

Young Leaders Forum: Discovery and Connection



YLF 2008 attendees included (l to r): Pei Xiaofei (2008 fellow), Paul Haenle (alumni fellow), Jennifer Dulski (2008 fellow) and Kim Ng (2007 fellow)

The 2008 Young Leaders Forum (YLF), a dynamic meeting of young, prominent Chinese and Americans from a wide range of fields and professions, was held in Snoqualmie, Washington, from September 18 through 22, 2008. Representatives from the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs (CPIFA), which partners with the Committee on the Forum, and from the All-China Youth Federation (ACYF) also attended the forum.

Now in its seventh year, YLF is a unique program that builds personal and professional relationships among the next generation of leaders from the United States and China. YLF fellows, who must be under forty years of age upon entering the program, are selected on the basis of their accomplishments, leadership potential and participation in civic and international affairs. The program is conducted in the United States and China in alternating years. Fellows participate actively for three years, and are then invited to return as alumni, which many do each year – a testament to the ongoing

value of the program.

“The people you meet in the program are either those you see on TV, in magazines, or those who have quietly achieved admirable results,” said YLF fellow Wang Jian Shuo, CEO of Baixing.com, China's largest classifieds website (a Chinese version of Craigslist). “I enjoyed having the executive director of New York's Miller Theater helping me learn how music changes life, discussing the importance of space technology with an American astronaut, debating about U.S. policy on China with the National Security Council's China director, or getting insights about the Iraq war from a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force who just got back from there. It was both inspiring and life-changing.”

The core of the forum is a series of discussions focused on a central theme, which this year was “Discovery.” Fellows shared the most significant discoveries – both personal and professional – that they had made in their lives, what brought them to their discoveries,

and where the discoveries had led them since. Wang Jian Shuo, who blogs about all things Shanghai, described what he had discovered about himself after blogging daily for six straight years: that one has to motivate oneself to experience life and discover something new in the everyday; Nick Beim, a partner at a venture capital firm, focused on the importance of serendipity, and the promising directions in which accidental discoveries often lead; Pei Xiaofei, who now directs the climate change and environmental health division within the Department of Science, Technology and Standards at the Ministry of Environmental Protection, spoke about discovering the secrets to successful marriage and relationships (which, ironically, provided a jumping-off point for a discussion on divorce rates in both countries); and alumni fellow Adam Kaplin, a faculty member in the departments of psychiatry and neurology at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, spoke of his laboratory discoveries and the exciting prospect that they may lead to a cure for multiple sclerosis. In the most interactive presentation of the forum, alumni fellow Damian Woetzel, a just-retired principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, explained what he has discovered – the power of dance – by getting everyone out of their seats and teaching them the opening sequence of a Balanchine ballet; the final “performance” included music.

“I was surprised by the openness of the forum, which embraces different opinions and ideas in a way that can hardly be seen in other international organizations,” said fellow Jiang Li, vice president of ProLogis. “Any topics of young people's interest can be openly discussed. We argue, but we don't fight; we agree but also disagree. The exchange about the topic of discovery in 2008 was presented to us from different angles, which brings a richness and depth of international perspectives.”

The forum also included presentations and panel discussions

featuring interesting guest speakers. Long-time National Committee member Sidney Rittenberg shared his fascinating story of discovering purpose in his life, a process he refined through years of close association with China's leadership, including Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong, and later through being in solitary confinement for sixteen years in a Chinese prison. Chinese and American fellows alike were deeply moved by his story and insights, and his extraordinary capacity for forgiveness and resilience.

Congressman Rick Larsen, who co-chairs the Congressional U.S.-China Working Group and has twice visited China with National Committee delegations (and whose district is in nearby Everett, Washington) spoke individually with

each of the fellows, and then addressed the group as a whole, giving particular focus to emerging economic issues in the United States and their relevance to Sino-American relations.

A panel discussion, moderated by National Committee President Stephen Orlins, included distinguished guests Joe Borich, the executive director of the Washington State China Relations Council and former consul general in Shanghai; National Committee Director Nelson Dong, a partner in the law firm Dorsey & Whitney, LLP, and a prominent specialist in international technology and intellectual property licensing and U.S. export control; and Dr. Robert Kapp, president of a consulting firm focused on China, and former president of the US-

China Business Council. The three of them discussed what actions the new president of the United States will need to take to best serve U.S. interests with respect to China in the areas of business, diplomacy and trade. Adding balance to the panel discussion, Ambassador Chen Yonglong, vice president of CPIFA, discussed the actions the Chinese leadership might take with the new administration, leading to an engaging discussion that offered a range of viewpoints.

A hallmark of YLF is the balance of intellectual and professional content with social and team-building activities that enable fellows to get to know one another from a different perspective and strengthen the YLF community. An exciting river rafting trip (including a team-

YLF Fellows and Alumni at the 2008 Forum

September 18 - 22, 2008

Lisa Anderson

Vice President, Global Public Policy
Time Warner Inc.

Nicholas Beim

General Partner, Matrix Partners

Lee Carter

Vice President
Luntz, Maslansky Strategic Research

Vishaan Chakrabarti

Executive Vice President of Design
and Planning, Related Companies

Dalton Conley

University Professor and Chair
Department of Sociology
Acting Dean of Social Science
New York University

Jennifer Dulski

CEO and Co-founder, Centerd, Inc.

Ashish Gadnis

CEO and Co-founder
Forward Hindsight

Paul Haenle

China Director
National Security Council

Auren Hoffman

CEO, Rappleaf

Matthew Isler

Lt. Colonel, U.S. Air Force

Jiang Li

Vice President, ProLogis

Adam Kaplin

Assistant Professor, Departments
of Psychiatry and Neurology
Johns Hopkins University School
of Medicine

Stacy Kenworthy

President and CEO
Fourth Quadrant Solutions

Verna Kuo

Director, Real Estate and
Natural Resources
The William and Flora
Hewlett Foundation

Li Rong

Co-founder and Vice President
21st Century Business Herald

Liu Lei

CEO, Savor Media Group

Liu Tianyu

Deputy Division Director
Liaoning Foreign Affairs Office

Nancy Lublin

CEO, Do Something, Inc.

Mark Lundstrom

CEO, BioScale

Kim Ng

Assistant General Manager
Los Angeles Dodgers

Gregg Pasquarelli

Principal, SHoP Architects

Pei Xiaofei

Director of Climate Change
and Environmental Health
Department of Science, Technology
and Standards
Ministry of Environmental Protection

Reihan Salam

Associate Editor, *The Atlantic*;
Fellow, New America Foundation

Todd Sigaty

Founder, Village Focus International

Tang Haisong

Private Investor

Wang Jian Shuo

CEO, Baixing.com

Wang Yang

General Manager
Rabobank Nederland, China

race), a wine tasting featuring wines from a Pacific Northwest vineyard, donated by YLF alum and U.S. Ambassador to Macedonia Philip Reeker and an evening in Seattle at a popular crab and seafood restaurant added a warm counterpoint to the intensity of the panels and discussions. This was a particularly successful YLF program that created fertile professional and personal connections that will ultimately benefit both the United States and China as fellows continue their leadership roles on both sides of the Pacific.

The National Committee gratefully acknowledges the support of ACE, Ltd., Time Warner Inc. and CPIFA for contributing to the continuing success of the Young Leaders Forum. ■

Damian Woetzel

Director
Vail International Dance Festival;
2008 Artist in Residence
Aspen Institute

Xiang Feng

Director, Public Affairs, China, UPS

Yuan Ming

Director of External Affairs and Anchor
Global News, Dragon TV

Robert Yung

Chief Technology Officer
PMC-Sierra, Inc.

Zhai Kun

Deputy Director, Institute of Asian
and African Studies
China Institutes of Contemporary
International Relations

Zhang Bei

Senior Vice President and
Chief Representative for China
ACE Limited

Zhao Min

Chairman
Adfaith Management Consulting

Zhu Tong

Director, China Operations
Deutsche Bank China

Special Congratulations

The National Committee would like to congratulate its Directors, members and those who have participated in our programs over the years who have been tapped for senior jobs in the Obama Administration. We wish them well in their important work over the next few years.

Mr. Jeffrey Bader *Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Asian Affairs, National Security Council*

Admiral Dennis Blair (former Board Member) *Director of National Intelligence*

Dr. Ashton Carter *Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics*

Mr. Kurt Campbell *Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs*

General Karl Eikenberry *Ambassador to Afghanistan*

Ambassador Christopher Hill *Ambassador to Iraq*

Ambassador Richard Holbrooke (former Board Member) *Special Envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan*

Governor Gary Locke *Secretary of Commerce*

Dr. Derek Mitchell *Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia and Pacific Security Affairs*

Dr. Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall *Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for European Affairs, National Security Council*

General Eric Shinseki *Secretary of Veterans Affairs*

In Memoriam:

Lucian W. Pye

continued from page 13

Lucian Pye, one of a group of wonderful men who took time from their families and professional lives to establish and nurture the National Committee, died in September at the age of 86.

His lifelong love of and interest in China stemmed from his birth into a family of educational missionaries in the city of Fenzhou in Shanxi Province in 1921. Home-schooled

through the fourth grade, he completed his primary education in Oberlin, Ohio, returning to China with his family in 1936 and finishing high school at an American school near Beijing during the Japanese occupation. He went to Carleton College in 1943, where he met his beloved wife Mary, a true partner, bearing their three children, collaborating on several of his books, and generously sharing him not just with the Committee, but with the many other institutions to which he



Politboro Member Hu Qili greets members of the National Committee's 1985 Distinguished Citizens' Dialogue. (l to r) A. Doak Barnett; Richard Solomon, Lucian Pye and Michel Oksenberg; the Dialogue, begun in 1984, was the first Track II exchange between China and the United States