

# Czyzowski Oversees Sino-American Bridge for Education and Health Program

## NH teacher and NEA-NH Board Member has spent summers in China since 2012

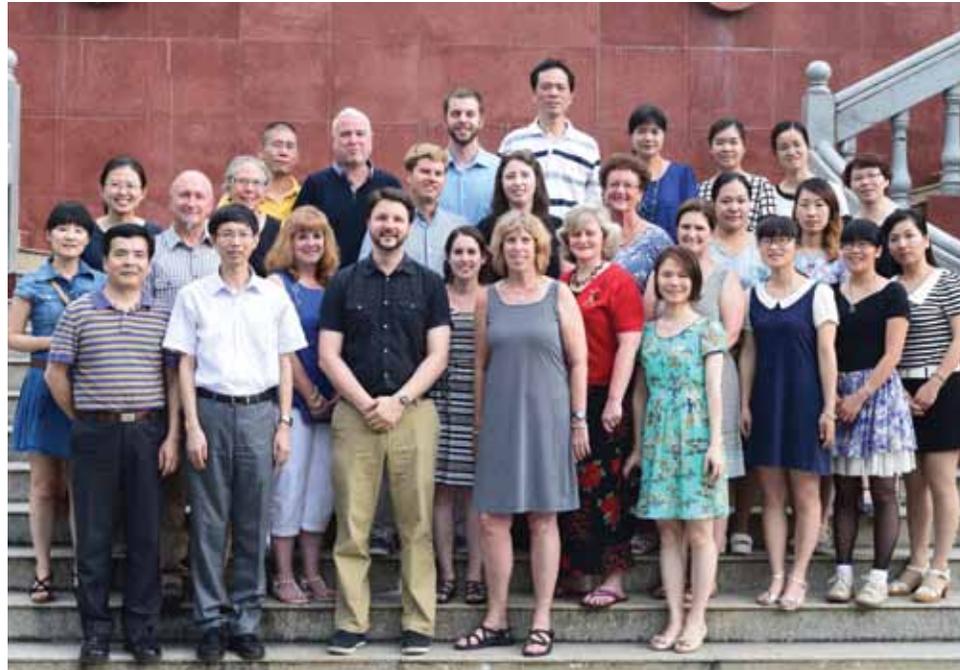
by Rosemary Hunter, Vice-Chair of SABEH

**E**van Czyzowski returned recently from China where he oversaw a unique summer program for U.S. and Chinese teachers at sites in Hangzhou and Fuzhou. He is an NEA-NH Executive Board Member, a high school English and drama teacher in Kingston, NH, and he is also the Director of Education for The Sino-American Bridge for Education and Health (SABEH).

Evan joined SABEH in 2012 for his first trip to China where he worked with Chinese teachers of English in Xi'an and Bao Ji. Returning each summer and taking on an expanding role as a lead teacher, Evan was well positioned to be appointed Director of Education for SABEH last year. While joining SABEH with experience as a former director of a similar program in Poland, Evan's leadership skills, interest and appreciation for other cultures, and dedication to education made him the obvious choice to the SABEH Board when their long-time Director, Ann Mills-Norrie stepped down.

Since 2005, SABEH has been sending U.S. teachers to China to conduct workshops on student-centered classrooms. Focusing on three key principles, the U.S. teachers share with their Chinese counterparts instructional techniques that provide students with frequent opportunities to 1) increase interaction, 2) improve comprehension, and 3) develop critical thinking skills.

SABEH is a competitive program that attracts applicants from across the U.S. Once applicants are accepted, SABEH holds a series of pre-departure planning meetings, in partnership with Bryant University's China Institute, to help prepare U.S. teachers for their work in China.



The American SABEH teachers, the Fujian Institute Dean and Vice-Deans, and the Chinese Teaching Assistants gather for a group picture. The program wins rave reviews on both sides of the Pacific.

learn a great deal about Chinese history and geography as well as its language, people and culture. During Evan's past four years with the program, he has visited most of the major cities and sights in China, including Tibet. As is true of all participants, Evan has also formed collegial bonds with many of the Chinese professionals, some of whom have visited the U.S. during the academic year to observe student-centered classrooms in action and visit U.S. landmarks, as well as experience first-hand the food and culture of the United States that they could only know about, otherwise, by reading textbooks.

town K-12 Yuhua School in Hangzhou (where 7 U.S. teachers of all grade levels and various subjects worked with over 120 Chinese teachers). At the latter site, U.S. teachers also conducted English and American Studies classes for 70 Chinese high school students.

When asked why he returns to teach in China each summer, Evan had this to say about SABEH's unique program:

"I love this program because Chinese and American teachers are constantly learning from one another about what works best in the classroom to engage and promote student learning. Everyone has such a passion for education, which is even evident during our meal times when conversations about teaching and learning continue."

While SABEH is a volunteer program, the hospitality and appreciation the Chinese teachers and administrators show the U.S. teachers is immeasurably rewarding. Chinese teachers face many of the same challenges as U.S. teachers, such as how to best engage students, but they also face large class sizes, often over 60 students, and the pressure of the high-stakes Goa Kao test, which is the only factor in China that is taken into consideration when students apply to college. Chinese teachers are therefore eager to learn to employ techniques from American teachers to create student-centered classrooms that move beyond traditional memorization. Evan emphasizes that, "The Chinese teach-

ers want to learn more about American education practices as do the school administrators who are incredibly supportive of the SABEH Program."

Evan's reflection about the SABEH experience is shared with all the teacher participants, who welcome the summer program not only as a great opportunity to learn about China, but also as a way to meet and collaborate with fellow teachers from around the U.S.

As experienced in previous summers in China as a teacher, Evan found his experience as Director this year offered the same just rewards, albeit from a broader perspective:

"Throughout this program I am constantly reflecting upon my own practice, which has greatly improved my own teaching. Not only do I use what I have learned about best practice in my classroom, but I also share my understanding of China with my students and colleagues. This program is a summer filled with hundreds of teachers from two countries working directly with one another to collaborate on what works best for student learning--it renews my passion for education!"

"The success of SABEH is due to the graciousness and tremendous support of our Chinese hosts and the amazing work of each of the SABEH teachers who come to China to teach each summer. They are all wonderful teachers who deserve many thanks. In the end, both American and Chinese students are the ones who will benefit most from



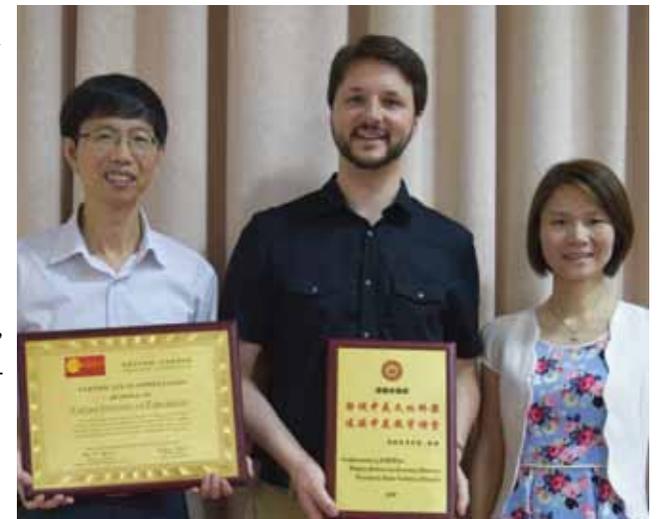
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In its short history, SABEH has involved more than 100 U.S. teachers chosen from a selective pool of applicants across the U.S., and over 2,000 Chinese teachers in 10 cities from across China. SABEH teachers volunteer to spend several weeks in the summer collaborating with Chinese teachers about teaching methodology and, in turn, they

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Continuing the tradition, Evan, as SABEH's new Director of Education, oversaw two SABEH programs: one at the Fujian Teachers' College in Fuzhou, China (where 13 U.S. teachers of all grade levels worked with 303 Chinese teachers) and the other at the Green-



Exchanging plaques of appreciation and thanks are, from left to right, Lu Jian, Fujian Institute Dean, Evan Czyzowski, SABEH Director of Education, "Wendy" Yang of the Fujian Institute.

this collaboration."

As this summer program ends, Evan will be working with past participants and the SABEH Board of Directors to begin planning for the next summer.

Please visit SABEH.org if you are interested in more information or for an application. The web site will be updated this fall with applications for summer of 2016.