A Chinese culture trip to Chicago Chinatown was held by WMU Confucius Institute on June 11th, 2016. Students and families, 38 people in total, from the Chinese Immersion Program in Meadow Brook, Grand Rapids, and the Chinese Teaching School in Kalamazoo paid a visit to Chicago Chinatown. They were excited about having a deep and extensive contact with the Chinese culture. The aim of this tour is to enrich experience, enhance the interests of Chinese learning and have a deep and direct understanding of Chinese culture.

Our team led by CI teachers and volunteers set off from Grand Rapids at 7am, and arrived at Chicago Chinatown at 10:30am (Chicago time). Led by local tour guides, three groups separating from the whole team visited some scenic spots including the Nine Dragon Wall and Jingjue Temple. Tour guides elaborated the architecture styles and Chinese history, evoking visitors' keen interests on Chinese culture. A lot of questions were asked during the tour.

After the tour, three groups successively arrived at the Lao Beijing Chinese restaurant and tasted the traditional Chinese meals. After the meal, students learned to make kites. The tour guide introduced the process of making kites and related cultural background, then showed the students the kite models. Students were so interested that they can't wait to try themselves. After getting materials, students started to make kites together in different groups. The process includes choosing patterns, color mixing, drawing, coloring and drying. Students creatively made different patterns, making this activity a whole success. At last, every one put their kites together and took pictures with them, which can become their precious memory.

At 3pm in Chicago time, we started to depart home. We played a traditional Chinese game called Drumming while passing round a toy panda. Who got the panda when music stops has to sing us a song or other talent shows. Kids were so happy and showed us their talents one after another. They sang Chinese songs, gave us recital and even dance! The whole bus was filled with laughter.

The Chicago Chinatown tour ended successfully. Every one harvested new knowledge and friendship. We will remember and cherish this trip, and look forward to our next wonderful journey!

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