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Making Friends Through Pickleball—Youth Exchanges Forge New China-U.S. Bonds President Xi Jinping's Reply Inspires Visiting Educators and Students from Maryland

"It's just amazing!" Early in the morning on June 6, Jeffrey Sullivan, Director of Athletics at the Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland, U.S., was exhilarated to learn that President Xi Jinping had sent a verbal message in reply to the students and teachers of the Maryland Youth Pickleball Cultural Exchange Delegation who had recently visited China. As the head of the delegation, Sullivan immediately shared the exciting news with the students and teachers—many of whom were reminiscing fondly about their trip to China.

Earlier in April this year, responding to President Xi Jinping's initiative to invite 50,000 young Americans to China for exchanges and study over the next five years, Sullivan led a group of 44 students and teachers from 13 local schools on a China visit. The trip took them to cities including Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Beijing. After the visit, the delegation wrote a letter to President Xi, expressing their thanks for his initiative. They said the journey had allowed them to forge unforgettable friendships with their Chinese peers and expressed the hope to invite Chinese teenagers to the United States in return.



"Congratulations on the success of your visit to China. I am pleased to see that pickleball

has become a new bond for youth exchanges between China and the United States. The future of China-U.S. relations depends on the youth. I hope that you will become a new generation of ambassadors for friendship between the two countries and make greater contributions to enhancing the friendship between the two peoples." President Xi's kind words and earnest hope greatly encouraged the students and teachers of the visiting delegation.

"We feel deeply honored to receive President Xi's reply," Sullivan said. "Super excited" and "totally surprised", the students were all eager to share their feelings of joy with the Xinhua correspondent.

► **A life-changing journey**

Even though it was during their summer vacation, several students from the visiting delegation immediately rushed to Sullivan's home as soon as they heard the news. They gathered to share the joy and recalled with great interest their rewarding journey to China.

In their letter to President Xi Jinping, the delegation wrote: "Thank you again for your vision and commitment to providing opportunities for our students and our countries to come together and build friendships, relationships and cultural learning opportunities."

This was a life-changing trip that empowered them. They truly experienced the rich diversity of China, Sullivan told the journalist. "That was made possible because of the hospitality of the Chinese people, who opened their doors to us, served us wonderful food, and had wonderful performances showcasing the culture and traditions of China." Everywhere they went, the Chinese people were so warm and welcoming, allowing them to feel the sincerity and kindness that connect people, he said.



"Despite his busy schedule, President Xi still took time to reply to us, making our China trip even more special and leaving a lasting impact on each of us," said Ryan Coakley, a student who was visibly moved. The "limited-edition souvenir" he had brought back from China is a pickleball paddle signed by his Chinese teammate. From spring to summer, he has stayed in touch with his Chinese pal via WeChat.

"What struck me the most is that—even though we are separated by half the globe, we're actually so much alike!" he said. "After returning to the U.S., I've told my friends countless times about everything I saw and experienced in China, and I still cannot stop! The schools I visited, everyone I met—everything is unforgettable. I also want to encourage all my friends to go to China and see this amazing country!" he added.

"President Xi's endearing reply made this trip stand out even more," said Ella Geary, another student. She described the visit to China as "full of unforgettable moments", but said the most memorable part was of course the good friend she had made in China. "I really miss her. We are still chatting to this day. It's amazing that you can just instantly bond with someone who lives on the other side of the globe," she remarked.

► Unbreakable new bonds

According to Sullivan, Montgomery is the first U.S. school district to offer pickleball as a varsity sport. It is precisely owing to the inclusiveness of this sport that everyone can enjoy it regardless of his/her ability. The Montgomery County public schools have now signed memorandums of understanding with the Shenzhen Nanshan District Education Bureau, Beijing Academy Education Group, and Beijing No.10 Middle School Education Group for long-term cooperation in education.

"This was my first visit to China. I was a little nervous before departing, but it definitely changed my perspective on things and how I viewed everything," said Isabella Brant, yet another student. In the letter, they had written down the most impressive things they had seen and experienced in China and shared their reflections with President Xi. For Brant, celebrating her birthday in China was undoubtedly "the best memory" of the trip. She recalled playing pickleball with her Chinese partner on that day and got beautiful flowers and valuable friendship as well.

Xie Yuan, a student from Wenhua School of Nanshan Foreign Language School (Group), Shenzhen who had participated in the exchange, said, "I witnessed firsthand the cohesive power of sports that transcends national boundaries, bringing us with diverse cultural backgrounds closely together."



"Pickleball has become a bond that forges new friendships," said Regan, Sullivan's daughter who had also been part of the China delegation. "Whether for American or Chinese students, the relationships we've built together are so wonderful, unforgettable, and unbreakable."

"Every high-five on the pickleball court, every experience in the intangible cultural heritage workshop, and every visit to high-tech businesses were deepening the young Americans' real-life perception of China's development," Wang Pengfei, one of the initiators of the 2025 American Teenagers' Pickleball Cultural Exchange China Trip said in an interview.

Sullivan said, the exchange between Chinese and American teenagers during this tour "is not just on the pickleball court, but also off the court". They had a special way of shaking hands and shared one meaningful moment after another, he said. All the bits and pieces of the China visit have converged into precious memories for the teenagers of the two countries.

Gary Dvorchak, a friendly American from Iowa, U.S., told the Xinhua correspondent: Pickleball is widely popular in the United States and its popularity is also on the rise in China. President Xi Jinping once again affirmed the importance of people-to-people exchanges and encouraged youth groups in America and China to strengthen the new communication bonds and build new friendships.



► Writing new tales of people-to-people friendship

Sullivan added that the faculty and students of the delegation wanted to tell President Xi Jinping that their trip to China and the "friendship through pickleball" had left a profound impact on them. Particularly when recalling the great significance of "Ping-Pong Diplomacy" more than 50 years ago, they fully realized the role of enhancing sports exchanges and youth interactions in boosting China-U.S. relations.

Beyond experiencing China's cultural charm and its might in technological innovation, many students in the delegation were trying table tennis for the first time in China. A visit to the China Table Tennis Museum deepened their understanding of the historic "Ping-Pong Diplomacy" between the two nations. In front of smart serving machines, the students took turns swinging their rackets, filling the venue with enthusiastic applause and laughter. "Table tennis balls were spinning everywhere!" Ian Harper, a student in the delegation, described his joyful first experience of the sport. "If I get another chance to visit China, I won't wait a single minute," he told the Xinhua journalist.



In April 1971, a 15-member U.S. table tennis delegation visited China. Starting with that historic trip, China and the U.S. used a tiny ping-pong ball to "knock open" the door to renewed exchanges, thus writing the diplomatic tale of "the small ball spinning the globe". In

November 2023, when President Xi Jinping delivered a lecture at a welcoming banquet jointly hosted by friendly U.S. organizations in San Francisco, he mentioned the 1971 ice-breaking trip of "ping-pong diplomacy" and noted, "The trend of the times brought us together, converging interests enabled us to rise above differences, and the people's longing broke the ice between the two countries."

54 years ago, the U.S. table tennis delegation had a group photo atop the Badaling section of the Great Wall. Last year, as participants in the "50,000 in Five Years" initiative, the table tennis delegation from the University of Virginia also had a group photo taken on the Great Wall with almost an identical composition. Upon learning of President Xi Jinping's message to U.S. youth, Stephen Mull, Vice Provost for Global Affairs at the University of Virginia and a former senior diplomat, told the journalist that strengthening sports exchanges can play a positive role in international relations—"Competitive sports encourage every participant to strive for their best while also emphasizing the shared values that bind humanity together."

"Pickleball has built a unique and joyful bridge, helping us strengthen ties, respect each other, and learn together," the teachers and students wrote in their letter.

"The future of China-U.S. relations should be a shared one in which we live up to the promises of our youth," said Sun Yuyan, a student from Shanghai Luwan Senior High School who had also engaged in the exchanges.

Chinese and American youth are continuing their two-way journey across the Pacific, enhancing understanding, connecting hearts, and forging friendships. With more authentic, multidimensional, and content-rich people-to-people exchanges, they are writing new stories of China-U.S. people-to-people friendship.

Missouri State University Delegation Calling "Cool" During an Immersive Trip to Jiaxing University

"Tell everyone about the real China—this has been an extraordinarily cool experience," remarked Daezia Cymone Smith, a faculty member from Missouri State University (MSU), on multiple occasions during her exchange visit.



Recently, eleven MSU faculty and students participated in a Business Management Program exchange camp at Jiaxing University. Featuring hands-on discovery and blended engagement, the camp offered immersive corporate visits, cultural activities, and academic exchanges so that the delegation were able to experience firsthand the dynamic economic, social, and cultural pulse of the Yangtze River Delta's core region. This journey helped foster a fresh understanding of the Chinese path to modernization.

► Gaining insights from Zhejiang's business wisdom

During the week-long program, the participants visited corporate pioneers including Alibaba and Hormel Foods. At Alibaba, a representative unveiled the company's evolution and focused on how its cross-border e-commerce platform empowered small businesses to reach global markets. At Hormel, students engaged in dynamic interaction with company executives to learn the company's successful experience

in brand localization and marketing strategies, agile responses to shifting global trends, and innovation planning.



The highlight came at Keeson Technology Corp. Ltd., where its cutting-edge smart beds sparked curiosity. The students pondered how to apply the company's production and R&D vision—"delivering smarter, more personalized sleep solutions to global consumers"—to future business practices.



► Decoding Jiaxing's secret to "common prosperity"

The exchange camp featured a deep-dive into Jiaxing's signature industries. Through discussions with the Honghe Woolen Garments Chamber of Commerce and direct interviews with local entrepreneurs, the students discovered how these traditional exporters are turbocharging growth via cross-border e-commerce and AI. They learned about the full-chain digital upgrade—from customer outreach to post-sales engagement—was fueling an export surge despite global headwinds. At Zhejiang Oversea Digital Technology Co., Ltd., the students watched a real-time demonstration

of cross-border livestream sales, experiencing the art of viral product pitching to overseas audiences.



At Xiuzhou Blue City Modern Fisheries Park, the innovative "government guidance + academic support + village-enterprise co-construction" partnership model came to life. The students saw how this synergy had sparked agricultural startups, boosted aquaculture tech, and created local jobs—narrowing income gaps while improving people's livelihoods. Many agreed that this template holds export potential for countries pursuing inclusive growth.

► Immersing in the beauty of Chinese culture

In the academic dialogue segment, through student-led talks, faculty round-tables, and sit-in classes, The Chinese and American educators and students ignited sparks of creativity while exploring cutting-edge topics like digital economy and innovation management—a powerful blend of Eastern and Western pedagogical philosophies.

For exploration of cultural origins, the campers traced the soul of historic waterways south of the Yangtze River at Jiaxing's South Lake and Hangzhou's West Lake. Later, they rolled up their sleeves for hands-on workshops—crafting sugar cakes, folding dumplings, and wrapping zongzi—diving into Jiaxing's traditional culture and customs.



► Building bridges to tomorrow

This week-long journey left the visitors deeply impressed by China's rich culture, dynamic economy, and warm hospitality—planting seeds of friendship in the hearts of all the young visitors.



"My experience in China—especially Jiaxing—will leave a lasting impact," shared Missouri State University student Michael James Guilfooy, visibly moved. "I will bring back to the U.S. stories of a different China to share with my classmates—a China we've touched and felt."

From the moment he arrived in Jiaxing, Anthony Lakin had started documenting the beautiful moments through his lens anytime and anywhere throughout his journey. He

said that this trip to China was the best ever experience in his life. He pledged to give, upon return to America, a panoramic presentation about Jiaxing University and his wonderful trip. He wanted to invite his family and friends to discover this incredible country.



As the Jiaxing University-Missouri State University "Business Management Program Exchange" came to a successful close, new friendships among the youths were only beginning to set sail. Jiaxing University remains committed to crafting with greater openness "small yet brilliant" programs to build platforms for cultural exchanges and greater friendship among youths, transforming every brief encounter with new friends into lasting cross-border bonds and setting a fine example for international exchanges.



C-ing Green in Shandong University by Youth from Five Continents

The 2025 International Youth Conference—International Youth Forum on Green and Low-Carbon Development, themed "Green and Sustainable Development—Youth Innovation and Responsibility", attracted over 60 young

scientists, environmental experts, and industry representatives from 16 countries to discuss climate action, green technology innovation and other topics in depth, contributing youth wisdom and practical solutions to global carbon neutrality goals.



► Opening ceremony: youth leading global green transformation

On May 13, the Forum kicked off on the Qingdao Campus of Shandong University. Releasing *the Initiative of Sharing the Mission of the Times and Creating a Green Future*, the Forum calls on global youth to strengthen sci-tech innovation collaboration, promote low-carbon technology transition, and provide support for the capacity building of developing countries. In addition, Shandong University and the University of Orléans of France jointly launched the summer school program "Green Leaders for the Future", marking their new breakthrough in talent cultivation and international cooperation and creating a new channel of exchanges between Chinese and French youth.

► Academic frontier: focusing on low-carbon technology and climate response

During the Forum, 44 thematic reports were delivered on topical areas like air pollution control, new energy technology, and circular economy in two separate sessions on "Green and Low-Carbon Technology Innovation" and "Climate Change and Sustainable

Development". Four young scholars from China, France, Germany, and Lebanon were honored with the Best Presentation Award at the Forum. In the Youth Innovation Workshop segment, the young scholars visited the research laboratory of the School of Environmental Science and Engineering, Shandong University for an in-depth look at the major research projects being undertaken by the School, such as the development of new pollutant identification and monitoring methods and new-generation carbon-neutral technologies. Dr. Elena Poschart from Germany said, "The workshop enabled us to move from theoretical exchanges to practical operations and inspired more innovation."



► Empowerment through practice: integration of culture and technology

On May 14, the participants visited the Shandong University Museum and explored the inspirations of the "harmony between humans and nature" philosophy from the *Qilu* traditional culture for modern ecological civilization through the "sci-technology and cultural relics" integrated exhibition.



A famous *Taiji* master lectured on the *Taiji* philosophy characterized by "strength-softness balance". Dr. Yoan Carreira Mendes da Silva from France opined, "The balanced approach of *Taiji* is highly in line with the systemic thinking of sustainable development." On May 15, the Forum organizers arranged a visit to the Atmospheric Observatory of Ocean University of China and Qingdao Metro Exhibition Hall. In the observatory, the forum participants watched up close the real-time atmospheric pollution monitoring system created by China on its own. In Qingdao Metro Exhibition Hall, the youth had an immersive experience of Qingdao's "Green City" and "Smart City" blueprints through digital sand tables and holograms. Dr. Daniel Tetteh Quaye from Ghana commented, "The Qingdao Cloud Brain is very impressive. The application of big data technology to municipal management is worth learning for other cities around the world."



► Looking forward: youth shaping sustainable development future

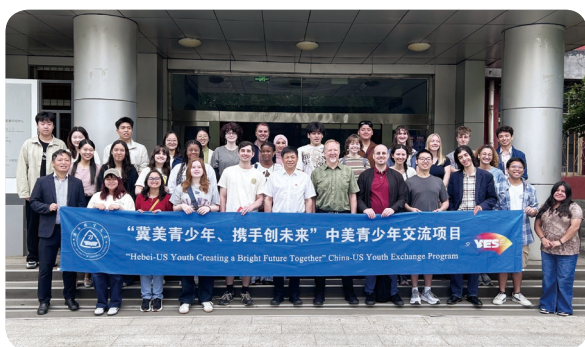
On May 16, the Forum successfully ended with the launch of a multidimensional communication network for academic discussion, innovative

practice, and cultural integration. As stated in the Initiative, "We call on young people from all over the world to work together to cope with global changes, protect the earth as our homeland with the sci-tech shield, and write a new chapter of sustainable development in the name of the youth."

Organized as an active response to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the 2025 International Youth Conference—International Youth Forum on Green and Low-Carbon Development was aimed at calling on young scholars from around the world to work together in response to the global climate change and energy transition challenges through international cooperation and academic exchanges. It is an effort to build a green cooperation network for global youth, inspire young scholars to participate in the SDGs process through sci-tech innovation and policy advocacy, and contribute to building a community with a shared future for humankind. In future, it will continue to help actively promote the in-depth participation of Chinese and international youth in the United Nations SDGs process, enabling youth wisdom to become the core driving force for the global green revolution.

Hebei & U.S. Youth: Together for the Future

To deepen cultural exchanges and foster mutual understanding between American and Chinese youth, Hebei University of Economics and Business hosted the "Hebei & U.S. Youth: Together for the Future" program from May 19 to 28, 2025. A delegation of students and faculty from California State University Monterey Bay, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), and Albany High School traveled to China for a cross-Pacific dialogue with Chinese youth on civilization.



► Youth dialogue: forging bonds of friendship

In the university library, the American visitors were struck by the dedication of Chinese students, sparking spontaneous conversations about their respective campus life. In Zhengding High School in Shijiazhuang City, they joined Chinese students in lively calisthenics, sat in engaging classes, and experienced firsthand the attraction and daily rhythm of education in China. From in-depth school interactions to warm greetings from the locals they ran into on the streets, the American visitors felt the friendliness and sincerity of the Chinese people. Through sincere conversations and shared smiles, friendship grew quietly in a relaxing and pleasant atmosphere across the Pacific.



► Rhythm of culture: feeling the pulse of millennia-old civilization

In the China overview class, the American teachers and students traced the evolution of Chinese civilization. Among the Hebei intangible cultural heritage displays, the exquisite craftsmanship of Yuxian paper-cutting and the lifelike artistry of shadow puppetry left them in awe of Chinese artisans' ingenuity and creativity. Inside the Invoice Museum, ancient receipts and bills told stories of the time-honored history of China's commercial culture. During the Guzheng (Chinese zither) performance, the millennia-old melodies dancing at the fingertips enchanted them with the unique charm of Eastern art. In the wushu class, the interplay of strength and softness in every movement revealed the profound wisdom of traditional Chinese philosophy. At the Hebei Traditional Chinese Medicine Night Market, the precise pressure of acupoint massage and the miraculous herbs of nature amazed them, unveiling the mysteries of meridian therapy and the health-preserving wisdom of "food and medicine sharing the same origin".

What deserves particular mention is the table tennis friendship match in which the youth from both countries bonded over the game, reviving the diplomatic legacy of "small ball spinning the big globe" and deepening their understanding of U.S.-China friendship through interactive competition. These immersive cultural experiences were not merely about passing down skills and techniques, but also resonating with the soul—allowing the younger American generation to truly appreciate the vastness and profundity of Chinese culture as well as the far-reaching significance of Sino-U.S. people-to-people exchange.



► Mountains and seas in harmony—listening to the symphony of history and future

From the towering palaces of Beijing's Imperial Museum to the majestic terracotta military phalanxes in Xi'an, from the shimmering lake-and-mountain vistas of the Summer Palace to the Changxin Palace Lamp at Hebei Museum, the delegation members journeyed through history's corridor, touching the profound legacy of China's 5,000-year civilization. Their footsteps paused atop Xi'an's ancient ramparts and Zhengding Ancient City's South Gate while their gaze stretched across the beacon towers of Badaling Great Wall, with its weathered bricks silently testifying to the continuity of civilization.

Modern China's innovative landscape proved equally compelling: Junlebao Dairy's integrated production chain demonstrated technological innovation while Nansantiao Wholesale Market's hybrid "brick-and-mortar plus livestreaming" model reflected the vitality of the digital economy. The visitors' swirlwind rail experience became a visceral encounter with the dynamism of "China Speed". In this space where tradition meets modernity while history and the future mirror each other, the American teachers and students had a deep exposure to Chinese civilization's contemporary and yet time-honored rhythm as well as the distinctiveness of a Chinese modernization rooted in the fertile soil of history in its march toward the future.



Elihu from RPI exclaimed excitedly after the *Guzheng* lesson, "When my fingers plucked the strings, it felt like traveling through time to converse with musicians from a thousand years ago. I will continue learning to play Chinese instruments after returning home."

Dr. Wright from CSU Monterey Bay said that sitting in at classes at Zhengding High School was the most invaluable experience as it allowed them to see what China's quality-oriented education was really about.

A parent of Hannah from Albany High School commented that the visit to China had built a bridge of friendship between the two peoples and that this unforgettable, wonderful experience would become a timeless treasure in everyone's memory.

Over ten vibrant days, the diverse cultural experiences and myriad exchanges not only enhanced mutual understanding between Chinese and American youth, but also injected new vitality into the friendship of the two countries' younger generation.

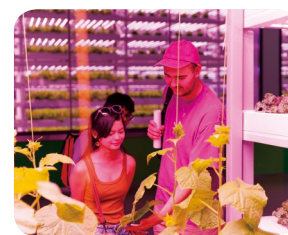
Successful U.S.-China Study Program on Environmental Science Frontiers and Cultural Exchange

From May 21 to June 3, a delegation of students from the University of Arizona, Michigan State University, and Sewanee: The University of the South participated in a 14-day international study program "Think Global, Act Local: Frontiers in Environmental Science and Cultural Exchange" hosted by Northwest A&F University (NWAUFU).



Co-organized by NWAUFU and the University of Arizona, the program was built upon their joint environmental science undergraduate initiative, blending academic research, fieldwork, and cultural experience to deepen U.S.-China people-to-people exchanges and advance collaboration in environmental science.

The delegation visited key research facilities, including the State Key Laboratory of Crop Stress Resistance and High-Efficiency Production and the Institute of Water-Saving Agriculture in Arid Regions. They engaged in (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) thematic workshops on "Ecological Protection and High-Quality Development in the Yellow River Basin" and "Agricultural Extension and Practice of Northwest A&F University". The U.S. and Chinese faculty and students engaged in in-depth discussions on sustainable arid agriculture amid climate change and other agenda items, including water resource management, soil remediation, and biodiversity conservation.



While taking in China's modern agricultural accomplishments, the study group also went deep into Shaanxi's profound historical legacy. The group visited the Baoji Bronzeware Museum, learned about the brilliance of Zhou-Qin civilizations, and toured Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum to experience the Qin Empire's monumental grandeur of terracotta soldiers and horses. They ascended Xi'an's ancient city walls to connect with the millennial capital's historical rhythm, explored Xi'an Museum to appreciate Han-Tang culture's distinctive essence, and traveled to Daci'en Temple to retrace the cultural footsteps of Xuanzang's westward pilgrimage journey to obtain Buddhist scriptures. These immersive cultural experiences gave the young Americans a direct and deeper understanding of China's time-honored historical traditions and cultural heritage.



The study program was meticulously designed to incorporate diverse cultural experiences. The delegation learned traditional Chinese handicrafts, experiencing lacquer fan making, Chinese painting and calligraphy, plant pounding, and woodblock printing. The Chinese and American students also launched a "Buddy Program" for one-on-one paired exchanges. Accompanied by their NWAUFU

counterparts, the American students traveled to a village in Guanzhong and, through participating in agricultural activities like cherry picking, personally experienced the rural life in China's Northwest. The "learning by doing" method allowed them to gain, while tasting sweet fruits, a direct insight into China's rural revitalization strategy in living practice at the grassroots level.



During the cultural exchange segment, the delegation actively participated in the 3rd Grassland Music Festival organized by the College of Environmental Sciences and the "Chat & Chill" Sino-American Social Gathering. Youth from both countries engaged in a dialogue of the hearts in a joyful atmosphere, where music and conversations sparked intellectual collisions, weaving trans-Pacific friendships amid shared laughter and cheer.



USC Delegation Visits Fudan–Yao Ming Fuels Dialogue on Sports, Sci-Tech, and Humanities

On May 29, Fudan University hosted a delegation from the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism comprising 15 faculty members and students, along with the Yao Foundation delegation led by basketball legend Yao Ming. The agenda included participation in the Fudan Sports Science, Technology, and Humanities Innovation Forum and the closing ceremony of the Second Fudan University Sports Culture Festival, along with a campus tour and a luncheon exchange with Fudan faculty and students.



Upon entering Fudan, the USC delegation was warmly welcomed by the host. Over lunch, teachers and students of both universities had a preliminary exchange on campus sports, culture, and life.

At the afternoon exchange session between Fudan University, the USC delegation, and the Yao Foundation, the appearance of a

2.26-meter-tall Yao Ming at the entrance of Xie Xide Auditorium ignited the room instantly. The faculty and students were amazed at finally meeting the "Giant." In the event, Yao Ming emotionally recalled how sports had shaped his growth journey and expressed his hope to empower more children through athletic opportunities to explore the world and realize their potential. The tripartite panel then engaged in a lively discussion on campus sports culture development. Representatives from both universities shared valuable experience in sports education while actively exploring collaborative partnerships.



At the subsequent China-U.S. Forum on Campus Sports Development and Technology Empowerment, Alan Abrahamson, a renowned American sports journalist and associate professor at the USC School for Communication and Journalism, first shared the distinctive features of his university as a leading sports institution in the United States: it boasted excellent sports facilities, a long-standing sports culture, and a vibrant sports atmosphere.



After that, Coach Zhang Yiqiong of the Fudan women's basketball team gave a concise yet comprehensive introduction to the university's sports culture. Lu Jianyi, a graduate student in Chinese Literature at Fudan and member of the women's high-level soccer team and Hadyn, an outstanding senior student from USC, shared their experience in and insights about campus sports culture development.

"Can you join me in this gesture? Let's shout 'Fight On' together!" Over 400 Fudan faculty and students followed Alan Abrahamson's V sign and chanted USC's iconic "Fight On" slogan. The atmosphere instantly became electrifying as the students and faculty from both institutions united together, basking in the powerful energy of sportsmanship and transcending cultural barriers. The ensuing Technology Empowering Sports Forum kicked off in this vibrant atmosphere.



"We at USC always take pride in our sports culture," said Glenn Osaki, Director of the USC U.S.-China Institute and Strategic Director of the USC Leonard D. Schaeffer Institute for Public Policy & Government Service. As leader of the delegation, Osaki proudly highlighted the outstanding achievements of USC athletes over the years. When discussing technology-driven sports empowerment, Prof. Jin Cheng from Fudan University's College of Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence shared, also with pride, their technological

assistance that had helped Shanghai Olympic athletes realize their Paris dreams. This included historic performances by Shanghai athletes, particularly women's shot putter Song Jiayuan who made her Olympic podium debut. Zhang Lihua, distinguished professor at Fudan and Deputy Dean of the College of Intelligent Robotics and Advanced Manufacturing, noted their AI-powered ice sports analysis system developed for the Beijing Winter Olympics. Through AI-assisted qualitative, quantitative, and customized analysis of athletes' characteristics, this system effectively improved training efficiency and level. Associate Professor Yu Zhiyuan from the School of Social Development and Public Policy presented exemplary cases of sports philanthropy collaboration between China and the United States. After listening to these insightful presentations, both Chinese and American participants expressed their appreciation for the perspectives shared.

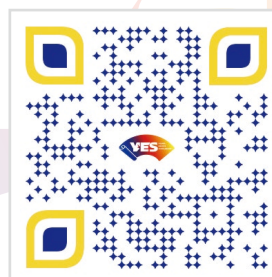
Following the forum, Fudan University faculty and students guided their USC counterparts on a tour of the newly completed landmark complex Fudan Yuan, which houses the University History Museum and Art Gallery. The USC delegation marveled at Fudan's 120-year legacy and its profound contributions to Chinese history and society. The delightful Fudan visit concluded with a group photo at the iconic Xianghui Hall and the Old Gate.



Through this activity, the teachers and students of both universities enhanced their understanding of the campus sports development and cultural atmosphere in both countries and demonstrated the unique charm of sports as a "world language" in a contribution to people-to-people exchanges between China and the United States.

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