

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Surmang Foundation/amara Vol III., no 1

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Amara, Inc. Receives 501 (c)3 status.

amara: the China rural health alliance[®], has been granted tax-exempt status by the US IRS. This completes one of the most fundamental tasks on the critical path to providing health care to the ultra-poor of China, by establishing a network of rural health providers.

Ogilvy and Mathers Lends Support

In a meeting on Feb 25 in their China headquarters, Ogilvy and Mathers (O & M) has agreed to partner with Surmang Foundation/Amara. O & M is one of the largest public relations & advertising firms in the world, whose portfolio includes such corporate giants as IBM, Motorola, Cisco Systems, Nestle, Mattel & American Express.

Their generous offer of help will be in form of creating a structural marketing plan, encompassing the range marketing and pr needs of Surmang/Amara, including: material targeting, profile raising, web design and content, brochure production, video production, sponsorship packages, promotion of S & A's projects and needs through strategic partners and their network of corporate clients.

Surmang and WAB Partnership.

Surmang Foundation is developing a project together with WAB (Western Academy of Beijing). WAB is one of the two biggest international schools in China. WAB students are typically children of parents who work for multinational corporations, or foreign embassies.



(South

David Harrison

The project will be part of their International Baccalaureate (IB) program – the highest qualification for international schools. This project is called CAS, for Community Action and Service and must be completed by all seniors to graduate from an IB school. Our main contact with WAB is through David Harrison, the CAS coordinator. He has taken students on extended residential service projects in the Kalahari Desert

Africa), Constanta (Romania) and SubeyBaja (Ecuador). David says, "Global Citizenship and Service begins closer to home and is available to everyone, even if they don't think they can help."

This partnership will bring about 10 WAB middle school students to Surmang at the beginning of the summer vacation, this June. The students will live in a nomadic yak tent on the Surmang campus. There they will study Tibetan language and culture, including such items as tsampa-making (Tibetan's national dish: roasted barley flour), lama dancing, thangka painting, sitting meditation, in addition to trekking, home visits, and volunteering on clinic projects.

The project will be managed by Tsering Wangmo (Stephannie Piro), an American who lives in Qinghai studying Tibetan language and culture. Wangmo, fluent in Tibetan, has a special expertise in Tibetan Buddhism. You can see her blog at

<http://www.travelblog.org/bloggers/wangmo>.



Wangmo (r) and friends.

This project doesn't create any additional logistical headaches for Surmang. The additional nomadic tent and platform would be purchased by the students as part of their travel costs. The CAS Coordinator for WAB, David Harris, an old hand at such field trips, has run groups to places as far afield as Mt. Kilimanjaro, and the Bolivian Andes.

When the children return they will create their own group project that surrounds issues they met at Surmang –anything, actually from ecology, to health, that creates support for Surmang Foundation over the course of the next year. We look forward to WAB's unique contribution to our work and to our work's unique contribution to WAB and the cause of global citizenship.

Growing Volunteer Army.

About two months ago, an American University Graduate student, Nick Houshower, asked if we would be interested in his services as an intern. Nick is a tall guy from Ohio, with a very mellow demeanor and native-level Chinese, according to Beibei. In the short time Nick has been with us, he's often caused me to wonder: how did we ever get along without him?

In the short time he's been with us, he's coordinated many activities including: WAB CAS, website alternate gifts, website Gesar Book gifts, website redesign, postcard production, Parasol production. He has been joined by Nicole Stubbs, also a student from the USA. Nicole has made substantial contributions to our marketing and operations particularly in editing a medical report to be used as a web-based slideshow. Nicole is currently researching site access for the Amara network.

SF/Amara Chosen to be part of LocalNoodles Network.

English language website and publication, LocalNoodles.com, has chosen Surmang Foundation & Amara to be part of their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activity. Basically their corporate partners adopt one of the 5

charities that LocalNoodles (<http://www.localnoodles.com>) has vetted to contribute to the charities' projects.

Website Re-design in the Works.

The SF, Amara and babyAid websites are currently undergoing content and structural change. The Surmang site will be more user-friendly and simpler to access all levels of information, in addition to having Chinese language content. In addition, there will be some Flash animation presentations. The Amara site will have some more depth to it as well. The babyAid site will contain information on last year's charity event, including a financial report.

Postcard Production Completed!

We have completed the production of 4 postcards to be distributed to foreign language bookstores and coffee bars servicing the foreign community in Beijing. They contain images from Surmang and will help create further recognition of our efforts (and donations, we hope) within the expat community of Beijing.

These postcards are also available to our international affiliates and please contact Beibei at info@surmang.org



Four postcards: (l to r, top to bottom): Adroshelabum's Fortress, Surmang, Chakrasamvara Lama Dancers, Prayer Wheels being spun, Illuminated Scripture.