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Madame Peng Liyuan Attends the "Bond with Kuliang" 2025 China-U.S. Youth Exchange Event

On the afternoon of July 17, 2025, Peng Liyuan, wife of Chinese President Xi Jinping, attended and delivered a speech at the "Bond with Kuliang" 2025 China-U.S. Youth Friendship Exchange Event held by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC).

Peng Liyuan watched a video of the "Bond with Kuliang" China-U.S. Youth Choir Week along with Chinese and international guests. Elyn MacInnis, the convener of the American "Friends of Kuliang", and Luca Berrone, a friend from Iowa, shared their stories of Kuliang and their experiences participating in China-U.S. people-to-people exchanges and sub-national cooperation. They expressed their deep affection for China and their gratitude to President Xi Jinping for his care and support for the youth of both countries. They also expressed their readiness to continue promoting China-U.S. friendship. Representatives of the American youth shared their enjoyable experiences during the visit and expressed their willingness to serve as new-generation envoys for U.S.-China friendship, carrying forward the touching stories of friendship between the two countries.

In her speech, Peng Liyuan said the following: The century-old story of Kuliang and the deep friendship between President Xi Jinping and his old friends in Iowa, which has lasted for 40 years, epitomize the friendship between the peoples of China and the United States. Though the two countries differ in history, culture, and language, the two peoples are family-loving, kind, friendly, hardworking, and pragmatic. They are perfectly capable of becoming good friends and partners. For over a year since President Xi proposed the initiative of "inviting

50,000 young Americans to China for exchange and study over the next five years", many young Americans have been invited to visit China. They have gained first-hand experience of the real China, made new friends, and jointly written new stories of China-U.S. friendship. Youth are the future of the country and the future of the friendship endeavor. Madame Peng expressed the hope that young people will become the inheritors of China-U.S. friendship and promoters of peace and amity, building a bridge of friendship between China and the United States and contributing their youthful strength to a better future for both countries.

To conclude the event, Chinese and American youths sang together in a passionate celebration of the friendship. Peng Liyuan had photos taken with the youths and other friends from both countries in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Before the event, Peng Liyuan met with Elyn MacInnis and Luca Berrone. Expressing appreciation for their longstanding dedication to the cause of China-U.S. friendship, she encouraged them to continue their active contributions to exchanges and mutual understanding between the Chinese and American peoples.

HZAU Young Envoys International Summer School Concludes Successfully

From June 3 to 16, 2025, Huazhong Agricultural University (HZAU) hosted the Young Envoys International Summer School, the university's first YES program themed "Bridging Cultures through Horticulture: Exploring Innovation and Inheritance in Plant Biology". More than 50 faculty members and students from the University of Ód and the Polish Academy of Sciences, Umeå University, and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, took part in this academic and cultural exchange event along with their HZAU counterparts.



At the opening ceremony, Lin Hui, Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee of the College of Horticulture and Forestry Sciences, stated, "This summer school provides an important platform for international youth exchanges. We hope students from different countries will grow through academic discussions and cultural communication." The summer school offered the participants an integrated international learning platform that bridges theory and practice through expert lectures, laboratory practice courses, industry visits, and cultural exchange activities.



In terms of academic exchange, the program featured nine high-level lectures by distinguished scholars from Poland and HZAU, with in-depth presentations on cutting-edge topics such as photosynthesis mechanisms, plant epigenetics, and fruit development regulation. The participants also took part in six laboratory courses, gaining first-hand experience in areas such as chloroplast biology and molecular marker development in tomatoes, which showcased HZAU's unique strengths in agricultural research.

The cultural experience activities were equally engaging. The students learned traditional Chinese arts such as tea ceremony and flower arrangement, and visited horticultural industry bases and the Hubei Provincial Museum, gaining an in-depth understanding of China's achievements in modern agriculture and its long-standing historical and cultural heritage. Maria Podsiadło, a student from the University of Łódź, shared her impression, "These activities let us have a deeper understanding of Chinese culture and also experience the warmth and hospitality of the Chinese people."



At the closing ceremony, Professor Zhang Fei of the College of Horticulture and Forestry Sciences said that the program provided an important platform for international youth exchanges, expressing the hope that the participants would take their insights and experiences in China and at HZAU back to their home countries and become ambassadors of international friendship. The students remarked that through this summer school, they had not only acquired specialized knowledge, but also deepened their understanding of Chinese

culture, leaving them with an invaluable life experience.

The university's National Key Laboratory for Germplasm Innovation & Utilization of Horticultural Crops and the College of Horticulture and Forestry Sciences will continue to host such international summer school programs that combine academic exchange and cultural immersion to provide international students with a window into China and HZAU, and to contribute to cultivating young talent with a global vision.

Chinese and American Youth's Innovative Expression While Tracing Jiangnan's Cultural Legacy



In June, a nine-member delegation of teachers and students from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UWEC), led by Professor Kaishan Kong, arrived at Suzhou University of Technology to participate in a three-week cultural immersion workshop themed "China-U. S. Innovation and Entrepreneurship". From the cutting-edge industry-academia collaboration labs and the innovative e-commerce hubs, to the classical gardens of Suzhou, the stone-paved alleys of Changzhou Qingguo Lane, and the glowing lanterns along Nanjing's Qinhuai River, the American students experienced the unique rhythm of Jiangnan. They also engaged with hands-on traditional crafts—Mount Yu seal-carving, plant-dyed silk art, Taiji practice, and dragon dance performance—gaining a multidimensional understanding of China's

"speed" of development and the "warmth" of its culture.

► Industry-Education Integration Experience: Decoding China's "Innovation and Entrepreneurship" Pulse

To deeply experience the "innovation" driving China's modern development, the workshop visited industry-academia collaboration labs, e-commerce industrial bases, and technology exhibition halls, embarking on an immersive journey to decode China's "dual-innovation" dynamics.

► Frontier Technology: A lively Classroom of Smart Applications

The participants visited laboratories and exhibition halls, where they observed intelligent robots in action. These were not abstract concepts from textbooks, but vivid demonstrations of how technological capability operates in real industrial settings. The robots' precision, efficiency, and collaborative abilities demonstrated how China has turned innovations in intelligent manufacturing and other frontier fields into tangible applications, bringing abstract technological concepts within reach.



► Youthful Energy: The Moment When Dreams Take Flight

An inspiring highlight of the journey was seeing the transformation of Chinese university entrepreneurship projects from theoretical

concepts to viable products in the market. These peer-led initiatives, from laboratory conception to preliminary market testing, demonstrated the young generation's passion for innovation, practical skills in problem-solving, and their capacity to turn knowledge into value. This vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and the young people's spirit of practical action left a deep impression on the American students.



► Building Bridges: From Laboratories to Cultural Understanding

This journey also offered the American students a multidimensional understanding of China. Through exposure to both advanced technologies and youth-led startups, they gained insight into the mindset, creativity, and drive of China's younger generation. This integration of technological innovation and humanistic vitality challenged stereotypes and revealed the pulse of China's modernization and scientific dynamism.



As American participant John Jacob Hagen said, "This is my first time experiencing China's technological and entrepreneurial

development. I am impressed by many of Suzhou University of Technology's ideas and practices, and I want to share what I've seen with my classmates, friends, and family back home." Such excitement and willingness to share are the natural outcomes of deep, firsthand experiences—quietly building bridges of cultural understanding through technological exchange.

► Deep Cultural Immersion: Ancient Crafts, Youthful Expression

In Suzhou, amid June the plum rain season, the UWEC delegation embarked on a cultural journey through Suzhou in the company of youth volunteers Lan Zhicheng and others.

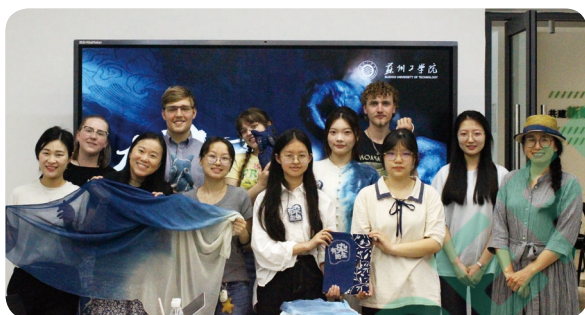


Seal-carving: At the Mount Yu School of Seal-Carving Workshop, under the guidance of Mr. Wu Wei, the students practiced carving on stone seals, experiencing how the aesthetic ideal of "faithfulness, expressiveness, and elegance" in Chinese art takes form beneath the blade.

Tie-dyeing: In the dyehouse, the students watched the plain silk gradually dyed with colors extracted from plants, turning the silk into lasting shades of cyan, green and indigo

described in the ancient *Book of Songs*. This process stirred both sensory delight and emotional resonance.

Hailey Houashee Lo, one of the students, was especially moved, "As my ancestors are of the Miao ethnic group, I feel a natural connection to plant dyeing. It was a wonderful experience! I even connected with Instructor Kan on WeChat so that we can continue to exchange ideas on dyeing techniques in the days to come." This sense of cultural kinship and the spontaneous formation of personal ties vividly illustrate how intangible cultural heritage transcends borders and connects hearts.



Taiji: In the dance studio, flowing Taiji movements unfolded like ink painting. Wearing training uniforms, the American students had their reflections in the mirror capture the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures. As they moved through each transition—opening, turning, shifting, and returning—they gradually shed their sense of unfamiliarity, coming to appreciate the philosophy of "harmony between humanity and nature".



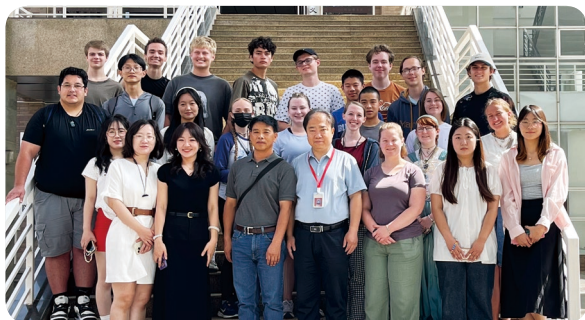
Loong Dance: At night, in the gymnasium, an illuminated dragon (or "loong" in Chinese) flew through the air, LEDs tracing bright arcs. The American students eagerly joined the performance, holding the loong's body and moving vigorously to the rhythm. Though their movements were still tentative, the joy and enthusiasm on their faces reflected how deeply they felt the power of teamwork and the spirit of perseverance at the heart of Chinese culture. Each leap of the loong symbolized the encounter of Eastern and Western cultures, sparking brilliance that illuminated the hearts of the Chinese and American youth.



► Seeds of China-U.S. Youth Friendship Lead to a Brighter Future

This program provided a window for dialogue between Chinese and American youth and marked a milestone in the deepening cooperation between the two universities. Students from both sides broke the limits of time and space and jointly built an ecosystem of innovation with their active thoughts and mindsets. When Bourbon Whiskey meets Biluochun tea, and when a Silicon Valley innovator encounters a Suzhou craftsman, ideas collide across thousands of miles, writing a new chapter in youth innovation and cooperation. We look forward to seeing these creative seeds, nourished by the misty rains of Jiangnan and the American sunlight, bloom brilliantly in the fertile soil of China-U.S. student exchange!

A Journey Through 13 Dynasties in Xi'an —by Students from Utah Valley University



Xidian University (XDU) successfully hosted a short-term YES program, joined by with 19 students and teachers from Utah Valley University (UVU).

XDU prepared a rich variety of engaging cultural courses and hands-on activities for the participants. During their stay, the American students attended classes, dined in campus cafeterias, and interacted with Chinese students and teachers. They also visited major historical landmarks, including the Shaanxi History Museum, Xi'an City Wall, and Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, gaining firsthand experience of traditional Chinese culture.

► Brush and Ink Create Bonds of Friendship; East and West Linked Through Art and Technology

In the calligraphy class, the American students held traditional Chinese brushes and practiced writing characters such as "yong" ("永") and "fu" ("福") under the patient guidance of calligraphy teachers. As the ink bled through the Xuan paper (rice paper), shaping bold and vigorous strokes, Eric Naylor found it amazing, "Each Chinese character looks like a painting filled with deep meaning. I'd like to take 'fu' ('福' , meaning good luck and well-being) home." During the dumpling-making session, XDU students taught their UVU counterparts

how to make jiaozi, or Chinese dumplings, step by step: rolling the dough, preparing the filling, and folding the dumplings. The cafeteria was filled with laughter and joy.

The UVU students and teachers also visited the XDU Museum, where they learned about the breakthroughs of China's communication technology and the rapid revolution of its computer technology. At the AI+ Education Center, the students experienced the AI-powered voice-interactive teaching system and watched how AI translation software worked. They were all amazed by the combination of technology and culture.

Besides, the participants attended a lecture focused on electronic communication when the XDU teachers vividly explained the history and development of China's communication technology that spans the ancient post stations and modern 5G technology, showing the country's technological transformation. The American students also made simple telegraph transmitters by themselves, feeling the charm of communication technology. Through this activity, they gained a deeper understanding of XDU's distinctive disciplines and helped build a bridge for academic exchanges.



The delegation traveled across Xi'an, immersing themselves in the city's history and culture.

From the imperial mausoleums of the Han Dynasty to the Terracotta Army, from intangible cultural heritage workshops to Huaqing Pool, the Chinese and American teachers and students jointly witnessed the continuity of Chinese civilization. The shared experience will bring new vitality to the people-to-people exchange between the two universities.

► Ascending the Ancient City Walls: A Dialogue with the Han Legacy

The delegation began their visit at the majestic Xi'an City Wall of the Ming Dynasty. Strolling along the largest and best-preserved ancient city wall in existence, they touched the weathered blue bricks and sensed over six centuries of history beneath their feet. Leaning against the battlements and looking into the distance, they enjoyed a panoramic view of Xi'an, where past and present converge, gaining a deep appreciation for the wisdom and grandeur of ancient military defense architecture.

The participants also learned some traditional carpentry skills, using traditional tools like planes and ink lines to practice basic mortise-and-tenon structures and woodworking techniques. Through each cut and carving, they not only honed their practical skills, but also felt the Chinese artisan spirit of "craftsmanship and perfection", therefore gaining a deeper appreciation of China's intangible cultural heritage and its unique charms.



► Exploring the Qin and Han Dynasties: Stories Told Through Art and Performance

Stepping into the Shaanxi History Museum's Qin-Han Civilization Museum, the delegation felt as if they had been transported back thousands of years. Inside the museum, majestic bronze vessels stood in solemn silence, rows of Qin terracotta warriors lined up with awe-inspiring might, and the gilded bronze artifacts of the Han Dynasty shimmered with exquisite craftsmanship and radiant luster. The delegation paused to gaze at the lifelike faces of the Terracotta Warriors and observe the intricate patterns on the bronzes. Examining the intricate patterns etched on the bronzes, they felt the pulse of the Qin and Han dynasties beneath layers of patina and gleaming gold, marveling at the extraordinary artistry and ingenuity of the ancient craftsmen.

As night fell, a captivating shadow play and Qinqiang Opera performance took the stage. Behind the illuminated screen, the puppeteer skillfully moved the fingers, making the puppet figures move with grace and vitality and unfolding stories full of twists and emotion. The lights and shadows in the play fully showcased the distinctive appeal of traditional folk art. Then came the resonant, impassioned arias of Qin Opera. The performers, with highly expressive performances, vividly conveyed the bold spirit and deep emotions of the Shaanxi people. The members watched attentively, fully immersed in this captivating audiovisual

spectacle and frequently breaking into warm applause.

During the hands-on session, a paper-cutting artist held red paper and scissors, deftly creating birds, flowers, fish, insects, and auspicious patterns that seemed to spring to life. Guided patiently by the artist, the delegation also took up scissors and began cutting carefully. Though inexperienced, they felt happy and proud after completing each piece. Through this dialogue between paper and blade, they experienced the exquisite artistry of traditional Chinese paper-cutting and appreciated the auspicious meanings and rich imagination embedded in folk culture.



► Tracing Qin Warriors' Origin and Immersed in Tang Splendor

With a sense of reverence, the delegation visited the Museum of the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Standing before the massive burial mound, they felt the majestic aura of the "Eternal Emperor". Through detailed on-site explanations and exhibition materials, the participants gained a systematic understanding of Qin Shi Huang's monumental achievements in unifying the six other warring states, the grand design concept of his mausoleum, and the ancient technological and artistic accomplishments embodied within. They came to deeply appreciate the pivotal role of the Qin Empire in China's long history.

In a replica terracotta workshop, members of the delegation became "Qin artisans", learning

traditional pottery-making techniques such as coiling clay, shaping, and trimming under the guidance of professional instructors. Kneading the clay and carefully carving the textures of the armor, hair buns, and beards, they worked with great focus to recreate the majesty of the "underground army". When each slightly rough but heartfelt "mini terracotta warrior" took shape in their hands, a sense of excitement at touching history and admiration for the ancient artisans' exquisite craftsmanship arose naturally.

Later, the delegation arrived at Huaqing Pool where they listened to legendary tales of Emperor Xuanzong of Tang and his beloved Consort Yang Yuhuan at historical sites such as the Haitang Pool and Lianhua Pool, and caught a glimpse of the luxury and romance of the court life during the glorious Tang dynasty. The mist rising from the hot springs seemed to still carry the poetic warmth of a thousand years ago, adding a touch of lasting elegance to this cultural journey.



This program not only deepened the friendship between the faculty and students of the two universities, but also helped lay a solid foundation for future collaboration. During the trip, the American students wrote down "friendship" in Chinese using ink brushes, and Chinese students taught their American peers to make crescent-shaped jiaozi (Chinese dumplings). All these have sown the seeds of culture in the hearts of both groups. Through an enriching and immersive journey, members

of the "Cultural Ambassadors" exchange group experienced the profound history and brilliant culture carried by Xi'an—an ancient capital of 13 dynasties. From the robust simplicity of the Han Dynasty to the grandeur of the earlier Qin Dynasty, and then to the openness and elegance of the Tang Dynasty, every visit was a moment of spiritual resonance and every experience a connection to the wisdom of ancient sages. Ancient Chang'an safeguarded civilization with its city walls and today's Xi'an connects the world with its openness. Chinese and American youth are now creating a new chapter of mutual understanding and appreciation between two civilizations!

Bridging Youth Power Across Cultures —2025 Shanghai Yangpu International Youth STEAM Exchange Camp Concludes



From June 23 to 29, 46 teachers and students from eight U.S. states, including California—a sister region of Shanghai's Yangpu District—visited Yangpu to participate in the 2025 Shanghai Yangpu International Youth STEAM Camp. To help the participants better adapt to and engage in the activities, the organizers introduced an innovative "immersive buddy camp" model. They selected nearly 20 Yangpu middle school students as volunteers to pair up with the American visitors as their life guides and cultural tutors during their stay in Shanghai. In addition, several local families were also arranged to host American students, offering them a closer look at the daily life of Shanghai

residents.

The opening ceremony featured impressive and highly creative STEAM performances by Chinese and American students. Representatives from Yangpu schools showcased the integration of traditional Chinese culture and modern technological education through folk music performances and interactive robot-pet shows. The American campers presented a crossover performance: wearing the traditional cheongsam dresses featured in wushu or Chinese kung fu, they danced to hip-hop music, blending dynamic street dance moves with the grace of Chinese martial arts. The creative fusion embodied a lively combination of Chinese and Western cultural symbols.



During the camp, the youth from both countries engaged in in-depth explorations under three themes: "Cultural Roots Journey", "Urban Pulse Expedition", and "Humanistic Landmarks Tour". They visited local schools in Yangpu and took part in hands-on courses on traditional Chinese culture, including pottery making, herbal sachet crafting, zodiac paper-cutting, the tea-pouring artistry of long-spout teapots, and kung fu fan dancing. The group

also toured the Innovation Corridor along the Yangpu riverside and visited the WorldSkills Museum — the first and only museum officially endorsed by WorldSkills International—to learn about Shanghai's achievements in vocational excellence. In addition, they explored the No. 228 Neighborhood, a United Nations Habitat Award-winning project, and discovered how a once 20,000-household workers' community had been transformed into an "all-ages-friendly 15-minute living circle", a model of smart urban renewal.



The week-long camp helped build a bridge of communication between Chinese and American youth. The integration of STEAM education and cultural exchange not only deepened their understanding of traditional Chinese culture and offered fresh perspectives of Shanghai and Yangpu, but also helped them forge genuine cross-border friendships. Through artistic and humanistic interaction, the young people from both countries learned to appreciate differences and find resonance in shared emotions, building a bridge that "connects heart to heart" between the youth of both countries and writing a new chapter in people-to-people exchange.

Outstanding Global Students Attend "Doing Business in China" Summer Camp at Xiamen University

On July 2, outstanding students from world-renowned universities such as UC Berkeley, NYU's Stern School of Business, the University of Oxford, and Sciences Po Paris gathered at

Xiamen University for the 2025 "Doing Business in China" Summer Camp, which focused on the theme of the international business environment.

At the opening ceremony, Prof. Wu Chaopeng, Vice President of Xiamen University and Dean of the School of Management, extended a warm welcome to the participants. A representative from Stellenbosch University, South Africa, brought the university's rugby team ball as a gift, which symbolized perseverance and unity and embodied the spirit of South Africa's national sport. In return, Xiamen University gifted an intricately crafted paper sculpture in the shape of a flame tree flower, with its vibrant red petals capturing the romantic essence of the "Garden University by the Sea".

In the first lecture, Prof. William N. Brown, a foreign faculty member at Xiamen University honored as a "Touch China" awardee, shared his 36 years of firsthand experiences in China, offering the international students a profound overview of the nation's socioeconomic development journey.



The exploration journey of the campers began at Xiamen University. This university, renowned as a top-notch university in South China, left a deep impression on the international students with its unique charm blending the beauty of Jiageng-style architecture and the natural scenery of Egret Island. The distinguished professors at Xiamen University, with their profound knowledge and forward-looking

perspectives, provided the participants with substantial academic insights.

Focused on the theme of businesses in China, this year's summer camp included eight carefully designed academic lectures, serving as a great opportunity for the visiting students to have a full picture of what China is like. Starting from China's Reform and Opening-up over the past four decades, the professors analyzed the logic and context of China's economic development from a macro perspective. They then zoomed in on micro-level practices in cutting-edge fields such as AI accounting and digital finance, using concrete cases to illustrate how technological innovation is reshaping the business ecosystem. From breadth to depth, this sequence allowed the campers to gradually grasp the dynamics of China's development through the interplay of theory and practice.



A visit to The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen (CUHK-Shenzhen) opened another window for the participants to observe the diverse landscape of China's higher education. Strolling through the campus, which integrates Chinese and Western architectural styles, they appreciated both the clean lines of modern buildings and the elegant grace of traditional Chinese aesthetics. During a session with CUHK-Shenzhen professors on the innovative growth of Chinese enterprises, the students came to appreciate in a systematic way the drivers behind Chinese companies' innovation and development, including policy support, market

demand, and academia-industry collaboration.

In the Q&A sessions, the students participated actively, voicing their opinions and raising questions. They were not only deeply impressed by China's remarkable achievements in economic development, but also engaged in discussions about the underlying drivers and supporting forces behind these accomplishments. The unique analytical perspectives and interpretative frameworks of Chinese scholars provided the participants with a more holistic understanding of the foundational logic and sustainability of China's innovation-led growth as well as the country's vital role on the global economic stage.



► Corporate Visits Offer First-hand Look at China's Economic Vitality

Apart from lectures, visits were also organized to renowned companies such as Xiamen Xiangyu Group, ABB, and RSM China, offering the visitors firsthand experience of how businesses are run in China. The visit to Xiangyu highlighted intelligent management and global networks in modern logistics and supply chains, underscoring China's crucial role in international trade. As a multinational enterprise with significant influence in China, ABB demonstrated the achievements of international cooperation and technological innovation. The exchange with RSM China showed the students how a local accounting firm leverages its deep understanding of Chinese business practices and international

professional experience to serve as a "guardian" for Chinese companies in their global expansion.

These corporate visits enabled the participants to experience in person the institute's strong university-industry partnerships and gain a direct appreciation of China's dynamic, innovative, and opportunity-rich development landscape, as well as its vibrant economic growth. Moving beyond abstract theories about China and its economy from lectures and professors, the participants engaged in in-depth conversations with Chinese corporate managers and employees, and witnessed firsthand—in well-organized modern production workshops and cutting-edge technology exhibition halls—the powerful pulse of China's robust economic development.



► Friendship across Borders: The Highlight of the Summer Program

Acting as group leaders and "buddies", volunteers from Xiamen University accompanied international students throughout their classes and visits. When Liam Pietersen suffered a recurrence of foot injury, the volunteers accompanied him for medical treatment and provided meticulous care. They helped him complete the program, demonstrating cross-border compassion. Liam persisted in learning Chinese and always reassured his buddies with a bright smile, telling them in Chinese that he was okay. His optimism and resilience deeply moved

and inspired the volunteers. In this mutually supportive environment, the students drew strength from one another's kindness and achieved mutual learning and personal growth.



An episode in a rainstorm also became a cherished memory for all students. While climbing the Xiamen Mountains-to-Sea Trail, the students were caught in a sudden downpour from a typhoon, which left them stranded. However, their spirits remained undampened. They admired the rain-shrouded mountains and sea together and sang in unison Natasha Bedingfield's famous song *Unwritten*: "Feel the rain on your skin, live your life with arms wide open. Today is where your book begins, the rest is still unwritten." Hands of different skin colors clasped tightly as voices singing in different languages blended together. The fervor of youth dissolved natural boundaries and cultural barriers, making this memory of China unique and profound.

The 2025 Xiamen University "Doing Business in China" International Summer Program has officially concluded, but the journey of understanding China and fostering cross-border friendship continues on. The program connected the vibrant present to a wider horizon of future exchanges. The participants will carry the insights from their time in Xiamen to the world, becoming ambassadors who tell China's stories and promote cross-cultural exchanges and cooperation.

Jasmine Melodies as a Bridge—U.S. St. Genevieve Valiant Voices Choir Visits Fuzhou No. 11 Middle School

The "Bond with Kuliang" 2025 China-U.S. Youth Choir Festival, themed "Sing for Peace" brought together over 1,000 youths from nearly 30 professional choirs from China and the U.S. The festival featured diverse activities in Fuzhou (capital of Fujian Province in Southeast China) and Beijing, including performances, masterclasses, school visits, flash mobs, cultural tours, and interactive cultural exchange events.

On July 11, the students and teachers from St. Genevieve Valiant Voices visited Fuzhou No. 11 Middle School as part of the festival. In the event, music and culture served as a bridge, connecting the hearts of Chinese and American youths in this beautiful season of jasmine blossoms.



Upon arrival, the choir members were greeted by Chinese students with garlands of jasmine flowers, a symbol of Fuzhou City's history and culture. The flowers glistened in the drizzle, witnessing the friendship of youths across the Pacific. Guided by faculty and student representatives, the American guests toured the campus when beautiful singing voices on the sports ground drew their attention.

Liu Yan, the School Party Secretary, extended a warm welcome to the guests on behalf of all the teachers and students. She noted that this event was to carry forward the profound Kuliang bond and marked a new chapter of China-U.S.

youth exchange in the new era. She expressed the hope that the intangible cultural heritage workshops and the choir performances would foster mutual understanding and friendship among the students from both countries.



In the classroom, the singing voices of students from both countries intertwined in harmony. Fuzhou No. 11's Zhuyin Choir opened with the ancient tune of *Jinse* (The Zither), bringing a poem by Li Shangyin, a renowned poet of the Tang Dynasty, to life. Their next song, *Taiping Tianxia* (Peace for All under Heaven), also left the audience deeply impressed. St. Genevieve Valiant Voices responded with a powerful performance of *Circle of Life*, celebrating vitality, followed by a unique rendition of the traditional Chinese *Fengyang Song*.



The host school then presented a school flag and a piece of Fuzhou lacquerware engraved with the school's name as gifts to the guests.

Delicately painted with scenes of Fuzhou's historic "Three Lanes and Seven Alleys", the gift offered a vivid display of the city's millennia-old lacquer art tradition, allowing the visitors to take a glimpse into the depth of local cultural heritage. As the guests received this small but meaningful gift, a group photo captured the heartfelt moment of China-U.S. friendship.

In the intangible cultural heritage workshops, the students from both countries explored traditional Chinese arts. In the tea art workshop, the American guests were amazed at the brewing technique of jasmine tea using covered teacups: as boiling water touched the tea leaves, they unfurled into blossoms, releasing a fresh fragrance that filled the room. In the creative arts workshop, paper umbrellas bloomed with cross-cultural designs—some painted with jasmine and goldfish in Chinese style, others with U.S. state flowers. In the printmaking class, the students crafted red envelopes with door-god motifs. Not only did they carry the symbolic meaning of warding off evil and bringing good fortune, but they also showcased China's unique cultural customs. Prints depicting the Xichan Temple of Fuzhou also showed the city's rich history.

The students gathered together to taste the tea and learn to paint. As the event drew to a close, bonds between the youths from both countries grew stronger. They exchanged contact information and ended the event with one more round of singing. The Zhuyin Choir also prepared jasmine tea as gifts, expressing the wish for China-U.S. friendship to deepen with time, just like the aroma of the tea in its scenting process.



This event planted a seed of cultural exchange in youthful hearts. It witnessed not only an encounter of cultures, but also the resonance of minds. Music transcended borders and the voices of youths came together to compose the most beautiful symphony of peace.

Greece Meets Jiangxi—The Ganpo Culture Study Camp for Greek Youth Concludes Successfully

The Greece Meets Jiangxi: Youth Cultural Immersion Program, hosted by Gannan Normal University, came to a successful close. Seventeen Greek youths embarked on a cross-cultural dialogue on "Culture, Experience and Friendship" in Jiangxi Province across the oceans and mountains.



During the 12-day program, the Greek youths immersed themselves in the culture of Jiangxi through diverse activities that highlighted the richness and vitality of Chinese culture. The program featured a variety of cultural courses, including Modern China and Charming Jiangxi, which systematically presented the unique features and course of development of Jiangxi Province; Traditional Chinese Painting and

Calligraphy, which showcased the aesthetic concepts of Eastern art; Traditional Chinese Medicine, which offered both theoretical knowledge and hands-on experiences such as acupuncture and cupping therapy, allowing the participants to grasp the essence of TCM culture.

The Greek guests also went on cultural visits, which covered the old town of Ganzhou, the Exhibition Center of Urban Planning, Natural History Museum, Hakka Museum, and Fushougou Museum, exploring the past and present of Ganzhou. They also visited Xiaobu Town, Ningdu County, where they tried tea picking, processing, and tasting, immersing themselves in local folk customs. At the intangible cultural heritage workshops, they learned to sing tea-picking opera from inheritors of the tradition, tried their hands at pottery wheel throwing and painting, and learned about traditional mortise and tenon techniques in woodworking, all of which left them deeply impressed by the charm of Jiangxi.



At the closing ceremony, the Greek youths shared their "Jiangxi diaries" in Chinese. Xiao Xing described how deeply impressed she had been by activities like tea picking and traditional Chinese medicine, Mi Li spoke highly of the Chinese cuisine and the urban and rural

landscapes, Alex marveled at Ganzhou's urban development and China's rapid progress, and Ze Fei cherished the memory of visiting the beautiful countryside in Ningdu. They noted that the program had not only enriched their cultural knowledge, but also helped them form deep bonds with Chinese teachers, students, and friends. They promised to take the most beautiful impressions of China and stories of Jiangxi back to Greece.

This program provided a platform for communication and mutual learning between Chinese and Greek youth. The participants gained a deeper appreciation of Chinese culture through experiences and enhanced mutual understanding through interaction, injecting youthful vitality into the friendly people-to-people exchanges between China and Greece.



2025 "Hexi Corridor: A Geographic Epic & Future Vision"—A Diversified Academic Exchange Platform Built by Lanzhou University



In 2024, Lanzhou University (LZU) launched its first International Summer Program, designed to weave geography with history,

move classrooms into mountains and rivers, and create an immersive experience for young people worldwide to better understand contemporary China.

In July 2025, the program set off again, welcoming students from 21 countries including the U.K., Italy, the U.S., Canada, Germany, and Belgium. Under the theme of "Hexi Corridor: A Geographic Epic & Future Vision", the program presented the youth with a platform for learning about West China and the Silk Road and for intercultural dialogue and exchange through a combination of academic lectures, cultural workshops, and field studies. It also brought to life the idea that "civilizations become richer and more colorful through exchange and mutual learning".



► Academic Excellence Deepens Mutual Learning

To explore the roots of civilization through rigorous research and fostering cultural interaction through on-site practice, the organizers for this year's summer program built a new paradigm of academic exchange through a series of lectures, in-depth seminars, and immersive cultural experiences, providing an "LZU solution" that sets an example for international cultural dialogue in the new era. Professor Long Ruijun of the School of Ecology opened the program with his lecture on "Exploring the Silk Road". He interpreted the Silk Road as a great artery of human civilization

from the perspective of cultural exchange, elucidating on both its historical significance and contemporary value and thus laying a good academic foundation for the program.

The professor took the class to Zhuaxixiulong Grassland in Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County. Against the background of endless green prairie and roaming yaks, he delivered a lecture titled "The Role of Yaks in the Pastoralism of the Asian Highlands". From the perspectives of ecology and cultural anthropology, he explained how yaks, known as the "arks of plateaus", play a vital role in maintaining ecosystem balance and sustaining nomadic culture. This immersive teaching of bringing lectures to fields deepened the students' understanding of highland ecological wisdom and stood out as a model of academic innovation in the program.



Dunhuang in Gansu Province—the cultural gem on the Silk Road—has witnessed the glorious history of integration between Eastern and Western civilizations. Associate Professor Shi Zhilin of the Institute of Dunhuang Studies at LZU gave a lecture entitled "Dunhuang: A Treasure of Silk Road Civilization", in which he explained the contemporary value of Dunhuang as "Dunhuang of the world" from the perspective of global dialogue among civilizations. The participants fully understood that "protecting the Dunhuang heritage is the shared cultural mission of humankind".

Dunhuang Academy's innovatively designed

hands-on mural reproduction workshop for the Mogao Class enabled the international students to paint flying apsaras and Buddha figures themselves, engaging in an artistic dialogue across thousands of years. This combination of academic interpretation and practical experience deepened participants' understanding of Dunhuang art and helped instill the concept of heritage conservation in their hearts.



Rooted in Western China and open to the world, LZU has always followed an open and inclusive approach in school running. It built a global academic dialogue platform for the summer program under the philosophy of openness and inclusiveness. Prof. Shao Yufeng of the School of Basic Medical Sciences chaired a global symposium on sleep research, which brought together sleep research experts from institutions like the National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm) in France and the UC Davis in the U.S. With a focus on the theme "Sleep Mechanisms and Human Health", the symposium covered topics from fundamental molecular biology research to clinical treatment applications, from methodological innovation to research ethics, creating a multi-level, interdisciplinary system of academic dialogue. It opened a window for the students to the cutting edge of international research, helped build a bridge for sustained cooperation between LZU and leading global institutions, and served as an important practice in LZU's pursuit of becoming a world-class university.



Only with academic depth can civilizations reach new heights of exchange; only with cultural richness can international cooperation have a broadened scope. In these carefully designed academic activities, theoretical rigor and practical innovation were combined, local features and global perspectives were leveraged to enable the participants to gain multidimensional insights during their field studies in the Hexi Corridor. Together, these innovations exemplified the program's educational philosophy of "moving the classroom to mountains and rivers".

► Cultural Immersion Shows Diversity

With the aim of promoting harmony without uniformity and mutual reinforcement among various civilizations, the 2025 LZU-ISP created a "moving cultural classroom", guiding the students from 21 countries on a distinctive cultural exploration along the Hexi Corridor. The participants visited the Gansu Provincial Museum and Gansu Jiandu Museum to experience the depth of Chinese civilization. They also explored the Tiantishan Grottoes, Yulin Caves, and Mogao Caves to appreciate the brilliance of Buddhist art. This multi-dimensional cultural immersion, blending

theory with practice and history with modernity, revealed the rich history of Silk Road cultural exchange and allowed the international young students to appreciate an inclusive Chinese civilization.



The magnificent landscapes of the Hexi Corridor became the broadest open-air classroom, where every natural setting served as a vivid teaching site. On the Yellow River, students rode traditional sheepskin rafts, experiencing the heritage of China's "Mother River", long celebrated in the famed ancient Chinese verse "the Yellow River surges down from the sky". At Zhangye's colorful Danxia landform, spectacular geological wonders that had been carved over hundreds of millions of years unfolded before their eyes. On the vast pastureland of the Shandan Army Horse Breeding Farm, horse-breeding traditions dating back to the Han Dynasty (some 2,000 years ago) inspired a Kazakh student to exclaim that he had "found the shared memory of steppe civilization".

These immersive experiences transformed the geographical epic of the Silk Road into something tangible and fostered dialogue between civilizations in the grandeur of nature.



For an experience of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) passed down for millennia and a view of the blended civilizations along the Silk Road, the program also featured a series of ICH activities. At the Lanzhou Beef Noodles Workshop, the participants from 21 countries learned noodle-making under the guidance of a master chef, fully experiencing the culinary philosophy of "first clear, second white, third red, fourth green, and fifth yellow" (a succinct description of Lanzhou's famed beef noodles which feature clear beef consomme, white daikon slices, red paprika oil, green cilantro/coriander or garlic leaves, and, of course, yellow noodles—the translator). In a Wushu class led by Associate Professor Chang Zhizhao of the Department of Physical Education, the students practiced the discipline of "standing like a pine and sitting like a bell", experiencing the profound Chinese martial arts in person.

At Zhangye High School, they tried calligraphy and paper-cutting and, with the use of brush, ink, and scissors, came to understand the essence of how traditional arts embody and help pass on cultural values. Through the students' hands-on participation, these ICH crafts that carry the codes of the Chinese cultural spirit, showed their contemporary value through time and space, contributing to mutual learning among civilizations.



Through these carefully designed experiences, the LZU-ISP introduced a content-rich, multidimensional system for understanding Chinese culture. Through the program, Chinese civilization was transformed from words in books into something tangible, experiential and interactive, deepening international students' appreciation of Chinese traditions and planting seeds of mutual learning among civilizations.

► Dialogue and Friendship Strengthen Bonds

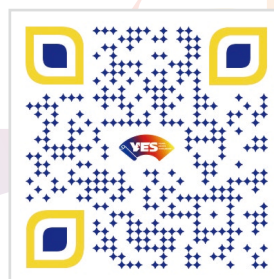
Friendship, which grows from close contact between peoples, holds the key to sound state-to-state relations. When international students and local residents danced joyfully together on the bank of the Yellow River, different rhythms blended seamlessly along the Mother River of China. When campfires lit up the night at the foot of Mingsha Mountain, the bright smiles of youth from 21 countries warmed the Gobi Desert. When the program coincided with the birthday of Sebastian from Venezuela, multilingual blessings echoed alongside camel bells on the ancient Silk Road. And when the participants recited the Chinese poem *Beyond the Frontier* atop Jiayuguan Fortress, their voices seemed to bridge thousands of years just as the "moonlight of Qin" 2,000 years ago shone

upon a shared resonance in the youth today. These moving moments, like pearls scattered along the Silk Road, strung together emotional bonds across mountains and seas.

No distance, not even that of mountains and seas, can separate people with common goals and ideals. This year's International Summer Program was a platform for dialogue and cultural exchange between Chinese and international youth. At Zhangye High School, the students connected through music and art: Chinese teachers and students performed classics such as *Moonlight over the Spring River*, reflecting the pursuit of harmony between poetry and music, while Italian participant Matteo Fronduti sang *Bella Ciao* impromptu, bringing Mediterranean passion to the stage. The program also organized a youth forum, offering a platform for the exchange of ideas. Through candid dialogue, the participants deepened cross-cultural understanding and realized that in building a community with a shared future for mankind, every voice deserves to be heard and every culture warrants respect.

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