



Kokomo Schools

Education Foundation Newsletter



November 2018



KHS Band Goes to China

Kokomo High School sophomore Ava Briggs never dreamed she would have the opportunity to play music in another country. The trumpet player also never imagined visiting China while in high school.

During Fall Break in October, Ava accomplished both; she was one of 39 Kokomo High School Wind Ensemble students who spent nine days in China learning about the country's culture and performing multiple concerts.

Ava had wonderful experiences traveling to Chile and Costa Rica through the International Baccalaureate program at Central Middle International School but was especially excited to visit China.

"China is just so different than anything you might see here in the United States," Ava noted. "You cannot know what the country is like until you see it for yourself. I feel really lucky that I was able to have this experience at such a young age. I'd love to return to China someday with someone who hasn't been before, so I can show them all the incredible places I saw."

The students began their adventure in Beijing, where they visited historic landmarks, including the Summer Palace, the Forbidden City, and of course, the Great Wall of China.

KHS students struggled to find words to describe the grandeur of the Great Wall and the value of walking along the wall while a tour guide shared stories about the wall's history.

"I know I keep using the word 'amazing', but the Great Wall truly was amazing," KHS junior Harrison Reed explained. "I don't really have the words for it."

KHS senior Parker Pluckebaum called it "breathtaking." Eva recalled something the tour guide said that stuck with her.

"The Great Wall was built to separate China from its enemies," Ava noted. "Now it is a place that brings together people from all over the world."

Following their time in Beijing, the KHS Wind Ensemble students, instructors, and parent chaperones boarded a bullet train to Shanghai. While in China's biggest city, the Kokomo High School students stayed in middle school dormitories and had an opportunity to bond with the Chinese students staying in the dorms.

"Every night when we returned to the dorms, these 3rd and 4th-grade girls would come to our room and spend the evening talking to us," Ava explained. "Those girls were so excited to see us, and I loved getting to know them."

Parker enjoyed being a role model for the younger Chinese boys in his dormitory, while also learning from these Chinese students. Parker made an effort to learn some Mandarin words before the trip to China, and also learned more words during his nine days in the country. Parker used his new vocabulary whenever he could.

"I felt it was important to learn a little bit about the language," Parker explained. "To me, it is a sign of respect, and it allowed me to connect more with the people I met in China."

While in Shanghai, the musicians in the KHS Wind Ensemble performed five concerts at local schools. The students had spent months learning 12 traditional Chinese and American songs to perform for their audiences. These songs included America the Beautiful, Shenandoah, El Capitan, Forbidden City, Great Wall, Brave Spirit, and Little Chinese Suite, among others.

"I felt proud to showcase our American music, but it was really heartwarming when we performed Forbidden City at a primary school," Parker explained. "All the little kids sang along as we performed."

The KHS musicians had the opportunity to sight-read a musical selection with a talented Chinese student orchestra at one of the oldest schools in Shanghai. The KHS students shared a stage with 100 Chinese students who recently had returned from a performance in Moscow. The KHS students also were able to play under the direction of a world-renowned Chinese conductor.

KHS Assistant Principal John Pinson, who also serves as the Director of Bands and Music, noted: "The students' final performance in Shanghai had the most profound effect on me. It was amazing to see how much learning was happening."

Between performances, the Kokomo High School students learned more about the Chinese culture. The students from KHS joined a group of Chinese students one afternoon to explore one of Shanghai's famous Water Towns, ancient cities surrounded by rivers, lakes, and canals. The KHS students learned about the history of these towns while becoming friends with the Chinese students.

The Chinese student guiding Parker through the Water Town introduced him to some traditional Chinese dishes at a café. Speaking of food, Ava noted that she was worried about eating traditional Chinese food because she is a picky eater.

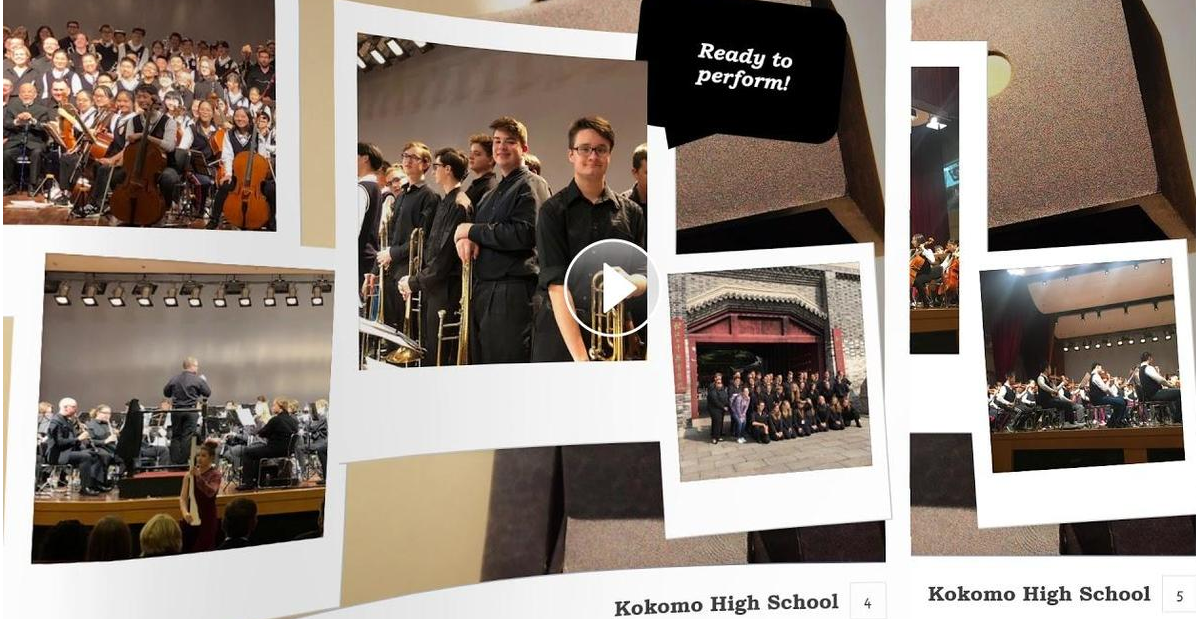
"The food was pretty good," Ava said. "I was surprised how much I like tofu. I also tried traditional Chinese candy. Some of the flavors were strange but good."

Mr. Pinson felt it was important to take students outside their comfort zones and allow them to experience a culture much different from their own.

These experiences begin to eliminate misconceptions about other cultures, and lead to meaningful learning," Mr. Pinson added. "It is nearly impossible to wrap your mind around the value of this educational opportunity."

When asked about his favorite part of the trip, Parker responded: "Can I say all of it? I enjoyed this trip so much, and I hope to be able to visit many more countries in the future."

Harrison added, "This trip was bigger than anything we had imagined. When our marching band performed in Washington D.C., we thought we would never be able to top that experience, but we did. Our band program keeps growing, and we continue to have amazing opportunities at Kokomo High School."



Lilly Foundation Grant Match

The Lilly Foundation is currently helping us to achieve our fundraising goal! They are willing to match each dollar donated to endowments with an additional 25 cents. This gives us a great opportunity to boost our endowments significantly. For example: each dollar donated to the endowments will be \$1.25; \$1,000 will be \$1,250; \$10,000 will be \$12,500, etc. The Lilly program is limited in both the length and amount they are willing to match. Therefore, this is a good time to add to existing endowments and perhaps start new ones. All donations are tax-deductible! If you have questions please contact Joe Dunbar at 765-437-1596 or email at jdunbar@kokomo.k12.in.us.

Contributions can be sent to:

KOKOMO SCHOOLS EDUCATION FOUNDATION, 1500 S. Washington, Kokomo, IN 46902

MS MAJOR SAVER COMING SOON!

Kokomo Public Schools Education Foundation

2018 MAJOR SAVER CAMPAIGN
 Campaign Kickoff: Thursday, December 6th
 Campaign Collections: Monday, Dec. 10th - Monday, Dec. 17th
 Campaign Follow-Up: Tuesday, December 18th

Proceeds from this fundraiser go directly towards funding classroom mini-grants for Kokomo teachers. Since 2012, over \$114,300 has been raised through the Major Saver program.

FEATURED BUSINESSES
 Marie's Car Wash, The Kat Store, Food Precinct, Indy Eleven, Outback Steakhouse, Prodigy, Cook, McDoogal's, McDonald's, Popcorn Cafe, 3 Amigos Mexican Grill, Dairy Queen, White Castle, Fittola's Restaurant, Jiffy Lube, Hall Moon, Heritage Lane, Rally's, MO Joe Coffee House, Papa John's, Culver's, and Charley's Philly Steaks

HOW TO PURCHASE CARDS
 Major Saver cards can be purchased via cash, check or online at www.majorsaver.com. The online sale can be credited back to a particular student and school. All cards purchased online will be mailed directly to the customer. Create a custom link for friends and family to share via social media or email. This link automatically credits the online sale to students when link is used to make a purchase. Major Saver cards can also be purchased, and credited to a student, through the Major Saver App.

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QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN?
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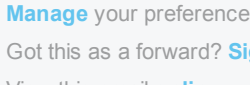
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