



# PART OF THE FAMILY:

## *Pete's Story*



Article by Peter Barth  
HCC Volunteer & Donor

“**M**y wife, Jess, and I first met Ning Guo in 2018 when he and several other international students came to our home for Thanksgiving. He, along with the others, were so gracious and polite, and our kids took to him immediately. We served a traditional Thanksgiving meal and played several wild rounds of Uno. Over Thanksgiving turkey, we learned about Ning’s studies, where he’s from, and what he enjoys doing. Being that our family is close to the Albertville Outlet mall, we offered to drop Ning and the others off so they could experience the craziness of the Black Friday sales. We were having so much fun with them that we didn’t want the evening to end.

After saying goodbye to Ning and the others that evening, Jess and I (and our kids) realized we really wanted to stay in touch with Ning. So we invited him and the other same students to our traditional Christmas Eve worship service, and then to our home for pizza afterwards. It was then that we learned a little more about the pressures Ning and other students face in their studies. We also learned about his parents, and their fears about his travels to the United States.

A few months later, Ning and a couple of his friends invited our family to their apartment for a traditional Chinese New Year celebration with hot pot. We



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# Chinese & American New Year Compared



Nick Li  
HCC Program Coordinator

When I was growing up in Beijing, China, Chinese New Year's Eve was the most fun time of the year. My whole family would get together, and most people get up to 2 weeks off work. My grandparents were always the happiest because they got to see everyone in the same room. We'd spend a considerable amount of time and money shopping for fireworks and gifts. New Year is a big

deal in Chinese culture!

The theme of every Chinese new year in my family was watching the New Year's Gala, eating dumplings, and playing poker games! It was the only time of the year when I felt relaxed and free from the stress of school.

Since I was the youngest generation in the room, I was always told to pick up more responsibilities because I became one year older. Family members would raise their glasses and toast my grandparents to celebrate their old age.

work. The only difference I noticed between a regular weekend and new year was this thing called "New Year Resolutions." All my American friends posted on Facebook about their new year resolutions, most of which were along the lines of "new year, new me" or "spending less time on Facebook."

Despite the differences, my experience in these two cultures tells me there is something universal: new year means a new beginning. It is a time of reflection. It is a time to look



Nick holds up his calligraphy. Many Chinese families participate in this tradition to decorate the front door of their home for the New Year.

**"Despite the differences, my experience in these two cultures tells me there is something universal: new year means a new beginning."**

I came to the US by myself when I was 18 years old. My first impression was that Americans didn't care much about the new year. There was no feast and very few fireworks. Families had just spent Christmas together, so they were getting ready to go back to

back at the mistakes we've made, and somehow do a better job next year.

What a blessing it is that we are no longer slaves to the mistakes we've made because of Jesus. **With Jesus, every day could be "new year."** ■

*"Part of the Family..." continued from page 1*

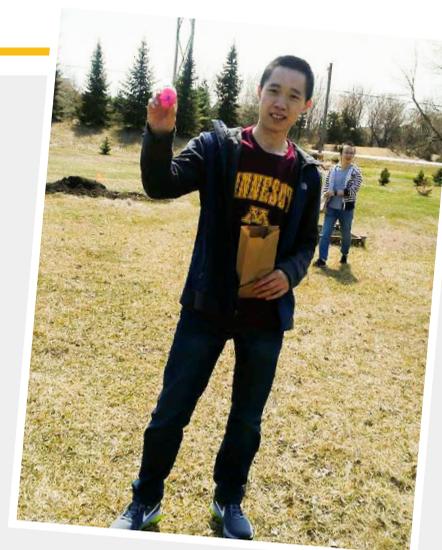
were thrilled to meet Ning's girlfriend who was visiting from China.

For Easter, Ning joined us for a traditional Easter dinner and even did an Easter egg hunt with our kids. Having him at our holiday events just seemed natural since Ning and the others fit in so well with our family.

I was able to have dinner with Ning several other times over the summer and fall of 2019, and when it was time for him to return to China, I

offered to bring him to the airport. Ning allowed me to say a quick prayer with him while at the airport, and we parted ways, wishing each other the best.

Jess and I were surprised at how hard it was to watch Ning return to China. Over the last year, it seemed like he was part of our family. Our kids will always have fond memories of him, and he'll be remembered at holidays for some time to come. ■



Ning Guo enjoying the Easter egg hunt with Pete and his family.

# Fruits and Loss in HCC's Family

Tim Grunditz, Executive Director

**O**ur dear friend Paul Ofstedal passed away this past month. His legacy reminds me of the Apostle Paul's quote in 1 Corinthians 2 as saying,

*"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. <sup>7</sup>So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. <sup>8</sup>The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor.*

*<sup>9</sup>For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building."*

**Paul has greatly contributed to the mission of Sharing Christ-liked love with Chinese here in MN and in China over the past 27 years.** Today thousands of Chinese are invited into the truest and most loving of families because of "seeds" that Paul has planted. He served HCC and China Service Ventures as a board member and



generous supporter. HCC staff and board are honored to celebrate as "co-workers" with Paul the great rewards of his labor. ■

## ReEntry: Our Multicultural Family



*A few photos of Jon and Doug Brown in China*

Jon Nesvig, ReEntry Coordinator

**T**his past summer, I traveled to China to visit the students and professors that were involved with HCC while in Minnesota. I had dinner with one of the professors, and immediately when we sat down to eat, her son asked a couple questions about the existence of God. This last week, I received a message from her that she now believes in the existence of God. She's been praying at night for her baby to sleep. Her baby has now been sleeping consistently. Praise God!

**Our end goal in ReEntry is that students and professors would return to China to thrive and impact others**

**God is still at work in the hearts of those that return.**

**with the best news in the world – that Jesus, fully God and fully man, crossed the greatest divide from heaven to earth to rescue us from sin and to build a**

**family made up of people from every nation.**

Some students and professors embrace this message while in Minnesota, but for many, it takes longer. The story above is

a good reminder that God is still at work in the hearts of those that return. Paul's words in 1 Cor 3:6 are true for our work: "I [in our case, HCC volunteers] planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos [HCC volunteers] watered it, but it was God who made it grow." ■



## Hospitality Center for Chinese

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# Fund the Family

Peter Arneson, HCC Partner Advocate

“HCC is like a family,” said the wife of a Chinese visiting scholar. This new HCC family member was recently introduced to us through one of our activities and instantly recognized the family vibe of HCC. For volunteers, donors, board, and staff who strive to share Christ’s love through hospitality, there can’t be much higher praise.

HCC is a family that knows how to love international students. **One donor is so convinced of this fact that they are supporting a \$30,000 matching gift.** This means that every gift received by HCC until December 31 will be doubled until that total hits \$30,000.

**We need your help in reaching this goal. Please donate today! ■**



## Mind Blowing Expansion

The table was piled with delicious Chinese food in front of me. Many food I knew, some I didn’t, but it all looked amazing, as it usually does at Tea House restaurant on East bank. Across the table from me sat a young woman we’ll call Linda. She was undistracted by the amazing spread of food. Instead she stared and listened, in utter disbelief, at the laundry list of loving services Minnesota families were offering to international students. Still unencumbered by the feast before us, she tells me that after being at the UMN for 3 years, she had NEVER heard of such services.

The reality is that Linda is from India,

and to the best of my knowledge, no such services existed for her during her time at the UMN. Linda was one of the first students to be told about HCC’s expanded mission of sharing hospitality to Chinese AND other nationalities. This Fall was the first time we had opened the arrival hosting program to “China Plus” other internationals. It’s a privilege to share with you that 15 students from India were hosted by dear loving American families this Fall. It’s an honor to be a part of connecting wonderful Minnesotan families with international students from around the world.

There are future leaders of the world here in Minnesota from 130 different countries. Linda is one of them. In total, there are nearly 10,000 stories like Linda’s. As a supporter of HCC, you are making it possible to reach the world from right here in the Twin Cities! Please continue to join HCC in extending the love of Christ to every single future leader of the world while we still have the opportunity! ■

Tim Grunditz  
Executive Director