



TACL LID Counselors and Campers
Breakthrough the Summer with Fun
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Editors

In the middle of summer, the sound of good, wholesome fun rings very close to the ears of tons of people, especially to little kids and teenagers. Being outside of school after enduring several months of being busy is an absolute dream. Really though. Approximately three months of doing nothing but going out with friends, clearing the mind from all the stress from school, and having fun. Moreover, to a specific group of about seventy kids, there is one certain activity that is making them more than excited for summer. Camping. Camp is back again for another year. Yes, that’s right; TACL LID (Leadership, Identity, Development) Camp was held at Palomar Mountains under the direction of camp coordinator, Philip Cheng.

Now imagine this: a big bunch of people in an enlarged circle in the middle of playing “Da Feng Chui,” a camp icebreaker game. The person in the middle states “Da feng chui!” In response to that, everyone else that makes up the circle asks, “Chui shen me?” Then the person in the middle describes an item that people might have, and if they do, the people have to run across the circle to an empty space. The last person to run across ends up being the person in the middle. The game keeps going and going. After about an hour of icebreaker games, the charter buses arrived to take the over enthusiastic campers to the campsite.

The camp’s theme this year was breakthrough, meaning for the campers “to have breakthroughs for [themselves] during camp... in any aspect.” The group of seventy kids were split into seven groups - Fried Prawns, Stinky Tofu, Night Hagglers, Free Sampos, Tiebanshao, Enchiang, and Darling Dumplings - each depending on his or her own age. Each group then had to make a night market-related group name and chant. After each group had thought of its own group name, each group was given what is called a rice baby, which ensued a friendly competition among all the camp groups. Groups were then off to their first activity, personal shields and decorating the rice baby. Much later, each group went up on stage to perform its own group chant. Once all the groups presented their chants, everyone gathered in a huge circle around the chapel to play another game. It was somewhat like the game “Hot Potato.” Two balloons are passed around the circle as fast as possible while music is playing. Once the music stops, the two people holding the balloons walk to the middle of the circle and pop the balloons. Each balloon contains a piece of paper with an action inscribed on it. The person has to follow what ever the paper says and perform that certain action. About four rounds later of this entertaining game, the staffers ended the day with the groups surrounding a campfire and telling ghost stories. Thursday morning was heralded by the first of many “morning exercises” led by the enthusiastic camp counselors. Decked out in mismatched sports gear, the counselors taught campers a dance routine to the famous song “Bye Bye Bye”

by the boy band ‘N Sync. After getting warmed up from dancing, campers had breakfast and then gathered for a series of workshops about Taiwanese history and traditional pottery.

Campers also got to make their own pottery as long as they steered away from the overused bowl design. In the afternoon, small groups were given the chance to take the lead in the point race with the small group competition. At each of the three stations, small groups had a task to complete: BB gun range was whoever could hit the coke can the most times, archery was determined by how close to the bulls’ eye your arrows were, and zip-line was how accurately you could aim and throw a water balloon at the camp coordinator’s head. Although zip-line was initially terrifying for many campers, the soaring sensation and breathtaking scenery was anything but terrifying. Later on in the chapel, a movie screening of “Formosa Betrayed” was shown, and the action-packed movie had the audience on the edge of their seats. Exhausted after a long day, campers collapsed into bed and fell asleep (except for the energetic few that stayed up all night to talk with their roommates).

Bright and early at 5 am the next morning, most of the girls were woken up by the sound of the boys stomping about upstairs for a morning shower. Sufficiently woken up by the racket, the girls groggily got up for another long day at camp. That morning’s two workshops were Taiwanese language and public speaking. The language workshop started with a hilarious night market skit with one of the male counselors modeling a dress for a potential customer. Then, everybody got to test out their Taiwanese skills in various games and skits.

The most important aspect of this workshop, however, was the key camp phrase that was taught: “Ai daiwan, xin dui dai yi kai shi” meaning “Love Taiwan, start with Taiwanese”. At the public speaking workshop, campers learned how to utilize CPR (Connect, Presence, and Repetition) in a mock infomercial that each group had to perform. During lunch, small groups learned the meaning of teamwork when they were forced to eat lunch with their hands tied to their team members. After that rather dissatisfying meal, special guest Chef Jessica VanRoo taught everyone how to make zhongzi, a sweet rice delicacy wrapped in leaves. Though campers were extremely full after eating that delicious dessert, they were forced to make room for more in the food relay that followed. The most disgusting food items - an entire bag of saltine crackers, wasabi peas, a package of cooked salmon, whole lemons, and many others - were brought out for small groups to eat, and whichever group could finish first won points. The relay was messy, brutal, and nauseating, but in the end, small groups were bonded like never before. Following the food relay and dinner (though most people had already lost their appetites by then), the girls and guys split up to do separate workshops. While girls were treated to a spa-

like girls’ night out, the guys were taught some karate. After everyone came back together, small groups were given more chances to win points with “Minute to Win It” games like folding paper airplanes and passing a rubber band down the row with only a straw in our mouths. The rest of the evening time was open for some loud karaoke, peaceful star-gazing, and nighttime football.

On Saturday, all the campers prepared for their last days, knowing that camp was already to be soon over. In opinion, it ended all too fast. The campers practiced our Bye Bye dance one last time, and prepped for group skits while they waited for our acclaimed guest speakers to arrive. Everyone was surprised to see that Dawen and Samuel Wang of Akufuncture were friends -- and they poked fun at each other during both their panels. Dawen was a friendly guy who entertained us with his witty lyrics, singing, and piano playing while spinning stories about his past experiences. He liked taking requests -- several at a time, and spinning them all into a crazy song that we enjoyed listening to. He also sang with many other campers who requested certain songs and made us laugh as he mixed songs like the “Chinese version of Friday,” with Bruno Mars and Adele. Samuel Wang of Akufuncture was just as interesting. He told the campers about how he started his company from scratch and how challenging it was to promote it in the beginning. Wang’s company became a success story and he made everyone chuckle as he explained the events that led him to his decision. Afterward, he threw key chains and t-shirts to everyone who asked an interesting question and also gave them tips on how to pursue their own dreams.

The rest of the day before Taiwan Night was spent on practicing on group skits. Campers struggled to memorize their parts, fooled around and procrastinated, practiced their group chants again, and enjoyed chatting with one another while they all readied ourselves for the Taiwan Night. Though not many family members showed up, (the drive was a little too far) everyone still enjoyed putting up a show for them to see. Each group started with its own chant, and then transitioned into its own skit while the staff provided hilarious sedge-ways.

After a very successful and heart-warming performance, campers said goodbye to their parents and prepared for the Dance that was to happen in the lodge. Though the dance didn’t last very long due to the complaining neighbors, partygoers had the privilege of joining into the circles, showing off their moves, and watching the amazing shuffling and breaking skills of the other campers. In the meantime, those who weren’t interested in dancing enjoyed playing board games, talking, and hanging out with new friends in the chapel. Most of the campers stayed up all night, partying with their friends, while others decided to get rest for the next day. For all the campers, amazing memories were made that night.

The next day, everyone stumbled out of bed, or off the ground, tired but ready to say goodbye. Some people were high off of cups of coffee, while other campers, (and some counselors,) were still snoring when it was time for breakfast. Everybody had a last breakfast together, then cleaned up their own rooms and packed their luggage.

The campers gathered in all small groups for the last time, having fun, wrapping up, and saying our goodbyes. Then, everyone gathered for the big group closing in the lodge where they took photos, received the camp t-shirts, and listened to a panel of TACL political interns. The political interns shared insight about their lives and times at camp, and explained what it was like to serve as an intern for politicians. The campers thanked the interns when they finished, and then prepared for the final closing in the end. At the final closing, campers gathered in a circle, turned away, and closed our eyes. Everyone was divided into groups that got up when his or her prospective number was called. Campers were then told to squeeze the shoulders of people who had “touched us,” “changed us,” “made us smile,” or “made us laugh.” During this exercise, every one’s shoulders were squeezed, and many tears were shed as well.

This final activity lasted for a

long time, and in the end, everyone gave a group hug and thanked his or her camp mates for all the memories. At the very end, every one made the trek to drag their luggage up the hill to wait for the bus. Though the bus was late, the campers enjoyed the last time they had together to spend time with their friends for the last time.

The bus ride back was a long but peaceful one. Much had changed and ended, but there was a world of opportunity waiting for all of them -- for their skills, their pride, and their unity.

For the three of us, going to LID camp was an absolutely different and new experience. The combination of fun and knowledge creates a great balance. We had many adventures and memories at camp that we will never forget. The friends that we’ve made at camp will probably stick with us much longer. Camp has truly been endearing and wonderful; we would not mind coming back again next year.

But if nothing else, we learned something very important -- one thing that the counselors and staffers drilled into our heads all camp:

Ai daiwan, xin dui dai yi kai shi.
Love Taiwan, start with Taiwanese.
And we love Taiwan.



2011 TAIWANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE (TACL) NATIONAL CONVENTION INSTALLS NEW NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LOS ANGELES, CA –August 28th, 2011 – The Taiwanese American Citizens League (TACL) held its annual National Convention at the Kyoto Grand Hotel in Los Angeles, California. Over 70 leaders from various TACL Chapters throughout the United States gathered to network, recognize individual chapter milestones, and welcome a new National Board. Chapters in attendance included: TACL Los Angeles, Taiwanese American Professional (TAP) Los Angeles, TACL San Francisco, TAP San Francisco, TAP San Diego, TAP Chicago, TAP Austin, TAP New York, and TAP Washington D.C. TACL’s various programs also had attendees, including for the Junior Taiwanese American Student’s Association (JTASA), Leadership Identity Development (LID) and Leading Youth Forward (LYF) camps, and the Political Internship Program.

The 2011 National Convention brought together some of the most influential young leaders of the Taiwanese American community, including eight (8) Presidents of organizations. It facilitated productive dialogue about current issues facing our community as well as provided an opportunity to share ideas and strategies.

National President Benjamin Ling officially ended his term and transitioned into the role of Chairman of the National Board. Mr. Ling’s tenure featured several notable achievements: the Census 2010 Campaign, expanding the Political Internship Program, reviving the Entertainment Internship Program, the 25th Anniversary Celebration Gala, formation of JTASA, and doubling the number of chapters nationwide. TACL awarded Mr. Ling the Lifetime Achievement Award for his service at the TAP-LA Annual Banquet Gala,

LA Annual Banquet Gala, which head-lined the 2nd night of the convention. Teddy Liaw was elected the new National President along with a new Board of Directors. Mr. Liaw has served TACL in a number of different capacities, such as the Coordinator for the Political Internship Program, three terms as TAP LA President, and a National Vice-President. Most recently, Mr. Liaw served as the TACL National Chairman.

“It is imperative that we continue to expand upon the rich 26-year history of TACL, as leaders at the forefront of the Taiwanese American agenda. I plan to launch several new initiatives focusing on leadership development and strategic alignment with organizations, while continuing to expand our key existing programs,” stated Mr. Liaw, as he elaborated on his intentions to build on the successes of recent years and to continue to uphold TACL’s mission to improve the lives of Taiwanese Americans in the United States.

The new board has already quickly taken action, including the formation of the External, Leadership, Youth, and Operation Task Forces. The Board approved a formal partnership with the Inter-Collegiate Taiwanese American Student Association (ITASA). Also, Bob Wu, President of TAP New York, was awarded Chapter President of the Year for his service in the ’10-’11 term.

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