

Winter 2020 Newsletter



Educate a girl today and she will create lasting change
for the next generation.



Scholarship Distribution Ceremony in October 2020 to the Guanlan Sisters
and Their Families by our Partner NGO staff.

To make a tax-deductible, secure donation through Paypal,

[Click on our website for the donate button,](#)

[Click on f to friend us on Facebook](#)

A Letter from the Guanlan Scholarship Founder, Dr. Vilma Seeberg

Dear Friends of the Guanlan Sisters,

With the New Year 2021 coming, the Guanlan Scholarship enters its 20th year of helping our village girls. For the past two decades, we've been able to witness our Guanlan Sisters get the education they need on the road to a flourishing life.

I started this scholarship in 2000 because of three powerful ideas:

One, a colleague in China told me the life-changing difference going to school made for village girls.

Few girls went to the village school in 2000.->

Two, it was and remains a rare gift to be able to help village girls come into their own.

These are the first Guanlan Sisters returning to school in fall 2000. ->



Three, I was and am indebted to a village family somewhere in China who gave up one of their daughters so that I could bring her home as my daughter Zoë Guanlan.

It has been a joy to be able to witness girls make new lives for themselves and also their families over these 20 years. About 10 years ago, Pang Yani introduced me to Pang Baoliang, a son of her village, who was able to be the link between the growing number of Guanlan Sisters and the scholarship. Since then, he and his wife Shi Sendan have built the Shaanxi Renai Children's Assistance Center (SRCAC), a non-governmental, charitable organization that serves the migrant children in Xi'an's urban villages who are from Anjinggou and other remote mountain hamlets as well as conducting disaster relief. I am proud to know and work with them; they are exceptionally kindhearted, sincere, giving people.

In the 2019-2020 school year, we are sponsoring 17 Guanlan Sisters in primary, 9 in junior secondary, and 11 in senior secondary school, a total of 37 girls. Among the 217 Guanlan Sisters over the 20 years more have stayed in school to graduation from tuition-paid senior secondary school. Of these, 17 have gone on to post-secondary institutions and colleges.

Because of your generous financial contributions and continued support of the Scholarship, more girls and their parents have changed their minds about education for girls. The people in the village and the village leaders have learned to attach more importance to girls' education and have done their part to pay for schooling. Since 2010, increasingly the younger generations have taken their children with them in migrating to nearby towns and cities for work, where schooling is better and more expensive.

Please contribute toward keeping in school for this year one primary & junior secondary Guanlan Sister costing US \$75 and US \$150-300 toward private tuition for a senior secondary school Guanlan Sister. All the funds go directly to the scholarships.

I want to let you know a bit more about how the Scholarship works and its impact.

The impact of this relatively small scholarship compared to the rising cost of schooling in the towns has still increased the number of girls who overcome obstacles of second-class status as rural migrants by furthering their educational attainment. Schooling is ever more essential for them to escape the traps of poverty, transform their own and their current and future families' lives, and contribute to progress for their whole community. That is our mission.

And then came 2020! Everyone on this planet shared the pandemic together, though became physically more distanced. The more vulnerable, the harder the burden of a natural calamity. In early spring of 2020, many of the Guanlan migrant families lost their jobs in the city and returned to the village, where there was shelter. The schools were closed, and the Sisters had but minimal, intermittent access on their phones. We were able to send supplementary funds that Pang Baoliang and his SRCAC team brought to Anjingou.



Banner: Thanks to the Guanlan Scholarship for giving help to us girls during the pandemic

By May, the pandemic was raging in the US, but had come under control in China. The children went back to school. They don't complain; we can only imagine the disruption to already precarious work in the cities.

In September, like every year, Pang and a team made the several hours long trip from the city and walked up the mountain to look in on how families are doing and whose daughters need help.



They bring with them basic necessities like oil, powdered milk, that can't be gotten in the village.



It gets cold early in the mountains.



Back in the city, the Guanlan Sisters sometimes after school drop in at the Shaanxi Children's Assistance Center (SRCAC). They've sent us some of their amazing artwork which we've sold at Christmas fairs in the past.



This year we will offer them for sale on our sparkling new [webpage](#).



Let me introduce to you three of our Guanlan Sisters. Keep in mind that the scholarships they receive bring them and their parents or grandparents a bigger gift than money, they bring hope.



Yuan Yuan (pseudonym) is a new Guanlan Scholarship recipient this year. Her mother left her with her grandparents right after birth and never came back. Her grandparents, who are in their 70s and seriously ill, also care for her disabled father. Their one wish is for Yuanyuan to go to school. They live in a crumbling old mud home on a remote mountain top in Anjinggou where they

farm a small plot. The SCAC team brought the scholarship money, milk powder, a school bag, stationery, sanitary supplies and a kangaroo doll. The kangaroo is Yuanyuan's only doll and only friend. She held onto to it without letting go for the whole family visit. You can see the joy in her eyes.



Xiaoying (pseudonym) shares this room with her two sisters, her father and mother. Her grandmother also lives with them and mental retardation has claimed her, the mother, and one of Xiaoying's sisters. A family of six rely only on the father's income from farming a small plot. Xiaoying as the youngest of 3 sisters does not have birth registration [hei hukou] which prevents her from attending public school. She was sent to a private boarding primary school in a remote rural area and had to transfer schools three times due to her undocumented status. Her father said many times, without the help of the scholarship, she would have had to drop out of school long ago. She is a very brave girl.



Yating (pseudonym) is a former Guanlan Sister who has exceeded all expectations. Her adoptive parents are subsistence farmers in Anjinggou, have poor health, and do not support their daughters going to school. Her older sister dropped out in junior secondary since there was no money to keep her in school. With the support of Guanlan Scholarship, Yating attended the village elementary and middle school, and despite their poor quality and high dropout rates, did so well in her studies that she was admitted to an academic senior secondary school also on the Guanlan scholarship. To pay the rest of the tuition she worked part time, yet still studied long hours, so diligently that she scored high enough on the national college entrance exam to be admitted to a top ranked university majoring in Chinese language and literature. She was awarded a student loan, works part time waiting tables, and tutors young children at the SCAC after school program. She also helps with the Guanlan scholarship village research and distribution. She took this picture back at home when she was studying online during the pandemic. She is a star, who knows where she will go.

On behalf of all the Guanlan Sisters and their parents and grandparents, we want to thank you for your support of their schooling through the Guanlan Scholarship Foundation. Your investment in the future of these girls is making a tremendous difference, and we want you to know that extending the promise of the Guanlan Scholarship experience to the disadvantaged daughters of Anjinggou village fundamentally changes the social landscape of village life and migrant girls and young women.

Sincerely yours,

Vilma Seeberg, Founder, & Yu Li, Assistant

Guanlan Scholarship Foundation

Below you will find more photos of this year's outdoor scholarship distribution ceremony.

Scholarship Distribution Ceremony in October 2020 in Shangluo & Village



Pang Baoliang reminds the girls and families about the importance of nutrition during this pandemic for girls' education, distributing milk powder with the scholarships.



This Guanlan Sister and her dad are happy about the new backpack, books, and stuffed animal along with the scholarship.

Distribution at the village headquarters. Banner: Support one girl child, change one whole life



The grandparents of one young Guanlan Sister shed a tear when they received the scholarship money so their granddaughter could go to the school pay overdue fees in the village school.



Village Life in October 2020

