Newsletter

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The Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation Limited
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From November 2012 to June 2014, the Foundation carried out the 18 months long “Teacher Librarian Certificate Course” in Baohe District, Hefei. This project has exerted remarkable influences on changing schools’ views and positioning of teacher librarians, resulting in changes even on the policy level.

School reading and library development should be promoted and operated by people equipped with professional skills. More and more reading-related charity organizations and schools have expressed their needs for professional development of personnel. In order to promote teacher librarian training in mainland China and to benefit more schools and teachers, the Foundation designed and developed Three Days’ Basic Course for School Teacher Librarians to satisfy the needs of schools who are just starting their reading and library work, and schools with little resources to start such work. Graduates of the Foundation’s first Professional Teacher Librarian Training Program will lead the teachings of this course. To guarantee the quality of this program, the Foundation has also invited experienced teacher librarians from Taiwan and Hong Kong as advisors. They will advise the teachers in Hefei to develop and improve training courseware and improve their training skills.

Since December 2014, Hefei School Teacher-Librarians’ Association has successfully held two rounds of the three day training course. In May 2015 and July 2015, under the invitation of Yunnan Ruili Women and Children Development Center and Stars Youth Development Center, Hefei School Teacher-Librarians’ Association went to Ruili, Yunnan and Guangdong to provide training for local teacher librarians. To better understand the reading condition of local schools and satisfy the needs of the trainees, the hefei teachers visited the recipient schools as well as interviewed the organizers before the training.
The *Three Days’ Basic Course for School Teacher Librarians* consists of 6 basic parts. Since the recipients in Ruili and Guangzhou are rural schools, the trainers revised the basic course to better suit the needs of local teachers. The course content focused on theoretical basics of reading, which was practical and easy to operate. Based on theories of free voluntary reading, the training course presented to the trainees how to build school reading culture, what good books are, how to develop library collection, and demonstrated lively and diverse reading activities. The training was held in various forms including seminar, reading class demonstration, and group discussion to fully demonstrate the different variety and aspects of reading and library.. The training very much emphasized the participation and thinking of trainees and made the ideas and methods relevant in the teachers’ daily work in schools.

The May training in Ruili, Yunnan was instructed by Ms Jiang Ying from Qingnianlu Primary School and Chen Li from Weigang Primary School. In July, the training in Guangdong was instructed by Ms Chen Huijuan from Shuhong Primary School and Ms Che Qian from Qingnianlu Primary School. The Foundation also invited June Wong, Vice-president of Hong Kong Teacher-Librarians’ Association to offer on-the-spot observation and assistance. As the trainers are both subject teachers and teacher librarians who promote reading, they are able to connect with the trainees through common language on their work. By sharing their development and working experience, the Hefei teachers not only sympathized with the trainees, but also gave great encouragement and confidence to them. The two rounds of training at Yunnan and Guangdong were very well received by the organizers and trainees.
The Foundation hopes to help Hefei School Teacher-Librarians’ Association to further improve and refine the “Three Days’ Basic Course Training for School Teacher Librarians”, so that it can be the Association’s core service project, providing professional reading and library development training for other organizations and schools.

“After attending the training and course demonstration by Ms Chen and Ms Jiang, I understand the importance of looking at reading from the perspective of kids. And telling stories is not that complicated. Especially the extension activities after reading class such as guiding students to take part in activities with their own hands and to use their imagination as well as to show their thirst for knowledge are scenes I never pictured before.”

-Yunnan Ruili Women and Children Development Center

“Among the 30 effective questionnaires retrieved by Stars Youth Development Center, 96.67% of them agree or strongly agree that the lecturers are professional and appealing… The lecturers timely adjusted training content with great flexibility after getting to know target school conditions ahead of schedule. And they did not preach but actually share with a kind and easy-going attitude when answering questions brought up by the trainees and can express their attitudes and opinions on key content.

-Stars Youth Development Center
2015 Hefei School Library Research Project

In order to understand how to effectively run school libraries and to design better teacher librarian (TL) training programs, the Foundation initiated “Day in a Life of a School Library – a Comparative Study across Primary School Libraries in China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan”. The study was based on the model framework of Hong Kong Education Bureau’s teacher librarians’ (TLs) system. However, this research did not cover Hefei city. (Note: “Report of a Day in the Life of a School Library – a Comparative Study across Primary School Libraries in Chinese Mainland, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan” is available for download on the Foundation’s website.)

“Teacher Librarian Certificate Course” has been completed for over a year and the training has successfully changed the principals’ and teachers’ conventional perception of school libraries and TLs. Meanwhile, BaoHe District Education Bureau provided financial support for and implemented policy regarding the assignment of TLs, library collection and library facilities, as well as the renovation of libraries and construction of new libraries. The Foundation aims to assess the impact of implementing 1st Teacher Librarian Training Program on the Hefei school libraries through a comparative study across different stakeholders in China, HK and Taiwan.

Based on the aforementioned circumstances, the Foundation initiated the Hefei school libraries research report (hereinafter referred to as “Research”) in May.
The target of the Research includes:
I. Evaluate the impact of each school’s effort in promoting reading and training TLs;
II. Identify TLs’ daily operation and assess the impact of the assignment of TLs on students’ reading practice and school’s teaching approach;
III. Assess library space utilization, book utilization rate, in particular, usage of libraries by subject teachers and their ability to collaborate with TLs;
IV. Objectively evaluate the impact and effectiveness of internal policies on library development and teaching approach in schools.

The scope of the Research covers BaoHe District Education and Sports Bureau, ChangFeng County Education and Sports Bureau, 19 alliance schools, 4 non-alliance schools, HeFei public libraries and commercial bookstores. The Research is conducted through questionnaires, group interviews with different stakeholders including principals, students and TLs and reviewing data with the role statement of the TLs.

The coordinator of the Research team is Foundation consultant Prof. James Henri. The data collection team comprises of Ms. Angel Leung, vice president of Hong Kong Teacher-Librarians’ Association, and Hefei School Teacher-Librarians’ Association. The data analysis team is led by Prof. Joyce Chen, the Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of Graduate Institute of Library & Information Studies, National Taiwan Normal University.

The Research report will be published in the second half of 2016 as the Research team is still at the data collection stage. The Foundation will invite authoritative scholars and experts from different countries to perform third-party evaluation to ensure the impartiality and credibility of the Research report.
CYSFF Joins the Second Civilian Library Forum

From 11 to 12 July 2015, invited by the preparatory group of the Civilian Library Association, the Foundation participated in the second Civilian Library Forum held in Beijing and shared our experiences in the promotion of reading with libraries through our Stone Soup Flagship Project.

This Forum was attended by 107 librarians from privately owned libraries from 24 provinces across China, as well as many NGOs such as the Foundation. Unlike libraries built in schools and communities by NGOs with support from various donors, these private libraries are promoted and established by individuals or groups including farmers, scholars and retirees. Many librarians present are senior citizens who, with passions for reading and in fears of withering home cultures, set up their own libraries available to folks in local community or village free of charge. They are amiable and respectable people, society transformers charged with a mission, and readers that love and appreciate books. During the two-day meeting, we could see their passion for the undertaking, eagerness to learn and willingness to try new ways.

Unlike other conferences, the Forum was more than a platform for emotional communication. The Organising Committee expected it to inspire the librarians more on the professional development of library and services. Five of them stood on the stage for the first time to share their experience in setting up a library and providing services for programmes. In the meantime, promotion of children reading is also a key focus for these libraries recommended by the Committee. Representatives from schools and the non-profit sector delivered targeted keynote speeches, highlighting the fact that children’s interest in reading is the foundation for the development of a reading culture in a region and a nation.
We saw the librarians giving wonderful speeches, carrying output intense group discussions, as well as putting forward proposals for the government, requirements for themselves, and suggestions for the event, all with a view to building better libraries that better serve local people. They are a group of passionate missioners. Professor Wang Zizhou at the Information Management Department of Peking University is the main organiser of this forum. He deserves our admiration as he spares no efforts in promoting the development of private libraries despite his position in the public sector.

Reading promotion requires support from all walks of life. By attending this forum, the Foundation can see that there is a group of people engaged in this effort beyond our reach. The impact and change driven by this local force, which is deeply rooted in its homeland, outweigh all external. In the future, the Foundation hopes to seek for the right way to contribute our own share of support and effort to the development of private libraries!
Dialogue in Family Philanthropy

"Dialogue in Family Philanthropy" was an intimate gathering of like-minded principals of family foundations hosted by the Foundation during 7-9 June 2015. Through themed sharing, group discussions and NGO site visit, the Foundation aimed to create a platform for principals from family foundations in the Greater China Region to discuss various topics of interests, including succession of family philanthropy, foundation governance and responsible philanthropy.

For the themed sharing, we invited Mr. FirozLadak, CEO of Edmond de Rothschild Foundation, HO Show-Chung and his wife Chang Sing-ju from Hsin-Yi Foundation in Taiwan, and Mr. Paul Shoemaker, director of Social VenturePartners International (SVPI) in the United States to share their developments, challenges and insights in their philanthropic journeys respectively. Attendees also had in depth conversations on Foundation succession, governance and operations.

A visit to the China Exploration & Research Society (CERS) was arranged on the last day to give guests a first hand experience on the “dialogue in action”. CERS, an organization which is committed to the conservation of natural heritages and communication of traditional cultures, shared with Dialogue participants their views from the NGO’s perspective, elaborated various challenges and setbacks in cooperation with funders, giving participants perspectives from the grantee’s side.
Some of the experience and views shared on this forum are summarised below.

Essential components for Family Philanthropy:

**Patience**
- Family philanthropists can invest in solutions to social problems with long time horizons
- Philanthropists work in areas *where things don’t work*, and markets have not provided solutions
- Solving problems in environments such as these requires time and resources, not just capital

**Domain Expertise**
- Focusing on a clearly defined mission leads to developing deep knowledge in the chosen area
- This knowledge – practices as well as connections – is crucial in designing and ensuring the success of interventions and programs, and doing so efficiently
- Ultimate goal: becoming a go-to resource in one’s chosen field

**Engagement**
- Moving beyond a traditional donor-recipient dynamic
- Working closely with donees leads to forming real partnerships
- High levels of engagement with partner NGOs and organizations ensures staying up to date with latest practices, not working in a silo

**Transparency and Sharing**
- Learning from mistakes is highly valuable
- Sharing mistakes with peers and learning from each others’ mistakes multiplies this value
- Transparency and sharing are essential to develop long-term relationships and partnerships
Heart

- More impactful philanthropy can be achieved by applying business practices
- However, philanthropy should not be cold and calculated
- Motivation for getting involved in philanthropy must come from the heart
- This passion is needed to overcome the many difficulties and challenges that will inevitably be met on one’s philanthropic journey

More information on this forum can be found on our website at http://www.cysff.org/event_2015_june_sc.html
We hope the experience, connections and discussions arising from the dialogues on this forum will drive and strengthen the growth of family foundations across the Greater China region, creating positive, sustainable impact in our societies.
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