

One of the teachers said the following at our last gathering in our Startalk training in UVa,
This is a beginning, not an end!

Yes, for me, the end of this 3-week Startalk teacher training program means it is a starting point. What lies ahead of me in my career is a blank piece of paper that hopefully, I can draw some beautiful pictures onto it with some beautiful colors.

I am a licensed Special Education teacher for three years and have worked with students with disabilities in various public schools in the Fairfax County for the last nine years. On weekends I have taught Chinese at a heritage school for two years. This January I decided to take a graduate class to learn about the theory-based methodology in teaching Chinese and finished it in May. Thus I have some ideas about the theories in Second Language Acquisition, the methodology, and experience in teaching Chinese before I came.

Here I want to say that I am very grateful and honored to be able to participate in this year's Startalk and have learned so much from Dr. Tseng, Teacher Natasha Pierce, Teacher Leonard Tseng, and Teacher Naichi Shih and all those talented teachers from all over the country. From their modeling, I have learned what a Chinese Language Teacher should be like through their dedication, diligence, passion, and professionalism.

I have also learned how to approach students whose first language is not Chinese using effective methods and practices. Through the two-week hands-on teaching practicum, my confidence grows as I know the teaching methods I used are rooted in years of researches. I also believe these research- supported methods are proven to be effective teaching practices. I finally find the "Golden Key" needed to open the door to lead our students who are not native Chinese speaker to the wealth of Chinese language and culture.

At the end of our training program, I have to thank everybody's hard work to make this happen. As I shared in the beginning, this is not an end but a beginning. Let's go back to our classrooms and be a good Chinese Language Teacher, and soon we will see each other and share our success stories.