

# Women exhibit their strength in different trades

**Editor's note:** Women in various fields in Jiading District are demonstrating their strengths by processing data with precision in labs, nurturing students with empathy in classrooms, offering insightful guidance in boardrooms, and providing compassionate support in their communities. In this issue, as we celebrate International Women's Day in March, may they continue to break boundaries and redefine what it means to be a woman.

## Promoting rural education

Wu Baoying, the principal of three rural schools in Jiading District, has spent three decades providing rural primary school students with music education and tutoring from top teachers.

"I grew up in a village, and I decided long ago that my mission would be to promote rural education," said Wu.

Early this month, inside a student extracurricular center in Jiading Primary School affiliated with Shanghai Normal University, Wu was conducting a group of children in accordion ensemble.

The children were wearing school uniforms neatly, and the music they played was melodious and encouraging.

The Little



Sea Lion Accordion Troupe of Jiading Primary School was founded four years ago and has won the gold medal at the Shanghai Spring International Accordion Culture and Arts Festival's Yangtze River

Delta Region Online Concert for four consecutive years.

"We're a country school according to the municipal education committee's classification, and parents of a country school tend to create less room for their kids' art education," said Wu.

"What if the kids are able to receive free art education at school? That will help them greatly in their later life."

In 2020,



Wu Baoying and the Little Sea Lion Accordion Troupe in rehearsal

Jiading Primary School sought help from the team of Professor Li Cong, former dean of Shanghai Normal University Music College, and founded its Little Sea Lion Accordion Troupe.

"It is really difficult and a treasured experience for an ordinary public school to promote accordion as a free selection course," said Xu Huiping, a music teacher at Jiading Primary School. "The first year was especially tough. The school

purchased the accordions to alleviate financial concerns for the kids and their families."

About 15 years ago, when Wu was headmaster of Nanxiang Primary School, she promised that the school would create a star teacher of its own in about three or five years.

She sought fund support from the education bureau, seminar quotas from education research departments, and academic works publishing quotas from different presses.

"I was quite taken aback when I learned I was to become the first star teacher," said Zhu Yanqing, a star teacher on the math team at Nanxiang Primary School.

"When we were heading together toward the goal, I was able to feel as if Dean Wu were pushing me ahead with all her efforts. Now I am a star teacher and tutoring the younger generation of teachers; I still miss the hug she gave me while asking me, 'Now it's your turn to lead.'"

## Building on family business



Jia Yingjie, a master's degree holder, is building her grandmother's seed store into a global seed industrial chain.

The thirty-something was raised in Jiading District. Her parents were involved in the seed trade. She remembered helping her grandmother weigh and package seeds as a child.

When she was 17, she interpreted for her father and Gary King, then head of the Global Agricultural Development at HJ Heinz.

"Compared with other sectors, agriculture has a born

advantage: that it will never disappear," she remembered King as saying.

This prompted her to produce vegetables and test new varieties in farms in high school, undertake overseas surveys on European and Japanese seed corporations during her college years, and attend the American Seed Trade Association conference in the US.

After completing her studies abroad, she joined her father's seed company, Shanghai Wells Seed Co, in 2015, and was one of the first to receive the city's certificate as an agricultural professional.

In 2016, she founded "Cang Shu Ge," an e-commerce platform to



Jia Yingjie in the greenhouse, caring for seedlings

further expand the seed business to gardening.

In 2024, Jia was elected the executive board member of the Asia and Pacific Seed Association.

## Creating piezoelectric ceramics



Liang Ruihong has been devoted to research on piezoelectric ceramics over the past 24 years.

Piezoelectric ceramics can generate electric charge against mechanical deformation and vice versa.

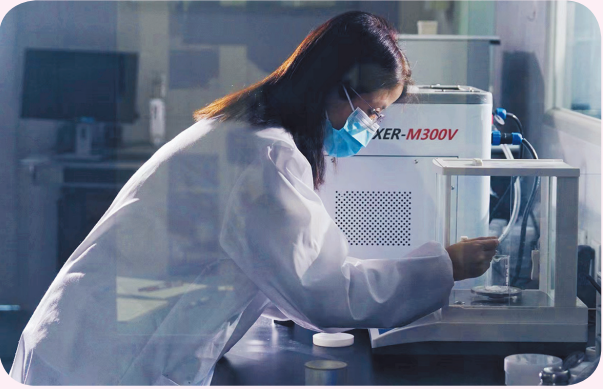
"It's natural for me to be engaged in scientific research, which means lifelong exploration," said Liang. "I studied inorganic non-metallic materials in college. Shanghai Institute of Ceramics of CAS is a leading inorganic non-metallic materials research institute. Luckily, I enrolled and

began my ambition of inventing new materials for my country."

After earning her doctorate in 2006, Liang did her postdoctoral research at the National Center for Scientific Research in France (CNRS) for two years before returning to China.

Her initial endeavor in China was developing high-temperature piezoelectric ceramics for deep soil oil and gas exploration. At that time, China's deep oil and gas exploration gear relied solely on imports, and piezoelectric ceramics able to resist 175 degrees Celsius couldn't be produced domestically. After months in the lab comparing thousands of data and modifying ingredients hundreds of times, Liang and her collaborators solved the bottleneck.

So far, the team has been able to make piezoelectric ceramics that can resist 260 degrees Celsius. In February, piezoelectric ceramics made by Liang and her team passed the testing in an over 10,000-meter deep vertical well in Tarim Basin in Xinjiang.



Liang Ruihong conducting research in the lab

## Community chief's 'thoughtful services'

Zhou Li, a retired soldier, serves as the chief of Jiading's Loutang neighborhood committee.

Zhou joined the army at age 18 in 1992 and became one of the eight women soldiers from Jiading District of that year. She was posted in southern Fujian Province.

She arrived half a month later than the rest of the battalion members but mastered all training essentials in three days.

Zhou retired in 1995 as a communications soldier and then worked for a foreign firm and a human



Zhou Li (right) joins local residents in tending a community garden.

resource company for over a decade. She later joined the Loutang neighborhood committee in 2013, embarking on a new career path like her father.

Fueled by her passion for the new role and the memory skills honed as a communications soldier, Zhou quickly learned the names and faces of the community residents. Each day, she gets around the neighborhood, engaging with residents to understand their needs.

Over the past decade, Zhou has led over 60

community workers to accomplish various tasks including rehabilitating a riverbank, increasing parking lots for two neighborhoods, and renovating old neighborhoods.

In Zhou's opinion, the She Power not only means "taking on responsibilities bravely," but also "providing detail-oriented, thoughtful services."

To make Loutang a more beautiful, peaceful and happy neighborhood always remains her commitment.

## 'Calming' sweet soup store

Peng Shan manages a Chinese sweet soup store in Nanxiang Ancient Street and delights customers with her food and service.

"My friends prefer to call me 'Wen Shan' which is the name of my sweet soup store," Peng said.

"Cooking food is a healing process for me," she said, admitting she is an anxious person and cooking helps her to focus and relax.

Several years ago, Peng watched "Kamome Diner" and was moved by the intimate food shop atmosphere delivered in the Japanese movie.

"What if I open a store like this?" she thought.

As a full-time mother, Peng faced the difficult task of both rearing



The sweet soups at Peng Shan's store in Nanxiang are a local favorite.

her child and discovering her own worth. She resolved to pursue inner serenity through the study of psychology. Six years' study helped her rediscover her confidence, and she opened a food store.

"My store makes custom sweet soups for my customers," Peng said.

She combines components to satisfy the taste of customers for each single item on the menu.

"We offer a total of 33 desserts and soups in our store and still adjust the menu in different seasons," Peng said. "In early spring, for example, bottled roasted milk and red bean paste with lotus seeds and orange peels enjoy high popularity."