

Young visitors from Ji'an City China experienced two weeks of "living American" this past summer as guests of 4-H host families in the communities of Vallejo, Fairfield, and Vacaville. This cross cultural exchange proved to be a beginning of lasting relationships made possible by the technology available that bridges thousands of miles and allows kitchen table chats seen via webcams on the computer.

Educational experiences, tours of California "must see" spots and local events kept families and their visitors on the go during the short visit. Such sights as the redwoods at Muir Woods, the state capitol in Sacramento, a ferry ride to San Francisco and a personalized tour of Jelly Belly's kept everyone busy.

A highlight of the visit for the Chinese teens was as a delegate to the annual 4-H Statewide Leadership Conference (SLC) held on the UC Davis campus. The six Chinese delegates and their host family teen, along with the hundreds of youth delegates from across the state, attended workshops in departments throughout the campus, heard inspirational speakers, and worked together to develop take-home action plans to kickoff local initiatives on youth service in local communities.

Sponsored by the Solano County Board of Supervisors through a Sister City agreement signed in 2005, this exchange was the first for Ji'an City and Solano County for youth to travel here and live in local communities with 4-H host families. Financial support from The Friends of the Fair, C.C. Yin, and UC Davis California Communities Project helped expand the opportunities and experiences for our visitors. The exchange still continues, even if our Chinese friends have returned home. Emails, photos on the web, regular communication continues—lasting relationships built