

2010 Reach Out trip to Beijing Migrant Schools

A major component of today's challenge in accommodating Chinese migrant workers exists in establishing modernized and well-run schools in migrant communities.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics' Studies on Chinese Migrant Workers' Quality of Life, 49.2% of migrant parents who brought children with them to the cities "had to pay an average registration fee of 1,226 yuan in addition to regular tuition fees." These fees are usually required by urban public schools that accept non-residents. Since rural migrant workers do not have a Beijing hu kou (户口), they are asked to pay fees that they cannot afford. In addition to educational costs, migrant children also face severe discrimination once they enter a Beijing city school. The discomfort that arises from this discrimination, as well as from the difference in income, influences the parents' decision to send their children into the city's school system.

As a result, migrant workers usually send their children to local migrant schools. However, migrant schools are often primitive and lack the resources city school systems have. Poor salaries, nonexistent work benefits and grim career prospects make it difficult for migrant schools to hire and maintain qualified teachers.

Therefore, our 2010 spring reach out trip participants will travel to a Beijing migrant school where we will perform educational relief service by working with the students there, teaching them various subjects that include the use of English. We believe that Yale students and migrant children will benefit and learn from each other, and the experiences they share will facilitate future cultural relations between Chinese and American students. Thus, we will be living in direct vicinity of the migrant community, and will be spending more than a week working with these children. Not all of these experiences can be purely academic; we hope to build bridges between American and Chinese cultures that will lead to a unique and diverse experience.

After working in the migrant community, we will be working with other initiatives in the Beijing urban metropolis that pertain to our service, as well as exploring the ancient and diverse history and culture the capital city offers us. In Beijing, we will be working with Chinese university students (many who accompanied us on our 2009 summer trip to migrant schools), and visiting some of the great landmarks China is well-known for, including the Great Wall, Forbidden City, Summer Palace, Tiananmen Square and other cultural sites. Total expenditures should amount to around \$1300, of which a large portion goes towards paying for airfare.

We look for applicants who show excitement and exhibit ideas about working in Beijing migrant community, as well as a genuine interest in learning about Chinese culture. Chinese language skill is by no means required, nor is it necessarily preferred; we ask for only a willingness to teach students in a migrant community that would greatly benefit from nurturing education. We look forward to reading your application!

For questions, please contact:

Rachel Wang, SM '12 at rachel.wang@yale.edu

Mike Zhan, SM '12 at michael.zhan@yale.edu

Itinerary for Reach Out Spring Trip to China

March 5th: Pre-trip orientation and last minute Q&A.

Live at Yale

March 6-7th: Flight from NYC to Beijing; arrive in Beijing and move into the hotel in Beijing.

Dinner and tour to Tiananmen Square, Qianmen & Wangfujing Street at night.

March 8th: Travel to migrant worker community site. Meet with migrant school officials in the morning. Meet with migrant school students in the afternoon.

March 9th: Start working and teaching class in local migrant community; live in community in camps.

March 10th – 14th: Work in migrant schools.

March 13th & March 14th: Weekend: cultural activities with migrant school children.

March 15th: Leave migrant school community and depart for Beijing. Arrive in Beijing hotel.

March 16th: Trip to Great Wall and Thirteen Ling tombs

March 17th: Trip to Summer Palace; Tour Beijing hutongs.

Dinner and tour through Hou Hai and Sanlitun at night.

March 18th: Shopping in Silk Street Market; lunch and dinner at Nan Luo Gu Xiang

March 19th: Fly back to NYC from Beijing in the afternoon.

Below are the migrant school kids we worked with this past summer!

