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*UNH Media Relations*

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## Media Relations

### UNH Offers Chinese Language Summer Camp For Grade 4-12

May 4, 2010

DURHAM, N.H. – For the first time, the University of New Hampshire will offer an intensive summer camp designed to immerse students in grades four through 12 in Mandarin Chinese and the culture of China’s Sichuan province.

The UNH’s 2010 STARTALK Chinese Language Summer Camp is a four-week nonresidential program sponsored by the Department of Literatures, Languages, and Cultures. From June 21 to July 16, 2010, native-born Chinese teachers with experience teaching at the elementary and university levels will teach 40 students who have minimum or no Chinese language preparation.

“Taking language classes at an early age is an excellent way for American students to acquire foreign language skills. Younger students are often less inhibited and better at mimicking languages, which is very important for a tonal language like Chinese,” said Chris Reardon, associate professor of political science and chair of the UNH China Committee.

Developed by the U.S. National Security Agency/Central Security Service and with the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland, STARTALK was started in 2007 to be a catalyst for a revolutionary change in foreign language instruction in the U.S. educational system. Each year, thousands of students participate in programs offering instruction in Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu, and Farsi.

STARTALK has received widespread praise from the national language teaching community, students, parents, and members of Congress. STARTALK classrooms provide a learning environment where students and teachers can bond across linguistic, cultural, and ethnic boundaries. STARTALK also produces groundbreaking research conclusions on foreign language instruction, assessment, and blended learning.

At UNH, students will develop basic Mandarin Chinese language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) with a focus on every day communication skills. In addition to intensive language lessons, students will participate in daily cultural activities that will reinforce language learning and a greater appreciation of Chinese culture.

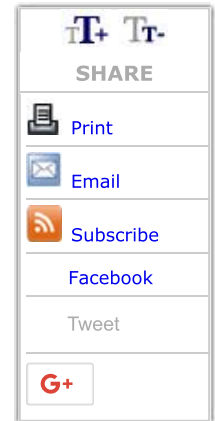
This year the UNH program will focus on living and learning in Sichuan province, which is the largest and most important province in Southwest China famous for its pandas, its teahouses, its spicy food. Such activities will include Chinese calligraphy, paper cutting, kite making and flying, Sichuan opera, dragon dancing, martial arts, Chinese music such as the pipa, and erhu, ping-pong, Chinese cooking, and a field trip to a local site of Chinese culture.

“Increasingly, parents are realizing that learning languages such as Mandarin Chinese will be very important for their children, who will be searching for jobs two decades from now when China will be an established global economic and political player. They will also discover that the United States government provides various types of financial scholarships to students studying critical languages such as Mandarin Chinese that will finance education throughout undergraduate and graduate schools,” Reardon says.

Successful candidates may have the opportunity to attend UNH programs at Chengdu University during the following summer.

For more information, visit <http://www.unh.edu/languages/STARTALK>.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling more than 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.



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