Duke China Care is a service organization at Duke University. Our goal is to help Chinese orphans through fundraising for their care. Cultural and mentorship activities are organized for adopted Chinese children in the local area to foster pride in, and understanding of, their birth heritage.
Playgroups

Playgroups are organized once or twice a month and are geared towards younger children. This year, Duke China Care held several playgroups introducing adopted Chinese children to various aspects of Chinese culture, including the Terracotta warriors, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese fans, and traditional Chinese dance. We also held a playgroup at Duke’s Nasher Museum of Art during one of their Family Days.

During the Terracotta warrior playgroup, the children learned about the amazing army buried underground with the first emperor of China, dating back to 210 B.C. The Terracotta warriors were once exquisitely painted and at the playgroup, the children were given an opportunity to paint their own clay figurines and animals.
At our Chinese calligraphy playgroup, the children were able to practice writing Chinese characters. The ink for Chinese calligraphy is made by grinding the ink stick with water in an ink well until the proper opaqueness is achieved. Special paper is also needed so that it has just the right absorbency for Chinese brush-and-ink calligraphy.

Duke China Care invited Duke Chinese Dance Troupe to come teach the children a traditional Chinese dance. The children learned a short dance with Chinese fans. Twists and turns and lots of fun were involved!
Mentorship

The mentorship program pairs a Duke student with an adopted Chinese child. We require that mentors and mentees meet up at least once a month and we also hold regular group mentorship events so that the older children can get together. Mentors and mentees in the past have done a variety of activities together such as watching a movie, baking, or going to Duke Gardens.

Our Southpoint Mall Mentorship event was the first chance for the mentors and mentees to get to know each other as a pair. This event had a great turnout, allowing us to launch our program fully.

In this picture, Duke China Care Member Rebecca Wu with her mentee Anna. Anna and Rebecca watched the movie “Heavyweights” and popped popcorn for their first get-together.
Duke China Care mentee Mei demonstrates the snake break dancing move at the Mentorship Meet-and-Greet kick-off event.

Before the mentors and mentees were officially paired up, we all went to Ben & Jerry’s to get some icy treats. The older children were given an opportunity to meet each other as well as meet their potential mentors. After going around and having everyone say their names, we also discussed our favorite movies and TV shows.
Speakers

In addition to hosting activities for children, we also invited a speaker to come to Duke to kick-off National Adoption Month in November. On Nov. 17, National Adoption Day, we had Jennifer Bao Yu Jue-Steuck come to speak to parents, Duke China Care members, and the Duke community at large. Jue-Steuck is the founder and director of Chinese Adoptee Links, which is a global network for adopted individuals from Hong Kong, Taiwan, mainland China, and across the globe.

Jennifer is a Chinese adoptee herself and spoke to parents about her experiences and read two storybooks, Sherry Eldridge’s Forever Fingerprints and Xinran Xue’s Motherbridge of Love to all of the children. As the parents had a Q & A session with Jennifer Jue-Stueck, the children colored and drew with Duke China Care members.
Our Banquet featured performances by Duke Chinese Dance Troupe and Duke’s Lion Dance group. We also invited Grace, a young Chinese adoptee, to perform a violin and piano duet with a Duke student. A Duke student also performed the Chinese zither (guzheng) for guests.

Through our discussion panel this year, we were also able to raise awareness for and increase interactions between student groups, Triangle area FCC, the Center for Adoption Policy, and the Chinese Adoptee Links.

We raised more than $1200 in our silent auction by contacting local businesses and informing them about our cause. The funds went towards purchasing food, supplies and lactose-free formulas for the children of the Baotou orphanage. Next year, we plan to reach even more businesses and bring in new speakers to address the issues involved in international/interracial adoptions.