



Mutual growth in the terraced classrooms

When teenagers from the metropolis encountered children from villages on mountains; and when textbook knowledge collided with local wisdom, this cross-country teaching volunteer journey provided students with life lessons far beyond the classroom. This Rural Revitalization and Volunteer Service Project at Qiangdongnan, Guizhou took place in Xiage Village, Zhaoxing Town, Liping County — a conservation area for the Dong ethnic culture. Focusing on three key themes — rural revitalization, intangible cultural heritage preservation, and educational equity — the program was carried out through a Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach.

YOU ZIQI (YOMI)

This teaching trip has given me so many reflections. It opened my eyes to the unevenness of this world. First, the environment in Guizhou — I really enjoyed being surrounded by mountains and feeling the mountain breeze. Then, the hardware conditions — whether it's living standards or educational resources, they can't really compare to what we have.

It also made me realize how narrow and ignorant my thinking was. Before coming here, I imagined the children would be innocent, pure, and longing for life beyond the mountains. But through our conversations, I found that my assumptions only revealed my ignorance. I once asked them, "Do you long for the outside world? Do you want to go out and see it?" But their answer was simply, "No."

What they care about is phones and games. That left me feeling both regretful and helpless. And when I heard

from Teacher Lu that most girls here get married and have children right after middle or high school, I felt deeply sorry and saddened for them.

That's also why I prepared a lesson called "Knowing the World." I hope that in this way they can see how vast and wonderful the world outside truly is. I don't want them to be trapped in such a small piece of land. Women have countless ways of living — they can shine brilliantly in all walks of life, not just serve as tools for childbirth.

I'm grateful this teaching experience let me witness the contrasts of the world and also gave me a chance, however small, to try to change something. I know that one week can hardly change much, but I still gave my best effort.

Visiting the homes of poor elders also made me more thankful for everything I have today. I'm grateful to my parents for the values they instilled in me, for teaching me empathy.

During the program, we also learned some Dong language. But we noticed that as Mandarin becomes more common among the younger generation, Dong is slowly fading away. We should continue the wisdom of our ancestors instead of letting it be forgotten in the river of time. As the younger generation, it's our duty to carry the banner of traditional culture and pass it on.

This teaching experience may be the only one of its kind in my life. It is unique, invaluable, and profoundly meaningful. I want to thank all the teachers and classmates who shared this journey with me once again.

SU LIWEN (LYDIA)

This activity was mainly about experiencing the local

people's lives, nature, and our teaching journey. After visiting local homes and learning traditional crafts like tie-dye and batik, what left the deepest impression on me was the teaching experience.

The school's facilities were very basic, the buildings old, and resources scarce. At first, I prepared a class full of games — seven mini-games in total. But after careful explanation, we only managed to finish one game completely: "Count to Three." I was a bit shocked. I realized that the teaching methods we use in the city are like shoes that don't fit here — they may look nice, but they can't walk the mountain paths.

The real change started when I let go of the idea of "teaching knowledge." Instead, I began teaching them sports and music, using simple interactive games and giving candy and snacks as rewards. I wanted them to feel that class wasn't only about boredom — it could also be fun. Slowly, things shifted: I was teaching, but also playing with stickers together, they braided my hair, and we learned, played, and laughed side by side.

Teaching wasn't about forcing knowledge on them, but about helping them feel life itself, to understand the meaning of learning. More than what I taught them, what mattered was showing them that the world holds many kinds of beauty — and the light they see in their daily life is not the only light there is. Breaking boundaries, walking out of the mountains, and meeting more beautiful people and things — that's the meaning of why we came.

Education is never about how completely you finish a lesson plan, but about those moments when you crouch down to listen, when you're willing to follow their pace and rediscover the world with patience, when you embrace life's soul in your own way.

YU JIAYING (CLAIRE)

From June 22 to 28, 2025, I joined the fifth-grade teaching program at Xiage Primary School in Liping County, Guizhou, as a volunteer teacher. Through classroom interactions and daily observations, I gained a direct understanding of the realities of rural education, economic conditions, and the challenges of cultural inheritance.

The fifth-grade classroom at Xiage Primary had only a weathered blackboard and a few outdated desktop computers. English lessons relied entirely on hand-written notes and self-made teaching aids. Students' exercise books were bound with rough paper, many with torn corners and blurred writing. The classroom door was rusted, the playground was too small for students to play freely, and the toilets lacked proper sanitation. Although students were curious about new knowledge in English class, their progress was slow. Since they mostly spoke local dialects in daily life, many struggled to distinguish English pronunciation from Dong language or Guizhou dialect. In home visits, I found that most parents had no English background and thus could not provide support; students had almost no opportunities to practice language outside the classroom.

Meanwhile, Dong cultural traditions were present in school life but faced significant challenges. During breaks, children often chatted in Dong language or hummed short folk tunes, but they knew little about more complex cultural elements such as the Grand Song or drum tower architecture. At temple fairs, performers of the Grand Song were mostly middle-aged or elderly, while younger generations showed little interest, preferring short videos

on their phones. Traditional crafts like bamboo weaving and embroidery survived only in fragments — some students could make simple pieces under elders' guidance, but more complex techniques were on the verge of being lost.

Still, the students often surprised us. Many were eager to imitate our English pronunciation in class, even though progress was slow. While we were out of breath climbing hills, they could flip effortlessly across the playground. Through cultural activities — wearing traditional clothing, language practice, and festival experiences — we came to understand the depth and value of Dong culture. Batik, tie-dye, pounding rice cakes, and drinking oil tea all revealed the wisdom of adapting to local conditions. For example, they even used native herbs like banlangen to produce fuel.

In just five days, this teaching program revealed the many difficulties rural education faces: limited resources caused by economic constraints, the absence of a supportive language environment, and the pressures of modern culture that endanger traditional heritage. Yet the students' focused eyes in class and their seriousness when learning new words showed me their strong thirst for knowledge. Looking ahead, perhaps Dong culture could be integrated into English teaching — for example, introducing the Grand Song or traditional festivals in English. This would not only spark interest in learning but also give traditional culture new life through modern expression.

This experience was not only about teaching knowledge but also about conducting a profound lesson in social observation. It gave me deeper insight into the development of rural education and cultural preservation. Finally, it also made me feel grateful that I was not born in the mountains, and reminded me to cherish what I have and never waste the resources around me.

CAI LUXI (LUCY)

Through this five-day rural research trip, my understanding of the village changed from a vague idea into a vivid picture full of human warmth.

Walking into the village, my very first impression was the breathtaking natural scenery. Every day, on the way back to the guesthouse by the terraced fields, I would look forward to the little steamed buns that sometimes appeared at lunch or dinner. Lotus flowers by the field ridges and swings nearby made it feel like a perfect photo spot. On sunny days, the sky here always stayed bright blue, and the wheat in the fields lined up neatly in rows.

In the afternoons, we visited the local primary school. The children there were playful, but when it came to games and activities that let them move around, they became highly engaged. By evening, smoke curled up from kitchen chimneys, elders sat at their doorsteps, and children ran around playing. At night, the village often burned its garbage, so the smell of smoke lingered in the air.

The local batik and tie-dye crafts were another highlight — beautifully intricate and full of character. We tried making batik ourselves and created many different styles of handkerchiefs. We also began learning a bit of the local Dong language, but it is now at risk of fading away due to a lack of promotion.

Remarks from the Principal's Award Recipients

MORRIS ZHANG

Good morning, teachers and fellow students.

It is a great honor to stand here today. This award is not just a recognition of my own effort — it belongs to everyone who has supported, encouraged, and



Conversations with villagers touched me deeply. One elderly woman told us that she had a blood clot in her brain, but local hospitals lacked the medical expertise to treat it. Going to a larger hospital would cost far more than she could afford. To avoid burdening their children, many elders here simply choose not to seek treatment when ill. Moments like these made me realize that a village is not just a geographical concept — it represents scarce resources, financial hardship, but also carries emotions and hopes.

The program was well-organized and meaningful. From teaching support to cultural experiences, every part of it gave me a more three-dimensional understanding of rural life. Of course, there were shortcomings — we lacked teaching experience and couldn't manage the children very well, so they didn't

actually learn much academically. But for me personally, this experience improved my communication and observation skills, and gave me the chance to try being a "little teacher." In the future, I hope to take part in more hands-on practices and contribute, even in small ways, to rural communities.

XU JIALU (JOLIE)

This teaching trip to Guizhou gave me many new experiences and opened my eyes to lives so different from my own. We came from Shanghai, and suddenly arriving in this small mountain village made me feel the sharp contrast in living conditions — though it was something I had expected. We had to walk along mountain paths and narrow roads to finally reach the village. On the surface, some houses were newly renovated, but

there were still many old wooden ones. These Dong villages preserve interesting traditions, and what fascinated me most was the drum tower. Its architecture carries a distinct style and important meaning. Around each drum tower, there is also a stage where they perform Dong opera during large gatherings.

Of course, our main purpose in coming here was to teach. We went to Chengge Primary School, which turned out to be in far worse condition than I had imagined. The floor was unfinished concrete, the walls were dirty, there was no air conditioning, and even the ceiling fans barely worked. The only thing that looked somewhat new was the desks. At first, we hoped to teach them some fun knowledge or help with review, thinking the kids would be shy but obedient, and that we could help them improve. After all, if

their grades stayed poor, this school might even be shut down, leaving them with no place to study.

Our first teaching method was simple: whoever answered a question correctly got a piece of candy. But very quickly, we realized we didn't have enough candy. So we asked them, "What do you want? What do you like to eat?" To our shock, the kids said they wanted things they saw online, like accessories from so-called "trendy internet idols." We were both angry and stunned — the village may be poor, but the internet was fast, and they knew all the vulgar memes from social media. So we decided to give small rewards only after class and only if they all behaved well. But it didn't work at all. They still wouldn't listen, they ignored us, and our carefully prepared lessons were impossible to carry out.

We began to reflect on ourselves —

were we doing something wrong? We tried to tighten discipline and asked what they were interested in. But their answers in class shocked us even more: they talked about fighting or imitating online street culture. We were both surprised and angry. We had thought of them as pure, innocent kids, but it turned out they had already been deeply influenced — even polluted — by the worst parts of online culture. Some of the boys were especially mischievous. They weren't even afraid when scolded by their teachers.

We discussed every night how to manage the class. On Wednesday, we observed their regular teacher's lesson. Sometimes even the teacher couldn't control them and simply let them be. But there were also teachers who managed to keep strict discipline and had them quietly doing their exercises. That made us realize how hard their teachers worked, often teaching multiple grades at once. We respected them deeply and tried to learn from their serious, strict way of running a classroom.

The real breakthrough came when Teacher Liu stepped in. We gradually developed our own teaching system. Without textbooks or lesson plans, on the fourth day we started making them read aloud in turns, like a "little train." Then we quizzed them on vocabulary to make sure they recognized the words. This turned out to be very effective. Each child paid attention and cooperated. If a few misbehaved, we made them stand aside, while the others helped correct them. Feeling embarrassed, those children soon quieted down. Of course, we didn't expect that in just seven days they would suddenly change — stop fighting, start studying hard, and improve their grades. But at least we managed to stop them from disrupting the class. That, I think, was already our greatest achievement: showing them that even "student teachers" like us deserved respect, and that classroom rules could not be ignored.

What struck me most was the last day, when we visited an elderly woman's home. It felt like stepping back 30 years in time. The house was made of wood, with a cement floor and a simple stove fueled by firewood. The old woman was in her sixties, but her health was terrible. She had a blood clot in her brain and spinal problems, but because surgery was too expensive, she gave up on treatment. Listening to this was both heartbreaking and shocking. It made me realize that even in this fast-developing 5G era, there are still so many people in China living in poverty. It hit me hard — the comfortable life I take for granted is something others can only dream of for a lifetime.

This teaching trip also let me feel what it's like to be a teacher, and what makes a good teacher. I finally understood how difficult my own teachers' work was.

In the end, although I didn't come here voluntarily and had many complaints at the beginning, the experience gave me lessons I could never have learned in my comfortable city life. I witnessed the harsher side of reality: how losing two years of savings could drive someone to desperation; how children wear the same set of clothes for a whole week; how people give up treatment when they get seriously ill. These truths shook my worldview. They showed me that everyone is just struggling to live — and living itself is never easy.



weight to your college applications. Another example is our Broadcasting Club. Many students have heard the morning or evening broadcasts. Though the program paused for technical reasons, it will resume this semester. I mention this because I believe every student can bring their personal interests into our school life. With planning, creativity, and relevance, these passions can enrich our community and spark innovation.

Third, athletics. Whenever possible, I encourage everyone to take part in sports. Last year, I was captain of our school's soccer team. I owe deep thanks to our coach, Mr. Xin Wen, and to every teammate. Without each member, the team would not be whole. Together we faced unfair calls, setbacks, and challenges,

but ultimately we won a league championship — by just one goal on goal difference. More importantly, soccer taught me lessons beyond winning and losing. Every run, pass, and defense tested my endurance and willpower. Victory never belongs to one player — it belongs to the team, and to the collective spirit behind us. That sense of teamwork and resilience has become part of who I am, and it drives me to push forward in the face of challenges.

From a practical perspective, varsity-level athletics also plays an important role in university applications, making sports a valuable pursuit in more ways than one.

Receiving the Principal's Award is a meaningful conclusion to my journey in Grades 10 and 11 — but more importantly, it is a new beginning.



This honor will continue to inspire me to strive forward in Grade 12 and beyond.

Finally, let me once again thank the school, my teachers, my teammates, and all of my classmates. This achievement is shared with all of you. Thank you.

GEORGE TANG

Before I say anything else, please allow me to express my heartfelt gratitude to our principals, teachers, counselors, staff, and my fellow students. Standing here as the recipient of the Principal's Award, I am deeply aware that this recognition is not mine alone—it

reflects the support, guidance, and encouragement I have received from all of you.

To our respected leaders — Dr. Lei, Principal Wan, and Principal Wang — thank you for leading Guanghua Academy with vision and care. Since this award bears your title, I am humbled by the trust you place in me. Thank you for looking beyond GPAs and trophies—for recognizing growth, character, and service, and for reminding us daily to "be the best version of ourselves."

To our teachers, counselors, and staff — you have turned classrooms into places where curiosity thrives and mistakes become stepping stones. You stayed late, read countless drafts, opened doors, looked after us in the dorms, and — most importantly — believed in us, even when we



struggled to believe in ourselves.

To my family and friends — your patience, encouragement, and honesty have carried me through the toughest days. A special mention goes to my former dorm 314 roommates: Morris, also a recipient of this award; Raymond; and especially Jason Mao, who is now pursuing pre-college studies in Australia. Though he is far away, his influence remains with us. I am grateful to have shared this journey with such supportive and inspiring friends.

Finally, to our new students — welcome. Some of you may have first seen me today, others perhaps noticed me receiving the Grade 12 Highest GPA Award. But please don't assume that my journey was without setbacks. In fact, there were many nights when I felt overwhelmed —

before the AP Physics C midterm, the APUSH final, or the AP Statistics exam when I hadn't even finished learning the material. More than once, I considered giving up. And yet, somehow, I persevered. The result? A full GPA in Physics and APUSH, and a 5 in Statistics. Looking back, I still wonder: wasn't it a miracle that I made it through? And the answer is — yes, it was.

That is what I want to leave with you: challenges will come, and there will be times you feel like quitting. But if you hold on, even when it feels impossible, miracles will happen. So to all our new friends in Grade 9 and 10 — embrace your high school life at GHA, face difficulties with courage, and believe in the possibility of your own miracle. Thank you.

Students gave their all on the sports field

As early as July, Toby Gu received an invitation to join the Cornell University golf team. He later showcased the international competitiveness of China's new generation of players at the 77th U.S. Junior Amateur Championship. As one of the most prestigious youth tournaments under the United States Golf Association (USGA), the U.S. Junior Amateur Championship is not only a key stepping stone for young players aiming for professional careers but is also hailed as a "cradle of champions," where legends like Tiger Woods and Jordan Spieth first made their mark.

Meanwhile, James Niu pushed his limits at the Cornell University Rowing Training Camp, demonstrating skill and determination. Talya Cai claimed victory at the Yangtze River Delta Youth Golf Elite Tournament, playing with remarkable consistency. After her win, Talya shared, "My woods performed the best—they were very steady, landing on the fairway almost every time and covering long distances. My biggest improvement was my approach shots to the green, and my putting felt much more accurate. Most of my par putts went in."





Our summer journal: Traveling through every "world" with you

Sarah Gao - Smith College

This summer brought me two major takeaways.

The first was meeting so many peers who share my interests. For example, at HOSA I connected with a group of students equally passionate about psychology and neuroscience. We clicked instantly because of our common interests — some of the girls I met are even using psychology outreach to support women in STEM careers, which resonated deeply with the project I had envisioned for the UCLA summer program. At Smith, the overall atmosphere was distinctly feminist, which made conversations around gender equity feel not like “radical debates,” but rather an everyday, natural part of learning. In such an inclusive environment, I made many friends and felt a true sense of belonging.

The second was a noticeable improvement in my critical thinking. At first, I was hesitant to speak up in class discussions, preferring to listen rather than contribute. But at Smith, the supportive environment encouraged me to share — even when I wasn't fully confident in my answers. Since I had just studied U.S. history the previous semester, I was able to join discussions on American politics. And when the class turned to global issues — like how the first and second waves of feminism were often centered around white women — I could bring in perspectives from China. For instance, I pointed out that in many ways, China is still grappling with second-wave challenges, such as equal pay and advocacy that often centers on more privileged women. Over time, I grew more comfortable speaking up and learned to consider multiple viewpoints. In the final class, my professor said she had seen me transform from a quiet, somewhat shy student into someone who actively contributed and offered unique perspectives — that moment was truly moving for me.

Looking back, I realize this is also one of the biggest changes I've experienced since transferring to an international school two years ago. Whether in daily classes, research writing, or competitions, I've been consistently encouraged to voice my own ideas. I've grown from being more self-focused and one-dimensional in my thinking to approaching issues from different angles and expressing myself with confidence. This journey has shaped me in profound ways.

George Tang - Brown University Pre-College/North Carolina Math Camp

My greatest takeaway was a complete transformation in the way I learn. Unlike the passive knowledge intake of high school, this program combined in-depth lectures each morning with afternoon group sessions led by counselors, where we worked collaboratively to tackle challenging problem sets. The emphasis on independent inquiry and teamwork pushed me to adapt quickly, and within a month of high-intensity training, I gained a much deeper understanding of university-level mathematics — especially in the field of Number Theory.

The most unforgettable moments came from genuine academic connections. One was during a discussion on the structure of the Rubik's Cube group center. I had an inspiring conversation with my professor, and as a token of gratitude, I gave him a Rubik's Cube when we parted — a small gesture that symbolized our shared passion for mathematics. Another highlight was meeting

extraordinary peers from around the world: my brilliant roommate from India and a PhD mentor from Duke University. Working through complex problems together, hitting the gym, and even playing board games with them broadened my perspective and strengthened my resolve to keep pursuing advanced fields of study.

This experience not only sharpened my perseverance in facing rigorous coursework but also ignited a pure enthusiasm for exploring the deeper beauty of mathematics.

Lea Ye - Barnard College

On the very first day of summer school, after parting ways with my friend, I felt completely lost about how to make new friends. New York was bustling and lively, yet all I felt was strangeness and loneliness. I even thought I might end up spending the next two weeks alone in my dorm room. But the turning point came unexpectedly — when I heard the sound of people chatting in Chinese coming from the common room on my floor. Gathering up my courage, I walked in and joined them. From that moment on, my summer school experience completely changed.

Many of the girls who had lived in the U.S. were incredibly warm and eager to share local culture and unspoken “rules” with me. What I loved most about Barnard, as a women's college, was this natural sense of support and appreciation among girls. Strangers I had never met would genuinely compliment my outfits, and even outside of campus, if I ran into a little trouble, Barnard girls would step in to help. Gradually, I began to step out of my comfort zone and meet friends from different backgrounds — like the girl I chatted with during intermission at a Broadway show, and the classmate who patiently helped me with a tough question in class. My nationality was no longer a barrier to making friends; instead, it opened me up to new experiences.

The warmest memory of all was the final pajama party. Everyone prepared a performance, and one Chinese girl who grew up in Australia played the pipa. The hall fell completely silent as she performed, as if time had stopped, before the room erupted into cheers and applause. In that moment, a deep sense of cultural pride filled me. I also performed a dance. Even though I had performed at school before, I still felt nervous standing in front of people I didn't know well. But as I danced, I heard the crowd cheering me on. Afterwards, so many girls — many of whom I hadn't spoken to before — came up to compliment me and add me on social media. In that moment, I felt I had truly become part of an energetic, supportive community where we encouraged and uplifted one another.

This experience gave me a deeper understanding of liberal arts colleges and a huge appreciation for the atmosphere of a women's college. I no longer feel uncertain or fearful about college life. Instead, I feel excited and much clearer about the kind of environment I want for my future.

Jonny Qu - University of Notre Dame

After two weeks at Notre Dame, I feel like I've basically figured the place out! Honestly, aside from the student

body being predominantly white, the somewhat rural location, and the school not being very well-known in China, I can't really think of any downsides.

Notre Dame is located about a two-hour drive east of Chicago in South Bend. The town is small and quiet, but there's an airport just 15 minutes from campus, and the school provides shuttle buses, so transportation is manageable. As a Catholic university, its reputation in China isn't huge — there were only six Chinese students in the summer program. The campus center is a gorgeous Catholic church; when the sunlight hits the dome, it reflects gold, which is breathtaking. About 90% of summer students are Catholic, attending Mass every Sunday. That said, everyone I met was incredibly friendly and welcoming, and I had a great time with my peers. But for undergrad, if you're hoping for many Chinese students around to support each other, you might want to think twice. The campus is a bit far from downtown Chicago, the student body is mostly white, and the culture can feel a bit conservative.

Notre Dame is seriously wealthy! In my film production class, the editing room was equipped with \$30,000 Mac Studios — it was amazing to use. Campus facilities are meticulously maintained; even the centuries-old buildings look vibrant. The greenery is stunning, with huge lawns that are watered every morning, and at night you can see fireflies — absolutely magical.

There's a massive football stadium, which I heard is home to a strong team. The library has a full-length mural of Jesus on the exterior and is clean, spacious, and even has bookable meeting rooms.

I stayed in Dillon Hall, the largest dorm on campus, with three floors plus a basement. Lounges on each floor have AC, but the rooms only have fans, so it got a little hot at night. Rooms are doubles or triples, each with a sink, and bathrooms are shared. The basement has laundry, vending machines, and a small gym. Lucky for us, the summer staff just replaced all the washers and dryers at the start of the program!

For meals, there's mainly one dining hall — North Dining Hall — which is spacious and has a decent variety (even made-to-order fried rice!). My American classmates thought the food was great, but for my Chinese palate, it was a bit heavy. Walking from my classroom building to the dining hall takes about 15 minutes, though there are also options at Eddy Street or the student center, but you have to pay extra.

Finally, a note on rankings: Notre Dame is #18 in the 2025 U.S. News national rankings and #316 in the 2026 QS World Rankings. Pretty impressive!

Mila Mao - UC Davis

This summer at UC Davis was amazing! I not only made a group of genuinely kind and thoughtful friends, but also learned so many essential skills for college life. The professors were incredibly dedicated, teaching us strategies for independent living and studying, and giving us a real taste of the pace and style of university classes. Experiencing all of this has made me even more motivated to study in California!

The most unforgettable moments were riding bikes and walking around the huge campus with my friends, sharing our thoughts and chatting about everything. That sense of freedom and the joy of connecting with friends in such a relaxed, open environment was truly special.

Sally Wang - UC Davis

The biggest takeaway from this summer was getting an early taste of college life! I learned to adapt to long classes—two and a half hours each—and to manage my time independently to finish assignments.

Some of my most unforgettable moments were all about being active. I went horseback riding for the first time, and my instructor was super kind, encouraging me gently the whole time. At first, my horse didn't listen very well, but eventually we found our rhythm together—it felt amazing! Another highlight was swimming in the outdoor pool. The water was crystal clear, and swimming in the late afternoon sun was just perfect. I even jumped in several times out of sheer excitement!

Of course, I can't forget the “room key black hole” incident with my roommate, Mila. Somehow, we managed to lose our room cards five or six times (no exaggeration!). Each time, we had to scramble to get replacements in the middle of the night—it was both frustrating and hilarious in retrospect.

Chloe Wang - Yuanpei Young Scholars

The biggest takeaway from this program was meeting so many outstanding students from different cities and schools. Talking and collaborating with them taught me a lot, and I also made a group of like-minded friends!

The most unforgettable moment was during my poster presentation. At first, I felt nervous seeing two teachers in the audience looking very serious and focused. But then I noticed many classmates behind me sending encouraging and supportive glances. That warmth gave me the confidence to finish my presentation smoothly—and to my surprise, I even won the “Best Subject Poster Award!” In that moment, the mix of nerves and joy created one of my most treasured memories.

Emely Zheng - Yuanpei Young Scholars

My biggest takeaway from studying economics at YSA was learning to step beyond pure theory and understand the “people” and “society” behind economic phenomena through an interdisciplinary lens.

The most unforgettable moment was right before my presentation. Sitting in the audience, I was incredibly nervous, worried I might stumble or forget my lines. But the moment I stepped on stage, even with slightly sweaty palms, all the content I had rehearsed countless times came out naturally, like old friends. When the teacher asked questions, I didn't panic at all—my thoughts just clicked, and my ideas became clearer as I spoke. Definitely a moment that motivates me to keep working harder in the future!

Royce Jiang - HSYLC

The biggest takeaway from this program was learning to analyze cases using forensic science, understanding the structure and logic of urban traffic systems, and diving into the business side of football—like club organization and player transactions. It was all incredibly fascinating!

The most unforgettable moment, though, was our first time dancing together. Even though we didn't know each other well yet, we jumped around, sang loudly, and formed a “train” on the dance floor. The energy and excitement were contagious—it was such a fun and unforgettable experience!

Tony Chen - HSYLC

My greatest takeaway from this experience was the people I met along the way—every single one of them left a mark on me.

The most unforgettable moment was during Seminar B, when we prepared a surprise for our teacher. Seeing their reaction was so heartwarming—such a wonderful person, truly deserving of all the kindness and care we could give!

Liberty Ge - HSYLC

The most unforgettable part of HSYLC for me was the late nights spent finishing seminar assignments with everyone. Even though the daily activities were packed and the atmosphere was super fun, the seminar work was no joke... This became a unique scene at HSYLC: dorm lights blazing late into the night, everyone bent over their laptops, focused and determined. Yet even in the stress, everyone tried to help each other. No one complained about the workload—we were all thinking, “Let's finish this and get some sleep!”

I took the course “The Business of Virality,” and I learned so much! The professor showed us how influencers and brands quickly gain popularity through the 3C model, visual appeal, scarcity marketing, and precise target positioning. We even optimized problems and designed virtual models for our favorite brands. It was both fun and packed with practical knowledge!

