

The Journey of Hope Continues...

Linda Chan 陳文綺嫻 Donor & Volunteer

After every CRRS vision trip to Guangxi, I remind myself not to make the trip again. I just do not have the time; the jetlag is too hard on me physically; the schedule is too hectic, etc. etc. Yet, I went again in November, 2018. Throughout the 8 days, we met over 700 students. We listened to their stories in auditoriums, shared in small groups in their classrooms, ate lunches and dinners with as many students as possible, watched their performances and hugged and cried with them. Many of their stories touched my heart again.

Here are some of the students we met –

Liao Ding Sheng (廖頂勝) – when Dr. Leung visited the Longji Rice Terraces (龍脊梯田) years ago, he got chatting with a sedan chair carrier (轎夫), saw his son running around in rags with no shoes, asked why he was not in school, learnt about the family's financial hardships and CRRS started sponsoring Liao Ding Sheng. Today, Liao has finished school and became a traffic police officer (交通警察). At our evening gathering in Guilin when Liao found out that some of the other university students had to leave early to catch the last bus back to school, he borrowed a car and drove them all home. As he puts it, all the students sponsored by CRRS are united as one big family and they should take care of each other.



Liao Ding Sheng (廖頂勝) (middle) treasures his copy of our 2018 Program Book. Photo taken with Simon Chan (Left, Donor from Toronto) and Chris Ho (Right, CRRS Chairman from Vancouver)



Linda hugs a crying Wei Lin Bei (韋林貝)

Wei Lin Bei (韋林貝) from Duan Yaozhong High School (都安瑤中) – Wei has been suffering from kidney disease since she was five years old. The costs of medical care have caused her family to go heavily into debt and so she applied to CRRS for sponsorship. She continues to take medication which has stunted her physical growth. Still, she keeps up her grades and is currently ranked within the top 20 students in her grade of 1,500.

年	月	日	第	周	星期	科	第	章(課)	第	節(共	節)
亲爱的叔叔阿姨们:											
你们好!我是来自都安瑶中高二年级的韦林贝。在去年的这个时候我成了文更班中的一员,那时候我很激动,暗下决心要更加努力学习!去年这个时间听到你们会来看我们的消息,我很开心,也很激动。真正见到你们的那一天我很开心很感动,那时候忍住激动的泪水与你们交流。因为我从小患有肾病,从5岁开始一直到现在,花去了很多钱,欠了很多债,但我没有放弃学习,凭自己的努力考上自己心中的中学,接下来还想考上心中的那所大学。有了你们的资助,让我家的经济条件好一些了,我也是在努力学习,现在在年级排在20名。我打算以后做一名优秀的人民教师,像博士一样教书育人,同时我也会像你们一样,将这份善心传递下去!											
你们爱我们,而我也爱你们,谢谢你们对我的资助,我会好好努力的,将来做一个对祖国有益的人才,报答你们!											
高二文更班:韦林贝											
2018年10月31日											

A "Thank You" letter from Wei Lin Bei (韋林貝)



No more tears for Wei Lin Bei (韋林貝)

Wu Jiahua (吳家華) from Huanjiang Third Primary School (環江三小) – Wu is a bright young Grade 6 student being sponsored by our teammate Francis Hui. Wu's mother died and his dad works in Nanning. On weekends, he goes home to his elderly grandma and grandpa. Even with all the hardships, Wu got into the "Class for Excellent Students" (優秀生班) and has been appointed a class leader. He even spoke to me in English to the laughter of his classmates, and said, "I play ping pong very well". He misses his parents a lot, but still has a beautiful, sunny smile on his face.



Wu Jiahua (吳家華) sitting left of Linda with his classmates

Home Visits

Wei Jiangjing (韋江景) from Huanjiang High School (環江高中) – both of Wei's parents have back problems and are unable to find better jobs in the city. Instead, they raise silkworms on the ground floor of their house. They work from 5 am to 11 pm every day to feed the silkworms. It takes 20 days to raise one batch and so from March to October, they can harvest about 8 – 9 batches. Breeding conditions have to be just right - not too hot, not too cold or not too humid. Otherwise, the whole batch will die. In a good year, they can earn about \$15,000 RMB. To leave enough room for the silkworms, eight family members squeeze onto the second floor of their house. Wei did not get good marks in her mid-term exam and felt really ashamed in front of her parents. Her mother kept assuring her she just needed to try her best.



Linda tries to comfort Wei Jiangjing (韋江景) and her mother



Breeding silkworms on the main floor of the home of Wei Jiangjing (韋江景)



The Yuan Siblings, Yuan Shuai (袁帥) and Yuan Ying (袁英), sitting in front of their home with Dr. Leung and Linda

Yuan Shuai (袁帥) from Tiandong Vocational and Technical School (田東職業技術學校) – a few of our team took a small van for a 1.5 - hour bumpy ride to visit Yuan's home. Yuan's sister, Yuan Ying (袁英), a cousin and an aunt came to prepare a meal to welcome us. We were curious why the brother and sister have such sad faces. It turned out their mother almost died from her illness a few days prior and was still in the hospital. Our team collected as much money as we could among us and went to the hospital. It appeared Yuan's mother has stomach ulcer and severe asthma among many other health issues, so much so that her knees, legs, arms and hands were all swollen. Yuan Ying had already quit school for a couple of months to try

to find a job to help out. Father is working in Jiangmen (江門) and cannot come home for fear of losing his job. We reminded Yuan's mother repeatedly that Yuan Ying must go back to school to finish her education. As we were leaving the hospital, we finally saw smiles on these two young people's faces. A few days later, I received a text message from Yuan Ying that she has re-enrolled back in school and promised me that she would study very hard so as not to disappoint our team.



Dr. Leung with Mrs. Yuan and her children in the hospital

The above stories are but a few of the heart-wrenching ones we heard. With the increased prosperity in China, life has indeed improved for many. Still, there are many families with minimal financial resources continuing to struggle. They may make do when all is well, but when there come some unforeseen circumstances like sicknesses or deaths or job losses, the balance will tip and the families will start to sink into cycles of financial hardships. All we at CRRS could do is to offer these families a little bit of financial cushion to give them some breathing room so their children can continue going to school.

We firmly believe in helping these children to pursue their education. Will you walk with them and their families on this journey and to give them hope?

