playing a critical role in the development of Washington Territory as early as the 1850s. Our wonderful Wing Luke Museum of the Asia Pacific American Experience was established in Seattle as a way of remembering and honoring our immigrants from China and Asia as a whole. Currently over at the Wing Luke is a great exhibit on Bruce Lee, who spent a good share of his adult life here in the Seattle area after emigrating from Hong Kong to attend the University of Washington.

Washington state also has a lengthy history of providing services and support to refugees and immigrants through its Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, which opened about 30 years ago. They work with other community-based organizations in offering a host of services to help new immigrants become self-sufficient and integrate into the community.

Today, Washington is home to a very large, diverse and dynamic refugee and immigrant community, and Washington continues to be one of the top resettlement states in the nation.

Our state is committed to welcoming all newcomers, and demonstrates this by making services and information available in multiple languages, including Mandarin. In addition, our governor's office consults and works with various commissions and councils, including the Commission on Asian Pacific Americans Affairs, to ensure that all Washingtonians have access to and participation in all fields of government, business, education, and civic society.

With all the services that can be found in Washington, including those provided by the Seattle Chinese New Immigrants Center, you really couldn't have found a better place to settle. With our already strong Chinese community in Seattle, an innovative business community, a housing

market that is still more affordable than that of Los Angeles and San Francisco, and our multitude of things to do and see in the great Pacific Northwest, new Chinese immigrants have found a wonderful home.

I hope you enjoy what we have to offer. I especially encourage new immigrants to get involved. There are any number of associations and organizations that cater to a variety of interests and cultures.

Explore Washington state, from east to west, from north to south. If you like mountain climbing and hiking, fishing, hunting, boating or beach walking, we have it all here. Seattle is not the only city in Washington with great theaters, museums and sporting venues. Washington produces some of the best wines in the world and we have over 700 wineries that welcome visitors. Some of the best is made over in the Tri Cities and Walla Walla areas.

If you would like to advance your education you will join a lot of your countrymen from China. The University of Washington, for instance, has over 18 percent foreign enrolled students now, most of them Chinese. I have heard that there are 3,000 Chinese nationals enrolled in our colleges and universities now studying all kinds of disciplines. Our community and technical colleges will match those from anywhere in the country. You can learn everything from cooking to rocket propulsion to video game production in our schools.

We welcome Chinese immigrants not as guests but as partners in education, culture and economic development.

We also encourage you to get involved in our political process. Introduce yourselves to your local and state elected officials and make them aware of any issues you might be encountering while you are settling in. If my office can be of any help, please give us a call.

Again, congratulations to the Seattle Chinese New Immigrants Center on your first year. I wish you many more to come!