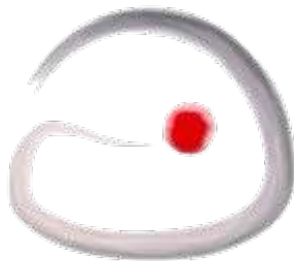




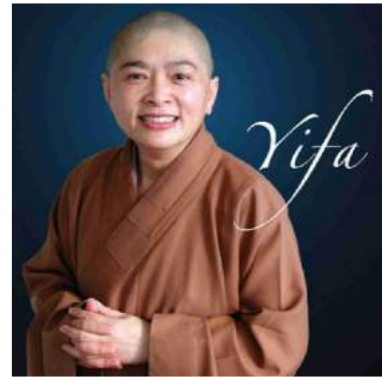
Woodenfish Foundation | 2016



## Message from Woodenfish Founder and Board Chair, Venerable Dr. Yifa

Dear Friends,

At the close of 2016, we cherish the various important landmark achievements and sustained support of Woodenfish since we launched the first Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program (HBMLP) in the summer of 2002. Each and every year, we commit ourselves to cultivating the next generation of international scholars, and developing compassionate and ethically minded young leaders across every field and industry. With our global network of over 1,000 program alumni; in 2016 alone, we introduced 100 new students from over 25 countries to Woodenfish's flagship program, the Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program (HBMLP), dozens of Chinese youth to the second annual World CitiZens Camp, hosted the first international Dunhuang Conference on the Transmission of Han Buddhist Texts bringing together a historic world-class group of international scholars, and forged bonds and cultivated new partnerships and relationships with a multitude of individuals and organizations in China and the US.



In 2016 we also gained Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. We have already begun our efforts to ensure that our East-West dialogue is bidirectional and we contribute meaningfully to developing and sustaining peaceful relationships and societies, especially between the United States and China. Woodenfish is so much more than the sum of its parts, and it is joyful to run into alumni on the streets of New York or at a conference in Beijing and take stock of where we have been and look forward to where we may go.

The generosity of individual supporters makes Woodenfish work possible and we are very grateful for your support. We look forward to building upon our work to extend our impact and ensure that we are doing all that we can to create a more compassionate, globally savvy, and enlightened world.

Thank you for your support and hope to see you soon. Omitoufo.

Venerable Dr. Yifa  
Founder and Chair, Board of Directors

## Our Vision

### Building a More Compassionate World

We envision a world in which the actions of individuals and communities around the world cultivate peace, compassion, preservation of human dignity and sustainable living.

## Our Mission

### Making Ancient Wisdom Relevant and Life-Transforming

Woodenfish Foundation aims to establish a global network of ethical and compassionate professionals, scholars, and leaders. Woodenfish cultivates ongoing exploration of one's inner life, and inspires meaningful engagement with the pressing global issues of modern times.

As of one of the few Buddhist organizations with operations in New York, NY USA and Beijing, P.R. China, we are uniquely positioned to further meaningful dialogue and mutual understanding within what may be considered the most significant bilateral relationship of the 21st century.



### Our Approach: Cultivate Mindfulness, Compassion and Ethics

In order to fulfill our mission, we approach our program development strategy in three ways, accounting for the fact that we believe that in order to achieve our vision, individuals and communities must cultivate mindfulness, compassion, and ethics.



Guided by the three pillars of mindfulness, compassion, and ethics, Woodenfish has developed three varieties of programs:

- 1) Experiential and immersive opportunities for students from around the world to personally experience



Buddhism as it is practiced in modern day China.

- 2) Educational and leadership training for Buddhist monastic and lay communities, within China and internationally, to enhance dialogue and understanding with international and interfaith global community of practitioners and scholars
- 3) Holistic educational opportunities for Chinese youth to learn outside of traditional classrooms, gain valuable skills and a better understanding of the world they are growing up in.

### Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program (HBMLP)

Since 2002, Woodenfish's flagship Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program has offered students from around the world firsthand exposure to the daily life, practice and theory of Buddhism within a traditional Buddhist monastic setting. Whether seasoned practitioners or completely new to Buddhism, all students are engaged through monastic discipline and philosophical inquiry to turn their attention inwards in pursuit of authentic realization. On top of this, many must learn to adapt to both a foreign country as well as a highly structured, religious setting. These two kinds of challenges are ample fertilizer to help HBMLP students grow in awareness of themselves and other cultures, inspiring moral insight and a global outlook. The 2016 Session of the Woodenfish Foundation's Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program (HBMLP) was held from July 1st to July 28th.



This was the 15th year of HBMLP and our 4th year operating in mainland China- is it any wonder that with so much accumulated experience we would have an exceptionally fruitful



month? Three temples in northern China graciously opened their doors to our group of lay students (plus one Korean monastic) and gave them the opportunity to experience Chinese culture, practice meditation, and survey the history and philosophies of Buddhism while immersed in a monastery setting. With an enrollment of 70 students from over 20 countries and 60 different higher education institutions, this was our biggest year in and around Beijing!

Three temples hosted HBMLP this year. The lay communities of these sites did their utmost to accommodate our large group and make everyone feel at home. These diligent volunteers who support the temples and their monastics, in addition to working in concert with program staff to ensure a smooth-running HBMLP, demonstrated the vitality of Chinese Buddhism in their day-to-day lives.

We were truly fortunate to spend July at the following sites:

- Longfu Temple in Langfang City, Hebei Province (河北廊坊隆福寺(2 weeks)
- Doushuai Temple near Baoding City, Hebei Province (河北保定兜率寺) (1 week)
- Pushou Temple in Mt. Wutai, Shanxi Province (山西五台山普寿寺) (1 week)

Surrounded by the five peaks of Mt. Wutai, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Pushou Temple is the largest nunnery in China. It is also home to a Buddhist college specializing in Vinaya. It was here that the silent retreat was conducted, culminating in a pilgrimage to nearby Dailuo Terrace (黛螺顶).

On July 25, 100 young people went on a three-steps-and-one-prostration pilgrimage to Wutai Mountain. In the Valiant Manjusri Temple, Ven.Yifa transmitted the threefold refuge and five precepts in English. The program closed perfectly with a talent show in Beijing Bosom friends' Hall. Many said that this program was life-changing.



## Dunhuang Conference on Sutra Transmission and Translation

From June 15 to 18, 2016 more than 120 famous Buddhist scholars from Europe, North America and Asia gathered at the first Dunhuang International Conference of the Transmission of the Han Buddhist Tradition to share their knowledge and ideas. They also spent two days touring famous Mogao Caves, Yulin Caves and Lei Yin Temple. This conference was significant as it was a great opportunity to boost cultural exchange between the east and the west by bringing together leading international scholars and introducing traditional Chinese culture and Buddhist sutras to western scholars. Experts



from different fields such as Art History, Zen Buddhism, Buddhist sutra translations, and Dunhuang Buddhist texts were all inspired by this conference which connected the past and the future, and the east and the west .

Mr. Xu Jialu, Fomer NPC vice Chairman, said in his congratulations letter that the International Conference of the Transmission of the Han Buddhist Tradition was a milestone for Chinese Buddhism and world

religions. In his memory, there were many religious conferences, but this one is unique.





The conference was held in honor of Master Hsing Yun, who turns 90 years old in 2016; in honor of Stanley Weinstein, Emeritus Professor at Yale; in honor of Lew Lancaster, Emeritus Professor at UC Berkeley, for their great contributions to Buddhism. Woodenfish invited dozens of international scholars, and the panel discussions that occurred during the course of the Dunhuang conference covered a diversity of topics from the pedagogy of sutra translation, digital translation, the application of translations, to Chinese perspective on sutra translations.

In addition, thanks to the generous support and collaboration with the Dunhuang Academy, all conference go-ers received incredible access to the Mogao and Yulin caves. The caves are designated UNESCO World Heritage sites, and as such are dutifully preserved and the general public typically may only access fewer than 10 of the 492 caves. However, our group was granted unrestricted access with accompaniment from Dunhuang guides. This allowed our group of renowned scholars and PhD students to see first-hand the caves that some had only seen or studied from books or photographs.

The successful event in Dunhuang will be followed up by more collaborative events to promote the cross-pollination of Chinese and international Buddhist scholars as well as the promotion of Chinese heritage and valued treasures. In the future, Woodenfish hopes to again work with Dunhuang Academy to continue to support the ongoing research of Dunhuang by Chinese and international scholars alike.

### **Presentation of Lifetime Achievement Awards**

Woodenfish Foundation has recognized the incredible achievements of outstanding Buddhist scholars. In 2016, Woodenfish's Venerable Yifa presented awards to five international scholars to thank these experts for their lifetime contributions to the research and teaching of Buddhism. We thank Bill K. Wang for his generous contribution to fund these awards.



At the closing ceremony of the Dunhuang Conference, Woodenfish Foundation presented the Woodenfish Lifetime Achievement Award to four famous retired Buddhism scholars, Prof. Tim Barrett, Prof. Carl Bielefeldt, Prof. Peter Gregory, and Prof. Paul Groner (see their bios below). After the conference, the awards were presented to Prof. Stanley Weinstein

from Yale University and Prof. Richard Gombrich from Oxford University.

[Tim Barrett, SOAS University of London](#)

His focus is Taoism and Buddhism; pre-modern Chinese history, especially the Tang period.

[Carl Bielefeldt, Stanford University](#)

Bielefeldt specializes in East Asian Buddhism, with particular emphasis on the intellectual history of the Zen tradition. He is the author of Dogen's Manuals of Zen Meditation and other works on early Japanese Zen and serves as editor of the Soto Zen Text Project and Co-Director of the Ho Center for Buddhist Studies.

[Richard Gombrich, University of Oxford](#)

is an Indologist and scholar of Sanskrit, Pāli, and Buddhist Studies. He was the Boden Professor of Sanskrit at the [University of Oxford](#) from 1976 to 2004. He is currently Founder-President of the [Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies](#). He is a past President of the [Pali Text Society](#) (1994–2002) and General Editor Emeritus of the Clay Sanskrit Library.

[Peter Gregory, Smith College](#)

Gregory's research has focused on medieval Chinese Buddhism, especially the Chan and Huayan traditions during the Tang and Song dynasties, on which he has written or edited seven books, including *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism* (1991). He is currently completing a translation of a ninth-century Chinese Buddhist text on the historical and doctrinal origins of the Chan tradition.

After coming to Smith, Gregory's research and teaching became increasingly concerned with Buddhism in America, on which he produced a film, *The Gate of Sweet Nectar: Feeding Hungry Spirits in an American Zen Community* (2004), and co-edited a book, *Women Practicing Buddhism: American Experiences* (Wisdom Publications, 2007).

[Paul Groner, University of Virginia](#)

His research areas concern Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, with a focus on the the Japanese Tendai tradition, how precepts and practice affected doctrine, and the relationship between monastic and lay Buddhism in medieval Japan.

[Stanley Weinstein, Yale University](#)

Stanley Weinstein is a specialist in East Asian Buddhism and works primarily on the history and doctrines of the Buddhist schools of China and Japan. Before coming to Yale, Professor Weinstein taught at Komazawa University in Tokyo and at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London. At Yale he served for four years as Director of Graduate Studies in the East Asian Studies M.A. program and as Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Religious Studies for one year. He also chaired the Council on East Asian Studies at Yale for three years. He has been a five-time recipient of the Ford Foundation Foreign Area Fellowship and has held a Senior Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Professor Weinstein teaches an array of undergraduate courses and graduate seminars on Buddhism in China, Japan, and India. He is the author of



Buddhism Under the T'ang and the forthcoming *When the Gods Met the Buddhas: Religious Syncretism in Early Japan*. In addition, he has written numerous articles, including more than a hundred entries for the *Encyclopedia of Japan*. His current research focuses on the interaction between Buddhism and indigenous religion in early Japan.

### Woodenfish International Student Exchange (WISE) Program

At the end of September, as many Chinese packed their bags to enjoy the Golden week National holidays and take a vacation, a diverse group descended upon the open fields and quiet space in Puji Temple in Ningbo, China to begin a six-week program of cultivation and inter-cultural understanding from the end of September through mid-November, 2016.

One of the purposes of the Woodenfish International Student Exchange (WISE) program is to cultivate talented English-speaking youth within the lifestyle and framework of an engaged and Humanistic Buddhist tradition. The participants follow a rigorous schedule beginning by waking up at 4:30am, meditation and chanting, learning Chinese language, studying Buddhist philosophy and directly living and practicing a Buddhist monastic life, and also offering English classes in exchange to the Chinese participants. The thirty young people from China, America, Hungary, and Sweden studied five classes



together. Chinese students studied the English Buddhist textbook “Buddha,Dharma,Sangha” edited by Fo Guang Shan Temple. International students studied Chinese and Buddhist vocabulary in Chinese. All students worked together to write an introductory Buddhist Album which is good basic study material for people who are interested in Buddhism around the world. Students also practiced “work zen” by cooking, cleaning the temple, building a wall

and taking care of stray dogs. They spent two days visiting famous local temples. The six weeks' program help students know more about Buddhism and combine life with cultivation.

## Engaging Chinese Youth Through World CitiZens Youth Camp: Second Annual CitiZens Camp Held at Tiayun Longquan Academy

The World CitiZen Youth Summer Camp was inaugurated in the Summer of 2015 by Ven. Yifa as a way to encourage Chinese children and teenagers to connect with global culture through the lens of Humanistic Buddhism and traditional Chinese thought. Global culture can be defined as a sense of belonging to not just one nation, but to a greater worldwide community that transcends boundaries and embraces the common values of peace, human welfare and education. This global culture is introduced through a curriculum that blends different traditions, Eastern and Western, with the assumption that they emanate from the same core



intention, namely the betterment of life on Earth.



From another perspective, the World CitiZen Youth Summer Camp seeks to cultivate four qualities in its students that we see as characteristic of "world citizens": awareness (自觉), inclusivity (包容), diligence (进取) and tranquility (自在). A world citizen is aware of themselves, who they are, what they can be and

their place in the bigger picture; in their awareness, they find what it is about themselves they share in common with people all around the world: hopes and dreams, worries and fears, and everything that makes us human, leading to an inclusive mindset; diligence arises in those who realize that the goal of creating a constructive global culture requires constant attention and energy; world citizens feel calm and tranquil upon realizing that they belong to a planet full of vast possibilities and people with similar goals.

From August 3 to August 9 2016, 30 Chinese teenagers spent a happy week with Ven. Yifa and a group of international teachers. The rich curriculum combined an international perspective with traditional Chinese elements. Students learned the Four Books and Buddhist sutras in English. They also learned Taiji and meditation in the philosophy and mind class. In the Western Philosophy class the subjects included existentialism, American myth and self-analysis. They further studied the concept of justice in the US, the governmental structure, the law-making process, and judicial trials in the international law class, climate change, peace and inclusivity, and international etiquette in United Nations debate class, and took part in a Walt Disney Music Drama experience in the music and art class. The Global CitiZen program closed with a “creative Zen” talent show.





## Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council

Woodenfish's work over the past 10+ years has been recognized as contributing to the overall goals of the United Nations, and as an NGO member with the one body that engages civil society at the UN, we will be able to leverage a much larger network of NGOs to broaden the scope and impact of the work we do. Woodenfish and its representatives will be able to contribute to the dialogue around the sustainable development goals, enlarge our knowledge base, collaborate with like-minded NGOs, and overall get better and what we do to further the mission of Woodenfish and contribute to a more peaceful and compassionate global society. This builds on a long history that Venerable Yifa has had participating in United Nations conferences, as she was also a recipient of the 2006 Juliet Hollister award, presented at the United Nations. With broader access privileges to the grounds of the United Nations, it is quite fortuitous that Woodenfish



continues to build its US base in the New York area. We anticipate hosting additional programs to visit the UN, especially surrounding larger conferences and assemblies that are of relevance. Thus, Woodenfish Foundation is able to carry out cultural exchange between the east and the west more effectively and to give Chinese people more international presence.

## Woodenfish Representatives Attend the Commission on the Status of Women Conference at the United Nations



The 60<sup>th</sup> CSW opened on March 3, 2016. Woodenfish representatives from Beijing, Shanghai, Boston and California went to the UN headquarters and attended the meeting. They visited Patricia Russo, Director of Women's Campaign School at Yale University on March 15. Invited by Patricia, Ven. Yifa and six other people went to the Yale Club where they discussed women's participation in politics and equal development, followed by a lunch.

At 9am on March 16th, Woodenfish representatives were welcomed by United Nations staff, Diplomatic Translation officer Mr. Cao Guozhong and Mr. Yao. The group visited the important departments of the UN and the General Assembly of the United Nations Headquarters, and appreciated the precious gifts given to the United Nations, including Peace Zun which was endowed by Chairman Xi Jinping on behalf of China in 2015. After the lunch at the United Nations Headquarters



Envoys restaurant, the group attended the United Nations Trusteeship Council closing meeting, whose theme was to solve the problems of female trafficking and to protect women's safety.

In the evening of March 18, the group went to the Temple of Understanding at the UN religious center church to mourn for passed-away UN staff working for religious causes, among whom Sister Joan Kirby was Ven. Yifa's dear friend. Supported by Eleanor Roosevelt, Juliet Hollister founded the Temple of Understanding to cultivate religious sensitivity and acceptance.



## Buddhist Education & Leadership Training in China

Woodenfish believes that religious leadership, ongoing interfaith, international, and intercultural dialogue are necessary components to creating and sustaining a more peaceful world.

Events held in China throughout 2016:

### English meditation class in Xinnancang No.6 Art Center, Beijing

On April 5, Ven. Yifa taught 20 students from home and abroad Samantha Vipassana in English in Art Center, Xinnancang No.6 in Beijing, where three English meditation classes were held.



### Weekend cultivation practicing Medicine Buddha Method in Longfu Temple

On March 5, lay people from different places get together to purify minds and improve wisdom. The cultivation included chanting and copying Bhaisajyaguru-sutra, listening to Ven.Yifa's preaching on Bhaisajyaguru-sutra and talking about life and cultivation. Ven.Yifa rejoiced in lay people's merit and held formal Threefold Refuge ceremony.

### Weekend cultivation practicing Quanyin Method in Longfu Temple

During a weekend cultivation at Longfu Temple in Langfang, Hebei province from May 7 to 8, Ven. Yifa expounded "the Chapter of the Universal Door" and led lay people in experiencing two days of monastic life.



### Public Diplomacy Forum

As a senior researcher of Charhar Institute, Ven.Yifa was invited to a Public Diplomacy Forum



held in Wenzhou on October 25.

### World Women Forum held in Nishan, Shandong Province

On November 16, the first World Nishan Women's Forum was held in Shandong, Qufu - the hometown of Confucius. Ven. Yifa gave a speech on "females and the power of compassion" which illustrated the power of compassionate women in religious communication. In Chinese religious culture, Guanyin and Mazu are gentle female figures who are very popular, as the saying goes that every family believes in Guanyin. Meanwhile, most people in the southern coastal region of China and southeast Asia believe in Mazu. In domestic life, women, such as grandmothers and mothers, play an important role in the transmission of faith. Nishan Academy, the institute which set up the forum and opened Maternal Academy, invited Ven. Yifa to unveil the plaque and give a speech on "personality is the best inheritance from a mother" to young mothers. After the speech, Maternal Academy engaged Ven. Yifa as special professor.



### Speech in CEIBS Alumni Association Entrepreneur Forum

Invited by CEIBS Alumni Association on November 27, Ven. Yifa gave a speech on how to maintain mental health from a Buddhist perspective at the trans-boundary Entrepreneur Forum which combined medical science, investment, healthy food and Chinese medicine. Yifa shared ideas and suggestions on how to keep mentally healthy from a Buddhist perspective.



### Lecture in female entrepreneurs seminar

Invited by Jinguo Women School in Jining, Shandong province on December 24, Ven. Yifa gave a one day lecture for female entrepreneurs. The key points include understanding of dependent origination and the emptiness of nature which gives people wisdom. Also, taking the five precepts and

practicing ten kinds of goodness helps people achieve moral excellence, while faith and practice convert mutually. After the lecture, Yifa answered ladies' questions and arranged a three-refuge ceremony for five ladies who voluntarily asked for it.



## Speech on “Love and compassion” in Nishan Maternal Academy

After the lecture in Jinjing, Ven. Yifa came to Nishan Maternal Academy for giving a speech to young entrepreneurs on love and compassion. Seeing there were many young parents, Yifa specifically talked about parent-child relationships and

child education, emphasizing that at all times and in all countries realizing that every child is unique and has great potential, and that parents should do exchange perspectives and be fully perspicacious to set a good example, and to teach children in accordance with their aptitude to let the children grow to be unique and happy. Finally, Yifa encouraged the audience to regulate themselves in life and business according to the noble eightfold.

## A conversation on life and death between Buddhism and psychology

On January 16, 2016, PKU

Alumni Association held a speech dialogue between Ven. Yifa and psychology Professor Zhu Caifang on the heart, consciousness, life and death. Yifa explained the theory and definition of heart, consciousness, life and death according to all kinds of Buddhist scriptures. She also explained the essence of life from both perspectives of science and Buddhism, especially mentioning that the definition of warmth, consciousness and age in Buddhism challenge the



definition of brain death in modern medical science. When people are dying, there are physiological and psychological changes. Therefore, Buddhism asks people to recite scripture for dying people and hold ceremonies for 49 days after death. Even organ donation is taken into consideration. Professor Zhu Caifang interpreted the Tibetan Book of Life and Death from the perspective of psychology.

### **“Avatamsaka Sutra scripture” on January 23**

Firstly, Ven.Yifa introduced metaphor, symbolism and poetry in the sutra. Then she explained how the “infinite will” connects to action. She also discussed different dimensions of the world including the material world, the life world, the spiritual world, the mental world and the ultimate world, the so-called sacred world. Finally, she talked about how to practice ten wishes of Samantabhadra in modern life.



### **Columbia University talk on “Heart Sutra”**

Invited by the Beijing Foreign Studies University Alumni Association of North America, Ven Yifa came to Columbia University on March 19 to give a 3 hour lecture on the “Heart Sutra”, which is one of the most important classics of Buddhism, on both its potential meaning and proprietary phase.



mind in order to achieve liberation. This talk helped the audience to understand the eight consciousnesses, how to read Buddhist scriptures and what real cultivation is.

### **“Verses Delineating the Eight Consciousnesses” by Tripitaka Master Hsuan-Tsang on May 28,29**

Ven Yifa talked from the nature and function of the eye, ear, nose and tongue to the eighth deep consciousness and how to cultivate the





### **“Ten good karma scriptures” in Gaoyang county, Hebei province**

On the last day of 2016, Ven. Yifa left Beijing very early for Gaoyang county in Hebei province, and finally arrived after 6 hours' traffic jam. Yifa preached "Ten good karma scriptures" to more than one hundred lay people and answered their questions. At last Yifa gave prayers and blessings and held purify ceremony for people to have a good start of the new year.



### **International Visits and Talks**

#### **“Buddhism of our time” in Department of Asian Languages and cultures in University of Michigan**

Invited by Department of Asian Languages and Cultures as an outstanding Buddhist to speak to the public at the academic level, Ven. Yifa gave a speech on Buddhism of our time



to 400 people in the biggest lecture hall in University of Michigan. When it comes to the differences between the East and the west, Yifa said meditation in the west is for relieving stress, and in the East the Buddhist purpose of meditation is to obtain enlightenment. Yifa also said that Buddhism has a system of religious principles, and that the future dialogues between Buddhism and science should be more in-depth. Yifa

indicated that the United States should be more open-minded to understand accurately the progress of China's development. Finally, Yifa said more exchanges and cooperation between the United States and China would be a great blessing for the future world. After an hour and thirty minutes' speech, the audience applauded for a long time. Yifa has been invited to a two-week tour lecture at five colleges in Massachusetts in February of 2017.

### Lectures in Zen history class in the Department of Asian Languages and cultures, University of Michigan

Ven.Yifa was invited to Professor Benjamin Brose's Zen history class in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultural Studies in the University of Michigan on March 21 where she gave a lecture and answered students' questions. Yifa said that firstly women should be confident, she did not feel discriminated as a woman; and we still have to help women in need. Secondly, we need to understand precepts in the full context and their practicality in real situations. Thus, Buddhist precepts developed into Buddhism systems and then to regulations. The discipline for the lay people is different from that for the monks. Thirdly, monastics should have a sense of responsibility to serve the whole world. When there is no selfishness, there is no barrier. Finally, she shared a motto with students, that is to do practical things in the spirit of Buddhism.



### “The Enlightenment of Buddhism to the future civilization” in Beijing Normal University

With the invitation from Institute of Humanities and Religious Studies of Beijing Normal University, on September 24, Yifa gave a speech on the Enlightenment of Buddhism to the future civilization of mankind to 300 teachers and students in library report hall as part of the lecture series of the religion of humanity, Buddhist forum. Yifa started from the 9.11



event in 2001. Based on her own English book Buddhism Reflection on 9.11 Incident, she analyzed the causes of the past and the present perplexing sectarian politics, and the modern international terrorist incidents in Middle East. Yifa suggested that young people should pay more attention to the diverse range of sutra treasures of Chinese Buddhism coming from Tibetan, Mongolian, Manchu, Xixia, and Pali origins. They represent the traditional Chinese culture. She

recommended that one not improperly belittle oneself, but work actively to contribute towards social development and world peace.

## Lecture in Buddhism Introduction in Yale University



Invited by professor of Buddhism, Andrew Quintman, Ven.Yifa gave a lecture at the Yale University on October 17th in the classroom of Buddhism introduction.

Visiting famous scholar Bernard Faure, professor of religion department of Columbia University. On March 15, Ven Yifa visited professor Bernard Faure from the religion department at Columbia University.

They talked about development of Buddhism and science, the development of Columbia Buddhist Center and religious education in China and the west. Professor Bernard Faure has been teaching Buddhism and neuroscience for four years, he said: "For the study of Buddhism and neuroscience, the exploration of the West in this area is relatively shallow. If it can be combined with the deeper Buddhist doctrine, it will play an important role in the development of the field." In response to the questions raised by Professor Faure, Yifa gave her own ideas and suggestions. According to Professor Faure, many famous universities in the United States have attached great importance to the development of the Department of religion, but the Buddhism study centers affiliated with religion departments often confront financial problems. How to help the development of the Buddhism study centers with the help of civil power has become an important topic of discussion.

## Visiting Buddhist study institute of Inner Mongolia Normal University

From September 21 to 23, Ven.Yifa and three other Venerables visited the Buddhist study institute of Inner Mongolia Normal University. They went to Jin Feng college, Helingeer music hall, and the Xilituzhao Temple. Ven. Yifa's party met Professor Jin Feng, Ba Meng, Hao Zhicheng and Secretary Chu Jinghui. They talked about Mongolian history and current Buddhist dialogues and agreed to work together to promote Mongolian Buddhism on international stage. Ven. Yifa appreciated the Normal University's Buddhism research and Professor Jin Feng's Buddhist



translation work which has a special significance to the development of northeast Asia Buddhism. Yifa also introduced to research and academic persons the Mongolia Buddhism in Europe and America, and promised to help build a bridge for academic exchange between east and west.



## Visiting institutions which are committed to cultural exchanges between China and the United States in the greater New York region



Accompanied by Woodenfish Chief Operations Officer, Julia Gooding and friends, Ven. Yifa called on institutions committed to cultural exchanges between China and the United States in the greater New York area from October 12 to 25, namely, the Luce Foundation, one of the largest foundations in US, Asia Society which is affiliated with the Rockefeller Foundation, Weatherhead East Asian Institute of Columbia University, Rubin Museum, and China Institute. They also called on Google's early engineer

Chade-Meng Tan who is a successful Buddhist author and speaker.



## Program Impacts

Since our inception and first program in 2002, Woodenfish has prioritized providing access to educational opportunities and the opportunity to study East Asian Buddhism, Chinese culture, language, and customs. Our programs create opportunities for authentic immersion and a launch pad for emerging scholars and leaders to have a first-hand, direct experience in modern China. The two charts on this page show our commitment to ensuring we have a diverse group of students participating in Woodenfish programs as well as gender balance.

We are dedicated to providing full program scholarships to ALL accepted participants.

The impact of Woodenfish is immediately internalized by program participants, and ripples

well beyond the 1,000+ alumni. It is difficult to measure long-term effects of educational programs or '[study abroad programs](#), as [a number](#) of [studies](#) have [attempted](#) to do. The outcomes of educational immersion programs are often qualitative rather than quantitative and intangible, the current status of alumni provide evidence that Woodenfish has often catalyzed participants to continue studies of East Asia, Buddhism. There is little better solution to promoting world peace than fostering meaningful human-to-human connections and mutual understanding based in compassionate and authentic learning and dialogue.

While we have maintained records of all previous years' alumni, 2015 was the first year Woodenfish was able to aggregate data to get a better sense of where Woodenfish alumni have gone and where they are today. With the assistance of [LinkedIn](#) and other social media channels, we have worked to track where alumni are today in order to develop a sense of the cumulative impact of our programs. Woodenfish attracts and enrolls quite capable, meritorious individuals as well as acting as a catalyst for their further growth and development across an extremely wide variety of careers. Of the most pronounced findings, Woodenfish program alumni are overwhelmingly involved in Higher Education, either as undergraduates, graduate students, PhD students, scholars, or professors at higher education institutions around the world. This high percentage can be in part explained by the fact that recent years' program alumni may have participated while in university, and are in the process of completing their degree. However, cohorts from every year since 2002 contribute to the association with Higher Education.

## **From Cultivating Individual Mindfulness to a Multiplied Impact on Emerging Scholars & World Peace**

Woodenfish operates at an important nexus, contributing to positive Sino-American relations and offering meaningful opportunities for cultivation of mindfulness and individual's ethical and global outlook. While our programs are often centered on what may be considered "historical" or ancient wisdom, cultural-learning and acquisition, appreciation of historical and religious traditions, and grappling with the reconciliation and incorporation of Western and Eastern values and conceptions of the good life are part and parcel of what Woodenfish programs tackle head on. As Woodenfish alumni have demonstrated, beyond their experience with Woodenfish, the impact of the program continues to multiply as alumni go on to become more actively engaged, compassionate citizens of whatever communities they are engaged in.

## **Financial Highlights**

Much of Woodenfish Foundation funding comes from individual donors within China. We aim to be a lean and program-driven organization. With a significant infusion of funding in 2015 from extremely generous donors in China, our partner organization within China for the most part received those funds and allocated them to fund HBMLP, the Dunhuang conference, as well as Global CitiZens.

## Statement of Activities

### OPERATING REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS.....	\$7,038
PROGRAM SERVICE FEES.....	\$51,670
TOTAL REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT.....	\$58,708

### OPERATING EXPENSES

GENERAL OPERATING COSTS.....	\$43,060
PROGRAMS AND GENERAL MANAGEMENT.....	\$38,414
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES.....	\$81,474

**CHANGES IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS.....**-\$22,766

## Financial Strategy

We have to date received 100% of our funds from generous individual supporters from around the world, and primarily in China and the United States. In order to continue to ensure a sustainable future for Woodenfish, we will continue to seek to diversify our funding sources. Much of our revenue for funding programming expenditures occurs within China, and is therefore not represented by the Woodenfish Foundation balance sheet within the United States. However, as we look to increase our programming in the United States, and charge a sliding scale of fees for Chinese youth programs, we will not only rely on donations, but also continue to offer the majority of our programs at nearly full-scholarship.

## Volunteer with Woodenfish and Make a Difference

We are a growing non-profit, and require a wide variety of skills sets to ensure our continued, sustained growth. If you would like to get involved, we would greatly appreciate adding your skill set to our organization, please contact us at [wfusa@woodenfish.org](mailto:wfusa@woodenfish.org).

## Looking Forward to the Future of Woodenfish

As we look forward to the work of Woodenfish in 2017, it is exciting to report that we will expand our program offerings as well as continue our mainstay programs:

**Finance:** We expect to meet our funding goals to be able to fund the existing programs including program scholarships for HBMLP and a large international conference for scholars in Dunhuang, China.

**Programs:** We are expanding our programming to include youth cultural programs with civic engagement, community service, UN culture, a women's group focused on dialoguing



in international arenas while at the UN Women's CSW, Dunhuang Workshop, Buddhism and New Technology Conference,, Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program and World CitiZens.

**Notable Upcoming Events:** The 2017 Buddhism and New Technology Conference will convene dozens of international scholars, scientists, and entrepreneurs in Shanghai in June!

## 2016 Woodenfish Board of Directors, Staff and Teachers

### Board of Directors

Emily Clawson, Board Member  
Ben Herzberger, Board Member  
Michael Paone , Secretary of Board  
Kaiyuan Wang, Treasurer of Board  
Fawn Wang, Board Member  
Huang Xing, Board Member  
Venerable Dr. Yifa, Chair of Board

Venerable Dr. Yifa , President  
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Guttorm Gunderson, HBMLP Program  
Coordinator  
Kim Dembrosky, HBMLP Program  
Coordinator  
Peter Romaskiewicz, HBMLP Core  
Instructor  
Karl-Stéphan Bouthillette, HBMLP Core  
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Zoltan Toth

