Letter from Yuanyuan Chen to Professor Li Si

Dear Uncle Li, Si,

Thanks very much for sponsoring me! Thanks very much for helping me!

How time flies! 2012 was gone and now 2013 is coming. At such a transitional time, I picked up my pen to write down my gratitude towards you.

I still recall vividly how excited when I first got the education grant from you. When my teacher told me that an education foundation was going to sponsor me, I felt so excited that I was speechless. What was more shocking to me was that the one who sponsored me was one far away from the other side of the ocean. The other side of the ocean is a place I never thought of. Now, a kind person there gives me support.

As I am writing this letter, my grandmother came to me several times, asking me to thank you. My grandmother is a farmer. She does not receive any education; but she is very nice and diligent. She broke her ankle when she was working in the field, she has to stay at home for several months. Every day my grandfather goes out to work in field before day breaks. Probably because he is not as strong as before, recently, he fainted in the field. Fortunately, a neighbor saw him and sent him to a small clinic. My grandmother was worried about my grandpa. She wanted to help him. Therefore even though she was not recovered, she still decided to work rather than stay at home. Unfortunately, a few days ago, she stumbled on a stair and hit her head, therefore, she had to rest for more time. My parents work in other cities. Because they don’t have diploma or skills, they can only do some labor work. They told me that they would not come home this Spring Festival because of the expensive bus ticket. I understand them. They want to create a better living environment for me. And since they are not with me, I have to learn to live independently. Comparing to my classmates who have their parents at home with them, this is a good opportunity for me to grow up, right? Moreover, since kind people like you help me so much, I feel I am blessed. But I am worried about my father’s health. He has gastric ulcer. My mom told me that since health care service is very expensive, sometimes even if my father is so painful that he sweats, he still does not go to see a doctor. My little brother is also weak. He is only a child but has asthmas and rhinitis. But he is very nice and thoughtful. He does not ask for lots of stuff as his peers would do. And he understands my parents’ difficulties.

Sometimes, I feel upset when I think of my family situation. But, compared to those who lost their parents forever, I am quite lucky. Adverse environment will lead to more appreciation of life.

The first semester of my senior high school is almost gone. Though my score of the entrance exam was not bad, since my classmates are all excellent in their studies, my ranking at the very beginning was not good. I felt somewhat anxious. But the good thing is with my teachers’ help and my effort, I have improved a lot. I ranked 58 in the whole grade for last exam. The final exam is approaching; I will study hard to get a better score so that I will not disappoint you and my parents. I heard that your research area is math. You must be very smart. High school Math is much more difficult than middle school math. I have encountered many difficult math problems. Do you have any suggestions for learning math? Probably because I did not learn English well at the very beginning, my English is not very good. You live in the U.S.A, you must use English every day. Do you have any good methods for learning English?

Uncle Li, every time I think of you, I feel warmth arising from the bottom of my heart. Again thanks for your help! Wish you happy every day; wish you work smoothly and wish your whole family happy!

Best wishes!

Yuanyuan Chen

Jan 12, 2013.