China offers a vast learning experience for students

By Kaleh Sampson
Layout Editor

Studying abroad in China provides students with a great opportunity to see the world from a new and different perspective and to experience how students from other countries and different cultures live.

Study abroad programs, such as UNCP's summer faculty-led study abroad program in China, allow students to absorb another country's history and culture. Instead of skimming through pages of textbooks and glancing at pictures and postcards of new and exciting places in the world, students are able to physically touch famous monuments and walk on the same cobblestone paths that famous figures in history have walked on before us.

China is one country that offers students opportunities to study Chinese history and culture first hand. China is full of architecture, artifacts and relics that date back to ancient times and brings China's 5,000 plus years of history to life.

In Beijing, the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City all offer a vast insight into Chinese history and culture. The Summer Palace, dating back to the Qing Dynasty, is also a beautiful tourist attractions filled with history and tales of how the Dowager Empress Cixi used moneys reserved for building a navy fleet to reconstruct the Summer Palace so she would have an extravagant summer resort.

The Shanghai World Finance Center, the third tallest buildings in the world, and also the Jin Mao Tower, the 10th tallest building in the world are located in Shanghai. The Yuyuan Garden, dating back to the Ming Dynasty, is also an historic attraction in Shanghai.

The Twin Pagoda Temple, located in Taiyuan, also dates back to the Ming Dynasty. The two 53-meter tall pagodas each have 13 stories made completely of brick and stone. Inside the pagodas, wishes and prayers of people who have visited the temples are carved into the bricks.

Not only does the rich history of China make the country a significant study abroad site for students, but the differences in Chinese lifestyle also make the country eye opening for American student to experience. In a country where the government has blocked popular social media websites including Facebook and Twitter, students experience first-hand the control of the Chinese government and impact that the Chinese Communist Party has on daily living.

In 2009, President Barack Obama announced the "100,00 Strong Initiative" urging American students to strengthen U.S – China ties by studying in China and becoming more involved in world affairs. According to the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational Affairs Ann Stock, more American students study abroad in China than in any other country.

UNCP has a summer faculty-led study abroad program in China that allows students to attend the Xi'an University of Posts and Telecommunications in Xi'an, China.

Eight UNCP students will earn 3-credit hours this summer during their 18-day stay in China. In addition to taking classes at XUPT, students will also participate in excursions to see the Great Wall, The Forbidden City, the Terracotta Warriors, the Beijing Opera, Shaanxi Provincial Historical Museum and many other historical sites in China.

"Study Abroad is an investment in your future. As a global citizen in today's world you are more aware of cultural similarities than differences, and you strive to practice humility, tolerance and self-criticism," Robyn Deemer, Study Abroad coordinator, said.

"You understand how to get things done in this world and you nurture and empower others around you. You are a leader in your own right. Travel abroad is an incredibly enriching experience, and when coupled with academics it becomes even more rewarding and valuable."

Editor's note: Pine Needle Layout Editor Kaleh Sampson traveled to China over spring break.

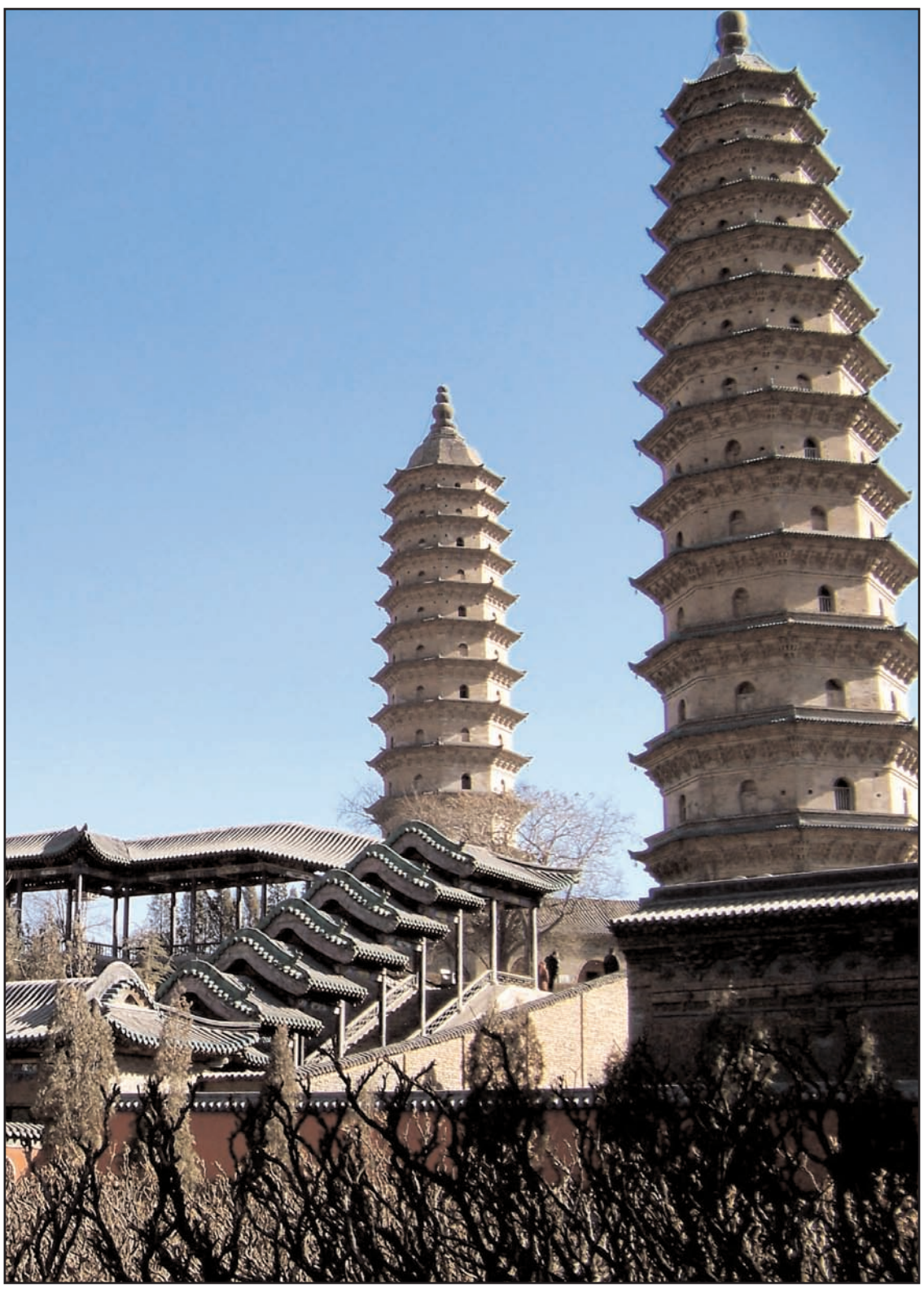

Photo by Kaleh Sampson

The Twin Pagoda Temple is a popular tourist attraction in Taiyuan City. The towers each have 13 stories and bricks are carved with the wishes of visitors.

Photo by Kaleh Sampson

The Shanghai World Finance Center (left) is the world's third tallest building in the world. The Jin Mao Tower (right) is the 10th tallest building in the world.

Photo courtesy of Dong Nan Nan

The Great Wall has a history of more than 2,000 years. The Great Wall is about 5,500 miles long.

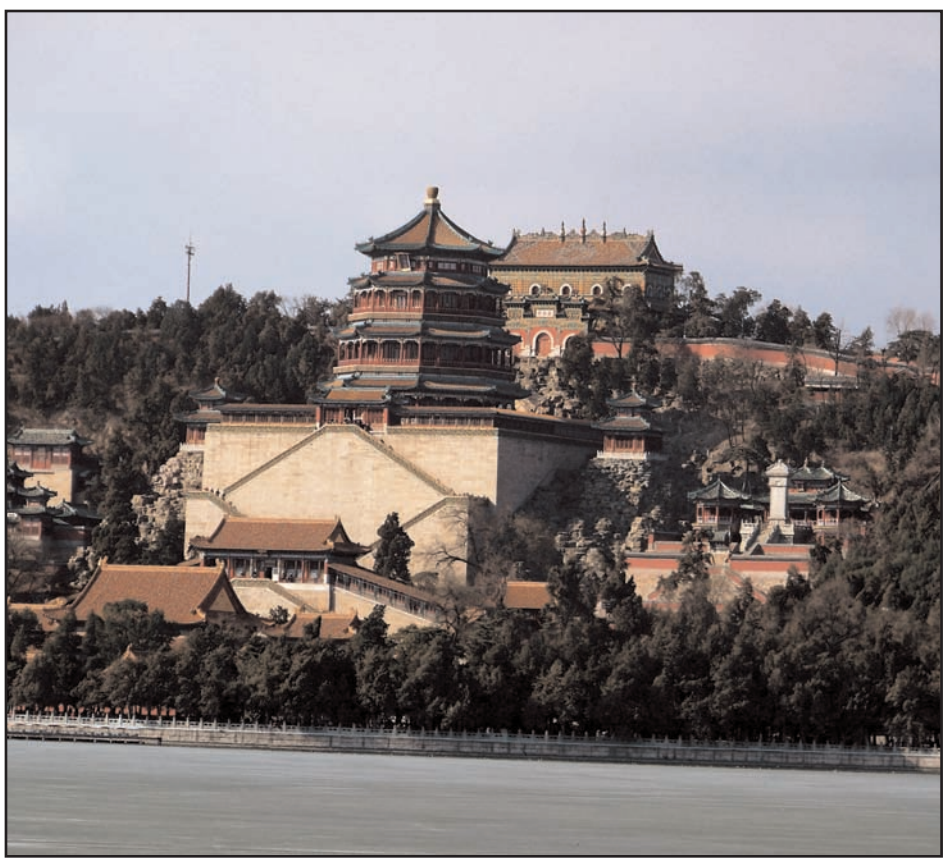

Photo by Kaleh Sampson

The Summer Palace in Beijing dates back to the Qing Dynasty. The palace includes temples, lakes and beautiful gardens.

Photo by Kaleh Sampson

Qianmen Gate, or Zhenqyangmen, is located south of Tiananmen Square. The Gate was first built during the Ming Dynasty.