

Master Ambassador

By Royden Potvin
Thunder Bay Ventures

Peng Youlian is well known to many people in Thunder Bay. He is one of our community's most effervescent citizen ambassadors. When you talk to Peng his excitement for the riches, beauty and cleanliness of Thunder Bay is infectious. Peng is a World famous Taiji Master (pronounced 'tie-chee') and you should get to know him as well.

Peng and his wife Su Jing came to Thunder Bay from Beijing, China in 1990. A Canadian friend in China connected them with David and Ellen Picard, who helped them start their life here. He says they were treated with so much kindness that they will be forever grateful to the people of Thunder Bay. Peng and Su have two children born here. His name is pronounced 'Pung' in English, not "Peng", a mistake I have made for years and Peng just laughs!

Master Peng Youlian started teaching Taiji at the 55 Plus Centre almost as soon as he arrived in 1990. As Taiji grew in popularity, the Thunder Bay 55 Plus Tai Chi Club was formed and in 1998, The Peng You Taiji Quan Association was formed to build a "Health, Happiness and Friendship" lifestyle in our community. Taiji classes are now offered across the City.

Peng is a true entrepreneur. In addition to instructing in Taiji, Peng has a company which does business with China. He can and will provide 'cultural services', including language services, to assist Thunder Bay or Canadian business owners who want to do business with China but do not know how to start. Recently, he sold his restaurant business and has started a new business which combines his talents of teaching Taiji and his skill in healthy Chinese Cooking. He is offering his services as 'The Taiji Chef' to individuals and groups. Peng's holistic approach to exercise, fitness, healthy food and living presents an alternate lifestyle model for people to consider. One of Peng's greatest attributes is his genuine honest nature and the vitality he brings to people's lives. These qualities will serve him well as he develops this new business/lifestyle concept.

Peng was the 2001 winner of the Chinese Canadian Entrepreneur of the



Peng Youlian

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Year award at ceremonies held in Toronto. As well, he was the 2002 Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce 'Ambassador Award' winner. After the 2001 Chinese Canadian Entrepreneur Award, a one hour documentary film was made of him and Thunder Bay by a Chinese Canadian TV channel. Peng says that that film was shown on Chinese TV for about 2 years and Chinese people from all across Canada know of Thunder Bay and him from this film. Recently Peng tells the story of being in Chinatown in Toronto where a store owner recognized him from the film and was so grateful to Peng for being an award winning Chinese Canadian Business Person that people could look up to and use as a role model. Peng said that the man did not want him to pay for his purchases because he was so grateful to him.

Thunder Bay is proud and pleased to have a Master Ambassador like Peng Youlian in our City. Thank you Peng for your enthusiasm and for your fierce pride and loyalty to our City; to your Chinese heritage and for your great gift of Taiji to all who have taken up its virtues. You are truly a Local Hero.

Everyday Heroes is a Community initiative sponsored by Thunder Bay Ventures. Everywhere in the City there are people living, working, playing and contributing to the fabric of our community.

To nominate a hero contact
heroes@thunderbayventures.com