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Editor in chief: Daniel Zheng
Editor: Liz Zhou



“Meditation” - Winner of the HOPE staff photo competition by Alice Zhang

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2023 HOPE Top 10 news

1. In 2023, HOPE has deepened and widened its cooperation with international and bilingual schools across China in such areas as university applications, subjects tutoring and academic background enhancing for students, summer camps, foreign teachers and bilingual teachers recruitment, teachers development and training, school links with overseas schools. HOPE school partners have spread all over the country.

2. Innovative, meaningful, effective and sustainable marketing events, such as Chongzuo and Xiapu Education Forum in March and October, during which autism charity activities were embedded , have further strengthened HOPE's branding.



Xiapu International Education Forum, 13-15th October, with over 30 principals of international and bilingual schools across China attending



Group photo to mark the start of the charity photography contest during Xiapu Forum

3. HOPE Parents Journal, Parents Trip (e.g. Jingdezhen and Dianshan Lake) and Parents Classroom further activate HOPE Parents Club, and are not only becoming the distinctive features of the Parents Club but also the bridges between HOPE and its overseas returned students parents.



Education workshops and counselling for students and parents



Briefing bank staff on early international education planning

4. HOPE has launched an exclusive strategic cooperation with Industrial Bank carrying out events in over 30 cities in China in 2023 and pushing HOPE business and branding nationwide.

5. A wide range of programmes to enhance students' academic background were developed in 2023, including autism volunteer training and practice course, i-class online subjects tutoring, online tutoring for Oxbridge interview, academic summer schools, thereby laying a firm foundation for diversification of HOPE's business.

6. New model of Sino-UK universities joint programme was explored and HOPE assisted Zhongnan University of Economics and Law to link Loughborough University with a new 3+1 model. HOPE is promoting this new model among other Chinese universities including Southwest Jiao Tong University and Shanghai Lixin University of Accounting and Finance.



Daniel meeting with the Head of Partnership and Senior Regional Manager of Royal Holloway and Student Support Manager and Senior Regional Manager of University of Reading.

7. HOPE established partnership with Royal Holloway University and Reading University for students recruitment; HOPE assisted with Vice chancellor and Pro Vice Chancellor of Loughborough University's visit in Shanghai and the media interviews; HOPE organized the training for university application counsellors from 7 Ningbo International Schools; More partners and more practical events we organized help maintained HOPE's relationships with university partners while opening up more channels for students recruitment.



Management team of Loughborough University visiting Clover Autism Rehabilitation Centre arranged by HOPE

8. HOPE's Overseas Returned Alumni Club, being called Old Friends, organized many practical activities with unique features, including enterprises visits, improvised drama, freesbee and camping, thus well creating a platform for career development and communication for oversea returned students.

9. HOPE relaunched winter and summer camps overseas for our partner Chinese schools after the Covid-19. A break-through is expected in new year in terms of diversified destination countries, rich features and numbers of students.

10. HOPE visited a list of UK partner institutions in September and October 2023 for the first time after Covid-19, meeting old and new friends in person and discussing potential collaborations. On campus promotion was also conducted during the visits to promote HOPE's partner institutions.

HOPE annual staff conference revealed 1/3 of staff having been with the company for more than 10 years

January was a month of fulfillment and harvest. HOPE's 2-day annual staff conference took place in Shanghai's historic Xu Jia Hui on 12-13 January with a theme of art and history.

Day 1:

Xu Jia Hui used to be a centre for foreign culture and exchange. It was named after famous Paul Xu, one of the first persons in modern time China bringing about foreign culture and Christian faith. A museum called Tou-Se-We witnessed progression of Chinese culture absorbing foreign culture.



HOPE team visited Tou-Se-We Museum

Other than museum, HOPE team also went to see the St. Ignatius Cathedral.



A group photo in front of the famous cathedral

A special activity of the conference is the staff photo competition on Xu Jia Hui. Every HOPE member took their favourite angle down and a panel of judges consisting of representatives from parents, HOPE students and teachers from partner institutions selected their favourite. Winners were revealed during dinner time. Here are the photos of the winner:



Champion: Meditations by Alice Zhang



Second place: Light of Intelligence by Alex Wen



Third place: The narrow door of time by Julie Zhou

At dinner time, Daniel summarized 10 top news for HOPE. He especially pointed out that the average working year for staff in HOPE has reached 8 years, with one third of them having been with the company for more than 10 years and 3 of them 2 decades. For veterans who have been working longer than a decade, Daniel gave out surprise gifts.



Game time was also a time worthwhile remembering. Staff drew their expectations for HOPE in the coming 2024.



Day 2:

The second day was a day about art appreciation. The team went to Oil Tank Art Museum to see an exhibition called '*Friends in the Art*'.



The annual gathering ended after a buffet lunch with laughter and warmth.

HOPE Parents Committee gathered for new year plan on students career service

HOPE Parents committee's first meeting in 2024 was held successfully on 14th January. The meeting discussed the committee's new plan in 2024 and it was unanimously agreed that focus should be on providing more career service for our students, using the parents resources.



Daniel introduced HOPE's service for students



New committee member offered career new guidance

Daniel, Director of HOPE first summarized HOPE's achievement last year, particularly the new business and services provided to to our students and our partner overseas institutions. He emphasized that HOPE is now much more than just an agent. Apart from offering students education counselling and university and visa application service, it also provides international education planning and various training for students prior to their application to overseas institutions. Besides, one of HOPE's targets in the new year is to provide more service to students in terms of their career development. HOPE's UK office as well as the parent committee can do

much more in this respect.



Mr. Xue addressing to committee

Mr Xue, chairman of HOPE Parents Committee pointed out that the focus of Committee's work in 2024 will be providing students with more internship opportunities and career guidance, particularly using HOPE and parents' resource and relationship with local companies, institutions and government organizations. His statement was agreed widely by most of the parents representatives. One of the parents stated that it was very difficult to find a suitable internship chance in this competitive society. Therefore, she was grateful that HOPE could offer this service to enable their children to explore more internship opportunities. Most parents described what they could do in terms of internship resources.

Two more parents were newly elected as committee members during the meeting. Experienced in foreign affairs and policies, both of them would be able to offer their resource in local government and stated owned enterprises.



HOPE parents committee meet for new year plan

INSIDE HOPE --- Photo news



Loughborough University visited HOPE office on 9th of January for staff training and online interview with HOPE students. A badminton friendly match was held in Xuhui Stadium afterwards. It has been 2 decades that Loughborough University started friendship with HOPE.



HOPE Nanjing team was invited to attend Nanjing Jianye District Disabled Persons' Federation New Year Party for Disabled Children . HOPE Nanjing won a certificate of 'Loving Volunteer team'.



HOPE Hangzhou team held pre-departure briefings in Shanghai and Yiwu for winter camps students and teachers to the UK and Australia. HOPE may have about 10 summer camp groups lined up for summer 2024 after Covid.

News from local media

Sign of universities upping their game

By ZHANG ZHOUXIANG | China Daily |



On Jan 8, the Department of Industrial Engineering at Tsinghua University published a notice announcing the dismissal of a US student studying in the department who applied for a six-month leave of absence in March 2023. He was supposed to resume studies in the fall semester of that year, but he did not return to the university and by December the university had still not been able to contact him. The case has aroused a lot of attention, but a glimpse into media reports will find it's not the first time a domestic university has dismissed an international student for nonattendance. As early as 2017, Wuhan University dismissed a number of foreign students, including undergraduates and graduates, because they did not register within the stipulated period. In April 2020, Shanghai Jiao Tong University also dismissed a number of foreign students for similar reasons.

All these cases make clear that university regulations apply to both domestic and foreign students. Some domestic universities used to apply looser standards for international students considering their difficulties in studying in the Chinese language, but that practice has declined in recent years.

The principle of equal standards for all and strict enforcement of that principle will certainly benefit the nation's higher education sector. As an ancient Chinese saying goes, strict teaching makes excellent students. That still applies today, to both domestic and international students equally.

An alliance for vocational education and industry development

By Yu Chao and Zhu Yile

The Jiading government and Shanghai Open University formed a strategic partnership on November 10. As part of the government-college alliance, the Shanghai Open University School of Automotive Industry was officially inaugurated. Zhou Yaming, director of the Shanghai Education Commission, Lu Fangzhou, Party secretary of Jiading District, and Lou Junjiang, Party secretary of Shanghai Open University, attended the signing ceremony and delivered speeches. Gao Xiang, director of Jiading District, and Jia Wei, president of Shanghai Open University, signed the cooperation framework agreement.

A college-enterprise cooperation agreement was also signed between Shanghai Open University and Shanghai International Automobile City, with eight companies designated as training bases under the scheme.

The School of Automotive Industry will forge close ties with industry-leading enterprises, research institutions and district government departments, providing skills training and vocational education for both auto firm employees and fresh graduates of vocational colleges.

With a focus on “intelligent connected and new-energy vehicles,” the newly formed school will offer tailored majors and curriculums, and develop training courses for industry certification projects.

By working with Shanghai Open University, Jiading aims to build a high-quality talent pool to accelerate innovation and further boost the development of the auto industry, said Lu, Party secretary of Jiading.

MOE holds national meeting on implementation of “Double Reduction” policy

Source: www.moe.gov.cn January 8, 2024

The Ministry of Education (MOE) held a virtual national meeting on the implementation of the “Double Reduction” policy on Jan. 4, to review progress against the three-year targets established by the Central Government in 2021, identify problems to be solved, and adopt implementation measures for the next stage.

The meeting noted that, through the coordinated effort of the Central Government and local authorities over the past two years, the number of extracurricular tutoring programs had substantially decreased and after-class services on campus had significantly improved. However, the meeting also highlighted key problems that must be solved if the three-year targets are to be met: the emergence of many academic-subject-related services that are actually tutoring services in disguise, inefficient monitoring of non-academic extracurricular lessons, slow progress in the promotion of STEAM education, and the need for further enhancement of after-class services provided by schools.

To address these issues, the meeting first reiterated the importance of the “Double Reduction” policy, calling for unwavering and vigorous enforcement, and then proposed several measures. First, school education needs to be constantly improved through the promotion of science-based classroom teaching strategies, the standardization of homework management, the diversification of after-class services, and the reform of examination and evaluation systems. Second, a long-term monitoring mechanism targeting extracurricular training needs to be established in order to strengthen prevention and control of academic-oriented tutoring services in unnoticeable and disguised forms. Third, non-academic services should be boosted so that they can complement school education. Fourth, effective and innovative plans need to be designed promptly to enable breakthroughs in STEAM education.

Representatives from the MOE, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and General Administration of Sports attended the meeting at the main venue in Beijing. Representatives from local authorities in the five sectors attended the meeting at sub-venues and shared their experiences and lessons learnt in solving these problems.