



CHINA HISTORICAL  
CHRISTIAN DATABASE

# THE GAZETEER

Your source for the latest news and  
information related to the China  
Historical Christian Database.

NUM 01 | SUM 2021



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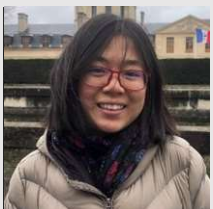
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## Summer Students Take the CHCD to New Heights

From its inception, the China Historical Christian Database (CHCD) has been made possible by dedicated teams of students. Some students work for course credits, some participate as part of funded programs or internships, and more than a few have volunteered their time to help record the Christian history of China. From top to bottom, students make the CHCD possible.

This summer, the CHCD will be a hive of activity as students from around the globe contribute to the project. Thirty-three students from the University of Perugia, Carleton College, Boston University, Renmin University, and elsewhere will

The China Historical Christian Database is a project hosted by  
the Center for Global Christianity at Boston University.





*"From top to bottom,  
students make the  
CHCD possible."*

## Student Power

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be working to collect thousands of data points about Christian people, places and events. Dedicating over three thousand hours of their time, these students will grow the CHCD database by threefold, if not more.

One of the major goals for the summer is completing data retrieval on the *Directory of Protestant Missions in China*. Running from 1874 to 1950, the directory is the longest-running and most comprehensive reference source available on Protestant missionary activity in China. On the Catholic side, students will be working with a diverse number of sources in Latin, French, and English. These sources will help provide a clearer picture of Dominican, Franciscan, Passionist, and Jesuit activities in China into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

With this raw student power, the CHCD is well-positioned to meet its goal of releasing an initial nation-wide data set by the beginning of 2022. At its release, the dataset will constitute the most comprehensive relational and geographic databases on Christianity in China to date. That achievement will be a testament to the immeasurable value of including students in the process of historical research. There is no power like student power!

## Summer Students by the Numbers

8

The number of partner institutions with students who are participating in the project.

33

The number of students who are working on the CHCD over the course of the summer.

3,000

The number of hours that will be dedicated to the project by students this summer.

# "This is a Game Changer"

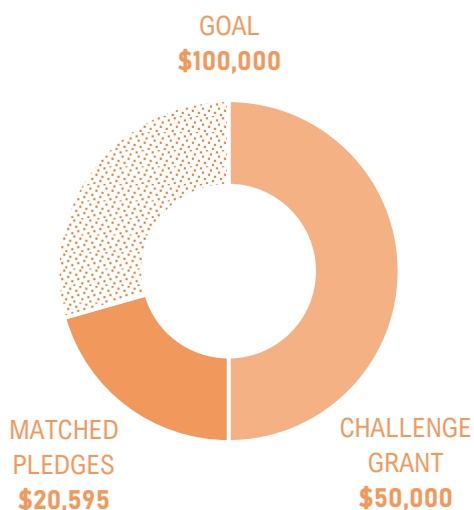
## Angel Donor's \$50,000 Challenge Grant Opens Up New Possibilities

On November 19-21, 2020, the Center for Global Christianity and Mission (CGCM) convened a workshop on "Mapping Christianity in China, 1550-1950" that drew 266 scholars from 28 countries. The workshop served as the official public launch of the China Historical Christian Database.

Six weeks following the conference, the CGCM learned that an anonymous donor issued a challenge. The donor would match dollar for dollar every gift given to the CHCD up to \$50,000. When Daryl Ireland, the Associate Director of the Center for Global Christianity & Mission and the Co-Leader of the China Historical Christian Database heard the news, he kept repeating, "This is a game changer!"

The Mapping workshop made it clear that the CHCD needed to advance on several fronts. A software engineer would be required so that scholars can upload data into the system from anywhere in the world. A web designer would be needed so that end-users, who are not familiar with how to run queries in a Neo4j graph database, can still interact with the data in powerful, intuitive, and significant ways. Funds would be needed to support archivists and students rifling through stacks of missionary materials in libraries and archives around the globe.

It also became clear that the CHCD needed a project director. Someone must lead the negotiations with the dozens of institutions who are ready to partner on this project, train people how to enter data, and provide quality control. Yet, all of that seemed out of reach. The CHCD had used every penny of its \$5,662 start-up funds from the Hariri Institute for Computing and Computational Science & Engineering. But with the potential influx of \$100,000 from donations and matching funds, the ambitious dream to quantify and visualize 400 years of Christian history through the CHCD can become a reality. Big data can change the way we see and understand Chinese history.



## Challenge Grant Update

The CHCD project team has been profoundly grateful for the support that donors have given during the period of our Challenge Grant. Thanks to a generous angel donor, every donated dollar up to \$50,000 will be matched during the period of our Challenge Grant. This means that every donation made to the CHCD during this time is effectively doubled!

So far, over \$20,000 dollars have been pledged to support the CHCD. If you would like help us match every dollar of our Challenge Grant and effectively double your support of the CHCD, [click here](#).





# Hired!

## The CHCD Gains a “New” Project Director

On June 1, 2021, Dr. Alex Mayfield was hired as the Project Director for the CHCD. Those familiar with the project will know that Dr. Mayfield has been a pivotal part of the project team since its inception. He received his Ph.D. from Boston University in May 2021, and his dissertation on pentecostals in Hong Kong was an inspirational first step in the creation of the CHCD.

In his role as Project Director, he will oversee the data collection processes, technological development, and partnerships which are essential for the CHCD. This new role was made possible by the generous support of donors to the CHCD and the Center for Global Christianity at the School of Theology at Boston University.

## State of the Data

While the collection and cleaning of the CHCD is still ongoing, this section provides a quick glimpse at how much data we have collected.

9,800

Individuals

1,600

Institutions

292

Organizations

54,600

Location Records

2,637

Personal Relationships



David Li

2019-2020

David Li worked on the CHCD during the early stages of its development. After receiving his BA in History and Economics from Boston University in 2020, David began a MA in East Asian Regional Studies at Harvard University.



Shuangyu Liang

2019-2021

Shuangyu Liang received an “Outstanding Student Researcher” award for his work with the CHCD. He graduated with a BA in History from Boston University in 2021 and will soon pursue a Juris Doctor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.



Ava Shen

2019-2020

Working in French and Chinese, Ava Shen was one of the first students to work on the collection of key Catholic sources. After receiving a BA in International Relations from the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University, Ava is now working on a MA in International Relations at John Hopkins University.

## Where Are They Now?

CHCD Student Alumni are Mapping Exciting Futures