



CHASC

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4TH CHINA-AMERICA STUDENT CONFERENCE

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear ChASC Community,

After a year of planning, a year of meetings, countless late-night phone calls, and hundreds of emails, what began as a small group of passionate ChASC3 delegates has transformed into something far more profound—an unbreakable team. As the months passed, our team didn't just collaborate; we became a family. We overcame disagreements, internal conflicts, and countless challenges together, and with each hurdle, we grew stronger. It is with immense pride that I reflect on how the ChASC4 Executive Committee doubled the size of last year's conference, laying the groundwork for the future, including the potential for our next conference to be held in China.

Seeing names on an application transform into faces, personalities, and friends has been one of the most inspiring experiences of my life. From interviews over Zoom to the moment we welcomed each delegate in Chicago, I was reminded of the importance of connection, perspective, and shared hope. We brought together a diverse, global community that shares a common passion—to improve US-China relations. The energy, enthusiasm, and dedication that each delegate brought to this conference has filled me with hope for the future.

As a leader, I've never been given so much freedom to create, to design, and to dream. Together with my incredible team, we crafted every element of this conference, from our theme—From Reflection to Connection: Lessons from the Past, Visions for the Future—to the speakers, events, locations, and every detail in between.

Our cultural and academic programming was built with care and intention, from visiting the State Department and the Chinese Embassy to hosting panels, workshops, and discussions on the pressing issues that shape US-China relations today. We learned, we debated, and most importantly, we connected.

The friendships formed, the perspectives exchanged, and the bridges built during this conference are evidence of the powerful potential we have when we come together. Whether it was during an East Asian brush painting workshop, a discussion with young diplomats, or simply sharing deep-dish pizza, these moments of connection showed us what's possible when we collaborate across cultures and borders.

As we prepare to pass the torch to the next generation of ChASC leaders, I'm filled with excitement. ChASC gives me hope—hope that future delegates will thrive, make their mark, and continue to strengthen the bonds between our nations. It's been an honor to serve on the ChASC4 Executive Committee Team and watch our vision come to life.

To the International Student Conference team, my fellow Executive Committee members, our delegates, and everyone who helped make this conference a reality—thank you. This conference would not have been possible without each of you, and I am endlessly grateful for your commitment, hard work, and belief in this mission.

Together, we've built something special.
Together, we've made a difference.

Sincerely,
Allison Hunt; American Chair, ChASC 4

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dear Friends,

ChASC finished its fourth annual conference in Washington, DC, on June 15, 2024. Over two weeks, 12 delegates and four Executive Committee (EC) members from China and the United States visited two iconic American cities: Chicago, Illinois, and Washington, D.C. The ECs created balanced programming that blended interactive activities, culture, and academics to curate an educational and engaging experience for all participants. The goal, of course, was to build bridges and lasting friendships between Chinese and American students.

In this, they succeeded. As the delegates said goodbye, they departed hopeful that their paths might cross again.

In Chicago, delegates explored the city's significant Midwestern representation in U.S.-China relations and Chicago's rich history of international dialogue and economic importance. Highlights included a visit to the Chinese Consulate and discussions on the role of U.S.-China relations in the region. The delegation learned about Chicago's history through an architectural boat tour and visited its striking Chinatown.

In Washington, D.C., delegates engaged with the city's historic and political environment. This part of the conference introduced students to U.S. and Chinese government institutions and their roles in international diplomacy.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Notable activities included briefings at the U.S. Department of State and The Asia Group, offering delegates insights into diplomatic initiatives and business advisory roles. A visit to the Chinese Embassy gave delegates a chance to talk with young diplomats and tour the facilities.

Despite the busy nature of the conference, ChASC 4 made sure to provide delegates with adequate free time to explore both cities' rich cultures. ChASCers enjoyed visiting monuments, museums, and restaurants. Over mealtimes, the students discussed their personal and professional aspirations, deepening their bonds.

I am especially proud of the leadership shown by the ChASC ECs this year. They secured a fantastic lineup of speakers and enriching activities and included Roundtables (RTs), small research cohorts, for the first time. RTs are a mainstay of ISC's other conferences, JASC and KASC, and give delegates the experience of engaging in research with their cross-cultural peers. The RT groups presented their excellent research at the Final Forum in Washington, DC at Trinity University. The presentations covered subnational agreements, policy proposals for cultural scholarships, and joint-based education on an international scale.

As you read through the ChASC Journal, I hope you will enjoy getting to know the faces behind ChASC 4 and the activities that shaped their experiences with the conference. Though their time together was short, it left a lasting impression and life-long friendships.

Sincerely,
Bahia Simons-Lane
Executive Director
International Student Conferences

Meet the ChASC 4 Executive Committee



Sophia To
.....

Sophia graduated in 2024 with her Master's degree in Public Policy at the University of Chicago.

Sophia holds a Bachelors in Psychology from the University College London. Her journey as an international student has led her on a captivating global tour, with stops in vibrant cities such as Shanghai, Hong Kong, London, and Chicago.

Vincent is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Industrial Design at Arizona State University, having previously earned a Bachelor's in Bioinformatics and Genomics from the same institution. He grew up in the United States as the child of Taiwanese immigrants.

With a versatile professional journey spanning from bioinformatics to tracking movie distribution and territorial rights, and even editing film scripts, Vincent brings a breadth of experience across diverse fields. His experience as a ChASC3 delegate fundamentally altered his perspective on international relations and even influenced some of his career considerations.



Vincent Lay
.....

Meet the ChASC 4 Executive Committee



Allison Hunt



Allison, a junior at Minerva University, is pursuing a major in Politics, Government, and Society, with minors in Philosophy and Ethics. Her university's unique structure has taken her to study in various locations, including San Francisco, Seoul, Hyderabad, Taipei, Buenos Aires, and London, with plans to conclude her senior year in Berlin. She has been awarded scholarships from the State Department's National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) and the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS), enabling her to study Mandarin in China and Taiwan respectively.

Melody graduated from the University of Arizona with Bachelor's degrees in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and East Asian Studies, along with minors in History and Japanese.

Post-graduation, she participated in various conferences and briefly served as a Student Services Advisor at Unitek Learning. As a Malaysian Chinese raised in both China and the United States, Melody joined ChASC to deepen her understanding of U.S.-China relations and foster holistic growth



Melody Lau



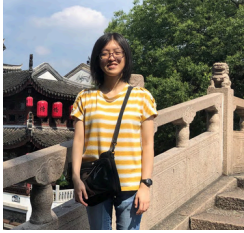
MEET THE DELEGATES



ASHLEIGH CANNON

Grinnell College

Major(s): Anthropology and Chinese



ASHLEY XIA

Washington and Lee University

Major(s): Japanese and Global Politics



AVIA WEBER

University of Pennsylvania

Major(s): International Relations and Psychology



DAHLIA TOWNLEY-BAKEWELL

Indiana University Bloomington

Major(s): East Asian Studies (Chinese Concentration)



ELIZABETH LIEW

University of Hawai'i, Manoa

Master's in Asian International Affairs



EMMA PETERSON

Centre College

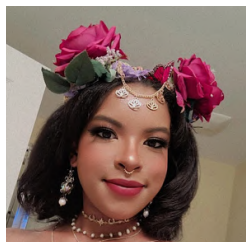
Major(s): Politics; Minor(s): Chinese and Studio Art

MEET THE DELEGATES



KAITLYN LEE

Stanford University
Master's in Computer Science



KIRAN NIEVES-NOEL

East Tennessee State University
Major(s): International Affairs



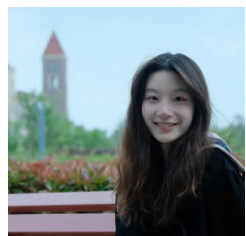
MARY HEISLER

University of Arizona
Major(s): East Asian Studies



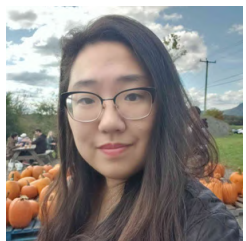
XIN SHU

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
Major(s): Global Affairs and International Relations



XUEYOU LIAO

Shandong University
Major(s): International Politics and English



YELIM LEE

University of Massachusetts Amherst
Ph.D Candidate in Communications - Digital
Asian American Politics & Cultural Studies

China's Cultural Expansion

ChASC 4 Roundtable



RT Leader: Vincent Lay

Ashleigh Cannon

Elizabeth Yen Tzu Liew

Mary Heisler

Though China's global influence in political and economic spheres has continued to grow at a near exponential pace, an area they've had considerably less success is within the cultural world. Despite the country being a key player in globalization, China's cultural products see far less proliferation compared to other East Asian nations. Like most countries that continue to amass global power, China also hopes to export its ideology through cultural means such as its art, media, and propaganda. However, given the capitalist nations that dominate the lion's share of the world economy, China risks alienating potential consumers with its decidedly more communist values. With China already having played revisionist to aspects of its traditions such as Confucianism, this roundtable not only asks the question of whether China will be able to successfully create a cultural identity amongst the world, but if it can do so without compromising its own values.

Delegates ultimately proposed for more investment in student exchanges with more of a focus on smaller towns, a reduction in bureaucracy in the visa process, and reinstating key education programs to increase cultural literacy.

Education and Society

ChASC 4 Roundtable



RT Leader: Sophia To

Ashley Xia

Kaitlyn Lee

Xin Shu

Welcome to the "Education and Society" Roundtable, where we explore diverse educational experiences, and unravel how our upbringing and academic environments shape our core values. We will also examine the differences between the Chinese and American education systems. We will delve into collectivism in China versus individualism in the US and discuss how family values impact our perspectives. This Roundtable isn't just about learning; it's a dynamic space for insights, cross-cultural understanding, and envisioning a brighter future in education and society. Our topics range from discussing historical context to deep-rooted societal values that shape our world. With Delegates actively participating and sharing their personal experiences, we conclude by inviting the most innovative ideas and recommendations, fostering cross-cultural insights and a shared vision for the future.

Delegates proposed a policy of educational exchange initiatives such as more collaborative universities between China and the world.

Ethics of Policy-Making

ChASC 4 Roundtable

RT Leader: Allison Hunt

Emma Peterson

Kiran Nieves-Noel

Xueyou Liao



Ethical policy-making in both China and the United States is deeply rooted in a complex blend of philosophical traditions and cultural beliefs. While China draws from its rich Confucian heritage, emphasizing values such as family, respect for authority, and social harmony, the United States champions individualism, democracy, and utilitarianism. How these distinct ethical frameworks coexist and shape policy decisions in a globalized world is a thought-provoking question. This roundtable seeks to explore not only how these ethics shape diverse policy areas like education and human rights, but also the opportunities for cooperation and understanding that emerge from their diversity. This exploration is key to navigating the complexities of international diplomacy and global governance, fostering a deeper appreciation of the intricacies behind ethical policy-making in these influential nations.

Delegates focused on the topic of subnational agreements as a way to create more nuanced change instead of broader policies.

Legacies and Narratives

ChASC 4 Roundtable



RT Leader: Melody Lau

Avia Weber

Dahlia Townley-Bakewell

Yelim Lee

History is a living narrative, rich with multiple perspectives and layers waiting to be uncovered. The Legacies and Narratives roundtable examines how historical and contemporary legacies and narratives impact various facets of U.S.-China relations, from policy choices to cultural identity and personal beliefs. It delves into the way elements like identity, culture, and memory are interwoven into these narratives, influencing how governments, societies, and individuals perceive themselves and the world. This examination provides crucial historical context, enables pattern recognition, and dispels misconceptions, ultimately promoting informed and strategic decision-making in the bilateral relationship. By dissecting the legacies and narratives associated with these two nations, this roundtable nurtures a nuanced understanding of complex issues, promotes effective exchanges across diverse fields, and empowers individuals to shape their own narratives and legacies in an ever-evolving global landscape.

Delegates advocated for more qualitatively focused scholarships in order to promote better cultural research and cross-cultural exchange

CHICAGO HIGHLIGHTS



CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

ChASC 4 enjoyed an informative and educational tour of the Chicago History Museum's "Facing Freedom" Exhibition.

ARCHITECTURE BOAT TOUR OF CHICAGO

ChASC 4 explored the city's unique architecture along the Chicago river.



NEGOTIATIONS LECTURE WITH PROF. JOHN BURROWS

Professor Burrows from the Harris School of Public Policy offered ChASC 4 insight on negotiation tactics.



CHICAGO HIGHLIGHTS

CHICAGO CHINESE CONSULATE GENERAL

The ChASC 4 Delegates were welcomed by the Consul-General Zhao Jian at the Chicago Chinese Consulate for an evening of discussion, networking, and incredible food!



CHICAGO SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL

Chicago Sister Cities International spoke with ChASC 4 about the organization's mission and the importance of citizen diplomacy in promoting peace.



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ChASC 4 had the privilege of attending a performance by the renowned Chicago Symphony Orchestra at The Chicago Symphony Center.



DC HIGHLIGHTS



CHINESE ART WORKSHOP

As a wonderful start to our DC programming, we learned Chinese brushwork painting and calligraphy from Carla Jarason at the Sumi-E Society.

THE ASIA GROUP RECEPTION

At The Asia Group, ChASC 4 learned the importance of U.S.-China business relations and practiced their networking skills at the dinner reception with TAG China Practice team.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE BRIEFING

ChASC4 visited the U.S. Department of State and engaged in exciting discussion with representatives from the Office of China Coordination, informally known as “China House.”



DC HIGHLIGHTS

EMBASSY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

ChASC 4 was once again welcomed into the Embassy of China gaining insight into the embassy's dynamic with the American government.



NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING

At the National Security Council, ChASC had the chance to discuss timely issues relating to the U.S.'s foreign policy toward China.

CHASC 4 FINAL FORUM

The DC Final Forum was the culmination of the conference's Roundtable Groups' research. Following a successful and fascinating series of presentations, the delegates were awarded certificates for the completion of ChASC 4.



THANK YOU TO THE GENEROUS SUPPORTERS OF THE 4TH CHINA- AMERICA STUDENT CONFERENCE:



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CHASCR NOTES!

- **ELIZABETH GAMARRA:** ChASC 1 & 2 (2020 & 2021) published a paper titled, "Human Security and Resilience: Complementary and Competing Paradigms?" in the Journal of Human Security Vol. 12, No. 3. Elizabeth was also selected as the Y20 U.S delegate for the Y20 Conference where she represented the U.S with the other 5 delegates.
- **RAVEN WITHERSPOON:** ChASC 1 & 2 (2020 & 2021) finally had the opportunity to meet two ECs from her cohort in-person in China!
- **CARISSA YANG:** ChASC 1 & 2 (2020 & 2021) earned her pilot's license from United Aviate Academy in January 2024!
- **SUSAN ST. DENIS:** ChASC 2 & 3 (2022 & 2023) began her M.A. in Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy at Tsinghua University in Beijing in 2023.
- **MELODY LAU:** ChASC 3 & 4 (2023 & 2024) is pursuing a masters in global political economy at the National Tsinghua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan. She is also Research and Development Director in the Global Engagement Initiative Division of the Bridge Cultural Exchange Academy, a citizen diplomacy and peacebuilding organization.
- **VINCENT LAY:** ChASC 3 & 4 (2023 & 2024) is currently a Boren Fellow studying Mandarin in Taiwan as part of an initiative from the Defense Language and National Security Education Office.

***We are seeking news for future ChASC journals.
If you are a ChASC alum and would like to share news in
next year's journal, please email us at info@iscdc.org.***

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