

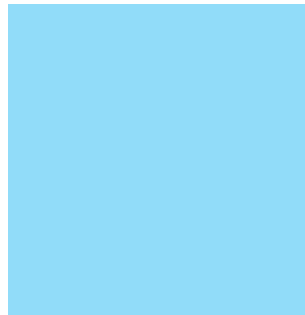
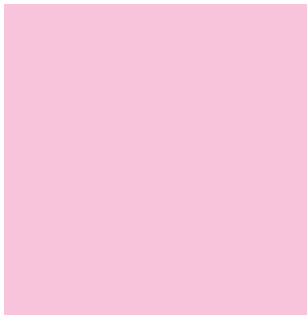


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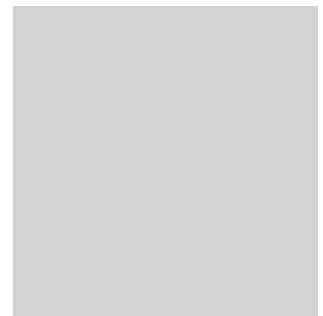
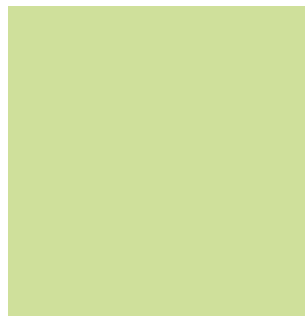
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NEWSLETTER | 2018 ISSUE 1

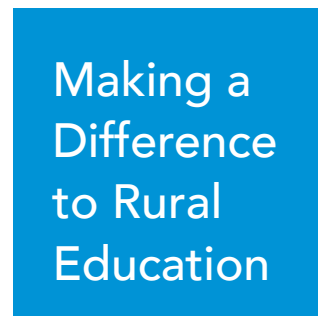
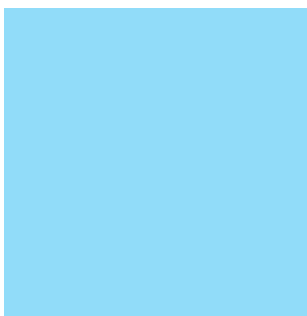
Summer Learning & Cultural Exchange Programme



Connecting People And Innovation



Making a Difference to Rural Education



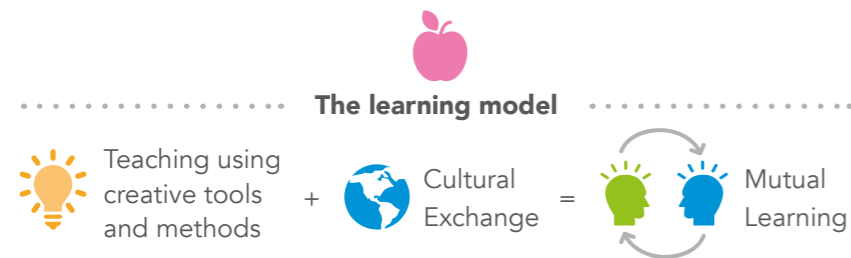
Message from the Editor

Summer is vacation time for most students, but can also be a meaningful opportunity for learning and broadening of exposure outside of the school environment. In this special issue, we would like to introduce to our donors and friends about the journey of our Summer Learning and Cultural Exchange Programme in various parts of rural China.

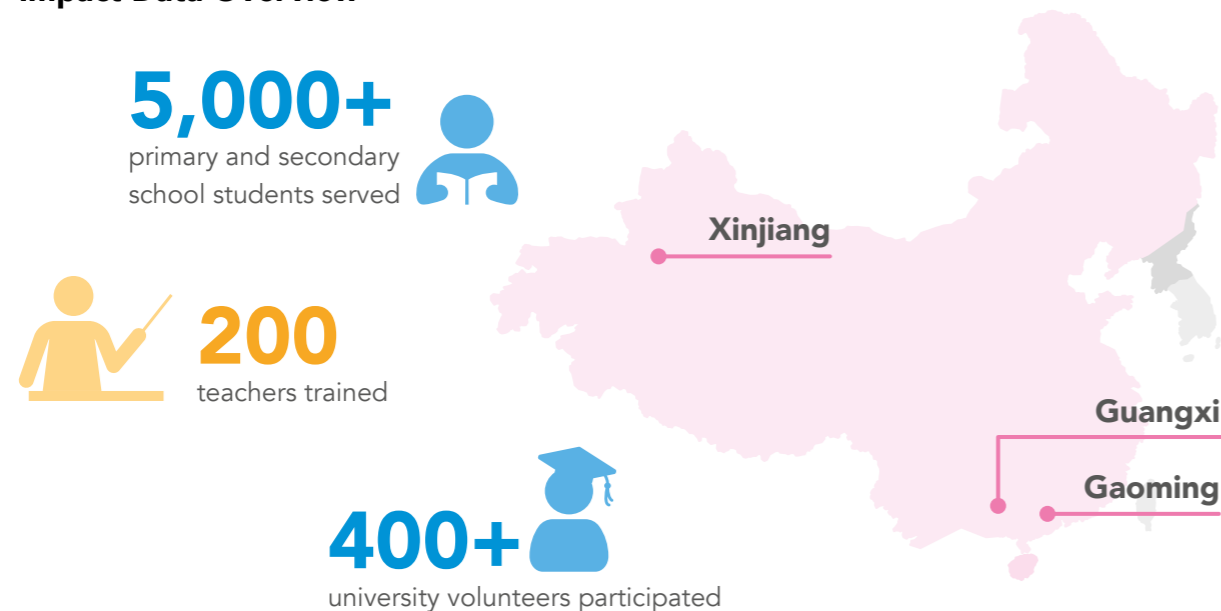
The Summer Learning and Cultural Exchange Programme

Economic growth in Asia has not only brought about prosperity, but also greater disparity between the cities and rural areas, creating significant challenges to the education of children in rural areas.

The Esquel-Y.L. Yang Education Foundation first launched the Programme in 2007 for children in rural Xinjiang. The Programme provides children with learning and mentoring opportunities, and **brings together the people, resources and innovation to bridge the gap in education infrastructure. It also seeks to overcome social and economic barriers impacting on education, and develop the potentials of the future generation.** In this process, both beneficiaries and volunteers are transformed.



Impact Data Overview



Story 1

Education challenges facing ethnic minority students in rural Xinjiang

Background

In Xinjiang, ethnic minorities often have difficulty mastering languages outside of their own native language and some see language instruction as an erosion of their culture and fear marginalization. Their children often only speak native languages with their families outside class. As a result, their learning generally suffers since they typically learn via Chinese/Putonghua.

Partnership with Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) Department of English

PolyU is the first tertiary institution in Hong Kong to have incorporated a mandatory Work-Integrated Education (WIE) component into the undergraduate curriculum. This pioneering initiative was aimed at enhancing all-round development and professional competence of students facing an ever-changing and increasingly competitive business environment. The Foundation has collaborated with the Department since 2011 and organized WIEs in Xinjiang and Guilin.

47
volunteers

2,000
students served since 2011



Facilitating multicultural inclusion through creative learning methods

Children in rural areas are more exposed to mechanical drills and rote-learning. They are rarely exposed to creative learning methods which are common in developed cities. The presence of university volunteers as teachers who come from a multicultural background is aimed at promoting a real communication need for these young learners through using English as a common language.



Collaboration with St. Paul's Co-educational College, Hong Kong

Since 2010, the Foundation has collaborated with St. Paul's Co-educational College (SPCC) and supports one of the school's outbound education trips, which takes place in Xinjiang, China, every year in July. The programme provides students with an opportunity to prepare (under the guidance of SPCC teachers) and conduct lessons for children in rural Xinjiang, giving them the exposure to a different culture and enriching their student life. Since 2010, 126 students from SPCC have participated in this programme, offering their volunteering service to over 1,000 children in rural Xinjiang.



University volunteers are guided by professors to design and develop their own teaching materials. Built-in consultation sessions with professors are crucial in this process. When the actual teaching takes place, university professors provide on-site support on class management and provide timely feedback.



126 volunteers since 2010

1,000 students served since 2010



Left-Behind Children in rural China

Left-behind children in China is a phenomenon of parents from rural areas leaving their hometown and children to seek opportunities in the cities. Children are often left in the care of relatives or grandparents, and some are unfortunately left to care for themselves. This has not only led to safety concerns, but also developmental issues such as vulnerability, low self-esteem or interpersonal relationship issues. A recent census identified over 60 million left-behind children in rural China.

HeartFire – Broadening the experience of rural children through mentoring and life education

The Foundation has collaborated with HeartFire since 2015. Heartfire was established by a group of Hong Kong undergraduate university students in 2009. The group is dedicated to create experiential learning opportunities for both rural children and university volunteers through voluntary services, inspiring and interactive learning, and cultural exchange activities.

Track Record of HeartFire

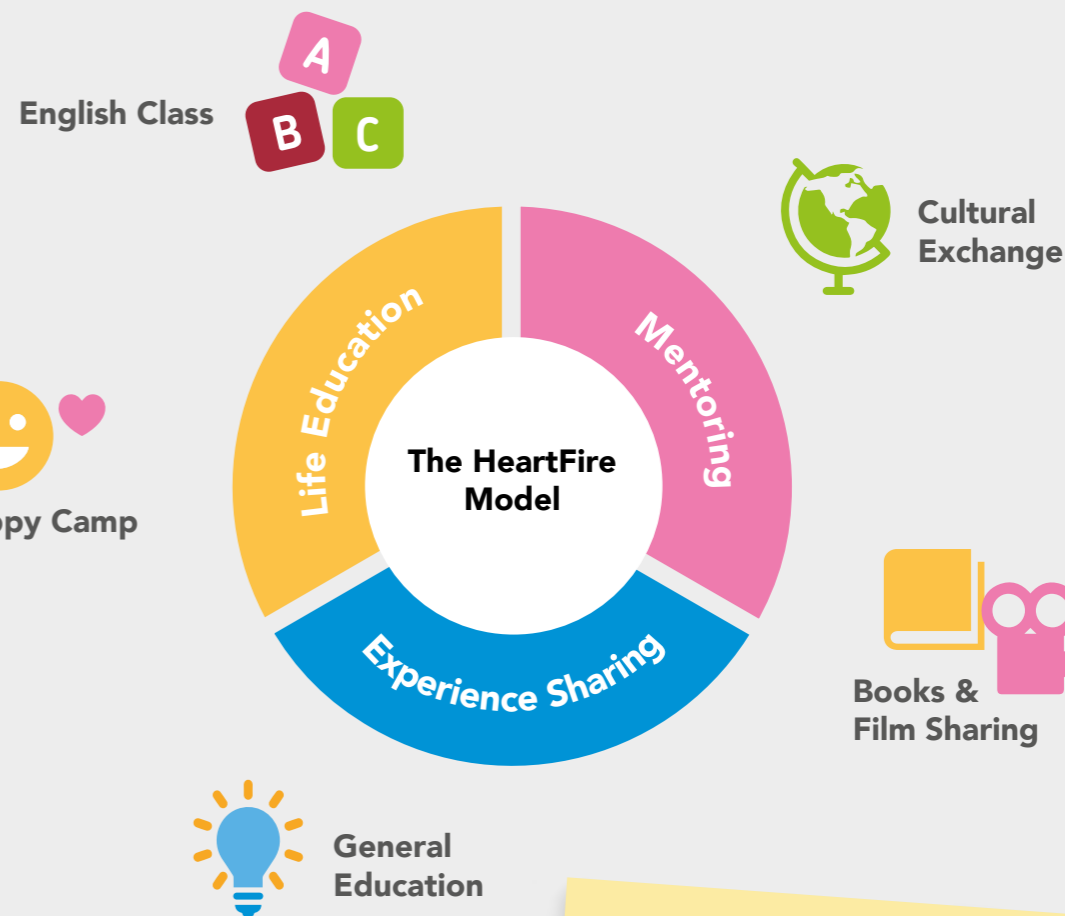
10+
locations in China

24
service trips

300+
members

20,000+
students served

28
schools



HeartFire's goal is to inspire both rural children and volunteers to see, to feel, and to think. Through interactive games, stories of ourselves, of a place, or of life, students and volunteers are encouraged to learn through experiences, inspire one another, become change makers to themselves and to people around them.





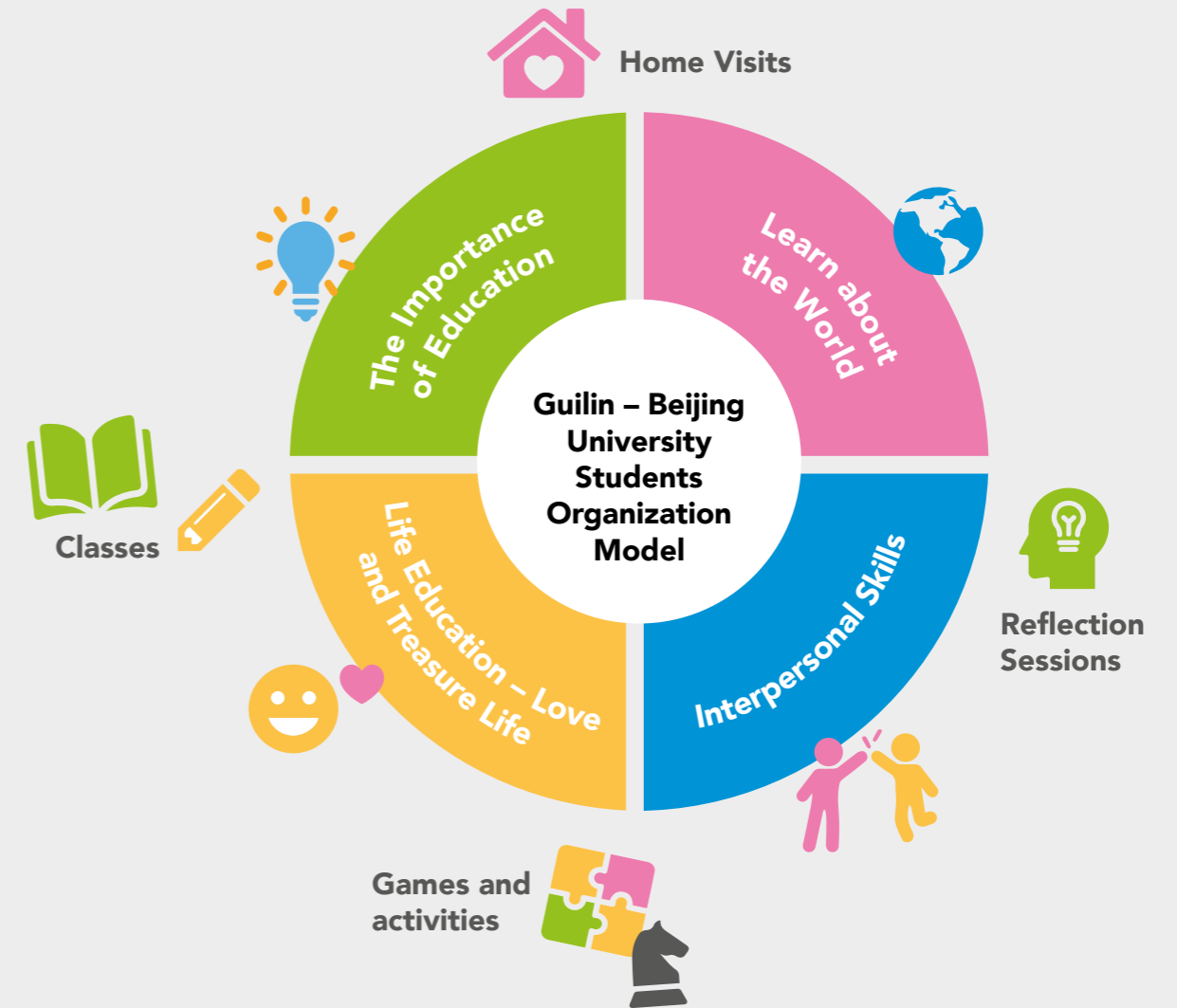
Guilin – Beijing University Students Organization – Great role models for rural children

This is a self-initiated student organization which consists of Guilin students studying at top universities in Beijing. The student organization has been organizing summer camps for over 500 children in rural Guangxi every summer using the students' own resources. The Esquel Foundation was touched by their story and supported them since 2016.

 **200**
active volunteers

Volunteers coming from **80** 
universities in Beijing

Beneficiaries **500** 
children in rural Guangxi each year



University volunteers help rural children open their eyes and see the world, develop goals and aspirations. The volunteers lead by example and become role models. At the same time, the horizons of university volunteers are broadened. They have a much deeper understanding of challenges of children in rural communities and the role they can play in making a difference.

Collaboration with PolyU Department of Computing - Bringing STEM education to rural China

Many developed cities in the world recognize the education of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) as important driving force for a city's development. Much resources have been dedicated to the promotion of STEM education to nurture students' creativity, collaboration and problem-solving skills. Students or schools in rural communities on the other hand, have very little or no exposure to the cutting edge tools to support the students' learning or the teachers' teaching in these disciplines.

Since 2011, the Foundation has collaborated with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Department of Computing, expanded the Summer Learning & Cultural Exchange Programme to include STEM components.

Training on Computational Thinking: Understanding the digital divide and finding appropriate solutions

The Project aims to mobilize university volunteers to harness technology for the benefit of the underprivileged in rural Xinjiang and Guilin. Through robotics programming software or apps, volunteers help children in rural areas develop problem formulation and solving abilities through computational thinking. Volunteers are required to study and understand the context and needs of the communities involved, and create a teaching experience using their knowledge and skills.



300 
students trained
since 2011

 **200**
teachers trained
since 2011

36 
volunteers
since 2011



App Inventor



Computational Thinking

Student volunteers are required to understand the context of the digital divide and challenges faced by local school students in rural cities. They need to select suitable technological tools to introduce the ideas of artificial intelligence, develop fun-to-learn teaching materials and conduct classes for an authentic group of local students in an unfamiliar environment. They are also expected to reflect on their role and responsibilities both as a professional in their own discipline and as a responsible citizen.

- Dr. Vincent Ng, Department of Computing
Hong Kong Polytechnic University





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Esquel-Y.L. Yang Education Foundation



About the Esquel-Y.L. Yang Education Foundation

Esquel Group established the Esquel-Y.L. Yang Education Foundation in 2003 and launched its charitable programs first in the rural areas of Xinjiang Autonomous Region, China. Since then, the Foundation's programmes have expanded to Guangdong and Guangxi Autonomous Region, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

The mission of the Foundation is "To Encourage the Spirit of Learning" as knowledge can bring vitality to life and change destiny. The Foundation hopes to support and promote an effective and continuous learning opportunity so that children may grow to become responsible and successful members of their communities.

The Esquel-Y.L. Yang Education Foundation is a registered charitable organization in Hong Kong, and registered not-for-profit foundation in the Xinjiang and Guangxi Autonomous Regions and the Guangdong province of China. The Foundation's overheads sponsored by the Esquel Group and 100% of donations received are channeled into the Foundation's programmes.

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