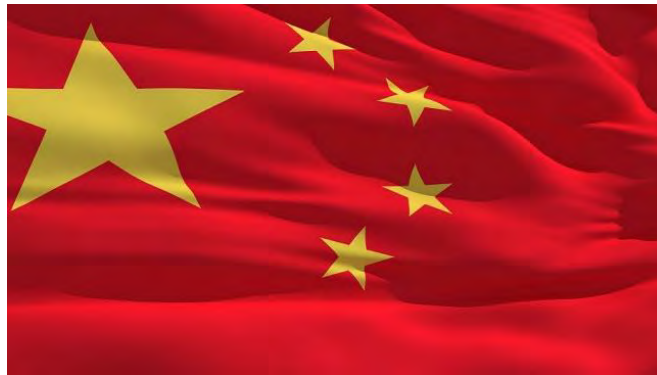




About your Program: China



"There comes a point in a person's life when you start asking yourself: what difference am I making in this world? I decided to put my time into something worthwhile."

-Gayle Harrod

have fun. help people.

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Important! You MUST apply for a VISA to visit China. Please see page 9 and follow instructions carefully!

China Beijing Experience

Introduction to China

located in East Asia, is the world's most populous country with a population of over 1.35 billion. China has a fascinating history of empires and communism intertwined with splendor and poverty. Mao Zedong came onto the scene in 1930, and the People's Republic of China was officially established in 1949. His "Great Leap Forward" was an unsuccessful attempt at jumpstarting the economy to catch up with developing nations, and was followed by the Cultural Revolution (1966-1970). During this time, intellectuals were murdered, ancient traditions abolished, and universities were closed in an attempt to strengthen Chairman Mao's stronghold on the country, and distract from other disasters in the country. Decades later, general displeasure for the communist party, soaring inflation, and corruption led to widespread social unrest as exemplified by the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. Hong Kong's return to China in 1997 marked the "One party, two systems" plan and kicked economic development into high gear. In many of the larger coastal cities, what you may think of as capitalism is flourishing at a mighty clip. Outside of these areas, rural China is governed by more traditional communist structure. China still struggles with widespread rural poverty, environmental issues, the Taiwan disagreement, and human rights violations. Particularly in Special Zone Areas, the standard of living is skyrocketing, while technology soars, and world power accumulates amidst China's remaining problems. With all of the political and economic changes China has undergone in the last decades, it is bursting onto the international scene in an unprecedented scale. As the population soars over a billion people, this formidable giant is a more interesting destination now more than ever.

China,



Challenges in China

China has always been a highly populated country but in the 1960's the government encouraged the citizens to have many offspring as a way of spreading Chinese culture and influence all over the world. In many ways this was successful as China has now become a superpower, but the overpopulation has left the country in a state of crisis with valuable resources being rapidly depleted. In the 1980's the government instituted a one child policy which has created challenges in a culture that usually prefers male offspring over female. In the bigger cities this attitude is changing but the long term impacts are starting to reveal themselves in there being a higher percentage of men in the country. This has led to all manner of social conflicts that have yet to be resolved.

In the countryside the government has less regulation. For example, if you are a farmer you are allowed to have more than one child, although many children in rural areas do not receive the proper registration or documentation necessary for citizenship. These children are not allowed to receive education or any kinds of health benefits. They usually end up going to the bigger cities in search of any kind of work they can find. Quite often, they fall into organized crime and other social ills. This creates an ever increasing 'wealth gap' between the rich and the poor as China's economy continues to grow at an unprecedented rate.



Despite the Chinese government's investment in universal education, its Hukou policy compels migrant families to pay comparatively exorbitant fees to take advantage of China's public services such as education. When paying for education gets weighed against going hungry, the choice for these unskilled laborers who are earning less than the minimum wage is easy. This situation has created a new population of uneducated Chinese citizens, and crime, drug use, and prostitution are simultaneously growing at alarming rates. The number of undocumented migrant workers is estimated to be over 150 million.

Community

Our volunteer program is based on the outskirts of Beijing. Here, volunteers will see the stark contrast between China's ancient traditions and rush to modernization, between soaring consumerism and shocking poverty. Modern-day Beijing is a huge and busy city. Internet and cell phones are the norm, and tourists are common at all of the historical sites. Growth of this rate and magnitude bring the usual pains, and Beijing has received hundreds of millions of national migrants, or people who move into the city from the countryside in search of work. The government requires formal permission when moving from your birth town in order to continue receiving basic human services such as healthcare and education. This process is extremely difficult (usually impossible), so the majority of the migrant population is without social services. Migrant children have been hit especially hard, as they are left to fend for themselves while their parents are working, with no free government schooling or healthcare provided. The school where we work is the only non-governmental, non-profit middle schools for migrant children in this area of Beijing. They offer free education to adolescents and are supported entirely by donations. Dr. Hong Zheng founded the in August 2005. Though Zheng has two Masters Degrees and a PhD in Micropaleontology, her desire to make a difference in the lives of these children is the driving force of her



life's work. When it opened, 60 students lined up outside the school gates as teachers eagerly awaited their arrival. Within days everyone's enthusiasm was tested as the difficulties inherent to working with children who had never sat in a classroom became apparent. Regular confrontations with the students caused several teachers to quit. The traditional Chinese classroom was a chokehold on the freedom of children who were used to a carefree life on the streets. Providing instruction in unconventional ways proved to be a successful way to reach these children. Zheng developed interactive workshops, dance, music, and art activities that made learning creative and fun for the new students. Math and verbal skills were taught in a

Business Entrepreneurship workshop. "We learn how to earn money that will help us support our families," said eighth grade student Lu Ling. Even English classes taught through group reading projects, songs and recitation enabled students to readily advance from the ABC's to talking about pot-bellied pigs and favorite birthday presents in a mere nine months. "Developing these kinds of skills is far more useful to these children because they see the value in this," said one teacher. Despite the perceptible progress, Zheng warns that major challenges still exist. The Hukou system brings new children to the school almost every week. Enrolling mid-way through the year makes it difficult for children to keep up with their studies. Zheng estimates that to educate all of Beijing's migrant children, several hundred more low-tuition schools are needed. Donor funding is also necessary to expand facilities and pay for better-trained teachers.

For the moment the passion and willpower of Zheng, as well as volunteers from Globe Aware and other support continue to keep the school running. They are committed to the forgotten children of China and will stretch every resource to pave a way for them to have a better future. The school now has over 1,000 students.

Projects & Expectations

Globe Aware volunteers will work in this non-profit middle school for migrant children. The school needs major assistance in improving the building's infrastructure and environment, which used to be a factory. Projects and priorities change by the week. Volunteers may help with projects such as painting classrooms, building furniture, and improving bathroom facilities. Volunteers will also teach English pronunciation and other essential skills. The school has an endless list of needs. Projects will be chosen based upon prior group progress and based on immediate priorities. We understand your desire to know as much as possible about the project you will be working on. It is important to understand that projects are often not established until about two weeks prior, as they are based on factors such as which projects were finished by the last group, what supplies are available, how many volunteers are in your group, weather conditions, the changing priorities of the community, etc, and can even be modified throughout the week. It is best to approach the experience with an open attitude, knowing you'll be working approximately 6.5 hours a day during the week days, usually concentrated earlier in the day. You will also have a couple of hours of unstructured free time every day. There are typically three to four planned but optional leisure and cultural activities throughout the week. Communicate with your coordinator. If you find the work level is too much, or not enough, he or she will do as much as possible to work with you.

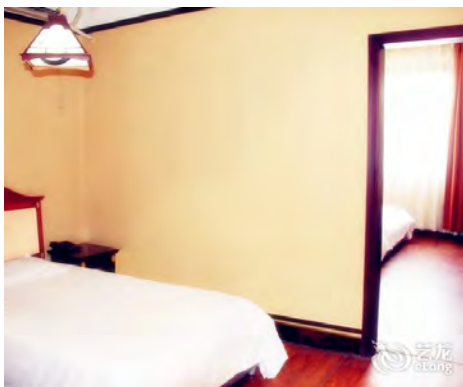
Leisure Activities

There is a wealth of things to see and do in Beijing. Volunteers will have the opportunity to visit sites such as the Forbidden City, the Great Wall of China (at Badaling), Tiananmen Square, the Temple of Heaven, and possibly the Summer Imperial Palace during free time or as an organized excursion during the week. You may want to leave extra time at the end of your trip to visit other sites that weren't part of your volunteer week. You are not likely to have time, for example, to visit Mao's Tomb.



Accommodations

Volunteers will stay at a modest hotel located minutes away from the project site in the 5th Ring district of Beijing. Private bathrooms with modern amenities are available in each room. Hotel: Xingguang Media Hotel, 2 Beixing Road (Beixing Lu), Xihongmen Town, Beijing, BJ, China
北京星光梅地亚酒店



Additional Packing Information

Please realize that modesty is important in China. You will need to have your shoulders covered (no tank tops) and legs covered at least to your knees. This is most important when we are working at the school. You may want to bring at least one outfit that can get dirty or ruined with paint, mud, etc. The weather in Beijing can be extreme, so check online prior to departure for a better idea of what to expect.

Donations

Many volunteers ask what else they can bring as donations. You have already given generously with your time and program contribution, so please do not feel obligated to give more than you already have. The directors of the school have requested more school supplies such as books, pens, pencils, stationary, backpacks, and educational software. Additionally, living goods such as water bottles and sporting goods such as soccer balls, basketballs, jump ropes, jacks, sidewalk chalk, etc would be greatly appreciated.

Electricity

Voltage in China is 220V, 50 cycle; and most a/c adaptor cables are equipped to handle from 11-220 to deal with this. Read the label near the plug on your device to make sure it handles this voltage. However you may find any of these four prong types, so it is best to bring an adaptor.



Two flat prongs with no grounding blade, like in **North America**.



Australian style.



British style.

Food

Chinese food is extremely varied throughout the vast regions of the country. Beijing is part of the northern style of cooking which is often described as more spicy. Meals will be taken with the group at local eateries. Additionally, you may consider packing additional snacks that remind you of home, such as peanut butter. Also, since China is a tea culture, coffee is typically Nescafe.



Weather

Beijing has a temperate climate with extreme seasonal variations. We suggest that you consult an online weather source immediately prior to departure for the best idea of what to expect. Depending upon the time of year smog can also be an issue.

Money

Chinese currency is called the yuan. You will be able to withdraw yuan at ATMs throughout Beijing; you may also change foreign notes at major banks by showing your passport. Counterfeit notes are a problem in China, so make sure to use reputable sources, and check your money. Also, foreign currency with tears, folds, or stains may not be accepted, so consider this when bringing money to change. Note there is NO ATM at the school or hotel where we are based.

****Also, a note for all program locations—it is a good idea that you call your bank and credit card companies before you depart and notify them of the country you will be traveling to and the dates of your travel so that they will allow charges and/or withdrawals internationally.****



Phone & Internet

Internet cafes are easily accessible and many locations have Wi-Fi, and you may be able to make inexpensive overseas calls at an internet café. Please do not expect to spend a lot of time on the phone or internet.

Health

Please refer to the United States Centers for Disease Control website for more information about health issues and recommended vaccines for China: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/destinationChina.aspx>

Safety & Security

Do not carry large sums of money, passports, or credit cards in crowded areas; use common sense to deter pick-pockets. Please review the State Department's website for more information about safety and security while traveling in China: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1089.html

Your Host: Kristy



Hi, I'm Kristy! I've been working in Dandelion School for seven years. Human resources and public relations are my main jobs. My hometown is in the northeast of China, Heilongjiang province. I came to Beijing after college to pursue my passion serving underprivileged kids in China. My husband also works at the school. I am excited to welcome you to my country!

Arrival and Meet-Up

Volunteers should plan to arrive in Beijing before 11 a.m. the Saturday the program starts. Your coordinator will meet you at The Friendship Hotel in Beijing and transport you to the location of your accommodations.

Additional Notes

1. Please wash your dish at school with soap provided
2. Please respect the privacy of the school children. We ask that any photos you take of the children be used respectfully
3. There is internet access at the school in volunteer office and at the hotel.
4. For any laundry needs, you are welcome to wash your own clothes either in the plastic tubs in your bathrooms, or in the washroom at school, or you can pay the hotel staff to wash your laundry for you, your coordinator can help in communicating this.
5. The coordinator will buy traffic cards for you to use. Please return to coordinator when you leave.

Entering and Leaving China

Visa Requirements

A visa is required to enter China. You must arrange this before departing for China. Please visit the Chinese Embassy website at for more information about the visa application process. Currently, Chinese visas are only available in person at an embassy or consulate; or via a private visa company that applies in person on your behalf.

We are recommending that all volunteers use this private service to process your visa:

Please contact Allied Passport & Visa at www.alliedpassport.com. This will cost an additional \$45, but all visas will be processed consistently through the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C.

- Please note that once you obtain your visa, it is valid for 90 days, thus it is very important to time your application accordingly. The regular visa processing time is 10 days, though you may expedite it for an additional fee.
- Currently, visas for American and Canadian citizens are only available in person at a Chinese consulate. You must apply to the consulate of your home jurisdiction. Consulates are located in Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary for Canadian citizens; for U.S. citizens in Washington D.C, Houston, San Francisco, New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles. For a List of Chinese Consulates in the United States:
<http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/visas/hrsq/>

You are applying for a **Tourist Visa (L Visa)**. With your application, you will need to submit:

- 1) Passport: Your valid passport must have at least six (6) months of remaining validity with at least one blank visa page in it.
- 2) Application form: One completed Visa Application Form (Q1) <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/visas/hrsq/>
- 3) Photo: one passport photo (black & white or color is acceptable) glued or stapled on the application form.
- 4) You must also provide round trip air tickets and confirmation of a hotel reservation which we can provide for you. The name of the hotel where you will be staying is the Hong Chang Hotel.
- 5) The cost is \$150 for U.S. citizens, and may be paid via money order, cashier's check, Visa, or MasterCard. Canadian citizens must pay \$50 CAN by cash, money order, or certified cheque.

Please carefully review the Chinese Embassy websites:

<http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/visas/>

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program is a free service provided by the U.S. government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency, keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements, and help your friends and family get in touch with you in case of an emergency. The link to STEP is <https://travelregistration.state.gov/librs/ui/>

Global Entry

Global Entry is a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) program that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers upon arrival in the United States. Due to sequestration, long lines have been reported at customs and immigration when coming back into the United States. Global Entry approved travelers are able to use the automated kiosks at immigration to reduce wait times considerably. For more information, visit <http://www.globalentry.gov/>

In Case of Emergency

In case you or your family members need to contact Globe Aware associates in China during your program, we are providing you this contact information to be used only in case of emergency.

Kristy (Coordinator) - +86 1 352 077 5977

Hong Zeng (Director of School) - 13701377686

This is the name of the school where we work, should you ever need to show a taxi driver:

北京南五环里传河路蒲公英中学 (Beijing South 5th-ring-road Li Chuan He Lu Dandelion School)

Beijing dandelion school

北京市大兴区蒲公英中学

联系方式

电话61288964、61286686

地址：北京市大兴区西红门镇寿宝庄团河路22号

邮编100076

开车：

从京开高速上南五环，向东（京津唐方向）行驶；在下一个出口“黄亦路—西红门金星”出来；在桥洞下左转，向东行驶约300米，遇第一个红绿灯，左转（南苑方向），向北行驶；大约一公里处，学校在右手，路东。）

公共交通：

学校门前有6条线路的公交车，在寿宝庄站下车即到：

369（黄村火车站-三营门）

954（马甸西站-大兴火车站）

485（团河北村-北京南站）

676（长春街路口西-团河北村）

957（北京站-大兴一职）

There are many aspects of Chinese culture that most travelers will not be familiar with. We REALLY love to encourage our volunteers to get to know about the culture they volunteer in beyond the way a tourist would. Below are a few topics we encourage you to ask about not only from your coordinator but any other locals you chat with. We encourage you to print and bring with you. You might get different responses from who you ask!

Sunday:

Marrying the Dead

In China it is believed that all who are to be happy are to be married. While we may joke that our marriages will be the death of us, this is actually true in China. If someone died a bachelor or bachelorette, it is Chinese custom to provide a wife or husband for the afterlife.

This may come in the form of a living or similarly deceased partner. If somebody is paired with a living partner, the living partner will remain celibate for life. If they are paired with an equally deceased partner, they will be buried together even if they never met during their lives.

Monday:

Chinese Boy eggs

Virgin boy eggs are a traditional dish of Dongyang, Zhejiang, China in which eggs are boiled in the urine of young boys who were presumably peasants, preferably under the age of ten. Named "tong zi dan", the dish translates literally to "boy egg" and is a springtime tradition of the city where the urine is collected from prepubescent peasant boys. The eggs have been listed by officials in China as a part of the region's "local intangible cultural heritage"

Basins and buckets of boys' urine are collected from primary school toilets. It is the key ingredient in "virgin boy

eggs”, a local tradition of soaking and cooking eggs in the urine of young boys.

Tuesday:

Yelling

It often seems as if Chinese are yelling at one another, but this is not the case – they just speak REALLY loudly!

This again has to do with the lack of personal space and the mass amount of noise, construction, cars, etc.

Some also contribute to the fact that Mandarin and Cantonese (Chinese is not a language in case you didn't know) are complex tonal languages and the loudness is to ensure that they are fully understood.

Wednesday:

Body Doubles

Although authorities have vigorously denied that this has gone on, often the “body doubles” don't even closely resemble the accused, and facial recognition software has proven it. The practice of hiring someone else to stand trial and serve your prison sentence is so popular among China's elite that there is a term for it: “ding zui” which means “substitute criminal”

Thursday:

Spitting

Spitting is as common as breathing in China, along with a laundry list of other bodily functions that you never even knew existed, so you'd better get used to it. If their body wants to release something, they believe (and maybe rightly so) that it should be released right then and there (weddings, birthdays, funerals, it doesn't matter.

Friday:

Lines and Lack of Personal Space

Personal space is a luxury that doesn't exist in China...

You should not take it personally, nor be aggressive about it. Just embrace it and go with the flow. If you are trying to get on to a bus or train, expect that you will be pushed and bumped around, just use your size to your advantage

Saturday:

You may be asked for your photo

If you've never experienced what it feels like to be an A-List celebrity, you might just get your chance in China. It is not uncommon for Chinese groups and families to ask to pose for photos with Western tourists, particular younger children with light hair. This is most likely to happen when visiting famous sites as there are often many Chinese there visiting from more far flung parts of China.

Other topics:

Table manners

Something that you have to avoid in most countries in the world is totally acceptable in China. This fact about China is just like in [Vietnam](#), spitting, yawning, grunting and burping are normal behavior when you eat in China.

Laughing

- Laughing does not always indicate humor. It is sometimes a response to an uncomfortable situation.

No gifts house guests

While many countries encourage hospitality by bringing food to another's home, it is an insult to do this in China because it implies that you think the host will be unable to provide for their guests.