

Charles Zhang

B I O G R A P H Y

Against the Odds
Building the American

Dream





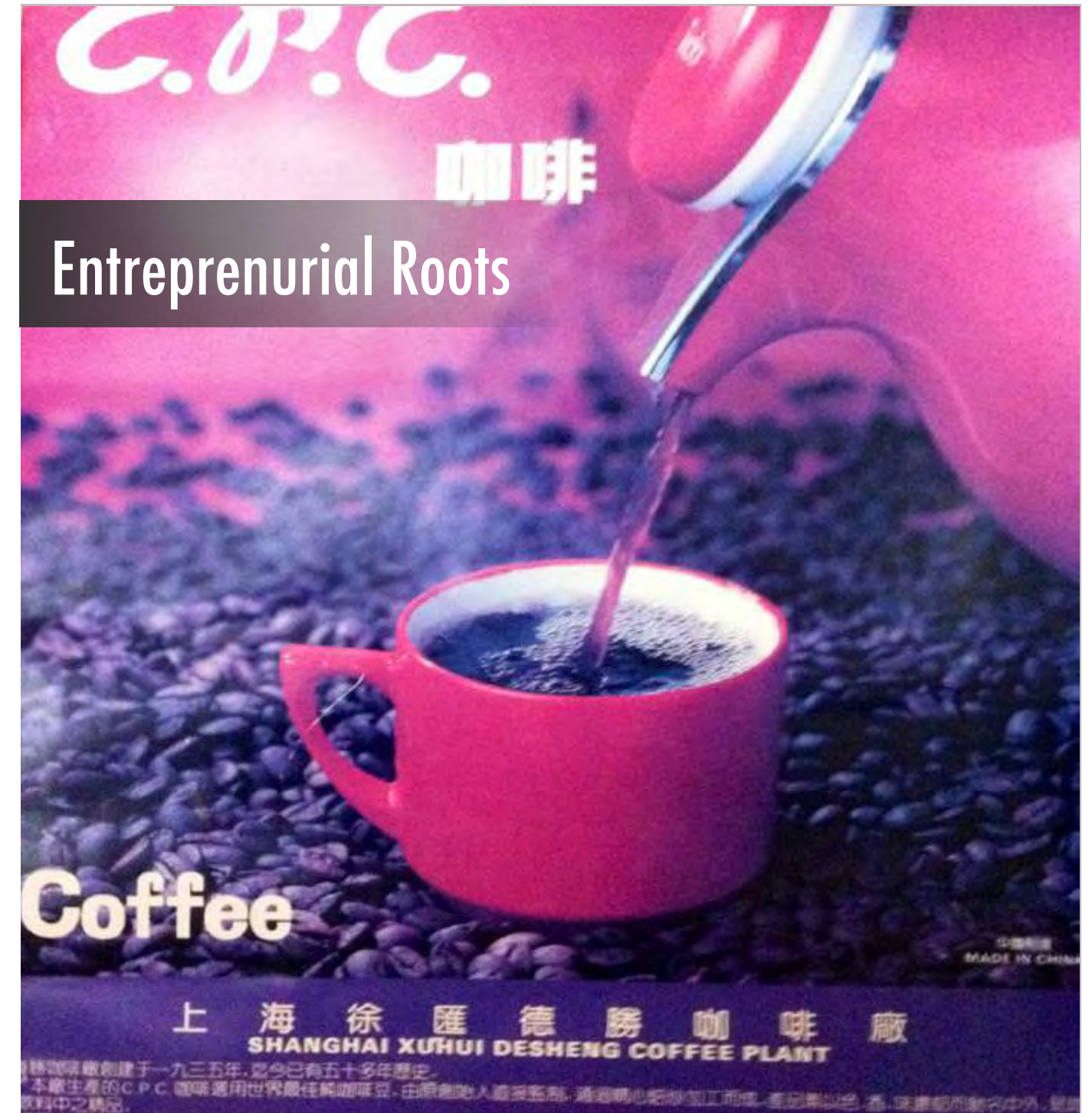
Young Charlie with his mother, in Shanghai China.

A HUMBLE BEGINNING

Born in Shanghai China, to a family of 9 children, Charles Zhang was the son of, China natives Chang Pao Cun, and Fang Hui Qing. Charlie's father, a doorman, who would go on to start one of the largest coffee distributors in China, CPC Coffee. Charlie's father would be his inspiration and the forerunner of his family's success by exemplifying what happens when you combine unrelenting hard work with entrepreneurial vision. Mr Zhang, transformed, his meager situation into a large and profitable enterprise

by responding to the needs of the market; but coffee consumers and connoisseurs, were not the only ones to take notice.

Charlie's father would ultimately be imprisoned for standing up to a repressive government regime, intent on unfairly ceasing private assets, including CPC Coffee which they still control to this day. Charlie's father was imprisoned for the next 22 years of his life.



Fatherless and heart broken,
Charlie and his family, somehow
found the strength to persevere.

Charlie would draw his next
inspiration from his mother, who
raised 9 children alone, with no
source of income or support.
Charlie's mother tirelessly worked
multiple jobs simultaneously just
to survive.



DREAMING OF AMERICA

As a young boy,
Charlie would
work at a rice
farm 13-hours per day and
a garment cleaning job
or whatever else he and
his siblings could do to
contribute to the family.
Unthinkable hardships and
setbacks continued for the
young boy, but through the
crucible of early pressure
and the loving guidance
of his mother, a rock solid
foundation was laid, as

the boy would grow to be
resilient and determined
young man.

Between school, his
multiple jobs and clarinet
practice, Charlie would
often dream of breaking
away and landing on that
fabled land called America.
An "amazing place", where
one could be reborn, a place
where dreams could become
reality through hard work
and value creation.

DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGE MUST BE MATCHED BY PASSION AND DRIVE

In 1980 that break would come. At the age of 25 the way was opened for him migrate to the United States. He landed on US soil in Los Angeles, awestruck and hopeful, he felt as though his life had begun anew.

This was the chance from God to make right all the wrongs and find redemption in the land of opportunity. Though he didn't speak English, had no college education, no connections, and no capital; he possessed a more valuable asset: belief. Like his father before him, he would he would begin his entrepreneurial journey penniless but not without hope.

Against all odds, he took \$20.00 in change and knocked on doors of anyone that would listen. Rejection followed, but he eventually was hired

as a gas station attendant.

During this period he would work in the morning at a gas station, go to school during the day, and at night work a liquor store in Los Angeles. After many failed attempts to find work at a restaurant due to language barriers and racial disadvantages, he was hired as a busboy for a restaurant.

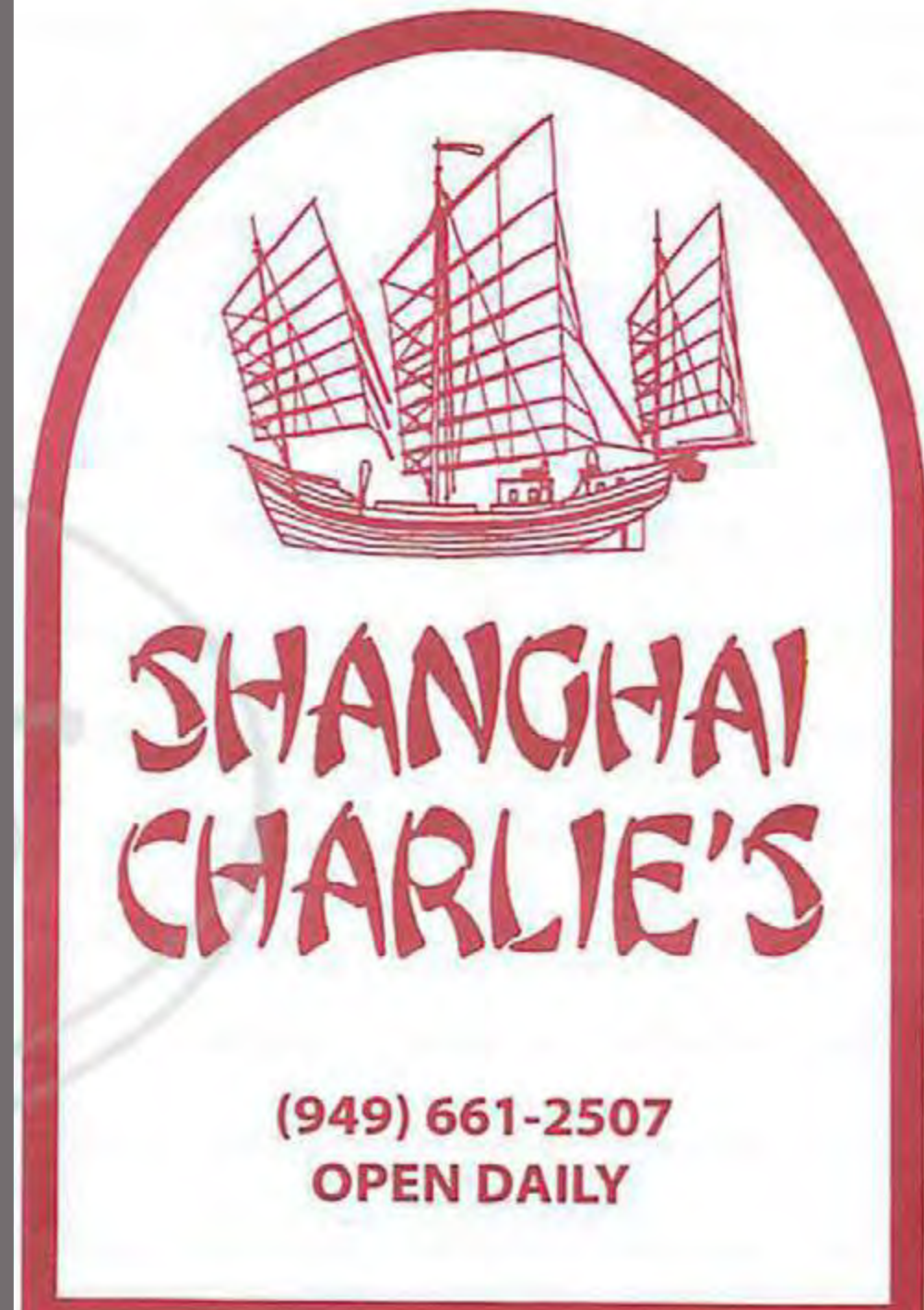
Though his days were spent mopping floors and bussing tables, Charlie was genuinely grateful for even the most humble of opportunities. He believed in his heart that somehow this was the stepping stone in his quest for the American dream. A short time later, Charlie began working in restaurant, Yen Ching, a Chinese restaurant in Orange where he worked as a server for several more years.

Big Dreams and a Bigger Heart

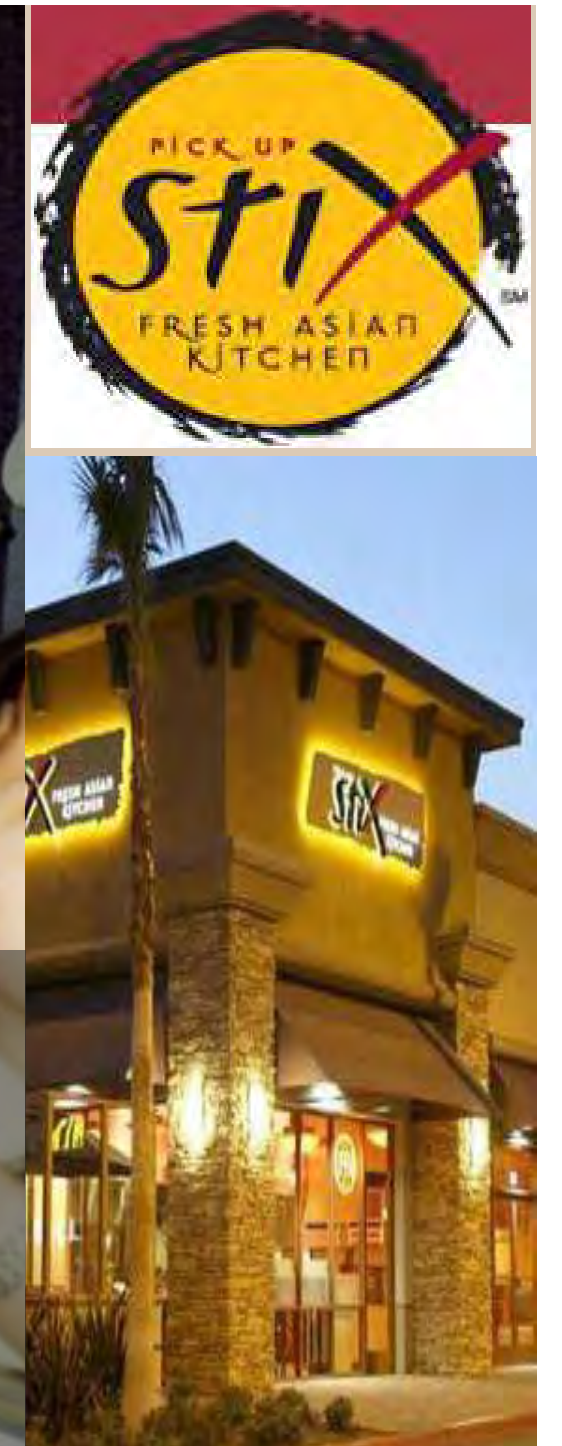


The country of his birth would not be the country of his heart. America would claim that place. The land of opportunity and the values that define the American entrepreneurial spirit fueled the love and fire for his new nation. Zhang became an ambassador for the American dream, and giving back.

Charlie learned everything he could about business and the food industry. He saved every penny under his mattress until he had amassed enough money to begin his entrepreneurial journey in earnest. In 1984, he opened his first restaurant: Shanghai Charlie's in Capistrano Beach, California.



Like his father, he discovered an opportunity to serve an unmet need in the marketplace. Charlie wanted to bridge the East and West in a tasteful, cost effective way, and open a restaurant that catered the to the American idea of a clean, cook to order, open kitchen and taste-oriented restaurant with the traditional Chinese fare, and fresh ingredients Americans love and crave. This was the catalyst for the creation of Pick Up Stix.



More lessons from a **FIRST JOB**

Pick Up Stix founder keeps it simple: good food and friendly service.

By **JERRY HIRSCH**
The Orange County Register

Charles Zhang grew up in communist Shanghai, a world dominated by a government-controlled economy and strict limits on entrepreneurial ventures. Zhang learned about capitalism in school, where his teachers portrayed it as one of the world's great evils.

Decades later, Zhang, a San Juan Capistrano resident, was named 1997 Orange County Entrepreneur of the Year by the Ernst & Young accounting firm.

His Pick Up Stix chain of Chinese takeout restaurants has grown from one Laguna Niguel store with sales of \$800,000 to a San Clemente-based 26-restaurant company that will collect more than \$20 million in sales this year.

"Capitalism is the only way to achieve goals and success," said Zhang, president of Pick Up Stix.

Here's Zhang's advice for workers starting out on the road of capitalism.

Q. What was your first job?

A. Working at the Yen Ching Chinese restaurant in the city of Orange. I was 26. I got a late start because I immigrated from China when I was 25, in 1980. Before that I just had a lot of part-time jobs.

It was a challenge fighting for the money and the tips. Being a server at a restaurant is almost like having your own business. If you serve well, you get a lot of tips. If you don't do a good job, you don't get the tips and your business goes down.

Q. What was the biggest lesson of your first job?

A. You are on the stage every time a customer walks in. So you really want to put in some effort and be nice to people.

Let's say a husband and wife with little kids come in. If you take care of the kids real well,



Charles Zhang of Pick Up Stix says you need to have a good attitude
JEBB HARRIS/The Orange County Register

Charlie Zhang of Pick up Stix says you need to have a good attitude and that hard work does pay off.

Airlines: ... it's ready to ... on board with ... erican. Page 2

Business

The Orange County Register • Wednesday, Jan. 10, 2001

COUNTY/STATE 3 • NATION 2, 4 • YOUR MONEY 6 • MARKETS 6-10 • SUMMARY 6 • NYSE 7

MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS

Second in a series: Overall Minorities | Chinese | Latinos | African-Americans | Koreans | Vietnamese | Japanese

To access previous reports, please direct your browser to www.ocregister.com/business/

The American dream

A study of minority business owners found that Chinese business owners are 91% foreign-born and 63% college-educated. The Southern California Minority Business Atlas by Merrill Lynch examined 1,200 business owners from six ethnic groups: African-Americans, Latinos, Chinese, Koreans, Japanese, and Vietnamese. Next week: Latinos

BUSINESS P

Years in busi

- Over 15 years: 13%
- 9-15 years: 45%
- 11-15: 10%
- 6-10: 23%
- Others: 2%

TYPES OF

Top three types of businesses

- Wholesale trade: 44%
- Chinese take-out restaurants: 44%
- Others: 12%

Charles Zhang, 44, owner of Pick Up Stix Chinese take-out restaurants, started the chain in 1989 with Stix in Laguna Niguel

RELENTLESS EFFORT PAYS OFF

Specializing in world-class customer service, and high-quality ingredients, he gradually grew with each empowered employee and satisfied customer. He eventually opened 7 restaurants, ranging from Chinese to Japanese to Thai.

Within a decade, Charlie had built an empire with more than 100 Pick Up Stix locations, a warehouse and Distribution Company, and a commissary named Cal International Foods, Inc. that streamlined

the preparation of ingredients ensuring that each restaurant serves the freshest products available with quality and consistency. Recognizing the potential for enormous growth by being part of a large well-respected restaurant organization, he sold his restaurant businesses and the distribution center to The Carlson Company, owner of TGI Fridays on June 30, 2001 for \$50 million dollars.

Healthy Food Can Taste Great!




Chinese Wok'd Fresh

**Las Vegas San Diego Orange County
Voted Best
Chinese & Take Out**

California		
Hillcrest PH: (619) 293.7849	Huntington Beach PH: (714) 840.0776	Newport Beach 2 PH: (949) 759.8200
Irvine PH: (949) 786.7849	Rancho Cucamonga PH: (909) 484.2000	Pacific Beach PH: (858) 483.9588
Aliso Viejo PH: (949) 643.0779	Rancho Santa Margarita PH: (949) 589.0522	Piacentia PH: (714) 524.8000
Anaheim Hills PH: (714) 974.9777	La Habra PH: (562) 694.0613	San Clemente PH: (949) 492.1236
Calabasas PH: (818) 324.9851	La Jolla PH: (858) 552.1566	San Pedro PH: (310) 833.9892
Carlsbad PH: (760) 720.6232	La Mesa PH: (619) 589.1111	Santa Ana PH: (714) 979.4222
Costa Mesa PH: (714) 441.5555	Las Vegas PH: (702) 838.9600	Santa Monica PH: (310) 395.4008
Del Mar PH: (858) 259.7849	Long Beach PH: (562) 595.1111	Scripps Ranch PH: (619) 435.9021
Encinitas PH: (760) 943.5555	Orange PH: (714) 999.7531	St. Louis PH: (314) 880.7373
Escondido PH: (760) 943.5555	Palmdale PH: (818) 752.4858	Stuart City PH: (818) 752.4858
Fullerton PH: (714) 999.7531	Redding PH: (530) 539.8010	Temecula PH: (951) 694.9999
Granada Hills PH: (714) 999.7531	Riverside PH: (951) 509.9999	Valencia PH: (661) 288.2000
Hemet PH: (951) 366.1688	Sunnyvale PH: (408) 251.7797	Westlake PH: (805) 729.8607
Huntington Beach PH: (714) 840.0776	Union City PH: (909) 650.7849	

“ FIND OPPORTUNITY IN EVERY ADVERSITY. NOTHING IS A TOTAL LOSS UNLESS YOU DONT LEARN FROM IT ”

“ BUSINESS AND LIFE IS ABOUT SIMPLY REACHING THE NEXT “FIRST DOWN. IF YOU CAN DO THAT, THE OUTCOME OF THE GAME TAKES CARE OF ITSELF. ”



Behind Every Good Man, is a Great Woman

FAMILY IS A LINK TO OUR PAST AND A BRIDGE TO OUR DESTINY

Charlie met his current wife, Tsuai Ling Zhang, also a China native on September 24, 1984, a short time later, the two were married on June 8, 1985. The two would evolve into lifelong friends and an undying support to one another. They have two sons, Joshua and Benjamin and continue to grow as a loving family. Charlie speaks of his greatest moments: “The two most significant events of my life were receiving Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and meeting and marrying the love of my life.” Ling has proven to be a critical factor in every success of Charlie’s life.





Not content to rest on his laurels, Charlie began his next entrepreneurial evolution in 2004, with Asceptic Solutions, USA a technology and bottling process to extend the shelf life of premium organic beverages. Due to operating partner mismanagement the business started losing over a \$100,000 per week. Undaunted, he rolled up his sleeves and began to labor and problem solved as he had done so many times before. By pouring quality and reputation into his work, bottle by bottle and order by order often sleeping at the plant, the tide began to turn. The business became profitable and has never looked back, with double digit growth to date.



“SUCCESS IS WON EVERY MOMENT AN EMPLOYEE IS INSPIRED, A PRODUCT IS DELIVERED AND A CUSTOMER IS SATISFIED”
- CHARLIE ZHANG

The state-of-the-art aseptic beverage bottling company received an unsolicited purchase offer publicly traded European Conglomerate, Glanbia PLC. Aseptic Solutions was sold to Glanbia Inc. for \$60 million+. Aseptic Solutions customers include many national brands, including names such as Naked Juice, Sunkist, South Beach Diet, Isagenics, Sambazon, Boldhouse Neways, FreeLife and others. He still advises the upper management and is very active at Aseptic, because he enjoys the mentorship process so much.



Charlie also established Zion Enterprises, a Real Estate development company, which has been involved in over 100-million dollars worth of commercial, retail and residential space projects to date in the Western United States. Revitalizing communities and adding value at every level are among Zion Enterprises core tenets to this day.



ONLY IN AMERICA

Among his awards are, “Entrepreneur of the Year” by Ernst and Young and received the “Spirit of Life” award in from the City of Hope. In addition, he received “Distinguished Business for Science and Technology” award, and “Beijing International Entrepreneur of the year and serves on the advisory board for Chapman University school of business.

A framed American flag sits proudly on his desk in his office, and when asked what he is most passionate about, his response: “The church life, family life, adding value, and never stopping.”

Charlie resides in Laguna Niguel with his wife, mother and two sons. Both he He has been devoting his development and building expertise to help build church meeting halls on both coasts of the United States.

Reluctant of his staff to even pen this biographical narrative, he downplays his success every chance he gets. Choosing to describe it all as “unmerited favor from God and this great nation. “

As has often been said..... “Only in America”

GRATEFUL TO HIS NEW NATION



It starts with
a dream, but
is realized
with ceaseless
effort and
determination.

A CHURCH IN CERRITOS, CA

Much of Charlie's time and energy goes to helping build churches throughout the United States. This effort is done with a selfless desire to take what God has blessed him with, and return to Him, what it His.



Charles Zhang

