



Young Envoys Scholarship



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Zhi-Xing China: STEM Education Leaders' Successful Visit

Zhi-Xing China: From June 18 to 28, 2025, a delegation of U.S. STEM education leaders visited Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Shenzhen. The group engaged in in-depth exchanges with Chinese primary and secondary schools, universities, and other relevant educational institutions. They also attended the China-U.S. STEM and AI Education Exchange Conference. On June 27, Fu Bo, Deputy Secretary-General of the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE), joined the wrap-up session for a cordial discussion with members of the delegation.



During its stay in Shanghai, the delegation visited educational institutions including Shanghai World Foreign Language Middle School, Weiyu High School, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, East China Normal University, and the Teacher Education Centre under the auspices of UNESCO. Through roundtable discussions, laboratory visits, and exchanges on academic achievements, the delegates gained a deeper understanding of China's secondary-level STEM practices, international teacher training, and related frontier research.

At Shanghai World Foreign Language Middle School, the delegation observed the students' outstanding innovation projects ranging from a Mars rover model and 3D-printed works to the smart conversation system named Shiwai

Bear. They also engaged with teachers and students on their research projects in physics and biochemistry labs, learned firsthand the school's pioneering explorations in fostering scientific literacy and developing innovative curricula.



On June 23, the China-U.S. STEM and Artificial Intelligence Education Exchange Conference was held in Hangzhou. Representatives from both countries engaged in interactive exchanges and discussions on current developments in this field as well as future case studies. Afterwards, the delegation visited institutions that included Hangzhou Tianchang Guanchao Primary School, Hangzhou Chongwen Weilai School, and Westlake University, gaining deeper insights into China's efforts in advancing future STEM education in primary schools and in cultivating STEM talent in higher education.

During their visit to Hangzhou Tianchang Guanchao Primary School, the delegation toured the school's history museum and observed a STEAM class in which the students applied the principles of magnetism to conduct an experiment named "flying butterfly", demonstrating their imagination and learning ability in explorations. At Hangzhou Chongwen Weilai School, the delegation entered the innovation spaces, viewed 3D-printed and pottery works produced by the school faculty and students, and observed a project-based course titled "The Secret of the Fan", witnessing the effect of interdisciplinary practice on fostering student development.

While in Shenzhen, the delegation visited Southern University of Science and Technology and Shenzhen Foreign Languages School. They held discussions with representatives on topics including STEM curricula, disciplinary competitions, and various explorations for potential modes of STEM education at different schools and the sharing of valuable experience in talent cultivation.

Deputy Secretary-General Fu Bo expressed the hope to take this event as an opportunity to promote broader cooperation between China and the U.S. in STEM education through seminars, faculty and student exchanges, among others, in order to turn out a new generation of young talent in a joint effort to address global challenges. Under the initiative of inviting 50,000 young Americans to China for exchange and study over the next five years, she pledged, CEAIE will invite more American youth to China for mutual learning and nurture a new force dedicated to the mission of China-U.S. friendship in the new era.



The delegates noted that this visit to China opened a window for them to learn more about China's education. They expressed the willingness to join hands with their Chinese counterparts to build dialogue platforms and carry out long-term exchange programs so as to create more opportunities for American students and teachers to learn about and experience China, deepen cooperation with China in STEM education and talent

cultivation, and actively contribute to China-U.S. cooperation and exchanges in the field of education.

Walter Payton College Prep. Delegation Visits Huashan Middle School for Sino-U.S. Educational and Cultural Exchange

From June 18 to 24, Huashan Middle School hosted a delegation of 27 students and teachers from Chicago's Walter Payton College Preparatory High School. During the week-long program, students from both schools deepened their understanding through immersive cultural exchanges. From finding common ground in calligraphy to sharing the joy of the vibrant Meshrep dance, their cross-Pacific friendship shone brightly at Tiemenguan, a historic gateway on the Silk Road.

On June 18, 25 students from Huashan Middle School held self-made name cards, eagerly awaiting the delegation from Walter Payton High School and anticipating a seven-day journey of shared experience. After the delegation arrived, a warm welcome ceremony commenced in the Cultural Corridor. The school's lion dance team started with a powerful performance as the resounding drumbeats and leaping lions highlighted the charm of traditional culture.

The delegation watched a promotional video entitled *Colorful Tiemenguan* and gained a first impression of the local landscape through vivid images. Principal Yan Jianming from Huashan Middle School extended a warm welcome to the guests from afar. In response, Ms. Fareeda Shabazz Anderson, Principal of Walter Payton High School, expressed her special appreciation to CEAIE for its well-considered arrangements and to Huashan Middle School for its warm hospitality. She also expressed high expectations for deeper exchanges and cooperation in education between the two schools in the years ahead.



In the ensuing exchanges, the students from both schools embarked on refreshing cultural integration activities. In the calligraphy class, students carefully traced the powerful characters "中华" (China) onto rice paper. During the paper-cutting session, they crafted delicate butterflies, symbols of good fortune. The traditional Chinese painting lesson saw them painting elegant orchids, emblems of purity and friendship. The atmosphere turned especially lively in the Xinjiang dance class, where students learned the Meshrep to cheerful drumbeats, their laughter filling the room. Finally, in the Tai Chi class, they practiced "tu'na" breathing techniques and classic movements such as "Cloud Hands" and "Parting the Wild Horse's Mane," gaining firsthand experience of the timeless wisdom embedded in this Eastern practice.

When the morning sunlight gilded the new Gobi city of Tienmenguan with a golden lining, its vast lavender fields were shattering people's imagination of the desert in a stunning spectacle—winds that carried the fragrance of flowers when sweeping across the purple waves filled the once-barren sandy land with moistened sweetness. When stepping into this miracle irrigated with science and perspiration, the delegation physically felt the modern-day legend of the Gobi turned into a beautiful garden.



Under the dome of the Korla Folk Culture Museum, the students gently touched the Silk Road patterns on ancient pottery and gleaming Etles silk. Stacks of mulberry-bark manuscripts, saddles studded with small copper bells, and wedding robes embroidered with pomegranate flowers were silently revealing the diverse codes of oasis civilization.



The delegation entered the Tarim Oilfield History Exhibition Hall, lingering over yellowed exploration manuscripts and intricate extraction models. Through the guide's narration, the students learned the tales of pioneers who had written the epic of energy development with their blood on the vast canvas of the Gobi Desert.

At Ruiyuan Dairy's panoramic smart ranch, the automated mechanical arms in the transparent workshop collected with precision fresh milk nourished by Tianshan glacier water. The students not only gained hands-on experience by feeding adorable calves, but also got close to the production line to observe the whole industrial chain from forage cultivation to dairy

processing, gaining a feel of Chinese enterprises' excellent pursuit of modernized production and quality control.



As dusk settled, the students of both countries danced hand in hand around a bonfire at Heshuo Golden Beach, with their laughter mingling with the sparks against the starry sky. At dawn, the newborn sun shimmered across the rippling lake as flocks of seagulls wheeled overhead, snatching food from the students' hands before soaring aloft again. Along the shore, the crash of waves and the peals of youthful laughter blended into the lake's glimmering light.

At the farewell ceremony, Principal Anderson expressed in tears her gratitude to all the staff throughout the program. She recalled that the students had shuttled between Korla's historic sites and scenic spots while immersed in hands-on experiences such as paper-cutting and traditional Chinese painting. These activities had not only helped bridge cultural and linguistic divides and reap friendship, but also fostered personal growth amid diversity. She expressed her wish for all the students to always maintain a global outlook while cherishing their cultural roots, allowing this memorable and moving experience to become a source of inspiration for their future journeys in life.

Qiu Chengguo from Huashan Middle School, reflected on the vibrancy, sincerity, and friendliness of the week with three key words: "enthusiasm, understanding, and expectation".

From practicing calligraphy together to learning Meshrep hand in hand, the students had deepened their understanding of each other's educational vision and cultural traditions and, more importantly, embodied the inner meaning of the ancient Chinese epithet of "being harmonious despite differences as befitting a gentleman". He expressed the sincere wish for the schools to establish a regular exchange mechanism to allow this cross-Pacific friendship to remain evergreen through sustained interaction.

The two schools signed a Friendship Schools Agreement, formalizing a long-term educational exchange framework. The ceremony concluded with a vibrant joint performance which pushed the event to a crescendo: The Huashan students showcased resilience through the dynamic dance *The Poplar Youth* and conveyed the elegance of Chinese rites and music in the classical dance *Deer Cry from the Book of Songs*. The Walter Payton students sang *See You Again* and presented the lively dances of *Super Shy* and *Cha Cha Slide*. In the finale, the students of both schools stood shoulder to shoulder while singing *Friends*, with their voices echoing throughout the auditorium, marking a joyful end to this cross-cultural exchange visit.



Principal Anderson remarked: I am privileged to be here. The people are warm and welcoming; the local cuisine is unforgettable. We are united by a shared vision of supporting students' holistic development and access to quality

education, and we have transcended cultural differences. I hope the Huashan students will study with dedication and strive for excellence while also relaxing through sports and other means. I wish everyone success in their exams and a bright future ahead."

Julia, a Walter Payton student, said that though she had initially felt anxious about the unfamiliar environment, everyone she met during the exchange turned out to be friendly and accommodating. She received a lot of support in the process, which made the journey unforgettable and enjoyable.

Her partner Dong Yina, a student from Huashan Middle School, noted that despite their brief time together, a strong bond had been formed. She wished Julia continuing success in academics, skiing, ice-skating, and a vibrant university life ahead.

The seven-day journey in Xinjiang concluded amid the sound of camel bells, but the friendships formed in joy and tears have just begun. The ink scent of calligraphy, the warmth of bonfire dances on Heshuo Golden Beach, and the shared care for calves on a prairie farm have already taken root in the adolescents' hearts. May this friendship remain as pristine and ever-flowing as the Tianshan glacier water and grow tall like European black poplars braving the sand and wind. May the ink marks of every cross-continental message and the echoes atop every cloud add to the growth rings so that a lush tree of friendship will grow robust between the Chinese and American youth.

Zhi-Xing China: U.S.-China Youth Leaders Dialogue: Tech-Powered, Tea-Infused, YES Youth Co-Craft a New Vision for Cross-Cultural Learning

To further strengthen friendship and mutual understanding between Chinese and American

youth, the Zhi-Xing China: U.S.-China Youth Leaders Dialogue, hosted by China Education Association For International Exchange (CEAIE), successfully unfolded in Beijing on June 29, 2025. The distinguished guests who attended and addressed the event included Zhao Lei, Deputy Director-General, Department of International Cooperation and Exchanges, Ministry of Education, P.R.China; Fu Bo, Deputy Secretary-General of CEAIE; David Zhang, Vice President of Visa and Head of Government Affairs, Visa Greater China. Also participating in the event were nearly 100 young students from 30 renowned universities of both countries, including UC Berkeley, Cornell University, Stanford University, Peking University, and Fudan University.



Zhao Lei noted that the Dialogue was a flagship program for carrying out President Xi Jinping's important initiative to invite 50,000 young Americans to China for exchange and study over the following five years, providing a platform for technological and cultural integration. He encouraged the Chinese and American youth to appreciate each other's cultural differences, build bridges of communication, sustain intellectual dialogue, and contribute to global development by turning dialogue into action and addressing global challenges head-on. Fu Bo affirmed CEAIE's commitment to promoting exchanges among young people from China and abroad. She stated that, as the lead executing institution of the Young Envoys Scholarship

(YES) Program, CEAIE encouraged in-depth exchanges between Chinese and American youth and contributed to greater mutual understanding and cooperation between the two countries. In his turn, David Zhang said that Visa was delighted to see American students in China to experience the country firsthand and stood ready to provide relevant support. He urged the young participants to actively promote interaction and mutual understanding, enjoy their journey to their heart's content, and contribute their share to people-to-people ties.



The dialogue featured two themes: How Technology Enhances the Quality of Life and My Story with Tea. The young people from both countries explored how technology empowers a better life and addressed challenges such as privacy protection in the digital age. They also shared their respective anecdotes about tea and interpreted tea culture from diverse perspectives. Through these conversations, they strengthened their friendships, shared insights, enhanced mutual and common understanding, and ignited shared aspirations to take on the responsibilities of their time together for a brighter future.



The event climaxed with a performance blending Chinese intangible heritage and ethnic arts. An inheritor demonstrated the art of "Gaiwan Tea" with the bowl's motion symbolizing the Eastern philosophy: "Heaven shelters, earth supports, and humanity thrives in between." Chinese folk music, with the melodies of traditional string and bamboo instruments, evoked the beauty of traditional aesthetics and gently drew the participants into chanting along whereas the acrobatic show *Plate Spinning* highlighted the appeal of Chinese artistry through thrilling and agile motion. The finger puppetry show *The Butterfly Lovers* retold the millennia-old legend of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai while the shadow play brought an animal world to life. All these won waves of applause and amazement.

As a significant step toward fulfilling President Xi's initiative, this event not only provided a platform for intellectual exchange between Chinese and American youth, but also demonstrated the resilience and vitality of people-to-people ties fueled by technology and culture in a two-wheel drive mode. As an important platform for cross-cultural dialogue, the Zhi-Xing China: U.S.-China Youth Leaders Dialogue embodies the practice of innovative concepts as well as shared wisdom and responsibility of a new generation. It highlights the vision of Chinese and American youth, with the sails of their young vibrancy and bridges of friendship, turning ideas into action to build in concert a brighter future for their countries and the rest of the world.

Zhi-Xing China: Journey to the West of the Country

From July 5 to 19, the 2025 China Deep Dive Program Central and Western Route was jointly launched by Peking University (PKU) and

China Education Association For International Exchange (CEAIE). More than 20 students from leading American universities, including Harvard, U Chicago, and Cornell, traveled together with PKU students to Beijing, Ningxia, Shaanxi, and Sichuan. The program offered opportunities to gain insights, through knowledge (Zhi) and practice (Xing), into China's socio-economic development as well as its historical and cultural heritage, fostering deeper cross-cultural understanding and friendships.



► Feeling the pulse of modern-era innovation

This summer program was based on the model of lectures by noted PKU teachers combined with field practice. Professors from the School of International Studies and Guanghua School of Management led the students on their journey, delivering lectures and answering their questions. Professors from the School of International Studies, Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development, School of Economics, and College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture presented in-depth analyses of key topics such as economic growth, ecological protection, and international cooperation through vivid case studies, helping the students adopt a systematic perspective on China's development and thus laying a solid cognitive foundation for the field visits to follow. Backed by theoretical preparations, the delegation visited tech companies and industrial bases to witness the application of China's innovative achievements and experience the

profound impact of technology on production and life.

At the iFlytek AI Experience Center in Beijing, the students were immersed in the fruits of intelligent technology. The AI-powered virtual cross-cultural teaching scenarios enabled them to recognize the application value. At the AG ESports Club and Digital Sports Base in Chengdu, the students toured the training center and exhibition areas of eSports competitions, marveling at China's vibrant eSports industry and expressing their desire to strengthen U.S.-China youth exchanges in related fields.



At the Geely Auto plant in Xi'an where a fully automated team of robots was orchestrating the entire production process including welding, assembly, and inspection, the students observed China's new energy vehicle (NEV) industry in action and its high-standard smart manufacturing. In Chengdu Tianqi Lithium Science Exhibition Hall, the extensive applications of lithium products in such fields as NEVs and energy storage batteries demonstrated the innovation capacity and global influence of Chinese enterprises across the industrial chain.

The delegation also visited several representative institutions and enterprises to explore the diverse practices of Chinese modernization. From AI to smart manufacturing, from digital sports to new energy materials, the vibrant innovation of Chinese enterprises gave

the students a more visual understanding of the role of new quality productive forces as a driver of China's socio-economic development.

► Listening to the echoes of civilization amid silent mountains and rivers

History and culture form the spiritual roots of a country and a nation. During their visits to the Palace Museum, Terracotta Warriors, and Dujiangyan Irrigation System, the students felt a deep sense of the richness and enduring legacy of Chinese civilization.

Stepping into the Palace Museum, a dialogue with six centuries of civilization unfolded amid the grandeur of red walls and golden roofs. Atop the Great Wall at Mutianyu, they had a unique experience of a grand history set against the beautiful natural scenery of meandering mountain ridges.

At the Western Xia Mausoleums National Archaeological Site Park, the students observed the ruins of the mausoleum towers and learned about their layout and historical significance. In Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, they tried their hands at restoring broken terracotta warrior models. At the Sanxingdui Museum, the students felt the unique charm of Chinese civilization. The mysterious and exquisitely crafted bronze masks and jade artifacts caught Khayre, a student from the University of Minnesota, in constant amazement: "How could artisans of 3,000 years ago have created such intricate objects? They seem to be telling stories of a mysterious and brilliant civilization. This resonance across time is amazing," he remarked.



The Dujiangyan Irrigation System shows the ecological wisdom of the ancient Chinese. The students scaled up Qinyan Tower to look out over the Min River and toured important hydraulic sites, including the Erwang Temple, Fish Mouth Levee (*Yuzui*), and Bottle-Neck Channel (*Baopingkou*). Awestruck, they explored, posed questions, and snapped photos along the way. At Qingxi Garden, they practiced Qingcheng Tai Chi and learned lacquer fan painting. Between their physical moves and brush strokes, the cultural spirit of "harmony between humanity and nature" came to life as something concrete and touchable. During their stay at the Tengger Desert camp, the campers gathered around a bonfire, singing and dancing happily, taking in the rich ethnic traditions and warm hospitality of the locals, with their happy laughter resonating over the desert.

These sites were no longer perceived as merely silent "specimens", but as live carriers of the DNA of civilization that enabled the American students to appreciate the continuity and creativity of Chinese civilization.

► Learning about the coexistence between humanity and nature

The Chinese and American youth also visited desert oases and rural areas for a firsthand experience of China's unique wisdom of balancing ecological preservation with economic development.

In Chateau Yuanshi Winery, Ningxia, the students savored specialty wines such as jasmine tea wine and observed the integration of traditions and innovations in Ningxia's wine industry. At the Minning Hemei E-commerce Poverty Alleviation Workshop, they tasted goat milk, wolfberries, and chrysanthemum tea and viewed the packaging and ordering processes, witnessing real-life cases of e-commerce empowerment of rural revitalization.

At the Minning Town Exhibition Center, the delegation had a deep look at the living practice of collaboration between China's Eastern and Western Regions to alleviate poverty. "Just a few days ago, I finished watching *Minning Town*, a TV series based on Minning's transformation. And today, here I am standing to bear witness to the miracle in person. This is truly amazing!" reflected Kristen from Georgetown University. "The development here is not simply about providing aid. It empowers the local community with the capacity for sustainable growth. For many, this model is worth emulating."

At the Shapotou scenic spots, the students learned about the local community's development model of achieving win-win in ecological preservation and economic development through "desertification control plus tourism". In the hinterland of the Tengger Desert, they learned about the difficult struggle for sand fixation with wind breakers by personally feeling the arduous efforts through learning to make straw checkerboards.

The Tianfu Granary base in Sichuan left the students in awe with its application of digital agriculture, smart farming machinery, and eco-planting technologies, showcasing the power of science and technology in rural revitalization. At the Bifeng Valley Panda Base at Ya'an under the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda, the Chinese and American youth had a close-up view of the daily lives of giant pandas. While delighting in the cute panda cubs enjoying their meal, they were also impressed by China's philosophy and practice of biodiversity conservation.



From the booming eco-agriculture to the decisive moment of completing the poverty eradication struggle, from the effective control in the Gobi Desert to the transformation and upgrading to modern agriculture, as the delegation traveled on China's vast land, they learned and appreciated through the detailed examples the living answers to the scientific concept—"Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets."

► Youth meeting builds a bridge between hearts

Barely a week into their stay in China, the American youth had already mastered the essentials of daily life—mobile payments, riding with code scanning, and even natural Chinese greetings. At the Datang Everbright City of Xi'an, they moved with ease through the streets, picking stores, asking for directions, bargaining over prices, and chatting with locals as if they were seasoned natives.



In just a week, shared experiences, teamwork, and communication on the journey had quietly dissolved the linguistic and cultural barriers,

bringing the Chinese and American youth ever closer.

At the Guanzhong Art Museum of Folk Customs, the American visitors tried their hand at calligraphy and rubbings, engaging with their companions on brush techniques and appreciating one another's work. At the Sichuan Cuisine Museum in Chengdu, the students teamed up to cook Kung Pao Chicken as the aroma became a vessel of connection that drew them closer to each other. At Yuehua Tea Company at Ya'an, they worked together to pick and fry tea leaves, leaving behind valuable tea-scented memories.

This extremely precious friendship can be traced back to a long, shared history. At the Flying Tigers Memorial Museum, part of the Jianchuan Museum Cluster, the students' eyes were fixated on the invaluable artifacts from World War II; they seemed to be in touch with the warring years when the Chinese and American peoples were fighting shoulder to shoulder against aggression. Drawing on the tale of U.S. diplomat John S. Service, Fan Shiming reflected on the enduring friendship between the two countries and pointedly reminded the youth, "It is the responsibility and mission that this era has endowed your generation to carry this friendship forward and promote future cooperation."

Feelings for the past and the present intertwined as the journey drew to a close. Before departure, the students gathered around to taste tea at Heming Teahouse, Chengdu People's Park. Coincidentally, they had all prepared gifts for each other and were exchanging postcards that conveyed their heartfelt wishes for the future.

Kristen, one of the American students, said emotionally, "I'm especially grateful to the teachers and students of Peking U for opening a world for me beyond the itinerary. From the

Helan Mountains to Sichuan, from the wartime solidarity to the warming tea time, every moment has offered a living classroom for bonding and understanding."

The fragrance of tea lingered as postcards were tucked into backpacks. As the footsteps of the "Zhi-Xing China" group stretched further, the mountains climbed together, the laughter shared, and the vanished strangeness had all settled as warm memories, taking root in the hearts of youth across the Pacific.

U.S. Choir in Xi'an for a Chorus of Friendship and Cultures

"When the moonlight over the Bell Tower meets the waves of Salt Lake, across thousands of miles, we embrace here together..." so goes *Glad to Meet You*, the theme song of a China-U.S. youth music exchange in Xi'an. Here, friendship deepened as music became their common tongue.

From July 6 to 9, nearly 50 members of the One Voice Children from Utah joined Chinese students in Xi'an at the invitation of the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE). Together, they sang, explored the city, and created a resonance of friendship and culture.



Music as a bond for dialogue between Chinese and American youth

Campus nurtures youthful stories. At the High

School Affiliated to Xi'an Jiaotong University, the Utah choir members paired with local students and learned to sing *Glad to Meet You*. After hearing her Chinese partner's explanation of the lyrics, 18-year-old Jane was deeply moved, "The song connects the cultural symbols of Xi'an with those of my hometown, Salt Lake City. It also says that even though we are worlds apart, it's always wonderful to get to know and meet each other. This perfectly captures our feelings."



"So glad to meet you. No matter how the world may change, let this beautiful time live on as an everlasting song..." Day after day, the melody and lyrics rang on the campus, along alleys, and under the ancient city walls. United by a shared love of music, the students became more familiar with one another in companionship. Jiang Yizhuo, a senior high school freshman, found instant kinship with his American partner Avery. He said, "We're both huge fans of the musical *Hamilton*. I never expected to meet someone across the ocean who would share almost exactly my taste in music."

On the journey, someone started a single hum, which would spark a roadside chorus of the song now familiar to the young companions, with their clear children's voices attracting the attention of passersby.

"When we first met, I already realized that the barriers I had worried about simply didn't exist. It is truly an amazing experience being able to

share the journey and sing together with our American friends who love music just as much," Jiang said.

► Experiencing China's cultural pulse in Xi'an

Xi'an, the ancient capital of thirteen dynasties, has witnessed the rites of Zhou, the system-making of Qin, the fashion of Han, and the cultural heyday of Tang dynasty. From the Big Wild Goose Pagoda afar to the Bell and Drum Towers up close, and to the ancient city walls one scales, this city is scattered with brilliant cultural imprints, like radiant stars across the sky.

For the choir members visiting Xi'an for the first time, the most anticipated site was undoubtedly the Terracotta Warriors. Standing before this world-renowned cultural icon, 15-year-old Andy was deeply impressed by the lifelike clay figures that formed the majestic army phalanx. "Since my early years, I've always wanted to see the Terracotta Warriors and Horses with my own eyes. Now that I'm really standing before this 'wonder', it's absolutely spectacular!" exclaimed Andy.

At the Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage Experience Center, a traditional shadow puppetry performance of *The Mouse Steals Oil* had just concluded when an image of Michael Jackson sprang on the stage. As the folk song *Xintianyou* began to play, his robot dance and moonwalk came to life before the audience's eyes as if he were truly there. This East-meets-West shadow play elicited a resounding applause.



"Highly creative!" exclaimed Tucker, who was visiting China for the third time. "It blends traditional Chinese culture with global pop culture, bringing us a completely new visual experience."

Another live performance, "The Eternal Legend of Xi'an", offered the choir members an even more direct visual spectacle. The combination of virtual and real elements broke the boundaries between the stage and the audience. Torrents of water seemed to be cascading down and waves of sand appeared to be rushing toward the audience. This performance depicted historical chapters of the Zhou, Qin, Han, and Tang dynasties by technological means. The students responded with waves of applause and cheers.

As soon as the performance ended, several choir members began sharing their amazement: "The water and sands felt so real—as if they were falling right from the sky!"

Even more curious about the plots, they gathered around their Chinese peers to ask about parts they didn't fully understand. A choir member Jade said, "Although I couldn't understand the narration immediately, the actors' performances and visual effects helped me grasp the general idea. After watching this show, I'm very eager to learn more about the history of the Tang dynasty."

The choir members also went through the bustling commercial streets of the Great Tang Mall, experienced the vibrant folk atmosphere of the Muslim Quarter, enjoyed the street blocks under *The Longest Day in Chang'an* theme, and watched the ceremonial grandeur of *Chang'an Impression: Tang Dynasty Grand Welcoming Ceremony*. They had a complete overview of Chang'an or Xi'an's glorious past and dynamic present, fully loaded with friendships and precious memories.

On the Xi'an City Wall, as the final group photo

was taken, it was time for departure. Just a few days of staying together had produced genuine friendships that transcended language barriers and cultural differences. One more selfie, one more hug—face to face, hand in hand, the participants expressed their reluctance to part. Laughter and tears were testimony to their youthful bonds. The end of one journey marks the beginning of another. New chapters of China-U.S. people-to-people exchanges will continue to be written amid the flows of musical notes and the dance of rhythm.

Zhi-Xing China: U.S.-China University Student Leaders Academy and American BlueSky University Summer Camp Draw to a Successful End

The Zhi-Xing China: U.S.-China University Student Leaders Academy and American BlueSky University Summer Camp were held in China from July 26 to August 2, 2025. Eighteen young students from Brigham Young University, Utah State University, and Utah Valley University participated in a nine-day immersive program focused on the Chinese language and culture.



Designed to meet the learning needs of American college students, the program featured a comprehensive, varied curriculum on topics such as language enhancement, cultural understanding, and city exploration. Through thematic Chinese language classes, voice technology experiments, and task-based learning activities, the students significantly

improved their Chinese communication skills. Integrated language and culture courses further enabled them to explore and interpret cultural phenomena, deepening their empathy and cross-cultural understanding. By visiting cities such as Shanghai, Jinan, and Qingdao, the students observed and experienced the technological advancements, green development, and quality of life in China, forming a multifaceted and authentic perception of the country.



The field visits had a balanced coverage of traditional and innovative elements: the participants learned to make stone rubbings, experienced the art of tea brewing with spring water, and practiced Taiji sword techniques. They also engaged in live-streaming e-commerce, tried out new energy vehicles, and took part in artificial intelligence voice experiments. These enriching, interesting, authentic, and touchable activities allowed the American youth to feel deeply the charm of traditional Chinese culture while giving them a direct exposure to China's outstanding achievements in science and technology.

The students unanimously agreed that the program's fully-packed and enriching courses had greatly broadened their perspectives. They were particularly impressed with the innovative design of Chinese language courses under the theme of environmental protection and technological innovation, as well as the extracurricular activities that provided valuable face-to-face interaction with local Chinese people. Many mentioned that they found China

a safe, convenient, and highly efficient society, expressing admiration for the efficiency of the Chinese people.

Mutual Learning, Shared Future: Zhi-Xing China—U.S.-China University Student Leaders Academy and the Third LEAP Global Summer Program

On July 28, 2025, the Zhi-Xing China: U.S.-China University Student Leaders Academy and the Third LEAP Global Summer Program wound up successfully on the International Campus of Zhejiang University. Twenty-three young participants from the United States, Italy, Germany, Hungary, etc. and ten Zhejiang U students were divided into four groups to present the fruitful results of 17 days of immersive study and cultural exploration on topics including tea culture, intangible cultural heritage, fin-tech, and cultural and creative industries. They showed carefully produced theme videos entitled "My Impression of China". A representative of outstanding students also shared reflections, drawing to a perfect close this enriching and wonderful journey under the Zhi-Xing China Program.

► Immersive learning: opening the door to Chinese culture

As part and parcel of the program, Chinese language courses also became a starting point for the campers to learn about Chinese culture. Based on their levels of language proficiency, the students were placed into beginner and intermediate classes. From pinyin and basic Chinese word characters, from fun games and situational dialogues to simulated negotiations and Chinese résumé writing for business communication, their Chinese skills improved steadily. The evening "Chinese Corner" sessions were even more lively, offering opportunities for practising oral Chinese, experiencing Wing Chun

(a kind of Chinese martial art made famous abroad by Bruce Lee), and making friends.

Through the effective integration of academic exploration and language learning, the participants gained deeper insights into the fabric of Chinese culture, moving from perceptual cognition to a deeper understanding.



► Company visits: experiencing China's innovation up close

The campers explored China's cutting-edge industries and witnessed innovation practices firsthand. At the "Six Little Dragons" exhibition hall in Hangzhou, the eye-opening dexterous movements of AI robots and real-time technological demonstrations highlighted China's strength in artificial intelligence. At the headquarters of an internationally renowned sports brand, they learned about its localized operations in China, particularly its collaborations with domestic sports stars, gaining a better understanding of how global brands integrate with the Chinese market. From technological innovation to branding strategy, the visitors viewed China through an international lens and actively engaged in discussions, showing great interest in exploring the opportunities China presents.



► Cultural exploration: discovering China on the move

Cultural activities represented an indispensable part of the program as they allowed the international participants to appreciate the charm of traditional Chinese culture. At the China National Tea Museum, they tasted and learned about tea, experiencing the aesthetics of an Eastern lifestyle. In the ancient town of Yanguan, they listened to the thousand-year-old story of the Temple of the Sea God and experienced the enchanting interplay of light and shadow in the intangible cultural heritage art of shadow puppetry; they even tried their hand at making shadow puppets. At Fanghuichuntang, a traditional medicine store, they explored the rich heritage of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). At the Zhu Bingren Bronze Art Museum, they were captivated by the fusion of traditional bronze craftsmanship and modern aesthetics. They also practiced tie-dye at the China National Silk Museum and learned paper-cutting and tea-whisking at the Zhejiang Chapter of Western Returned Scholars Association. Each handmade work reflected their fondness for Chinese culture and embodied lasting memories. From ancient skills to contemporary inheritance practices, the participants felt the pulse of Chinese culture and experienced the depths and heat of cultural exchanges on every step of their journey.



► Youthful voice: a journey of lifelong resonance

The students from different countries shared

unforgettable reflections. They described the initial cultural shocks upon arriving in China and the direct experience that effectively helped dispel many preconceptions. The journey far exceeded their expectations, bringing home the immense value of exploring other countries. They emphasized that the best way to understand China and overcome stereotypes is to visit the country in person—to see, experience, and communicate with local people. They concurred that going abroad and engaging with other cultures greatly broadens horizons and nurtures openness and inclusiveness—characters which are particularly precious today for avoiding conflict and war.



At the closing ceremony on July 28, representatives from the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE) and Zhejiang University International Campus congratulated all the participants on their successful completion of the program. They noted that this program was not only a journey for knowledge and cultural exploration, but also a valuable practice in cross-cultural dialogue and exchange. Pointing out that the friendships and experiences gained across borders would become lifelong treasures for all the students who hailed from different countries, the speakers encouraged the students to share what they had witnessed in China with their communities back home and tell authentic and vivid "China stories", serving as young ambassadors of cultural exchange. They also expressed the hope that the students would

transform the knowledge and wisdom they had acquired in China into capacities to build bridges of mutual learning among civilizations, promote meaningful cultural exchanges, and work together for a world of mutual respect and understanding, and harmonious development.

Zhi-Xing China: U.S.-China University Student Leaders Academy has been designed by CEAIE as an exchange program for Chinese and American youth to cultivate future leaders with strong overall qualities, an international vision, outstanding leadership skills, and a dedication to advancing sound China-U.S. relations and world peace. Through in-depth, distinctive, and systematic courses, seminars, interviews, field research, and site visits, the program is aimed at helping American college students gain firsthand knowledge of China's history, culture, language, education system, technological innovation, and socioeconomic development while immersing them in the cultural diversity of contemporary Chinese society.

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