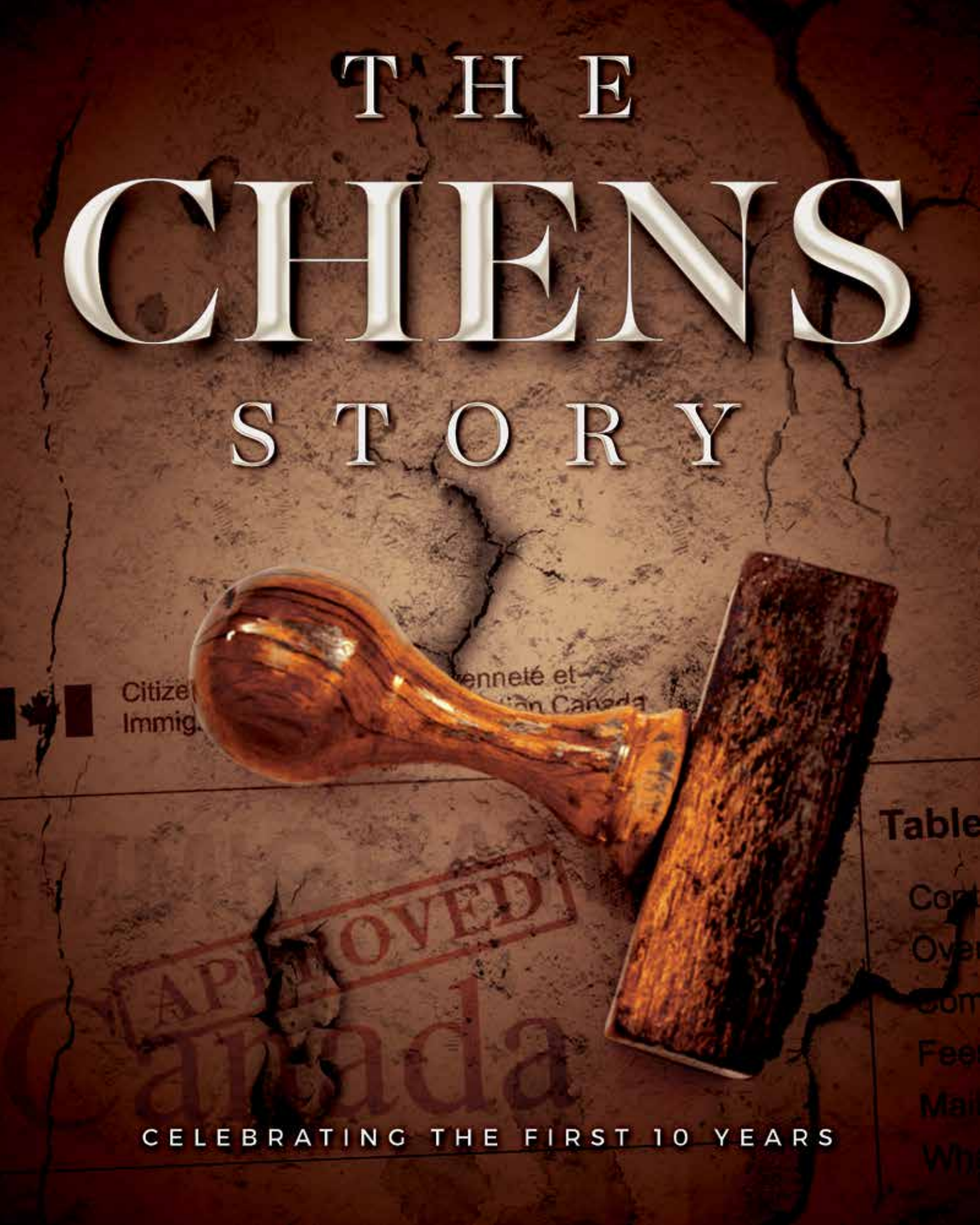
THE CHENS STORY



CELEBRATING THE FIRST 10 YEARS

This book

is dedicated to

all descendants of

the Chen Family.

THE CHENS STORY

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1

Jie's Story

Few people outside of the business community have heard the name 'Jie Chen', but his story is a remarkable and inspiring one for all Canadians. In the last twenty years, since his arrival in Canada in 1995, Jie has built a remarkable and inspiring business that is a shining symbol of Canada's multicultural society.

Jie's story is a model example of a successful immigrant. Back in China, his father was a doctor and he followed in his father's footsteps. He studied for a professional career and became a general surgeon. He moved to Canada hoping to expand his horizons. After many years of struggle he founded his own business and became the successful business leader he is today.

Because Jie was the eldest child in his family and had a good career in China, lots of people looked up to him and admired him. "My cousins and brothers held me as a role model, so I couldn't be a failure," he said. He was also encouraged by his parents. "My mom kept telling me I should be like a grass seed. She said, 'Jie, you can throw a grass seed anywhere and it will grow up." Jie took his mother's advice to heart and set out abroad.

When he came to Canada he had only one hundred dollars in his pocket. Quickly, he realized the Canadian government would not recognize his credentials as

a doctor and it was impossible to train again because it would take too long. The only way was to go back to school to study another specialty.

Unsure of how to proceed, he sought advice from a school counsellor and asked what was the fastest way to have a professional career. The counsellor told him getting an engineering degree was the fastest and would only take four years. "'What kind of engineer do you want to be?' she asked me," recalled Jie. "I told her, 'I don't know. I want to be the best one.' She said, 'How do you define the best?' I said, 'Whichever one can make the most money!'" The counsellor laughed and told Jie that computer engineering was very popular, so that's what he ended up choosing.

However, before Jie went to University of Toronto, he had never touched a computer before. "My classmates were so good at computers. I needed to spend five times more effort than them," said Jie, "When I was in China, there were no computers." Fortunately, through Jie's diligence, he was able to keep up with the program. In the mean time, he had to work in the supermarket industry to earn his living and tuition fee.

Jie's attitude has been one of resilience since he was a child. He has a strong will and confidence. "If somebody can make it why can't I? I'm not stupider than other people. I'm not a lazy guy, so if you can make it, I should be able to make it too. That idea kept me going in difficult times. Also my parents kept encouraging me."

While studying, he found a job to support himself, and started at the very bottom working in supermarkets. The work included cutting vegetables and preparing food items among other chores. During this time he was bullied by many people. He said, "At that time most of the Chinese [in Canada] were speaking Cantonese. Everybody could bully me. Everyone could yell at me. I felt so embarrassed. I thought 'What the hell am I doing here?'"

He would often remember his life in China and wonder if he should go back. Exhausted from studying and working he almost gave in. The only thing that kept him going was that he knew his brothers and his parents all counted on him to be successful.

His first break was partly because of circumstances. As a Fujianese himself, originally from Fujian Province in China, he had many friends in the Fujianese diaspora community. As it turned out he knew the owners of the first Fujianese supermarket in Toronto. This supermarket was struggling and the owners were losing money. Of the five original partners, three had already abandoned the business. The two remaining owners went to Jie for help. "They couldn't offer me a lot of money. They could only pay me half of what I was making at my previous job. But because they were from my hometown, I wanted to help them." Jie took on the job and did all kinds of odd jobs for the Fujianese supermarket, including preparing the meat, poultry, and fish, vegetables, and bookkeeping.

Then, after studying the business, he discovered the major problem, which was product sourcing and poor management. The owners had been sourcing all their products exclusively from Chinese suppliers, even products produced in Canada like milk, eggs, and meat, that could be purchased for cheaper prices. Jie redesigned their business model to help them source directly, which immediately cut costs, gave their customers lower, competitive prices, and increased the supermarket's profit margin and sales figures. At the same time, Jie pointed out there was a lot of waste in different areas and provided methods to improve the effectiveness of the supermarket. The owners quickly gave him a bonus and promoted him to store manager.

"Every business is a risk," said Jie. But by the time Jie had turned the Fujianese supermarket around, he knew the Chinese supermarket industry inside out. At that time Chinese supermarkets were able to source ethnic products from all over Asia. "China, Vietnam, Philippine, all of Asia," said Jie. "But they all had problems getting mainstream products." These supermarkets didn't know where to look or who to talk to.

Jie explained, "I would take a day off each week to go to No-Frills, or Walmart, or Costco. Later, I went to some Cash and Carrys. When they had a deal I would buy

the goods we needed at cheaper prices and bring them back to our store and put them on the shelf. At the time that was the only way to get mainstream products. I already had an idea in my mind. If someone could supply me with a product, a mainstream product, in a professional way that would be great."

In 2006 Jie bought a failed IGA supermarket in Brampton. He rebranded it Fair & Fresh, and turned it into the first 'East meets West' concept supermarket. "I hired a manager who used to work for Sobey's, and I was also the first to hire non-Chinese people. At that time in all the Chinese supermarkets the staff were Chinese." Because the local neighbourhood was full of British and Irish people, and there were lots of seniors, Jie adapted the supermarket for them. He introduced free home delivery for seniors, and started relationships with manufacturers of mainstream products, like Maple Leaf Foods. He also brought in Asian products like soy sauce and other materials for making sushi and Chinese food. When a senior citizen asked if she could buy half a carton of eggs, and the store manager refused, Jie chided the manager. "From now on, give the customers what they want," he told the manager. "If they want half a carton of eggs, cut the carton in half." After one year they tripled the sales compared to the IGA store and became profitable.

Then, unexpectedly, someone made an offer to buy the store. "They came in and saw how busy the store was. Everyone in the community loved us." The buyers were a couple from the United States. They wanted to immigrate to Canada and needed to invest in a business for immigration purposes. They wanted to find a successful, profitable business and came across Jie's store. "The buyers' agent had an office right across from our supermarket," said Jie. "But we didn't want to sell the shop at that time, we were doing so well." However, the offer was so high that Jie could not refuse, and he sold the business.

"And then I didn't know what to do," said Jie. For the first month, he was happy that he had time off from work. "I could relax, I was like a king in my house. I could sleep

whenever, wake up whenever, cook or do gardening." But then Jie started wondering what he would do next. "I thought about this for a few months and discussed it with my brothers. I didn't want to randomly choose a business. We weren't young anymore."

Jie's two brothers, Yuan and Jin had helped him with his supermarket business up until then. But now they argued with him about it for many days and nights. The reason Jie didn't want to get back into supermarkets was because many people were doing it already. It would only have made the competition harder. "The profit margin was already lean," he said. It was a cut throat industry with little room to grow.

"People usually do whatever they are familiar with," said Jie, "so my brothers wanted to do supermarkets. They suggested importing from China, from the Philippines and so on. We knew what products could sell and the prices. And it's easy to get products from suppliers and the entry level investment is low." But Jie did not want to take this safe route. He knew there was more opportunity in wholesale and distribution, if only they could enter the mainstream market.

"It was a very tough decision," said Jie. With supermarkets, there was no worry about cash flow. "Customers pay cash right away. But in distribution, people owe you money. When you purchase from mainstream manufacturers, you need to pay them in a short time frame, like ten days. But the supermarkets pay you back in sixty days. So we were worried. And many supermarkets shut down, so if they owe you, you don't get paid. That's very risky. But because of my supermarket background, and the Chinese community and Fujianese community, I knew them well. I had lots of friends in the business that I could count on and trust. Even now they are my friends."

Jie says his guiding principle has always been integrity. "Don't do sneaky things, be honest to the vendor, to the customer, to yourself. Support your customer and it will be an 'All-win' situation. Chens, vendors, customers, supermarkets."

In 2008, he started Chens Enterprises Corporation with his two brothers as partners. The business has experienced strong and steady growth ever since.

"Maple Leaf was my first big account," Jie said. That account was a big turning point. Jie knew the company's representative from his Brampton store, a gentleman named Stephen. "We became friends after doing business in Brampton. He gave me good deals. After we sold the supermarket, he pushed me to open up a new supermarket. He wanted sales too of course. So when I opened up Chens, he was the first person I called. He was very supportive." At that time, Maple Leaf was reluctant to open up an account for Chens. Chens had no references, no history of doing business. But Stephen approached his finance department at Maple Leaf Foods and vouched for Jie, saying he knew Jie well. From there, Maple Leaf became Chens first big vendor account.

"Next was P&G", said Jie, speaking of the corporate giant Proctor & Gamble. "It was a huge milestone. I attended a trade show, and P&G had a booth there." Companies at trade shows rarely have executives present at the booths, but Jie was lucky. "Usually they hire someone to tend the booth, or get a lower position employee. But the person they had was a senior official. I introduced myself. That gentleman had a great vision. He also saw the potential of ethnic markets. So he gave me his business card, I gave him mine. After that, he helped me set up an account. And P&G has been our great partner since." Chens was appointed by P&G as the exclusive strategic partner for the Canadian ethnic market ever since. Their sales grew from two hundred thousand to millions of dollars.

Chens Enterprises has had other milestones. They moved from Jie's basement to a third party site. Then to their first warehouse, fifteen thousand square feet in area. Today, Chens occupies a formidable warehouse in Mississauga covering a hundred thousand square feet.

There were a few other key decisions that made their growth possible, such as when they upgraded their computer software and distribution system to an ERP system. Few ethnic distributors have such a system since it requires a big investment. But Jie had the long vision to implement and invest in its future.

Over the years, under Jie's careful stewardship, Chens has won many awards. In 2018, they won 'Best Supplier Award' with T&T for the 2017 calendar year. Chens also provided an MBA students group the opportunity to study its organization, and became a 'Partner-in-Learning'. Jie has been recognized by York University and the Schulich faculty with a Certificate of Recognition for his efforts to teach younger generations how to be business leaders. Jie wants to help young people learn about how he designed Chens business model and the development process. He adamantly feels it is his responsibility to show business students how to build a company in a socially responsible way that will benefit the community. In 2015, Jie was also recognized as the Chinese Canadian Entrepreneur of the Year by the Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs. And in 2017, Chens was featured in the national magazines, Maclean's and Canadian Business, for Canada's Fastest Growing Companies. Perhaps Jie's biggest achievement of all is creating stable, enjoyable, and nurturing employment for its employees, a service to the community in its own right.

Jie is already expanding the company nationwide. They plan on building distribution centres in the west. Currently, supermarkets in Quebec, Vancouver, and Alberta pick up from Toronto. Jie intends on bringing their service to the rest of the country by setting up distribution centres in Vancouver, Calgary, and Quebec. Additionally, for the last year, the company has been implementing its e-commerce business, called Brandco Direct. Consumers can now order online, get home delivery. Jie says Brandco is growing quickly but needs a lots of efforts.

Without a doubt, under Jie's leadership, Chens Enterprises Corporation will have many years of successful growth ahead.

2

Jin and Yuan's Story

Chens Enterprises is one of the most successful wholesale companies in the industry today. This is a result of the effort of three remarkable brothers. Under the leadership of the eldest, they gained a deep understanding of the ethnic supermarket industry and Western product market in Canada, and built a small family business into a distributing wholesale power with national reach. In the process of doing so, the Chen brothers have become model citizens and leaders in their community.

The Chen brothers grew up in a town near Fuzhou, in a county called Lianjiang. The eldest was Jie, the middle was Jin, and youngest was Yuan. All three were bright students who had professional and comfortable careers. The two younger brothers, Jin and Yuan, were engineers, while Jie was a doctor, just like their father. But in 1995, seeing that there were many opportunities abroad in Canada, Jie left his native land in China.

Seven years later, in 2002, the middle brother, Jin arrived in Toronto and found his brother Jie working as a co-owner of a Chinese supermarket. Jin did not have any specific plans. All he wanted was help his older brother. "My brother asked me what I wanted to do. If I wanted to study at school, or if I wanted to help him in his business. He left it up to me," said Jin, who ended up working for his brother.

Jin recalled this period in his life. "Actually I enjoyed it very much because my days were busy and full of things to do. Even though it was tiring, I knew we were building towards our future."

Three years later, in 2005, Yuan, the youngest brother in the family immigrated to Toronto. "It's true that I missed my life in China when I first arrived," said Yuan. "But my two brothers were here as well, so we had each other to keep us company. On top of that our father and mother were here."

For his first year, Yuan worked at a Korean supermarket called P.A.T. in Mississauga. After that, he went to help his brother Jie, who had taken over a failed supermarket in Brampton, a former IGA. "I went there to help as a grocery manager," Yuan said. It was a fitting job for Yuan, because the position involved talking to many English-speaking people and his English was excellent. Soon they turned it around into a viable business called Fair & Fresh.

Although working in a supermarket seemed simple, the brothers learned a great deal. They turned the former failing Brampton IGA into a successful 'East Meets West' concept grocery store, tripling the sales. They discovered that their knowledge was very valuable.

"It was just a supermarket," said Yuan. "But we came across so much product information that we could use. Many of the products that we had in that store were Western products for Western customers. It wasn't a Chinese supermarket."

After two years, an opportunity came along, and Jie sold it. "After all we knew everything about the industry," said Yuan. "We had been doing it for so long. If we didn't know so much about the industry we would have been hesitant about selling it."

From having worked in the Western supermarket, the brothers made connections to Western suppliers. They formed important relationships and gained the trust of Western suppliers. When Jie Chen sold the supermarket, the three brothers weren't sure what to do afterwards.

Around this time the three brothers began to talk about creating their own company, the company now widely known as Chens Enterprises Corporation. Yuan said, "It was then that we began to understand how to build a company around the knowledge we had acquired from working in both Chinese and Western supermarkets." The three brothers wanted to put their experience and knowledge about Western products and Chinese products towards a single goal, their own successful company.

"We had been in the supermarket industry for so long and now we weren't," said Yuan. "We really understood how much products were selling for and how much they were worth. We had so many connections. So we discussed the idea of going into wholesale."

Making this decision was one of the toughest choices for the Chen family. "We three brothers argued about it. Jie wanted to go into wholesale, but we weren't sure," said Yuan. "The saying goes, 'If you don't know it well don't do it'."

But after all, working in the wholesale industry was similar to the supermarket industry. It wasn't the same, but it wasn't totally different either. In the end, Jie persuaded his brothers to try it.

In 2008, they founded Chens Enterprises Corporation. At first it was rough. When they first started out as a distributor they faced many challenges. "We didn't even have a truck," Yuan recalled. "We had no goods, we started in my brother's basement. That was our company office. Our success was because of my older brother, Jie. We left it all up to my older brother to take care of." As Yuan and Jin remember, Jie managed to secure a major vendor, P&G. He was attending a product exhibition and fortunately for him, one of the senior executives from P&G was at the booth. Jie quickly befriended the executive and soon afterwards got an account.

Jie's leadership skills shaped Chens into a very successful business. Yuan remembers his older brother's executive abilities. "My big brother has always been a very good leader especially with regards to the long-term planning. He has a comprehensive

knowledge of the industry as a whole. That gives him good insights and judgment. He also has excellent communication skills which help him as a leader."

As for teamwork, Yuan said, "We brothers never argued. Well we would argue a little about business matters only. But no matter how we argued we always left the final decision up to my older brother." For example if they had a disagreement over whether or not to stock a product, Jie was the one who made the final decision. Whether or not the two younger brothers fully agreed, in the end they would support Jie one hundred percent. This allowed the brothers to focus on their goal of creating a positive work environment and successful company. "This is about teamwork after all," said Yuan. "There is always room for discussion and disagreement. But once a decision has been made, we work towards the same goal of improving the company."

This teamwork has been the backbone of their success. Ever since childhood, they got along together. Both Yuan and Jin recall that their older brother was a leader and took care of them.

"I was born in 1979," said Yuan. "At that time our household was not that well off so my big brother would always leave the best for us. Even though our house was not very big there were enough bunks for us to sleep in. But we three brothers would always end up sleeping in the same bed." That sort of sibling companionship and friendship has lasted their whole lives and infuses Chens Enterprises with the kind of camaraderie and team spirit it has today.

During their childhood, Jie would entertain his brothers with games. At night Jie would read them stories to help them sleep. "I remember he read us Romance of the Three Kingdoms," said Yuan. "He also read Water Margin to us which I loved," another one China's most famous stories.

Yuan tells this story of his brother: "When I was in fifth grade Jie was already in university. One year just before summer break, I visited him in his dormitory. On the school campus were many mango trees and he showed me how to pick the mangoes

I was only in middle school then. Everyone on campus would look at me and say 'Oh! What is a little kid doing here? This university student is so young!' I was living in my brother's room and it made me feel very special. In the dorm, it was very hot and there was no air-conditioning. I was afraid that I couldn't fall asleep because of the heat. Jie would stay up and use a hand held fan to fan me. I remember that very well and was moved by it." This brotherly love and caring spirit which Jie Chen has always shown his family, is the same spirit that has made Chens Enterprises so successful.

Such a spirit was passed down by the boys' father, who worked at a hospital. Sometimes he worked night shifts and the hospital gave him complimentary snacks like eggs or buns. The father could not bear to eat the food himself. He would wrap up the food to bring home for his children, Jie, Jin, and Yuan. Jie too would make sure his younger brothers ate first. This kind of sacrifice and brotherly ethic that was found in the early days of the Chen family drives Chens Enterprises today.

Of Jie, his brother Jin says, "Many bosses elsewhere will order you around without caring about your opinion. They'll say, 'This is how I want things done.' And that's how you have to do it. But with my brother there's always discussion first. He'll solicit our opinions before making a decision. It's not like working elsewhere. After he listens to our opinion, if he doesn't agree, he'll tell us why he doesn't agree. But if we come up with a better idea, he'll often change his mind and listen to us. But in the end we're there as a supporting role."

In their capacity as community leaders and business leaders, Jin offers this advice to new immigrants who want to start their own business: "We've come across many people who want to start their own businesses. We will often help them if we can. Sometimes they will come to us with a problem and ask 'What should I do?' We will do everything we can and use our experience to help them even if they have nothing to do with our company."

Jin has worked almost every position in the company. "I've liked every job I've

had at the company," he said. Whichever job he does, he puts in a hundred percent effort, which is his advice for others. "Whatever I do, I take it seriously and use all my effort. I only have one thing in mind which is to do the best I can."

Jin admires his brother. "I want to thank my brother for taking such a challenging path and leading us along this long road from the very beginning. And for sharing his experiences and knowledge with us to help us all be successful. Whether we are in China or in Canada he is always there for us."

If all companies were built in the spirit in which Chens Enterprises was built, from the love and care of an older brother looking after younger brothers, and of diligent work and clear market insights, all companies could be so successful. Chens Enterprises serves as an inspiration to other businesses in the community and is a symbol of aspiration for newcomers.

3

Jie's Photos

In China

Group graduation photo from Medical School in China. I am the arrow pointed one. - cir. 1992

My engagement photo. I was a medical doctor and Rong was a nurse in the hospital.

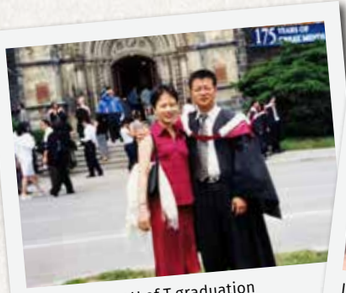
My parents, Jin and me in Chinese Spring Festival. - cir. 1977

In Canada

First winter in Canada. My friend bought me the coat as Christmas gift.

First year in Canada

First summer in Canada



My wife at my U of T graduation ceremony. - cir. 2002

I was one of the founders of a Chinese Supermarket Chain. - cir. 2003

My graduation picture, from University of Toronto, St. George Campus, Computer Engineering

New born Katherine. I was student in U of T. - cir. 2000

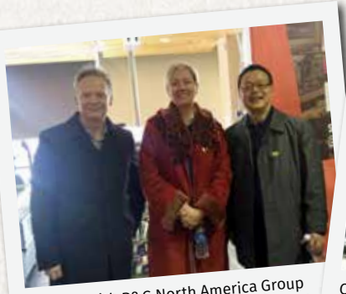
I was student at U of T, Computer Engineering

Exciting got my Engineering Ring

I was working at my home basement office. When my brothers and me started Chens. - cir. 2008

Meeting with Perry Caicco, the author of "The ethnic consumer in Canada"

Meeting with P&G team. Far right, P&G former Canadian President, Thom Lachman



Meeting with P&G North America Group President, Carolyn Tastad & P&G former Canadian President, Thom Lachman

Chens first 15,000 sq. ft. warehouse in Mississauga with only 1 loading dock. - cir. 2013

Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs Most Progressive Award Winner 2015 - cir. 2015

T&T founder, former CEO, Cindy Lee invited my family for lunch during the Chinese New Year

Chens team picture in Chinese New Year. - cir. 2017

Chens first 15,000 sf warehouse in Mississauga with Brandco Direct Outlet, Cash & Carry concept. - cir. 2014

Family

My wife, Rong, with my 2 Angels

Left Katherine with my parents for 3 years. When we went back to China, we were like strangers to Katherine

My eldest daughter, Katherine, with Grandma in China

Me and my 2 Angels - cir. 2005

Parent's day

Bombardier Tour Day

Celebration dinner for Katherine. Katherine is admitted to McMaster University with a Scholarship, Life Science program - cir. 2018

Christmas with Angels

Attending a charity event with my family, cir. 2017

The Brothers

My brother, Jin, in China. He was an Electrical Engineer in Hydro China

Yuan Chen in uniform in China. He worked as a Mechanical Engineer

Yuan Chen in China. He worked as a Mechanical Engineer

My 2 brothers, Jin and Yuan, and me in China in 2002

My 2 brothers, Jin and Yuan, and me in China in 2002

Chens Brothers in New York 2018 on a business trip

Celebrating Canada 150 years company event. Cruise on Lake Ontario 2017. Chens brothers picture

Company employee fun day, Canada Day cruise in Lake Ontario 2016

Chens first 15,000 sq. ft. warehouse in Mississauga with Brandco Direct Outlet, Cash & Carry concept

AS May and CB Powell are very pleased to have been affiliated with Chens Enterprises and family since 2009. We have a vivid memory of Jie coming to our office (a few times ☺) and pleading his case as an upstart Distributor. The vision of providing opportunity to the Ethnic Market by introducing many strong mainstream Brands to those retailers appeared very intriguing. We were impressed with Jie's tenacity and strategic thinking which eventually resulted with incremental business in a Market of which we were not familiar.

Jie, Jason, their family and colleagues all have an exceptionally strong work ethic along with sincere respect for the Vendor community, colleagues, and service driven for their Customers. This is a culture of "Brilliant on the Basics" and truly collaborative working with Jie . He is also very personable, engaging and always an enjoyable experience at every meeting discussion .

We share in the success and vision of Chens Enterprises and are honoured to be doing business. Jie, Jason and family, congratulations to inspired growth in just 10 years. This is truly an entrepreneurial success story within a competitive Marketplace, and the future looks even brighter.

Jie .... "A WILL FINDS A WAY" ...

> Dave Hibbard
> Vice President, Business Development
> A.S. May

It is with great honour that we congratulate Jie and yourself on the 10th year anniversary of Chens Enterprises,

We remember some of our first meetings with Jie. Often they would occur over the phone, however, once we asked for a meeting at a local coffee shop that led to a visit at his temporary warehouses along Steeles Avenue. He had stacks and pallets of various products of inventory, sometimes leaning at angles that defied gravity. The warehouse was very busy - it was a frenzy of activity. It almost matched Jie's excitement and we could tell then that this would be just a stop on a much longer journey towards even bigger business success.

We are happy to see how his business has grown to service the need to bridge the gap between traditional North American companies and those of the Asian marketplace. We are equally happy to see pallets of inventory stacked upright.

On behalf of Clover Leaf Seafoods, we thank you for inviting us to being part of your success, and wish you all the best for another 10 years and beyond.

> Doug Ohori
> Vice President Sales,
> Clover Leaf Seafoods

I met Jie in May 2017 as I transitioned into managing the Ontario distributors for Kraft Heinz Canada. I was immediately struck by how proud he was of his business, and how dedicated he was to ensuring he had very good supplier relationships. We received a detailed overview of his business, how he manages his customers, and even got a tour of his warehouse! He was so genuine, engaging and passionate, no doubt the 3 key reasons why he has been so successful in building the business for the last 10 years. Thank you for being a great business partner for the last 10 years, wishing you all the best in your success in the next 10 years and beyond!

All the best,

> Chris Hackbart
> Director of Customer Strategy and Development
> Kraft Heinz Canada ULC

ConAgra Brands would like to congratulate Chens on a successful 10 years in business. Jie and Chens have been an extremely supportive customer over the years, driving our sales and pushing our brands allowing for mutual success in the market. Thank you for great communication and execution, since I have been managing your account over the past 3 years. I have greatly enjoyed the dialogue we have shared, especially discussing the market with Jie over coffee in our last meeting. I look forward to numerous more years of success for Chens and will enjoy working with you on growing the business!

> Michael de Haan
> Territory Account Manager, KW/Guelph
> Conagra Brands

I met Jie soon after he opened Chens Enterprises. I was President of the Clorox Company of Canada at the time. Jie was just getting started and he was looking for some companies with big brands to partner with.

Jie and I hit it off right away. I loved his story about coming to Canada and I saw that he had picked the perfect time and had the right business plan to capitalize on this opportunity. You could also see that Jie would make it work through brains and sheer willpower. I was happy to call some of my counterparts at other companies like P&G, Kimberly Clark, Pepsico and tell them about Jie.
Jie is an amazing business person, family man and entrepreneur. I'm happy to call him a friend and wish him and his family all the best.

> Mark Malo
> Clorox EVP (global)
> The Clorox Company

Three years ago, Jie started a working relationship with Irving Consumer Products to best promote Royale paper products to his most loyal customers, those retailers that could appreciate the consumer demand for a truly fine brand. Never in doubt in his intentions, Jie has proven to be an excellent partner always willing to accommodate Irving, be it weekly or monthly based on product availability and SKU selection. Nothing was left behind. Since then, full trucks are constantly rolling into Coopers Ave. This is a win win for both our companies and is to continue well into the future.

Royale is Canada's most recognized brand of paper, It is the finest quality and is very proud to have a major tissue and converting facility right here in Toronto.

Jie, you are a gentleman to work with and I sincerely wish continued success to you and your family.

> Jean-R Jetté
> Business Development Manager
> Irving Consumer Products

Congratulations on your ten-year anniversary Jie and the Chens team! The hard work and persistent dedication has certainly paid off and our partnership continues to grow. We have enjoyed working with the Chens team, both personally and professionally during our longstanding relationship that has been built around collaboration, hard work and transparency. Best wishes for continued success, which we look forward to being a part of for many years to come.

> The Global Appetite Team

Please accept our most heartfelt congratulations for your 10th anniversary! Your history of success is the perfect testament to your dedication and excellence!

The partnership between MapleLife and Chens was a lucky coincidence, but our mutual growth has proven that this partnership was the correct and wise choice. Thanks to Chens, MapleLife's products were pushed to more supermarkets, while Chens also greatly facilitated MapleLife's existing supermarket vendors. MapleLife and Chens has successfully worked and grown together over the past three years, and I trust that this partnership will continue, whether ten or twenty years down the road. We are delighted to witness and share in your success, and look forward to growing together in the future.

> Alina Shen
> Director, Sales and Marketing of Chinese Market
> MapleLife

I have known Jie personally for 8 plus years – our business has grown double digit over that time. I wish to congratulate Jie, his brothers and Chens Enterprises for their Success over the last 10 years – and their continued Success.

> Wayne McDonald
> North American Sales Director
> Smucker Foods of Canada

HENDERSON TSE CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT

I was first introduced to Chen Jie at a Restaurant Grand Opening Reception on April 15, 2013, which date was a few months before Chens Enterprises Corporation's ("CEC") 5th Anniversary.

The past 5 years was indeed very fruitful to both of us.

I remember quite vividly when Chen Jie first came to my office later in August, 2013 and we chatted over 3 hours about how he and his 2 brothers, Chen Jin and Chen Yuan, came to Canada, their education, working experiences and business encounters and the creation of CEC. Chen Jie made an account and recollection of many events and incidences in great details as if they were unfolding in front of us.

Chen Jie has unbound energy, and so do his brothers. Most of our conversations either face to face meetings or over the phone that begin around midnight. Regularly, we continue to use WeChat to connect when he is still working while I return home at 2 am in the morning. Apart from accounting, business and income tax, we talk about Chinese traditional family values, respectful and caring to our parents, taking care of family members, and assisting friends. We also share views on personal characters, working habits, cultures, religion, and politics, and of course improvements of operating CEC.

Interestingly, after a full day of corporate meetings on mega business arrangements, he can sit down to work on accounting figures with remarkable detail and precision after midnight.

He cares very much about his brothers, and many times when I talk to Chen Jin & Chen Yuan, they are religiously respectful to their eldest brother. It is quite amazing that the 3 brothers run their business in great harmony.

He has qualities of Confucian entrepreneurs. He seldom carries the word "profit" in his conversations; he always strives for excellence. His purpose is not only for the benefit of CEC, suppliers and customers, but also to create a win-win situation and thus serve and influence the communities at large.

I embrace Chen Jie, Chen Jin and Chen Yuan, and CEC for all their successes and wish them all the very best in the future.

> Henderson Tse, CPA, CA, LPA

It is a great honour to be asked to contribute to the commemorative book for Chens Enterprises 10th anniversary celebration. I first met Jie back in 2010 when compostable bags were just starting to come onto the market for new residential compost collection programs. Jie approached Ralston to source our Biosak compostable bags and that was the start of our relationship and many meetings at Tim Hortons on Dundas Street in Mississauga near Chens first location.

I have watched as Chens Enterprises has developed over the years moving to several different locations and widening their customer base and product offerings. Jie and I have become more than just business associates; we are friends and I always look forward to our lunches with Jie introducing me to some of his favorite restaurants and foods from native China.

Whenever we meet, our conversations are slow to develop into business as we discuss our families and how we are both doing. Never have I left a meeting without a product Jie has in his office. A true gentleman and I look forward too many more years of working with Jie, his family, and their team.

On behalf of everyone at W. Ralston we congratulate Chens Enterprises on hitting this milestone anniversary and wish everyone good health and great success in the years to come.

With Great respect.

> Neil Fisher
National Account Manager
W. Ralston (Canada) Inc.
Inteplast Group

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W. Ralston

It is an honour to be able to provide a testimonial for Jie Chen. I have been fortunate enough to be able to work with Jie for over the past 5 years.

Jie is always willing & able to provide opportunities that others do not see or appreciate. He leaves 'no rock unturned' in his quest to build business. Jie treats me as a partner in his business - looking for ways to build our mutual businesses together.

Jie is a tough negotiator, but once finished negotiating, Jie is true to his word & delivers on his promises.

We wish Jie continued success into the future and thank him for his continued support of our brand, when there are many who compete for our business.

Thank you.

> Vince Morrison
Key Account Director
Freeman Signature

NAYA

FOUNDER AND FORMER CEO OF T&T SUPERMARKET

I am really happy I can share Chens Brothers' Success.

Mr. Chen (Jie) is a very intelligent man, he is always striving to learn more daily. Through his tireless work ethic, never give up attitude, Jie and his brothers have built a very successful and sustainable business model. Jie knows what ethnic customers need and wisely expands his business rapidly while always maintaining a professional demeanor.

Jie fully understands how the Chinese business person operates. He is the only Chinese distributor with rich supermarket retail experience. He used to successfully own and operate a Chinese supermarket chain in GTA. Jie is willing to help others when needed. Through his understanding and passion, Jie has built a great network in Oriental community.

Jie is very fluent in both English and Chinese. He gained his Medical Doctor degree in China and earned his Engineering degree at the University of Toronto. Jie has been well educated under both Oriental and Western culture, plus his business acumen, this has given him advantage and great understanding of how business operates in the Western world.

Jie and his two brothers, Jin and Yuan, built Chens Enterprises from the ground up through blood, sweat and tears, starting the business from Jie's home basement in 2008 to their current 100,000 square feet multifunctional warehouse. Over the Years, Jie has forged tremendous partnerships with world renown manufacturers. Chens Enterprises becomes a strong bridge, connecting Mainstream manufactures with Ethnic supermarkets.

> Cindy Lee
Founder and Former CEO of T&T Supermarket

大統華 T&T Supermarket

Through demonstrating fundamental Canadian values such as doing business with integrity and celebrating opportunities through diversity, Chens Enterprises is a deserving winner of the 2013 Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs Most Progressive Business Award, 2014 finalist for the Canada's Best managed Companies program and recently a nominee for the Golden Pencil Award. Congratulations to Jie, his brothers and the whole team at Chens Enterprises for a decade of spectacular accomplishments! Wishing you more success in the many years to come.

> Keith Kwan
MNP Partner

MNP LLP

DUNNE STRATEGIES INC.

I have known Chens Enterprises Corporation for a number of years but it has been over the past two (2) years that I have had the wonderful opportunity to build out a very healthy friendship with Jie Chen. The corporation is driven by the passion and commitment to do what is right by his employees, customers and vendors alike... focused on win win solutions for all.

We speak often on how to ensure his service levels to his customers are best in class and that recently came too light as he implemented an online platform allowing it easier for his customers to do business with Chens Enterprises staying relevant in a changing marketplace.

Chens has developed strategic partnerships with multiple Blue Chip companies where they have negotiated a preferred/exclusive distributor deal for the ethnic trade in Ontario. These decisions do not come lightly from these organizations in today's climate. Chens Enterprises certainly does not take them for granted as they continue to grow their business in a class of trade they know extremely well and have built out a high level of trust and ability to serve and manage.

Jie and the entire Chens Enterprise Corporation should be very proud of what they have accomplished in there first 10 years. I wish them continued success as an employer, partner and distributor in the next 10 years.

> Bill Dunne
> President -Dunne Strategies Inc.
> Former CEO, ACOSTA

It has been a pleasure to watch Chens Enterprises flourish over the last 10 years. Jie and his family and Team epitomize hard work and a great business ethic. I feel fortunate to have worked, learned and laughed with them throughout this time. Congratulations and good luck for the next ten years!

Sincerely,

> John B. Long
> Business Development Manager
> Reckitt Benckiser Canada Inc.

rb
HEALTH · HYGIENE · HOME

I met Mr. Chen through business dealings when he was working in a Chinese supermarket. He is an honest business man, a friend I can trust.

Later, we learned from each other that we were not businessman at all when we came to Canada, but we took the opportunity, risk and hard work to become who we are today.

Mr. Chen and I are thankful that Canada gives a new life by turning us upside down and inside out.

> Jack Jia
> President
> Chinese News

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on your

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CONGRATULATIONS

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10th Anniversary

Nestlé

Dan K. Woo, *Interviewer and Co-Author*

Dan K. Woo is the author of ***Learning How to Love China***, and winner of the 2018 Ken Klonsky Novella Award. He received his B.A. in history from the University of Toronto. Following graduation he lived and worked in various positions for over a decade in Hong Kong and China. He currently lives in Toronto, Ontario with his wife.

"Learning How to Love China" by Dan K. Woo is a biting satire of modern-day China and its social hierarchies. Little Comrade, a young woman who struggles with the expectations of her family and the romantic fantasies of a mythical place called Canada, is caught in a cycle of working poverty, and navigates a world that is equal parts tragedy and comedy. Brilliantly funny and slyly political, ***Learning How to Love China*** is the 21st century social satire we didn't know we were missing." - Jen Sookfong Lee, radio personality for CBC Radio One, and author of ***End of the East, The Better Mother***, and ***The Conjoined***.

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