Letter from the Director

Dear readers,
Ni Hao!

The U.S.-China Institute and Confucius Institute at Bryant University continue to offer high-quality academic and cultural programs that strengthen the connection between China and the United States.

Faculty and student research on China is an important part of our programs. Page 3 provides an example of a faculty-led research program that resulted in new knowledge about China’s past, while student-faculty interaction in the field and laboratory contributed to superior scholarly publications. Similarly, Page 8 tells the story of a Bryant student who became intrigued with China through courses and a study trip. These interests led to the pursuit of a summer internship in Beijing.

Building upon the success of the Sophomore International Experience (SIE) in China over the past several years, the U.S.-China Institute and Confucius Institute have added Hong Kong as a new destination beginning in 2012. A gateway city mixing Eastern and Western cultures, Hong Kong will provide Bryant students with a different perspective on modern China (Page 4).

The institute’s Chinese Speaker Series continues to attract faculty and students (Page 6). Four experts in the spring semester delivered interesting talks covering a wide range of China-related topics.

To better understand a country, it is our belief that cultural events go hand-in-hand with academic programs. Our annual Chinese New Year celebration at Bryant University has become a regular and much-anticipated event for Rhode Islanders (Page 10).

For the fifth consecutive year, the U.S.-China Institute was selected by the U.S. government to offer STARTALK Chinese language and cultural programs on campus. This intense three-week immersion training camp attracted 67 middle school and high school students and 35 teachers from K-12 schools across Rhode Island and other New England states (Page 7).

For the first time, the U.S.-China Institute and Confucius Institute collaborated with WaterFire Providence to offer a Chinese Culture Night on July 16 in the state’s capital city. The “Chinese Culture Night/WaterFire Providence” featured the Bryant University Student Dragon Dance Team and a splendid show of Chinese arts and culture (Page 5).

The Bryant community welcomed Ms. Li (Ada) Xiang and Mr. Qin Lei as exchange students from China University of Geosciences at Wuhan. They were selected from a large pool of applicants. In addition to their excellent academic records, each possesses unique artistic talents (Page 9).

A series of new programs has been planned for the spring. For updates, please refer to our institute’s website at china.bryant.edu.

We wish you an enjoyable semester!

Hong Yang, Ph.D.
Charles J. Smiley Chair Professor
Director, U.S.-China Institute
and Confucius Institute
Bryant University
Bryant has signed an agreement with Jilin University Zhuhai College to build a joint business school and start a series of programs for student and faculty exchanges. This marks a significant new milestone in the scope of Bryant’s China programs and global outreach.

The business school will be located on the campus of Jilin University Zhuhai College. Jilin University is one of the major comprehensive universities in China, and its Zhuhai College boasts a strong business faculty, world-class facilities, and a steady growth trajectory with a global focus. The school expects to enroll students in fall 2013 once approval is received by China’s Ministry of Education.

Because of its location and infrastructure, Zhuhai is attracting an increasing number of educational institutions, both domestic and international, which are establishing branch campuses. The city, located in the Pearl River Delta area in Southeast China, is one of the most highly developed and prosperous yet environmentally sustainable areas in the country. Located less than one hour from Hong Kong, Macau, and Shenzhen, Zhuhai is part of the financial, industrial, and educational hub of China and Southeast Asia. The joint business school will attract not only Chinese students but also those from Southeast and South Asia, including Singapore, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

For Bryant students, the school will serve as a base for study, research, and cultural experiences. Bryant faculty members will also have opportunities to teach and conduct research with their Chinese counterparts.

Additionally, the agreement outlined a program to recruit qualified Chinese students for Bryant’s MBA program.
A rcheologists have long been fascinated by China and its ancient history of civilization, unearthing countless, spectacular artifacts. Today, many hypotheses relating to Chinese civilization can be tested using advanced scientific and technological methods.

A research project led by Professor of Science and Technology Hong Yang, Ph.D., Dr. Charles J. Smiley Chair for the Confucius Institute at Bryant, explores environmental changes relating to the origin and early development of Chinese civilization. Using organic geochemistry and isotope geology technologies, Professor Yang and his colleagues – Professors Qin Leng and Gaytha A. Langlois (members of Bryant’s Science and Technology Department) – have studied material from archeological sites in the northwestern provinces of Inner Mongolia and Gansu along the ancient Silk Road. Working with Bryant students, they examined organic remains and sediments used to build housing approximately 4,000 years ago. Their research attempts to answer questions about early human settlement in response to global climate change during the Neolithic Age.

This group of Bryant professors and students visited archeological sites (see picture above) and conducted laboratory work with the help of Dr. Xiaoyan Ruan, a visiting post-doctoral organic geochemist from China University of Geosciences, Wuhan. The results of this study have been the subject of several presentations at national and international conferences, including the National Conference on Scientific Archeology in Beijing at which Dr. Yang delivered an invited presentation. The group also participated in a symposium that focused on the application of modern technology to Chinese archeology. Twenty researchers from the United States and China participated in that conference, which was held on the Bryant campus last year.

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One of the participating students, Caitlyn Rose Witkowski ’11 (Long Island, New York), was a Bryant Honors Program member who earned her bachelor’s degree in environmental science in May. She participated in field work in China and carried out laboratory work to analyze these samples. A manuscript based largely upon Witkowski’s Honors thesis has been accepted by the international academic journal *PALAIOS*, and she is the first author of this paper. Witkowski’s interest was piqued by this research and Chinese culture, and she decided to study at China University of Geosciences in Wuhan for a year starting in the fall of 2011. She has been awarded a full scholarship by Hanban, the Confucius Institute Headquarters in Beijing, for the year of study in China.

This research project has been supported by Bryant University’s summer research stipend, NASA’s Rhode Island Space Grant, and the Confucius Institute grant.
Bryant sophomores will have an opportunity to visit Hong Kong as part of the Sophomore International Experience (SIE) trip to China in January 2012. Students will experience and explore Hong Kong’s unique history, the intersection of Chinese and Western cultures, and topics in business and politics. Highlights of the visit will include meeting company CEOs, touring one the largest shipping terminals in Asia, a river cruise, and a self-planned exploration day.

The destinations of each China program are carefully selected to offer a combination of educational, business, and cultural experiences. The two-week trip will also feature stops in Beijing and Guilin, which have been rated favorite places to visit by past SIE students.

In Beijing, the focus will be on cultural heritage and traditions, urban development, and the high-tech industry. Students will visit landmarks such as the Great Wall and Forbidden City, tour the headquarters and manufacturing plant of Lenovo (which makes the laptops that Bryant provides to every entering student), and relive the historic 2008 Olympics at original venues such as Bird’s Nest stadium and the Water Cube.

Guilin will provide students with breathtaking views of China’s natural landscape, a sharp contrast between its rural and urban economic development. Planned activities include hiking, mountain biking, a cooking class, a cultural show, and cave exploration. (One of the highlights in the past was everyone jumping into a mud pit in the cave and blending in with nature.)

The group will then travel to Zhuhai, located across the Pearl River from Hong Kong. Students will visit Jilin University Zhuhai College with which Bryant has signed an agreement to build a joint international business school. Bryant students will interact with Chinese students and will also visit factories and companies that are typical examples of Chinese manufacturers.

For more information about the program, past trip pictures and student testimonials, please visit our website at: china.bryant.edu.

Read what former SIE students have to say about the program:

“Traveling to China has been so far the most educational and enjoyable experience of my life. Bryant did an amazing job organizing and packing the trip with activities that are all worthwhile. I highly recommend that everyone choose China and am so thankful for my own experience there.”

– Emily Bogan ’13

“This trip was one of the best experiences of my life. It has opened my eyes and given me a global perspective. I do plan to return to China in the future, but I am afraid that my future trip will be no match for how great this one was.”

– Kyle Lipkvich ’12
An old Chinese saying: "the more logs brought to the fire, the higher the flame will be" came to mind as a WaterFire Providence event showcased Chinese language and culture through a Chinese Culture Night on July 16, a beautiful Saturday evening. Spectators crowded the bridges and areas around the three rivers in downtown Providence to experience Chinese culture through the event, jointly sponsored by U.S.-China Institute and Confucius Institute at Bryant University and WaterFire Providence. For the first time, these two non-profit organizations formed a partnership to create a unique fusion of art, culture, and diversity featuring China. Following are highlights of the event:

**Chinese Culture Reception**
The evening’s festivities began with a private reception hosted by Bryant University. President Ronald K. Machtley offered warm, welcoming remarks to more than 350 special guests, who enjoyed delicious American and Chinese hors d’oeuvres.

**“China Village”**
Curious guests to “China Village,” which was decorated with flags of China and America, were treated to demonstrations of paper-cutting and Chinese calligraphy by visiting Mandarin Chinese instructor Ms. Quan Long from the China University of Geosciences (Wuhan) and Mr. Jia Xie, a 2011 STARTALK teacher. Representatives from several Confucius Classrooms affiliated with Bryant showcased their strong partnership with the university through displays and demonstrations. Through the generosity of Lenovo, the Institute raffled off two computers to audience members and event attendees.

**Stage Performances**
A Chinese Culture Night show featured artists and students from the local community and China. The Rhode Island Kung Fu Club opened with a Lion Dance, Chinese drums, and a kung fu demonstration. Other artists highlighted Chinese culture through folk songs and musical instruments, group dances, calligraphy, and opera. Students and teachers from the 2011 STARTALK program also demonstrated their Chinese language and culture skills through song and dance.

**Bryant Dragon Dance**
During the WaterFire Providence procession, the Bryant University Student Dragon Dance Team embarked on a boat journey across the river from Dyer Street to Waterplace Park and performed at a location called the Basin. The 54-foot-long dragon, manned by Bryant University students and staff, as well as 2011 STARTALK students and teachers, spanned three connected boats and drew large crowds eager to catch a glimpse.

**Beautiful Music on the River**
Ms. Xu Jia, a talented singer and music professor from the China University of Geosciences (Wuhan), gave a special guest performance. She sang a classic Chinese folk song from a moving boat on the Providence River, her angelic voice and graceful gestures depicting a beautiful and confident young Chinese woman. A group of STARTALK students and teachers responded to her singing with a chorus onshore. The unique performance was a delightful and unexpected surprise.
Dr. Grace Chun Guo, assistant professor at Sacred Heart University, was the first speaker of the Spring 2011 Chinese Seminar Series at Bryant University. Dr. Guo gave an informative lecture on “guanxi” (social connections) and its role in establishing healthy business relationships with Chinese entrepreneurs. After a discussion about the importance of traditions such as Confucianism in the development of personal relationships, she discussed “guanxi” in social media, a growing trend in China.

The second seminar focused on European Union-China relations and its impact on the United States. Academic Dean of the Swiss Business School Dr. Bert Wolfs led the program and outlined the important role China plays and will continue to play in the global economy. He also touched on a few of the challenges that China and the rest of the world face as they shift into a new era of modernization.

The final seminar was led by Dr. Peter Kiang, professor of education and director of the Asian American Studies Program at the University of Massachusetts Boston. He reflected on Chinese-American history and heritage, from building the transcontinental railway to modern media hype about “Tiger Mothers” and Chinese parenting and education. Dr. Kiang also discussed a field project he and his students are involved with – a community effort to restore desecrated 19th century Chinese-American grave sites in the Boston area.

Beginning this fall, the monthly seminar series will feature a scientist who will speak about climate change in the Tibetan plateau, a professor who will discuss conducting business in China, a representative from Hong Kong who will address that country’s culture and business climate, and a renowned opera singer from China.

We hope that you will join us!
This marked the fifth consecutive year that Bryant’s U.S.-China Institute and Confucius Institute hosted the federally funded STARTALK Chinese Language and Culture Program for K-12 teachers, as well as middle school and high school students. From July 5 to July 23, a total of 67 students and 35 teachers chose STARTALK at Bryant as an important part of their summer experience.

Since its inception, more than 300 students and 150 teachers have graduated from Bryant’s STARTALK program, and 10 percent have participated for more than two years. The main motivation cited by students is that Bryant STARTALK not only provides them with rich Chinese language and cultural knowledge but also lasting friendships and memories.

Read about how Mackenzie Eastman, a four-time STARTALK participant from Beacon Charter High School for the Arts (Woonsocket, Rhode Island) is growing with STARTALK.

When I first stepped onto the Bryant University campus in the summer of 2008 for my first year of the STARTALK Chinese program, I hadn’t the faintest idea what I was doing. I was a 13-year-old, seventh-grade student who hadn’t heard a word of Chinese in her life, had never been to Bryant before that day, and had never been in a program like STARTALK. I was shy and a bit offbeat. But I loved learning, especially about languages, and the culture of the East fascinated me, so there I was.

Within those short two weeks, I discovered much more than I ever expected. I learned that the mysterious characters so symbolic of the image of China actually had specific meanings and pronunciations. The tones of each word could change what the meaning of your statement was. The strokes of a character were intended to be drawn in a specific order. I learned how to write my name in a new language, how to say “hello,” “goodbye,” “thank you,” and other simple phrases, and was taught with the rest of the program participants how to sing “Beijing Huanying Ni” in honor of the 2008 summer Olympics. And I exited the program knowing one thing for sure: I loved Chinese, and I wanted to learn more.

As summer drew to a close and fall began, I eagerly participated in a beginner’s Chinese class offered at Bryant to continue my studies, proudly writing my new Chinese name on every possible surface to commit it to memory. I became one of the most dedicated students in my class, making dozens and dozens of flashcards to commit characters to memory. I shyly tested my tones with fellow students, who usually either took Chinese classes at their school (which mine did not offer), were of Chinese heritage, or both. I should have been the one at a disadvantage, but I persevered and even, as some insisted, excelled. By the time summer returned, I was eager to attend the 2009 STARTALK program, bringing my friends with me to share the experience I’d had in my first year. By this time, I had advanced from the beginner level of the program to beginner plus – after only a year of learning Chinese.

Again I found the program a delight, learning even more that I’d ever dreamed. I saw a lion dance for the first time and was prompted by my teacher to show off the calligraphy work I’d done that she insisted was just as good as the work of a native-born Chinese. I laughed and ate rice under the trees with my friends as they slowly grew accustomed to the program, and watched with fascination as dancers and kung fu masters alike displayed their craft. STARTALK drew me deeper and deeper into the mysterious world of the East.

I continued my studies throughout that year as well, alternating between classes and private tutoring – whatever it took for me to go on learning. Then summer came, and a new Mackenzie Eastman returned to Bryant for a third year of STARTALK. The most significant part of that year was my new level of learning: I was already in the beginner high class. I had accomplished what I thought was impossible. I had broken out of my shell, worked through a class I initially believed to be beyond what I was capable of, and passed the final exam. I had learned to write my name in Chinese, play the drumbeat for a lion dance, and talk in Chinese about my name or the weather. I had been introduced to the East and fallen in love with China.

And it is because of all these things that I continued my Chinese studies and participated in my fourth year of the STARTALK program at Bryant University this past summer.

Mackenzie shopped at Kam Man Market, a Chinese grocery store, during a field trip to Quincy, MA, during the 2010 STARTALK program.
Bryant University senior Jason Fortin ‘12 (Pomfret, Connecticut), a double major in economics and global studies, has become increasingly engrossed by U.S.-China relations. In the summer of 2010, he was involved in an ongoing Chinese research project as part of a special topics course on the history of U.S.-China relations that he took with Professor Judy Barrett Litoff at Bryant. Fortin visited Beijing, Xi’an, Yan’an, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Hangzhou during his stay in China.

This past summer, he completed an internship at the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy in Beijing, where he also blogged about his experiences through the U.S.-China Institute website. In his second entry, he discussed one of the many events he was involved in during the internship.

Wrote Fortin, “… the Center hosted one of the best events I ever attended titled ‘China and India: Nuclear Doctrine and Dynamics.’ This event brought together major generals, a former ambassador, an admiral, top scholars, emerging academic leaders, and a host of other individuals from India and the PRC… Individuals candidly shared philosophical and historical perspectives, as well as policy paths on topics ranging from nuclear strategy and modernization; missile defense; and safety, security, and future of nuclear energy.

“Bilateral and multilateral cooperative options covered topics ranging from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).”

Earlier this year, Fortin interned at the Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy organization and influential think tank in Washington, D.C. There, he served as a research assistant to Senior Fellow Pietro Nivola, who has written extensively about energy policy and regulations. Fortin complemented his internship by taking three classes at Georgetown University.
Bryant University welcomed two talented students from China University of Geosciences (CUG) to its undergraduate program in December. Li Xiang and Qin Lei took part in a very competitive selection process with other CUG students to attend Bryant. They stood out not only because of their stellar academic performances but also because of their artistic talents and engaging personalities.

A Wuhan native, Li Xiang is a well-rounded student and head of the arts department of the Student Union at CUG. Li has been trained in hosting and has received numerous awards, including one from the Sixth Chinese Universities Shakespeare Festival in Hong Kong. She also enjoys playing the Cucurbit Flute (Hulu Si), an ancient Chinese musical instrument. Li successfully hosted the 2011 Rhode Island Chinese New Year Celebration in February, soon after she arrived at Bryant, as well as the Chinese Culture Night/WaterFire event on July 16 in Providence, co-sponsored by Bryant’s U.S.-China Institute and Confucius Institute.

Qin Lei is also a versatile student. Born in Sichuan Province in Southwest China, Qin trained in dance at a young age. As he matured, he also developed an interest in design and arts for school and community work. His talents were especially appreciated during the Chinese Culture Night/WaterFire event. Qin choreographed a group dance with K-12 students and designed promotional images for the event.

Asked what motivated them to apply to Bryant, Qin said he wanted to understand American culture, meet new people, and learn different things. Li hoped to use her language skills and cultural knowledge to help people understand and appreciate the similarities and the differences between Chinese and American cultures.

Qin and Li are impressed by the beautiful Bryant campus, friendly people, and hardworking students. Their first year was challenging, they acknowledge, and they struggled academically and culturally. But with various resources at Bryant such as the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and the Douglas and Judith Krupp Library, and help from professors and other students, they adapted very quickly. Today, they are more confident in the classroom and in their daily lives.

After graduation, Li hopes to continue her interest in mass communication in a graduate school and enter the field, helping to improve interaction among the cultures of the world. Qin plans to attend graduate school and start an arts investment company to assist and encourage struggling young artists.

Li and Qin aspire to become leaders in various cultural activities on campus. Without a doubt, their contributions to Bryant and the surrounding community will be invaluable and appreciated.
The U.S.-China Institute and the Confucius Institute at Bryant University hosted the 2011 Rhode Island Chinese New Year Celebration on February 6 in the main gymnasium. It was the fifth consecutive year that the state’s largest Chinese New Year Celebration was held on the Bryant campus.

Bryant students presented the Dragon Dance and played the Gu Zheng, an ancient Chinese musical instrument that is part of the zither family. The visiting Art Troupe of the China University of Geosciences in Wuhan (CUG), Bryant’s partner school, dazzled the crowd. They offered a variety of Chinese musical presentations and folk dances, as well as martial arts demonstrations. Local community groups also performed. For the first time, students and teachers from four of Bryant’s affiliated Confucius Classrooms in Smithfield and Lincoln (Rhode Island) and North Attleboro (Massachusetts) showcased their class work by reciting and singing in Chinese.

Mr. Robert O’Brien, Superintendent of Schools in Smithfield, was presented with the 2011 Bryant Confucius/Lenovo Achievement Award for his outstanding leadership and tremendous support of Chinese language and culture programs in his school district. Two schools in the Smithfield district – the William Winsor Elementary School and Smithfield High School – are the first K-12 Confucius Classrooms in the world to partner with the Confucius Institute.

The event was co-sponsored by the Rhode Island Association of Chinese Americans (RIACA). Ambassador Peng Keyu, Consul General of China in New York City, sent New Year’s greetings to the people of Rhode Island. Bryant President Ronald K. Machtley, Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts, and other distinguished guests joined more than 1,500 audience members from Rhode Island and other New England states to celebrate the start of the Year of the Rabbit.

According to the Chinese Zodiac, Chinese Lunar Year of 2011 is the Year of the Rabbit. People born in this year are articulate, talented, and ambitious. They are also virtuous, reserved, and have excellent taste. Rabbit people are admired, trusted, and are often financially lucky.
More than 1,000 people attended “A Chinese New Year Celebration” in the auditorium of North Attleboro (Massachusetts) High School on February 7, 2011. East met West as students from the North Attleboro High School (NAHS) Mandarin Chinese language class took to the stage, followed by the award-winning performing arts troupe from the China University of Geosciences (CUG) in Wuhan, China.

Mr. Scott Holcomb, NAHS principal and director of the school’s Confucius Classroom, offered some enjoyable and humorous welcoming remarks and introduced the CUG troupe, the staff of the Confucius Institute at Bryant University, and students from the NAHS Chinese language class. He also remarked that he hoped the Year of the Rabbit would bring peace and happiness to both countries and their people.

Hong Yang, Ph.D., Dr. Charles J. Smiley Chair Professor and Director of the U.S.-China Institute and Confucius Institute at Bryant, joined the head of the dance troupe delegation and Chairman of the University Council of CUG, Mr. Xiang Hao, who expressed his appreciation to North Attleboro High School. Mr. Hao also offered praise for the high school’s teaching facilities and library.

The performance opened with 19 students from the Confucius Classroom singing “Happy Chinese New Year” and “Jingle Bells” in Mandarin Chinese. With ancient Chinese music playing softly in the background, they also recited famous Chinese Tang Dynasty poems. They wrote sentences in Chinese characters, including: “This year Massachusetts had a lot of snow.” Their Chinese teacher, Ms. Lei Yang, performed a celebrated piece of music titled “Grand Mountains and Flowing Water” on the Guzheng, a Chinese folk music instrument described as a Chinese piano that dates back about 2,000 years. These performances were well received, as evidenced by the audience’s delight and applause.

The CUG troupe then gave a one-hour performance that included a Dragon Boat Folk Solo, a Folk Music Ensemble, a “Steeds Galloping” Flute Solo, the “Rhythm of Calligraphy” Dance and Music Ensemble, and other selections. Their brilliant performances allowed those in attendance to sample 5,000 years of rich Chinese history and culture. The audience responded with a sustained standing ovation.

After the celebration had ended, all the performers dined in the North Attleboro High School Media Center. They exchanged gifts and took pictures together to remember this magnificent day. “What a wonderful experience for our kids and for our town,” said Mrs. Anne Marie McGrail, chair of the NAHS foreign language department and the Confucius Classroom coordinator.
Upcoming U.S.-China Institute Events

Thursday, September 15
Mid-Autumn Festival
The Mid-Autumn Festival will feature a presentation on Chinese jade culture by experts from the China University of Geosciences at Wuhan, as well as a Chinese Jade Exhibition. The Exhibition will also be displayed in the Museum of National History and Planetarium in Providence beginning on September 17.

Monday, September 19
Opening Ceremony of the Affiliated Confucius Classroom of SORICO
Westerly High School
Westerly, Rhode Island

October 23
Chinese Proficiency Test (New HSK)

November 12
Youth Chinese Test (YCT)

Monthly
China Seminar Series
Chinese Film Screenings

Beginning in late September
Community Chinese classes

For more information, visit our website at china.bryant.edu.