

# THE MAYWAY MAILER

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## In The Community

### Mayway Opens Its Doors to Students

by Wylie Huey, L.Ac.

Students from the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (ACTCM) received a rare treat this September when Mayway hosted its first ever student field trip. Professor Mark Frost brought over his Patent Medicines Class students to get a first-hand, behind-the-scenes look at the business side of Chinese Medicine.



As one of several student programs currently in development, the event was engaging, informative, and a complete success.

On the day of the field trip, participants were visibly excited to get out of the classroom to learn about herbs and the industry. Mayway President Yvonne Lau greeted the group personally and shared the rich history of the company. "There's this perception that we're large and unreachable, but after 45 years, we're still a family operated business. We have very loyal customers, and great employees that are like family." Yvonne was referring to Mayway's humble beginnings as a small herb shop in San Francisco's Chinatown before moving to our current Oakland location.

Students first toured the Mayway offices, order processing area, warehouse and loading dock, including the quarantine area, which was especially interesting. Although just a large, restricted access area, it is the place where most of the physical quality control takes place. While all herbs and products have been extensively tested prior to



arrival for species authentication and general safety, they are quarantined upon arrival, pending further inspection, sampling, and sometimes retesting before they can be considered inventory and sold. Familiar with identifying herbs but not so much with the quality control aspects, students were impressed by Mayway's strict quality control standards to ensure safety.

Next, I led a tour of the Mayway Herbal Dispensary. Most students have very basic training when it comes to working with herbs, and from the viewing area just outside the Dispensary, many were surprised at how modern and clean it was. Students were intrigued by the extensive cGMP guidelines we employ when informed that staff wear lab coats, hair nets, face masks, and shoe mitts before entering the certified clean room area; that hands must be washed and disposable gloves donned before touching any surface, let alone herbs. Numerous guidelines pertaining to facility sanitation, ingredient traceability, labeling, and herb storage were also explained. One student initially commented that it seemed "over the top," but as a professional third-party dispensary preparing prescriptions for practitioners nationwide, the group quickly realized how necessary all the



Dispensary's quality control measures are to ensure safety.

The incredible range of treatment styles that herbalists employ, as well as the sheer volume of prescription orders the Dispensary receives, demand that we carry an incredible variety of only the best herbal medicine. Back in our conference room, we gave students a chance to touch, smell, and experience our herbs first hand by participating in an interactive herb ID contest. The game brought out the competitive nature of ACTCM students (as expected)! An informative slideshow where Yvonne explained the manufacturing of teapills, tablets and extract powders, testing, and other quality control measures surrounding Chinese Medicine was presented, followed by a lively discussion of pesticide use on herbs and the situation of organic herbs in China. This concluded the over 2 hour field trip.

We enjoyed spending time with Professor Frost and his class, and appreciated their participation and review of our pilot program. Based on the overwhelmingly positive feedback, we look forward to meeting and interacting with more students and their teachers at future field trips here at Mayway.

The Mayway Student Field Trip is just one of many student programs currently in development. If you are an educator and would like information about how to participate, please contact Wylie Huey, Dispensary Manager, at 510-208-3113 ext. 8137 or [wyliehuey@mayway.com](mailto:wyliehuey@mayway.com).

*Bio:*

*Wylie Huey, L.Ac. is a licensed acupuncturist. His passion for Chinese medicine stems from family, who exposed him to herbs at an early age. As the Dispensary Manager at Mayway, he handles herbs on a daily basis and oversees all aspects of filling customized formulas for practitioners from all over the country. He is a big fan of community acupuncture and has a private practice in Oakland, CA.*