



Support at CET Harbin

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Who is the intended audience(s) for your Perspective Piece?: "Students of color, low-income students, people who want to go China"

There is no program that is more supportive than CET. In a lot of ways, I wasn't an average student. Following my acceptance into the program, I received the devastating news that my financial aid wouldn't be ready in time for the program. I didn't know what to do. What do you do in that situation? Give up? Fortunately, I am my mother's daughter, so I called up CET and explained my situation.

Kate Bohan, from the CET financial department assured me that it was possible for me to go, I would just need to turn in the program fee in September. It took a few days before the program ended for me to receive the news that I was getting my financial aid soon. Kate, Eduardo (my resident advisor), and Ren Laoshi (the academic director) gave me a lot of support during my struggles. Kate gave me the time and patience needed to enjoy the program. Eduardo listened to my sobs and rantings when good news kept turning bad. Ren Laoshi was there to talk to me because she wanted to make sure that I enjoyed my time in Harbin but also had a support system to lean on during my troubled times. Oddly enough, my teachers were a big support system for me as well. The concern and understanding that they had about my situation was something that I had never experienced before in teachers. Finally, my best friend that I met in China, was the shoulder I cried on and the person I talked to when the anxiety nearly took my break away.

I can't say that this was a normal experience, it wasn't. I can say that I would have never had an experience like this with another program because CET supported, not only, my physical health, but my mental health as well. Yes, I am African American in China and many Chinese people find that intriguing, but I am also a student from a low-income background who never thought it was possible to study abroad in China for three and a half months. Since I have had this experience, it is easier looking at other programs and signing up because I know that if an organization as amazing as CET gave me an opportunity, I am confident that other programs will give me a chance. Now that's a true lifelong experience.