

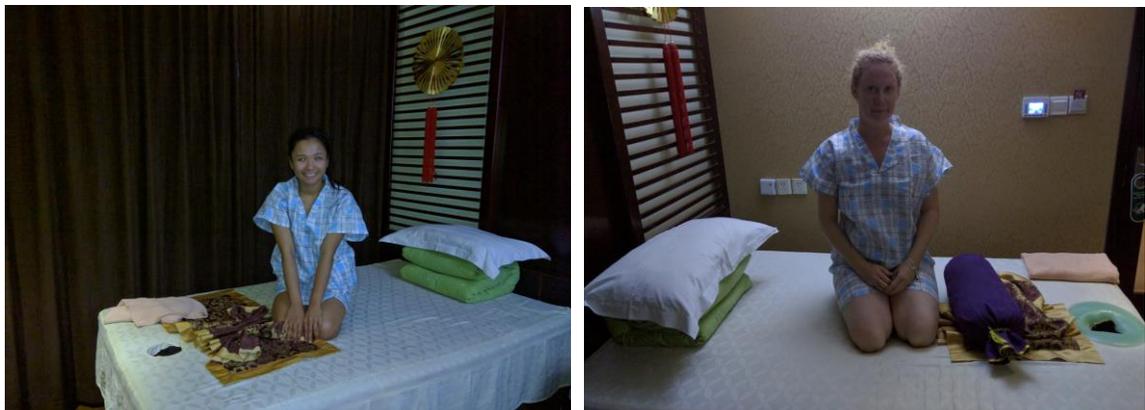
## Week Six Report (July 17 – 23, 2016) Report

Students began week six on Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, by mentally preparing for their long 10-hour bus ride back to the CUG campus in Wuhan. The team completed their data acquisition and research training in Badong County earlier than expected due to demolition of the areas planned for permanent GPS stations. A decision was made to further enjoy the Chinese culture with the help of the program assistants and friends from CUG in Wuhan. The day commenced with a breakfast buffet beside the hotel and loading onto the bus. This would make their final bus ride with the driver, whom they had trusted and familiarized themselves with for the past two weeks. After about four hours of travelling, the group decided to enjoy a family-style lunch before completing the rest of their journey. During lunch, the students enjoyed a game of Mahjong, showing the professors and others what they were taught. After lunch, Dr. Guoquan Wang and Dr. Jin Wang were dropped off to the airport while the students continued on to Wuhan. The students arrived to CUG campus in Wuhan around 6:30 PM, where their program assistant, Suki, warmly greeted them. The group was directed back to their original dormitory rooms where they settled in and unpacked their belongings. The day concluded with a much needed dinner at McDonald's to satisfy their long awaited cravings.



Students Rob, Jacob, Janice, and Ben play Mahjong during lunch.

The students enjoyed their next few days off to re-familiarize themselves with the city of Wuhan and get back into the routines they left. On Monday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, students dedicated their morning to catching up on laundry and grocery shopping for the week. A few students enjoyed tea time during the afternoon to catch up on their journal entries, while others unpacked the rest of their belongings and caught up on rest. During the late afternoon, students were asked to meet with Suki to acquire their scholarship award from CUG. Everyone was pleased with their scholarship award as it gave him or her an additional allowance to spend. During the evening, several students enjoyed a relaxing two-hour massage at a location recommended by Suki, while others spent their evening catching up with Chinese friends.



**Top:** Students enjoy coffee and waffles at the coffee shop near their dorms. **Bottom left:** Janice enjoys a massage. **Bottom Right:** Jennifer enjoys a massage.

Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, a majority of the students enjoyed the famous breakfast choice, hot dry noodles, at a renowned location. During breakfast, the students enjoyed an audience of people who were curious about their breakfast as only locals eat there. After breakfast, the students continued on their day by walking to the



Students from left to right Rob, Valerie, Janice, Jennifer, Wanda, and Ben enjoy a meal at Papa Johns in Wuhan.

shopping plaza to purchase souvenirs for friends and family. Souvenir shopping encouraged students to learn the art of bargaining and communicating through body language. Many students succeeded with their first try in bargaining for merchandise, happily leaving with irresistible offers. After the shopping session, they decided to partake in an afternoon coffee chat at Starbucks where they enjoyed the nostalgia of home for a few hours. During the evening, the students decided on pizza at Papa John's where they were treated exceptionally well by their waitress. The students



Students from left to right Rob, Valerie, Jennifer, Ben, Janice, and Wanda eat ice-cream at Baskin Robins.

enjoyed an evening stroll after dinner around Optical Valley, a higher-end plaza, where they found many familiar western restaurants and shopping stores. One of the stores they took interest in was Baskin Robins, a delicious treat to end the humid night. As the students were leaving the shopping area, they also experienced the process of 'closing time' in one of the large department stores. During this experience, all exits were blocked except one main one, where everyone in the department gathered in single file lines to exit. Luckily, the students were able to navigate themselves out as they realized that the people in a line were the workers waiting to time out from their work shift. The night concluded with a nice stride back to the dormitory as they collapsed in their beds from a long day out.

On Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup> students were allowed to sleep in and enjoy their morning. Many students enjoyed breakfast at the canteen as they waited for their 2:00 PM activity appointment with Suki. The students arrived in front of the CUG museum to meet with Suki who assisted in directing the taxis to the correct location. The taxi's drove the students to the Italian side of the Optical Valley Plaza where they attended a pottery making class. Everyone picked out a specific shape, either cup, vase or their own creation, to create his or her pottery sculpture. The instructor demonstrated the techniques necessary to mold each shape appropriately to the desired product. As the students were put to work with their creativity, many onlookers stopped by due to curiosity and awe of seeing the foreign students at work. Once finished, the students then left to enjoy an early dinner together. The weather was nice and breezy for the early evening with very little rain so everyone decided to walk to the dormitory.



**Left:** World City Plaza Mall **Right:** Students learn how to make pottery.

The next day, Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, was scheduled for painting the pottery the students created the previous day. Before their 10:30 AM appointment at the crafts store, several students decided to have a nice walk to Starbucks for breakfast, while others decided to enjoy hot dry noodles. The students did not have much difficulty painting their crafts because the majority of them already had an idea from the examples displayed on the shelves. Since painting did not take long, the students had ample time to walk around the various streets dedicated to different cultures such as: German Street, Italian Street, Spanish Street, etc. After walking around, Suki and professor Li Yue, the phonetics teacher from week 2, decided to show the students a Japanese style restaurant located in the shopping plaza. The Japanese restaurant was beautifully decorated, requiring the students to obey the tradition by taking their shoes off before entering the dining table area. The students separated into two small groups at adjoining tables, where a few of them accompanied Suki, Li Yue, and Iris, their friend. As lunch ended, the students continued to explore the large five-story plaza recognized as "The Longest Pedestrian Walkway in the World," where the students had yet to discover the rest of the unknown areas. Shopping discontinued



Students paint their pottery.



**From Left to Right:** Valerie, Rob, Jacob, Jennifer, Dr. Zhou, Katherine, Ben, Janice, and Wanda enjoy a last meal with Dr. Zhou before leaving for Beijing.

when the group received a call from Dr. Zhou, inviting them to dinner. The students rushed back to their dormitories to make the dinner appointment with Dr. Zhou, the CUG Geology professor who educated the students about the geology and structure in Zigui City and Badong County. The students appreciated their final meal, a family-style Chinese dinner, with Dr. Zhou before he departed back to Zigui City to teach other classes. After dinner, the students strolled through the streets with Dr. Zhou as he paved the way back to the dormitories, where the students said their final goodbyes and thank yous to their professor.



An internet café exists in the private theatre where students watched a movie.

On Friday, July 22nd, many students found their way to the canteen at different times, enjoying their daily breakfast routine. The students prepared to meet with Suki at 11:15 AM for their scheduled activities. Suki led the students to the public bus for a ten-minute ride to the subway station. After arriving at the subway station, Suki instructed the students on how to use the automatic ticket kiosk that would bring them to the Hankou train

station. Suki accompanied the students to help with purchasing their train tickets that would transport them to Beijing, where they will be spending five days before their departure to Houston. Majority of the students enjoyed their lunch at Burger King, located within the train station, as the others waited patiently to purchase the required tickets. After the tickets were purchased, the students continued their day at Wanda Plaza, a very upscale shopping mall catering to the Western style. Many of the shopping stores in Wanda Plaza are also found in the U.S., with most of the prices being double those found back home due to the foreign nature of the brands. The area was beautiful and most of the students enjoyed walking around and window-shopping owing to the expensive pricing! As students grew weary, everyone gathered and decided on whether to watch a movie at the Wanda IMAX Theatre or a private



Students view a private showing of the Conjuring. From top left Valerie, Rob, Ben, Iris. Bottom Left: Janice, Wanda, and Marx.

movie theatre. The students decided on the private movie theatre located in the Roman Cafe just on the outside of the Wanda Plaza. The rooms contained comfy, adjustable lounge chairs, a large projector screen, and dim lights. The students rented out two rooms where they were given a variety of movie choices to choose from in which one room chose a scary movie and the other, a biographical drama. The students were able to relax as they enjoyed the theatre setting and movie choice for the late afternoon. After their movies, the group ventured their way to a tradition Korean barbeque restaurant highly recommended by Suki and her friend. Throughout their period of waiting for their table, the owner of the restaurant greeted the students and asked for pictures with them. The students enjoyed their Korean barbeque meal, where the owner and the other wait staff cooked vegetables and several pieces of various marinated meats right at their tables. The night ended with walking back to the subway station where the students caught the last subway back to their destination, leading them to a taxi to take them back to the dormitory.



Students enjoy a Korean BBQ meal for dinner.

On Saturday, July 23th, a few students tried to enjoy breakfast at their usual spot, the canteen, but experienced difficulties due to their meal cards surprisingly expiring. As other students failed to use their cards, the issue was addressed to Suki who attempted to help with the concern. Saturday was another off day for the students to do as they please, and many used the morning to do laundry and clean

their dormitory rooms. During lunch, several students decided to hangout at the Starbucks in Optical Valley while the students who were interested in purchasing a seal cutting kit, met with Professor Song. Professor Song, the famous seal-cutting professor, invited a few students to his house located on West Campus to show them his renowned work as well generously giving each of them one of his books depicting many of the seals he has carved. Several students also enjoyed the rest of the afternoon doing their personal shopping in the many shops located in and around the plaza district, while others headed back to the dormitory early to relax for the rest of the night. During the early evening, a few students enjoyed shopping in an antique market where they were able to bargain for great deals! After antique shopping, a few of the students had dinner at West Lake while others enjoyed a carryout meal. The night concluded with everyone resting early for tomorrow's activities.



**Left:** Students take a tour of Dr. Song's seal collection. From Left to Right: Katherine, Monica, Jacob, Dr. Song, and Ben. **Right:** View of West Lake.