Wu Zhi Qiao Foundation / XAUAT – MaCha Village Center Construction

IIP Internship – Summer 2014
Gansu Province, China
Katherine Gao `15
MaCha Village (马岔村) is located in Huining County (会宁县) of Gansu Province (甘肃省) within China.

One of the state-level poverty-stricken counties in China.
Prof. Mu Jun of XAUAT partnered with Wu Zhi Qiao Charitable Foundation to construct a village center for MaCha.

- 2 of Prof. Mu’s master students headed this project (began in February 2014).
- Part of the national plan aimed at relieving poverty through economic and social development.

Location of the village center is at the junction of the 2 main roads.
- Very close to the primary school.

Objectives: To provide a space with facilities for public service and activities as well as to demonstrate that the local, traditional earth-based technology can be used to create ‘modern’ architecture as well.
Rammed Earth Technology

- Based off of traditional construction method
  - Located in the Loess Plateau
- Advantages
  - Local materials
    - Sturdier than mud-only houses
  - Less expensive than concrete/steel construction
  - Fits in with the local culture/environment
  - Easily constructed
  - No need for expensive manpower – use pneumatic hammer
Consists of 4 main buildings: a stop, a kindergarten, a clinic, and a multi-function hall

- Also has a stage covered by a bamboo roof, seating area, toilets, water storage tank, and a slide
Construction Process

- Began in June 2014
- My responsibilities were to assist the master students and help out with whatever tasks/work needed to be done on site
WZQ Volunteers

- Worked alongside the local workers as well as other volunteers from Xi’an and Hong Kong (mainly university students) – late July – late August
Progress!
Aims of Wu Zhi Qiao / XAUAT

• Create sustainable infrastructure (footbridges and village centers) in remote and poor villages in Mainland China
• Inspire respect, appreciation, and preservation of local culture and environment
• Fully utilize local materials
• Work closely with the villagers
  • Learn from them (i.e. masonry, efficient tool usage)
  • Teach them knowledge of the advanced rammed earth technology and how to maintain the structure in the future
• Demonstrate that this retake on the traditional construction technique can be used to make ‘modern’ structures which are not only economical, but are efficient and fit the local environment.
• Encourage volunteers, especially university students, to help improve the lives of underprivileged villages in remote areas of Mainland China
Macha Village
Center Construction