



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD CHINA

Contents:

Page 2	Editor's Note
Page 3 – 7	Volunteer Stories
Page 8	Feature: Voices of the World Club
Page 9	Photo Page
Page 10	Holidays and Social Calendar
Page 11	Practical Information

Editor's Note

Nihao from Project's Abroad China!

Winter seems to have arrived in Shanghai with the air now chilly, but here at Projects Abroad China we promise to give you a very warm welcome! If you will be arriving soon be sure to pack up on your winter gear including sweaters, jackets and maybe even some boots!

In this November edition of our newsletter we review our recent Law Workshop, in which volunteers learnt about the development of the Chinese Legal system and got a chance to share their experiences on their placements working at different law firms in Shanghai. We are going to share three wonderful volunteer stories in this issue: Laetitia Delmarche from France recounts her experience at Journalism Project in Shanghai, and Susanna Ackroyd from Australia tells us about her teaching placement at Dynamic Kids, Shanghai, last but not least, we are going to share Iwona Sobon's story, who recounts her experience at Business Project in Chengdu.

We hope their experiences will provide you with a bit of the variety of projects available here in China, and we sincerely hope these stories will encourage people to join us here too! Meanwhile, if you are interested in what's going on here, you can always check out our Facebook Group, '**Projects Abroad Shanghai, China - The Official Group**' or '**Projects Abroad Chengdu, China - Official Group**' for more photos or stories; or email any queries and comments to china@projects-abroad.org

If you would love to share your story and experience in China, you can also get in touch with me at suzieli@projects-abroad.org

Hope you have a great month and enjoy your time in China!

Suzie Li
Information Manager

Volunteer Story

An Australian girl Susanna Ackroyd uses her gap year to make her marker on China Teaching Project



Spending the holiday with family and friends, or preparing for university are all great ways to spend a gap year. However, for a select few like Susanna Ackroyd, a gap year is a time of self-discovery, meaningful work and adventure.

Susanna Ackroyd is interested in Chinese cultural and would like to study Chinese in the University. Therefore, she decided to spend her gap year with Projects Abroad which she consider could offer the most support during her time of China, and participated a placement where the end result would be both meaningful while also enjoy her surroundings, so she signed up for a Teaching Project to work with kids in a language training center in Shanghai.

The language training center Susanna worked, offering English lessons to 3 to 17-year-old students. They provide students with a fun, creative and relaxing learning experience. The teachers are

professional, creative and outgoing people who enjoy teaching English and having fun with the children. “My first month here was actually summer holiday of Chinese public school. Thus, as a language training center, my placement provided a summer camp for children. I spent a lot of time in my placement during the first month. I was teaching the children English and playing game and interact with them.” Susanna said “The ages of children are between 5-6 and 10-11. After the summer camp finished, I started to working day care with a group children around 3 years old. Besides, in the afternoon I provide English training for other staff member in the language center.”

Susanna’s typical working day start at 7.00 am, and spend one and half hours on the public transportation. “Because my placement is fairly far away from my apartment, but it is an interesting experience.” Susanna said “Then I



started my first class of my day, I looking after the children, playing games and teach them some English words. And the most of my day was provide English training for other local staff members. Their English is good, but English is still their second language. And they really appreciate me as a native speaker to help them improve their pronunciation.”

Apparently, Susanna’s in Shanghai experienced much more than just her placement, with regards to her free time, she spent the most of her time with other volunteers. “I was little bit of nervous at the begging, because I only know a bit of Chinese, and I barely know anyone in Shanghai. So I was terrified if I am just going to spend my time here alone.” Susanna said “But I was really lucky, I was in the city only one and half hour before I went to my first social event with other Projects Abroad volunteers. And be honestly, I have never feel more welcome in any other kind of community, it just incredible close!” Susanna smiled.

As the advice from Susanna Ackroyd to other future volunteers who considering join the same project, she said, “be prepared for the unpredictable, prepared your lesson before ahead is really nice and useful, and also make thing much easier. But you also working with children, and they are unpredictable, they might be upset, so, you need to know how to calm them down and not just be a teacher, but also sort of be a friend.”

Iwona Sobon - Poland, Business Project



Being a qualified accounting technician with a few years of experience I have decided it was time for me to develop some more new skills within finance, abroad. China seems to be the best choice as one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Originally I wanted to go to Shanghai but Projects Abroad found me a placement in Chengdu in Amicorp – a rapidly expanding, international financial company.

The first day was very exciting; the office is based on the 22nd floor of one of the main trade buildings in the city centre of Chengdu, walking distance from famous



Tianfu Square. My supervisor introduced me to little group of my new colleges and I started work straight away. On a daily basis I was an assistant to the director of Amicorp, conducting market research on international tax laws and legislations, liaising with other branches and reporting to him directly. I also had couple of projects within my professional field as creating final accounts for clients and analysing their cash book. Some days were busier than others and many times I had to stay till late to help with last minute jobs but I had few days where there was not much to do as well. I wish I would do more work relating to my actual profession but overall I'm glad with the new experience I gained there.

Chengdu itself is a fascinating city and I'm happy that I was placed there. At the start I was afraid of its famous spicy food as it wasn't my favourite back then but after a few weeks I slowly got used to the flavours and it began to be quite addictive. Chengdu it is a very busy place with thousands of cars, buses and scooters pouring through the streets at rush hour, it had a certain buzz about it. The atmosphere felt different and more friendly than other parts of China.

The people were much more relaxed and welcoming and you would find groups of men and women sitting outside their houses in the evenings eating, chatting and playing games. There is also an array of cultural, entertainment and social opportunities available around the city.

During my stay in Chengdu there were only a few other volunteers, we always tried to arrange something to do or see around the city and as we had two national holidays we travelled a bit around Sichuan; just a warning – do not go to Jiuzhaigao Park during national holiday in the first week of October – it was a nightmare ;-). It is a very beautiful place but there were just too many people.

China itself was a culture shock but after a while I really liked it! I met great people, had the hottest but delicious food, seen some amazing landscapes and will definitely never forget my experience in there.

Volunteer Story

Laetitia Delmarche - France, Journalism Project



Après l'Inde, me voici arrivée en Chine pour le même projet : journalisme. Il était clair pour moi que ça serait différent et en effet, le changement a été radical.

Pour tous les projets, le premier jour est une introduction au lieu de stage. On arrive avec la directrice de PA Shanghai et on rencontre notre superviseur. La rencontre fut courte et je n'ai pas été présentée aux autres membres du staff. Pas grave, je me dis que le lendemain je verrai tout le monde. Et bien, personne ne s'est présenté, j'ai connus le nom de mes collègues grâce à leurs adresse e-mail.

Le matin tout le monde arrive mais personne ne dit bonjour, ils commencent directement à travailler. Je dois bien avouer que ce n'était pas l'ambiance la plus facile pour créer des relations. Pour ce qui est du travail, il y a une chose qui m'a paru bizarre : on ne peut pas commencer à écrire sans avoir d'abord les photos. En fait ils ont besoin de photos officielles. Par exemple j'ai été à une exposition mais je n'ai jamais rien écrit dessus pour la simple et bonne raison que les photos officielles ne sont jamais arrivées. On travaille tant que journaliste, mais j'ai passé le plus clair de mon temps à la rédaction. Cependant, j'ai eu aussi des expos ou des événements à

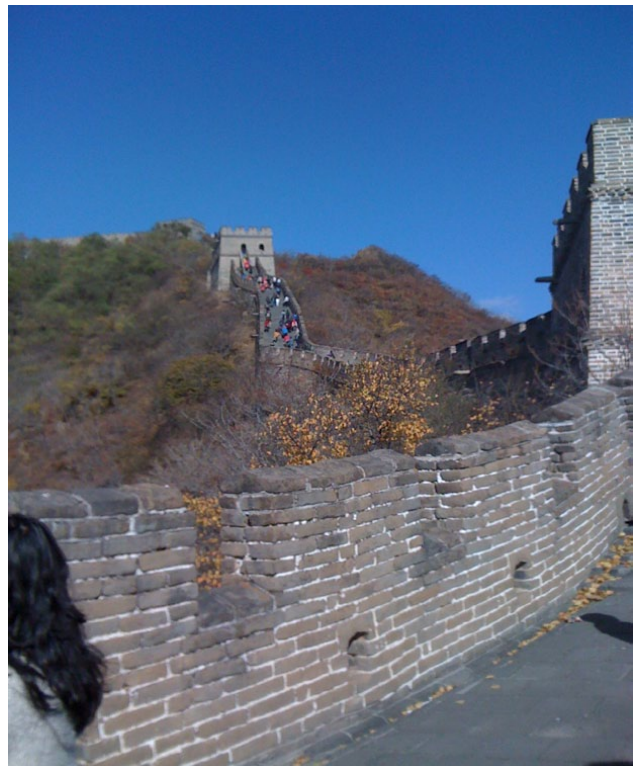


couvrir le soir ou le week-end.

Pour ce qui est de Shanghai, c'est une ville intéressante et multiculturelle. Après avoir été en Inde, c'était comme un retour à la civilisation. Ici vous pouvez trouver un peu de tout. Toute les sortes de nourritures que vous voulez, toutes les marques, ... Mais franchement je vous conseil de manger un maximum la nourriture locale. Déjà c'est beaucoup moins cher, ce qui est un bon point, et puis on ne va pas en Chine pour manger au Mc Do et Pizza Hutt tous les jours. Essayez de visiter un maximum, et dès votre premier week-end parce qu'il y a tellement de choses à voir. Pour un de mes week-end, je me suis rendus à Pékin. Un conseil, allez-y, c'est bête d'être en Chine et de ne pas y aller. Avec le train de nuit ca prend peut-être 12h, mais comme vous dormez vous ne le sentez



pas, ca passe vraiment très vite et vous ne perdez pas de temps pour visiter. Si vous savez, allez aussi visiter un des village près de Shanghai. Je n'ai pas eu le temps d'y aller et c'est mon seul regret.



Feature

Voices of the World - Second Workshop



Voices of the World is an online global initiative developed by Projects Abroad, the leading global organiser of overseas volunteer work placements. It is a platform (in the shape of an online newspaper and magazine) for young people all over the world to freely express their opinions, desires and aspirations while exploring the vast and fascinating domain of journalism. Through the website, young aspiring journalists from Mongolia or Romania, South Africa, England, France or Senegal (to name only a very few) will have the opportunity to meet and exchange views with one another and in this way to come to understand the world and to express their views on it better and with more empathy. ---from What is Voices of the World?



Second workshop of voices of the world with the interview as topic. There were five participants this time. Before starting, the new girls introduced themselves a little bit.

All the participants are studying journalism, so they knew already a lot of things about the interview, and they already trained this skill, but with friends.

First we just talked about what the girls already knew. After I gave them my experiences.

We talked a lot about the recorder : is it good to use a recorder or not. We were all agree that recording is good if we want to put good quotes or if we want to be sure of something, but it is not something we have to use systematically when we are writing. The best is using the memory.

The girls were very curious and asked me a lot of things. They were really interested in this topic.

After the discussion, it is time to practice a little bit. I asked the girls to prepare some questions. The idea was they have to write an article about Belgium and fortunately, there is a Belgian girl in their office. The practice time was quite nice and some questions were very interesting.

It was a very good workshop and the girls are really participative. For a beginning, it is encouraging, and I think Voices of the World China has a good and beautiful future.

—————Laetitia Delmarche

Corrections:

The article in November issue "Voices of the World China: first experience with a volunteer" was written by Laetitia Delmarche instead of Juliette Poissonnier.

Social Calendar

Pratical Information

Destination Staff Contact Information:

Kay Xu Country Director
kayxu@projects-abroad.org

Ling Zhao Regional Manager – (Chengdu)
lingzhao@projects-abroad.org

Vicky Fang Operation Manager
vickyfang@projects-abroad.org

Suzie Li Information Manager
suzieli@projects-abroad.org

Violet He Volunteer Coordinator
violethe@projects-abroad.org

Michael Meng Volunteer Coordinator
michaelmeng@projects-abroad.org

Wendy Wei Administrator

Lily Zhang Accommodation Supervisor

Projects Abroad | China
22H Liang Feng Mansion
8 Dong Fang Road
Shanghai 200120
P. R. China

Tel: +86 (0) 21 68885082
Fax: +86 (0) 21 58876796
www.projects-abroad.net