



## Sister Cities News

### Where are They Now Series

The Spring edition focused on Terry Chipp (Doncaster) and Shantal Martin (Bridgetown) – now we will get a glimpse of what Eric Alexander Wade (Belize) and Li Peng (Dandong) have been occupied with as their career paths continue to press forward. Peng, a Dandong native, spent over a decade studying in the UK before returning home. Both stories focus on study abroad experiences. Next edition will feature We Rui, a respected artist from Dandong who traveled to Wilmington for a No Boundaries Colony.

### From 17 degrees north of the equator to learning how to navigate snow



Eric Alexander Wade received his bachelor's degree from UNCW and took a break before continuing his studies in marine biology. When we

located him much to our surprise in Oregon, he preferred to respond to our request using an interview method. Below are Eric's answers to five questions.

#### ***How did you choose Oregon State University for your graduate studies?***

Choosing a graduate school to attend is quite a long process that entails looking at the intricate details about the university, the department, the faculty and the community. It is even more difficult because it is

where you will spend anywhere between 2-6 years so you want to make sure you get it right the first time. When I was looking at OSU, it had all the parts I wanted in a university and especially it had the professor I wanted to work with. This was the biggest driving force. Her work takes an interdisciplinary approach to studying natural resource management and I knew this was the path that I wanted to take. OSU is located in Corvallis, a relatively small city, which was also a driving force for me. I knew I didn't want to be in a big city. Lastly, because I had previously lived on the east coast, I knew I wanted to try something different to broaden my horizons.

#### ***What does the term 'human dimensions' in fisheries science mean in the context of your home country?***

Human dimensions of fisheries science is an important aspect of understanding Belize's fisheries industry. It is often said in fisheries management that we don't manage the fish, we manage the people. In order to do this, we must first understand the people we are trying to manage. We must understand their values, perceptions and viewpoints in order to effectively manage the industry. My research specifically uses environmental psychology and political ecology to understand the diverse voices in Belize's fisheries sector. I work with governmental officials, non-governmental organizations and fishers throughout the country in order to understand how these major stakeholder groups are viewing Belize fisheries industry. I believe one of the first steps in putting place effective management is to first get to know all the players that are involved to understand the dynamics that are at play on the ground.

***Fishing is a major source of income for many households in Belize, especially as demand for sugar crops has waned over time. Do you think the efforts to educate the community about preservation of marine reserves and the dangers of over fishing are sufficient?***

Belize has done a great job in educating its fishing communities about the importance of fishing and ensuring the promotion of the sustainability of the industry. I do think that due to the complex dynamics of fishing and all the moving parts, education must be a continuous effort taken on not only by the government but also by the environmental NGO community. I think we must engage in new methods to better engage the communities by taking advantage of new technology but also by working one-on-one with people in the community. Many coastal communities already realize the benefits and dangers that are plaguing the system, so I believe the country just needs to drive the point home on how we all can take an active part in protecting the ecosystems for the future.

### ***What do you like best about the life style in the Pacific Northwest?***

Living in the PNW has been an exciting adventure – two years in. Although it is cold and rains about nine out of the twelve months, there is always something to do here. I think the most enjoyable thing that I try to do as often as possible is to travel to the coast, which is about an hour from where I live. It has become my “happy place” when I need a break from the endless work associated with finishing my graduate degree. Unfortunately, while I was able to swim and enjoy the waters in Wilmington and Belize, it is not as easy here with the waters being constantly cold. However, the interesting coastline of Oregon does make up for this – it is so different from what I’ve seen in NC and Belize. Apart from the outdoor adventures, I have also been fortunate to make some great friends that make my time in the PNW that much more enjoyable.

### ***You have been exposed to a minimum of four different cultures as this point in time given the regional differences in America and your semester in the UK. What advice would you give to another young person in Belize who might be considering international studies?***

I think the diverse cultures that I experienced throughout my educational career have been one of the most defining points of my life. I think for many people, not only from Belize, is the fear to leave the area they have grown up in and have been accustomed to. I think being adventurous and traveling to the States and the UK was the best decision I’ve ever made. I have grown up so much from all the experiences. I think my biggest advice for someone considering studying abroad is simply to take the

plunge and go for it. It becomes much harder if you start thinking about it too much.

## **Dandong Entrepreneur Recollections on Study Abroad Opportunities Li Peng**

I was born in the 1980s, I personally believe people my age are on their way to realizing their dreams. As entrepreneurs, we should have specific directions, have the capability to manage a business, be willing to take responsibility and acknowledge different cultures. Meanwhile, we should keep chasing our dreams and explore our independent ideology.

“Peng” is a common name for my generation. It means great ambitions and bright future. My father gave me this name with the hope I would have a good future. So I chose to study in Great Britain after graduating high school. Thirteen years later, I finished my bachelor’s degree, master’s degree and my PhD. Recalling those years in Edinburgh, feelings and memories flashed back. The truth is, studying abroad was not as great as I imagined. It is an extremely hard process. Fortunately I inherited the diligent spirit of my father, who started a business when he was very young and he kept telling me that the first principle in life and in business is to bear hardship. While I was a studying I had many part-time jobs – waiter, janitor, food deliverer, cashier - sound familiar?



My major was civil engineering for my undergraduate degree and structural engineering for my postgraduate study. I wanted to stay in Great Britain for my future so I was hired by a road design company in 2004 where I worked on road design, research & development and testing. At last, I finished my PhD in 2015 from Edinburgh Napier University

To be honest, I started on my path to having my own business by accident. My interest was only in science and research. During the economic crisis of 2008, my employer was going into liquidation. My colleagues and I started our business because we were suddenly unemployed. We accepted some important projects, such as the Royal Mile Edinburgh, Belfast Downtown reconstruction, the Edinburgh tram and St. Andrews main road reconstruction among others. We decided to open up in foreign markets and catch up with the opportunities in China. We decided to pursue China

for domestic business there but we failed for various reasons.

But after all, I didn't give up. As a Chinese expat successful in the UK, why can't I be successful in my home town of Dandong. In 2010 my mother suddenly got sick. This made me realize that my parents are not young anymore. They were the most important reason for me to be home. I gave up the UK location and returned to Dandong in 2011 and opened my new business. UPIC is an educational institution which is dedicated to overseas study and English training. At the beginning, no one knew and understood us. Our philosophy is different from the long-established exam-oriented education in my hometown. I realized that what we needed to do is not only promote the business but also to cultivate a market and a concept. Since the establishment of UPIC, I keep arriving at the office at 7:00 AM every day and I am also the last person to leave at night. I take responsibility for myself and my team. This was also my habit when I started the engineering business in the UK. In my days as a civil engineering intern it was common for me to arrive early and leave late. I was able to endure the loneliness. Through the teams' efforts, UPIC has branches in Dandong and Beijing. UPIC has become the biggest overseas study institution and the only professional IELTS English training school in Dandong. Teachers at UPIC are all professional English level 8 or with overseas experiences.

We strive to have our hometown people access professional overseas study plans and receive IELTS English training without going to another city or province. Since 2011, UPIC has accepted thousands of people preparing to study abroad and its IELTS passing rates are almost 100%.

Six years have passed and we have developed from an education company into a comprehensive enterprise integrating investment, international trade, intelligence monitoring, maker space, Internet+Service.



## Wilmington Sister Cities Awards a Small Grant to Aid UWI Students



The Sister Cities Association board approved a grant application from UNCW to help support costs for students from the University of West Indies-Cavehill in Barbados to attend a summer session at the Cameron School of Business (UNCW). The enrolled students were able to choose two courses in Business/Economics while being exposed to Wilmington's life/culture. Off campus activities are planned for tours of the area and gaining some historical perspective on the connections between our region and Barbados. Photo above: Barbados students arrival day – UNCW OIP.

Nearly 60% of International Study majors are enrolled at the Cameron School of Business at UNCW. A strategic direction for the school has been to offer dual degrees in international business through partnerships with universities around the globe. The 2:2 (2 years at UNCW & 2 abroad) program has included Transatlantic Business Schools (TABSA) in France, Germany, Spain and the UK.

Dr. Peter Schuhmann, who is on faculty at Cameron and teaches economics, has been a visiting professor to our sister city campus in Barbados in the past. A relevant area of study at both campuses is natural resource economics. It is hoped that UNCW enrolled students will travel to Barbados in 2019 as part of the renewed partnership between the two schools. The strongest connection between the universities previously had been in the school of nursing, although other departments have had varying relationships over time.

### A Tale of Two Countries

Graeme Jones, former Doncaster Rovers star, was part of the Belgium team playing against England on June 28 (FIFA 2018). Jones has been partnered with Roberto Martinez, current manager of Belgium, for the past decade. The team has been unbeaten for nearly

two years since the Martinez/Jones began managing Belgium and was favored going into the 2018 World Cup. Jones has a new offer to consider after the competition but rumors are circulating that he may be tapped by Gareth Southgate to go back to England.

### Sister Cities Commission Updates

Thomas Massey, the CFCC representative since 2017, left the Commission at the end of the school term. Tom was an active participant and particularly helpful when the Dandong delegation was in town. His contributions will be missed. Tom will be replaced by Dr. Emelia Sorensen..

SCI's Eastern Region of North Carolina met in Wilmington in April to exchange ideas and share best practices. It was a good opportunity to learn from one another about managing sister city relationships, fundraising and much more.

### Sister Cities Association Updates

The June 11 SCAW board meeting honored Charles Blanton, outgoing president, for his contributions to both the association and commission for the past three years. Charles will be beginning his training with the Army Reserves over the summer and sadly had to give up his numerous community commitments. The officers for 2018-19 were elected: Marilyn Cantarella, President; Qian (Chad) Fan, Treasurer; and Peggy Rosoff, Corporate Secretary/VP.

There are still two vacancies to fill on the board. If you are interested or want to recommend someone, please send an email to [membership@scawilmington.org](mailto:membership@scawilmington.org). The next board meeting is September

### Citizen to Citizen Diplomacy Honor Roll

SCAW attempts to involve as many people and institutions as possible to achieve its mission in Wilmington and the international community. We want to recognize the individuals and groups that have made a contribution in the past calendar quarter through their active participation or support of a Sister City program activity.

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|--------------------|--------------------|
| Charles Blanton    | Scott Czechlewski  |
| Marilyn Cantarella | Nikki's Restaurant |
| Peggy Rosoff       | UNCW-OIP           |
| Chad Fan           | Randy Shackelford  |
| Eric Wade          | Maria Goudiss      |
| Li Peng            | Brady Surles       |

## Upcoming Events

**July 17** – Sister Cities will host a reception for the Barbados exchange students and a group from Fudan University (China) along with City officials at 5:30 PM in City Hall. SCAW members are welcome to join us for this event.

**July 25-Aug 8** – **Barbados Crop Over** is a great time to visit the island and experience a unique series of events featuring music, masquerade, history and culture.

**Aug 2** – **Israeli Scout Caravan** will perform in Wilmington at the Hannah Block Community Arts Center at 7:00 PM.

**Aug 2-5** – **International Costa Maya Festival** in San Pedro will feature music, dance, food & carnival games – a family fun event..

**Aug 9-23** – The **2018 Jewish Film Festival** summer series begins. For more info on the selections, start times and how to buy tickets visit [www.wilmingtonjff.org](http://www.wilmingtonjff.org)

**Oct 21** – **SAVE THE DATE** You won't want to miss the 2018 Peace Concert at the Basilica Shrine of St. Mary 5:30 – 7:00 PM.

\*Photographs below are from the April 2018 Farwell Reception for the UNCW International students

