



## Education and Economic Development for Ethnic Minority Regions

### A letter to Dad

**C**andy comes from a village in the south of Qiannan Prefecture. Her father finished Senior High and so perhaps values girls as much as boys. Unfortunately, he was unable to secure a job that could comfortably support the family. Candy was unaware of the financial situation at home until her father told her frankly in a letter; this reflects an unusually open and intimate relationship in a Chinese family. She left school a couple of times but returned because of her class teacher's encouragement, insistence and concern. She is studying in a school in Duyun City.

Di-e (or "father", an ancient and endearing term),

I used to want to do our country proud by becoming an airline-stewardess, or a policewoman, or even a professor, or a scientist. Then I would share not only from my wealth of knowledge but also from my riches. I want to turn into phoenixes the poorest and most diligent students by sending them to school. I had dreams for myself – to do post-graduate study abroad.

However, when I read your letter to me, I broke down. I cry for hours every time I read your letter. I know now that every cent I am spending, I am sapping your life. I know now how hard you are working for me. I am very, very sorry. Would you forgive my ignorance? I have given it a lot of thought. I've found another way to fulfil my dream: I could do self-study courses while I work. We have already spent a lot of money sending me to school. Why don't we reconsider; let me do self-study? Maybe I will learn more and at a faster pace, maybe I could finish Senior High in 2 instead of 3 years. By then, I will be able to make a some money, finish school and spend less over my studies. Most of all, you needn't worry over school fees at all.

If only we were not this poor, if only you were not sick, I would have never given up this opportunity of a lifetime to study in school. But for the sake of our family, I'm willing. What would we do if you work yourself to death? Brother can't send any money home even though he is working. Grandma is too old to do much in the field. Mum couldn't earn enough for the needs of the whole family. Can you see, Di-e, I have given this matter much thought before I came up with the solution.

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## IN BRIEF

### *Sichuan Province- Aba Prefecture Report*

#### **Education:**

- ***There are 26 Aba county students now sponsored, totaling more than 20,000 RMB.***
- ***More than 5000 RMB spent in improvement to school resources in library books and sports equipment in Kehe and Kasha townships.***

#### **Health:**

- ***Approximately 50 patients received treatment from two foreign experts who provided four days of training in physical therapy techniques to Kehe's primary doctor of Tibetan medicine.***

#### **Agriculture:**

- ***Initial research of potential market use for Aba's wild "Shaji" berry.***

## 'Children of Guizhou'

### 2006 Calendar

*A fundraising project from  
Field of Dreams*



**Field of Dreams** is a Hong Kong based group of professionals who came together to develop and support projects and activities focused on alleviating poverty around the world. They have made a beautiful 2006 calendar in A4 size. It includes 12 photographs and a description of Guizhou.

For a copy, (Hong Kong) please contact:

fieldofdreamsasia@yahoo.com

If you are outside of Hong Kong, e-mail us at 3E: 3edevelopment@eroam.net

All proceeds of the calendar go to 3E Development's scholarship fund.

## *Batiks for sale!*



**These** batiks are made by Chinese minorities with their traditional dyes. There are a wide variety of subjects and stories, on wall hangings, table clothes, stockings and bags. To order please e-mail us at: 3edevelopment@eroam.net to request a catalogue. All profits will go to 3E.

I have worked you to the bones. You are exhausted and you must rest. How I want to take the load off your shoulders. Unfortunately, all I could cope with at the moment is to care and to feed myself. Forgive me, Di-e. Sometimes, I don't know if I am a lucky or an unlucky girl. I have a father who loves his son and daughter equally; this is my greatest blessing. Yet, we are miserably poor in spite of all the work you all put in.

Di-e, I want to come home. I don't have the nerve to finish this semester. Please forgive me for coming home without your permission and please don't hit me again. I am a big girl now. I know that I am not a filial daughter and I have been a disappointment to you.

Signed, Candy

The above is a letter written by Candy, a fictitious name, to her father. We have chosen her letter because it shows the typical struggles of a family in Qiannan Prefecture, namely, financial, employment, health, and education. These factors ultimately force a child or children to leave school at an early age and face the bleak future of employment. 3E has come along side Candy's family and started paying for her tuition and living expenses so she can complete high school.

## ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ *Christmas parties* ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

We have enjoyed the parties with our sponsored students in Duyun. We sang carols, played games and ate Christmas cookies. There was also a small present for each of the student to wish them 'Merry Christmas'.



### ***How you can give to 3E:***

#### **In USA:**

National Heritage Foundation ([www.nhf.org](http://www.nhf.org)) You can make donations online, you need to do a foundation search for '3E Development'.

#### **All other countries:**

Please e-mail [3edevelopment@eroam.net](mailto:3edevelopment@eroam.net) for details.

#### **3E Development Company** - offices in Guizhou and Sichuan

Our main focus is working in overseas development, aid and relief, child sponsorship and micro-loans, specifically in educational and economic development for ethnic minorities, their families and communities.

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