

The 160th Anniversary Community Awareness Project
Assembly Presentation on 14th September 2012

Ho: Dear Dr. Kennard, teachers and fellow schoolmates,

Ho: Good morning, I am Jonathan Ho from 5C, he is Anthony Ki from 5F and he is Jonathan Ma from 6D, we all participated in the 160th Anniversary Community Awareness Project this year. The project comprised three major events, the Youth Service Learning Conference, the Guangxi Visit and the follow-up activities back in Hong Kong.

Our College has already organized five Community Awareness Projects since 2008. Our footprints covered Harbin, Henan, Guizhou and Qinghai. In the midst of the 160th anniversary celebrations, our principal Dr. Kennard added some new elements into the project. Anthony will tell you some more about it.

Ki: The 160th Anniversary Community Project took place in Hong Kong and Guangxi between 8 and 19 July, 2012. Hosted by St. Paul's College, the event ran in conjunction with U-Hearts and the International Boys' School Coalition (IBSC). In the previous projects only SPC students and teachers were involved, but this time we managed to invite students and teachers from four IBSC member schools in the USA and Australia. A total of 19 visitors arrived in Hong Kong on 8th July, the same day that the Music Union organized a 4-hour Music Marathon to raise funds for U-Hearts and Christian Action. Up next, the school organized a Youth Service Learning Conference on 10th July, over 500 delegates from 14 local secondary schools were present. The conference invited three keynote speakers (Dr. Chung Chi Ping JP, Mr. Lu Kwong Fai and Mr. Poon Siu To) and some local and overseas students to share their experiences and with the delegates.

Participants brought donations of their own in a small piggy bank. We raised over fourteen thousand dollars for our organizing partner, U-Hearts during the Music Marathon and the conference. The conference was also broadcast live to the IBSC conference in Melbourne, Australia which was taking place at the same time. In the afternoon, the conference event proceeded with hundreds of participants in 12 groups heading for different local service projects. Some walked to Kwun Lung Lau and Caine Road to visit the homes of the elderly while others travelled far away to Mongkok, Shamshuipo and Jordan to visit those people living in the refugee hostel, the ethnic minority centre and the cage homes. Two groups staying at St. Paul's to join either the sign language course or the workshop with the handicapped. The afternoon service projects were meaningful, fruitful and unforgettable. Credits should be given to the many service organizations in Hong Kong, especially to Christian Action, Caritas Hong Kong, LifeForce, the Hong Kong Society for the Deaf, the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong and the Methodist Church. Heartfelt thanks should also be given to the teachers of the 14 participating schools and some of our old boys who volunteered to be the group leaders.

The service projects ended at 5pm approximately, but it was not the end. All the delegates came back and they gathered at the lower playground for the Youth Social Evening which was another wonderful element in the project. We got opportunities to make friends with students of other schools, to share learning experiences with each other and watch the entertaining music and magic performances while having our dinner. The youth social evening was sheer joyful, entertaining and memorable.

Ma: The end of the conference only marked the beginning of the final challenge, the Guangxi Visit. Days ahead of the Guangxi Visit, all of us including the overseas delegates had to undergo many hours of training. Harsh indeed, but we did build stronger teamwork and set clearer missions after the pre-visit training. On 12th July, we gathered

at the China Ferry Terminal at 6:30am, quite early in the morning and hopped on a ferry to Gaoming Port across the Zhujiang Delta, and further proceeded into the city of Yulin (玉林) in Guangxi, where we resided at the Zhen Yeung Hotel , preparing for the days of challenges that followed.

The next day, we arrived at Licun Middle School, where we met some new friends. After the ice-breaking activities, each group geared up for the home-stay programme and went to the market to buy some fresh meat and vegetables for dinner. We all looked forward to the home-stay night even though we might have to walk three hours in the heat.

Fortunately, we all arrived at the host families in good shape and still managed to enjoy the once-in-a-lifetime cooking experience. As we are typical HK teens not used to serving others, we took more hours to have the dinner done. Worst still, we had no access to electric or gas stove, except pieces of chopped firewood. Our efforts paid off. All of us were so hungry that we emptied all the dishes regardless of the weird taste and appearance. With no delay, we took a quick shower right after the dinner as we had got the whole body black and wet while burning firewood in the kitchen. Luckily, the water was not that cold in summer, the bed was not that hard and the night was not that long. The next morning, we worked in the farm as the locals do. They also let us dry the rice and reap the crops. It was the first time that we did farm work, and we were a bit nervous. Fortunately everything was fine.

After that, we bade farewell to the host families and walked back to school. Some groups took another 3 hours while the sick and the injured got good excuses to have a free bus ride. Honestly, many of us were no longer in good shape after the overnight torture and we longed for a better rest. However, right after the lunch, we needed to decide what sort of renovation work should be done in the campus. In the heat of the argument

among different groups, we finally decided to paint the window frames. We unanimously agreed that renovating the dormitory should be the first priority because we had stayed there the previous night and found that the condition of the dormitory was very bad. We wanted to do something for them.

The fourth day approached, we could not wait but to furnish the campus with brushes and paints. Though each group could only paint four rooms, in moments, the dull window frame started growing in shiny silver, and at noon, when we finally came down from the dorms, even the railing of the stairs were painted! The local students were overjoyed and we felt satisfied as we had finally contributed something to them.

After lunch, we went to one of the places in Licun Middle School that the local students are quite proud of - the Culture Corridor. There were many blackboards mounted on the walls, giving updated information to students. We walked along the corridor only to find three blank boards. We picked up pieces of coloured chalk and started to decorate these blackboards with our theme song while Mr. Ng was drawing his signature cartoons. We also wrote our heartfelt blessings to them there. It also marked the end of the six-day visit. Many local students gathered at the school main gate to wave goodbye to us. We all know that it might be the last chance that we met each other and tears were slowly dropping down from our eyes.

Ho: On July 16, we came back to Hong Kong in the evening. Some of us accompanied the overseas students and teachers to the Caritas Hotel at Tinwan as they would stay three more days for sightseeing and shopping before departing home.

Now, please enjoy a video capturing the highlights of the 12-day service learning project. The background music is composed by Chris Cheung in 6C, while the lyrics in English are written by Jonathon Ma, the beautiful lyrics in Putonghua and Cantonese are written by

Jason So in 5D and Matthew Man in 5F respectively. The song is sung by Alex Yau in 7C. Please enjoy it.

(Play [VIDEO](#))

We would like to express our gratitude to a number of people,

a) to the nine wonderful teachers accompanied us the whole trip, for their fabulous effort and support.

b) to the volunteers from U-Hearts, who offered wonderful guidance and backup to us throughout the trip.

c) to teachers and students of the four IBSC member schools for their participation and friendships. This is not their business after all, but they chose to leave their comfort zone for two weeks to join our project.

Last but not least, we would like to thank the College Council and Dr. Kennard for supporting and subsidizing the project and the School Management for offering perfect administrative support.

Once again, a big thanks to all the students, janitors and teachers involved. Without them, the project would not be so successful. And thank you for paying attention to our presentation.

Thank you! This is the end of our presentation.