

LNU-MSU College of International Business

Our campus is located in Dalian, Liaoning
Province, People's Republic of China



辽宁师范大学国际商学院
(与美国密苏里州立大学合作办学)
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LNU-MSU Student Magazine



辽宁师范大学国际商学院 学生杂志

Liaoning Normal University - Missouri State University
College of International Business, Dalian, China

辽宁师范大学国际商学院
(与美国密苏里州立大学合作办学)

WELCOME TO THE LNU-MSU STUDENT MAGAZINE

This magazine is the work of students enrolled in a joint bachelor's degree program between Liaoning Normal University of Dalian, China, and Missouri State University of Springfield and West Plains, Missouri, USA.

OUR MISSION

The #1 goal of this magazine project was to create opportunities for our students to showcase their creative talents in many areas, including: written communications, project management, teamwork, artistic design, information technology and photography.

Two student teams designed and developed this magazine with oversight by two faculty advisers and some technical support from specialists in areas such as information technology and printing. The literary compositions are the creative efforts of the contributing students.

ON THE FRONT COVER (3 photos, left to right)

1. Wang Zhongchen dressed as a pumpkin at the annual Halloween Pumpkin Carving Contest;
2. Liang Jiawen kneeling in front and Cao Xiaolin standing behind, during a dance competition;
3. Xu Angran playing guitar during the annual Student Talent Contest.

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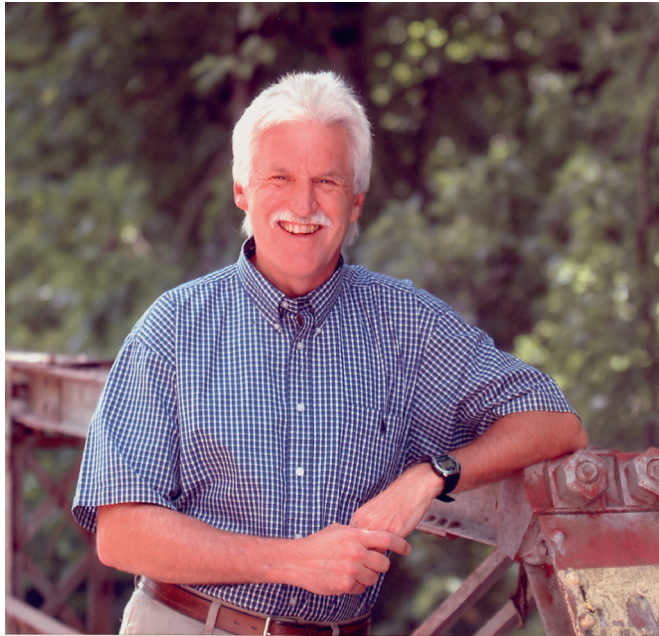
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MSU



Dr. James Baker, Vice President for Research, Economic Development and International Programs at Missouri State University, oversees MSU's partnership in the College of International Business joint program. He has served as one of the senior-level leaders of this LNU-MSU cooperative program since the beginning. Our magazine's Hu, Xingchen (English name, Carol), recently interviewed Dr. Baker, and the following are his responses.

CAROL: "Dr. Baker, thank you for granting us this interview. I would like to begin by asking, what is it that makes our program so unique?"

DR. BAKER: "The collaboration between LNU and MSU has been extraordinary. The fact that the partnership began in 2000 and is still going strong today is one of the many unique features of the program."

CAROL: "How has this program benefited students as they integrate into society?"

DR. BAKER: "The first benefit is that students with college degrees are more likely to find better jobs. Obviously, the ability to find a good job and to support your family is important for all graduates. Second, we believe that it is critical for our graduates to be good citizens and that they make contributions to their local communities. There are many benefits for students from both the Missouri State program in Dalian and in Springfield to better understand students from around the world."

CAROL: "What suggestions do you have for students going abroad to pursue their master's degrees?"

DR. BAKER: "First, learn as much as possible during your undergraduate studies. You have to be willing to work hard and to be disciplined in your work. Make sure that your language skills are adequate to allow you to be successful in undergraduate as well as graduate school. Most importantly, be prepared to work very hard."

CAROL: "Is there a vision for the next five to ten years, to sustain an excellent education program for our students?"

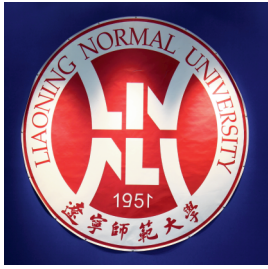
DR. BAKER: "There is, and we are working with LNU officials to determine if we need to expand program offerings based on potential enrollments in Dalian in the future."

CAROL: "Dr. Baker, thank you for your insights. Is there anything you would like to add?"

DR. BAKER: "Yes Carol, I am extremely proud of all that we have accomplished in our partnership. We have been so fortunate to work with many outstanding leaders, including President He, President Qu and President Han from LNU as well as with President Keiser, President Nitzel and President Smart at MSU. And finally, the two other leaders that are most responsible for the success of the program are LNU's Dong, Guangcai, Executive Director of the Joint Management Committee, and MSU's Steve Robinette, Associate Vice President, International Programs."



Carol Hu



LNU

Dong, Guangcai is the Executive Director of the LNU-MSU Joint Management Committee, and former Dean of the College of International Business, which is located on the Dalian campus of Liaoning Normal University. He has served at the senior leadership level in China since the early years of the program's evolution. The following interview was conducted by two of our reporters, He, Shifan (Dana) and Li, Jiahuan (Margaret).



DANA: "Executive Director Dong, thank you for granting us this interview. Please start by telling us about your history with the joint LNU-MSU program?"

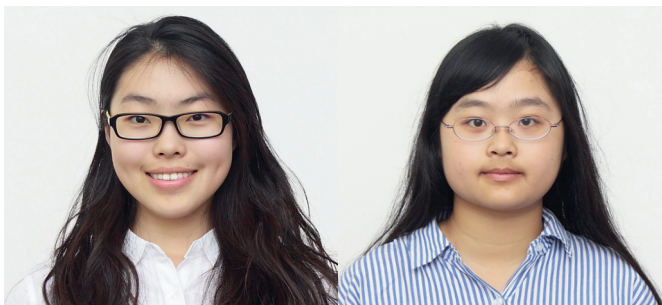
DONG, GUANGCAI: "The program was created in 2000, and I joined it in 2004. That was also the year that we had the current program approved by the Central Government's Ministry of Education. So since 2004 this has officially been a joint program of Liaoning Normal University and Missouri State University, which means that we have the right to offer bachelor's degrees together, and our students receive two degrees, one from each university. This is quite a significant difference from most other programs, and I feel fortunate to have been part of the senior leadership team at that important time in our history. We gained approval of not one, but two unique education models, which we call the 4+0 and 2+2. The 4+0 program is all four years here in China. The 2+2 program is two years here and two years in the USA."

MARGARET: "What's your impression of the students in this program?"

DONG, GUANGCAI: "Our students have a stronger English proficiency, which is one of our requirements, and our students come from many different provinces in China. Only about 50% come from Liaoning Province, with the rest mostly from eleven other provinces, plus our international students from about ten different countries. Our college is very diverse, and our graduates benefit from that."

DANA: "What's your advice to students completing the first two years of the 2+2 program?"

DONG, GUANGCAI: "I encourage all of the students to go to Springfield after two years study here. They are in an international business college and they should seek international experience. If they go to the USA of course they will have more opportunities to work with students from different countries. And, of course they will gain experience from that society. For the students who are thinking of staying here, there's no problem, we understand, stay in China, that's fine. But if you stay in China, you can still seek a global business perspective with us, here in Dalian, from our international professors."



Dana He

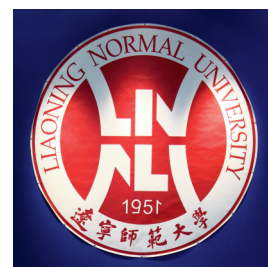
Margaret Li

MARGARET: "Thank you sir. In closing, is there anything you would like to add?"

DONG, GUANGCAI: "Yes, I'd like to express our great thanks to the leadership at MSU and LNU. Without their vision and support the program would not have been so successful. And I also want to specifically mention Dr. Jim Baker, Steve Robinette and Dave Meinert, who have been working closely with us on this program for so many years. We should give all of these people our very special thanks."



LNU



Dr. Liu, Yamei is the Dean of the College of International Business. Previously she was the Assoc. Dean for this program, has taught English in the LNU School of Foreign Languages, and was an exchange scholar for three and a half years, primarily at Miami University of Ohio. Her background includes: English Education, International Politics and a Ph.D. in International Economic Relations. (Interviewer: Wang, Yuhao / Vincent)

VINCENT: "Dean Liu, could you begin by explaining the advantages of getting two degrees to our readers?"

DEAN LIU: "Dual degrees means more benefits to the graduate and to their employer. It's not unusual for other schools to collaborate on a degree program. But it's not very common for students in a joint program to be officially "enrolled" at both schools, especially with one in China and the other in the US. Our graduates don't just get a single degree from a school partnering with a foreign university. Our graduates get two bachelor's degrees, one from each country. This is also a big advantage when applying for a master's degree. And upon graduation, our two degrees make it possible for our students to work for Chinese or other companies who do business internationally, and that's a huge advantage."

VINCENT: "What do you believe the trend will be in the future for schools like this?"

DEAN LIU: "There are already more than 50 Sino-foreign cooperative institutions, and a few universities somewhat similar to ours, in China. By integrating high quality educational resources, these Sino-foreign institutions and universities attract more and more high school graduates who can achieve the same types of goals as studying abroad, but do it in China at a lower cost. Having been established for 15 years, our LNU-MSU program has been widely recognized by both industry and the community."

VINCENT: "We have a lot of international students. What brings students from such distant countries to Dalian?"

DEAN LIU: "First, I think they know our school's reputation. Second, they know from websites, etc., that we have much lower tuition here in China than if they study in America. And third, they gain both a global perspective from our international faculty, and they experience the history and culture of China."

VINCENT: "What plans do you have for the students after they graduate?"

DEAN LIU: "We will not only prepare them with excellent English proficiency, and the specialized knowledge for them to be competitive in the job market, but also the virtues and qualities that LNU-MSU values most—international perspective, perseverance, a sense of responsibility, and team spirit. Important ideals for them to build their lives upon. I also want to establish a social association here for our graduates that will build new career and personal ties between themselves and our school. Building relationships is a powerful part of any career."

VINCENT: "Do you have anything you would like to add in closing?"

DEAN LIU: "Yes, I want to say to the high school graduates who are considering which school to attend, college is one of the most important choices you will make. And I suggest you come here, where you will enjoy all of the benefits of two reputed schools, LNU and MSU, and where you will experience an American education, right here in China."



Vincent Wang



MSU



Mike Coutts is the Associate Dean of the College of International Business. A native of Toronto Canada, Mike received his M.S. in Mathematics from Texas A&M in the United States, and has been an instructor here since 2007. Just two and half years later he moved into administration, but also continues to teach Algebra and Calculus, which helps him get to know our students very well. (Interviewer: Sun, Jiahao / Virgil)

VIRGIL: “Associate Dean Coutts, let me begin by asking, what brought you to China?”

ASSOC. DEAN COUTTS: “In 2006 I came to Hangzhou to attend a five week program for teachers, and to travel in China. The experience was wonderful, so I started looking for a job. Then in February of 2007, I was offered a teaching position at LNU-MSU, and I enjoyed it so much I decided to stay.”

VIRGIL: “Thank you. Next, could you explain what options students have with this program?”

ASSOC. DEAN COUTTS: “Sure, actually there are more options than you might realize. First, we have what we call a “2+2” program, and a “4+0” program. The “2+2” means you can study two years here in Dalian, and then two years abroad. If you are a mainland Chinese student enrolled through China’s National College Entrance Exam, in the General Business/Management major, you can graduate with two Bachelor’s degrees, one from each school. But, there are always some people who want to study a major other than business, and they can take their first two years of basic curriculum here with us too.

The “4+0” program means our students can also choose to study all four years in Dalian. And the same opportunity (as the 2+2 program) for two Bachelor degrees applies. This is a great option for students who want an international education, but want to stay in China. After finishing the four-year general business degree, students may decide to also get an MSU Masters degree in business (MBA). Or, they can get a Masters degree in one of the other majors that MSU offers, such as accounting, education, etc. Many of our students continue on with us for an MBA, but you do have a lot of other options.

Students who attend our program, and then go to MSU in Missouri with a GPA of 2.5 or higher, will get a international partnership scholarship. It’s a special discount for our students, and the tuition rate that other International students pay is reduced by 75%. Our partnership scholarship is a big savings.”

VIRGIL: “What is the English requirement for students here?”

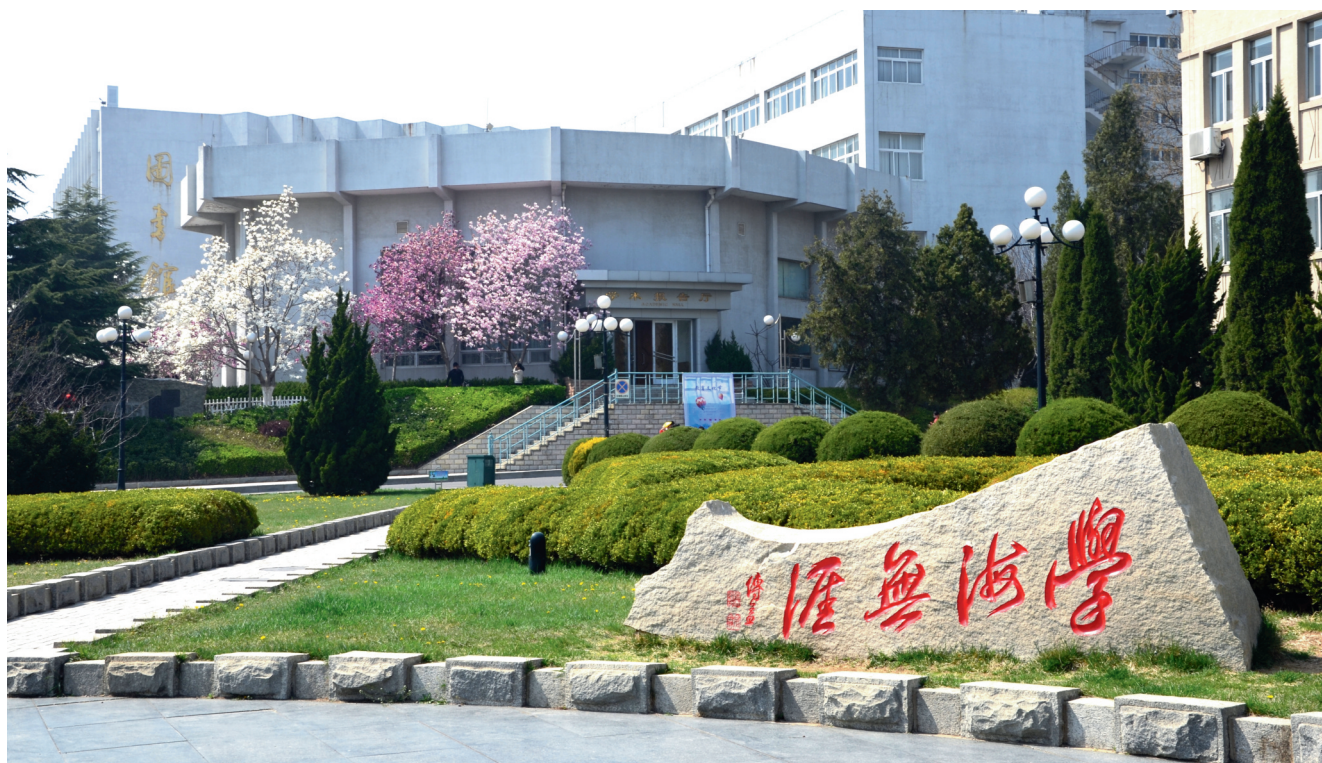
ASSOC. DEAN COUTTS: “Our requirement is a score of at least 100 points in English on the Chinese College Entrance Exam (Gaokao), but the non-mainland Chinese students must take the TOEFL test.”



Virgil Sun

VIRGIL: “Is there anything else you would like to add?”

ASSOC. DEAN COUTTS: “Yes Virgil, I’d like our readers to know that there are big advantages to attending here in Dalian, in addition to the cost savings. For students who want to have an international experience, this program becomes a helpful step between home and overseas. Our students are successful in the USA and around the world because they had the advantages that come with preparing here for two years before taking the bigger step to a foreign country. We have small classes and our students get more individual attention. The faculty get to know you, and your English will improve a lot. You still get the same strong academic experience you would get in the USA, but you get a lot more help in preparing to travel abroad.”



The LNU Library and Lecture Hall (English translation of the saying on the stone: "There is no end to learning.")

Our LNU-MSU Administration, Faculty and Staff

LNU-MSU Administration in Dalian, China

Dong, Guangcai, Executive Director of the LNU-MSU Joint Management Committee
 Dr. Liu, Yamei, Dean of the LNU-MSU College of International Business
 Mike Coutts, Associate Dean of the LNU-MSU College of International Business
 Xu, Desheng, Associate Dean of the LNU-MSU College of International Business
 Dr. Steve Henry, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs
 David Hamilton, Assistant Dean of Operations
 Li Yuxin, Director of the Student Supervisor Office

MSU Administration in Springfield, Missouri, USA

Dr. James Baker, Vice President for Research, Economic Development and International Programs
 Steve Robinette, Associate Vice President International Programs
 Dr. David Meinert, Associate Dean of the College of Business

LNU-MSU Faculty in Dalian, China and Springfield, Missouri, USA

Our faculty is truly an international team. We have thirty-seven educators from nine different nations, all sharing their global, multi-cultural, learning methods and experiences with our students. That is just one reason we are different from most universities. At LNU-MSU we prepare our graduates for success in their interactions with people from everywhere in the world.

Asst. Professor, Steve D. Acton, USA. M.A. TESL, University of Central Missouri.
 Thomas W. Akers, Sr., USA. B.A. Communications, Western Illinois University.
 Sean V. Astrakhan, USA. M.S. TESOL, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.
 Jackie Brosius, USA. B.S. TESOL, University of Wisconsin at River Falls.
 Chang, Shengjun, P. R. China. M.A. English, Missouri State University.
 Asst. Professor, Joseph Cheong, Singapore. M.S. Information and Communication Technology.

Assoc. Dean, Michael G. D. Coutts, Canada. M.S. Mathematics, Texas A&M University at Commerce.
 Dana Frederick, USA. M.B.A. Emporia State University.
 Asst. Professor, Lori A. Gatlin, USA. Ph.D. Nutrition, North Carolina State University.
 Dr. Dana L. Haggard, USA. Ph.D. Business Administration University of Missouri.
 Dr. K. Stephen Haggard, USA. Ph.D. Business Administration University of Missouri.
 Asst. Dean, David A. Hamilton, USA. M.S. Administrative Studies, Missouri State University.
 Julie Hamilton, USA. B.S. General Business, Missouri State University.
 Asst. Professor, Abe Hammar, USA. M.B.A. Missouri State University.
 Dr. G. Alexander Hamwi, USA. Ph.D. Marketing Georgia State University.
 Asst. Academic Dean, Dr. Steven R. Henry, USA. J.D. Law, University of Missouri.
 James Allen Holden, USA. M.Div. Corban University.
 Michelle Hulett, USA. M.B.A. Missouri State University.
 Aaron M. Kruse, USA. M.G.S. Global Studies, Missouri State University.
 Asst. Professor, Mark Lewis, USA. M.Ed. Texas State University.
 Liu, Xue, P. R. China. M.B.A. Missouri State University.
 Asst. Professor, Nadine Morris, Jamaica. Ph.D. Urban and International Economics, Howard University.
 Dr. Walt A. Nelson, USA. Ph.D. Real Estate, Georgia State University.
 Asst. Professor, Pei, Tingyan, P. R. China. M.B.A. Missouri State University.
 Dr. James Philpot, USA. Ph.D. Finance, University of Arkansas.
 Asst. Professor, Dale O. Robinson, USA. M.S. University of North Texas.
 Asst. Professor, Robert St. Denis, USA. Ph.D. (ABD) Chemistry, University of Washington.
 Asst. Professor, Berliana N. Sihombing, Indonesia. Master of Acct. (MAcc) Missouri State University.
 Professor, Dr. Chandra Bhushan Sinha, India. Ph.D. African Dramas, University of Delhi.
 Sun, Yongjun, P. R. China. M.A. TESOL, Missouri State University.
 Farah Nisar Tanki, India. M.A. Psychology, University of Kashmir.
 Asst. Prof. Dr. John J. Walsh, Republic of Ireland. Ph.D. Environmental Economics, University of Wales.
 Wang, Tongtong, P. R. China. M.A. Liaoning Normal University.
 Mohamed Yacoub, Egypt. M.A. in English, Missouri State University.
 Yu, Na, P. R. China. M.P.A. Missouri State University.
 Professor, Dr. Zhao, Hong, P. R. China. Ph.D. Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences.
 Zhong, Shan, P. R. China. M.B.A. Missouri State University.



LNU-MSU Dalian faculty (left to right): Mohamed Yacoub, Wang Tongtong, Mark Lewis, Liu Xue, Chang Shengjun, Aaron Kruse, Yu Na, Mike Coutts, Sun Youngjun, Farah Tanki, David and Julie Hamilton, Steve Henry, Zhong Shan, Nicholas and Jackie Brosius, Sean Astrakhan, Nadine Morris, Tom Akers, Chandra Sinha, James Holden, Bob St. Denis, Steve Acton, Joseph Cheong, John Walsh, Dale Robinson, Zhao Hong, and Pei Tingyan (not pictured, Lori Gatlin, Abe Hammar and Berliana Sihombing).



LNU-MSU Dalian administration and staff (first row, left to right): Assoc. Dean Xu Desheng, Tan Wen, Zhou Kang, Liang Xueshan, Wang Huimin, Song Lai, Dean Liu Yamei, (second row, left to right): Wang Shuo, Li Wenhui, Che Ning, He Shan, Gong Xiaoli, Dong Xiaoguang, Song Yang, Guo Xintian, Peng Wei, Liu Guangcheng, Director Li Yuxin, Wang Tongtong, Li Fangfei, Wu Shouhui, Yu Zhenning, Song Aiwei.

LNU-MSU Administrative Support:

Jackie Brosius, Academic Center Coordinator
 Gong Xiaoli (Lori) – Advisor and Registrar
 Guo Xintian (Ivy) – Copyroom Attendant
 Asst. Professor, Abe Hammar, Academic Integrity Chairperson
 He Shan (Becky) – Supervisor
 Li Fangfei (Ava) – Advisor and Supervisor
 Liang Xueshan (Shirley) – Supervisor
 Liu Guangcheng (Cindy) – Secretary
 Dr. Nadine Morris, International Student Coordinator
 Peng Wei (Vivian) – Bookroom Attendant
 Song Aiwei (Ivy) – Supervisor
 Song Lai (Selina) – Foreign Affairs Specialist
 Song Yang (Ariel) – Supervisor
 Wang Huimin (Michelle) – Financial Assistant
 Wang Shuo (Michael) – Office manager
 Wang Tongtong (Sandy) – Registrar
 Zhou Kang (Kelly) – Supervisor

LNU-MSU Technical Support:

Nicholas Brosius – IT Specialist
 Yu Zhenning (Ben) – IT Specialist
 Li Wenhui (Lucas) – Campus Services
 Wu Shouhui (Mr. Wu) – Campus Services

LNU-MSU Student Services

The Academic Center

The Academic Center is a free service provided to the students of the LNU-MSU College of International Business. The Center offers tutoring to students in subjects such as Accounting, Computer Information Systems, Chemistry, English, History, Math, Public Speaking and more! Students tutoring students is a popular strategy used in many American universities to offer academic support in a way that upholds the high academic integrity standard of the college. The tutoring peers in our Academic Center include Americans, Chinese and international students, who are knowledgeable in a variety of subjects.

The LNU-MSU Library

Our building has its own student library, which is open seven days a week to provide educational resources and a pleasant, quiet environment for studying. There is also a much larger LNU Library on campus, which is available as well, but this smaller library is used more by our students because of the convenience of being located in the same building as the majority of our classes.

Facilities for Physical Education and Extracurricular Activities

Inside our classroom building on the main campus is an exercise room for weight lifting, a room for aerobic exercises and areas for table tennis. Outside our main building are basketball courts, volleyball courts, tennis courts, an outdoor track and a football field.

LNU-MSU Student Organizations

The Original Club

The Original Club is a campus organization which focuses primarily on creative design, rubber stamp carving, cosplay, painting and photography. Every weekend they offer anime comic classes to teach club members drawing skills. They also focus on helping each member discover new, individual abilities. One historically popular campus event they host every fall is the pumpkin carving contest (pictured: Guo Yiming /Abner and Assistant Professor Abe Hammar). The Original Club's goal and motto is: "Originality enriches our lives."



The Speaking Up Club

The Speaking Up Club is an oral English club at LNU-MSU, which focuses on improving speaking skills and on increasing student confidence. The Speaking Up Club, which was founded in 2007, is sometimes also called "English Corner." Students and international faculty participate and communicate with each other regarding a different topic and activity each week. And as the club members tell us, "The Speaking Up Club can not only improve your spoken English, it also helps you make more friends!"

The Study Club

College is a time for each student to gain as much from their educational experience as possible. The ultimate student goal is to prepare for a successful career by learning, retaining and taking that knowledge with them into the workplace, and also into their personal lives. The Study Club provides opportunities for students who are willing and interested, to improve their understanding of study methods, and the skills that come from using those methods. The club is made up of members who are already successful at a particular skill or subject, and of members who just want to learn. This all takes place in a teamwork environment with the members discussing and designing activities that allow them to learn together. Very much like our Academic Center, the Study Club believes from experience that students tutoring students is a practical, successful strategy for providing academic support. The club is always welcoming new members, both as learners and as teachers. All are welcomed here!

The ISA

LNU-MSU's International Student Association (ISA) is a student-led organization representing people from four continents, which includes foreign countries such as the United States, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Iran, Bahrain, Colombia, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Nigeria, and Congo.



The ISA serves as a source of support, to communicate information and provide assistance to our international students. The ISA holds meetings and is responsible for facilitating social events.

The Diamond Drama Club

Our Diamond Drama Club offers new experiences in performing, and in the management of providing performance-oriented presentations, by hosting a variety of entertainment activities. This includes theatrical performances, contests and the annual Halloween party. Both students and faculty participate.

The Dream Dragon Club

Our group's goals are: to promote social communication, create an effective learning atmosphere, improve the self-image of our student members, and make their lives more colorful. Our club is comprised of the etiquette department, the quality development department, the ministry of communications, the advertising and marketing department, and the planning department. We provide many student activities, including stage shows, do it yourself events, etc., and our club has consistently received high praise, including a four-star rating (which is an honorary title).

The Red Cross of the LNU-MSU College of International Business

Our local Red Cross Club, which is staffed mostly by college students, is associated with the international organization, which was started to protect human life and health, to ensure respect for human beings, and to prevent and alleviate human suffering. Our activities have included examples such as: helping the elderly at nursing homes, donating books, interacting with community volunteers to support community activities, and more. We are dedicated to patriotically serving our society, which improves the social harmony and stability in our communities.

The Star Voice Club

Our music club is comprised of the Vocal, Instrument, PR, Planning and Club Office sections. We hold vocal training every week, and also periodic in-club activities and competitions. Our members plan, organize, communicate, promote and perform, with a great passion for the entertainment industry.



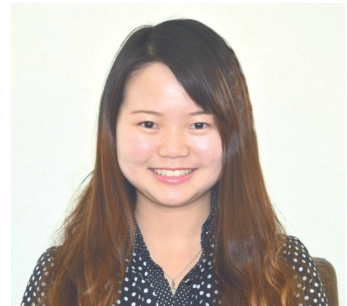
Student Literary Contributions

The mission of this magazine is to provide our students with the opportunity to showcase their creative talents. They are constantly encouraged to test the various skills and abilities they develop here. And by successfully competing for the chance to be published, the primary mission of this magazine was realized. A second part to that mission is the opportunity for our student magazine staff to learn from the experience of designing and creating this publication.

We hope you enjoy the students' contributions below as much as we enjoyed bringing them to you.

On a Mission - by Xiao Liqun / Tiffany

How good is it when a person volunteers to serve at an educational institution in a far away land, away from the family, but, of course, on a mission? Well, my experience tells me that my efforts yielded excellent results, in that it was a good opportunity to learn what selflessness and virtuousness are. The ecstasy of that wonderful experience is still palpable in me. I now wish to share that experience with my readers.



I was thrilled with joy when I had the opportunity to go to Thailand for a month during the winter vacation 2014-15. I volunteered to work in some of the elementary schools in the rural areas of Thailand. Later, I would also be traveling to Bangkok to work in other junior high schools. While there, I hoped to get lots of opportunities to go sightseeing and do some shopping. I knew there were plenty of good things to be seen there, and I intended to make the most of the opportunity. In the north of Thailand, there are mountains with dense forests, with lots of flora and fauna. It was a place worth going to. It did not take me long to make up my mind to go there as my parents supported me in this venture.

The first school I volunteered to serve was in central Thailand. The school had three levels—kindergarten, elementary school and junior high school. There were a few English teachers who had volunteered to serve in the school and were known to be doing a commendable job. As for me, I was asked by the principal to teach Mandarin. It is becoming popular in Thailand, but only the students who live in the cities have an opportunity to learn it. The fact remains that many Thai youngsters are eager to learn it.

I was pleasantly surprised to discover that several young students of the school were smart and enthusiastic to learn Mandarin. When compared to the students I had taught in Bangkok later, I found them more involved in the learning process. I began with small words used in day to day conversations. I used the catch-as-catch-on method to help them overcome their hesitation. The ploy worked! They were quick in learning it. They never gave me an opportunity to be critical of their work. Soon, we found ourselves communicating well. I was happy with the progress we were making. It shows that when the will is strong, nothing is impossible.

I have many good memories working with them. The picture albums that I had taken along with me from China were shared between us. They made several good remarks which showed how clever they were. The thing that impressed me the most was their trust in me. They were inquisitive children and would often ask me questions which were difficult to answer. But I enjoyed every bit of their company. The pictures pasted below were taken at the time when I was teaching them. The smiles on their faces showed how happy and contented they all were.

My teaching schedule was three hours a day from Monday to Friday. I was given a class schedule detailing the classes I had to take and would work according to it. I tried my best to cater to their needs, both in and out of the classroom. As for sightseeing, there were not many places to visit, as the place

was quite a distance from the main tourist attractions. Therefore, I would usually stay with the kids, and play different games with them. On the weekends, the principal along with the host family would go out on visits and they would invite me to accompany them. At the end of the first week, I went with them to the Elephant Hotel. It took us three hours to reach there. The elephants were huge and wonderful. I was thrilled as I had never seen them before. When I touched one of them, I was surprised to find how tough and spiky their skins were, but overall, I liked the feeling. Below are some of the pictures I took when I was in the Elephant Hotel. It is a very nice hotel, and they have many elephants there, but they are never maltreated. In fact, they are worshipped in Thailand (as is the case in India, also).

But the whole time I was there, I felt lonely. Though in the company of other volunteers, I missed the kids and the games we played. I had not meant to disparage my young students, but I had to go out and explore when I had the opportunity. I can now well understand why mothers insist on not being separated from their kids for even a minute.

On the last day of my presence in the school, I shared several postcards with my students and they loved it. Many kids came and hugged me. Some had tears in their eyes. It was a separation that was heart-rending. I advised them to continue learning Mandarin, as they would benefit from it in the future. I assured them I would come back soon which somewhat made them happy. The spell they had cast on me remained for a long time. The principal jokingly said that if I ever get married to a Thai, everything would be easy for me as I would not have to get a visa to visit them. Later, the principal divulged a secret that he had two nephews who were of the same age as me. Ha, ha. The next weekend, the host took us to Sukhothai, which was the capital of Thailand 700 years ago. From Sukhothai, I would go further on to Bangkok.

Before I reached the host family in Bangkok, I was worried because I had to go there alone. They were Muslims and I had heard several stories about them. There have been several cases of social disorder in the southern part of Thailand, and this did not go well. The host family messaged me to reach their place before seven o'clock in the evening as it was dangerous to travel at night. I was really confused when I received this message, and decided to do as asked.

The school in Bangkok was a Muslim school. The architectural design of the school is of Muslim-style and the female students and lady teachers there dress in a veil, which covers their head. My working hours were from 9:30 to 11:30 AM, and the rest of the time I would explore Bangkok. Awesome! Here are some pictures of the school and of the students.

When it was the third day of my stay there, I asked my host why she had asked me to come before seven o'clock. She said there was a boy in her community who wanted to learn Mandarin, and his house was a little further away from my host's house. Now, I knew why she had said that! So, till the time I was there, I had to teach him Mandarin. Later, he brought his sister along. Soon there were other kids, as well!

Besides teaching, I also traveled to a lot of tourist places in Bangkok. I went to The Great Palace with the students that I had from my host family's community. It was fun and quite informative. They had dressed me up as a Thai student, as I would not have to pay for my entrance fee amounting to 500THB. They were very smart, indeed!

On the weekend, I went to Pattaya, a well known tourist place, with another volunteer, named Camille. She had just finished her high school, and was now attending a college program in Brazil. She is a very brave and sweet girl! We went to watch a lady-boy's show which was quite entertaining. Later, we went to a nearby island by motorboat. When we were searching for a place to have dinner, we met with two travelers, a Spaniard and an Indian. They were riding bikes, and often raised money from public donations. In return, they would act as guides. We donated 100 THB each to them and they gave us two English version tour guide books. It proved helpful.

When we were back in Bangkok from Pattaya, the host family asked us to conduct an English workshop for the adults in the community. There, we gave them easy and catchy sentences to work on. It paid rich dividends. Later, by chance, we attended a lovely wedding ceremony! The local people were very nice and kind to us. They treated us like family members. Their hospitality was truly touching. Also, they cooked very good food which we all liked a lot. The picture shows the Muslim bride in the traditional Thai attire, tall and beautiful.

On the flight back to China, I recollected all the past experiences that I had in Thailand. I posted a status on Facebook, so that all my friends could share the lovely experienced that I had on this mission. I was reminded of the old saying that if you share something with the wrong people, they will take it for granted. If you share something with the right people, they will reward you with more. I have been so lucky to shower my love on the innocent kids I came across in Thailand. In return, they rewarded me with much satisfaction. We often do not know what we are earmarked for, but certainly through volunteering for a good cause, we know what we are capable of achieving. I suddenly realized to my great happiness what I had once learned in my literature class. What a man gives, he gets back in plenty. And so did I. I gave them love, understanding and compassion and was instantly rewarded by their trust and good will. It helped me to re-energize and to de-stress. I am happy to have made the decision to volunteer for a mission.

Upon my return to China, many friends asked me how and from where I had found the information for volunteering. I would like to share it publicly. The information I had was through IVT, which stands for International Volunteer Traveler. They also have a platform on WeChat. If you want more about this organization, you can fill out an application form online <http://form.jotform.me/form/50584308260452>. There are several other volunteering opportunities available.

A Fear Overcome - by Zhang Ruiqi / Dora

I had a memorable experience two years ago. I had a part-time job teaching junior high school students. It was the first time I had taken up a part-time job, so I was pretty nervous standing behind the podium trying to introduce myself to my students.

It seemed it would rain heavily, as there were dark clouds hovering in the background. My mood always changes with the weather, but I smiled to myself and said, "I must not be in a bad mood. This is my first day in school as a teacher and so I must look happy and cheerful!" On my way to the bus station, the wind was blowing menacingly and it looked that it would disrupt the overhead electric wires. I was scared and cold. My fingers and ears had gone numb. Five minutes went by and then ten, but there was no sign of the bus. Twenty minutes later, I got on the bus; however, it was so crowded that I could not hold on to the bar for balance. Then, I lost balance and fell backwards. The floor was dirty with the wet mud from the shoes of the passengers getting on and off the bus. It was the last thing I had expected. My clothes got wet and dirty in a few places. What was I to do? Go home and change into a new dress? I wouldn't be able to reach the school on time. So, that's how the journey to my first job began!

Since it was raining cats and dogs, the driver drove slowly. When I arrived at school, it was time for the class to begin. I had arrived at the very last minute! I stood in the front of the class and looked at my students. They looked back at me. Some, I thought, were trying to size me up. I didn't know how to begin or what to say! My mind seemed to have gone blank. I felt as if the moment would never end.

The inner strength within me came to my rescue. It reminded me that I had a responsibility to fulfill. I wouldn't allow anything to mess around with my aspirations and the plans I had made for the future. I would rather die fighting than accept defeat as a coward. I tried my best to break this embarrassing situation and I dare say that I won!

"Good morning," I said.

"Good morning, Miss," came the instant reply.

Then, I didn't know what to say, my brain went blank. It was still pouring heavily. It sounded like somebody mocking me. Although I was cold, I could feel the sweat drip into my eyes. "I will die" I thought. But, my fortitude kept me going.



Suddenly, a student stood up and said, "You are our new teacher, right?"

I said "Yes." He then added, "You are so beautiful!" Then, a girl said, "Yes, you are so beautiful! Before you came in, we were thinking you would be an old woman. Now that we know you are not, we are very happy to see you! Welcome, dear teacher."

The students clapped and welcomed me. They were so kind! I looked into their eyes. I was certain they really meant all that they had said to me. I knew they liked me and were curious to know more about me. I could also notice they were expecting me to provide them a world of information. I felt relaxed. It sure was a good start to my teaching experience and I could imagine getting along pretty well with them in the near future. The thought gave me the impetus to act courageously, which I did. To my great satisfaction I began teaching them with great ease. The words seemed to pour out of me very easily and my thought process was quick. Everything seemed to work in perfect co-ordination. Perhaps, they did not know that they had really encouraged me and made me feel comfortable. I wonder what would have happened if they had not been as friendly as they were.

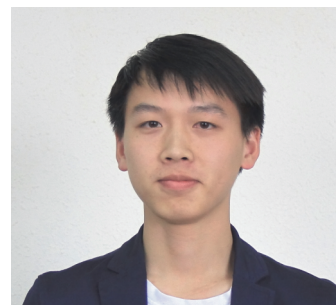
After the short introduction with the students, I discussed the courses of study and gave them a brief outline of the various lessons that were prescribed. I found I was not uncomfortable and cold any more. Nor was I sweating. Also, the rain had stopped and the sun had come out in its full glory. The rest of the day was spent in the class going through the syllabus.

I can't forget this wonderful experience because it was due to the children in the class that I eventually overcame the fear that had initially gripped me. I really cannot forget them and hope they do exceptionally well where ever they are. After this experience, I know that even a small amount of encouragement can help people a lot. It can change their lives forever.

Buying a Porsche in a Year

by Tang Zhuchuang / Jungel

If you earn only 3,000 RMB per month after graduation, working for a corporation, how can you afford to purchase a Porsche within a year? One of my cyber-pals shared a very inspiring and encouraging article with me.



Nowadays, more and more youngsters who work for salaries of almost 3,000 RMB per month complain about the unfairness of society, and yet reveal how ambitious they are, rather than to work hard and learn how to finance their ambitions. The leading character in the article is a male who comes from Chongqing and is paid 3,000 RMB monthly for working in a private company where the accommodation is included.

As he does not have a girlfriend and he neither smokes, nor drinks, nor parties, he does not spend even one RMB on such expenses. At the same time, he lives in his company's dormitory, which is not far away from the company itself. Therefore, he walks to work with the thought that he can exercise as well. His monthly telephone fee is between 20 and 30 RMB, and he pays 20 RMB for transportation. He seldom goes out, except for going to the library, where he reads or buys some books to take back home. On his reading hobby he spends 30 RMB each month. As he is typically an extremely frugal person, his ordinary household expenses are 100 RMB per month in total, and normally he doesn't purchase clothing or shoes.

As for food, the company's canteen is closed on the weekends, which means that there are a total of eight days each month for him to eat elsewhere. Each of those days he spends three RMB for a steamed bun and soybean milk for breakfast, six RMB for lunch and six RMB for dinner in fast food restaurants. So in one month he will spend a total of 120 RMB on food. Adding these 120 RMB to his ordinary household expenses of 100 RMB per month, and providing for emergencies like cold weather or going home, in one month he spends 500 RMB to cover all of his expenses.

How much money does he save in a month? Yes, he deposits 2,500 RMB into the bank. How much will

he have in his bank account after a year? Of course, he has only 30,000 RMB. So, the question is coming...how can he afford a Porsche? I guess you do not know.

The answer is that his father offered him 2,570,000 RMB. Eventually, he purchases a Porsche valued at 2,600,000 RMB. After reading the article, there was a wry smile on my face.

A Time Apart - by Tang Zhuchuang / Jungel

Rain, rain, go away,
Little Jungel wants to play.
Time, time, would you mind,
Turning back just one more time?
Cry, cry, do not be shy.
This moment belongs to you and I.
Tear, tear withdraw, back,
We can meet some other night!

June always comes along with rain,
Just like the tears in your eyes.
We always separate accompany with tears,
Looks like the rain in the sky.
After the entrance examinations, we all are silent;
After the graduation party, we all are grieved.
When told the scores, time to face separation;
When admitted to university, time to part.

I want a time machine, for one month,
One week, or only one hour, in the classroom.
I would cherish every second I spend with you.
Joy and sorrow together.
Would I remember every smile you have given,
Consciously or unconsciously?

Then, as time goes by,
Dida... dida...
In the crowd,
You can see me,
I can meet you.
We are not alone.
Happy, hand in hand,
Cry on my shoulders.
Good or bad? All is fine!
Only you and me
At that time.

Horrible Neglect - by Zhang Yingxiang / Helen

Aging is a factor that cannot be stopped. City life is fast and excessively competitive. City folks rarely realize how rapidly time moves on. Finally, when people do realize it, they find themselves old and bald with wrinkles all over the face and hands. But, admittedly, it is the Law of Nature and must be faced some day.

Time relentlessly moves on and parents soon find themselves as grandparents; their children now working in far away places, and with very



little to do to keep themselves fruitfully occupied. Worse still, is their loneliness. Though it is the duty of the young to see that their elders are looked after well and not left to fend for themselves, very little thought is given to this vital issue. In earlier times, it wasn't the case.

It must be realized by all that grandparents deserve all the attention possible from their near and dear ones, since they had made it possible for their loved ones to reach the position they are in right now. In the absence of their sacrifice, the young folks might have had several more hurdles to overcome and life would certainly have been much tougher for them. It's easy to find an excuse by saying, "I would have very much liked to help but for the job that I have in a far away city," or, "I am not the only person in the family who can look after the grandparents. Why can't my elder brothers look after them? Why don't they help?"

It's easy to find excuses, but the harm caused by such utterances to the aged is incalculable. When they hear such talks, it pains them immensely. And then, more often than not, they lie awake in bed preferring not to have any contact with any of the family members. If this continues, it could hasten their end! This, I believe, amounts to a criminal breach of misconduct which must be discouraged by all literate people world-wide. None can be absolved of the responsibility of looking after their aging parents or grandparents. They had given the best years of their life for their loved ones and now when old, expect their children and grand children to be with them and to keep them happy in the last years of their life. The one-child policy introduced in China has not helped the cause of the elderly. In fact, it has isolated them.

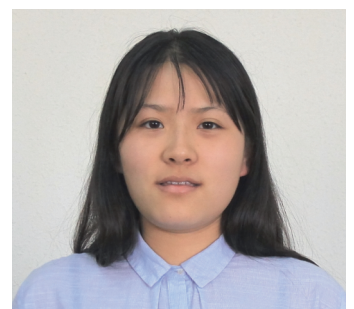
I can't help recalling a movie that I watched during the most recent winter holiday called Miss Granny. It's a comedy that reflects a number of social realities concerning the problems of the elderly. When people get old, there seems to be a feeling that they belong to a disadvantaged group. The China News, Beijing, wrote in its September 24 edition, "According to a joint survey conducted by the Social Investigation Center of China Youth Daily and Sina.com, most Chinese will support themselves when they are old instead of depending on the Government." The percentage mentioned was 80%. But, that is immaterial. The question that comes to my mind is, "What about the emotional content of the problem? Can grandparents live or do without care, affection and understanding from us?"

The situation in the western hemisphere is not very heartening either. There are Homes for the Elderly where one comes across scores of elderly people wishing they were living together with their sons and daughters. What are we doing with our elders and where are we heading? The destination seems to have been forgotten by everyone, but we mustn't forget that we too will one day be like our grandparents, yearning for love and recognition.

An Experience to Learn From

by Ma Chen / Ann

The last summer vacation was a restless one, mostly due to lack of activity at home. Nevertheless, I had an unforgettable experience on account of an irregular diet and a faulty lifestyle. I still vividly remember one morning when I woke up. I felt my head spinning. Worse still, I felt too weak to stand or walk and had to lie in bed for the rest of the day.



Besides this, I often got nauseated when I ate. My mother was alarmed at this sudden development, and told me that I needed to rest. I was asked to drink as much water as I could. For the rest of the week, I was low in spirits and had a poor appetite. I lost five kilograms in one week! Though I was quite happy to lose my weight, my illness was killing me. Ultimately, my mother decided that we could not delay it further, and took me to the hospital. There I had to undergo several pathological tests and finally was sent home with lots of medicine. I do not know what the final diagnosis was, but it took me six days to recover from that terrible experience. I call this "terrible", since I had never before experienced such pain and agony. I had a thousand different thoughts, such as, "What happens if I have cancer?" and "What if I need surgery and must remain in bed for several weeks?" Fortunately, nothing of that kind happened. But, of course I had learned a bitter lesson. Henceforth, I would be more careful. Once bitten, twice shy. Now, I have resolved to avoid eating any food from road side stands, and to exercise regularly.

We all must strive to have a balanced diet requiring carbohydrates, fiber, protein, minerals, and plenty of liquid intake. There is nothing better than to be in high spirits and proper shape. If we are in good health, we are the luckiest of all.

Bad Effects of Smoking - by Ma Chen / Ann

As per studies undertaken by the health department in Beijing, smoking is a popular pastime with the young and the old alike. It is a widespread habit all over the world. Nowadays, one can see many people smoking while walking on the streets, driving cars, eating in restaurants and so on. This suicidal habit has not spared the women-folk, either. One day, I saw a young girl smoking on the campus. It did not surprise me, as I had previously seen many women smoking in public places.

First, it is common knowledge that smoking does great harm to smokers. From the statistics provided on a smoking website, there has been increasing evidence of adverse health effects due to the consumption of tobacco. Obviously, there are some alarming short-term effects, including an increase in heart rate, elevated blood pressure, bronchitis, and depriving the tissues of the much-needed oxygen.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has provided details about heavy smokers in one of its reports. According to the organization, smoking causes 90% of all lung cancer cases. The report, entitled Warnings of Health Risks, states that 20% of heavy smokers suffer from a chronic lung disease called emphysema, which causes the narrowing and clogging of the airway passages. It causes obstructions in free breathing. This disease is seldom seen in non-smokers. According to the report, smokers are four times more likely to develop oral and laryngeal cancer than non-smokers. Recently, I heard sad news from my grandfather; he said that his best friend had died from lung cancer as a result of excessive smoking. I then realized how horrific the bad effects of smoking are on people.

Second, smoking has several adverse effects on non-smokers, such as family members, colleagues and others who are compelled to breathe the noxious smoke that fills the room. My grandfather has been smoking for many years. While he is addicted to it, it is a cause of great anguish for us. We, at times, remind him to stop, but it has fallen on deaf ears. Furthermore, I still remember the day when my grandmother caught a bad cold. Due to my grandfather's continuous smoking, her medical condition worsened. In addition, the second-hand smoke from a parent's cigarette increases the child's chances of developing middle ear problems, and of causing coughing and wheezing. It also certainly affects their mental and psychological growth.

Smokers also set a bad example for youngsters. According to a study conducted by Smoke-Free Campus, when both the parents smoke, a teenager is more than twice as likely to smoke as a young person whose parents are non-smokers. Also, if only one parent smokes, young people are also likely to start smoking early. Pregnant women who smoke are more likely to deliver underweight babies, causing a grave situation for its survival. The fact is that if teenagers inhale too much second-hand smoke, the intelligence quotient (IQ) of their children will also be adversely affected. Thus, smoking does the maximum harm to the health of non-smokers. Several decades ago, people thought otherwise, and there were no restrictions imposed.

Third, without doubt, smoking also does harm to the environment. Growing tobacco plants destroys the natural resources of the land system, making productive land turn barren. Also, a lot of forested areas are turned into agricultural areas for its plantation. This inevitably leads to soil erosion and the unnecessary loss of soil nutrients, i.e. sodium, potassium, and magnesium. The smoke that emits from smoking produces large amounts of gas, such as carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. This adds to the existing air pollution. Though smoking has been banned in public places, countless people still persist in smoking in public.

Recently, I took an elevator in a shopping mall and noticed a person smoking in the elevator. People in it were all staring at him, and some were even coughing. He was not supposed to smoke there, as it infringed upon the non-smokers' freedom to breathe clean and fresh air. Floating dust particles increase with the density of the smoke, which compels plenty of people to wear masks to help them breathe freely. Smoking could also pose a security risk, such as causing a fire, which would threaten the safety of precious lives and property. Finally, cigarette butts are non-biodegradable.

The governments of the world are concerned by this grave matter and have initiated several necessary steps to see that such unhealthy practices are stopped forthwith. This would allow health conscious people to live better lives. Heavy taxes are being imposed on the sale of cigarettes, making it less affordable to a large number of people who would otherwise continue smoking. The news media have also taken up this issue and are creating mass awareness among the people. However, the good news is that an increasing number of people have realized the harmful effects of smoking and its adverse effects on the environment.

To conclude, smoking not only does harm to both smokers and non-smokers physically, spiritually and mentally, but also adversely influences our environment. Habits die hard, but if a person has the conviction to stop, he can do so.

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Love in Life and Death - by Zha Jinglin / Airis

Lisa was sitting in a private cinema...alone. Although she couldn't remember how she had arrived at this cinema, she felt entirely comfortable. It was as though she had been chosen to sit there. The cinema was both tiny and dark, but in the right corner a little red light was shining that reminded her of an emergency or warning light. Titanic, Lisa's favorite movie, was showing on the screen. The hero of the movie, Jack, was just about to kiss the heroine, Rose, which is the most beautiful scene in this famous movie.



"Lisa? Lisa! Is that you?" a man's voice suddenly called out to an astonished Lisa. She immediately turned to her left. To her great surprise it was her husband, David! Even though he was taller and thinner than usual, and a little bit gaunt, Lisa still immediately recognized him.

"Yes, yes! It's me, David! I miss...How did you get here?" she asked while sobbing.

"It doesn't matter, honey. Why don't we just enjoy the movie? I do remember this is your favorite one." David winked at her as he usually did, and, at the same time, the red light in the corner twinkled.

Holding her husband's hand tightly, "You are probably right," Lisa said softly. Her eyes were so bright that it seemed she had stars in them.

"How is Sherry doing these days?" David asked curiously.

"Well. She has just learned to ride a bicycle. I didn't initially agree with that because I thought she was too young to learn such a thing. But she did a very good job. She is an adventurer, just like you," Lisa said happily.

"I told you that you would be a pretty good mother. Our little Sherry definitely will be a good girl." David smiled and held her hand tightly.

"But you are not right by my side, are you?" Lisa said unexpectedly and burst into tears. She grabbed David's shirt sleeve as firmly as she could from fear that he would suddenly vanish into the air.

"I will not go anywhere, Honey, but I cannot always be by your side," David said with a gentle voice. He winked his eye again and so twinkled the red light.

He had spent the whole day with her. Just then, the movie was reaching its climax. As ill luck would have it, disaster had struck and the ship's passengers had been taken unawares. Jack was trying his best to

save Rose by giving her a piece of wooden deck. However, Jack ultimately died due to being exposed to the cold waters of the Atlantic.

"I love Titanic, but I don't like this sad ending," Lisa said and she looked at him in the eye.

"Honey, sometimes we cannot decide which endings we want to see, but we can decide the way we treat the ending." David hugged Lisa gently and whispered in her ear, "I am not going anywhere, but I cannot be by your side. I am so sorry for that, but you are stronger than ever. I think you can handle all difficulties. I know that you are going through a tough time, but you are my good girl, Honey, always."

"Take care of yourself and do remember that I will never forget you!" Being unable to control her feelings, Lisa cried again.

All of a sudden she saw everything crash down in front of her. She was so scared that she tried to close her eyes. But she was forced to open them due to noise and light around her. She was awoken by the sound of her alarm clock and the sun rays that were peeping through the curtains.

It was just an otherwise normal day. It had now been four years since her husband's death and she had yet to recover from the tragedy.

How PED 100 Revolutionized My Life

by Arthur A. Guslim

A popular perspective among students at virtually every education level these days is: the purpose of studying is to obtain good grades. As a student, I must admit that I hold the same belief. Even worse, being a Type-A perfectionist, I believe it so much to the extent of trying to achieve 100% at every exam and assignment in spite of the fact that I am completely aware 90% is all it takes to ace my courses.



Contrary to that popular belief, however, the reward of the considerable amount of effort and number of hours dedicated to studying does not end only with attaining a high GPA. Fortunately, the knowledge we acquire while studying can also be applied in our real lives. My experience in PED 100 (Fitness for Living) proves that.

For the record, PED 100 was not my first Physical Education (PE) class. I also had PE in elementary, middle school, and high school in Medan, Indonesia. The PE classes that I took there, focused so much on memorizing facts about sports down to the history, rules, and the dimension of balls, courts, and tools (such as bats, clubs, and rackets). Only rarely did I ever get the chance to play the sports, and, even so, the options were very limited. Moreover, the PE classes did not teach about how to eat and be healthy. I spent my daily allowance on at least one bottle of soft drink every school day. Also, I regularly ate lots of unhealthy, junk food to the point that I was overweight and quite insecure about my figure. The thought of going to the gym and lifting weight literally had never crossed my mind before PED 100.

On the contrary, PED 100 focused on how to lead a healthy life. Throughout the course, I learned about nutrition, weight-lifting, cardio, wellness and lifestyle management, stress management, and so forth. To be perfectly honest, my one and only motivation to sign up at the gym two years ago was to ace the course. I was not sure if I could pass the course's fitness test with my physical condition at the time. Equipped with the information I learned from PED 100, I started hitting the gym at least four times every week and eat healthy by cooking-in most of the time. Little did I know, I went from pants size 36 to 32 within months, started to get stronger and healthier, and I finished the course with a gold medal. I am very proud to say that I am addicted to working-out and healthy living. Now, I am in the best shape I have ever been, and I feel more confident than before.

Especially for You - by Liu Sirui / Sherry

It's not been very long
That we have been together
Yet it seems to me
That I have known you forever.

What you mean to me
It's likely, you do not know
Maybe it's my fault
For till now I have never revealed so.

But today I think the time has come
Now is the time and this the hour
To tell you that you are wonderful
Someone else like you I have not met so far.

Your gentle eyes, your caring looks
Your smiling face, your caring heart
Your mere existence is enough
You are my strength and support.

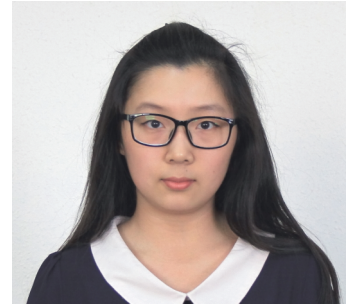
When there is darkness all around
You give me courage to carry on
There were times when I would have given up
Had you not said, "It will be gone".

There is no fear, when you are near
My troubles return their way
I know not if I will get the chance
To you, your goodness to repay.

I hate to say, but then it's true
A day will come when we will have to part
With a heavy heart and quivering lips
But, your love will always enlighten my way.

We may be together, we may be apart
For life is different all the time
Not only joy but also pain
And yet I know that you are mine.

Somewhere, someday, we will meet again!

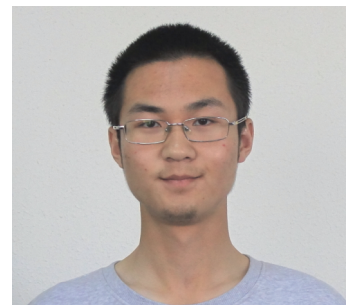


Ganzhou, a Fascinating City

by Zhou Hongyu / Christoph

Jiangxi Province is in the central eastern region of China. The short form of it is "Gan." I have known that ever since I was a kid. But, why is it so, probably very few people know. Now, consider the Chinese character Gan (赣). On the left side of this character is "Zhang (章)", and on the right is "Gong (贡)". Seen jointly, it means the Zhangjiang and the Gongjiang rivers meet to form the Ganjiang river, that flows past the beautiful city of Ganzhou.

Ganzhou is in a basin and is in southern Jiangxi Province. To the west of Ganzhou is the Luoxiao Mountain, on the east is Wuyi Mountain, and on the south is the Nanling Mountain. Ganzhou was long ago a desolate place. But, during the Song Dynasty, many people moved there from the provinces of northern China. Since Ganzhou is the starting point for water transport on the Ganjiang river, it was a



suitable place to develop trade and commerce. Due to the all round help rendered by the government over the years, it gradually developed into a city of repute. It was called Qianzhou at first, but later was renamed as Ganzhou. The city walls, which were built in the Song Dynasty, can still be seen today. Since the Royal Pavilion then was in Ganzhou, the city walls were also called Imperial City walls.

The city walls exhibit Ganzhou’s cultural heritage, while the rivers display Ganzhou’s natural beauty. There is a pontoon bridge across the Zhangjiang river. Ganzhou is a very serene and mellow place. While walking on an old street, like Zaoer Alley or Liucangpu Alley on a rainy day, one can discover the real fun and ecstasy of splashing water. There are many famous historical sites to visit there, like Yongjin Gate, Xijin Gate, Bajing Terrace, Yugu Terrace and the formal residence of Jiang Jingguo, the son of Jiang Jieshi, who was the governor of Ganzhou in between 1939 and 1946. Yugu Terrace is also an important place to visit. It was here that place that Xin Qiji, a well-known Chinese poet, wrote a famous poem during the period of the Song Dynasty.

The residents of Ganzhou find the city environment invigorating. The air quality is excellent as there is very little environmental pollution. There are dense forests in the vicinity, which gives it a special status. Large scale reforestation over the past two decades in the area has made it look like a garden. The local people have time enough to relax with family or do things that people elsewhere are unable to do. The people are friendly and speak Hakka which is different than Mandarin.

It’s the ideal place to visit with family, friends and others. It would certainly be a once in a life time opportunity to visit this gorgeous place known as Ganzhou.

Let's Laugh Together - by Tong Zhipeng / Tony

Modern Definitions:

Friend: A person who helps in cheating.

Michael Jackson: A highly charged particle which is never at rest.

Mathematics: A war between the duster and chalk on the poor blackboard.



Thoughts that Keep us Steady:

The winner always has a plan.

The loser always has an excuse.

The winner says, “It may be difficult, but it’s possible.”

The loser says, “It may be possible, but it’s difficult.”

The winner says, “Let me do it for you.”

The loser says, “That’s not my job.”

Fun with Vocabulary:

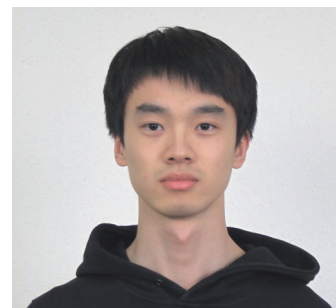
Jealousy	NV (Envy)
Vacant	MT (Empty)
Not difficult	EZ (Easy)
Too much	XS (Excess)
Freezing	IC (Icy)

Pictured (L-R): Yu, Xiangping (Louis); Wei, Linxi (Luke) and Hao, Enqi (Ted) entertaining at the student welcoming party.



The Grammar Family - by Meng Qingzhe / Chuck

There is a world famous family in England whose surname is Grammar. The family is headed by Mr. Noun. His constant companion is Mrs. Verb. His efficiency is remarkable. Mrs. Verb and her husband, Mr. Noun, have three children, one son and two daughters. The son's name is Mr. Pronoun. He presides over the family in his father's absence. He commands a respectable position as he is the eldest child. His two sisters are Miss Adjective and Miss Adverb. Miss Adjective and Miss Adverb love each other very much but there is a vast difference between them. Miss Adjective adores her father, Mr. Noun, and her brother Mr. Pronoun. She is always busy highlighting them. But, Miss Adverb loves her mother, Mrs. Verb, and modifies her whenever there is a need. There are also two servants in the family. The chief servant is Preposition. He is the official servant of the master, Mr. Noun, and is his constant bodyguard. Wherever Mr. Noun the master goes, Preposition, the chief servant, follows him. Their other servant's name is Conjunction. He is the family servant and looks after them. He carries messages from one member of the family to the other. He has to work very carefully. There is a relative of this grammar family who visits them only in times of joy and sorrow. His name is Sir Interjection. Thus, you have been introduced to the Grammar Family! Remember, they live in a house named Speech.



My Respected Instructors

by Liu Pianran / Krystal

My respected instructors, Madams and Sirs,
You were the ones who guided me and made me see
What is right and what is wrong
To lift my head and walk proudly in the throng.

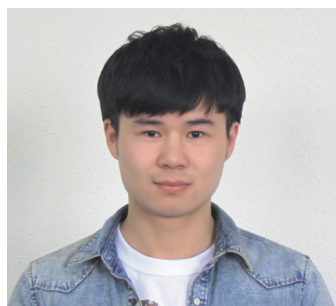
I was in your care, and you showed we what is fair.
You taught me to be bold
To face the truth and never buckle
And never for a lie to be sold.

Respected instructors
In my mind your advice lingers
Never for a moment does it fade
The kindness, the blessings and the bliss
That you showered on me.
Adieu, dear instructors!



Asst. Professor of Accounting, Berliana Sihombing (above left), shows Student Magazine editorial team member, Xu Jinzhu (Tina), a balance sheet issue.

Important Thoughts to Ponder - by Xiao Bo / Rick



- Opportunities are never lost; someone else will take it if you don't.
- Be open-minded, but not so open-minded that your brains fall out.
- Keep your words soft and tender because tomorrow you may have to eat them.
- A mother is as happy as a child.
- The more mistakes you make, the cleverer you get.
- If you are still talking about what you did yesterday, you have not done much today.
- You should never buy a white carpet if you have a black dog.
- It is hard to lie when you are looking at your mother's eyes.
- No situation is so bad that losing your temper will improve it.
- A minute of extra thinking beforehand save hours of worry later.
- When you are too busy for friends, you are awfully busy.

Listen Mankind

by Yang Pushuo / Paul

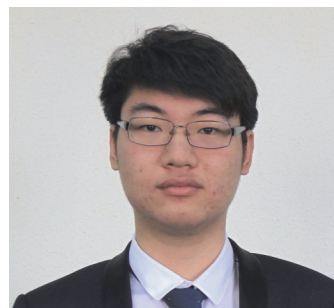
One Nagasaki and Hiroshima
Is enough to understand
The terrifying power of nuclear weapons
Which no one can withstand.

The smoke rises high in the sky
Boom-boom bursting and many die
Fear in every one's mind
Safer way no one can find.

Where has peace gone?
Why has humanity withdrawn?
No brotherhood, no co-operation
Only the devastation.

Oh God! My voice is choking
Help the world
Help mankind
Please reconstruct the human mind!

Listen, listen
This is the last warning
Stop, stop the nuclear war
Disaster and destruction are not too far behind.



Nothing Has Changed - by Pan Yu / Charlotte

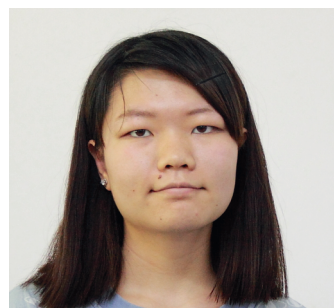
Days, months and years passed
The new millennium came.
Life changed, style changed
But some things remained the same.

Some great men came
Paving the way for us.
The way they described, alas!
It all remains unchanged.

Days, months and years passed
The new millennium came.
Files changed, mobiles changed
But some things remained the same.

Geyser, pager, freezer came
And made our lives sublime.
The men who discovered, the secrets they uncovered
It all remains unchanged.

Days, months and years passed
The new millennium came.
Sculpture changed, agriculture changed,
But some things remained the same.



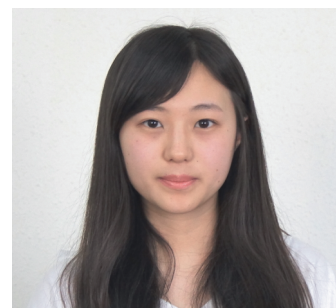
On the Other Side of the Lane - by Liu Lihua / Cici

On the other side of the lane
A boy of thirteen was begging.
Some pitied him
Some gave him a scowl
But none helped
Oh God! Have some pity.

On the other side of the lane
A man lay on the trail
Chronic and naked.
Thousands of people came and went
But none helped!
Oh God! Have some pity.

On the other side of the lane
A boy who sold tea was busy
Some people called him here, some there.
When he counted his earnings
Someone snatched it away.
Oh God! Have some pity.

To see this begging and thrashing
Why were we born
On the other side of the lane?
Please help these poor people
Otherwise they will complain
And all will be up in flames.



Labeled a 'Coward' - by Daniel Tanu

It was August 2004 when the Afghan war was at its peak. The commanding officer of the 4th battalion of the 2nd Para Regiment, Lt. Col. Peter Holmes, was busy looking into the details of a commando attack to be launched soon on the jihadists in the suburbs of Kandahar in Afghanistan.

A man named Samuels, from Texas, was ushered in the C.O.'s command post. He saluted the officer smartly and said, "Samuels, from Texas, reporting for duty, sir." Col. Holmes took an immediate dislike to the new recruit. The man standing in front of him was short statured and seemed incapable of armed combat.

"Corporal Willmansson will show you to your quarters, Private Samuels. There you would have the company of three other men of the platoon. If there be trouble of any kind, let me know. You are dismissed for now," he said curtly. When the two men had saluted and left, he quietly sat down and lit a cigar. He had been at the God-forsaken front for almost a year now, and felt drained of all emotions. His men often called him by various nicknames, "Mr. Cool", "Mr. Cold", "Mr. Devil" and so on. He had court-martialed six of them already, and four more were in the offing. He wouldn't ever take a "No" for an answer.

The fighting with the Afghan rebels had worsened during the first six months of the year. Almost every day there would be more than six to seven casualties, mostly due to sniper firing on night patrols or mortar attacks during the day time. Col. Peter Holmes had served for the past ten years in various capacities, first drafted in the Iraq war as a commissioned officer. He took pride in displaying to his fellow officers the medals that he had earned in various battle fronts with the enemy. At times, he had been grievously wounded but, by sheer providence, had managed to recoup somehow and continue



leading his men in battle. He was considered a highly decorated officer due to his several daring feats.

Early the following morning, Private Samuels was summoned by the C.O. for further instructions. "Listen carefully, Samuels," Holmes began, "right here, things are damn hot. We all want to get out of this war alive. I don't want you to sit and watch. You see what I mean, don't you? We do not go about hunting for these venomous snakes. At night, there are patrols protecting the camp, and each patrol comprises four men. You have been drafted on one of these. Your group will be replaced after four hours. Corporal Willmansson will have you introduced to your group members. That is all for now. Dismissed." Samuels had yet to see live action. He had just graduated and had come straight to the place where the action was at its worst. He was young and, in his heart, yearned to earn some fame in battle. At least, that's what he thought. He saluted and left with Corporal Willmansson.

"Thank the Lord, the patrols are at night," Willmansson spoke out aloud. "It's terribly hot sometimes rising to 45° C at noon. They entered the mess tent, where a few soldiers were having an early lunch.

"Hey Stevens, Tom, Jake, meet your new comrade-in-arms. He will be joining you on your night patrols," Willmansson called out.

An Afro-American stood and said, "Sheesh! Just what we need, a newly." Another man, tall in the late twenties came forward and shook Samuel's hand, "Mustn't mind Stevens, that's how he always talks. Hi! I'm Jake and he is Tom," said Jake, pointing to a thin, tall, white man sitting next to Stevens. "Oh, I don't mind," said Samuels. "By the way I am Private John Samuels." All shook hands thereafter. "Anyway, welcome to the group," said Stevens. Samuels spent the rest of the day chatting and passing the time with his new friends.

As dusk approached, John Samuels grew a bit tense but felt assured and comforted by reminding himself that he would be in the company of veterans. Besides, he would probably see some action for the first time. That sure would be some fun!

"Okay guys, let's move," said Jake, who was the leader of the patrol. Though it was dark, their metal helmets shone in the moonlight. Since the area was mostly rugged with bare mountains on all sides, they had to take a route alongside a canal and circle the camp from a distance of two miles, checking for any presence of enemy intruders. At times, they had to lie on their bellies and move ahead, crawling, for not to be seen by the enemy who would often wait in ambush on the rocky mountain slopes for a chance to fire at a moving target. Truly, trigger happy people! It was wilderness country with hardly a tree for comfort. Yes, there were shrubs here and there, but still not much cover to protect oneself from a possible ambush. Their lives seemed to be at peril each moment, but that was what they had been told to do and couldn't dare to question why. So, they prodded on. To worsen matters, there were hundreds of mines scattered in the area, and one wrong foot could put an abrupt end to their sincere efforts. And therefore, the group trudged on, not knowing exactly where and when disaster would befall them. They could just hope and pray that they would come out of the muddle alive. Such was the grave danger!

Suddenly, there was a shot and a whistling sound could be heard. Thereafter, there were a series of machine gun shots. They tried locating the source, but had no clue. There wasn't any point lying in the dirt and firing aimlessly at an invisible enemy. They had to scatter as fast as they could, as they were now as good as sitting ducks. The enemy had located their position and in the next few seconds the bullets would come straight at them. So, Jake barked out an order, "Guys, scatter, disperse 100 meters. In a group we will never get them." They did as ordered, with young Samuels unsure of what to do. Then, after a few minutes of uninterrupted firing, there was pin-drop silence. The moon was now covered by the clouds. Nothing was visible.

After a silence that seemed to last for hours, there were several rapid shots and then silence again. Samuels ran, hoping to find Jake and the others. In the faint light it was difficult to run fast. He stumbled over a body. There were two of them, and, as he looked into their lifeless faces, he stopped breathing. It was Stevens and Jake! Both had their throats slit.

The door to the command post was held open and Private Samuels stood before the Commanding Officer, Col. Peter Holmes. "What is it," the C.O. snapped. Samuels related the incident as the C.O. stood motionless, his face expressionless.

In the early morning, on orders of the C.O., a search was mounted. Two bodies were recovered, but there wasn't a trace of the third.

The C.O. was furious. "Apparently your patrol, headed by Jake, met with an ambush. And you deserted your group and left them to die."

Samuels head was in a whirl. He was dumb-struck at the coldness of the C.O. "Have you anything to say?" "I assure you sir, it wasn't so," said Samuels in a quavering voice. "No excuses," barked the seasoned C.O. "Take him away to the guard house. There's no place for cowards here."

Young Samuels was court-martialed and sentenced. Today, he is still trying to live down what they had labeled him..... COWARD!!

The South Eastern Star - Singapore

by Zhou Yuyang / Daniel

The name Singapore originates from the words "Singa Pura" which mean "Lion City". It is located on the cross roads of south eastern Asia. During the British colonization era it was called "The little diamond in the Queen's crown". Half a century ago, it was difficult to imagine in one's dreams that this little, beautiful island could become a country of its own. On account of its strategically important geographical location, and also due to its industrious, brave people, Singapore made history. Today, Singapore is a rich, developed country with a high per capita income, mostly driven by its people's personal conviction. It has been an incredible journey!



Singapore is a diamond-shaped island with smaller islands surrounding the main one. It is just 15 meters above the sea level. Fifty percent of it is covered by greenery, giving it yet another name- "Garden City". It was a part of Malaysia, but due to the Malaysian government's discriminating policy, the people of Singapore decided to be independent and put themselves on the line to stand up for what is right and true. They faltered and stumbled, but finally their fortitude saw them through.

In the initial stages of its development, Singapore was poor, its people hardly having any regular source of income. But, gradually the people of Singapore took full advantage of their strategic location and built a huge modern city of great commercial importance. It became the "throat" of southeastern Asia and a "hot point" of investment for people from all over the world. Singapore has attracted many international companies of repute, such as "Shell" and "Exxon Mobil Corporation". They have made Singapore the third largest country for petroleum refining. In order to prepare talented people for the future, the Ministry of Education of Singapore decided years ago to introduce English as the main language for imparting education.

The Government of Singapore is known for its fairness and flexible business laws, and for the corruption-free environment. After the country became independent, the powerful leader of Singapore, the late Lee Kuan Yew, led the government with distinction. The Planning Commission, under his supervision, designed and implemented a comprehensive development and economic plan to develop the infrastructure of the tiny island country. Never did he swerve from the path of serving his country. He took action which doggedly set him on the path to make a difference. The credit for the success story must also be given to the local Chinese folk, who form the main ethnic group of Singapore. Their sincerity of purpose propelled it into the front line of commercial activities.

The open economic policy of the government has helped the economy to grow very fast, at almost 8% per annum. Though the growth rate is now slowing, the government is trying its best to minimize the wealth discrepancy between the rich and the poor. One such example is the construction of affordable apartments for the poor and the middle class. The housing problem is being looked into in right earnest, and soon it is believed that the problem will be solved to a great extent. Such social security measures have won applause from the common man of Singapore. Many more social reforms are in the offing.

Singapore is also a popular tourist destination. It receives tourists from all over the world year round.

There are plenty of wonderful places to visit there. The Chinatown Heritage Center and the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve situated on a small hill on the north western side of the island are truly fascinating to watch. Others are Parliament House, Lazarus Island and Sisters Island, CHIMES, Little India, Mount Faber, and many more. Arab Street is famous for shopping and is a ten minute walk from Little India. From carpet rugs to birthstones and gemstones, almost anything can be had very cheap!

Singapore promises a lot to the visitor. The people of Singapore had decided to build their own road, had wanting and demanding more from life, and surely have attained it. They made it fun and got it done!

A Movie Review of “Cloud Atlas”

by Wang Ao / Tiffany

Among the many movies I have seen, “Cloud Atlas”, directed by Tom Tykwer, Andy Wachowski and Lana Wachowski, has impressed and moved me the most. The movie portrays six different but interrelated stories that have been set in separate eras and places. It illustrates a delicate relationship between an individual’s behavior and its impact on time. It allows the resurrection of the dead, making a strong case of why the dead should not remain that way. In addition, all actors deliver solid performances, which add to its popularity.



Happily, the film has received the recognition it so richly deserves. The audience realizes that the characters who play their individual roles are fine actors who have bright futures ahead of them. The plot is an engaging one, and one doesn’t feel any stiffness or have a feeling of it being over dramatized. As a student of Literature and a lover of films, I would highly recommend this film to both history and film buffs. I was also impressed with the cinematography and musical score.

We are introduced to the first story of the movie with the howling of the gusty winds and the snapping sounds of a bonfire. An old man sitting by the fire is telling a story of his “old friend” Ol’ Georgie to his offspring. In fact, this Ol’ Georgie is just his inner demon, which had been haunting him since the day he had abandoned his brother and left him to die. He had willfully deserted him at the hour when he had most needed him. Now, his conscience pricks him, reminding him of his cowardice. He felt his guilt like thumbs on his windpipe. Then, the scene changes to an extremely sweltering beach, where a lawyer happens to see a greedy doctor, who had almost killed him for wanting to possess the gold coins he had kept hidden on a ship.

The second story based in 1849, tells of African people still under the yoke of slavery. It features the Moriori slave whom the lawyer had helped earlier. He feels so obligated to the lawyer for the good that he had done him, that he finally saves the lawyer’s life. The third story is based in San Francisco in 1973. Journalist Luisa Rey is investigating a dubious nuclear campaign. She bumps into a nuclear physicist named Rufus Sixsmith, who gives her valuable hints about the conspiracy surrounding a nuclear reactor. In exchange for the information received, she begins to help Dr. Sixsmith find his lover’s last work, “Cloud Atlas Sextet”. Robert Frobisher had been employed by an aging composer. Frobisher left his love and began living in Cambridge thereafter, seeking fame and fortune. However, the aging composer had lost his talents and tried to steal Frobisher’s work by threatening him with dire consequences if he refused. Finally, Frobisher was left with no choice but to murder the aging composer. But, as he was filled with remorse, he committed suicide in a wayside hotel.

To make the plot interesting, a number of scenes rapidly change from one story to another, rather unpredictably. This is one of the many good things I love about this movie. All of its stories happen simultaneously. I consider this a supremely serviceable medium of communication. It has helped me retain the most vivid impressions. Besides these, my critical imagination was challenged to the very maximum! The other aspect concerns the director making use of the same actors and actresses to portray the events in these six stories. For instance, the salesman who is sitting in an old recording store and enjoying “Cloud Atlas Sextet” is the same actor who plays the composer Robert Frobisher. The actress who plays the role of the reporter who helps Mr. Smith to find the symphony also acts the role of the aging composer’s wife. The afterlife of the composer is bound to his composition, and the “Cloud

Atlas Sextet” brings these two characters together in death again. There are a number of other illustrations that show the delicate relationships of the afterlife. It is interesting to note that they have some ethical, philosophical and metaphysical interests that provide enough thought for creativity. It is a marked departure from a regular academic style, and therefore, not dry and boring.

My favorite line in this movie is said by a fabricant who is a clone, Sonmi~451. He lives in a futuristic utopian state in Korea. Sonmi~451 was born to be a slave due to her clone identity, and the entirety of her life is based on speaking lies and suffering brutality. Interestingly, in that futuristic country, she can live only for ten years before her “Exultation”. It turned out that “Exultation” was just another way to destroy clones into fragments for recycling them into new ones. She seeks help from Commander Hae-Joo Zhang, who does all he can to help her join and then lead a rebel movement to break this “reprehensible” system. But, she is captured and imprisoned, where she comes across another archivist in the prison. She tells him, “Our lives are not our own. From womb to tomb, we’re bound to others, past and present. And by each crime and every kindness, we birth our fortune.” I think these words tell a lot about this movie. Every character in this movie is doomed to be someone else in his or her life after death, because of what they have done. It also illustrates the consequences of an individual’s actions in the present life speeding through eternity. The narrative aspect of the dialogues also helps add a dimension to its popularity.

At the end of the movie, the archivist asks Sonmi~451, “Does this mean that you believe in afterlife? In a heaven or hell?” Somia~451 answers, “I believe death is only a door. When it closes, another opens. If I care to imagine heaven, I would imagine a door opening. And behind it, I will find him there waiting for me.” Then, the scene changes into the second story, where the previous life character of Commander Hae-Joo Zhang, the lawyer saved by a slave, is opening the front door of his home, after having survived a murderous assault on board the ship. He hugs his wife most passionately, who in her previous life was Sonmi~451.

Thus, the plot of this movie delves into metaphysics, theology, and medieval history, it helps it attract a mass audience. There is a universal appeal to such stories that deal with death and re-incarnation. Probably, people like it because they do not like seeing easy experiences, or at least may not always want this. What made me like it the most were its superb direction, the plot, the action and above all the role-play of the characters- their facial expressions, their body language and the music that accompanied it. It hit all the right notes for me! That’s all I need to say without spoiling the enjoyment of the film for those wishing to see it. It is highly recommended, and nicely paced—a great film!



Pictured above is Dr. Lori Gatlin, (standing) with one of her student teams, as they share their ideas for a class project.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY - AN OVERVIEW

(The following eight stories all deal with this topic)

1. Be a Smart Teenager

by Tanki, Farah Instructor of Psychology

With the participation of around 149 students in psychology class, who have shared their views on teen pregnancy, it is good to know that almost all of them understand the risks and consequences of teenage pregnancy.

Teen pregnancy in simple words means children having children.

It is hard to raise a child when you are a child. Teenage pregnancy invites health, social, emotional and financial problems for the teenage parents and for the baby. There are health risks for the mother and her baby. It is our social responsibility to create awareness in youngsters to help them realize the gravity of the problem and to avoid temptation.

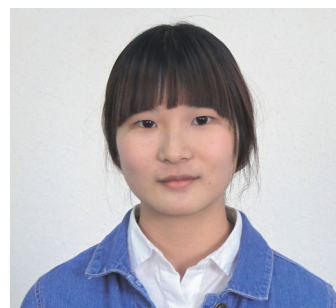
Pregnancy is only one of the complicated issues that can happen with unprotected sex, not to forget about STDs, HIV or even AIDS. It is just not worth the RISK.

But, if pregnancy does accidentally occur, do not deal with it alone. Get medical and psychological counseling from people you trust and respect.

2. Teenage Pregnancy is Not Right

by Zeng Kejia / Alisa

I think teenage pregnancy is not good for teenagers, as it has many adverse influences on the health and psyche of the young mother. She needs a lot of nutrition to make sure the fetus develops normally. It hurts the body and the spirit of the adolescent mother. Finally, the elders in the family have to suffer public humiliation. Never have a baby when it is time to enjoy life and to make a career. Avoid “slipping up.”



3. Say “No” to Teenage Pregnancy

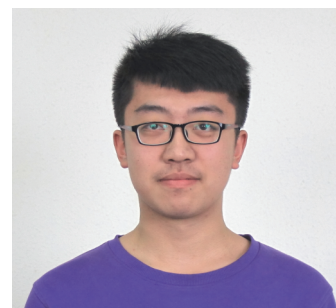
by Zhang Dingxin / Donna



I just cannot accept teenage pregnancy because it damages both the mother's and the infant's general health. Such an infant may suffer from mental illness due to physiological and psychological retardation of the brain. Even if the child is born normal, it could still suffer on account of the lack of parental love. After all, the child may only have one of the parents with him. Since it is very difficult to find work nowadays, the family will always be facing acute financial crisis, which in turn will limit the child's personality development. In China, the traditional concept of almost all families is not to allow teenage pregnancy. The main reason is that it causes great harm to the mental and physical well-being of the mother and her child, for example, pregnancy hyper-tension syndrome.

4. Sex at its Worst - by Wang Shijia / Ethan

Teen pregnancy has always been an important social problem. It is pregnancy in people under the ages of twenty years. It is believed that with education easily accessible by a large percentage of teens, the pregnancy rate in adolescents has decreased. The media has also played a crucial role in this. When adolescents have babies, they are unable to do anything else other than to rear them. Abortion or abandoning the child are some of the common solutions that teens normally arrive at. But it is very unfair and an immoral act which must never be resorted to. Thus, it is really important for all of us to focus on this vexing problem.



5. Beware of Early Marriage

by Tian Jiahui / Joanna

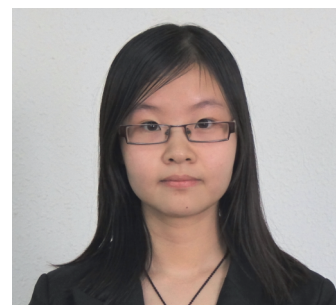


First of all, becoming pregnant will surely have an adverse influence on a teenager's education. Some of them may even have to drop out of school. In my opinion, getting pregnant is not advisable for teenagers. At this age, the most important thing is to build their future, to achieve their dreams, and to be the person that they really want to be. Although having a baby may sound like a wonderful thing, it could destroy their lives permanently. It is an immaturity on the part of both the sexual partners. In short, teenage years are a time to fight, and to build our future. We may not get another opportunity.

6. Is Teenage Pregnancy Good?

by Jiang Yuning / Amanda

Certainly not! I suppose that people who suffer from this problem are not mature enough. People who do not have any clear career plan, have to live in perpetual poverty. Having a child early could cause a bad effect on the mother's psyche. Some may even go mad due to repeated accusations made against them. These are known as taunts. How long can the mother withstand it? We need to improve general sex education and have access to affordable contraceptive options.



7. Do Away With Teenage Pregnancy!

by Lin Fan / Albee

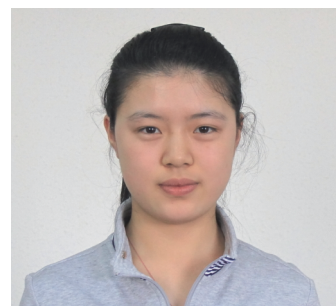


It is obvious that teenage pregnancy is not a good thing; it can cause a range of problems. First of all, if a girl chooses to have a child when she is still studying, she would have to drop out of school! Then, she cannot get an education, or find a good job to support her family, and it will be very hard for her to make a living without a university degree. How will she look after her infant? Will she be able to last long without money? How long will her parents be able to support her? Besides, living in poverty will not be beneficial for her child. Will she be able to provide the child with a good education? We need to have classes on sex education in schools and colleges so that young girls will think twice before becoming a mother. The accepted convention in all Asian societies is sex after marriage.

8. Young Mothers Meet Their Doom! - by Yin Zezheng / Veronica

Nowadays, many teenage girls frequently engage in sexual activities. However, they do not have enough cognitive abilities to use contraceptives while indulging in it. Therefore, it needs our immediate attention, before the situation gets out of hand.

It is generally believed that teenagers who are likely to become pregnant are those who do not want to study anymore. So, they opt for the easier way out—to become pregnant and to live independently without the interference of their parents. I must admit that I believe this is an irrational decision, which can only bring more pain and anguish to their lives.



Besides, early motherhood causes various ailments, such as pregnancy hysteria and immunological intolerance. It requires proper parenting from early childhood.

The questions that come to mind are how will the young mother nurture her child without having the proper training and the necessary resources at her disposal? Would she not need any help for her near and dear ones? This is a competitive world, which requires a person to be alert and conscious of one's responsibilities. Love affairs are immaterial when seen in the larger scheme of things. The most important thing is to build a career and then enter into a romantic relationship. That way the girl or the boy would be killing two birds with one stone!

Test of Friendship - by Huang Jingwei / Cathy

There were times when I had the thought
How could I get a friend, like I have got?
The time was ticking away fast
And no one, like you, was there in the past!

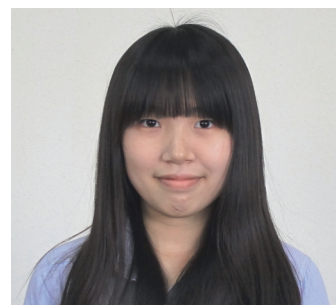
There were many who swore
That they liked me from their heart's core.
But no one was a real friend
And when we parted, it was our friendship's end.

Appreciation is something
That should never be neglected.
Our thoughts in each other must we possess
Even if they are, to us, like a curse.

There have been moments in the past
When we got into quarrels very fast.
It was wrong on our part,
As we should respect each other from our hearts.

Thought of separation has created a fear
Which now I can scarcely bear.
Time is speeding past
And the time to part is coming fast.

But who knows the future, and what may happen.
Our friendship may widen, may slacken.
But, before the tears burst out
I admit, "You are in my heart."



The Bio-data of the Earth - by Huang Jingwei / Cathy

Name: Earth

Address: Third planet from the Sun, near Venus and Mars, and a part of the solar system.

Main source of energy: Sun

My permanent friend: Moon

My age: 4.5 million years

My weight: 6.6 sextillion tons (i.e.. 6,600,000,000,000,000,000,000)

Density: I am the densest planet in the solar system.

My shape: Spherical, but slightly flattened at the top and bottom.

Diameter at the Equator: 7,926.41 miles

Pole-to-Pole Circumference: 24,860 miles

Movement: Rotation and revolution

My clothes: The atmosphere around me.

My total surface area: 197 million square miles.

My physical appearance: 70% of me is water.

My temperature variation: +1,360° F to -1,270° F

My contribution: Kindheartedness and generosity. I provide air, water and food; and also cater to the basic needs of all living beings to live and to reproduce plentifully.

Status: A beautiful blue pearl in space, 93 million miles away from the sun.

My future: Looks bleak. Will it end? It could. When?? Soon. Why??? Ask yourself!

My wish: Say 'No' to deforestation, please. But, say 'Yes' to reforestation, always. PLEASE...

<http://www.space.com/17638-how-big-is-earth.html>

A Solemn Vow - by Wu Jia / Sky

Into the forest I walked one day
The trees were tall and beautiful.
Suddenly, I felt someone ask me something.
Perhaps, about the pollution in the surroundings.

Answer, I had not, but all I could say was,
"You are a precious gift of nature.
Without you, we cannot prosper
We vow to care for you.
Be sure, we really need you."



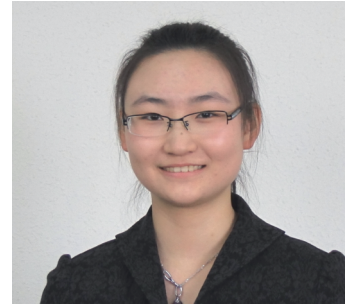
The Most Expensive Words - by Wu Jia / Sky

The most bitter word is:	Alone
The softest word is:	Mother
The most final word is:	Death
The most beautiful word is:	Love
The most cruel word is:	Revenge
The longest word is:	Smile
The saddest word is:	Forgotten
The warmest word is:	Friendship

The Dying Dolphin Sculpture

by Yu Xintong / Rinna

When we think about dolphins, the first image we think of is usually a graceful creature jumping and smiling. Imagine a sculpture of a dying dolphin that is also crying and bleeding. There exists such a sculpture which has three parts: a jumping dolphin on the top; a pole stabbed through the dolphin's body in the middle; and a bottom part designed like splashing water. Humans slaughter thousands of dolphins every year, and this sculpture is not only a memorial to dead dolphins, but a reminder for humans to stop slaughtering and to start saving dolphins.



The main part of the sculpture is a jumping dolphin, which is made of silvery metal. The dolphin is jumping out of the water and arching its body in the shape of a parenthesis, making it look like smooth, silvery silk glittering and floating in the air. The dolphin is noble at first look, but if you come closer and see it more clearly, you will see that there is a tear dropping from its left eye that shines like a diamond under the sun light. It seems beautiful, but it is actually in great pain.

The dolphin is crying because there is a sharp pole stabbed through its body, piercing its back and coming out from its belly. All the strength of the pole is focused on its point, giving people the feeling that it can stab through anything with just a blow. The sharp point of the pole gathers sunlight and reflects a strong bright light, which burns like the life of every innocent dolphin in the world. If you stare at it directly at noon, you might understand a dolphin's pain and feel its pain in your eyes.

Under the dolphin and the pole is the bottom stage of the sculpture. It is designed as splashing water. All the water is dyed dark red, as blood, and has splashed high from the tears and the blood of the dolphin that had dropped into the sea.

This dying dolphin sculpture shows an example of the real disaster happening to dolphins every year. It was designed to honor the souls of dolphins which have already died, and also to warn people to stop killing and start protecting them before they disappear forever.

“The Brothel” - by Guthrie McLean

Once upon a time, I was a little white boy living in Beijing. It was the year 2003. I roamed the streets as if it was my own. The streets were always busy and aggressive. The smog was only half as bad as it is now. Every morning the streets were packed with tons of street food including my favorite, known as egg-bread, which I bought on my way to school every morning. I relished life there.



One day, my mom decided it was time for me to get a haircut. I wanted to have it cut as I hated long hair. But, I also hated going to barbershops. I would often get a bad haircut and it would disturb me. We went to our usual street for shopping. On the sidewalk, we saw a few shops. There was a pet shop, a convenience store and two barbershops, side by side. One shop was teeming with customers, while the barbershop on the right was empty. So, we decided to help their business. Through the window glass, I could see three pretty girls with high heels and bright lipstick, smiling back at us.

Neither of us were able to speak much Chinese; my mom used to communicate with signs to indicate that I needed a hair cut. The girls looked at each other strangely with the expression, “He wants a haircut?” They welcomed me to a seat. The room looked like a barbershop: there were mirrors, scissors, a rotating chair, and bottles of hair products arranged neatly on the vanity before the barber chair. Soon, I found myself seated on the chair while the girls in the room looked anxiously for a pair of scissors.

The girls gathered round my little head and one began to cut my hair as the other two seemed to offer instructions. As I sat under a white barber cloth, I heard the door open on my left. I looked to see a shirtless over-weight man come out of the door, wearing a towel around his waist and pushing at the

door. Behind him, was a dark room with a faded light and a girl wearing only her bra and underwear lying on a wide soft bed.

The girl cutting my hair had finished. My hair was short but there was something odd about the way it was cut. Regardless of it, I thanked her. I handed her a 10 yuan note, but she and the other girls said with a naughty smile, "No, it's a pleasure to have you with us." One of the girls smiled and welcomed us to come again. I was left wondering why she had refused to accept the money from me.

The next day at school, everyone wanted to know what had happened to my hair! I explained where exactly I had gone for my new haircut. "It is the latest style. It is called...the Brothel." They said. "Oh...that's not a barbershop, it's a brothel!"

A Cold Eventful Night

by Guthrie McLean

I was only ten, and I thought I feared nothing. I was wrong. One very cold winter night, or should I say, early in the morning, while it was still dark in the valley of Missoula, Montana, I had woken up early to watch TV. It still felt like night because it was pitch black outside even though it was four in the morning. I was lying on the green couch facing the TV with my feet crossed at the end of the couch. I had the remote control in my hands and I was flicking through the channels. My mom was still sleeping. I kept flicking through the channels, when all of a sudden, a screechy noise came from outside.

I thought I had heard this sound a few times before, but did not pay attention as it seemed short, but that sound had come back every few minutes. Sometimes it was brief, but sometimes the sound lasted more than a few seconds. It now grew louder. What was it? Even though I may have been safe inside being on the first floor of the apartment building, I felt like I was not safe, and was being watched. The noise evolved into what sounded like a strange person dragging a wheeled wagon outside, very, very slowly and quietly.

The shrieking noise chilled my body and made my skin crawl in terror and fright. I immediately pressed my thumb on the ON/OFF switch of the TV remote control. I lay very still. The noise grew louder and louder, making me raise my eyes in fright, my eyes darting left and right routinely. The rest of my body seemed frozen as if a frightened cat would be when approaching a dog. I was paralyzed and wanted to call for my mother, but couldn't utter a sound! Even though my mom was in her room, she couldn't help me.

While it did not seem likely that someone from the outside could hear me speaking from inside my apartment, I was worried that if I had spoken, that person outside could hear my voice. The curtains were down against the window, but the light was on. This is what worried me: that the person outside knew I was in the living room alone. I felt like he could see me against the curtains. It was so quiet inside whereas outside I still heard what I thought were moving wheels being dragged along the asphalt path. It was going back and forth. It stopped after a few seconds and then came again. I imagined it being a crazy man with long hair dragging a black wagon. All I could hear was this sound and the beat of my heart. The noise grew louder and louder. I raised my eye brows. My eyes were wide open and finally found my voice. I quietly said, "...Mom?"

Hoping she would hear me, I kept wondering to myself what could that sound be. It was so loud and close that I felt surrounded. This lasted for over ten minutes. Finally, I decided to quietly get up from the couch. Without making a single sound, I tip toed towards the wall very quietly to turn off the light switch. I walked to the corner towards the window with the curtains. I lowered my head and raised the curtains from the bottom to the peak of the window frame to see what was outside. The noise had stopped for a few seconds. I saw nothing but the two-storied apartment buildings across from me, the cross path, the darkness and the leaves on the ground...and suddenly, the noise came back, and I saw the leaves being blown and being dragged off the asphalt. I laughed. I had spent the past ten minutes thinking that there was someone outside dragging a wagon and had planned to attack me if I let out a cry. I sighed and felt relieved. I went back to the couch laughing and turned the TV on again.

Our New Teacher, Mr. Holden

by Huang Yidan / Christina

I recently had the good fortune to interview the new Public Speaking teacher, James Holden. He has been in our midst since September, 2014. I asked him several questions covering many issues and he answered them in a frank, friendly manner. Some of the thoughts that he shared with me have been reproduced below.



Date: March 08,

Time: 1:00pm

Location: LNU-MSU Faculty Lounge

Interviewee: James Holden, Instructor LNU-MSU College of International Business, Dalian. He graduated from Tennessee Temple University, B.A. in English and M.Div. from Corban University (USA)

The interviewer and interviewee: J for James and C for Christina, respectively.

C: Good afternoon, James. Welcome to the interview. How old are you?

J: I am 43 (without any hesitation).

C: It is difficult to believe that. You look much younger. What is your secret of keeping young and fit?

J: I eat well, sleep well, exercise regularly, and drink plenty of water. I also don't get too much sun. Teaching University students helps to keep my mind young as well.

C: What made you come to China?

J: Wang Liping, one of my best friends in school, encouraged me to visit China. So in 1999, I taught English in a university in TianJin. I've loved China since then. In 2008, I started my career here, and I hope to stay here many more years.

C: What is the biggest difference between Chinese students and American students?

J: Chinese students work hard in high school, but many American students do not work hard until university. Chinese students know their majors before they begin their courses -- and they must stay in that program. American students can change their majors until the end of their second year of university. Many Chinese students worry about tests and scores, while Western students think about the process of learning. Because they can choose their majors, there may be more passion in learning.

C: What is your favorite Chinese food?

J: I relish Chinese food, particularly Di Sanxian, Da Pan Ji, and Kung Pao Chicken.

C: These days the competition between students has become stiff. Could you give us some suggestions on how to balance the relationship between loyalty and competition with them?

J: In high school, there is too much competition between students, so they do not trust each other. They just want to compete against each other. I think that it is very bad. You should not compare yourself with others, but try to be the best you that you can be. If we compare ourselves with others, someone will always be better than us and, we might get disappointed or even depressed. Be the best you that you can be!

C: How do you usually spend your free time?

J: I like to jog, ride my bicycle, practice Brazilian JiuJitsu, and hang out with friends. Sometimes, we play Xbox 360 or watch movies.

C: Could you please describe traits of your character and your interests?

J: I am easy-going and like making friends. I enjoy work and competitions and try to do the best I can. Many friends say that I am a human Facebook.

C: Could you give our students some suggestions for studying and doing well on exams?

J: Besides bringing their textbooks, pens and notebooks, I think students must prepare well in advance for the classes (i.e., read ahead and make their own notes). They also should be prepared to actively participate in class discussions with comments and questions (and summarize the teachers' notes). They should maintain a balance between extra-curricular tasks and study. Students should take care of their health by eating healthy and nutritious food.

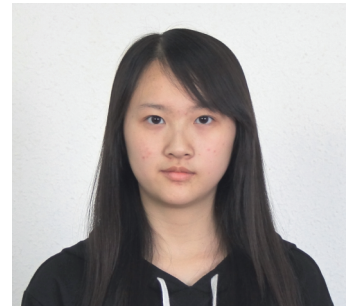
C: Thank you for your views and I am sure that many of the students would like to inculcate them in their academic life.

J: You are welcome.

James is an outgoing person, and he properly balances his work with his free time. He is sharp and witty. I wish him every success in his career.

Some Differences between Northern and Southern China - by Deng Jin /Jenny

In China, people consider the Huaihe River and Qinling Mountains to be the country's northern-southern boundary line. This is used to distinguish the north and south not only in natural geography but also in economics and culture. I am from southern China and I am now spending my college life here in Dalian, which is a city located in northern China. After one year of studying here, I have found that there are many differences between the north and the south, and some of them are great differences. So, I want to discuss some of these geographic, economic and cultural differences just for your information.



From the weather perspective, the south has much more rain and hot weather than the north. This makes crops different in the two areas. In the north, there is much less precipitation and a lower temperature than in the south, and these are conditions suitable for growing wheat. In the north, people like to eat food made from flour, like noodles. However, places with higher temperatures and more rainfall are ideal conditions in which to grow rice. The Chinese believe that we are what we eat. This means that human beings are shaped by the land around us. Northern China's drier and colder climate shapes why there are many noodle restaurants in the north while southern China's climate shapes why her people more frequently eat rice.

Economically, you can easily find that most heavy industries are located in northern China while light industries are in the south. This is because there are rich resources like coal, petroleum and iron ore located in the north. However, in the south there are not many resources of this kind. In order to enhance their natural advantages and avoid their disadvantages, southern people started light industries and took advantage of convenient transportation, like shipping, to do business.

I think the biggest differences between northern and southern China are of lifestyle and culture. They include a lot of areas. Here I can just talk about some of them. First, the language is different. Mandarin is the official language of China; it is also the most widely used language in the country. In southern China, we not only speak Mandarin but also speak other dialects, like Cantonese. If you are from the north and you go to southern China, it is okay to communicate in Mandarin with the locals, but you will not understand their dialect unless you spend time to learn it. For example, Cantonese is spoken by the people of Guangdong province, Guangxi province, and Hong Kong. Yet, even though people there all speak Cantonese, they still have different accents and variations of slang. Therefore, sometimes people do not understand each other even though they speak the same dialect. Here in northern China, all

people speak Mandarin but there are different tones. Because of this, even though it is Mandarin, it sometimes confuses me.

A second area of difference is that of the food. In northern China, people prefer flour-made food to the people of southern China, and they make many delicious flour-made types of food, like dumplings. Southern China is famous for its wild eating, especially in Guangdong and Guangxi. I can properly say that they eat almost everything in the world. For instance, people raise dragonflies to eat their babies. However, we also have some healthy food that northern China does not have, like food for the festival of folk songs, which is called five-color sticky rice. Every family makes the five-color sticky rice. The black rice is made of maple leaves; the yellow rice is made of butterfly bush flower; the red and purple are all made of a kind of herb. Each herb's different position gives it a different color. Because it is made of herbs, the five-color sticky rice is good for our bodies.

A third difference is about the sense of direction. It is a funny one. In northern China, people are used to explaining directions by referring to north, south, east, and west. But in southern China, people give directions in terms of left and right. This difference can cause big trouble while traveling. The reason for this difference comes from the difference of geography. There were not many buildings in ancient times, and the landscape in the north is mostly flatland, so people had few reference objects for giving directions. Therefore they used north, south, east, and west according to the Polaris to give directions, a method which is still commonly used today. The landscape in southern China is more complicated. It has many rivers and mountains. Southern Chinese people sometimes cannot see the Polaris because high mountains block their view, and so they developed their own way to express directions.

There are many differences between northern and southern China that I cannot explain in one essay. The best way for you to learn them is to experience them for yourself. In my opinion, differences make China more rich and colorful! If you want to learn more about southern China or have a trip there, please feel free to communicate with me!

A Dark Night - by Tian Ye / Ocean

I was about 7 years of age at the time. It was a scary night with the rain beating down relentlessly. Before leaving for the party, my parents had instructed me to have a glass of milk before I finally called it a day. I told them I would and that they need not worry at all for me. How bold I was! Little had I known that I was about to experience one of the saddest happenings of my life.

Ever since I can remember, I have had a great fear of darkness. That night when my parents left, I bolted the door from the inside and returned to the living room. In their absence I felt lonely and afraid. So, I decided to switch on the T.V. and, by sheer coincidence, opened a channel that was showing a ghost movie. Out of curiosity, I began watching it.

I was watching a scene in which two witches were scheming to destroy the life of a man who had spoken ill of them. They sought revenge. They were dancing and singing round a boiling cauldron in a cave. I saw them throwing weird objects in it, such as toads, fillet of a reptile, the tongue of a dog and the leg of a lizard.

I knew it was black magic and was immediately repulsed. I went to the kitchen to have the glass of milk that I had promised my mother. When I returned, I saw a blood soaked child, his hair matted with blood and that was enough for me. No more witchcraft. My head was reeling and I wanted to lie down. Just as I was about to turn off the switch, the power went off and it was pitch dark. In my haste to get a candle, I tripped over a wire and fell flat on my face. I knew I had hurt myself badly, but more than the pain, I was frightened out of my wits—what, with the lightening and the thunder all round. I lay sprawled on the ground and could hear my teeth chattering in fright. I tried to stand but my feet just didn't seem to exist. The fear of the unknown was driving me crazy. A thousand evil thoughts swept through me, and I prayed as I had never prayed before. I don't know how long I lay there in the dark, but those tumultuous hours certainly seemed to be like years!



Finally, I heard footsteps coming towards the main entrance. The door opened and I heard my mother calling for me, "Dora, what's the matter. Why isn't the light in the living room on? Are you alright?"

It was the best thing that could happen to me. I leaped like a wild cat straight into her arms, crying and laughing hysterically at the same time. Later, my parents told me that the main switch of the apartment had tripped. It didn't matter anymore. What really mattered now was that my parents were with me and I felt secure and safe. The witches would cause me no further harm.

The Ugly Truth - by Jamya Gatlin

I lay awake in bed at night
wondering why I think the thoughts I do
and why my past tortures me.
Visions of high school
and the dumb mistakes I made.
No one is perfect,
but I am the definition of far from it!
I wonder why I long for something
I have right in front of me,
metaphorically speaking of course,
and why I can't seem to
appreciate the blessings showered on me.
Why do I fall so short of being the best I can be
when I look around and all everyone sees in me is greatness?
Dealing with the pressure untamed
the fire inside seems not to melt me,
but keeps a steady forcing flame
that does no permanent damage
yet builds new morals in me.
I have nightmares of how everything I have
could be gone in a flash.
My family, my lover, my social life,
Even the sad memories of the past.
I'll never forget who I was,
where I've come from,
and who I am now.
Yet it slowly seems to linger
behind my every move.



In Great Dread - by Jamya Gatlin

When I was a little girl, I was very different from the other girls. The reason was not hard to infer. The other girls wanted to play with Barbies or with other similar toys, but not me. I was a girl who rolled with "the big boys", so to speak. Even to this day it seems I still do. This is a story that concerns me when I was seven years old. I could somehow overcome my fears with perseverance and a little push from my dad.

It was a warm August afternoon, maybe a week before school was to begin. A group of boys and I decided to climb the biggest tree in our neighborhood. It just so happened that the tree we wanted to climb was in my neighbor's backyard! Many people had fallen from the tree before and got hurt really bad. The very thought of climbing the tallest tree was truly terrifying, considering the fact that I had never really climbed a tree before.

The first boy went up, then the second, then the third. I followed directly behind the fourth, and of course he was the one to fall, making me fall right along with him! My knee was badly bruised and it bled profusely in several places. I ran inside and told my mom. After some first aid, she told me to be more careful the next time I try climbing the tree. I was petrified! I told my friends I would never climb the tree, or any other tree for that matter. They all laughed at me and I was perfectly fine with that, or so I thought.

Each day for about a week after the incident, I would go and stare at the tree. One day, my dad came home from work early and saw me staring at the tree. He asked me what I was doing. I told him I wanted to climb to the top of the tree but I didn't want to fall and get hurt again; my cut was just beginning to heal. He then told me that scars help to make a person strong and perseverance makes him stronger.

I thanked my dad for trying to make me feel better but it didn't seem to help. The next day after dinner my dad took me out to the tree and told me to climb it. He said we wouldn't return home until I reached the top. I was scared out of my mind, but my dad said he would catch me if I fell. He hoisted me a little bit, and up the tree I went! I was never more excited than at that moment. I had climbed to the top of the biggest and the tallest tree in our neighborhood and all it took were my dad's words of encouragement and the conviction in me. Even to this day I still have the scar from the first time I fell down that tree, and since then I have never been afraid to climb another tree! "Never despair," is my motto now.

Academic Preparation for Life

by Guo jinya / Cindy

I am finding college life to be blissful and very different from my experience in high school. Ever since I have joined the College of International Business, in Dalian, my views about education and career prospects have changed dramatically. I find myself to be a much more confident person in every manner. Gone are the days when I sometimes felt low in confidence, mostly due to the lack of knowing what I was capable of achieving.



I, as was the case with several others, joined the college seeking a better platform to sharpen my communication and writing skills. I knew well in advance that to become a manager in a multinational company requires a tremendous amount of practical training in oral and written communication, besides having the ability to critically think concerning all social, economic and cultural issues. When armed with these skills, I will be more likely to have a bright future ahead, a thing that will make my life purposeful, more meaningful and satisfying. Little did I know then that I would gain so much, and so quickly.



(L to R) Steve Robinette, MSU Assoc. Vice President-International Programs; Dr. David Meinert, Associate Dean of the MSU College of Business; Mike Coutts, Associate Dean of the LNU-MSU College of International Business

When preparing for the college entrance exam, I worked very hard to get good grades. It was a fierce competition, and I was under great pressure. Each day was a stressful experience. I would often lose the vitality that young people normally have, and think of myself as an imprisoned bird. But, now in college, life is great. There isn't any stress or worry, at least for me! And I love every moment of my stay here.

I have been in this college for a little over a year, but it seems that it is my second home. Everyone here, including teachers and friends, seems so friendly and so co-operative, that I couldn't have asked for more. I have had ample opportunities to improve my English, my critical thinking abilities, take an active interest in the several clubs that are in the college, and to develop inter-personal relationships with national and international students. Also, my intellectual capability has advanced manifold. I am able to retain much more than previously. My parents and I are happy we decided that I should attend this college. Teachers are nice mentors and they always encourage us to ask questions, and are ever willing to clear the doubts we have. The classes are lively and buzzing with class room discussions and other activities. Teachers encourage us to speak our thoughts without fear of being laughed at, even if the answer is not the generally accepted one. It could be right if well supported with documentary evidence! In such an invigorating environment can exams be daunting? However, such conceptions are rare to be seen in the traditional Chinese form of imparting education. In it, there is just one standard answer. If the answer is not as per the standard answer, we are given a zero or are blamed for not working hard. This method often makes students shy and quiet in class, which later destroys their creativity. But here, we cover such questions as "Why was it said, where was it said, what is your personal opinion on it, do you agree or disagree and why?" This helps us to understand the content better.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my dear teachers, staff and friends, for making my stay here a truly memorable and a rewarding one. I look forward to attaining further heights of excellence in the years to come.

A Guilty Conscience

by Yu Meiqi / Amy

It's snow time again. I see scores of children playing all sorts of games on the big chunk of ice behind our house. I am reminded of what had happened several years ago, a nasty act of cruelty on my part.

I recall that sad day when the tragedy happened. My little brother Jiaqi was about six and I was three years older than him. I do not remember the incident vividly, but the feeling of guilt and shame is apparently clear in my sub-conscious mind. There were musk roses outside and we felt happy. There was a frozen stream nearby which seemed to be extending its arms, inviting us to play on it. How could we resist the temptation?

"What a beautiful day, sister. I want to go out and play on the ice," said he cheerfully. "Let's go, sister."

"Good idea, little one," I replied, and we both scrambled towards the exit.

"Where are you both going?" asked my mother when she heard us opening the door.

"We want to play outside in the snow," we replied enthusiastically.

"Okay, but Amy, take care of your brother. Don't leave him alone for a second. Don't you play far away. Take care! Remember!" Mom had always been like that—caring, observant, and watchful.

"I will, Mom!" I promised and we ran downstairs, two steps at a time.

We played on a huge ice surface close to my apartment block. We pulled each other back and forth, and were enjoying the thrill, at first. After I had pulled my brother for a long time, it was his turn. But by then, he was exhausted and stopped pulling at all.

"Jiaqi, won't you pull me anymore. I have been squatting here since long without having moved at all," said I, a bit annoyed at his indifference.

He said nothing and then suddenly let go of my hands without me being prepared. Then, I tumbled and fell flat on the icy ground. I stood up slowly and turned towards my brother, half angry, half crying. The words came out in a burst, "Bad guy, go away. I hate you. I won't play with you again. Go away."

Then, we began playing by ourselves without caring to look at each other. Thirty minutes passed and then a devilish thought came to me. I began scheming to teach him a bitter lesson, by doing the same. But, the very next instant, I began asking myself, "Is this right? Should I do this?" I asked myself again and again, but the devil got the better of me and I decided to do it, little realizing how grave the consequences could be.

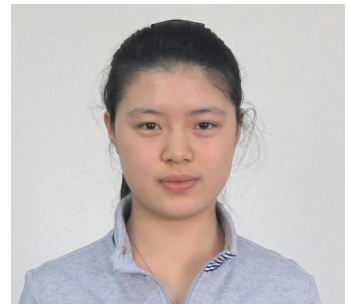
I approached my brother, gave him a smile and invited him again to play with me. He agreed. A few minutes later, I did the same thing that he had done to me earlier. But suddenly I realized that I had done him great harm. After all, he was only a kid and had meant no harm to me. When I let go of him, the inertia and the fast pace threw him against a sharp piece of ice. I could see blood flowing out of his hand. He burst out crying and that made me nervous. I didn't know what to do. I had only wanted to give him a small punishment but this had turned out to be a nightmare. I pressed his hand hard and carried him home, expecting my mother to be angry at me.

Reaching home, I told my mother what had happened and she immediately took him to the hospital. Several hours later, he returned with a bandaged arm and with several stitches. My mother did not blame me, nor did she ask me questions. It was a relief for me, but I suffered from a guilty conscience. Even to this day, I cannot forgive myself. I have not disclosed this to anyone, and probably this secret will remain in me till my last breath.

Drive Safe, Be Safe

by Yin Zezheng / Veronica

The need for safe driving has never been so acutely felt as it is today. The number of automobiles on the road has increased manifold over the past decades, necessitating an urgent review of the existing driving rules. Take for example the need to devise and implement rules that prohibit typing messages on the cellphone while driving, or wiping the snow off the windscreen before driving so that visibility is not marred and the individual reaches his destination safely.



I remember a friend in the neighborhood telling me of a sad event that took place a few years ago. One of her distant uncles had met with a serious and fatal accident. It had been snowing heavily in the night, and in a hurry to reach the office in time, he hadn't the time to wipe off the snow that had accumulated on the windscreen and the roof of the car. He cleaned it partly and thought it was enough. But, he was wrong! Disaster struck when a lorry coming from the opposite direction hit him from the left side. The impact of the collusion was so great that the car turned over and her uncle was thrown out. He probably thought there was enough room on the left to let the lorry pass, but there wasn't!

I know there are various other similar things that require specific rules to be implemented to make driving less hazardous and safe for all, but this unfortunate incident has attracted my attention the most. I am sure there must be hundreds of such unfortunate happenings during the winter season, when the ground visibility gets poor. As explained earlier, I would like to call upon government bureaucrats to frame the necessary laws to curb dangerous driving of all kinds, and also on the press media to spread mass awareness among the people. On several occasions, major accidents happen due to ignorance of the rules, and therefore driving tests should be made tougher than they are at present.

For many of us, the onset of winter is the most wonderful time of the year, but care must be taken to see that the windscreen doesn't have any snow on it or any other obstruction that can cause an accident.

Surging Ahead - by Pape Fall

I am from Senegal, in western Africa. The educational system currently used there is based on the French language and so most of the schools use the French Educational System. It consists of three kindergarten classes, six middle school classes and seven in high school.



Our system is different from the English system. After four years in high school one has to pass a national exam similar to the one at the end of high school, which is also hard. Thus, in order to graduate from this stage, the students have to pass an exam that determines if they are able to move forward with their studies. For instance, when students reach 12th grade, they have to take a national exam similar to GED, but relatively harder, called Baccalaureate. It is one of the biggest fears of students, considering the number of courses they're tested on and the percentage of failures.

In case of failure in that exam, the students will lose a year before being able to take the exam once again; and this goes on until the student passes it. Then, the student will finally get the diploma and will be able to pursue college.

It's mostly considered a moment of pressure because one never knows if he is going to succeed or not. From my experience, I used to study very hard but I always felt a big pressure inside. Parents, neighbors, even owners of random shops at the corner of my street were waiting for my result. The exam week came. I attended all the exams and felt pretty good. But, I still I had a nagging doubt because several examiners correct the paper, and they all have different opinions. In every subject, they review the student's paper twice. The idea of listening to the director of the school call out the names of successful students in front of hundreds of people sickened my stomach.

Then, finally came the day of reckoning. Before leaving the house, my mother was so stressed that she told me, "Even if you do not pass you will still be fine. You are still young and can afford to lose a year."

Those words demoralized me and made me doubt my abilities. When I arrived at the school, we had to wait an hour until the director called everyone to let them know he was ready to deliver the results. His co-workers and teachers gave him the microphone and he started calling out the names of those who had succeeded in the exam. The names of ten students were called out and I was still waiting for my name! I felt my heart beat so fast that I had trouble breathing. My legs underneath felt like two old wooden chopsticks about to break, not to talk about the sweat on my face.

On one hand I saw happy faces smiling in joy, whereas there were others who wore gloomy and miserable faces, the ones whose names had not yet been announced. Suddenly, I heard mine spoken out loud and clear. The pressure and the pain I had experienced that year disappeared in a flash because I knew all the intense studying had paid off rich dividends. I was so happy and I called my parents to tell them. They were proud of me because I have always been a hard worker and I haven't stopped proving it.

To conclude, though it was a frightening experience, it taught me that practicing repeatedly is the only solution to counter failure. Not everybody passes this exam. Finally, it was a wonderful experience since it raised a sense of responsibility and taught me how to handle pressure.

A Tender Love Unspoken - by Chen Yanjun / Nina

It all happened when I was a cashier at CVS. I felt my heart sing out for the first time ever, something that took me completely by surprise. Though, nothing tangible came out of that experience, I can still feel the pangs of separation in my heart.

It was a sunny day, a Saturday for that matter. Everything seemed cheerful and I was just whiling away my time at the cash counter, having nothing to do. There were not many customers then. I was wondering how my day



would turn out.

Then, as if by an act of providence, a girl gracefully slid through the half open door. She seemed to have appeared from paradise—young, enchanting, and as fresh as the morning dew. Everything about her was enthralling. Her long, black hair was almost touching her waist. Her beautiful face wore a look of serenity. She was not tall, but very attractive, and very young. At first sight, I knew she was shy, as she rarely raised her eyes. She bought a few toiletries, and came to the counter.

It was the moment I was eagerly awaiting. I looked into her eyes and she looked back. I was bewitched! I had not imagined I would ever have the good fortune of seeing a beautiful specimen of a girl of her kind. I wanted to say, “Hello”, but the word got stuck in my vocal chords. I do not know how long I stood there, looking at her. But I sure was embarrassed when she awoke me from my slumber, saying, “Could you please give me a bill for these things”. I had an inkling that she knew what was going through my mind. To change the topic, I said, “This is a gift we often present to customers,” and gave her a pack of chewing gum. She took it, but I was certain she knew I was lying. She smiled, winked at me, and left as quietly as she had come.

That night I could not sleep. The next morning, I did a bit of introspection and discovered to my horror that I had fallen in love. I was not sure whether it was true love or infatuation. I longed to meet her again, and prayed as I had never prayed before, “Oh Lord, give me a chance that I can meet, talk, and explain how I feel about her.”

Fortunately, she arrived again the following Saturday. I was not expecting her, but she did and I was happy. We chatted for some time and she left again with a promise to come back the following week. After this, we met on several week days, but I for some reason could not muster the courage to tell her that I had begun to love her. It was my cowardice and I truly regret it.

Two months passed by and then one fine Saturday, she did not turn up. I tried to ring her but with no success. Finally, when I could not bear her absence anymore, I found out where she lived and spoke to her neighbor. Then, I received the bad news! She had left with her family to settle permanently in Shanghai, without leaving behind an address. I was struck by lightning, and knew that I had lost her forever. Till today, I curse myself for not being valiant enough to speak to her like a man. I also resigned from the job, as sad thoughts would often come to me and I would feel like crying. Now, I have come here to give myself a chance to start life afresh.

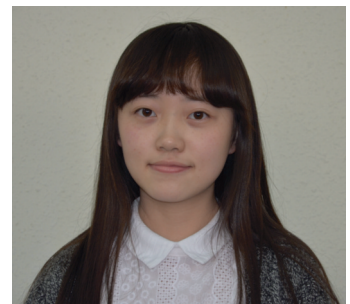
A Holistic Approach - by Li Mengyuan / Norah

I have learned a number of interesting facts about life and how it must be lived in the English literature and theater class. I wish to share it with my readers.

A proof of the existence of God is when ordinary people do extraordinary things and come up with the strength they never knew they had. God does not take away the problem, but instead gives us the resource to cope with it. Religion cannot change the way we relate to them.

We “melt” God when we pray, when we are helpful and kind, when we overcome nasty habits, addictions and pettiness in our lives. Ultimately, the spiritual growth is like climbing a ladder. We climb up slowly, step by step. With each step we take, we solidify our footing and then move on to the next one. Each step nourishes our soul. Finally, we meet God, completely and truly. But that is easier said than done. Is it really possible in this ‘materialistic’ world of ours?

I am reminded of a poem that we read in class entitled, “An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum,” by Stephen Spender. It tells of the pathetic lives of slum children who are forsaken by all. They are looked upon as the scum of the earth, meaning thereby as waste matter. Their foggy slums offer them nothing tangible except a bleak future, innumerable illnesses and inherit knotty, gnarled diseases. Their bones peep out of their skin! They live in cramped holes! It’s difficult to imagine how these poor children live such incredible and obscure lives, completely alienated from society. There are millions of unfortunate



children languishing everywhere. It is my understanding that such social injustices and class inequalities have to be abolished quickly, or else we would have only ourselves to blame for the miserable condition we would all be in. Our existence is imperative and we need to stop and introspect, to find a way out of the mess we have created for ourselves.

Thus, I wish to emphasize the point again that, though ethical practices are necessary to keep avarice, malice and disappointment away from our lives by endeavoring to lead a pious life, we also need to stop moving about aimlessly, as it will do us no good. Only after a long silence and due introspection can we expect to become fully equipped to remove despondence, misery and bloodshed.

To Conclude: Our Magazine Staff

From the Faculty Advisors: The development of this magazine was the result of the combined efforts of two extremely talented teams; the Design, Photography and Layout Team (below); and the Editorial Team (on the facing page). With no past experience of this kind, and no existing model to follow, they created a new LNU-MSU student magazine with the express goal of providing opportunities for their classmates to publish and showcase their original literary works. In the process the two teams benefitted as well, by developing their own creative talents and by gaining real-world experience in many areas, including: written and oral communications, project management, teamwork, artistic design, photography and information technology. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the student literary works contributors and the two magazine teams for creating this wonderful piece of LNU-MSU history.



Our magazine's Design, Photography and Layout Team (front row, Left to Right): Design and Photography Manager, Wang Ying (Bright); I.T. and Layout Specialist, Liu Tianwen (Vivian); Chen Tiantian (Tina); Zhu Dianyi (Katniss); Li Jiahuan (Margaret); Back Row (Left to Right): Faculty Advisor, Tom Akers; I.T. and Layout Specialist, Feng Shengni (Sunny); Communications Manager, Wang Yuhao (Vincent); He Shifan (Dana); Li Yufan (Carrie); and Sun Jiahao (Virgil).



Our magazine's Editorial Team (front row, Left to Right): Wei Shuqi (Alexandra); Yang Lingyu (Victoria); Li Mengyuan (Norah); Zheng Yayun (Claire); Yu Jialin (Lexi); Back Row (L-R): Faculty Advisor, Dr. Chandra Sinha; Wang Ao (Tiffany); Xiao Liquan (Tiffany); Wang Hao (Crystal), Song Xiaojing (Sapphire), Managing Editor, Daniel Tanu; (not pictured: Xu Jinzhu / Tina). Below (L-R): Wang, Bang and MSU-WP Chancellor, Dr. Drew Bennett.

