

Dandelion Village Library Program

Of Pass Love Charity Foundation



Who are we?

Our Story & Organization

Inspired by the movie *Pay it Forward* (2000), two Chinese students Du Keming and Xuan Jianwei, who studied in U.S. universities founded the Pass Love Charity Foundation (PLCF) in 2006. PLCF's founding philosophy is to help impoverished children in rural China receiving fair education, and to encourage these children to pass love forward and help improve the lives of others in their communities.

Pass Love Charity Foundation (PLCF) registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-governmental charity organization in the United States (EIN: 06-1768564) and donations are tax-deductible in the U.S.

Based on the learning of pros and cons in different kinds of early charity efforts, PLCF launched the Dandelion Village Library Program in 2008 to establish quality village libraries in economically disadvantaged areas of China.

The Dandelion Village Library Program

Program Mission Statement

To promote education reform in rural China by establishing high quality village libraries that provide developmentally appropriate reading materials, engaging activities and ongoing teacher support; so that rural children can receive a fair and compassionate education.

Current Program Status

As of October 31, 2012, PLCF has established 43 Dandelion Village Libraries in China since 2008 with 5 more in the pipeline.

Unique Features of the Program

The following features make the Dandelion Village Library Program special:

- A large collection of high quality and age-appropriate books selected by experts of rural education and children publication
- An inviting library room appearance based on a professional interior design master plan
- A low-cost approach of establishing a library by refurbishing an existing classroom
- Common processes in site selection, project training, material procurement, time-controlled project implementation, and village-library-enabled enrichment activities.
- Sustained support managed by PLCF to ensure long-term utilization of our Dandelion Village Libraries
- Involvement of volunteers in project planning and implementation, provision of sustained support for long-term success, post-project evaluation of benefits to students and teachers, ...

A typical Dandelion Village Library has 3,000+ books, serving 300 to 1,000 students and teachers.

It is one of the top priorities for PLCF management to maximize the impact of your donations. In 2010, 96% of the monetary donation PLCF received for its Dandelion Village Library Program was used for the libraries.

The Dandelion Village Library Program helped PLCF win a \$25,000 award in the 2009 Chase Facebook Charitable Giving Contest.

Recognition and Press

PLCF has been featured on Hunan Satellite TV International Channel and in several newspaper and magazines circulated in both China and overseas, such as Oriental Morning Post, Jinling Evening News, Fuyang Daily, People's Daily Overseas Edition, Elegance, and Marie Claire China. It has also received grants and recognition from The Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation, Shanghai United Foundation and Chase Community Giving.

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Who Benefits from The Dandelion Village Library Program?

The primary beneficiaries are the students in schools with PLCF's Dandelion Village Libraries. Teachers also benefit from the libraries. The Program also provides a platform for PLCF members and volunteers participating in the Program to convert their universal love into actions in the specific area of rural education in China.

More about the Dandelion Village Library Program

Reading – The core of the Program

Reading is fundamental to a child's future, and it is a corner stone of education. PLCF's Dandelion Village Library Program spark rural children's passion for learning, foster independent thinking, encourage them to inspire others with their experiences, and in turn help them become responsible citizens.

It was recently estimated that roughly 8 million rural children in China have no access to reading materials other than text books. Reading is cornerstone of education, but poverty has put these children at a significant disadvantage. Lack of quality and developmentally appropriate reading materials negatively impacts their academic performance and their motivation to learn. In the long run, it limits their opportunity to higher education and their chances of taking part in the society on an equal footing with others. Majority of rural children never go to high school, they become teenage farmers and migrant workers. PLCF's Dandelion Village Libraries provide carefully selected and developmentally appropriate reading materials along with engaging activities and ongoing teach support, which will give these children a fair education and inspire them to improve the lives of others in their communities.



A trained volunteer is guiding students in the “Read a Word, Read the World” enrichment activity

The Dandelion Village Library Program is a low-cost, sustainable and scalable model that follows four principle guidelines: select high quality and developmentally appropriate reading materials, engage students in reading with enrichment activities using library materials, provide ongoing teacher support to integrate library materials into reading instruction, and integrate technologies to foster an online community in rural China.

PLCF firmly believes quality books are vital for the success of a library program. At the early stage of the Dandelion Village Library Program, the PLCF team spent a majority of their efforts identifying a collection of high quality books that are developmentally appropriate for rural children in primary schools. Two major criteria were used to select the books: engaging and enlightening. A book is judged by whether it is written from children’s perspective and uses children’s language, whether its content presentation is interesting, whether its language is dynamic, active, and understandable; and whether the design of the book is creative.

In collaboration with experts in reading instruction, children’s literature, library science, and rural education, the PLCF team identified a collection of over 3,000 books that are high quality, engaging, and educational. The collection covers a wide range of genres: picture books, poetry, comics, folktales, fairytales, prose, fictions, non-fictions, biography and philosophy. To facilitate the use of the books in the elementary schools, all of these books were assigned into one of four reading levels. The collection also includes audio books and educational videos (about 100 CDs and DVDs).

In addition to superior books, library rooms are thoughtfully designed to create an inviting and child-friendly reading environment. Books are organized and displayed on shelves; walls are decorated with colorful pictures, maps and students’ artworks from various reading activities. The cozy reading corner with cartoon-shaped pillows and cushions is often students’ favorite place to read. Having Dandelion Village Libraries is a unique experience for rural children.



Inviting, cozy, relaxing environment provides a unique experience for rural children to read and learn

Providing access to the featured books is only the first step to spark rural children's passion for learning. In collaboration with the local elementary schools, the PLCF team has developed enrichment activities to engage students in reading using books at the Dandelion Village Libraries. The activities fall into two major categories. The first is regular reading activities which students can do on a daily basis, that include reading aloud in the morning, silent reading at noon or at the end of day in the classroom, reading books in the library, and reading books at home. Each day, teachers lead students to read aloud in the morning. Books that are appropriate for reading aloud are selected and recommended to teachers by the PLCF team. At noon or at the end of day, students can read books silently for about 20-30 minutes. Additionally, teachers at different grade levels rotate their schedule and designate one class session for students to read in the library each week. Students are allowed to check out books for reading at home. On average, each student borrows and reads 2-3 books each week. Students are encouraged to recommend and pass their favorite books to their classmates.



In addition to the regular reading activities, situational activities are incorporated to foster students' independent thinking, and to improve their creative writing skills. These activities include reading contests, book reviews, writing a letter to the author, and even writing their first book. For example, to celebrate the anniversary of the first Dandelion library in the Wanglou Elementary School in Anhui Province, an activity called "My Wanglou, My Book" was designed to engage students in writing their own books about Wanglou. Another popular group activity is called "101 Reasons to Read". Students are divided into small groups, and each group makes a poster to list their reasons to read. The "Taking Knowledge Home" activity encourages students to read books to their parents and grandparents at home. Also each year, students have the opportunity to vote for "The Best Book of the Year for Rural Children."

Teachers play a key role in a child's education. Our Dandelion Village Library also provides books for teachers that focus on instructional pedagogy in reading instruction, classroom management, assessments, and learning theories. We encourage teachers to integrate library materials into their daily teaching routine and reading instruction.

More importantly, ongoing teacher training is provided throughout the year by PLCF. Topics include integration of library materials into a curriculum, classroom management, case studies of best practices in reading instruction, demonstrations of reading lessons by exemplary teachers, sex education, and elementary students' social and psychological development; as well as how to communicate with students and parents, how to develop children's critical thinking and creativity, and how to work with families to create a nurturing environment for children in migrant families. Due to the resource constraints, teachers in rural areas normally have few opportunities for professional development. Therefore, the teacher training that we provide is enthusiastically embraced by the teachers we have been working with at the rural schools.

One teacher training topic that is particularly important for girls is sex education. Many girls in rural areas are left-behind children who don't live with their parents. As a result of the general lack of parental guidance, they simply do not know how to protect themselves from sexual harassments and how to understand the physical and psychological changes as they transition into adolescents. Thus, it is important to help rural teachers raise awareness and develop knowledge and skills in helping girls to address these issues.



Initially, we built libraries in remote locations in several different provinces, such as Shandong, Anhui, Sichuan, and Guangxi. We learned from our initial efforts that it is more effective to build libraries in proximity. If we start with one village library and build subsequent libraries within a driving distance of half an hour, it will enable inter-library activities and make regional teacher training possible. Also, teachers and librarians from established libraries can help and share their experiences with newer libraries. As a result, a regional village library network was created.

Integrating Technologies to Foster an Online Community

We created an online community on our website (www.passlove.org) to connect students, parents, teachers, the PLCF team, volunteers, and sponsors. Each school with a Dandelion Village Libraries, has a homepage on our website to update library happenings, share pictures of reading activities, showcase students' work (e.g., books or poems written by students), and engage in discussion with their colleagues. The online platform provides a window into the practice of other schools and libraries, where ideas are exchanged and experiences are shared. In addition, parents who have left home to work in big cities can access their children's school work on the website and increase their involvement in their children's education.

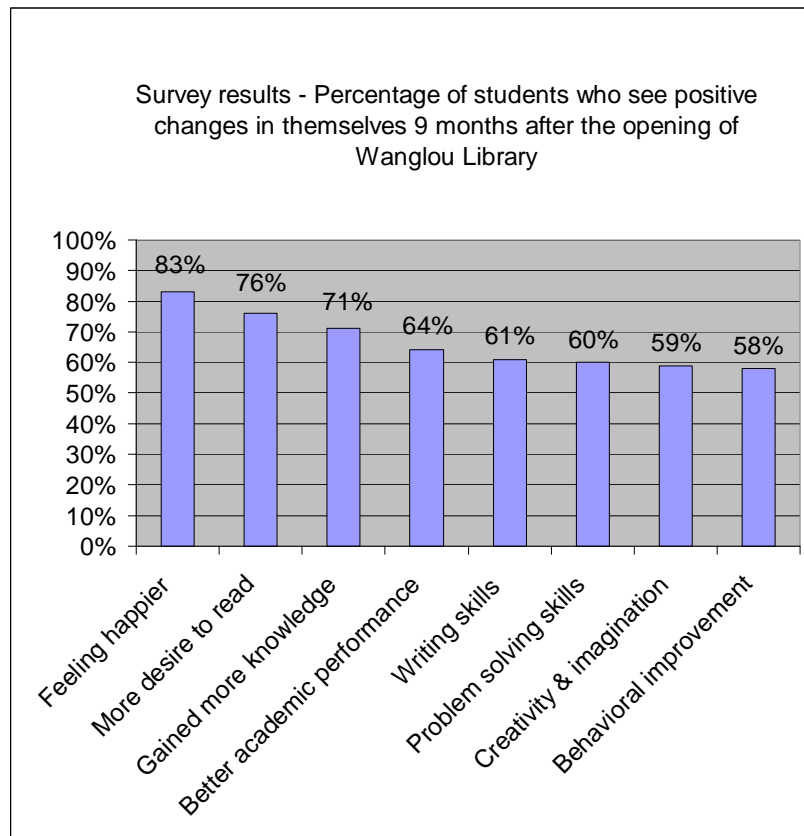


Volunteers also keep journals while they tutor students in local schools. They share their observations and reflections on the website, which provides valuable feedback on the impact of the Dandelion Village Libraries on rural students

and teachers, and also on improvements that need to be made for future projects. Our PLCF team also uses the website to collaborate on projects, to update the progress of library building, reading activities that are implemented in different schools, and information on teacher training sessions. Each teacher training session is videotaped. The videos and resources are also made available on the website for teachers who did not attend the training.

Program Assessment

PLCF uses assessments to see impacts of Dandelion Village Libraries using both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Methods include interviews with students, teachers and parents, classroom observations, and evaluation of students' work. The following chart is an example from such an assessment.



Co-founder Biographies

Liling JIANG (net name: DU Keming) is the Founder and Chairperson of PLCF. She received her BA in Chinese Literature from Beijing Normal University and obtained an Ed.M. in Early Childhood Education from Michigan State University.

Weijian XUAN (Jack) is the Co-Founder and Vice Chairman of PLCF. He received his BS in Engineering from Peking University and obtained MS in Engineering from Chinese Academy of Sciences, MS in Computer Science from Brown University and MBA from University of Michigan. He is also the Chairman of China Entrepreneur Network.