

**Give to the Max Stories—November 2017**  
By Yinghua parent Mike Tong (5B, 3A and K3)

## **Powerful, Real World Language Experiences at Yinghua Academy**

### **Language Forges Friendship—Matilda’s Story**

Fourth grader Matilda's favorite thing about Target runs with her mom isn't visiting the toy section. Nor is it dreaming about the impulse-buy candy in the checkout lanes. In fact, Matilda has found something far more valuable than anything that's for sale in Minnesota's hometown retailer: Friendship.

Lynn hails from China and works at the local Target. She's also Matilda's favorite person to see in the signature red and khaki. As Matilda's mom, Jayne, wraps up her shopping, Matilda waits eagerly to connect with Lynn. They go on and on in Chinese, sharing stories and laughs—even finding unusual commonalities about the places they've been and the places they're from.

Yinghua Academy gives the gift of Friendship—traversing age, culture,  
and even conveyor belts—through the gift of shared language.

Help Yinghua earn an extra gift from our School Board and friends. If we receive **350 or more donations** during this campaign, they will donate \$7,630!

And, your gift may lead to even more through the Bush Foundation-sponsored **PRIZE POOL**. Each hour, one prize of \$1,000 will be awarded through a random drawing of all donations from the previous hour. And, one **Super-Sized Prize** of \$10,000 will be awarded, drawn randomly from all GiveMN.org donations made before 11:59 p.m. on November 16.

Make a gift of any size, or use your donation to recognize a Yinghua milestone-

- \$31 honors each of our 31 Chinese immersion homerooms.
- \$99 recognizes each and every person on staff.
- \$172 equals a **dollar-a-day** for the school year.
- \$559 celebrates every household in the Yinghua community.
- \$816 counts every student.
- \$2006 commemorates our founding year and the leaders whose vision made such a difference.

### **Language Outside the Classroom—Kai’s Story**

In September, guests from the Consulate-General of the People’s Republic of China in Chicago toured Yinghua with our Executive and Academic Directors.

On the third floor, the group encountered a 7th grader performing his Student Life "Hallway Prefect" duties. Kai was talking into his radio and clad in safety yellow. Mrs. Berg made introductions, and Kai explained his duty to monitor hallways and make sure students are where they're supposed to be during recess or homework time. Mrs. Berg recalls, "Our guests were flabbergasted! Here was a great example of community responsibility, and they were absolutely amazed by our student's command of Chinese."

One of the school's strategic initiatives is to increase Middle School students' use of Chinese in school settings outside of the classroom. Under the guidance of teacher Bo Liu, who serves on the School Board, we ask 5th through 8th grade students to use Chinese in SLO committee work, event planning, clubs, scheduling, and communication.

Yinghua Academy gives more than classroom Chinese  
to its students—it gives the language of life skills.

### **Language at the Crossing—Kiri’s Story**

The reporter asked about sidewalks, crosswalks, and whether jaywalking was dangerous. They anticipated the usual observations about safety and increasing car traffic in their city, Hohhot, capital of north China’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Imagine their surprise when one of the youngsters described the bike lanes at home in Minneapolis.

You guessed it, the news crew had met Kiri, a Yinghua fourth grader whose family is on leave this year in Hohhot—her family likes to bike.

Kiri is the only foreigner at Xinhua Primary School. Mom writes, “Her four years at Yinghua—kindergarten through third grade—prepared her well to join Xinhua. Her Chinese speaking skills are on a par with her classmates.” In October, five weeks into the school year, the Xinhua director reported to her parents that she’s doing really well in school. Mom again: “Yinghua Academy definitely provided Kiri with a very solid foundation for success in a Chinese public school.”

Giving the gift of Chinese fluency prepares children for far more  
than we can imagine. So whether they're called to life in Asia, or to  
appear on the local news — they will be ready.

### **Saving for the Language Keystone—Mathea’s Story**

For Mathea, China was further than it looked on the map. And more intriguing, as well.

As Yinghua's rising seventh and eighth grade classes do each year, Mathea's cohort was charting its own course for the Middle Kingdom. The birthplace of fireworks, porcelain, and kung fu fighting (with kicks as fast as lightning). But for Mathea, a single obstacle stood before her like a great stone wall.

How was she to raise the needed \$4,000 to participate on this trip? Strapped with determination, creativity, and support from her mom and Yinghua Executive Director Sue Berg, Mathea made a plan. As an artist, she set out to draw support by hosting her very own art show at the Casket Arts Building in Northeast Minneapolis. As a savvy netizen, she created a GoFundMe page. And with the help of many people, Mathea accomplished her goal.

This annual rite of passage for our Middle Schoolers is the keystone to your child's Chinese language education. And Yinghua wants to help families make it happen. In January 2018,

Yinghua is partnering with St. Paul's Drake Bank to help families set up accounts for their children to save for the Middle School study abroad trip.

### **Language Brings Us Home—Naomi’s Story**

The Gunflint Trail is 57 miles of rugged wonder. Cordoning off the northeastern tip of our great state, the endless lakes that stretch along the road are a staunch reminder that a measly '10,000' hardly captures the land that is Minnesota.

Here, you are far from home. And for two Chinese interns, lodging for the summer on the Gunflint Trail, home is even farther away. Farther, that is, until Naomi came down the path.

With her family at her side, Naomi came up north for a fish fry, but was quickly reeled into conversation with the Chinese faces that reminded her of being at back at Yinghua Academy. For Naomi, it was a lively conversation in her second native tongue. But for these Chinese women, they got a taste of home to ease the sickness of being so far from China.

Yinghua Academy makes an impact everywhere our students go.  
Even if they're traipsing 57 miles through the North Woods  
(or 92 kilometers, whatever makes you feel at home).

## Language Creates Human Connection—Freddy’s Story

When a group, 12 strong, of Chinese tourists unleash smartphones atop telescopic selfie sticks and head for the Empire State Building, they're not messing around. They have come to take their bite of the Big Apple. Visiting Broadway, chewing on a pretzel, and strolling Central Park—all in the name of connecting with the America they've come to see.

But one thing they didn't pack: Native proficiency in the New York vernacular (most of us lack this!). So, when 12-year-old Freddy, a 7th grader at Yinghua Academy, surprised them with his fluent Chinese, they made the meaningful connection they had crossed an ocean to make. And Freddy made a dozen new friends.

Yinghua Academy gives more than Chinese language to bridge-builders like Freddy.  
Yinghua Academy gives these connection-making children to the world.

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Please donate: <https://givemn.org/organization/Yinghua>.