

CHNS 3102 Foster Grandparent Program Spring 2021

What do you think the partner organization(s) would identify as the most significant/helpful out of all your contributions?

I think the partner organizations would identify my most helpful contribution as being able to speak in Mandarin with the participants, since the programming that is offered is otherwise only offered in English. I think being able to offer programming in Mandarin through the help of students from Chinese classes at Northeastern in addition to other volunteers who can speak Mandarin is incredibly important, as this programming can help the participants with the social isolation and loneliness that can come with the isolation caused by COVID-19. Without Mandarin speaking volunteers, this opportunity wouldn't exist, and from talking to the participants, I know how much they appreciated being able to talk with us every week.

Isaac Walker (He/Him)

What have you learned about the community you served? What have you learned about yourself in the process?

I learned that these older Chinese women genuinely love spending time with us and are so grateful for the one hour we have together. I learned specifically about their lives in China since they did a lot of reminiscing. I learned that I am so interested in getting to know anyone and their story even though it may only be a temporary/zoom relationship.

Sidney Li

What were your pre-service expectations? How have these evolved over the course of the semester?

- My pre-service expectations were that we would be speaking with a Chinese elder to simply make a connection with them and (hopefully) be an exciting respite from the daily mundane activities of quarantine. However, as we progressed, I ended up making a deeper connection with my partner, learning about her life story and family. Especially with the recent rise in AAPI hate, we talked about how that impacted her thoughts and how she talks to her family about it. I genuinely want to continue after this semester, especially because I'll be graduating and will want to continue to practice my Chinese.

Matthew Tong

2. I learned that a lot of the Chinese grandmas I talked to are particularly lonely and frustrated right now. Because they can't interact in person with that many people, they have to use technology which can be frustrating when you don't know how to use it. I learned that I am actually a lot more capable at speaking 100% in Chinese than I thought. 不管我不知道一些字，我就可以简单的解释我想说的话，然后他们都明白我在说什么。

Adele Baughan

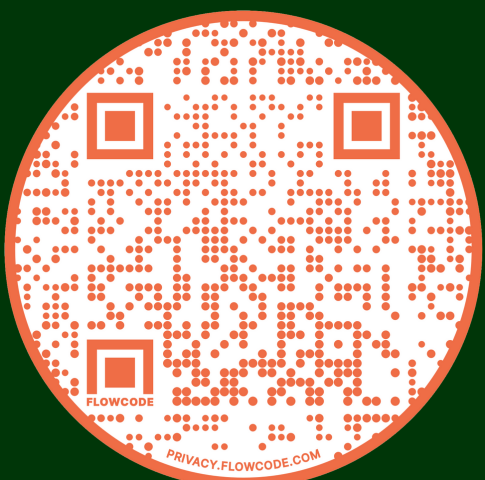
Pre-service, I wasn't really sure how programming would work via Zoom since I know when there are a lot of people on one call, it's sometimes difficult to let everyone have a chance to talk. Over the course of the semester, this no longer became a concern as we got into a rhythm ++ decided the format of the calls each week, which the residents seemed to grow familiar with quickly. I learned a lot about the community at Morville House, including where many of the residents grew up + what they did as a living. We were also able to delve into more personal details like what they wanted to be when they were little. One thing I've learned most about myself in the process is that I'm really used to and also comforted by a large group setting like that in Morville House - it reminded me of being around my relatives at home.

Riana Buchman

I learned a lot about my foster grandmother's various opinions regarding politics, school, culture, language, etc., and it was interesting to learn new words that she would say through live-translating.

Evan Rumsfeld

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