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DANCER'S PASSION IS SINGING

BY JESSICA LYONS

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Chinese-born Bianca Chen initially came to the United States for her education, and has now found her niche as a dance instructor who also sings and works for a film production company.

Back in 2001, Chen came to the United States from Nanjing, China after her grandmother applied for immigration papers for Chen and her mother. They first settled in Iowa, where an aunt was living at the time. After her senior year of high school in Iowa, Chen began college at the University of Iowa, where she studied for two years.

After deciding that she might want to live elsewhere, Chen transferred to New York University and moved to New York City. First living in Flushing, Chen also lived in Elmhurst and Jackson Heights before recently moving back to Flushing.

When Chen came to the United States, she said that the biggest challenge she faced was learning the language and how to communicate with Americans. Now, though, she said that the challenge has become figuring out what she really wants to do with her life.

This year, Chen began teaching dance classes in Bayside to children through the Asian Coalition of Education. Chen initially became interested in dancing when she started performing at age four while in China. She got into a formal dance school when she was 10 years old and also studied dance in college.

Chen, who also formerly taught dance in China, teaches the children ballet and traditional Chinese dance. She said that working with

the kids is a lot of work, but that she loves to see them enjoying themselves and seeing that they like her. She also said that she has gained confidence and learned about communicating through working with them.

"I love dance," Chen said.

During the course of the classes, Chen said that she has become close with her students, who often run up and give her hugs when they see her.

"They will surprise you and they are really open to you," she said. "They accept you if you're open to them."

At night, Chen also works as a singer, performing at community

events and private parties. She said that her mother is a singer and that one day came to the realization that it is also something she enjoys doing.

"One day I just realized I really loved singing," said Chen, who then began taking lessons from her mother.

Chen took part in a competition in China, where she won an award, which helped her gain confidence about her singing. She mainly sings R&B and pop music.

While in college Chen developed an interest in film production. She has since started working with Clockwise 1 Productions, which was founded by a friend of hers.

Chen also volunteers her time helping with the Better Chinatown Society, a community organization based in Chinatown. She said that they organize events such as festivals and parades.



Bianca Chen

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