6 plane rides, 3 cities, and 1 unforgettable adventure. Here in this newsletter you will get to follow along on the cultural and professional experiences that we were able to have all because we made the best choice of our lives and chose China.

Airdropping pictures is a tool on the iPhone. It has been the lifeblood of us sharing pictures and memories on our trip. We airdropped in China and were airdropped into China ourselves.

Waynie Lee
Reed Smith
Erica Williams
**Erica Williams** is a 2016 graduate, majoring in marketing and real estate from Atlanta, GA. This is her first time traveling outside of the U.S. She likes jet skiing, going to the nail salon/spa, watching movies, and playing with her puppy Bentley.

**Fun Fact:** She plans to take over her family’s real estate business after graduation.

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**Reed Smith** is a rising junior studying advertising and marketing from Atlanta, GA. He enjoys basketball, lacrosse, fishing, drawing, and spending time with friends. He hopes to eventually end up in Hawaii.

**Fun Fact:** He has 90 degree angle hitchhiker thumbs.

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**Waynie Lee** is a rising junior studying advertising, business management, and international business from Suwanee, GA. She loves anything related to fitness, good food, and listening to music. She has been to China a few times to visit family, but never really as a tourist.

**Fun Fact:** She has gone skydiving twice and is terrified of birds.
Shanghai Splendor

Hearst Agency Visit

To kick off our agency visits we were able to visit Hearst International Publishing. Hearst is one of the largest media companies in the world, owning many household names such as ELLE, Esquire, and Cosmopolitan. Beyond that, they have many other divisions including a venture capitalist branch. We were lucky enough to have Hugues de Vautibault, the deputy of GM of Hearst China present to us. He gave us a quick overview of Hearst as a media company and of the social media landscape in China. We were then lucky enough to be able to have a panel of new employees sit down and talk to us. They were able to give us a first-hand glimpse into the lives of new graduates in the industry and their first-hand experience. All of us pretty much grilled them with questions because this was an opportunity we’d never be able to have again. From the rapidly changing technology to crazy work hours, it only made us want to get into the industry even more. Our time at Hearst was very beneficial. We got to learn about what the company does from one of their top executives while also having our questions answered about what it’s like to work day-to-day in the company’s various divisions.

OgilvyOne Visit

Ogilvy & Mather is one of those agencies you read about in your textbooks, the legendary ones. Our visit to Ogilvy, without a doubt, lived up to those expectations. When we arrived we got a tour of the office and it blew us away. You could feel the creativity in the office just based on how the office was laid out. Already in awe from the multi-storied office tour, we were greeted by division President, Jacco de Schegget. He is a charming and wildly impressive man we all instantly admired. We were hanging on to his every word in the 2-hour presentation. Jacco explained to us a little bit about what OgilvyOne does in China and what makes them special as a company, and trust us it was a lot. He then gave us an overview of the macroeconomics of China and its social trends. Jacco did an amazing job of making the information he presented to us relatable from a foreigner’s perspective. The knowledge we walked out with from his presentation was so much better than anything we could’ve gotten in a classroom. His expertise in the industry was incredible and the insights he gave us about advertising and China in general are invaluable. We all left the office very inspired and motivated. It’s times like these that reassure us that we picked the right industry to go into.
Burson-Marsteller is located in the same WPP building as the Ogilvy office. We met one of the company’s consultants, Cody, in the lobby and he took us up to their office. The Burson-Marsteller workplace, he explained, was designed with a mix of creative and traditional office characteristics. We sat down in their presentation room and he discussed Burson-Marsteller’s background and what they do.

Burson-Marsteller is a global public relations and communications company. Some sectors of the business work directly with the government and engage in crisis communication. The company focuses on corporate reputation and consumer/brand marketing. Waynie will actually be interning there for two months in their brand marketing department after this trip ends. They also develop some games to promote their customer’s brands using HTML 5. Overall, the visit we had with Burson-Marsteller was a good one, and it was our first exposure to a company that focuses heavily on public relations on our trip thus far. It was clear they did great work and we were lucky to learn a bit more about it.

PHD Media Visit

After visiting Ogilvy, we had the opportunity to go visit the media agency PHD. We walked into a very modern office then straight into the conference room where we were greeted by Kindy and bowls of snacks all perched on top of a long table made completely of legos. She knew the way to our hearts. Here we learned about what PHD does and how the smaller firm fits into the communications chain. Kindy also gave us an overview of the macroeconomics of China and how their social media systems worked. She made it a point to emphasis out how China plans to redefine what “Made in China” means to the world as the country plans to increase quality and decrease on quantity. Being a smaller firm it was interesting to find out a little bit more about how a more boutique firm operates in connection with larger agencies that they share clients with. Kindy answered all of our questions regarding the industry and really helped us even further understand the media world.

LKK Design Visit

Our visit to LKK was a rather new experience compared to the other agencies we had been to thus far. Upon entering, we were met by the smiles of a handful of young LKK employees and Yan Zhang, the director of the company. We received a tour of their office, and it quickly became clear to us that LKK is founded on ideas of creativity and innovation.

Next, we sat down for the actual LKK brief. We were led through the presentation and company videos to give us an idea of what LKK does. Alongside engineering and creating actual inventions, LKK works as a consulting company. Essentially, LKK specialized in anything involving creativity and innovative thinking. They recently helped a cultural arts center redesign their business structure in order to lure in more customers and promote interest in some of China’s dying arts. Now, they have been tasked with doing the same type of consulting for one of China’s oldest tea shops. They gave us the brief, and had us do actual, hands-on creative work to see what solutions we could come up with. All in all, our experience at LKK was a fantastic one, and it was nice to get a chance to get involved and try out some of the work that these companies do day to day.
Wuzhen Water Town

Wuzhen is located within a triangle that lies between Shanghai, Hangzhou and Suzhou. The town is south of the Yangtze River and is built on a water canal. Therefore, the residents’ main form of transportation is by boat. The town is often referred to as the Venice of the East. There are 5 other water towns in the area, but most of them have been taken over by tourism. Wuzhen is the most untouched of the water towns.

Wuzhen was extremely beautiful. We visited the east part of the river first. The East part is still inhabited by native families. When we first came into the town we saw a native woman washing her vegetables on the side of the canal. In another home an elderly man was cooking himself lunch. The town was nearly packed to capacity with tourists, and the native families continued to carry out their daily activities. There were so many people we were pretty much shuffling the whole time.

After visiting the east side of the river, we ventured to the west side. The west side is more modern, and is not inhabited by families. It was also less packed with tourists! We loved seeing the men in rice hats paddle ferries across the canals. We came across a side of the canal that was full of small dog sized koi fish. There were beautiful buildings and shops to see. Despite the dreary weather the trip out to Wuzhen was a big hit.

What’s On The Menu?
Hot Pot Dinner

Shanghai was full of delicious and exotic foods but the farewell hotpot dinner took the cake. Imagine an Asian version of fondue except healthier and more delicious. Each person got their own simmering hotpot full of delicious broth to cook their chosen ingredients in. On the table was a variety of delicious meats, vegetables and noodles. Everyone chose what they wanted, dipped it into the steaming bowl of goodness, and a little while later your once uncooked ingredients were ready to eat. Eating hotpot is an activity in itself, and a must try when one comes to China.

Tianzifang Art District

Tianzifang is an art district in Shanghai located in the Old French Quarter. The area consisted of alley ways and streets, with unique and creative stores. The layout was like a maze, and each alley-way presented a new artistic flavor. Our group thoroughly enjoyed exploring the clothing and small trinket stores. The various souvenir shops that sold small Buddha statues, Shanghai fridge magnets, and authentic Chinese hand creams were also incredible. Tianzifang reminded us of the Little Five Points area in Atlanta. The area was eclectic and encouraged artistic expression. One artist actually sat outside and made a masterpiece by cutting small pieces of paper into tiny designs. We all got these amazingly designed souvenir t-shirts that looked like street art. Dr. Meng’s suggestion to explore Tianzifang was a great one.
At the Temple of Heaven, we got to play emperor for a day as this is where emperors would come to pray to the heavens for good harvests. The historic area consists of three locations: The Circular Mound, Imperial Vault of Heaven, and the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests. The intricacy at which all of the temples were built was mind blowing. In fact, some of the buildings are made completely out of wood. That’s correct- not a single nail. On the way out we were invited to a game of jianzi, the Chinese version of hacky sack, by some locals. We put on quite the show to say the least. Let’s just say none of us will be kicking around a jianzi anytime soon.

When you come to Beijing there is a list of must do’s, and visiting Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City is on the top of that list. Visiting here gave us a small glimpse into what life in the dynasties was like. What you will notice right away is just the sheer size of both the square and especially the palace. The beautiful government buildings surrounding the Square just shows how much of a presence the government has in the country. Once inside the palace we went from building to building listening to our wonderful tour guide, Merry, talk. The real treat was when we climbed to the top of Jing Shan Park and got to see this amazing view. It was picture perfect.

The motto of this picture is “No pee, no tea.” We got the impromptu chance to go to a tea ceremony. Here we were able to sample five different kinds of delicious teas and watch the tea maker prepare them in the way they were truly meant to be prepared. If anything has come from this trip, it is that we have all been converted into tea drinkers. Perhaps our favorite part was when the tea maker brought out the pee pee boy. The Chinese have many amazing things used for the enjoyment of this age old tradition, like color changing cups and clay figurines. This pee pee boy is used to test if the water is ready. If the water is just right then the little figurine will “pee” - if not than no tea. If anyone is looking to collect tea we would recommend Puer. For those who spend too much time in front of a screen, we suggest a little jasmine tea.

There is a reason they don’t call it the good wall. This visit most definitely great. This was what most of us had been looking forward to for a long time. Covered in sunscreen, we set off to climb the wall, well one section of it anyways. The ride up to the start point on the ski lift, or sorts, was incredible. The view was unlike any other. You could look and see from horizon to horizon, and underneath you was a forest of green. It wasn’t an easy climb, with some places being almost vertical, but the view from the top was all worth it. We hurried back down in anticipation of what was awaiting us- tobogganing down the Great Wall. We were all ready to fly, but sadly Merry told us if we went too fast she wouldn’t give us dinner. It was 6 minutes of pure fun as we took in the scenery around us on our little carts. If we could do one thing again, it would be this.
Beijing Cuisine

What’s On The Menu?

Peking Duck Dinner

Despite only staying a few days in Beijing, it is safe to the food there was amazing. Every meal was so delicious that it was silent for the most part as everyone was so busy eating. The highlight of our stay in Beijing though was definitely the Peking duck dinner. Beijing is famous for its delicious duck that is specially prepared from the way the duck is fed to the preparation of the meat that takes a two days. The combination of the perfectly crispy skin, various sauces, and other small ingredients all wrapped up in a translucent thin pancake is to die for.

Lazy Susans

What is round, spins, and loved by all? We’ve all come to love this handy food dispenser. Now we can’t imagine eating without one. It just speeds up the process so much. However, you have to be careful not to lose a hand in the feeding frenzy!
Homage to Hong Kong

**SPRG Visit**

Strategic Public Relations Group is the biggest local PR firm in Hong Kong. However, we learned that within the Public Relations Organizations International (PROI), the company is the second largest firm. Richard, the CEO, told us that he was the first Asian Global Chairman of PROI in 46 years. To get to this position he worked double shifts for 3 years, and didn’t get off until midnight every night...definitely someone to look up to. He told us that after working with Edelman he decided to set up his own PR group because he wanted to own the biggest PR firm in the world. Most of his staff have been there since he first opened his doors. To top it all off, SPRG does an amazing amount of charity work. Richard was an impressive man, that built an even more impressive company.

**Burson-Marsteller Visit**

At Burson-Marsteller we met Antoine Calendrier, the firm’s Market Leader. He taught us that public relations is all about creating an investable story. Any company can create a great product or service, but no one is going to invest in it if they don’t believe in it. The best piece of advice he gave us, was to find our passion and follow it fiercely while trusting in our gut. In the short time he talked to us, he inspired us all to fearlessly go after what we want.

Since Antoine had to run, Susie followed up with an in depth case study of one of Burson’s biggest clients. It was cool to see the real work they had done for this tech giant. Next we met Polka, who is a Senior Director within the company, perhaps one of the coolest people we’ve met so far. She showed us how to make a “message house”. This is used to communicate to clients how our organization is better than the others, and drive this fact into their heads through the use of strong, factual points. To be a great public relations firm you must first understand the market’s current perception of your client, and then determine what the client wants the market’s future perception of themselves to be. We learned that it is very important to outline how communication will support the business objective. If improved PR and communication won’t support the client’s business objective, then your work is futile. Polka’s most important advice though was telling us that as PR professionals we need to be reliable and detail oriented. This is definitely one of our favorite agency visits. We loved Burson-Marsteller Hong Kong!
Edelman Public Relations Worldwide Visit

Following our string of amazing visits, we went to Edelman. Here we met Adrian Warr who is the Senior Director. He informed us that Edelman is an independent and unleveraged agency. Independence affords them a lot more freedom to change and grow, that some other agency structures won’t allow. This includes fiscal benefits, cultural benefits and a unique organizational design. At Edelman they love pro bono and do a lot of work for charitable organizations. In his short time with us, he gave us a lot of amazing advice. The most memorable thing he said was that he straight up thought that advertising was a dying industry. Crazy right? What he said about the lagging structure of agencies will soon be outperformed by lean structured PR firms. Everything he said made perfect sense and had us all rethinking a few things.

BBDO Visit

Wrapping up our agency visits for the whole trip, we visited BBDO. BBDO is a world-class advertising agency with offices around the globe. Poi, a manager in the agency, was our presenter. She opened up the talk with some facts about BBDO itself, named after the last names of the four founders. Super cool facts: the term brainstorming was actually invented inside BBDO by Mr. Osborne, BBDO was involved in the incident that caught Michael Jackson’s hair on fire which was rumored to have started his plastic surgery obsession, and the sitcom Mad Men is actually based off BBDO back in the day. Pretty cool right? We loved their motto which is “the work. the work. the work.”, simple and to the point. Poi then treated us to some of BBDO’s work. There were some pretty amazing pieces of work, both funny and creative. It’s seeing things like this that give us all assurance that we picked the right field to go into. Then came the most interesting part of the presentation, an overview of China culture. Her talk really hit points that the other agencies didn’t. We talked honestly about what we’d seen so far on our trip and it was one of the most educational discussions thus far. BBDO, and the ever so engaging Poi, was the perfect way to close up our agency visits.
**That’s interesting...**

When we were leaving Macau, something caught our eye in a convenience store. There was a wall of cigarettes for sale, all of which had aggressive, scare-tactic advertising as part of their display. Apparently, it is required by law here to place these images next to cigarettes. Due to our advertising studies, we found this to be interesting. Cigarette companies here actually have to deal with advertisements that directly oppose their products when attempting to make a sale.

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**Day trip to Macau**

On our last official day of the trip we spent the day in Macau. It was an early morning to catch the hour long boat ride to Macau. Excitement filled all of us as we were determined to make this last day a good one, but the heat and humidity really tested us. Our tour guide was incredibly knowledgeable and was telling us some very interesting facts. Having been colonized by the Portuguese, Macau has an interesting mix of cultures. Some say it is a place without an identity of their own actually. The architecture was very close to that of the streets of Cuba. We first visited the oldest Portuguese fortress and learned a little about why they built it. Then we walked the streets in front of the ruins of St. Paul’s church. It was interesting to see the clash of cultures etched onto the walls of the church. On the streets we sampled all the local food, including their specialty pork and beef jerkies, almond cookies, and egg tarts. Lunch was at a small Portuguese place with delicious food and afterwards was the temple. Last on our trip was the Venetian hotel, inside of which had a huge casino and lots of shopping. It was like they took streets straight out of Venice and plopped them into the hotel, complete with fake blue skies. Some gambled and some shopped, Macau treated us well.

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**What’s On The Menu? Dim Sum Dinner**

Dim sum holds a special place in all those who live in Hong Kong. It is a lifestyle, a past-time, and is quintessentially Hong Kong. Our exquisite lunch of dim sum on the 30th floor in Nanhai No. 1 was a dining experience like no other. With the picture perfect view of the Victoria Harbor combined with the delicious food in steaming baskets it was nothing short of a culinary voyage. Our table was filled with steaming BBQ pork buns, succulent shrimp dumplings, and savory stir fried beef noodles. Testing everyone’s chopstick skills, the dim sum were snatched up within minutes of them being set down. The meal was filled with sounds of delight. Dim sum was definitely a memorable meal. We discussed out quest to find good dim sum places back home. Let the quest begin.
These three weeks have been some of the most beneficial and influential of my life. It seems that for as long as I can remember, I have excelled at living within my comfort zone. When I signed up to go abroad to China, it had not yet hit me how much of an adventurous leap this would be. Yet, as the departure date approached, I grew nervous. It became fully clear the seeming insanity that this trip was about to be- I was about to travel halfway across the world, immerse myself in a culture polar to my own, and visit some of the world’s most elite agencies. And now, after taking this leap, I realize that it could not have paid off more. This trip came to me at a low point in my life, and has lifted me up with inspiration and provided the motivation I need to push forward, harder than ever before. I feel that I have now seen the world, and I am sure that with the correct focus and effort, I can excel in it.

Having been to China many times before I wasn’t sure there was much more for me to see, but I am so happy to admit that I was dead wrong. These 3 weeks have been the best weeks of my life. I basically have gotten to re-experience China again but this time as a tourist, and with the most amazing group of people I could’ve asked for. The bonds we’ve formed learning, laughing, and growing as people has left me with some amazing friendships. I’ve gotten to talk to people I never could’ve dreamed would even give me the time of day, and learn so much about the industry I love. The cultural excursions and food exceeded every expectation I ever could’ve had. My 2nd trip to the Great Wall, complete with ski lifts and toboggans, will forever be my favorite memory. This trip honestly has changed my life and has left me with memories I’ll cherish forever. This trip has given me assurance that I chose the right field to go into and the fuel I need to chase my dreams passionately. Given the choice of other study abroad programs, I would choose China every time.

Four years ago, I never would have imagined that I would be in this place right now. As a first generation college student, I had to research, learn and explore all that college had to offer on my own. It wasn’t until fall semester of my fourth year that I decide to explore studying abroad, and learned that there were numerous scholarships and grants available to fund my excursion. Fast forward to the summer, and here I am, in China! It is my very first time traveling outside of the United States. One small step towards learning more about the world, and one huge step outside of my comfort zone. Nonetheless, this entire trip has been astonishing. China has shown me how remarkable history is, as well as how incredible progress is. I feel so incredibly rewarded to have had the opportunity to visit the Great Wall, the Forbidden city, the Temple of Heaven, Wuzhen, Macau and many other amazing destinations in China. Furthermore, our various agency visits have enlightened me about the wonderful and promising future of advertising and public relations, and I cannot wait to join the industry. Thank you so much China, for accepting me with open arms. These past three weeks are forever engrained into my heart.