



Highlights

- 01 Music as a Bridge for Youth Harmony–The Yale Whiffenpoofs' 2026 China Tour
- 02 Youth Writing an Inter-University Exchange Chapter Across Mountains and Seas-The XJTU-Cambridge Young Envoys Scholarship Program
- 03 Wuhan and Tacoma Reunite After a Decade of Sister-City Friendship
- 04 Table Tennis Sparks Youthful Vitality: Shijiazhuang Foreign Language School Builds a Bridge for China-U.S. Friendship
- 05 Friendship Across Continents–2026 Irish Youth Study Camp in Henan
- 07 Setting Sail for Friendship with One Heart: An Unbelievable Journey at ZJITC

Music as a Bridge for Youth Harmony —The Yale Whiffenpoofs' 2026 China Tour

With music as a bridge for dialogue among civilizations, the century-old Yale Whiffenpoofs fostered deep cultural resonance through song. Founded in 1909, the Whiffenpoofs are one of the world's best-known collegiate a cappella groups. Over the 14-day tour, the 12-member troupe traveled to nine Chinese cities including Chongqing, Chengdu, Zhaoxing and Changsha. They held musical exchange activities at five universities and six primary and secondary schools, and shared the stage with more than 150 young choir members. Through language-free melodies, they built emotional bonds between Chinese and American youth. Their visit injected youthful vitality into people-to-people exchanges and mutual understanding between China and the United States.

This public-interest choral tour helped young people gain a deeper understanding of contemporary China. It also provided a platform for Chinese youth to share their perspectives with international audiences through music. A China-U.S. youth music exchange event was held at Chengdu City Concert Hall. A total of 150 students from six local schools joined the Whiffenpoofs to perform *The Brightest Star in the Night Sky* together. Participants came from Chengdu Shengfei Primary School, Fangcao Primary School, Chengdu Foreign Languages School Meinian Campus, Tianfu Shishi Affiliated Primary School, and two other local schools. The Chinese and American students rehearsed together, refining their harmonies and forging sincere friendships across the Pacific. The Chinese participants said that their close interaction with the Yale students enabled them to experience the confidence and joy of connecting with the world through music.



The tour also explored innovative approaches to cultural exchange by incorporating intangible cultural heritage elements, enabling China's rich traditional culture to resonate with younger generation. At Zhaoxing Dong Village, Guizhou Province, the century-old American a cappella tradition met the thousand-year-old Grand Song of the Dong Ethnic Group in a memorable cross-cultural collaboration. In Changsha, the Whiffenpoofs joined local school choirs in performances, demonstrating the unique power of music to connect hearts and minds. Spontaneous flash mob performances in Chongqing and Zhangjiajie further bridged Chinese and American people through music.

Through immersive visits and exchanges, the choir members broadened their understanding and gained firsthand experience of a real, multidimensional China. During their visits, the American youth learned about China's urban development and experienced the charm of Chinese culture. By uniting young people via music, the program encouraged participants from diverse cultural backgrounds to break down communication barriers through joint performances. It also injected fresh impetus into China-U.S. youth exchanges.

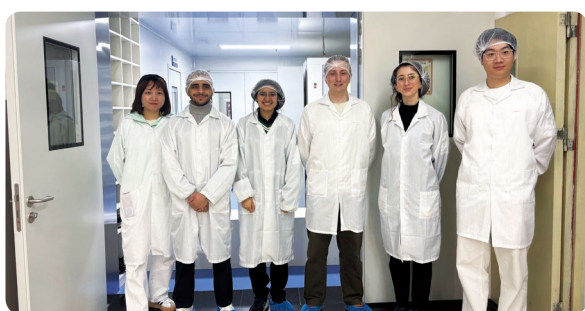


Music knows no borders, and friendship knows no distance. More than just a musical tour, the Whiffenpoofs' China trip delivered extensive people-to-people youth exchanges. The tour was initiated by Chengdu University of Information Technology, with the support of local authorities in all the host cities.

Youth Writing an Inter-University Exchange Chapter Across Mountains and Seas-The XJTU-Cambridge Young Envoys Scholarship Program

In April 2026, a student delegation from the University of Cambridge visited Xi'an Jiaotong University (XJTU) under the YES Program. This year, the XJTU-Cambridge Young Envoys Scholarship Program highlighted the industry-education integration and cultural heritage preservation. The program aimed to expand student exchanges between China and other countries, strengthen the public foundation for sound bilateral relations, and promote exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

During their visit, the Cambridge delegation toured the State Key Laboratory for Manufacturing Systems Engineering, including the Laboratory of Micro-nano Manufacturing and the Laboratory of Bio-fabrication. Faculty members and students from both universities exchanged views on the development of cutting-edge technologies.



At the National Experimental Teaching Demonstration Center under the School of Mechanical Engineering, participants learned how to operate humanoid robots, quadruped robot dogs and robotic arms under the instruction of Professor Wang Ziping from the Department of Smart Manufacturing and Big Data. Wasef Rana, an international student from the School of Management, gave a lecture titled AI Applications in the Robotics Industry. He also held in-depth talks with attendees covering AI innovation, robotics research and development, and engineering education.

The delegation also visited the Sports Center on campus. With Coach He Changke from the School of Physical Education, the Cambridge students learned table tennis serving techniques and basic strokes. They teamed up with their XJTU counterparts in a friendly match to reflect on history and appreciate the charm of "Ping-Pong Diplomacy". After the match, delegates strolled across the springtime campus and attended the 5th Spring Cherry Blossom Festival.

With a 130-year educational tradition and the enduring spirit of the Westward Relocation at the core of its institutional ethos, the year 2026 marks the university's 130th anniversary and the 70th anniversary of its westward relocation from Shanghai. On this significant occasion, members of the University of Cambridge student delegation extended their best wishes to XJTU. Ben Silva extended his warm congratulations on XJTU's 130th anniversary, saying, "It is my great honor to engage in in-depth exchanges with the faculty and students at XJTU, both in the laboratories and on the ping-pong table." Sienna Bass remarked that XJTU's beautiful campus had left a deep impression on her. "I am so grateful that the YES Program brings together people with shared dreams and ambitions, which unites us to strive

forward for the common goal," she added. In her congratulatory message, Gaia Bertolino wrote, "The historic XJTU has made outstanding contributions to cultivating talent. As we mark its 130th anniversary, I hope Chinese and international students will keep striving via the YES Program to push forward global education cooperation."

Wuhan and Tacoma Reunite After a Decade of Sister-City Friendship

In April, the inaugural YES Program hosted by Wuhan City Polytechnic (WCP) concluded successfully. A 15-member delegation of teachers and students from Tacoma Community College in the U.S. completed a two-week immersive exchange, combining Chinese language courses and vocational skills training. Their visit became a meaningful gift of friendship marking the 10th anniversary of the sister-city relationship between Wuhan and Tacoma.

► **Integrating Language, Skills and Culture: A Three-Dimensional Learning Model**

Guided by a practice-oriented approach, Wuhan City Polytechnic (WCP) developed a three-in-one study model combining language, skills, and culture. In the Fun Chinese Learning class, the U.S. participants started from scratch and experienced the unique charm of Chinese characters. They received hands-on training in cross-border e-commerce livestreaming and toured Hubei Humanoid Robot Innovation Center. These experiences gave them first-hand insight into the rapid growth of China's digital economy and smart manufacturing. Austin Cole Ward, a U.S. student representative, commented that China's robust development in the digital economy and intelligent manufacturing was truly eye-opening and that this experience would remain etched in his memory.



► **Two-Way Cultural Exchange: Pickleball Forges Friendship Bridge Across the Pacific**

Cross-cultural exchange became one of the highlights of the program. The U.S. visitors experienced Wuhan's local culture via multiple trips: they admired time-honored bronze chime bells at Hubei Provincial Museum, overlooked the meeting point of the Yangtze and Han Rivers from Yellow Crane Tower after dark, and strolled along East Lake Greenway to enjoy Wuhan's natural scenery. On campus, immersive experiences including tea ceremony, paper-cutting, Tai Chi, and dumpling-making gave them a deeper appreciation of Chinese culture through hands-on practice.



Originating in Washington State, U.S., pickleball came full circle during this program. As a highlight, pickleball training ran throughout the event. The China-U.S. Sister-City Youth Pickleball Friendship Match kicked off with great vitality. Paired Chinese and American students competed side by side, quickly growing from strangers into close teammates. The sport became a "universal language" of cross-cultural communication. Through sport, participants built friendships and deepened mutual understanding, vividly illustrating the idea that "the foundation of China-U.S. relations lies in the people, and the future lies in the youth."

► Deepening Institutional Partnership: Inauguration of Pickleball Exchange Center

At the closing ceremony, the China-U.S. Sister-City Pickleball Exchange Center was officially inaugurated, marking a shift to regular institutional collaboration between the two colleges. The Center will use sports as a bridge to advance joint curriculum development and reciprocal visits by faculty and students, building a new platform for China-U.S. cooperation in vocational education.

Mr. Newman, the representative of Tacoma Community College, said that his visit to China 30 years ago had changed his life and that he believed this program would broaden the international outlook of the delegation. The U.S. delegation took away far more than academic knowledge and vocational know-how from their Wuhan trip: they gained a genuine, all-round understanding of modern China. At the closing ceremony, they sang "See You Again" in Chinese. This cross-Pacific friendship infuses sustained vitality into China-U.S. people-to-people and youth exchanges.

Table Tennis Sparks Youthful Vitality: Shijiazhuang Foreign Language School Builds a Bridge for China-U.S. Friendship

From April 7 to 14, Shijiazhuang Foreign Language School (SFLS) welcomed more than 200 middle school students from 14 U.S. states, along with distinguished American guests including Judy Hoarfrost, a key figure in the landmark 1971 Ping-Pong Diplomacy exchange. The event marked the 55th anniversary of this milestone exchange. Together with their Chinese peers, they revisited that pivotal moment to carry forward the long-standing China-U.S. friendship.

Paired with student volunteers from SFLS, the group visited the school's art building,

sports complex, table tennis arena, labor education center and other campus facilities. They also participated in courses integrated with table tennis elements, including weaving, creative handicrafts, paper-cutting, calligraphy, traditional Chinese painting, martial arts, and drone piloting.



The Chinese and American students held friendly matches in table tennis, badminton, soccer, basketball, volleyball, and pickleball. Inside the school's table tennis hall, 50 tables lined the spacious venue. Judy Hoarfrost, Connie Sweeris, Olga Soltesz and other veterans of the 1971 Ping-Pong Diplomacy were delighted to see old photos capturing their historic meeting with Premier Zhou Enlai during their China visit decades ago. These snapshots brought back warm memories of cross-border friendship. "It will always be a wonderful memory of our Ping-Pong Diplomacy visit to China! May we always celebrate the great friendship between the Chinese and American people!"



A friendly exchange of sporting skills drew the Chinese and American students closer. For Savious Joe, a student from Central Academy in the United States, it was his first time picking up a table tennis paddle. Tan Zhiyuan from

SFLS enthusiastically invited him to play and patiently demonstrated the basic techniques to him. Through the game, the two young men opened their hearts to each other. The two teenagers exchanged contact information, planting the seeds of a new friendship. Savious exclaimed, "Getting to know Chinese friends through table tennis and learning about a different culture—this kind of exchange is incredibly meaningful!"

In the school's Friendship Garden, the visiting teachers and students, along with their local Chinese peers, tied wish cards to the branches of a ginkgo tree, expressing hopes for China-U.S. friendship. "The China-U.S. Friendship Tree—The Ginkgo Wishes Project" had been initiated by Mr. Luca Berrone, a devoted friend of China from Iowa, aimed at celebrating and promoting the sister-state relationship established in 1983 between Iowa and Hebei Province. Through drawings and written wishes, the project encourages the people of both regions to express their brightest hopes for an enduring friendship between China and the U.S.

"May the spirit of Ping-Pong Diplomacy continue to unite the younger generation."
"I hope China and the U.S. can join hands to guide the world toward a brighter tomorrow."
"I hope future generations of Chinese and American youth will value our shared bonds and recognize that we achieve far more when united."
"My wish is for the U.S. to embrace the beauty of Chinese culture just as warmly as China has welcomed ours. In this media-driven age, may we use these windows of exchange to truly see and understand one another, making mutual cultural appreciation a normal part of our lives." Vibrant red wish cards hung on the ginkgo trees dotted with spring foliage, each carrying sincere wishes from Chinese and American youth for a brighter bilateral future.



The visit of the U.S. Youth "Inheritance of Friendship" Study Tour was more than a cultural exchange program but rather a journey of heartfelt connection. It demonstrated to the genuine and lasting friendship between Chinese and American youth. It is believed that this friendship will serve as a youthful force propelling China-U.S. relations steadily forward.

Friendship Across Continents —2026 Irish Youth Study Camp in Henan

Gathering in Henan from across the world, the participants built friendships through meaningful exchange. The formal closing ceremony of the 2026 Irish Youth Study Camp, hosted by Henan University of Animal Husbandry and Economy (HUAHE), took place on April 13. Attendees included three groups of guests: Li Ren, Dean of the Confucius Institute of Chinese Medicine and Regenerative Medicine at the University of Galway, Irish student and teacher delegates from Galway Educate Together Secondary School and Dominican College, plus faculty and student volunteers from the host university. Together, they celebrated the successful conclusion of the nine-day cross-border study and exchange tour.



At the closing ceremony, the audience viewed flashbacks of heart-warming memories and captivating highlights of their growth during the study camp. The university's folk dance troupe performed the classical dance Blue and White Porcelain, elegantly showcasing the timeless beauty of ancient Chinese heritage. In return, the Irish youth presented a delightful sequence of performances, featuring a violin show, a folk chorus, and a traditional group dance. Through these energetic and engaging artistic expressions, they beautifully conveyed the unique charm of Irish culture, earning waves of resounding applause from the entire audience.

Teachers and student representatives of the two countries took turns speaking onstage, recounting their thoughts and warm moments from the camp. Irish students deemed the tour an invaluable memory. Educators from both institutions agreed the exchange served as a cross-cultural bond, enabling Chinese and Irish youth to thrive via mutual learning and respect.

The study camp, themed "Soaring Young Spirits Witness Henan's Glory; China-Ireland Friendship Lasts Forever", was officially opened on April 5, 2026. Traveling across the ocean to the heartland of Chinese civilization, the young Irish students discovered the essence of China's Central Plains culture at every stop and forged deep friendships along the way. The tour began at the Badaling section of the Great Wall. Irish young people visited the two ancient capitals of Zhengzhou and Luoyang, immersing themselves in cultural landmarks like Shaolin Temple, Longmen Grottoes, Songyang Academy and Henan Museum. They marveled at the strength and discipline of Shaolin Kung Fu, millennia-old stone carving craftsmanship, and the profound heritage of Chinese civilization.

They also visited the Luoyang Peony Garden and admired peonies, a symbol of beauty and

elegance in Chinese culture, experiencing the unparalleled charm of Chinese floral culture.

As part of the cultural experience and inter-school exchanges, the Irish students visited the campuses of Henan University of Animal Husbandry and Economy, North China University of Water Resources and Electric Power, Henan University of Chinese Medicine, and Zhengzhou No. 106 Senior High School. They took part in ice-breaking activities, campus sports meets, and cultural exchange events, competing and playing games with Chinese youth, which helped melt away barriers amid laughter and friendship. They also tried their hands at traditional crafts such as making ceramics, sewing traditional Chinese medicine sachets, and wrapping dumplings, feeling the historical pulse of the Central Plains through tactile practice. Outside campus, they toured Huayu Holding Group and a BYD Di-Space manufacturing plant. These field trips let them experience the thriving development of modern Henan and China's booming smart manufacturing sector, leaving them with a genuine, well-rounded perception of the country.



Though the tour came to a close, the friendship is here to stay. The camp not only immersed the Irish youth in the profound charm of Central Plains culture and the vitality of China's development, but also fostered friendships with their Chinese peers and added youthful momentum to China-Ireland educational and cultural exchanges.

Setting Sail for Friendship with One Heart: An Unbelievable Journey at ZJITC

From April 18 to 28, 2026, Morgan Phillips, President of Gateway Technical College (GTC), United States, headed a delegation on an official visit to Zhejiang Industry & Trade Vocational College (ZJITC). During their stay, ZJITC held the 6th "Perceiving Wenzhou • Young Sails" Sino-U.S. Vocational Education Development Exchange Forum.



► Deepening Cultural Exchange Through Engaging Activities

ZJITC carefully designed a program featuring "intangible cultural heritage experiences, Tai Chi, and campus interactions". The college organized visits for the U.S. delegation to explore local Wenzhou intangible cultural heritage crafts, such as Ou clay sculpture, Ou embroidery, and wooden movable-type printing. The visitors created Ou clay sculpture works themed on campus landmarks and took part in a Tai Chi experience class, feeling the essence of traditional Chinese culture through hands-on learning.

► Enhancing Youth Understanding Through Immersive Classes

An innovative, immersive cultural talk show at the opening ceremony showcased Wenzhou's delicacies, entrepreneurial spirit, and Liu Ji culture (the legacy of Liu Ji, a renowned strategist, advisor, and writer of the Ming dynasty), vividly highlighting the city's distinctive character and the ethos of Chinese vocational education. The delegation witnessed firsthand the operation of intelligent

manufacturing production lines and modern logistics management systems, and participated in mock job interviews.

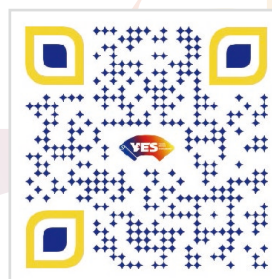
► Experiencing China's Smart Manufacturing Through Enterprise Visits

The host college organized visits for the U.S. faculty and students to several well-known Wenzhou enterprises, including Yalong Intelligent Equipment Group Co., Ltd., Semir Group Logistics Center, and Delixi Group. Members of the delegation visited functional intelligent manufacturing assembly lines and state-of-the-art logistics management platforms, alongside experiencing mock recruitment interviews. These real workplace experiences deepened their firsthand understanding of China's vocational education and industrial development.

During the closing ceremony, the word "unbelievable" echoed frequently among the U.S. teachers and students. One student representative described the Ou clay sculpture experience as "a meaningful bridge connecting Chinese and American youth" and a GTC faculty member stated, "Industry-education integration isn't just a slogan, but something that happens here every day."

Contact Us

- 👤 Contact: YES Team
- 📞 Tel.: 010-66090069-8006
- ✉ Email: yes@ceaie.edu.cn
- 🌐 Website: <https://www.youthlink.cn>



YOUNG
ENVOYS
SCHOLARSHIP