



US-China Review

Fall 2019

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**Videos Highlight Friendship
Essay Winner Named
National Convention Set for Minnesota
Young, Old Share Hangzhou Retirement Home**

Letter from the President



US-China Peoples Friendship Association

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40 Years and Beyond: Friendship, Successes and Challenges

Greetings to all!

With the USCPFA National Convention in Minnesota on the horizon (October 18–20), I hope you have made your flight and hotel arrangements and are prepared to participate in an exciting weekend filled with cultural and friendship events. You will be surrounded by multi-sensory experiences for your enjoyment. Art, music, food, plenary sessions, diplomats, speeches, awards, friends, gardens, architecture, poetry, fall weather, videos, new insights and more await the fearless traveler. The convention theme will focus on *Forty Years and Beyond: Friendship, Successes and Challenges*.

Because of the important anniversary year of formal diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China, USCPFA is sponsoring the project 40 Videos for 40 Years, 1979–2019. The videos, by USCPFA members and others, share the friendship stories between U.S. and Chinese friends over four decades. These are amazing friendship stories that you will love to hear—about how we started as an organization, and what we have done in the many years since then. Many of the stories are summarized in this *US-China Review (USCR)*.

USCPFA initiated a student essay contest called “My China Friendship Experience,” in which college students were invited to write their own personal story about friendship with the Chinese people. One essay winner, Stephen Fong, a University of Arizona law student, gives his own literary insights into “Culture as a Perspective” and how martial arts impacted his thinking and his life’s view. The other winner, Alexandra Casale, a student at Wake Forest University, wrote about “My First Time Seeing a Doctor in China.” Both essays are featured in this *USCR*.

As you can imagine, there will be much to learn and much to experience in Minneapolis. I wish you well. Keep your chapter strong and safe travels to all!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Diana C. Greer', is written in a cursive style.

Diana Greer
President of USCPFA



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US-CHINA PEOPLES FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

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*The US-China Peoples
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of China and the United States.*

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About the cover: Margaret Wong, of the Minnesota chapter, a participant in USCPFA's "Forty Videos" project. On the bookshelf are photos of her father, Jun Chow Wong, who was a Nationalist general, and some of her student groups. See a summary of her story on page 8.

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Forty Videos for the 40th Anniversary of U.S.-China Ties

Editor: Here's the latest about the Forty Videos project from Christine Aylward (Southeast Florida chapter and National Board member), who modestly neglected to note that she spent countless hours editing the videos.

By Christine Aylward

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the normalization of U.S.-China relations, the USCPFA National Board launched the 40 Videos for 40 Years project. The video committee is comprised of Diana Greer, Evelyn Mei and Christine Aylward. Each chapter was encouraged to have its members videotape their experiences with China and the USCPFA.

Our members stepped up. By March 31, we received 67 videos from 62 members from all over the country. Their historic

and inspiring stories have proven what a vital role the USCPFA has consistently played in U.S.-China relations since the early 1970s. The project has documented many significant moments in our members' journeys with the people of China. This monumental project will be enjoyed and appreciated by all members for many years to come.

The video committee is very grateful to each and every member who participated in this project, by no means an easy feat considering that many had no prior experience with video making and transfer. Special thanks to Evelyn Mei (Long Beach chapter), Karlynn Fronek (Minnesota chapter), Gordon Hu (Southeast Florida chapter), Vernon Ching (Honolulu chapter) and Elizabeth Kraft (Long Beach

chapter) for their countless emails to deliver their members' videos successfully to the committee.

The videos will be presented at our convention in Minnesota in October and later to our membership body. In the meantime, you can read summaries of some of the videos in this issue of the *USCR*, and there will be more in the next issue. ■



Christine Aylward

Dozens of Videos, Dozens of Friendship Stories

By Mike Revzin

While all of the videos submitted by USCPFA members have one thing in common—U.S.-China friendship—each video tells a unique story. Here are summaries of some of them.

Diana Greer, Richmond chapter, USCPFA president

A (Musical) Note of Friendship

Diana Greer's video starts with her playing the "Kangding Love Song," one of the world's most popular folk songs, on a soprano recorder. It's an appropriate beginning, because Greer is a retired music teacher whose first trip to China came on a teacher's scholar grant from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

"That was the beginning of my China years," she recalled. Going on a 'friendship for the arts tour'... was my chance to see China and meet many wonderful Chinese people."

Among her many subsequent trips was one to Nanchang, capital of Jiangxi

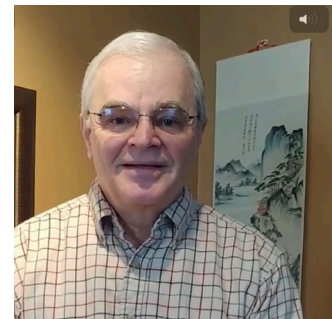


province, in 2010 for the Fourth Friendship Forum. She said she made many new friends there, including Madame Li Xiaolin, president of the Chinese Peoples Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, "who magically arranged a surprise visit for us to meet President Jimmy Carter in Shanghai." Greer also mentioned the importance of the USCPFA national conventions and Washington seminars.

"Music has brought me to China, and through music and the arts we can raise our voices to bring about a deeper understanding of each other by listening to and caring about each other," she said.

"China is our most important partner in the global economy, and we should increase our friendship links and cultural ties to the Chinese people," Greer said. "I hope that we can forge a stronger friendship in years to come and build on what was started formally in 1974 when we became the US-China Peoples Friendship Association."

She concluded by saying, "To all of our remarkable Chinese friends, thank you for so many years of friendship. And may we together have many, many more years to come." ■



Ralph Beha, Minnesota chapter president

50 Years of Legal Bliss

Ralph Beha has been involved with China since he majored in East Asian Studies almost 50 years ago. As a lawyer, he has done business with China since 1982. Beha has also taught East Asian political economy in a local MBA program and served on several nonprofit boards involving China.

"In almost five decades I've noticed remarkable changes in the business culture with the growth of an entrepreneurial class lifting over 700 million people in China out of poverty," he said. He said he has seen foreign connections expand from "the thin thread of dedicated Youxie and USCPFA pioneers to robust connections among regional, national and local governments, and other cultural changes as well."

Other changes over the years include going from "Negotiating with teams wearing Mao jackets to the current Western fashion and style, from cities swarming with bicycles and noxious buses to highspeed rail, electric vehicles and other transport. From very tenuous connections between the U.S. and China to a vast number of business travelers, student visits, exchanges and foreign study programs."

"We've seen a revolution of expectations on both sides. From the West we've gone from viewing menacing Red China to very high and probably unattainable hopes for an immediate Western liberal democracy."

Beha said he has seen things change in China "from a lack of any meaningful legal system or judiciary to an ever-strengthening rule of law. From dealing exclusively with state-run enterprises and joint ventures in a totalitarian communist economy to a very diverse and often confusing mix of business actors and roles."

"And in China, they've gone from viewing us warily as American imperialists to partners on the geopolitical stage, even when we seem sometimes to be unwilling. They've gone from a very closed-off society and economy to participating with the United States and the West in significant multilateral and bilateral arrangements across all arenas."

"And from a self-perception of a poor, developing country needing tender treatment and special breaks to a self-confident power staking its own path. And from a people, simply having enough rice and a place to live, to a large, modern, robust consumerist and wired personal life and vibrant dreams to go along with that."

"Through all of this I experienced the spirit of friendship, deep friendship, from my first visit to Hong Kong (as a banking intern), visiting with a modest and warmly welcome home of a fellow intern's parents back in 1971, to a friendly pickup game of pingpong I wandered into in Beijing in 1983, despite mutual language barriers."

"We've experienced family friendships since 1980, spanning generations," he said.

He noted "our current sister city relationships between Minneapolis and Harbin and St. Paul and Changsha" where the Minnesota USCPFA chapter is active in engaging cultural, academic, local gov-

ernment and business actors and ties in an ongoing and regular basis.

"Here at the USCPFA in Minnesota we're going to continue to build these bonds through creating contexts for personal connection and understanding," Beha said, concluding, "I believe this spirit of person-to-person connection will help us get the United States and China through rough patches we inevitably face and move on to a continuing peaceful and prosperous and amicable future." ■

An Wei, Minnesota chapter *An Ardent Bridge Builder*

An Wei, who began working as an English interpreter in the Foreign Affairs office of Shaanxi province in 1967, also served in that province as secretary-general of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. He has also been an official of other China-related groups, as well as an official with translators organizations.



"But I call myself a bridge builder," he said. "Building bridges of friendship and understanding between the Chinese and American people."

"I have a special relationship with Minnesota. For 40 years, USCPFA Minnesota has been my partner in the United States," he said.

In the late 1970s, he hosted two friendship delegations from Minnesota headed by Fred Ptashne. In 1982, An Wei was a member of the first government delegation from Shaanxi to visit the Twin Cities.

For 20 years, beginning in the 1980s, he was a guide for annual tours to China by students from Minnesota's Breck School, organized by Margaret Wong.

"Many of those students later became the backbone of Sino-American exchanges in the fields of economy, trade, culture and education," he said.

He also has worked for years with the

Concordia Language Villages program, as well as the Minnesota-based Global Volunteers, which did 180,000 hours of service for schools, enterprises and hospitals in Shaanxi.

"The establishment of official relations promoted the exchanges among the people, from all walks of life. The exchanges at the grassroots levels have also facilitated the visits of official delegations," he said.

"The Chinese and the Americans are peace-loving people. No matter what frictions and differences may occur now or in the future between politicians of the two countries, the two peoples will stand shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand and continue to build the bridge of friendship leading to the future," he concluded. ■

Judy Manton, Northern New Jersey chapter *Building Bridges with China*

Judy Manton begins her video by talking about her late husband, Tom Manton, who was born to missionary parents in Burma. During his childhood, he had



heard from his mother about her love for China, where she had been born and where she had lived as a child of missionary parents and later as a teacher.

Tom earned a Ph.D. in international relations and founded the Committee for a New China Policy, lobbying the U.S. government to change its China policy and for China to replace Taiwan at the United Nations.

In 1971, after the People's Republic of China obtained the U.N. seat, Tom's committee was invited to send a 12-person delegation to visit China.

"So, in January 1972, we entered China, seven years before our two countries established diplomatic relations. The only Americans in China were a few leftists, supportive of the revolution," she recalled.

"A few days after we arrived in Beijing in 1972, our delegation received a notice to

Continued on next page

Judy Manton (continued)

be ready to meet a high official sometime that night. As Premier Zhou Enlai had the reputation of working late at night, we hoped he would be the one we would meet. At 2 a.m. we were driven to the Great Hall of the People, where Premier Zhou received us."

Zhou thanked Tom Manton for his efforts to help China obtain the U.N. seat, which occurred in 1971. Judy Manton presented Zhou with a button from the One-China movement in the United States.

The Mantons were invited to dinner by Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Zhang Wenjin, and Qiao Guanhua, who had played an important role in talks with Henry Kissinger and the drafting of the Shanghai Communique.



Judy and Tom Manton, Zhou Enlai.

Zhang would later become ambassador to the United States and Qiao the head of the first delegation to the U.N.

"They asked us a lot of questions about President Nixon, who was to visit after our return. They also asked for our suggestion as to which gift the Chinese people should give the American people. My mouth opened and out came 'a pair of pandas,'" said Manton.

"Can you imagine our astonishment when we returned home and, while watching on TV Nixon in Beijing, we heard the announcement that the Chinese were giving the Washington Zoo a pair of pandas? Well, later I learned that Mrs. Nixon had also suggested a pair of pandas. So I guess that's why the pandas were gifted to the Washington zoo. But I said it first." ■



Photo by Linda Hanley

Marge Ketter, Southeast Florida May Have Been Chinese in Previous Life

Marge Ketter has served as National Secretary and Regional Chair, and is now Chapter Chair in Southeast Florida. She begins her video by saying, "When I'm asked what my interest in China is, I really don't know other than, in a previous life, I may have been Chinese. I've been interested in China and the Chinese people since I was a teenager."

In 1977 Ketter, who has a banking background, was asked to become treasurer of what was to become a new USCPFA chapter. "I knew nothing about the US-China Peoples Friendship Association," she said.

Her first trip to China was on a Youxie tour in 1983. "That was quite an experience, because that was the early days and China only had a few places open." She later made several other trips to China. "The many trips I took produced a lot of interesting experiences and very good Chinese friends," she said.

She became a member of the National Board, was secretary for the board for 14 years and national treasurer for several years, while also active at the local level.

"The main program of our chapter...has been financially assisting mainland Chinese who came here as grad students. In the '80s, the early years, they didn't have a lot of money. They came with maybe \$100 in their pocket, \$200 in their pocket. They learned about us and we started financially assisting them with their tuition and books. And that continues to be our main focus right now, in addition to offering three or four meetings a year."

Ketter concluded by saying, "Although we don't have the thousands of members

that we had in the beginning, I think that the USCPFA still has a role in promoting the understanding between the Chinese people and the Americans, and it can only lead to world peace if we get to know each other better." ■

Nancy Li, Chairman of the Board, Houston chapter

Dedication, Passion and Commitment

Nancy Li has held several leadership roles since she began her involvement with the Houston chapter of USCPFA in 2001. In that year, Houston created a Friendship Ambassador award to recognize individuals who distinguished themselves in U.S.-China friendship and cooperation. Houston has also established the Young Friendship Ambassador scholarship to encourage the younger generation to study China.

Li is also active in many other organizations. More than a century ago, Russian Jews played a major role in developing Li's hometown of Harbin, in northeast China. This led Li to study the role of Jews in China, and to become involved in Houston's Jewish community.

She has served on the board of Holocaust Museum Houston and is now the board secretary. With the help of the USCPFA's Houston chapter, she was involved in bringing an exhibit about the Jews in China to U.S. cities. She is also a founding members and vice chairman of the International World War II Museum Association.

The core values of all these organization "is to make the world better and peaceful by educating people against hate and prejudice," she said.

Li recalled a member's presentation at her chapter's gala in 2018, in which photos were displayed showing the dramatic improvements that have taken place in China since 1978.

"Many people like me have benefitted from the great diplomatic and economic relations between the U.S. and China,"



she said. "I believe a great and healthy relation between the U.S. and China is so critical for world peace and prosperity. So, as a loyal member and leader of USCPFA, I feel more obligated to continue my dedication and passion to enhance friendship and cooperation by helping educate the people on both sides of the world." ■

Randall Chang,
Hawaii subregion, Honolulu chapter
An International Banker's Journey

Randall Chang decided to study Asian history and Mandarin during his undergraduate years to learn more about his roots. He later earned a Ph.D. in modern Chinese history and international economics.

"I guess you can say, from an academic viewpoint, my China story emanated from my pride in my cultural heritage, combined with an intellectual curiosity in the future of China," he said.

"The late 1960s was the time of the great Cultural Revolution, where tremendous changes were occurring in China. As a graduate student, I was fascinated to study and follow these current events unfolding history before my eyes."

"In the 1970s, American banks were eager to grow their geographical presence overseas," Chang explained.

As a result, he began a career as an international banker, working in the U.S. and Asia.

"As an international banker, my knowledge of China was an important component. For example, in 1981 I was part of a 10-member banking delegation who were invited to visit China to give banking seminars to the Bank of China... This was the first American banking delegation to visit China after the opening of China."

In 1993 he returned to Hawaii to become a bank president. That year, he also joined the USCPFA.

"I was so happy to find an organization in Hawaii with close ties to promoting friendship with China," he said.



In 2004 he retired from the corporate world to "focus on my real love, that of being a university professor," first in Guangzhou and later in Hong Kong.

He now lives in Hawaii, but spends several months a year teaching in Guangzhou.

"None of this would have been possible if I had not embarked on a voyage of studying about China and taking some courses in Mandarin when I first set off to college many years ago as a young man," he said.

Chang said he has loved his career. "It always saddens me to hear a person say, 'I can't wait until I retire.'"

"Because my work has been so closely tied to my interest in China and Asia, I always like to say I hope I never retire."

"I hope that my story will lead others to activate their interest in China and also join our friendship association," he concluded. ■

Walter Graff, Minnesota chapter
Finding More Than Just Friendship

Walter Graff found more than friendship when he joined the USCPFA—(spoiler alert) he found love.

Graff, a board member of the Minnesota chapter for more than three decades, also served as chapter president or co-president during some of that time.

It all began with what he called "a mid-life adjustment," when he found himself newly single and decided to go to the University of Minnesota extension school and take Chinese history and language courses. This led him to a USCPFA event, where he liked the fact that people came from different backgrounds and had different viewpoints.

"The other appeal was the idealism and the premise of the Friendship Association, which of course is that personal people-to-people contacts, people-to-people relationships between

people from different countries, and for that matter people of different cultures, people within your own country that you think of as foreign or that you think of as different. That's the wonderful tool to break down barriers, to understand each other, to learn from each other. And from that to grow societies or groups that work well and appreciate each other..."

At one point, USCPFA Minnesota helped about 600 University of Minnesota graduate students from China, he said. He added, "It was also a period when USCPFA had some privileges... we weren't then the exclusive agent for getting to China, but we were certainly an excellent way and a knowledgeable way for people to visit China. And we had the privilege of being able to attract interesting delegations, rare delegations in those days, and visits from the consul general from Chicago, even an occasional visit from the ambassador."

Graff said there were two ways the USCPFA had an influence on his life. In November 1989, on his first trip to China, a tour sponsored by Youxie-USCPFA, he became ill and was treated with a combination of Western medicine and traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture. He came back as a believer, and eventually became board chairman of the first accredited school of acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine in Minnesota.

But an even greater impact on his life occurred at a USCPFA annual picnic, where he met fellow member Margaret Wong. They have been married since 1989. ■



Walter Graff

A Pioneer in Teaching Chinese in High School

Margaret Wong, Minnesota chapter *The Chosen Path*

Margaret Wong begins her video with a cheerful, “Ni hao?”—an appropriate start for a pioneer Chinese language teacher. Wong, who was born in China, came to the United States as a teenager, via Brazil.



Later, while she was teaching English and French in Minneapolis public schools, the school superintendent found out that she was Chinese and told her, “You ought to be teaching Chinese in our schools because President Nixon has already visited China.”

“The very next day, the head of the Modern Languages Department recruited me to begin teaching the next week, which was the beginning of the new trimester. This is how I began my 40-year career teaching Chinese in American high school,” she said.

“Teaching Chinese in high school at the time was quite a novelty, and so I was interviewed in the newspaper,” said Wong. After that, Ted Farmer, a founding member of the USCPFA Minnesota chapter and professor of Chinese history at the University of Minnesota, nominated her to be one of two teachers to lead a delegation of 20 American high school students to China.

The invitation came from Youxie, which asked the national office of USCPFA to coordinate the first trip of young Americans to China. Wong joined the USCPFA in 1976, the same year she was selected for the trip.

A Month to Prepare

“I had only one month to make all of the preparations for this trip. My children were toddlers at the time and we had just closed on our house three days before departure. However, no matter how difficult it seemed at the time, I was not going to

decline such a special opportunity—visiting the country that I had fled as a child with my family,” she said.

“My father having been a Nationalist general in Chiang Kai-shek’s army, and now this was going to be an opportunity to get reunited with the rest of my family left behind more than 30 years ago.”

The month-long trip included a four-day orientation in San Francisco. The two teachers and their students devoted that time to “Dealing with all the trip logistics, jamming in more than 5,000 years of Chinese history, learning about Chinese government and language, rehearsing our different talents, such as singing, dancing and playing a musical instrument—since we were told that we had to perform for our Chinese hosts throughout the trip.”

“You ought to be teaching Chinese in our schools because President Nixon has already visited China.”

“I remember teaching very special words and slogans that I had to become acquainted with like ‘comrade,’ ‘commune,’ ‘brigade,’ ‘cadre,’ ‘dictatorship of the proletariat,’ ‘Red Guards,’ ‘Friendship first, competition second,’ and teaching the 20 students how to do the Chairman Mao’s four-minute exercises.”

“And I taught them songs,” Wong added, such as *The East is Red*.

Upon arrival in Beijing, the group was met by seven guides—two from Youxie and five foreign language students and teachers.

“A ratio of one to three. Imagine that hospitality—never to be equaled,” Wong said.

“They accompanied us throughout the entire 20-day trip to seven cities,” Wong said, including Mao Zedong’s hometown of Shaoshan, in Hunan province, which was near her father’s hometown.

Cadre Schools

“Besides going to many of the famous monuments and historical sites, such as the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, we went to Peking University, middle schools, youth palaces, sports schools, and cadre schools, where I was severely admonished for calling rice shoots as green onions. And they said I could really benefit from spending some time at the cadre school.”

“We went to factories, hospitals—where we observed surgery under acupuncture anesthesia. Shopping in Friendship Stores—remember those? Welcome banquets and farewell banquets, on and on in every city.”

“We met with students, farmers, factory workers, cadres, government officials, common people in their homes—and were inspired by the uniformity of their patriotic spirit and their purpose in life, and that is to, ‘wei renmin fuwu,’ 为人民服务 ‘serve the people.’”

“One elderly Chinese woman asked me if Justin, a blond, curly haired, blue-eyed, very tall young man, was my son,” said Wong. “When I asked her how I could I, a short Chinese woman have a son like Justin, she said without hesitation, that, of course, he was born in the United States, and he was brought up with milk and lots and lots of meat.”

“That first trip left such an indelible mark on my mind, in my heart, that from that day on I decided to include a China trip as part of my curriculum. So, in 40 years of teaching Chinese, I have organized and led more than 32 trips to China... as small as 24 people, and as big as 75 students and their parents.”

When Wong made the recording for the 40 Videos project, she was planning a special trip.

“I will be taking my smallest group, of 12. And they will be my children and their spouses and all my grandchildren, to see the China that has transformed 180 degrees many times over since that very first trip in 1976.”

“Thank you, USCPFA national, for changing the path of my life.” ■



The Wei Family, Southeast Florida chapter: Yuhe Zhu, Liqian Wei and Angela Wei.

A Family Affair

Liqian Wei has been a USCPFA member since 1996. His video also includes comments from his wife, Yuhe Zhu, and their daughter, Angela Wei.

Liqian Wei came to the United States 24 years ago as a student from China and was introduced to the USCPFA, which gave him a scholarship.

Twenty-five years later he became director of a U.S. IT company and moved back to China with his family to set up a research and development center for that company.

"That was also a great experience to continue to carry on the mission and build strong relationships between the two countries," he said.

Angela Wei described her experience in China.

"During my three years living there, I observed many new things about the Chinese culture as a foreign teenager living in China, and I was able to maintain a blog with the Palm Beach chapter's USCPFA website so I could share with my fellow U.S. citizens what life in China is like for a foreign teenager."

Yuhe Zhu commented, "The USPFA is really a great organization. We feel very lucky to be part of it. And knowing so many nice and friendly people. We enjoy every moment of the activities."

Her father added, "We really wish all the best to the organization and every member, and we'd also like to say, 'Happy anniversary.'" ■

Ted Farmer, Minnesota chapter

Journey of a Chinese History Professor

Ted Farmer spent his career at the University of Minnesota, teaching Chinese history.

"I made my first trip to mainland China in 1975 with the USCPFA," he said, adding that he has been a member ever since.

"We were a group from the Midwest and we went to China at the end of the Cultural Revolution, so it was very interesting to see what China was like. I had lived in Taiwan and been to Hong Kong, but I had no idea what the People's Republic was like."

"It was a great shock to see many of the things that we saw," he recalled. "I had expected that China building socialism

would be very dynamic and lively, and what I found was that it was quite the opposite.

The people in factories were rather sullen. They moved very slowly. People had one-speed bikes, which they rode sedately. Everybody took a two-hour nap in the middle of the day. It was just quite different from what I had imagined."

Farmer's video also describes details of the chapter's early years.

"I consider myself a lifelong member of the USCPFA," he said. ■



Robert Sanborn, Indiana, National President, 2005–2011

What Lifetime Experiences

Robert Sanborn's introduction to China was in the 1970s, when he took a class at Indiana University called "Chinese political systems."

"This was near the end of the Cultural Revolution in China and the political turmoil there was even more interesting than watching President Richard Nixon resigning from the White House office in August of 1974. To compare the two systems was truly fascinating and hard to believe," he said.

He was also thrilled when he found the China Books & Periodicals bookstore in Chicago.

"It was a treasure trove of books and materials about China that you just did not see anywhere else."

Another person who helped Sanborn develop an interest in China was Ernest Heppner, who was in his computer club. Heppner came to Minneapolis by way of Shanghai as a German refugee, and wrote a book called *Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto*.

Sanborn goes on to describe how he joined the USCPFA after he learned about it from friends and acquaintances. He also tells of his experiences at national conventions and the many friends he met along the way.

"To this day, I feel that my greatest accomplishment as a president of USCPFA was to convince Bart Trescott to write the story of USCPFA, *From Frenzy to Friendship: The History of the US-China Peoples Friendship Association*."

"USCPFA has also given me several once-in-a-lifetime trips to China to see things like the hugely contrasting cities of Beijing and Shanghai, the history of Xian and the terracotta warriors, the stunning beautiful sites like the Potala Palace in Tibet and Shangri-La, which is actually a real and beautiful place in China."

"USCPFA is a terrific organization to know and be part of, and I certainly have enjoyed being part of such a terrific group of people. You should also become part of a chapter," he said. ■

**Penny Zhang,
Las Vegas chapter founder and
president**

From Minnesota to Las Vegas

Penny Zhang is the founder and president of the Las Vegas chapter. She came to the U.S. from China in 2000 to work in Minnesota for a high-tech company, and moved to Las Vegas five years ago.

In Minnesota, she became involved in her son's school and also in community activities, such as teaching Chinese language and culture. Through that work, she met Minnesota USCPFA members.

Zheng was involved in a sister school project and with Minnesota's China Friendship Garden. In Las Vegas, she hopes to expand her chapter's activities to include programs on such topics as architecture, crafts, cooking and sports. ■

**Kirk Huang, Northeast New York
chapter president, member of the
National Board**

The Voice of a Bridge Expert

Kirk Huang is a civil engineer who literally works with bridges—not just friendship bridges.

He first attended a USCPFA event in 1999—a Halloween party. He said he still remembers the delicious food, good people and good conversation. He started attending USCPFA events regularly, and eventually served in leadership roles. He is member of the National Board and Secretary of the National Board.



Kirk Huang

"In the beginning, I joined for the fun, for the good people and friendship. But, as time goes on, developing the friendship between the people in the United States and the people from China has become my emphasis," he said.

"There are many proud and memorable events during my tenure with USCPFA, but one event stands out, which is the national convention that was held by our chapter in 2005."

His favorite places in China are the terracotta warriors and the Great Wall. As a civil engineer, he said he is "amazed by the craft and also the technology, the building skills. We are talking about a couple thousand years ago."

Huang said his chapter has been very active and he plans for it to continue to hold many events. "My plan is also to attract more attendance and therefore attract people to become our new members," he said. ■

**Joe Gao, Washington, D.C. chapter
*Friendly Messages***

Joe Gao, born in China, came to the U.S. 19 years ago, and joined the USCPFA eight years ago.

"I wish these two countries can have a great relationship with each other. However, due to the different cultures and different ideologies, there's a huge gap in mutual understanding between these two countries. I hope I can serve as a bridge. A bridge of passing friendly and peaceful messages from the Chinese people to the American people," he said.

Gao hopes that the two countries "can solve some global problems together," such as poverty and terrorism.

"I am a Christian, I believe in God. I hope that God will help these two countries to increase understanding so they can become more friendly with each other."

He concluded, "I love this idea of 40 videos for 40 years of the U.S.-China normalization, and I hope these videos will bring friendly messages to China because China and the U.S. are friends." ■

**Henry Huang, Long Beach chapter
*American Generosity***

Henry Huang came to the U.S. from China as a student, and became a USCPFA member in 1982. "This organization helped me a lot," he recalled. "It helped me to find an American family."

I stayed with them almost 10 years," and later his wife and son joined him.

"The gentleman didn't charge me a penny," he said of his host. "This organization helped us and other students, and we're really grateful."

Huang said the USCPFA still helps a lot of Chinese students, and is a bridge of friendship between the people of China and the U.S. His hope is that "China and U.S. friendship will go from better to best." ■

**Elizabeth Kraft, Long Beach chapter
*"My Favorite Place in China"***

Elizabeth Kraft first went to China in 1995, which was also the year she joined the USCPFA.

"I decided I should join this group and find out what is really going on in China," she said.

Since that time, the Long Beach chapter has "had four or five meetings every year, so we have covered at least 100 topics about U.S.-Chinese relations. It's been a wonderful, eye-opening experience," she said.

"One of the wonderful things about this group has been is that we have a combination of Americans who are just simply interested in China, and people of Chinese heritage."

She said one of the most interesting questions is what is her favorite place in China? The terracotta warriors in Xian come to mind, "but the most exciting view in China is the Li River," near Guilin, she said. ■

Billy Lee Creates Declaration of Interdependence



Billy Lee (William Ming Sing Lee), South Bay chapter

"Years ago, I wrote an article about friendship, called 'Good Feelings,'" said Billy Lee. He was elated when the article was published by the All-China Women's Federation magazine, *Women of China*. He told his friends, including one who was a director of an international foundation. The friend invited Lee to give a workshop in Washington at a gathering of children from all over the world.

The event, held on the National Mall on the Fourth of July, was an opportunity for children to display their talent.

At the festival, Lee distributed fans with the slogan "To Promote Friendship, Be a Friend." It listed "do's and don'ts." For example don't stir up fear or suspicion, do reach out.

Lee and his friend also decided to design a Declaration of *Interdependence*, and propose an international cross-cultural institute on *friendshipology*.

Lee also created the annual Heart-to-Heart Bridges program in which students go to China to paint a friendship mural. ■

1976 — What a Year That Was!

Jim Harkness, Minnesota chapter

Jim Harkness was a delegate to the first high school students tour to the People's Republic of China organized by the USCPFA in the summer of 1976.

"I would never have been able to participate in that trip if it was not for the Minnesota chapter," he said. "People like the Ptashnes, who some of you might remember, and of course the great Margaret Wong who, if you don't know, is the mother of Chinese language instruction and Chinese friendship here in the state of Minnesota, and at that time was my high school teacher at Minneapolis Central High School."

"As soon as she found out there was going to be a tour in the summer of '76, she had all of her students apply, and she signed up to be one of the tour leaders."

Harkness was originally chosen as an alternate but, a few days before the trip,

someone pulled out and he was able to go.

"People talk about how youth is wasted on the young. I have to say that, looking back, those of us on the tour had no idea what a tumultuous year it was for China."

"In the spring, Zhou Enlai had died and there had been the first set of Tiananmen demonstrations."

"We were playing Frisbee at the Dazhai Model Commune and one of our minders ran out and grabbed the Frisbee and said, 'Marshal Zhu De has gone to the peach flower garden. There will be no games played in China for a week.' So we stopped. We didn't



Marshal Zhu De

Continued on next page

Here are the 62 members who submitted a total of 67 videos:

South Bay Chapter: Gerry Low-Sabado, Bet Messmer, Billy Lee, John Marienthal, Dana Eaton (4 videos), Catherine Zhao, George Chadwick, Jana McBurney-Lin, Grace Trafton, Winny Lin, Kenny Lin

Honolulu Chapter: Randall Chang, Frances Goo, Vernon Ching, Leonard Wong, Gordon Lum, Brenda Young Matsui

Northeastern New York Chapter: Rezsins Adams, Kirk Huang

Carbondale Chapter: Kitty Trescott

Las Vegas Chapter: Penny Zhang

Southeast Florida Chapter: Marge Ketter, Nancy Penn, Marty Penn, Joan Gates, Gwen Germaine, Dolores Panaro, Dusty Panaro, Gordon Hu, Christine Aylward, Nina Zhang-Levin, Wei family (Yuhe Zhu, Angela Wei and Lique Wei)

Minnesota Chapter: Linda Mealey-Lohmann, Barbara Harrison, Jim Harkness, Chen Zhou, An Wei, Mary Warpeha, Walter Graff, Ralph Beha, Margaret Wong, Ted Farmer

Sarasota Chapter: Duane Finger, Jill Dye (4 videos, plus one with Duane)

Richmond, Virginia Chapter: Diana Greer, Bonnie Strommer, Nancy Wan, Patsy Pettus, Thelma Williams-Tunstall

Northern New Jersey Chapter: Judy Manton (2 videos)

Metro DC Area: Joe Gao

Nashville Chapter: Barbara Cobb

Houston-Galleria Chapter: Nancy Li, Cresali Lawell

Portland, Oregon Chapter: Paul Morris

Midwest Region: Robert Sanborn

Long Beach Chapter: Elizabeth Kraft, Henry Huang, Mimi Lau, Joe Lissak

1976—What a Year *(continued)*

know who Marshal Zhu De was.”

“And then, a couple of days after our group left China, in July the Tangshan earthquake hit, killing over a quarter of a million people. So that was a close shave, that we had no idea of at the time. And especially because the (Chinese) government suppressed all information about the earthquake.”



Jim Harkness,
Minnesota
chapter

“And then, a month after that, Mao Zedong died and the Gang of Four were arrested. So this was the most important year probably in Chinese history after 1949 and there we were, right in the middle of it, taking our three-week propaganda tour of daycare centers and high schools and model communes. It was an amazing experience, and even if we did not fully understand the historical significance of what we were going through and the political power struggles that were going on all around us, we did have an amazing experience and I will always be so grateful.”

“It certainly changed my life forever. I went on to study Chinese at the University of Wisconsin and lived in China for about 17 years over the last 40, working for the Ford Foundation, running the World Wildlife Fund’s entire China program and working for various other nongovernmental organizations and foundations. And so you have my deep gratitude and I hope you have a successful meeting and best wishes for the association in the future.” ■

Smiles Can Break the Language Barrier

Barbara Cobb, Nashville chapter

Barbara Cobb explained why she joined the USCPFA in 1983 after returning from her first trip to China.

“I wanted to continue learning about China,” she said. “After 35-plus years, I’m still learning—not just in an academic way, but in a personal way, as friendships grow.”

“USCPFA has been instrumental in that learning, not only with its seminars, programs, tours and exchanges, but also for the opportunity to meet people in the U.S. and in China, one-on-one.”

“My first trip to China was an eye-opening experience and I wish that every person would have that experience.”

“After returning home, I attended my first Chinese New Year dinner and sat next to a Chinese man from Taiyuan, capital of Shanxi province. He was a student scholar at Vanderbilt University, and about my age. I was the only American he knew who had been to his home city Taiyuan, and our friendship grew as I attended the tai chi classes he offered each week.”



Barbara Cobb

“In 1988, I visited my friend and his family in Taiyuan for a few days before joining a USCPFA tour in Beijing. They later provided hospitality to USCPFA’s delegations in 1998, 2007, and 2010. Now I chair the Nashville Taiyuan committee for Sister Cities of Nashville and I work on the high school student exchange,” Cobb said.

“People to people friendships blossom and multiply. In the 1980s and into the 1990s the Nashville chapter assisted Chinese students here and offered programs

and social activities to bring the students and local residents together,” she added.

“As more students came, they formed a student association and began providing orientation and assistance to their incoming students. Since then, the association has helped USCPFA by providing student interpreters for visiting Chinese delegations.”

*I learned again and again
that people can communicate
with little or no common
language. With smiles, nods,
showing off babies and taking
photos together.*

“Through this connection, I met a Chinese woman who was a leader in the Chinese student scholar association. Over our 20-year friendship, we have shared the art of dumpling making and our perspectives on business, news, family and other aspects of life.”

“As USCPFA tour coordinator I organized tours to China for about 10 years. I had the joy of showing China to first-time travelers, connecting with people we met and getting to know travelers and Youxie staff who traveled with us. On the streets of China, I learned again and again that people can communicate with little or no common language. With smiles, nods, showing off babies and taking photos together.”

“In 2019 we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the People’s Republic of China and the 40th anniversary of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between China and the United States. Both events are important for our two countries and for the world. I’m glad to be a part of USCPFA, which promotes friendship and understanding between our two countries. We need more of that. Obviously there is still a need for USCPFA.” ■

Thank You to Members Who Worked on Friendship Essay Project

The USCPFA has selected two winners of the “China Friendship Experience” essay contest for students enrolled in U.S. colleges. The USCPFA announced that it would pay expenses for the winners to attend the National Convention. One winner, Stephen Fong, will attend. The other, Alexandra Casale, is overseas and is unable to attend the convention. Their essays are published below.

The judges for the contest were Dr. Elizabeth Kraft of the Long Beach chapter, Dr. Shifen Fox of the Metro D.C. Area chapter, Professor Gerald Kato from the University of Hawaii and Ms. Kathleen Trescott of the Carbondale chapter.

The Hawaii subregion, whose president is Randall Chang, and USCPFA National are the co-sponsors of the project. “We thank the Essay Project Committee, made up of Chair, Frances Goo, Evelyn Mei, Christine Brooks, Kathleen Trescott and Henry Fung,” said USCPFA President Diana Greer. “They have done and continue to do a mountain of work on this ‘pioneering’

project, as Randall calls it. We are grateful to the students who submitted essays and to all of those who did the follow-up work,” said Greer.

When the project was first announced, Chang explained that contestants had to be enrolled or planning to enroll in a Mandarin language course or a course related to China. They were asked to submit an essay explaining why they are interested in learning about China, any kind of memorable events that happened during their learning, and how they intend to use their learning in the coming years.

“The purpose of the contest is to stimulate interest among college-age students about our Friendship Association,” Chang explained. “We hope that this will encourage more knowledge about and interest in joining our organization. This contest provides an opportunity for our various chapters to spread information about our Association to the colleges and universities in their regions.”

Culture as a Perspective

By **Stephen Fong** 冯振辉

Second Year Law Student,

James E. Rogers College of Law, University of Arizona

My interest in China started during my early childhood as a kung fu student and manifested itself when I was in college. For my undergraduate career, I decided to pursue a double major in Political Science with an international relations concentration and East Asian Studies with a Chinese culture focus. The combination of the two set a foundation to pursue a law degree at the University of Arizona and enabled my participation in a legal exchange program for the summer of 2019 hosted by Renmin University in Beijing.

Growing up, I was heavily influenced by martial arts films. These films inspired me to take lessons, and I was fortunate enough to take part in the USA Kung Fu Studio Team in the California Bay Area. The most impactful experience from this team was training in China with the professional Chongqing Provincial Wushu (martial arts) team. This experience with the Chinese team members and the close relationship we developed through grueling training heightened my interest in China. To my surprise, there were no Shaolin monks from a temple teaching us wisdom but instead training was conducted in a modern gym, like those of university sports centers. Most importantly though, I realized that despite our many differences, there were also a great number of similarities. Just like many young people in the USA, the young professional martial artists aspired to be high-level World of Warcraft players and sought out the newest mobile technology.

Aside from igniting an appetite about Chinese culture and history, the training was also a driving force for me to learn the Chinese language. People are often impressed that I learned to

Continued on next page

My First Time Seeing a Doctor in China

By **Alexandra Casale** 孙立欣

Student, Wake Forest University

Last summer, I had quite an interesting medical experience in China.

The day after I arrived in Beijing, I had a painful sore throat. How could this be? I thought, perhaps I have strep? I decided to go to the doctor right away so that they could give me the correct diagnosis. However, I was concerned that if I went alone, the doctor would not understand me. After all, my Chinese level is not too advanced. Fortunately, my tutor, Bai Fan, promised to take me to the doctor and help me translate.

Before going, Bai Fan asked, “Can you ride a bicycle?” At first, I thought I misunderstood her, wondering: “Does she think I cannot ride a bike? Although the main form of transportation in the United States may not be bicycles, we still use them in our country!” Although I was thinking this, I simply replied, “Yes, I can.” So, we found two shared bicycles and started our journey to the hospital. It is common knowledge that many people ride bicycles in Beijing, but I didn’t fully understand just how difficult it would be! Not only were there countless bicycles crowding around each other, but everyone was riding extremely fast! This experience was certainly a frightening one, as I almost hit numerous people along the way. Not only bikes were everywhere, but a multitude of cars too!

After arriving at the hospital, I was quite impressed with its appearance, as I had never seen a hospital this modern and clean before. Once we registered, Bai Fan and I were not sure where to go, so she asked a nearby doctor, “Excuse me, how would we get to the second floor?” Yet, as soon as Bai Fan saw the doctor’s face,

Continued on next page

Culture as a Perspective *(continued)*

read and write Cantonese, Mandarin and Korean in grade school and college, without having any exposure to the languages at home. During my undergraduate years, the reading seemed like a monotonous mountain of books, but thanks to enthusiastic professors, my fellow students and I formed an undergraduate East Asian Studies Journal. Due to my article, "The Lion Dance Outpost: From China to the Overseas Chinese Community," I was elected to the position of assistant editor in my freshmen year and later chief editor. The Journal's goal was to highlight East Asia's role in popular culture, expressive art, and relevance in modern-day topics, ultimately addressing themes not routinely discussed by elitist economists and politicians.

In my classes, I learned that despite the belief that the Chinese people operate under "Confucian" doctrine, that China, just like the USA, is widely diverse in the cultural paths that people follow. This became especially evident when I was immersed in Wushu culture. I grew comfortable with the fact that the relationship between Confucianism and Chinese culture is largely exaggerated. Wushu maintains its own set of morals, ethics and values, and distinctly propagated itself to both commoners and the elite through means of oral tradition, opera, storytelling, and puppet shows. This strategy of dissemination can be readily be seen today with action movies and popular martial fiction.

Wushu culture is often discussed independently, but it is important to note its context. There are two unique sides of traditional Chinese culture, and they are "Wen" and "Wu." "Wen" generally is referring to civil society, while "Wu" tends to correspond with the martial or military side of culture. Wushu falls under the "Wu" category, and although these two are often depicted overseas as conflicting cultures, in China, they are often two sides of the same coin, hence the famous saying "Wen Wu Shuang Quan" (文武双全), implying there must be a balance between martial and civil cultures.

Though having origins in China's past, "Wen" and "Wu" are culturally relevant in modern day China. For example, researchers have commented on "Wen" and "Wu" as frameworks for masculin-

ity, emphasizing these sides ("Wen" or "Wu"), as guiding features for manhood. These concepts should be applied even to politics and international relations, such as the trade war between China and the United States. I strongly believe that the "Wen" and "Wu" concepts would prove to be extremely useful in understanding the reasoning behind some of China's decisions in trade, politics, and society.

Although China's emergence as a global superpower is common knowledge, the decisions that China has made and continues to make are misconstrued by news and media outlets worldwide. There has been an attempt by the international community to better understand this economic and political powerhouse in East Asia, and in my opinion, many of them have come short. It is obvious that some reporters and newscasters feel that China is starting to inappropriately encroach on certain Western powers, and that China's goal is to eliminate Western presence on media platforms. While their fears are understandable, I believe that if taking the framework of "Wen" and "Wu," China is simply establishing a foundation for themselves to not be bullied or harassed. China has had to make certain maneuvers so that China can be self-sufficient when other powers cannot support her.

These maneuvers are the aspects of Chinese growth that scare international analysts the most, but if utilizing the "Wen" and "Wu," it is obvious that China's objective is not to push out the competition or create havoc, but instead, to establish a power balance. It is with this knowledge that I hope to be an effective cultural interpreter so that foreign governments and businesses will have more accurate understandings of China when making global decisions. I have decided to attend law school studying international trade because law appreciates a level of objectivity that is rare in today's media portrayals of international relations. I strongly believe that if I utilize what I have absorbed at Renmin University, and I can impress the understanding I have of Chinese culture onto other Americans, the relationship between China and the USA will be much more harmonious. 友

Seeing a Doctor *(continued)*

her own face turned completely red. The doctor was quite attractive, an ideal 高富帅.* He was very "tall," very "handsome," and probably also very rich, since most doctors receive a generous paycheck. He smiled at Bai Fan and then pointed right beside her, saying, "The elevator is right next to you." Failing to notice this, Bai Fan looked incredibly embarrassed.

After we found the doctor we were looking for, Bai Fan described my symptoms to her. The doctor said, "Okay, open your mouth." After she meticulously examined my throat, the doctor began to laugh. Perplexed, I looked at my Chinese tutor, wondering if she knew what was so humorous. Then, the doctor said, "You are not sick, you simply have allergies." Although I was glad to hear that diagnosis, I also felt embarrassed. After all, we went through such trouble over harmless allergies. The bike ride was more dangerous than the sickness. How funny!

Ultimately, the doctor prescribed allergy pills and we were on our way. On the trip home, my bicycle skills had significantly improved from before! Over the next few days, I took the medicine as required, and soon felt better. From then on, every time I see a doctor, I think of this interesting experience I had in China. 友

* 高富帅: This phrase is composed of three adjectives: 高 (gao) tall, 富 (fù) rich and 帅 (shuài) handsome, and refers to men who possess all three of these enviable qualities. A.K.A, Mr. Perfect!



Do We Welcome You to Minnesota? You Betcha!

The Minnesota Chapter hopes that you take advantage of the National Convention opportunity to come to our great state to reconnect with your USCPFA colleagues from around the country, to make decisions that will affect the future of our association and our country's relationship with China, and (of course) to appreciate the home of Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon ("where the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average").

You'll be able to learn a bit about how to talk Minnesotan, a distinct dialect of American English, derived from our Scandihoovian roots of restraint and reserve (where you don't affirm by saying "yes," but "you betcha" or express a negative opinion gently, with "that's different...").

At the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Nature Preserve, next door to our convention hotel, you'll revel in the uncertainty around our fall weather in mid-October (average temperatures on October 19: high of 57°, low of 39°). It may be sunny and heavenly, or, um, "not so much" (again, a key Minnesotan term). Don't worry about the weather, though, in Minnesota it's bound to change again momentarily. You'll see one of the best museum collections of Asian art in North America at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. You'll see the St. Paul–Changsha Friendship Garden, with the beautiful replica of Changsha's Aiwan Pavilion, rising up on the shores of one of Minnesota's 10,000 Lakes (typical Minnesotan modesty; over 14,000 by actual count).

Maybe you'll also learn something about Minnesota's culture; we've got two major orchestras in town, the most theaters per capita of any U.S. city outside New York, and a vibrant and diverse contemporary and ethnic music scene. Our state has over 260,000 Asian-Americans in all, from Afghani to Vietnamese and Yao.

There's a plethora of affinity groups for all interests: culture, business, education, advocacy/politics, community service; just let us know your interests and we can connect you with them.

Our colleges and universities have been hosting Chinese students since 1914; at any given time there are several thousand Chinese students in the Twin Cities. We'll hear from one Minnesotan, Wing Young Huie, who won the 2019 Minnesota Book Award (memoir and non-fiction) for his book, *Chinese-ness*.

Let's gather in Minnesota in October to celebrate and reaffirm our commitment to building bridges of understanding and friendship between the peoples of the U.S. and China.

—Ralph Beha
Chairman, Minnesota USCPFA



St. Paul–China Friendship Garden.



USCPFA 27th National Convention

October 18–20
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Registration for the convention begins at 2 p.m. Friday, October 18 at the Hilton Airport Hotel. **Friday evening's** events start around 6 p.m. and include a cash-bar cocktail hour, dinner, and comedy by Harkness and Shapiro (pioneering student visitors to the PRC).

– **Saturday's** events begin at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast. The day also includes the opening plenary session, presentations, and discussion groups for resolutions or amendments. Lunch will be at the hotel.

– **Saturday afternoon** includes a field trip via bus to the St. Paul–Changsha China Friendship Garden and Minneapolis Institute of Art's Asian Art Collection.

– **Saturday evening** includes a gala convention banquet at the hotel, with awards and performances.

– **Sunday morning** includes breakfast regional meetings, presentations and a closing plenary session. The convention ends at noon Sunday.

The Gaokao—Adults Look Back on a Life-Changing Exam

By Stephanie Sun

In the previous USCR, we briefly described China's college entrance exam. In this issue, we look at changes that are being considered for the "gaokao."

The *gaokao*, or "high exam," is the most important test in Chinese students' academic careers, and sometimes one of the most important events of their lives.

It takes place in June on the same days all over the country. It tests at least 12 years of studying, and the results can affect a student's life.

People used to say that *gaokao* is like millions of people crossing a river on a single-log bridge at the same time. Without long-term, highly focused study, people can't make it over the river. Only people who have been through it understand the hardship.

10 Hours a Day

"I took the *gaokao* in 1998. I remember that I stayed at school studying from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day. Usually, I studied two hours each morning before school and two hours each night after school," said May Wu, who is now in a doctorate program in Canada. The general consensus is that, to succeed in the *gaokao*, a student must study at least 10 hours a day.

Since 2010, more than 9 million people have taken the test each year. In 2019, about 10.31 million people took the exam. Peking University and Tsinghua University in Beijing are the dream schools of many students. But reality for most students is entrance into universities that are less well-known.

Good Score, Good Life

"If you get in a good university, you have a better chance to get a good job and live a good life," said Fang Li, a teacher.

From 2011, the admission rate into any university for those taking the test has been more than 70%. In 2018, it reached 81.13%.

Most people who take the exam are students in their final year of high school. But some students who failed to get admission in previous years also take the exam again, and some people who didn't go to



*Students take the *gaokao* in 1977. Xinhua photo.*

high school take the exam if they have an equivalent level of knowledge and skills.

The *gaokao*, suspended during the Cultural Revolution and reinstated in 1977, has been through many changes. For example, the dates of the exams were originally July 7–9, but in 2003 they were changed to June 7–9 to avoid hotter weather. Most students have two days of exams, but some places that are experimenting with new evaluation methods have three days of tests.

The exam itself and the standards that universities set for admitting students have also changed.

Such changes usually take place gradually, starting as pilot programs in some regions before being implemented nationally.

All students are tested in Chinese, math and a foreign language, but they have more flexibility as to which other tests they take.

In high school, students study a variety of subjects, but choose to emphasize either liberal arts or science. In the past, liberal arts students then took politics and his-

tory on their *gaokao* tests, while science students took physics and chemistry.

More Choices

Now, students have more choices. Currently in most provinces and regions, all students still take Chinese, math and foreign language tests, and choose one comprehensive subject. Liberal arts students take a comprehensive liberal arts exam that includes politics, history and



*Chen Jiayuan, of Hubei province, hopes to study medicine. She told China Daily, "Life's road is very long and the *gaokao* is just one step along it." China Daily photo.*

*In Northeast China, purple underwear is popular among *gaokao* candidates. In the local dialect, "purple bottom" sounds similar to an affirmation that a person will accomplish their goal.*

—Cai Xuejiao

geography, while science students take a comprehensive science exam that includes physics, chemistry and biology.

Chinese, math and foreign language tests are each worth a maximum of 150 points, while the elective subject accounts for 300 points. Thus, a perfect score is 750. The exam for each subject takes two to three hours. The exam includes multiple-choice and fill-in-the blank questions, as well as an essay section.

Jiangsu province is among the places in which new ways of assessing students are being tried in pilot programs. Jiangsu has tried or proposed a variety of changes. These include evaluating students' character, academic standing, health, and artistic skills. Students will also be tested on several individual subjects in the weeks



Students in Hunan take a break while studying for the gaokao. Xinhua photo.

Gaokao is short for 普通高等学校招生全国统一考试. The official translation is The National College Entrance Examination.

before the gaokao.

Some other reforms are being tried in Shanghai and Zhejiang province. They give students more choices and opportunities, and try to assess students' comprehensive abilities.

For example, those students don't need to choose between liberal arts or science, but can take tests on their strongest subjects. Also, they can take the foreign language test twice and submit the higher score. If the pilot programs are successful, the changes will be implemented nationwide.

Regional Quotas

Despite all the experimenting, a student's score remains, by far, the key factor in gaining admission.

The top universities are required to allocate a certain number of openings for students from each province and region. So, depending on the average scores of students in different regions, and different exam models, the admission standards can be different.

For example, in 2018, science students from Hebei province had to get at least

704 points to get admission to Tsinghua University, but students in some remote regions, such as Qinghai, only needed to get 637. This ensures the diversity of each university.

At the same time, each region sets admission standards for its different universities, based on each school's quality and status. Students who have higher scores have priority in getting admitted to the school of their choice.

"Luckily, I passed the exam with 560 points and was admitted to Suzhou University and studied English education," May Wu said.

Majors are chosen by students, and students with higher scores are given priority for openings in that major.

Art and physics majors usually take exams in those subjects ahead of the gaokao. Their ability in their major subject is considered in the admission process, and their gaokao score is less crucial.

Looking back on the great effort required to get high scores on the gaokao, most people wouldn't want to go through it again. But they also think the efforts paid off.

"It was so tiring. But now, when I think about it, I'm grateful to the gaokao. It totally changed my life. If I didn't pass the gaokao, I think I would be doing routine service work," May Wu said.

Gao Zhi, a university teacher, agreed. "If you let me choose again, I think I would still do it. No pain, no gain," he said.

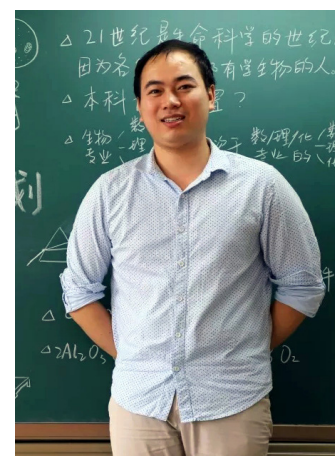
Due to the gaokao's importance and the intense public attention that is focused on it, authorities go to great lengths to prevent cheating and to ensure fairness. The exam papers are guarded around the clock and transported by armed police.

To make sure students are not distracted during the tests, construction work, horn honking and loudspeaker announcements

Continued on next page

Some parents have a mistaken attitude that if they have prayed to God, their child's grades will definitely be better...

—From Gospel Times, published on Chinasource.org



Lu Fajie, a Beijing math teacher, told China Daily that his students are nervous before the gaokao, and so is he. China Daily photo.



Some mothers and teachers wear a qipao while students take the gaokao. “Qi,” which means “flag,” is part of an idiom that means “to win victory.” China Daily photo.

Gaokao (continued)

from buses are not allowed near test sites on exam days. The *New York Times* has reported that air traffic routes from nearby airports are even changed to reduce overhead noise.

Many students and families reduce their stress by staying at nearby hotels on test days.

Bigger Changes?

Even as changes take place with the exam, there is a debate on whether China should continue with its exam-oriented education system or implement wider education reforms.

Some people say the current system is all about scores and can't test the all-around quality of students. They suggest further changes. But people who support the current system think it is the only fair way.

“I think the current gaokao system has many drawbacks. But it has one benefit, which is fairness,” said May Wu.

The opportunity that the gaokao can offer to poor people is also an argument.

“I think the current gaokao system is fair to everybody. Poor people can take the opportunity to get out of their current class

in society. With the so-called ‘all-around development,’ poor people can't afford it,” Fang Li said. All-around development would include things like the ability to play a musical instrument, which would require expensive lessons.

May Wu agreed with her. “It (a system that relied less on the gaokao) would only benefit rich people,” she said.

In the meantime, even those who advocate broader educational changes are not taking any chances. Those who can afford it send their children to after-school lessons to improve their chances of getting higher scores. As in the United States, students who come from wealthier school districts or wealthier families have an advantage.

Nowadays, with the continuing opening of the country, people have a way to opt out of the grueling gaokao path. Having gone through the hard journey themselves, some parents decide to send their children to international schools or abroad before high school.

Also, domestic universities are no longer the only choice for those who take the gaokao, as some universities in North America and Australia accept a gaokao score when considering admission.

A traditional Chinese saying goes, “The pursuit of scholarship surpasses all other occupations.”

Because of China's large population and traditional culture of valuing educated people, the gaokao will remain a major topic of debate in coming years. 友

Stephanie Sun is a Chinese journalist who lives in Shanghai.

Could You Pass the Gaokao?

How would Thomas Alva Edison react to the mobile phone if he came to the 21st century? No less than 800 words, choose your own title.

—Essay question from a gaokao exam

An honest person may not be smart, yet a smart person may not have true wisdom. Please write an essay in no fewer than 800 words on this topic.

—Essay question from a gaokao exam

Between June and August, a cruise ship travels from Fujian province to Venice, via Mumbai, as part of Xi's “21st century maritime silk road” strategy. Which of the following would it experience on the way?

- A. When passing through the South China Sea, the cruise will face continuous rain.
- B. When passing through the Arabian Sea, the cruise will sail against winds and currents.
- C. When passing through the Red Sea, large stretches of forests will be seen alongside the coast.
- D. When passing through the Mediterranean Sea, the cruise will experience several days of rainstorms.

Answer: B.

—Gaokao multiple choice question



Students and relatives in Guiyang, Guizhou province, relax after the test. Xinhua photo.

Carter Says Establishing U.S.-PRC Relations His Biggest Contribution to World Peace

On its website, the Jimmy Carter Center in Atlanta has posted the former president's reflections on his role in U.S.-China relations, as well as his advice for today's leaders.

The comments come from the Shanghai Institute of American Studies' "Forty People, Forty Years" series commemorating the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

Here are excerpts:

Question: Looking back at it now, how do you see your role in that period of history [the period in which diplomatic relations were normalized]? Would you count that as one of your greatest legacies as president?

[After listing several other achievements, the former president replied by saying the following:]

Of all that I was able to achieve during my term as president, normalization with China may have been the most beneficial to world peace and understanding. In my frequent trips to China, I can tell by how I am welcomed by China's heads of state, provincial governors, university students,



President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalynn Carter viewing a gift from Vice Chairman Deng Xiaoping during a state visit at the White House in January 1979 following the normalization of relations with China. Photo: Jimmy Carter Library.

and ordinary people that they admire what we achieved.

Question: China-U.S. relations today are confronted with circumstances quite different from 40 years ago. Do you think there are any opportunities for today's leaders to set a new tone for this relationship in the next 40 years? What advice would you give them to keep our relations resilient and robust?

Some observers of China are saying that China is not adapting its govern-

ment to become like the U.S., and therefore we should reject the principle of engagement that has served as the basis of American policy.

I would remind people who make such claims that when we normalized relations, we knew that the U.S. and China had vastly different cultures, histories, forms of government, interests, and levels of development. We acknowledged these differences and anticipated that differences between our two countries would persist. But we also believed that the goals that bound us together—mutual respect, the pursuit of peace,

prosperity, and progress—were much more important than the differences that divided us.

The most important piece of advice I can give to current and future leaders in both countries is to remind them of their obligation not only to be committed to world peace but to engender that commitment in the people of their countries.

Editor: To read the extensive interview, go to cartercenter.org and search for "40 Years of Friendship."

Transitions

"The Man Who Stayed Behind" Dies at 98

Sidney Rittenberg, an American who became an adviser to Mao Zedong, died in the U.S. in August at age 98. Rittenberg served in the U.S. Army in China during World War II, and stayed for more than three decades. Despite his devotion to the new government, he was imprisoned twice—for a total of 16 years, finally being released in 1977. Later, when China opened to the West, Rittenberg helped advise Westerners about doing business with China.

The *Washington Post*, noting that Rittenberg was an active participant in the Cultural Revolution, said he "would come

to regard Mao as 'a great hero and a great criminal all rolled into one.'" Rittenberg's memoir, *The Man Who Stayed Behind*, was co-written with journalist Amanda Bennett.

Spoke to USCPFA

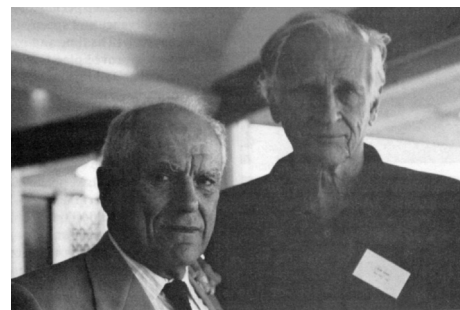
Rittenberg spoke at the 1993 USCPFA convention in Seattle. Here is an excerpt of what the USCR reported:

"He told an attentive audience that though Americans may disagree with aspects of Chinese policy, such as treatment of dissidents and prohibitions against freedom of speech, it makes no sense to allow such disagreements to disrupt a relationship that is important to the two peoples and world peace.

He compared the centuries of experience

in evolving democracy that lie behind the Western legal systems to the few decades that constitute China's modern period, and urged understanding of the difficulties faced by the government there."

—Mike Revzin



Sidney Rittenberg, left, and Hugh Deane, the founding editor of USCR, in Seattle, 1993.

Young, Friendly, and Living in a Retirement Home

By Fan Yiying

Wu Kai, fresh-faced and freshly graduated, never thought he'd be living in a nursing home at age 21. Or that he'd love it.

In July, Wu was among a dozen 20-somethings who moved into Sunshine Home, a state-invested but privately run elderly service center in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang province, to take part in a project poetically promoted with the slogan, "Keeping others company is the deepest expression of love."

"What the elderly fear most is loneliness," says Wang Kai, director of Sunshine Home's social worker department. "They want someone to talk with."

The home matches its lonely residents with budget-conscious young people, who have to spend at least 20 hours a month chatting with the elderly, reading books to them, and helping them navigate their electronics. In return, their monthly rent is just 300 yuan (\$44)—a significant discount, Wang says, adding that similar apartments in the area go for around 2,000 yuan a month.

Such companionship projects have existed in developed countries for some time but are new to China, where nursing home facilities lag behind the needs of its rapidly graying population. In Hangzhou, the number of residents aged 60 or above increased from nearly 18 percent of the population in 2011 to over 22 percent at the end of 2017—compared to 17.3 percent nationwide. Yet the city only has 4.2 nursing home beds for every 100 senior residents, according to 2016 findings.



Yang Yunhai on his bed at Sunshine Home. Photo by Chen Zhongqiu for Sixth Tone.



An elderly couple watches TV. Photo by Chen Zhongqiu for Sixth Tone.

Sunshine Home, which was built in 2017 along a lake in Hangzhou's Binjiang District, has yet to fill about 1,400 of its 2,000 beds. Renting out rooms on the cheap in return for some "volunteer" work made sense. "It makes up for our own limited manpower and our service's shortcomings," says Wang.

"What the elderly fear most is loneliness." —Wang Kai, Sunshine Home employee

However, the project might not be applicable elsewhere in China. Since there is a shortage of nursing homes around the country, few institutions have the rooms to spare. It's been well received, however. The Communist Party's newspaper, *People's Daily*, praised the initiative as a "win-win" and suggested other private nursing homes with rooms to spare emulate the model. A local government official called the program ahead of its time, but said it was too early to judge its merits.

In May, when Wu was ready to move off-campus and start the pension administrator job he had found in Hangzhou, he noticed a recruitment ad for Sunshine Home. Applicants needed to be single, work in Binjiang District on at least a

one-year contract, and could not own a home in the city. Besides the cheap rent, he liked that his volunteer work would be related to his day job.

Two months, one application, and several rounds of interviews later, Wu moved in. He works a 9-to-5, and usually gets home at around 6 p.m. In the evenings, he spends time with his elderly neighbors. "Sometimes, they make an appointment with me and I go to their room at a reserved time; other times, they just come downstairs and knock on my door," Wu says.

Wu is tan, tall, and has a warm, if somewhat shy, personality. At first, he says, approaching his elderly housemates was embarrassing, but it quickly felt natural. "I'm Wu Kai, a volunteer here," he says, introducing himself to the seniors in the activity rooms where they play table tennis and pool. "You can come to me if you have problems with your mobile phone or just want to chat." Most of the elderly around him respond kindly to his self-introduction, with some writing down his room number and adding him on messaging app WeChat.

Sunshine Home tracks how many hours Wu and the other volunteers spend keeping residents company. For Wu, the required monthly 20 hours are a piece of cake. "Technically, I only need to spend less than an hour a day," he says. When Sixth Tone meets him on the 20th of the month, he has already reached his quota.

But not all participants fit in as well as Wu. Of the eight people who joined the program when it started last December, six moved out within half a year, says Wang, the director. Some married, others bought a house. Still others left because they lost interest or did not have enough time. Sunshine Home's quiet location between a lake and mountains is a draw for seniors, but makes for boring living for people in their 20s. There are no shopping malls or movie theaters nearby. The nearest restaurant is a few kilometers away.

By the time Situ Keren, another volunteer, gets home from work, it's usually 9 p.m., and most of Sunshine's seniors are already sound asleep. "At first I thought it would be an easy way to have a good place to live in a big, expensive city," she says. But, unable to fulfill her time requirements during the week, 26-year-old Situ has had to scale back her weekend social life.

The work is also different than Situ expected. "I came here with the idea of helping them with housework or delivering meals to their room when they have trouble walking," she says. But after nearly a month, she's realized what they need most is having someone physically around them: "In most cases, they just want me to be in their room while they are doing their own thing."

Nevertheless, Situ is committed to the program. For one, the rent for her old studio apartment in Binjiang cost her five times as much as Sunshine Home. And she knows how important company can be. "My grandma lives in a nursing home in [Situ's Zhejiang hometown] Jinhua, but I know she doesn't want to, because she feels lonely there," she says. "Some grandmas here feel the same. I want to keep them company, just like how I wish someone would do the same for my grandma back home."

At present, government policy for elderly care focuses on providing medical treatment and places to live, but doesn't pay much attention to quality of life. Sunshine Home's companionship project supplements a team of five social workers in charge of organizing events during the holidays and festivals. There's demand among residents for people who can teach them new things, such as calligraphy—which is something Yang Yunhai, a 29-year-old full-time painting and cal-

ligraphy teacher who moved into Sunshine Home in July, can provide.

Like the other volunteers, Yang lives in a 30-square-meter studio that resembles a hotel room. There are floor-to-ceiling windows, a work table, an en suite bathroom, and two single beds. "It's much better than my previous small studio room," Yang says, adding that the place cost him over 700 yuan a month.

Every Saturday from 2:30 to 4 p.m., Yang leads a class for a couple dozen senior students, most of whom haven't tried their hands at calligraphy since childhood. They

"I want to keep them company just like how I wish someone would do the same for my grandma back home." —Situ Keren, volunteer

hang their homework on the wall, hoping to get feedback from Yang.

One of his students, Liu Cuiyu, just turned 80. With her 82-year-old husband, she joined the class for the first time after hearing about it from their neighbors in the dining room. The class has proven popular: Many seniors showed up half an hour in advance to make sure they'd have a table, and so Liu sits deskless behind her husband.

The couple lived with their daughter for the past eight years until May, when they moved to Sunshine Home to reduce the burden on their children. To her surprise, Liu saw young faces walking around the home. "They call me Grandma Liu, and teach me how to use smartphones and my iPad so I can video-call my grandchildren," she says, smiling.

One of Yang's regular students is Huang Jin, 67. In June, when Huang's husband



Yang Yunhai gives a woman feedback on her calligraphy. Photo by Chen Zhongqiu for Sixth Tone.

passed away, she sold her Hangzhou apartment and moved into a shared room in Sunshine Home. A retired nurse and longtime Christian choir member, she spends much of her time in Sunshine's music room. "I heard that a volunteer will open up a singing class in the next coming months," Huang said, holding her writing brush.

After the class, Huang asks Wu—the volunteer—to order some rice paper for her online so she can practice her calligraphy every day. They've been in contact via WeChat since they met last month. Huang is ambivalent about the companionship project. "I'm happy that [the volunteers] can help me with something that I can't do, but I'm not interested in chatting with them," she says. "I don't want to burden other people with my emotions."

Huang's not alone in the sentiment. There are other Sunshine residents who aren't looking to spend time with young people, Wu says. Some rarely get out of their rooms and others prefer to be with their spouses instead. Wu's been turned down before when he suggests a game of table tennis or pool. "It's a bit awkward, but I think it's still worth a shot," Wu says. "I don't want to overlook a senior who's too shy to ask me for companionship." 友

This article originally appeared on Sixth Tone (www.sixthtone.com), and was used with permission. The Sixtone editor was Kevin Schoenmakers.

NGO brings HOPE to China's Health Care System

In 1983, Project HOPE became one the first international non-governmental organizations in China. Since then, it has helped China in such areas as pediatric medicine, women's and children's health, noncommunicable diseases, nursing education and disaster relief.

In 2018, the U.S. Consul General in Wuhan, Jamie Fouss, presented Project HOPE with the Heart to Heart Award for promoting collaboration, cultural exchange and mutual trust between the U.S. and China and the people of both nations through HOPE's pioneering programs to train health professionals and deliver care.

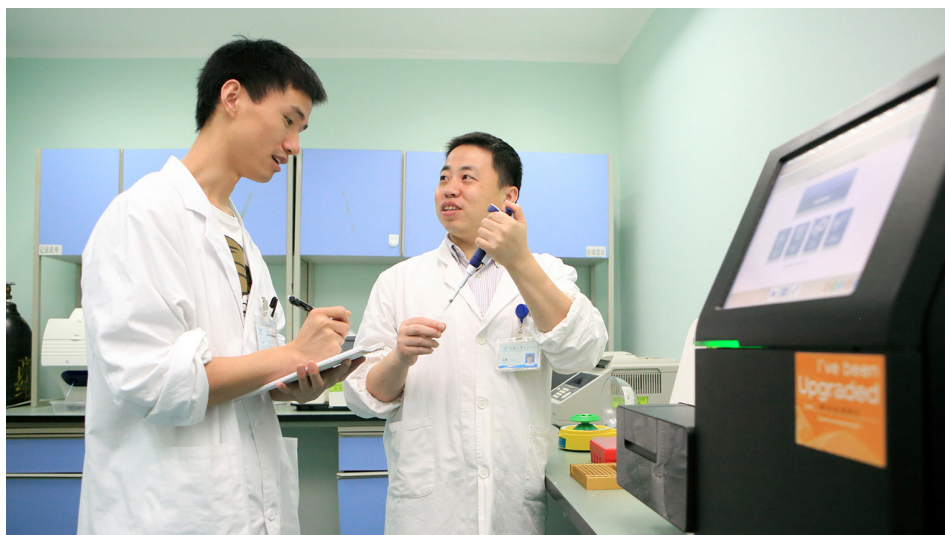
Thanks to the support of the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) program of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Project HOPE has upgraded and improved the training of health workers and increased accessibility to quality nursing education in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province.

Nursing School

The HOPE School of Nursing was established in 2002 in Wuhan as a collaboration between Wuhan University and Project HOPE, and has become one of the leading nursing schools in China.

"We are truly honored to receive the Heart to Heart Award. We have been proud to promote the best American approaches and practices in nursing education in China through international exchange and collaboration, nursing education, curriculum reform, and faculty development with our partner, Wuhan University. This has improved the quality of education of tens of thousands of nurses who are making a huge difference in the lives of so many patients," said Linda Dong Wei, senior program manager at Project HOPE in Wuhan, upon receiving the award.

Since 2007, Project HOPE has received ASHA grants that have supported the development of a long-distance teaching center, the School of Nursing Simulation and Research Center, the School of Nursing Comprehensive Simulated Rehabilitation Center, and the School of Nursing Disaster Preparedness Training Center.



Project HOPE researchers.

Linda Dong Wei said Project HOPE aims to pursue future opportunities with local partners on health education to benefit local communities.

"Project HOPE is celebrating our 35th anniversary in China in 2018 and 20 years at the Shanghai Children's Medical

Project HOPE's partnership...is an example of China-U.S. people-to-people collaboration...

Center," she said in 2018. "We feel humbled by the work we have done building the health workforce and inspired to do much more, addressing health needs such as epilepsy, cancer prevention, non-communicable diseases, asthma and more."

HOPE Ship

The U.S.-based Project HOPE (Health Opportunities for People Everywhere) was founded in 1958. In 1960, it became known for the *SS Hope*, the first peacetime hospital ship, and also for its land-based operations, which are today in 35 countries. The ship was retired in 1974.

In China, HOPE developed long-lasting cooperation with the Chinese government

medical universities and other partners to establish the Shanghai Children's Medical Center (SCMC), as well as the previously mentioned nursing school in Wuhan.

It has also expanded access to high-quality pediatric care for children at health facilities and community health centers.

HOPE also showed how public/private alliances can address unmet needs in non-communicable diseases, such as chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer. It also uses a train-the-trainer approach to improve diabetes care and addresses the importance of safe medicine to strengthen patient's safety public awareness across China.

Project HOPE partners closely with the National Health Committee, universities, hospitals, and community health centers to improve health service capacity, quality,



Project HOPE supports medical training in China.

and accessibility. HOPE works nationwide from three regional offices in Beijing, Shanghai, and Wuhan.

Public Awareness

Beijing is HOPE's central government affairs office in China. Its staff implements nationwide programs focusing on clinical trainings and case management for diabetes and hypertension. The Beijing office is also responsible for coordinating disaster relief efforts when needed and works to reduce the use of unsafe medicines in China through educating policymakers, journalists, health professionals, patients and the general public.

Project HOPE Shanghai collaborates with SCMC to integrate multidisciplinary care into pediatric medicine at health facilities ranging from tertiary to primary care settings.

Key efforts include developing the skills of pediatric health professionals, upgrading clinical practice, installing and supporting the use of state-of-the-art equipment, integrating disease management into pediatric care, and coordinating with the education system.

Additionally, the Project HOPE Shanghai office implements innovative pediatric management practices and works to address the nationwide shortage of pediatricians through training and international exchange programs.

Project HOPE's Wuhan office was established to develop a team of future nursing leaders through the Wuhan University's HOPE School of Nursing. HOPE continues to enhance the nursing school's capacity through faculty training, international collaboration and exchange, and establishing state-of-the-art learning labs. The Wuhan office has also implemented HIV/AIDS treatment and care, palliative care and hospital capacity building programs.

History in China

In 1983, the Chinese Ministry of Health and the Zhejiang Medical University invited Project HOPE to support the modernization of the country's health services.

This generated the first neonatal medicine training program in Zhejiang Children's Hospital, in addition to a biomedical training for staff. In 1990, HOPE initiated the pediatric cardiovascular surgery program at Shanghai Xinhua Hospital. This program was extended to

SCMC after HOPE was invited to participate in the hospital's planning, designing and construction in 1995. The hospital was opened and began serving children in 1998.

Project HOPE's partnership with SCMC is an ongoing example of the China-U.S. people-to-people collaboration that has involved public and private partners, medical institutes, and individuals. Since opening, SCMC was expanded from 250 beds to 640 beds when it added a heart center in 2007 and a hematology oncology tower in 2010.

It later became the first Joint Commission International accredited children's hospital in mainland China and today is the National Children's Medical Center, Shanghai, providing services to 1.5 million children annually.

HOPE's partnership with SCMC has led to it becoming a national resource for the training of physicians, nurses, dietitians, social workers, administrators and allied health personnel from throughout China and abroad.

Project HOPE also launched the first nationwide diabetes education and care training program in China in 1998. Over the years, HOPE has implemented various diabetes programs in line with the Chinese government's health care reform policies and in response to emerging needs in diabetes prevention and management. 友

The information from this article comes from the Project HOPE website, www.projecthope.org, and was compiled by USCR editor Mike Revzin, whose father, Dr. Marvin Revzin, was an oral surgeon with Project Hope in Indonesia in 1961.



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Chinese Official: Implement Trade Consensus

In August, Minister Xu Xueyuan of the Chinese embassy in Washington spoke about U.S.-China economic ties and the current trade war.

Her speech took place at a luncheon for the International Business Council of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Baker Donelson law firm, the TN-China Network, and the TN World Affairs Council.

Here are excerpts:

Your state is well-known in China. Many Chinese people travel here every year to enjoy the spectacular Great Smoky Mountains National Park and even more enjoy sipping on a glass of Jack Daniel's. More importantly, Tennessee is also home to James Sasser and Joseph Prueher, two U.S. ambassadors to China who greatly contributed to China-U.S. relations during their tenure.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of China-U.S. diplomatic relations. In the last four decades, our two countries have scored historic achievements despite some twists and turns. This has resulted in huge benefits to the people of China and the United States, and it has helped contribute to world peace, prosperity, and stability. History has proven that both China and the United States benefit from cooperation and lose in confrontation. Cooperation and dialogue are better than friction and confrontation.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and U.S. President Donald Trump met in Osaka, Japan, in June of this year and had an in-depth exchange of views on the fundamental issues concerning China-U.S. relations. They agreed to continue pursuing a China-U.S. relationship based on coordination, cooperation, and stability. They also agreed to re-start consultations on trade. These important points of consensus have sent positive messages to the world, and have been extensively applauded by the two countries and the international community.

Andrew Jackson, the 7th U.S. president, who spent most of his life in Tennessee, said, "Take time to deliberate, but when the time for action arrives, stop thinking and go in." An important task for us right now is to implement the consensus reached by



Xu Xueyuan. Chinese Embassy photo.

our two presidents, expand cooperation based on mutual benefit, manage differences based on mutual respect, and ensure the growth of bilateral relations remains on the right track.

You must be following the China-U.S. economic and trade relationship very closely. It is important for us to always remember that this relationship is mutually beneficial. China and the U.S. have been each other's most important trading

...as the largest two economies in the world, China and the U.S. are deeply intertwined.

partners, and the two countries also act as an important source of investment to each other.

Our bilateral relationship contributes greatly to economic growth and the improvement of people's livelihood in both countries. Last year, the two-way trade of goods and services exceeded \$750 billion, and accumulative two-way direct investment approached \$160 billion. According to the U.S. statistics, American exports to China supported over one million jobs in the U.S. and trade with China helped every American household save hundreds of dollars. More specifically, let's look at Tennessee. China is the state's third-largest goods and services export market. In 2016 alone, exports from Tennessee to

China provided over 20,000 job opportunities to the state. At present, nearly 30 Chinese companies have invested in and established their presence in Tennessee, providing nearly 4,000 jobs. And these figures could have been much bigger if it were not for the trade war.

In the age of economic globalization, as the largest two economies in the world, China and the U.S. are deeply intertwined. Increasing tariffs or decoupling our economies will not resolve our differences in trade policy. It will only hurt both sides. Both countries need to take a rational and cooperative approach to address their issues through dialogue and consultation. China is sincere about its talks with the U.S, but they must be based on equality and mutual respect, and they must address reasonable concerns raised by the two sides.

Exerting maximum pressure on China is not a wise strategy. China is a huge market, and its economy is resilient. As President Xi Jinping said, the Chinese economy is not a pond but an ocean. Big winds and storms may upset a pond, but never an ocean. We hope the U.S. will meet China halfway and work toward a final solution that is acceptable to both sides. This is in line with the fundamental interests of both countries and the general expectations of the international community. 友

The entire speech is available at the Chinese Embassy's website. Search for "Remarks by Minister Xu Xueyuan at the Luncheon of Tennessee Business Community."

Chinese Students Adjust to Rural U.S. in “Maineland”

Maineland

Directed by Miao Wang
Three Waters Productions
China release 2017, USA release 2018
90 minutes, Mandarin and English
with English subtitles

Reviewed by Joann Pittman

What happens when you take wealthy Chinese urban high school students and drop them down in a small town in Maine? That is the story of *Maineland*, a documentary film directed by Miao Wang.

Maineland follows two Chinese students, Zhu Xinyi (Stella) and He Junru (Harry) as they pursue their dreams of an American education, and by extension, a bright and prosperous future—not in a tony school in the Upper Westside of Manhattan, but in a boarding school in a Maine village.

Leaving behind the hustle and bustle of urban life, as well as the rigid conformity of the Chinese educational system, they encounter the quiet and isolation of rural life, as well as a more open style of education that emphasizes critical thinking and individualism.

We see them enjoy the great outdoors and struggle through classroom discussions. We see them participate in school



life and at the same time seek camaraderie with the other Chinese students. We see them embrace some aspects of American life and culture while trying to retain their own.

Like many Chinese movies, the most compelling messages are conveyed, not with words, but with visuals. Hence, there are long stretches of images of Chinese urban life juxtaposed with images of rural Maine.

While Stella and Harry are, ostensibly, the main characters, their presence at Fryeburg Academy, one of the oldest schools in Maine, is clearly being driven by the needs and actions of the other main characters—the school itself and the parents.

Fryeburg Academy needs to enroll international students for financial reasons, and thus recruits heavily among China's wealthy elite. The parents, convinced that an American education is the path to success for their children, are the ones deciding their children should study abroad. It is for the family.

The students, then, are playing their parts, not only in the stories of their families, but in the story of the school, and the story of Sino-American relations.

Much has been written lately about the influx of Chinese students into American schools, both public and private. This film is a fascinating look behind the scenes of this phenomenon.

This article appeared as a blog post on ChinaSource.org, and is reprinted, with permission. The film is available on Amazon, and the trailer is on YouTube.

Joann Pittman is senior vice president of ChinaSource and editor of ZGBriefs. Prior to joining ChinaSource, she spent 28 years working in China, as an English teacher, language student, program director, and cross-cultural trainer for organizations and businesses engaged in China.



Chinese students adjust to a Maine boarding school in *Maineland*.

Send your news to USCR

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Summer issue pub. July – Materials due April 15 to Jane Lael (joyousjane77@gmail.com)

Fall issue pub. October – Materials due July 15 to Mike Revzin (mike.revzin@gmail.com)

Winter issue pub. January – Materials due Oct. 15 to Mike Revzin (mike.revzin@gmail.com)

Spring issue pub. April – Materials due Jan. 15 to Charles Petersen (charleskpetersen6@gmail.com)

I.M. Pei Contributed to Mutual Understanding

"The worldofchinese.com" was among many sites and publications that paid tribute to I.M. Pei, who died in May at age 102. Here are excerpts:

The death of Chinese-born architect Ieoh Ming Pei (贝聿铭) has been greeted with a flood of tributes and retrospectives from his adopted country of America all across the world to China, where his modernist approach helped bring an end to three decades of Stalinist architecture....

Born in Guangzhou in 1917 to a prominent Suzhou family, Pei grew up in Suzhou and Shanghai before traveling to the U.S. in 1935 to study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard. He had planned to return to China... but was prevented by chaos, war, and revolution...Pei would end up living in New York for the rest of his life.

"I returned to China to visit family in the 1970s, nearly 40 years after I departed the country," Pei wrote in 2004. "I feel that China is in my blood no matter where I live. China is my root." ...

In New York, Pei started out designing low-income housing and office buildings before establishing his own firm in Manhattan in 1955, now a U.S. citizen. The beneficiary of a political decision to entice talented Chinese to stay in the U.S. as citizens, rather than returning to become Cold War rivals, Pei's decision to stay would eventually provide inspiration for generations of immigrants about the heights of success that could be achieved as a Chinese in America....

As many mourned his passing, China's foreign ministry released a statement that Pei had "made important contributions to the mutual understanding between the Chinese and American people and the exchange of Eastern and Western cultures for a long time." ...

The entire article, including details of his projects in China, can be found at www.theworldofchinese.com by searching for "I. M. Pei: A Chinese Retrospective."

American Waiters Like to Chat

Zirui Yan, from Guiyang in Guizhou province, is a student at the University of North Carolina. He has written freelance articles for Business Insider, including one about the cultural differences he noticed since he moved to the U.S.

For example, American waiters like to chat with their customers, food at farmers markets is more expensive than at grocery stores, Americans usually don't bargain at markets, and they don't drink hot water.

He also feels that Americans don't care about luxury and designer brands as much as Chinese people do, even though luxury goods are cheaper in the U.S.

For more of his insights into cultural differences, search the internet for "business insider Zirui Yan."

Four Generations of "Ma!"

If you've studied Mandarin, your teacher may have demonstrated the four tones by explaining that "ma" can mean "mother," "hemp," "horse" or "scold," depending

on which tone you use.

But a different example of four "Ma's" has become an internet sensation. Last year, a family in China posted a video of four generations of a family entering a room one by one, as the person of the younger generation calls "Ma!"

Since then, people around the world have imitated the video, each calling their mother or, in some cases, calling "Pa," for their fathers.

Google "four generations meme" to find these examples.

China's Tweets Help, Hurt

Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* published an article headlined, "*Chinese officials have finally discovered Twitter. What could possibly go wrong?*"

It said that tweets from some Chinese officials have caused controversy, while others have helped China send its message directly to international audiences—to counter foreign media coverage it sees as unfair.

The article says, "China's diplomats are finally warming to Twitter as they move away from their traditionally low-key style of communication and seek to engage more directly with the rest of the world."

It notes that Twitter remains banned in mainland China. Now, China, which has complained about some of President Donald Trump's China tweets, has itself caused international controversy on that platform.

To read the article, do an internet search of the headline mentioned in italics above.

Chinese Contribution to U.S. Railroad Acknowledged

In May, several days of events were held in Utah to mark 150 years since the completion of the U.S. Transcontinental Railroad. As noted in previous *USCR* articles, the enormous contribution made by workers of Chinese descent was ignored in the celebrations and official photograph in 1869, when the railroad was completed, and was scarcely noted at the 100th anniversary in 1969.

This year, Chinese-Americans were among those taking part in the reenactment of the 1869 photograph, making for a more historically accurate picture.

NPR's Emily Feng was among those reporting on this event. Her story can be found by searching NPR.org for "Railroad Workers' Descendants Notice Lack Of Credit For Chinese Immigrants."

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, who previously served as Secretary of Labor, was the first Asian American woman and the first Chinese American to serve in the Cabinet.

In her speech at this year's ceremony, Chao commented, "Civil war veterans from both the North and the South worked together on the transcontinental railroad, along with Mormon settlers, African-Americans, native Americans, and, of course, Chinese laborers."

In concluding her speech, she later added, "Today, we remember the estimated 12,000 or more Chinese laborers and all the laborers who sacrificed greatly to make this great dream a reality, the benefits of which America is still enjoying today."

Information compiled from NPR.org, Transportation.gov and other news sources.

South Bay Chapter to Form US-China Climate Projects

By Jana McBurney-Lin

In June, Wei-Tai Kwok, a member of former Vice President Al Gore's Climate Reality Project, spoke to USCPFA South Bay about the necessity for us all to combat climate change.

"Increasing levels of heat-trapping gases, such as CO₂, methane, and nitrous oxide, are causing global average temperatures to rise," he said. "And China and the United States are the world's worst carbon-dioxide polluters, accounting for over 40% of total annual global emissions."

Kwok, whose parents moved to the U.S. from China, was born in Washington, D.C., and graduated from Yale University. He had his own successful advertising company and thought nothing of the climate, other than was the weather nice enough to take his two young children to the park. Then, in 2006, he saw the new movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*. The Oscar-winning documentary, narrated by Gore, detailed the science behind climate change. Gore, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, also won the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to publicize the issue.

Kwok was so moved by what he learned that he found it difficult to concentrate at work. Every day that he wasn't doing something to help the environment was a day he felt he was part of the problem, rather than the solution. So, after a year of struggling with this moral challenge, he decided to make a major change in his life.

He sold his business, got a job working for the solar panel company SunTech Power, and became a member of the Climate Reality Project. This project, funded initially by Gore with proceeds from the movie and subsequent book, aims to educate people around the world about climate issues, and turn this awareness into action. Today the group consists of more than 20,000 scientists, cultural leaders, activists, and concerned citizens like Kwok, committed to building a sustainable future together.



Wei-Tai Kwok

Kwok pointed out that 18 of the 19 hottest years ever recorded by weather instruments have taken place since 2001, with the five hottest years being the last five years. Last summer, South Korea and Algeria set new records for the hottest days in their countries, with temperatures soaring to 103F and 124F, respectively. That same month, the temperatures were so hot in Berkshire, England, that melting asphalt trapped vehicles. In Shandong province, China, it was so hot that a boy was actually able to cook an egg on a manhole cover. More seriously, however, thousands of people were taken to hospitals, hundreds died due to global heat waves.

"Every day, we spew 110 million tons of global-warming pollution into the atmosphere," said Kwok. This pollution comes from various sources, but the main source of the global warming pollution, by far," said Kwok, "is our use of fossil fuels—oil, coal, and gas."

As the result of global warming, weather disasters have become more common and more intense. In March, a bomb cyclone hit, causing massive flooding in the Midwest, a blizzard in Colorado and Wyoming, and winds up to 110 mph. In a 13-day period in April, over 200 tornadoes touched down in the Midwest. On Father's Day, four tornadoes touched down in Dallas. Double the typical rainfall for June in the UK triggered flooding. The list goes on and on. According to data Kwok showed, in the 1980s there were 200 weather disasters per year. Today, there are more than 800.

Kwok believes we can change, and that China and the United States (which have the heaviest carbon footprints) must take the lead. He, for one, traded in his gas-powered car for electric, put solar panels on his house, and is taking steps towards becoming a vegetarian. He also regularly contacts his elected representatives to keep them focused on climate issues.

But, while Kwok suggested we all keep in touch with elected government officials, he emphasized the most important change maker is each one of us. Thirteen years ago when he saw *An Inconvenient Truth*, he was devastated. He was sure that his own children and grandchildren would witness only further destruction. Today, he is hopeful. Hopeful that we can learn what it is we are doing wrong and find ways to change. All it takes is our willingness to make change. One person at a time.

USCPFA-South Bay is brainstorming ways to create U.S.-China collaborative projects on climate change. If you're interested, please contact Billy Lee at williamslee@gmail.com. Also, if you'd like to be trained in climate reality like Kwok, look up the next session on the website: climateresalityproject.org/training.

If you do not see your chapter's activities here, please urge your chapter's leadership to submit news and photos to your USCR editors often! The publication schedule is on page 25.

WESTERN REGION

South Bay

Thanks to South Bay board member George Chadwick for organizing a wonderful outing to Filoli on May 26. Fourteen members and friends toured the world-renowned Filoli, a country house and formal gardens surrounded by a 654-acre estate, located in Woodside, California, about 25 miles south of San Francisco.

Filoli was built in 1917 for William Bourn II, a wealthy entrepreneur. He named his beloved home “Filoli” by combining the first two letters of his three-part credo: “Fight, Love, and Live,” which means Fight for a just cause; Love your fellow man; Live a good life.

George made sure we had the most knowledgeable docent to give us a tour with emphasis on Chinese plants, like Chinese magnolia and peony, and the fabulous Chinese art collection in the mansion. On top of several educational lectures and presentations, our chapter tries to add one outing every year. This one to Filoli was indeed a very memorable and exciting event.

—Winny Lin

EASTERN REGION

Northeast New York

In August of each year our chapter takes about 20–25 students and scholars from China (and their family members) to see the local Houston Astros affiliate, the Tri-City Valley Cats, play. They are in the Class A New York–Penn League.

For many, this is the first baseball game they have ever attended; most have only arrived in the U.S. about a week earlier. Most of our Chinese guests attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute or State University of New York at Albany.

Chapter members are seated by each group of students to answer questions and explain the fine points of this American pastime. Chapter member Dan Wilcox keeps the box score and shows them that he can almost recreate all the action of the game using what he marks on two pages in the program.

The Valley Cats organization always



South Bay: the Filoli outing.



Inside the Filoli house. Photo by Winny Lin.

creates a fun and entertaining evening for families. There is never a dull moment as there are giveaways, stunts and competitions for the fans—including the children. This year the Valley Cats' opponent is the Hudson Valley Renegades. Our chapter really appreciates the Valley Cats' annual willingness to provide free tickets for our friends from China. By the end of the game everyone has new friends, knows about the USCPFA and our September “welcome picnic.”

—Mel Horowitz

MIDWEST REGION

Minnesota

On July 13, the Minnesota chapter of the USCPFA once again floated “Team Friendship” on the first day of the St. Paul Dragon Festival held at Phalen Regional Park in St. Paul. Team Friendship is recruited from the members, friends, and supporters of the USCPFA in Minnesota. With an even mix of participants of Chinese and Western heritage, men and

Continued on page 30

The China Daily published these two articles about Nashville's sister city relationship with Taiyuan, before the Sister Cities International annual conference, which took place in Houston in August. A U.S.-China pre-conference commemorated the 40th anniversary of the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Nashville-Taiyuan: Driven by Economics

After more than a decade since it became an official sister city with Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi province in northern China, Nashville, Tennessee, has developed deep cooperation and friendship with its Sino-sibling through a variety of cultural and economic exchanges.

"Our partnership started in 2007, and really began because there was an economic partnership between the state of Tennessee and Shanxi province in the 1980s," said Heather Cochran Cunningham, executive director of Sister Cities of Nashville, a volunteer organization that promotes exchanges between Nashville and all of its eight sister cities.

Cunningham said the relationship of the two cities so far has developed from the initial iron and steel industry in the '80s to broader cultural and economic exchanges.

She said that China is the fourth-largest trading partner of the Nashville metropolitan area, at \$539 million, and the third-largest trading partner of the entire state of Tennessee.

"A number of large Nashville-based companies have long-standing business relationships in China, including Jack Daniels, Gibson, Tractor Supply and CAT Financial," Cunningham said.

There are also many industry exchanges and delegation visits between the two cities, Cunningham said.

A delegation from Nashville attended the 2018 Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum last year. The forum was an important opportunity for the program as the Nashville mayor's office has been working toward transferring more of Nashville's energy consumption to renewable solutions.



Students from Yuying High School of Taiyuan, spend a day with students at Nashville's Ensworth High School. Photo provided to China Daily.

"In January, the vice-mayor from Taiyuan led a delegation to Nashville, where they met with our vice-mayor," Cunningham said, adding that other organizations have also come from China to learn about Nashville.

In terms of educational exchange, an email pen-pal program was established between 33 students at Martin Luther King High School and 36 students at Taiyuan Affiliated High School in 2010.

In 2013, a reciprocal high school exchange was launched between Nashville students and students at Yuying High School in Taiyuan that continues today.

"We have been working with Yuying High School for about the last nine years," Cunningham said, "and through our student ambassador program in Nashville, we have students from a variety of public and private high schools applying to go on our exchanges."

She said eight students from different schools in Nashville went to Taiyuan last summer.

"We always receive students from Yuying High School too," Cunningham said, adding that ten students and two teachers from Taiyuan visited Nashville for a week during the winter holiday.

"They're home hosted, they learned about the Nashville government, culture and history," she said. "We took them to

see the key sites and they lived with the family here, they went to school for a day and we just tried to immerse them in the culture of Nashville."

"And conversely, they do the same thing," Cunningham said of American students going to China.

She said students from Nashville were able to learn about kung fu, dragon festivals and other special holiday activities in China.

"They did paper-cutting and calligraphy, they made special foods to eat, and they went to Jinci Temple," she said. "So, they're doing the same thing—just learning all about Taiyuan."

Citizen Diplomacy Fosters "Family" Connections

Citizen diplomacy is ever more important during the current trade war between China and the U.S., said the leadership at Sister Cities International (SCI) ahead of the upcoming U.S.-China Mayors Summit to be held in mid-July in Houston.

The summit will be part of the 2019 SCI annual conference where municipal representatives from around the world will gather to foster understanding and connection at the grassroots level.

As China and the U.S. established diplomatic relations 40 years ago, St. Louis

Continued on next page

Sister Cities *(continued)*

and Nanjing became the first pair of sister cities for the two countries. That number has grown.

Today “we currently have over 200 city partnerships and more than 40 state partnerships with China,” said Roger-Mark De Souza, president and CEO of SCI. “The relationship with China has become one of our strongest partnerships. In building those relationships we have seen many concrete examples of cooperation.”

De Souza noted that the sister-city relationship between Columbus, Ohio, and Hefei resulted in more than \$1 million in exchange programs in one year.

The relationship has become so involved that a biennial U.S.-China Mayors Summit was set up in 2013.

“This is our fourth U.S.-China Sister City Mayors Summit,” said Carol Lopez, chair of the summit and vice-chair of the SCI board. “This year has special meaning because we are celebrating 40 years of diplomatic relations. What an amazing 40 years it has been in terms of what has happened in China and what has happened with our economies working together.”

Tim Quigley, chair emeritus and president of the SCI Foundation, said that the summit mechanism shows that “both countries put great emphasis on subnational connections and in municipal and community connections.”

According to Quigley, over 200 Chinese delegations representing more than 20 Chinese cities have already registered for the summit; another nine cities are considering sending delegations. On the U.S. side, 21 cities have confirmed they will participate. “That’s a notable increase over the past conferences,” he said.

De Souza said that the primary goal of the summit is to not only celebrate the relationship, but also to point to the direction.

“We bring some of the questions to the summit: The Maritime Silk Road and what it means for us? How do we continue to energize and build the sister-city relationships between the U.S. and China? What have we learned from the relationships? How do we leverage citizen diplomacy to really make a difference? We need to

think how to strategically engage each other and move forward,” De Souza said.

Lopez said efforts have been made to commemorate 40 years of the relationship. Working with Quigley and the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), they “came up with the idea of establishing a U.S.-China endowment that could ensure in perpetuity we will continue to have these exchanges.”

The U.S.-China Endowment for Citizen Exchanges is the brainchild of Quigley and one of the principal features of the upcoming summit.

“The purpose of this endowment is to enable us to have the resources to provide to local U.S.-China sister-city relationships in order to promote more exchanges in youth, sports, academia or municipalities,” said Quigley.

Quigley stressed the importance of citizen diplomacy during the current climate.

“One of the most critical roles the citizen diplomacy has played for millennia throughout the history of the world has been providing those connections between people, in particular when national governments are hitting some bumps in the road,” he said.

Fan Bo, a representative for China at the SCI Foundation, said the fact that the more active participation of Chinese cities in the summit indicates that Chinese people understand the importance of staying engaged with the U.S.

“People have expressed interest in exchanges in more than 20 fields, and we are working hard to meet that demand,” Fan said.

For De Souza, citizen diplomacy has a personal connection. His great-great-grandfather came from Guangdong. He grew up with a strong presence of Chinese traditional culture.

—Submitted by Barbara Cobb

Minnesota Dragon Boat *(continued from page 28)*

women, and both younger and “older” crew members, Team Friendship placed solidly in the middle (9th place) of the 16-team pack, with an aggregate time for four heats of 5:20:50. The chapter provided Team Friendship shirts to each team member and sponsor, as well as a catered Chinese luncheon including traditional zongzi. Special thanks go out to

Team Friendship corporate sponsors—the accounting firm of RSM; Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society, the law firm of HSML, and Rainbow Resort—individual sponsors Mary and Wally as well as anonymous sponsors, and all participants and volunteers who made the event a successful friendship and bridge-building opportunity.



Minnesota's Team Friendship dragon boat team.

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MEMBERSHIP, STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The US-China Peoples Friendship Association is a nonprofit educational organization. Our goal is to build active and lasting friendship based on mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of China. **We recognize** that friendship between our two peoples must be based on the knowledge of and respect for the sovereignty of each country; therefore, we respect the declaration of the United States of

America and the People's Republic of China that the resolution of the status of Taiwan is the internal affair of the Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits. **We also recognize** that friendship between our two peoples and good relations between our two governments plays a critical role in maintaining peace in the Pacific Basin and in the world. **As an educational organization**, our activities include sponsoring speakers and programs which inform the American people about China, organizing tours and special study groups to China, publishing newsletters and other literature, promoting friendship with Chinese students and scholars while in the United States, and promoting cultural, commercial, technical, and educational exchanges. **Everyone is invited** to participate in our activities, and anyone who agrees with this Statement of Principles is welcome to join. Subscription to *US-China Review* is included in membership.

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2019 Is the Year of the Pig