



孔子学院

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE
AT ALFRED UNIVERSITY

MARCH - APRIL 2016

Northstar Christian Academy

In March and April, Instructors Jing Wu and Juan Xu at Northstar Christian Academy in Rochester celebrated the changing seasons by making dough figurines. The elementary students made the Monkey King, known in China as Sun Wukong, and spring flowers. This was their second time making figurines with dough. Students were amazed at the magical traditional art and were proud to make the art pieces with their own hands.



Group Photo with Dough Figurines

Students also learned about Chinese currency - RMB. They were curious with the first paper money in the world, “Jiaozhi”, and learned the stories of the scenery and people shown on the currency.

Students learned about traditional Chinese instrumental music and listened to some of this music.



Students and their dough figurines

Students reviewed the numbers from zero to a hundred in Chinese. They were so proud when they found they

could count from zero to one hundred. Students also reviewed the names of body parts in Chinese, and sang songs and played games with what they had learned.

The elementary students learned the names of some fruits and sang the “Fruits” song, a song which combines colors, numbers, and fruit names together.

Now students greet each other in Chinese during class time or even in the hallway.

Students in upper grades learned to use the “like/love” and “have/has” structures to express their fondness in Chinese. They can say: “I love Mom,” “I like red apples,” “I have a brother,” etc.

High school students learned how to talk about the environment, home decor, shopping, daily life, and health. One class learned to write research papers. They were preparing for the Chinese AP Test coming up in May.

Gates-Chili Central School District
CIAU teacher Juan (Rita) Xu introduced Chinese culture to the third grade students of Paul Road,

Disney, and Florence Brasser Elementary Schools every week. The students learned about Chinese elementary students’ daily life, traditional clothes, money, calligraphy, Chinese New Year, the story of the Monkey King, and more. Twenty-eight students at Florence Brasser Elementary School joined the Mandarin Club after school every Thursday. Mrs. Xu taught them how to do Chinese dough modeling, use chopsticks, write calligraphy, make red envelopes for New Year, play shuttlecock, etc. Each week some new Mandarin words were taught. The children love this club very much.



Students and their dough figurines

On April 12, Mrs. Xu finished the first session of the Chinese enrichment class for first and second graders at Disney Elementary School.

This group has focused on topics such as Chinese architecture, food, and language. Some children can count in Mandarin from 1 to 100. Some children can use chopsticks skillfully, and they like to greet each other in Chinese.



Students eating Chinese food

North Syracuse Central School District

In March and April, the students in the Confucius classrooms of Gillette Road and Roxboro Road Middle Schools learned what to call family members in Mandarin. They also have become quite comfortable in greeting others and counting in Mandarin. They learned how to use a brush to write Chinese calligraphy,

and how to prepare ink with dry ink and an ink stone.

On March 21st and 22nd, we had a visitor to our language classes. Mrs. Dillon showed students her work making dough figurines. The students were so excited to see the vividly colored figurines made from flour. Every student had a chance to make their own panda figurine with wheat flour dough.



Students and their dough figurines

Geneva City School District

The Dual Language Immersion Program at Geneva West Street School has attracted more attention from the community. The mother of one of Lily Huang's students, Owen, suggested putting Chinese numbers

on the school buses to promote Chinese cultural influence in the Geneva City School District. This led to positive news in the local community.

CIAU faculty Linda Chen, Lily Huang, and Elyn Song also did a lot of cultural and artistic exchange activities in the Geneva City School District. The Mandarin teachers organized a wonderful introductory activity to promote cultural exchange at the Book Festival on April 9th in Geneva City School District. More and more children and parents showed interest in Chinese culture.



CIAU faculty Lily, Linda and Elyn with friends at the Book Festival

In March and April, Ms. Huang taught the 1st grade students in the

Immersion Program at West Street School how to name arctic animals, nine kinds of fruit, and winter clothing such as hat, glove, scarf, and boots in Chinese. Ms. Huang taught them simple sentences, such as, “I like eating...” and “I love eating...” which provided them with good opportunities for communication and stimulated their enthusiasm for speaking Chinese. Ms. Huang also taught them four Chinese songs.

From March to April, students in Geneva North Street School learned more about families and animals. In order to make learning more interesting, Mrs. Chen and Miss Wu added some cultural activities to language learning, which enriched the Chinese class.



Miss Wu demonstrating Chinese painting

After a unit learning, students experienced Chinese ink painting with Mrs. Chen and Miss Wu. Students were very excited about painting pandas with writing brushes. From this culture class, students not only painted their own pandas, but also understood more about Chinese ink painting in general. Students all had a good time together.



One student and her panda painting

The Mandarin Elective Program at Geneva West Street School (WSS) focused on numbers and folk dances during these two months. WSS invited a Chinese music and dance ensemble from New York City to give a performance at the end of April. Elyn Song and the music teachers at WSS cooperated to provide this special cultural event.

The Pre-K and Kindergarten children can count to ten and give the "Marching Code" as "One-Two-Three-Four, Two-Two-Three-Four" to match the Chinese music and dance. The older kids in the school worked on counting to one hundred.



One student and her work

Starry He taught her students how to name the four seasons and weather in Chinese. The students can now express their favorite season and describe the weather of a whole week in Chinese by themselves.

On April 8th, New York State Education Department Commissioner Mary Ellen Elia came to Geneva

West Street School and visited a Mandarin class.



Starry teaching how to discuss weather in Chinese

Binghamton City School District

In March and April, CIAU faculty Zhaoyun (Catherine) Zhai continued teaching Chinese at Binghamton City School District. Her 6th graders kept practicing and consolidating numbers. They also learned some new topics including recognizing Chinese money, asking after prices, and talking about time, including dates, days of the week, and time on the clock. Ms. Zhai emphasized timely review and repeated practice, so that students can understand and apply numbers to topics of daily conversation, such as birthdays, U.S. holidays, weekly schedules, and specific times.

In the third marking period, Ms. Zhai kept guiding students to practice Chinese character writing and to read Chinese ancient poems as part of class routine.

Besides that, Ms. Zhai designed a series of programs to introduce the students to Chinese culture. In the very beginning, she talked about



6th grade students are doing a role-play conversation

Chinese food, discussed diet differences and customs all over China; secondly, she showed the geographical landscape of China, focusing on the introduction of Xi'an and Beijing, which were well-received by students; thirdly, she presented Chinese folk arts, including dough figurines, shadow puppets, embroidery, and kites. In addition, she explored traditional Chinese painting with a goal of appreciation

of this ancient art, introducing students to painting tools and giving them a chance to experience painting themselves. This greatly enriched the Chinese classroom teaching, inspiring the students' interest and passion to learn Chinese language and culture.

Visit from Chinese Consulate-General in New York City

On March 2nd, Education Counsellor Yongji Xu of the Chinese Consulate-General in New York City, Consul Quansheng Chang, and Fu Bo visited the Confucius House in Alfred. Directors Wilfred Huang and Tao Peng introduced both the development and prospects of CIAU to them, especially the achievements in language teaching and cultural communication, such as the Chinese programs in cooperative school districts, the Immersion Program in Geneva, and the Tai Chi and Painting classes.



Directors Huang and Peng introducing CIAU

The significant influence made by CIAU and the hard work of CIAU faculty members were recognized by Education Counsellor Yongji Xu. He first congratulated CIAU for being selected as one of the ten best Confucius Institutes this year, and then discussed the future work of CIAU faculty.



CIAU members with
guests from the Consulate-General

Confucianism and Taoism Lecture at Alfred University

CIAU's Haley Gao was invited by Chris Yarnal to give a lecture on Confucianism and Taoism for the AU class, "Introduction to Religions of the World" on March 2nd.

Ms. Gao introduced the doctrines of both Confucius and Laozi, who are the representative figures, respectively, of Confucianism and Taoism, which are sometimes termed religions, but are more accurately considered to be ethical systems, or systems of norms. Ms. Gao not only presented the core ideas of these systems, but also answered students' questions afterwards. They discussed the effect of these two central ideologies on Chinese culture and society.



CIAU faculty Haley Gao explaining Confucianism and Taoism

Guzheng Performance at "Alfred Around the World"

On April 1st, the Alfred University Guzheng Ensemble took part in the "Alfred Around the World" show at Holmes Auditorium in Harder Hall. AU students Vanessa Mahadtawon Englerth and Brandon Charles Miller and exchange students from Hunan University of Commerce, China, Xuan Xie and Xin Zuo, performed the guzheng piece "Swordsman" together with CIAU faculty Zhongbei (Daisy) Wu. The performance was well received by the audience.



Guzheng performance at "Alfred Around the World"

"Alfred Around the World" is a global culture showcase that highlights the diverse talents within the Alfred community. It is a big event at AU for exchange students from all around the world.



Guzheng performance at “Alfred Around the World”

AU Bergren Forum: Sound of China - Guzheng

On April 7th, in Nevins Theater, CIAU faculty Zhongbei (Daisy) Wu gave a presentation on “The Sound of China – Guzheng” at AU’s Bergren Forum, which is held every Thursday on a wide variety of topics.



Daisy introducing the history of guzheng

Daisy Wu is a visiting associate professor of music in the Performing

Arts Division of Alfred University and the Cultural Activities Coordinator of the CIAU. She started playing guzheng at the age of nine and is an award-winning guzheng player.

In her speech, she not only introduced the history of guzheng, but also compared it with other stringed instruments, such as koto.

Daisy finished her speech with the audience’s applause. Many people asked questions and she answered them based on her abundant experience.



Daisy communicating with her audience

One boy showed an interest in guzheng and experienced it on stage under Daisy’s instruction. He told Daisy he would buy one and start to learn this traditional Chinese instrument.



A member of the audience experiencing guzheng

University, won the third prize and the encouraging prize.



CIAU candidate Charles giving a talent show on guzheng

15th Chinese Bridge Competition in New York City

On April 9th, the 15th Annual “Chinese Bridge” Chinese Proficiency Competition for College Students was held in New York City.



CIAU candidate Charles Miller giving a speech



CIAU candidate Nathan giving a speech

Two candidates, namely Charles Miller and Nathan Badaczewski from the Confucius Institute at Alfred



CIAU candidate Nathan giving a talent show on a pottery wheel

It was not easy for the two candidates from Alfred to qualify for the finals. Other competitors are mostly Chinese majors from Harvard University, Princeton University, and so on, while the two candidates from Alfred University just studied in Chinese class four hours a week.

In order to meet the competition, the candidates put forth a lot of effort, and instructors from the Confucius Institute also worked very hard to help them prepare. For nearly a month, the candidates practiced their speeches and talent demonstrations with instructors every day.



Alfred's two candidates with CIAU teachers and judges

This competition not only increased the experience for the candidates, but also stimulated their enthusiasm for learning Chinese.



Group photo at the Chinese Bridge competition

Symposium to Promote Chinese Martial Arts held in Arizona

On April 9, Tao Peng, the Chinese director of the Confucius Institute at Alfred University, attended a symposium on promoting Chinese martial arts hosted by the Confucius Institute at the University of Arizona.



Tao Peng introducing CIAU Tai Chi class

Tao Peng discussed the Tai Chi class of the Confucius Institute at Alfred

University, which was founded in 2011 and has had more than 80 members so far. In the CIAU Tai Chi class, participants have mastered not only the basics like the 24-Step sequence, Yijinjing, Baduanjin and the Five-Animal exercise, but also advanced long forms like the Swimming Dragon and Kung Fu Fan.

Attendees from different Confucius Institutes shared their own experiences with promoting Chinese martial arts like Chinese boxing, Kung Fu fan, and Tai Chi.



Group Photo at the Martial Arts Symposium

HSK Test

On April 16th, the HSK Chinese Proficiency Test was administered in AU's Perlman Hall by CIAU faculty Haley Gao, Flare Ding, and Molly Zhang.



Students taking the HSK Test

Nine Alfred University students in Chinese classes took the Level 2 test. CIAU has arranged for students in Chinese classes to take the HSK Test several times so far. The testing process has become more and more standardized.

Guzheng Recital

On April 17th, CIAU faculty Zhongbei (Daisy) Wu's guzheng class students, Vanessa Englerth, Charles Miller, and exchange students Xuan Xie, Mengqi Dong, and Lixuan Pan from Hunan University of Commerce, China, performed guzheng in Miller Theater for the Alfred University Performing Arts music recital.



Vanessa and Charles performing guzheng

After one semester's study, they were adept at playing this traditional Chinese instrument guzheng, and their performance was well-received by the audience.

On April 19th, CIAU faculty Flare Ding, Molly Zhang, and Mark Duan were invited to introduce Chinese calligraphy and painting to sixth grade students at Oliver Middle School in the Brockport Central School District.



Molly Zhang introducing calligraphy



Hunan students performing guzheng

Chinese calligraphy and painting lecture at Brockport Central School



One student scrutinizing an ink stone

Flare Ding introduced two drawing styles, meticulous painting and free sketch painting, together with the “Four Gentlemen of the Flowers”: plum, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum.



Flare Ding introducing two styles of painting

All the presentations were well received and students asked many questions about Chinese culture.

In the end, students learned how to use writing brushes and then experienced both calligraphy and painting for themselves.



Students experiencing calligraphy and painting

Open House in Geneva

On April 22nd, the Chinese Immersion Class of Geneva City School District held an open house from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Open house provides a great chance for the parents to learn about school programs and gives a valid channel for communication between parents and teachers.



Parents watching students' performance

Starry He's students showed their knowledge of Chinese language to their parents by singing Chinese songs, accompanied by CIAU faculty Daisy Wu with her guzheng.

The Chinese program is appreciated by the parents and the school district, for it is offering a new skill and perspective to their children.

After the performance, students gave their Chinese teacher, Starry He, a present to express their gratitude.



Students giving a present to CIAU faculty Starry He

Also, many students were interested in the traditional Chinese instrument guzheng and tried to learn how to play it with the help of Daisy Wu.



Students learning guzheng



Students and parents eating Chinese food

In addition, CIAU provided traditional Chinese food for both students and parents, which was well received.

2016 National Chinese Language Conference

The 2016 National Chinese Language Conference, which is dedicated to encouraging dialogue in the field of Chinese language education and ensuring wide-scale success, was held in Chicago from April 28 to 30.



CIAU faculty at the National Chinese Language Conference

CIAU faculty Zhongbei (Daisy) Wu, Yanfang (Elyn) Song, and Zhaoyun (Catherine) Zhai, attended this conference, together with Geneva

City School District Superintendent Trina Newton, Director of Innovative Programming Tracy Marchionda, and Kindergarten teacher Jenna Keeton.

Tracy Marchionda, Trina Newton and Jenna Keeton, who is the teacher of English in a dual language English/Mandarin classroom, talked about how to set the stage for learning Mandarin in a Dual Language Program.



Tracy, Trina and Jenna delivering a speech

Hot Dog Day Parade

On April 30th, the CIAU Tai Chi group joined the Hot Dog Day parade down Main Street, together with twenty-seven other groups from Alfred.



Tai Chi class members

Hot Dog Day, which includes a parade, carnival games, amusement rides, bounce houses, arts and crafts vendors, and food vendors, has been an annual tradition in Alfred, NY, since 1972. The many events that comprise Hot Dog Day are organized by Alfred State and Alfred University students in service to the local community.



CIAU Tai Chi Group in the Hot Dog Day parade

Upcoming Events

June 2nd to July 2nd: Chinese Painting Exhibition by the Canisteo Class. Steuben Trust Company, Hornell, NY

June 11th: Tai Chi Demonstration at Alfred University Alumni Reunion Event. Alfred University Bandstand

July 25-28th: Chinese Summer Camp. Geneva City School District, Geneva, NY

Learn a Chinese Word and Know Its Culture:

China's Dough Figurines

The Chinese word miansu (面塑), literally meaning “dough sculpture”, refers to dough figurines.

The main raw material of dough figurines is sticky rice flour, which is processed into dough of various colors. Using simple tools, craftsmen are able to turn the dough into all sorts of different figures and animals. Several characters from traditional Chinese operas - including Sun Wukong (known as the Monkey King), Zhu Bajie, Guan Yu, Mu

Guiying and Hua Mulan - are frequently made into dough figurines.



Dough figurine Sun Wukong

The “Dough Figurine Zhao” from Shanghai and the “Dough Figurine Tang” from Beijing represent two different styles of dough sculpture arts. Sculptures of “Dough Figurine Zhao” style tend to be detail-oriented and brilliantly colored, while sculptures of “Dough Figurine Tang” style are lifelike and possess primitive simplicity.



“Dough Figurine Tang” type of works



“Dough Figurine Zhao” type of works

Dough figurines are small in size and highly portable.

In addition, they do not easily become misshapen, nor do their colors fade easily. For these reasons, dough figurines make excellent souvenirs, and are especially popular among children. It is common to see folk artists creating dough figurines at scenic spots throughout China.

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