

PRESS RELEASE-IC-CAE Trip to China

On May 12, 2008, eight students from Norfolk State University, two students from Howard University and two students from the University of the District of Columbia chaperoned by Dr. Arlene Maclin left for a three week cultural immersion experience in China. This was a cataclysmic trip in a number of ways. It turned out that on the same morning, a 7.8 point earthquake on the Richter Scale had occurred in Sichuan, which is in the Southwestern part of China. This region of China is more than 1000 miles away from Beijing, yet tremors of about 3.8 were felt in Beijing, which was our final destination. It turned out that our trip paralleled a number of events in China that demonstrates its short term goal of becoming a major world power. For the first time, the national and international press was given open access to the events of the earthquake, and there was 24 hour coverage on CCTV. This was definitely a first in the People's Republic of China. The Premier, Wen Jiabao was interviewed repeatedly about the Sichuan Quake victims. He also visited the region within hours of the quake and showed unbelievable compassion and empathy for the victims. More than 69,000 people were killed, 368,000 injured, 18,000 missing and more than 5 million people have been displaced. Additionally, over the course of 3 weeks, more than \$6 Billion have been donated from all over the world to provide relief to the victims. Chinese government officials were very open with the international press and others about the Sichuan situation and are determined to show the world that they know how to deal with crisis situations. The government officials, including President Hu Jintao and all of the other high level officials, were very cognizant of



public opinion on the way this event was handled. Furthermore, they want to demonstrate that China is a safe place to visit for the summer Olympics of 2008 in August. It was difficult to ignore the Sichuan earthquake since there were three days of national mourning from May 17-20. All flags were lowered throughout the country

and entertainment on television was halted. Many Chinese people also visited the temple during this time. The first week of our visit was in Beijing, where we visited the usual tourist

sites including the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Chairman Mao's mausoleum and a number of imperial gardens. We also visited the Beijing Office of the National Science Foundation. The Director, Dr. William Chang was a very gracious host and he discussed the technical details of the earthquake that had occurred earlier in the week.



We also visited the Great Wall of China



We also visited Ericsson Telecommunications (A Swedish Company) in Nanjing and were accompanied by students from the University of Arizona, who were there for a semester long study



abroad program. All of the students participated in intensive classes in Mandarin in Nanjing for two weeks as well as lectures about the history and business relations of the People's Republic of China. The students also worked with migrant worker's children at a school in Nanjing. An article about the students' work will appear in a Chinese magazine in August.

