

Week 3 Update (June 26-July 2)

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6-26-2017

Monday morning the group woke up early 4AM to depart for the train station. We took the subway to the train station arriving at 6am. Once we had our tickets in hand we made our way through security and towards the waiting lobby. Everyone found some breakfast and a seat and waited to board the train. The bullet train traveled at speeds of 300 km/hr and it took about 4 hours for us to arrive in Wuhan. Once we arrived in Wuhan we all rode in a van to China University of Geosciences. We were welcomed by a friendly staff and introduced to the building. We put our bags in our rooms and went on a campus tour led by volunteers Anqi and Eric. Later that evening we had dinner with Dr. Wang and his professor Dr. Changqian Ma along with other faculty members who help organize and run the program. The food was great, we shared many toasts to celebrate our safe arrival and the IRES program. By the end of the night we were all exhausted ready to get some rest.



Beijing subway entrance escalator.



Beijing bullet train platform.



Shasta on the way to Wuhan.



Eric welcoming us to Wuhan and leading us to the van.



Welcoming party group photo in front of Silk Road building.

6-27-2017

Tuesday morning is cool and breezy; the sky is a mix of clouds and sun. During the day it is hot and humid. Today we will begin our Culture and Language class with Ms. Angela at 9 AM. We begin with the four basic tones that comprise the Chinese language. A fulfilling class was met with a chicken lunch at a nearby fried chicken fast food style restaurant with classmates, being a bit weary of any food poisoning mishaps from last years' concerns.

The second half of the class was about Chinese paper cutting - characters comprised of spring, double happiness, and pandas. Having enough energy, some classmates went out to play ping pong with local master's students during the night!



Paper cutting for Chinese culture class.



Colton Morrow playing a friendly game of ping pong with CUG students.

6-28-17

Wednesday's class was about Chinese basic words like "hello", and some few simple phrases. Students began feeling more confident in their ability to speak publicly and some even tried these phrases on Wuhan locals. During the break between classes, students are allowed whatever they please so chores were in order as well as some much needed rest. Touring the CUG museum followed suit – led by volunteer, Eric and one museum tour guide. Unfortunately, the air conditioning was not in proper order that day so the museum tour felt more humid than usual. Nonetheless, students were fascinated by the many rocks and minerals that was on display at the museum.



Chinese language class with Mrs. Li Yue.



Visiting the CUG museum, image of crinoid fossils.

6-29-17

Thursday language class included common greetings and introductions with our first set of numbers up to 6. The group started going to the west campus to eat lunch since the volunteers spoke so fondly of it. The canteen there appeared to be brighter, larger and had more options. The afternoon class was about Tibetan dancing and we practiced a few movements with the teacher. It was more strenuous than we may have imagined and with hours of dancing under our belts we had worked up a bug apatite. Since we were at the north campus we ate at their canteen and it was just as good as the west campus. This concluded our Thursday evening.



Colton Morrow focusing on his pose during traditional dancing class.



Traditional Chinese dancing class with Mrs. Julie



End of class group photo.

6-30-2017

Friday language class reviewed our first few days covering tones, the numbers, some greetings and introduced more new phrases. We also went into ordering foods from the local markets and learned a few of the colors. Our teacher for the day was very thorough and made sure we followed along swiftly. That afternoon we went to the gym and gave the climbing wall a try. It was much harder than i could have imagined and required balance and a good grip. We then joined the local patrons for some badminton taking turns against an elderly fellow who made quick work of each new-comer. We made our way to the basketball court where we played 4 vs 4. It was a great day that ended with us trying out a new canteen at the west campus.



Group photo in the Wuhan CUG west campus gym.



Vasilios Tsibanos making a pass to a team mate.



Colton Morrow making his way to the top of the rock wall.



Eleanor Dietz showing her cougar pride.

7-1-2017

Saturday morning language class was with Mrs. Jingjing. We again reviewed or previous days and practiced ordering meals. We learned about breakfast foods like niunai (milk) and lunch foods along with the words that accompanied those times of days. The evening class was an introduction to taichi with Mrs. Sunny. We practiced the first few movements and learned how tai chi was used in small rural villages for self-defense against the government. For dinner, a few of us went to the mall and found Pizza Hut! A few of us were craving some American food and the cheesy pizza crust hit the spot.



A great tasting supreme pizza from Wuhan Pizza Hut.



Tai Chi class with Mrs. Sunny.



Remembering to push through the ears.