



MY JOURNEY IN CHINA WITH A GROUP OF TEENAGERS

BY LIONEL RICAUD

Every year for the last ten years, the Bluestar group has organised a trip to China for the children of its subsidiaries' staff. Each year a group from Adisseo participates in this inter-cultural trip to Beijing. Adisseo provides the opportunity for 1 or 2 corporate volunteers to supervise the group. This year, Lionel Ricaud, Head of Hygiene Quality, Safety & Environment for the Specialties Business Unit volunteered, and agreed to share his experience.



WHY DID YOU VOLUNTEER?

I travel a lot and usually I organise my own trips, often focused on sports with my friends. Participating in this trip with a group of teenagers I didn't know and whom I was responsible for, in a completely different cultural context was totally new for me and it was a cultural and social challenge I felt like undertaking.

WHAT WERE YOUR ASSIGNMENTS ON SITE?

The role of the supervisors of each group was to ensure the safety of the teenagers in all the activities offered, as well as to ensure communication between the group and the local supervising teams. During the camp, children of all nationalities are gathered together and obviously they don't all speak the same language. There are translators on site. We act as go-betweens and make sure the rules are respected so the children can enjoy their adventure to the fullest.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST MEMORY?

Sledging down the Great Wall of China, of course! You barrel down a winding slope in pairs at full speed! My 7-year-old Chinese partner, John, was great!

AND WHAT'S YOUR WORST MEMORY?

Every week, the Chinese team asked us to assess our group of children for an awards ceremony at the end of the trip. I didn't like this experience much. I felt it wasn't consistent with the group spirit and the sense of family.

TWO WORDS TO SUMMARISE THESE TWO WEEKS?

Wow! Unforgettable!