

Building a Global Community: Camp Adventure in the People's Republic of China 建立一個全球性的社區：在中國舉辦求生訓練營

Dr. Christopher R. Edginon, *Professor and Director*

John S.C. Li, *Program Director (Camp Adventure Youth Services)*

School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, University of Northern Iowa

艾丁頓博士 (教授 / 學院主任)

李約翰 (求生訓練營課程主任)

美國北愛奧華大學健康、體育及休閒服務學院

摘要

作者透過本文介紹由美國北愛奧華大學與中國廣州體育學院合辦的青少年求生訓練營。這訓練營於1996年營營暑假在廣州市舉行。對象為來自當地三間小學，年齡6至12歲的學生。訓練營的舉辦目的營在於建立所大學未來的合作和交流的橋樑，並且籍著妥善而有系統的訓練課程和活動，培養青少年合作，溝通，和領導等才能。訓練營共有六節，每節維持五天，分別在廣州市三所小學輪流進行。訓練計劃內容包括遊戲；運動；唱歌；語言訓練；藝術及手工藝；戶外和水上活動等。

Introduction

Building a global community to encourage peace and understanding between the peoples of nations requires a commitment to promoting and fostering cooperative exchange programs. During the summer of 1996, the University of Northern Iowa's Camp Adventure Youth Services program and Guangzhou Institute of Physical Education successfully operated a unique summer program directed towards children and youth ages 6-12 years. The program was established to operate in cooperation with three schools -- Li Wan Overseas Chinese Primary School, Zhong Shing Primary School, and Zhen Lei Zhong Primary School -- in Guangzhou and served weekly 60 children and youth.

The cooperative summer program grew out of an opportunity for exchange initially facilitated between the University of Northern Iowa and the Guangzhou Institute of Physical Education by Dr. Frank Fu at Hong Kong Baptist University. Both institutions were interested in establishing relationships in each other's country, and Dr. Fu provided the initial communication link to establish an exchange leading to the development of cooperative programs. Following meetings in People's Republic of

China in January 1996 and subsequently in the United States in February in the same year, several strategies were proposed "...to link the ... [two]... institutions as well as to promote a greater understanding between professionals in health, physical education and recreation in People's Republic of China and the United States of America."

One of the cooperative exchange program proposed was the operation of a service learning program focus on providing day camp programs for children and youth operated by the University of Northern Iowa's Camp Adventure Youth Services. The Camp Adventure Youth Services programs operate as a demonstration project and learning laboratory for students preparing for a professional career in the areas of youth, human and leisure services. The program focuses primarily on crafting youth development programs and services for school-age children and youth in non-school settings. Camp Adventure emphasizes both classroom and experiential learning through a series of crafted activities that promote leadership, team building, diversity, school-age curriculum development, and the principles of youth development. A multi-faceted program, Camp Adventure Youth Services programs provides opportunities for encouraging and promoting global awareness and cultural sensitivity.

The Camp Adventure Youth Services program was founded in 1985 and has successfully been implemented throughout the world. At its inception 12 years ago, Camp Adventure Youth Services operated three sites in Korea. In 1996, it operated at 118 program sites in 13 countries, including Korea, Japan, England, Belgium, Germany, Turkey, the Netherlands, Kuwait, People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Russia, and the United States. The program has also successfully operated in Italy, Spain, Panama, Puerto Rico, Guam, and

Bermuda. School-age services offered by Camp Adventure Youth Services have expanded from summer day camp programs to include services in the areas of outdoor pursuits, sports, computers, teens, learn-to-swim, competitive swim, dance, theater and child care. Camp Adventure Youth Services served more than 8,000 children a day in 1996, or 560,000 children annually as measured by daily participation.

Camp Adventure in Guangzhou

An air of excitement, anticipation and goodwill surrounded the "grand opening ceremony" of the Guangzhou-based Camp Adventure program in the summer of 1996. High officials from the University of Northern Iowa, the Guangzhou Institute of Physical Education and the government of Guangzhou, including the vice-mayor attend the opening session. All expressed their hope and excitement for the opportunity to build a positive exchange program. As one official noted in his opening remarks "... We know that today's children are tomorrow's leaders and we must invest wisely in their future if we are to have a world of peace, harmony, and friendship."

bond of friendship, cooperation and trust that provided a foundation of excellence greatly contributing to the success of the program.

In implementing the program in Guangzhou at the three primary schools, the basic Camp Adventure Youth Services youth development program design was employed. The basic curriculum strategy involved using a theme-based integrated program format. Three (3) program themes were selected as a way of organizing the content of the program -- "Blaze and Glory of the American Story," "Olympic Dreams and All-Stars Team," and "Power-Packed Animated Adventure." The camp programs were organized into six (6) sessions rotated between the three primary schools. Each session was five days in length operating Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The overall program design of the Camp Adventure programs was also focused on assisting the participants in gaining awareness of the American culture, especially those experiences related to day camping in United States. Like all other international exchange programs, there was great flow of ideas and concepts from one culture to



A key factor in implementing the exchange program was the integration of staff members from the University of Northern Iowa, the Guangzhou Institute of Physical Education, and the Guangzhou Normal School of Foreign Languages. Four (4) counselors from the United States, trained in the Camp Adventure youth development program design, were backed by three (3) individuals who serve as interpreters/counselors. An overall on-site coordinator assisted with logistical matters such as transportation, supplies and equipment, and program and event management. This staff was committed deeply to the Camp Adventure endeavor. They build a strong

the other -- the Chinese culture to the American culture and vice versa. Activities were varied including games, sports, music, singing, arts and crafts, new arts, creative dramatics, skits, clubs, aquatic-based programs, literary and language skills, trips and tours, story telling, and special events. A typical day found participants involved in an opening ceremony with songs, skits, cheers, and team-building activities. Daily the program featured two one-hour sessions where children in groups of 15 met with their individual counselor. Activities in these session including English language conversation, social bonding activities as well as planning and rehearsing for special

event. Each day participants also devoted one hour to team competition. The purpose of these sessions was to promote team spirit, cooperation, and skill enhancement.

Daily participants were provided an opportunity to participate in special interest "club-type" formatted activities. The club program format provided an opportunity for participants to choose an area of interest within which they could participate based on their specific needs and interest. There were usually three types of club formats available including: arts and crafts; singing; and sports. Aquatic-based activities were very popular among the children. Twice a week children participated in a wide variety of aquatic activities including swimming lessons, games, competitive swimming, waterpolo, and general play activities in the pool. Another feature of the program design was the use of a rotating activity format. Several activities such as parachute games, new games and initiatives and low organized games were established so that children could rotate in half hour blocks of time to a new activity. During the mid-part of the week a series of trips and tour were organized to unique areas such as Sha Pui Experimental Farm, Fu Shan Amusement Park and Ancestral Hall, Baiyun Mountain, Fu Rung Zhang Resort Area, Lotus Mountain in Zhung Shan, and the Guangzhou Zoo. Each day there was a lunch period, free time and a nap time. Afternoon naps are compulsory for children in school in the People's Republic of China.

The highlight of the program was the special performance of the children for their parents at the week's end. "Parents' Day" brought the week's activities to a close. Parents and family members were invited to attend the special ending presentation organized by the children. A cheerful and fun filled event, "Parents' Day," was punctuated by a program of songs, dance, stories, piano playing, recital of poems, performance of skits, and the use of Chinese instruments. The event was well received, creating a harmonious and positive relationship between the family members, staff, and children. At the conclusion of the event, each child received a Camp Adventure Superstar Certificate.

Global Learning and Awareness

The impact of the Camp Adventure Youth Services program in Guangzhou is best viewed through the eyes of the children and the counselors. An interpreter/counselor from the Guangzhou Normal School of Foreign Languages has written " . . . in that short

period of six weeks, we were delighted to see children to learn so many things so fast. Camp Adventure really opened their eyes to the outside world. We are glad that we have that in China and hope that it will go on and on." For this counselor it was also a growth experience, " . . . as translators, we learned a lot too, such as American culture and teaching methods new to China." From an American counselor, who identified the participants of the program, as the "Children of the Red Dragon" the experience was also transforming. She writes " . . . the children, taught me so much . . . life in the People's Republic of China is so different that it forces you to look at the world and your own life in a different way . . . the experience I have had will be carried with me throughout life."

For the children the experience was exhilarating and meaningful. At first the children viewed the counselors as authority figures, but by the end of the week the children became attached and involved with their counselors. "Little by little we bonded and become friends. By the end of the week, I would be tripping along in a clump of kids who all wanted to be attached to me in some way, shape or form. They were so excited to have us there. They were not alone in that emotion, for we were just as excited to be with them." The desire for enriched human contact and communication was great . . . "I remember how once during the first week, one of my boys told my translator, that she had to teach me Chinese so that I could speak with them. That made me feel even closer to him because he really wanted to talk with me, yet it made me realize the gap that lay between us that could not be filled in so short a time as two months."

The interaction between the counselors and children was significant and meaningful. As one counselor noted " . . . just as every experience and every person you meet can affect your life, so too can a child. A child can change the whole perspective of our lives and the world we live in, if we let him/her." The bond that was developed between the children and counselors transcended language and culture. The spirit of the program and the relationship between the children and counselors spoke to the essence of the most basic of human qualities. Friendship, trust, caring and the genuine desire for meaningful human contact clearly demonstrated that the Camp Adventure spirit effectively transcended cultural and linguistic barriers. In Camp Adventure the essence of the effort is focused on transforming an individual; of --creating magic moments for children that last a life time.

Concluding Comments

The partnership established between the University of Northern Iowa's Camp Adventure Youth Services program and the Guangzhou Institute of Physical Education effectively marks one of the first efforts of this type between organizations/institutions in United States and the People's Republic of China. To make the project successful, both parties collaborated effectively to facilitate its implementation. The University of Northern Iowa provided a team of highly skilled, professionally trained leaders and internationally tested youth development program design. The Guangzhou Institute of Physical Education handled all logistical factors including recruitment and registration of participants, provision of areas and facilities, transportation, recruitment and selection of interpreters,

and liaison with local officials as well as backup and advisory services.

Camp Adventure staff often draw inspiration from the words of Walt Disney. Disney once noted that "... if you can dream it, you can do it." The Camp Adventure Guangzhou-based counselors provided their own unique twist to this statement. They note that "... if you can dream it, at Camp Adventure we can do Guangzhou program. The counselors dreamed and did what they set out to do. The goal was to it." This positive affirmation was the hallmark of the Camp Adventure promote an environment of peace, harmony, friendship and global awareness and understanding. And as we say in Camp Adventure, we create programs of magic and delight, joy and discovery, friendship and fellowship, learning and sharing, and pride and achievement.

