

'Life-changing' experience

IOC program trains budding sports journalists and gives them the chance to cover the Games

By **SUN XIAOCHEN**
sunxiaochen@chinadaily.com.cn

The Young Reporters program created by the International Olympic Committee provides field training in sports journalism for young professionals during the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games.

Launched by the IOC at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in Singapore in 2010, the initiative trains budding reporters aged 18 to 24 from around the world. They will learn about the fundamentals of journalism across multiple platforms and have the opportunity to cover the Games.

After a battery of tests and interviews, 35 college students and young professionals from five continents will participate in the program during the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games from Aug 16-28.

The reporters will live in the Youth Olympic Village and have access to more than 3,600 athletes. They will also attend classes and

receive field training from some of the top names in print, photography, television, radio and digital journalism.

"We hope to inspire the next generation and carry on the Olympic legacy through this program," said Jiang Manzhu, the youth service vice-manager for the program.

"Having veterans in journalism pass on their knowledge and experience in the business to young reporters is a kind of inheritance. Hopefully, the youngsters can improve themselves by learning and practicing on the frontlines and eventually realize their dreams to be qualified journalists."

Several of the reporters who participated in the Sin-



Thirty-five budding reporters from around the globe are covering the Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing. COURTESY OF NANJING 2014.ORG

gapore program have covered major sports events such as the 2012 London Olympics and landed radio and print jobs at major media outlets.

Singaporean sports journalist Sonali Prasad, who graduated from the 2010

program, called it a "life-changing" experience.

"I developed on both personal and professional fronts and it gave me the knowledge and skills to be a successful journalist," the 23-year-old told olympic.org.

She has gone on to cover the London Olympics and the 2014 Sochi Winter Games for the Olympic News Service, and has been appointed to the IOC Press Commission.

The IOC covers the cost of airfares, accommoda-

tion, meals and tuition during the program. Jiang said the Nanjing event will offer more.

"We will take it as an ideal opportunity for youngsters to experience folk customs and traditional Chinese culture," Jiang said.

IOC gives rookie reporters rare up-close access

By **SUN XIAOCHEN**
sunxiaochen@chinadaily.com.cn

For Huang Haiyun, a young reporter who formerly worked for Nanjing Broadcast and Television Station, nothing could be more exciting than living alongside the athletes in the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games Village.

"I can get close-up access to how athletes live, train and socialize, which is crucial for behind-the-scenes stories," she said.

Athletes' villages at most major sporting events are normally cordoned off from media, but the International Olympic Committee's Young Reporters program, first launched in 2010, has given Huang and 34 other reporters a free village pass.

"I am so blessed to be part of the program, through which I can learn first hand from some of the veterans in the business and get access to some inside stuff at the Games," Huang said.

One of 10 participants from China, Huang passed two rounds of tests before reaching a final interview with the IOC's media relation officials in March. Her fluency in English and Russian and years of experiences covering cultural news for Nanjing TV earned her a spot in the program, which received applications from students and young professionals from around the world.

Huang said being an IOC reporter is completely different from working at Nanjing TV.

"Compared to my prior experiences, we received extensive pre-event training from seasoned media members who have covered many international events," the 23-year-old said.

"Working with the local TV station, we rarely had a chance to be exposed to an international atmosphere. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

To prepare for the event, the 35 young IOC reporters went through

intensive training from Aug 12-15 to learn about broadcast and print journalism, social media and photography.

They were then divided into groups of six and assigned to different venues to cover various sports with access to athletes and coaches. Their interviews and articles will be used as reference material for accredited media and broadcasters.

"Working in a multinational crew, I have the chance to learn how interviews are conducted by people from different countries. I can also learn about new trends in sports journalism in foreign countries," Huang said.

Although she quit her job with Nanjing TV in March, Huang said it's been worth it to receive the full support of the IOC.

"After all, this helps train a better reporter for my organization," she said.



Huang Haiyun (center left), who participated in the IOC's Young Reporters program, takes a group selfie with IOC president Thomas Bach. PHOTO PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY