

New fund to help students

By SHI YINGYING
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Brazilian Roger Fernandez Paulo will be able to celebrate his 30 birthday in China thanks to the Shenzhen Universiade International Scholarship Foundation (SUISF).

He's also planning to write a book about his experiences here.

The new foundation was created on the night China's star hurdler, Liu Xiang, lit the torch with four other athletes from different regions, and one of its first missions is to aid three out of the four foreign torchbearers to study in China for free. Paulo is lucky enough to be one of them.

"I came to Beijing four years ago because I have been into Chinese culture since I was little," said Paulo, in a strong Beijing accent. "I'm interested in Chinese philosophies such as Taoism and Confucianism, and my book is going to talk about Chinese kungfu and immortality — the only reason it will be done in English is because I want to spread Chinese culture abroad."

Being a freshman from Beijing University of Chinese Medicine whose major is in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Paulo spends much of his spare time learning martial arts and local health practices.

"You may say a 29-year-old guy is a little too old to enter a college in China, but my father refused to pay my tuition after I graduated from high school and I had to work hard to save the money for the Chinese trip. That's the reason why I'm now a freshman — I had no chance before," said Paulo.

The Brazilian was excited when talking about the experience of igniting the games' flame with Liu Xiang. "It was very funny because Liu is tall and has long legs — one of his steps is two of my steps, therefore I



Performers turn on a special performance for the members of the World University Presidents Forum (Shenzhen) at the Sheraton Shenzhen Futian Hotel on Saturday.

LIANG XU / XINHUA



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Brazil's Roger Fernandez Paulo.

was a little bit behind when the five of us were running together towards the torch tower," he said. "Then you heard the director yelling in everybody's earphones 'slow down! Slow down!'"

Liu is a nice and humble man though," he said.

Morocco's Bouchiba Nasser, another torchbearer — and the same height as Lui, felt his competitive instincts kick in.

"I was on the right side of Liu, so I was mentally prepared. When I saw Liu speed up, I lifted as well," said Nasser, a retired taekwondo athlete.

He said the experience of attending the 1992 World Championships gave him many common topics with the Olympic champion hurdler Liu and the world's new men's 1,500m freestyle record holder Sun Yang when they rehearsed together. "I even met an old schoolmate from the Beijing Sport University when I was with a bunch of athletes that night," he said.

Once majoring in sports medicine at Beijing Sport University, 35-year-old Nasser first came to China as a Moroccan team athlete. "It was the time China just established its own taekwondo team and we came as training partners," he said.

Being the youngest of the torchbearers, 25-year-old Dzeinika Volha, of Belarus, is a student at Shenzhen University. "That was the greatest moment of my life," said Volha in her limited Chinese, referring to lighting the Universiade torch.

Apart from those three torchbearers, another seven young students, including two Chinese, were given 40,000 yuan (\$6,300) to cover a year of tuition fees and living expenses.

"It was our way to memorialize the Universiade," said an official of the Shenzhen Education Bureau. "We hope to leave something after the games."

The official said the program had been founded to help students with financial difficulties study abroad and 10 students from five continents were chosen for the first batch.

"Some of them will come to study in China and some Chinese students will have opportunities to go overseas," he said, adding it would become the first public foundation dedicated to assisting poor students to go overseas for study.

"Building the SUISF as a public foundation doesn't necessarily mean we want the public to donate money," the official said.

Teenager Pan finds his station

By MICHELLE FEI
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — "What are you doing here, boy?" people at a U station in Nanshan District, where volunteers offer on-spot and instant help to passersby, asked a teenager.

"I'm a volunteer for the Universiade!" 13-year-old Pan Xinyou said proudly, his round eyes behind a pair of glasses full of joy.

The big smile on his face was just as cute as the iconic smiling "U" logo on his shirt.

Pan is among the youngest of more than a million volunteers for the 26th Universiade in his hometown. Though the grand event is about elite sportsmen and sportswomen from universities around the world, the middle school first grade student is making his own contribution to the Universiade.

However, it wasn't all smooth sailing for Pan on his way to achieving his ambition of working in a U station during the event. First of all, he had to convince people who doubted a young teenager's working ability. "How much do you know about the Universiade? When will it open?" People often challenge the youngster with questions like this, yet Pan mainly replies with timely and correct answers.

He received some training at home before working at the U station. He rehearsed answering questions with some friends.

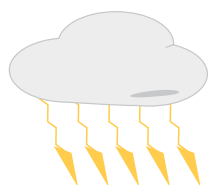
"What are the differences between the Universiade and the Olympic Games?" asked one passerby. Pan was caught off guard and ran out of words. Meanwhile, his mother, Ms Han, helped him out with clear and comprehensive answers.

"I was discouraged after failing to answer the question, yet my mother told me that cooperating with my partners could help me perform my duties well. Teamwork, that's also the spirit of sport," said Pan.

There are 818 U stations in downtown areas, venues and communities all over the city.

The "culture of youth" is the essence of the "difference" being made by volunteers, such as Pan, at the stations.

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Scattered T-storms
Max **34°C**
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