



Pearl S. Buck lived in Zhenjiang, China for 16 years and considered it to be her second hometown. First as a student and later as a teacher, the Chongshi Girls School was an integral part of her life. Today, her lasting legacy still lives on through the students at the school.

The Chongshi Girls School enrolls students from all over Zhenjiang and provides them with a humanitarian education which focuses on helping others who are also in need. Additionally, the school provides the girls with the tools needed to become successful and encourages them to self-study through reading and writing.

While in school, the girls gain exposure to different cultures through cooperation between schools in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Spain, and the United States. In remembrance of Pearl S. Buck's influence on the school, every two years the school organizes a trip to the Pearl S. Buck House to learn more about her and the work she did during her lifetime.



All of these opportunities are made possible through the help of caring donors. Most of the girls who attend the school come from low-income families and underdeveloped cities, which prevents them from receiving a proper education. Through the Pearl S. Buck International Child Sponsorship Program, students in need are provided with the financial support they need to continue their education.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors, these girls are able to buy the necessities they need for school such as uniforms, books, and meals. The students are able to develop skills and abilities to prepare them for their future careers. In fact, each sponsored girl within the past two years has successfully finished high school and then enrolled in universities across the country. Having a sponsor means these girls now have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams.

You can help a bright young lady have an even brighter future by becoming her sponsor. Please visit www.pearlsbuck.org/sponsor-a-child. 🌐



Mission Matters

It's the Holiday Season...

For Americans, December is the month when families come together to celebrate special holidays. Whether it's Christmas, Chanukah, or Kwanza, this season is a time for gathering and appreciating one another while exchanging gifts. It's also a time when families across the United States prepare for the new year and make resolutions of things they want to improve or accomplish. **Families in the Philippines, China, Vietnam, and Thailand celebrate Christmas and Chinese New Year this time of year, too.**

Christmas is a very important holiday in the Philippines. In fact, the Filipinos enjoy the longest Christmas season in the world, and start by decorating in the “ber” months (September, October, November). Some Filipino traditions are similar to Christmas traditions in the United States like caroling and *aguinaldo* (the tradition of visiting

relatives during Christmas day). Other traditions are different, such as using *parols* (paper stars) to light the way to church at night, and *panunuluyan* (similar to the Mexican *posadas*) a recreation of Mary's and Joseph's journey to find shelter for the birth of Jesus.

This year Chinese New Year is celebrated from February 4–10, 2019 and is the Year of the Pig. The Chinese people will celebrate with red decorations, as red is believed to be a lucky color; and, pigs will be predominately displayed. It is a time to spend with family, enjoy fireworks and exchange red envelopes filled with money which is believed to bring good luck.

The Vietnamese people celebrate *Tet Nguyen Dan*, which translates as “the first morning of the first day of the new year” and falls on the same day as

Chinese New Year. Tet is a seven-day celebration where offerings are made to the Kitchen God to bring good luck in the new year. Ancestors are honored by burning incense, and a feast is prepared to celebrate the new year. Families then go to their places of worship to pray for the new year to be prosperous.

Many people in Thailand can trace their ancestry back to China so they also widely celebrate Chinese New Year. Even though it is not a national holiday, block parties and festivals can be seen throughout the streets of Thailand, especially in areas like Bangkok which has a large Chinese population.

Take a moment to share your holiday traditions with your sponsored child and ask what traditions their family celebrates during this time of year. And, have a joyous holiday season. 🌐

