

Global Media Explore Energy, Innovation and Jobs in Pittsburgh on Anniversary of 2009 G-20 Summit

Continuing the global conversation about Pittsburgh, its transformation and its recognition as a “model city,” the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance’s marketing initiative – the [Pittsburgh World Tour 2010](#) – included a recent [Pittsburgh showcase tour for domestic and international media](#). Marking the one-year anniversary of the Pittsburgh 2009 (G-20) Summit, the tour brought five journalists to Pittsburgh from September 23 – 26 to explore how the region is living up to its accolades as a model for the 21st-century economy. Despite the recession, Pittsburgh has continued to perform better than the average of its 14 benchmark cities and the U.S. as a whole. The region’s strength lies in a balanced, diverse economy, and sectors that are currently “hot” – energy (including sustainable building technologies and the traditional and renewable energy supply chain), for example, are creating exciting and diverse employment opportunities, as are our region’s other mainstay sectors: advanced manufacturing, financial and business services, health care and life sciences, and information and communications technology. What’s more, Pittsburgh, despite the recession, is hiring. [Some 22,000 jobs and careers across key industry sectors are available](#), and more will emerge soon. Visiting media interfaced with employers and examined why Pittsburgh is hiring in significant numbers, while other cities and regions are not.

The visiting journalists included Tang Weiwei, editor of *Forbes China*; Martin Jolicoeur, senior journalist at Montreal’s *Journal les Affaires*; Ben Schulman, a blogger with Chicago’s *Gapers Block*; Patrice Hill, chief economic correspondent at the *Washington Times* (DC); and Barbara Woodworth, who writes for *Equal Opportunity Publications*.

Traveling the farthest from Shanghai, Tang Weiwei was eager to learn more about Pittsburgh, whose mayor received a prestigious invitation from Shanghai’s mayor to speak at his International Business Leaders Advisory Council’s convocation on October 12. To complement this visit, she plans to inform her readers in China about Pittsburgh and its transformation in future issues of the magazine.

Allegheny Conference on Community Development staffer and tour correspondent Ben Kamber caught up with Weiwei near the end of her visit to talk about her observations of Pittsburgh.

Touring around Pittsburgh has no doubt left impressions on you. What are some of your first and lasting impressions of Pittsburgh?

When I learned I had the opportunity to visit Pittsburgh, I knew it had a reputation for being a city with many high tech and green industries. Although, I was very surprised to see that Pittsburgh also has well established cultural institutions and musical offerings. I was also very surprised to see so many people from all different fields, focused on how to work towards creating a better Pittsburgh. This bodes very well for Pittsburgh’s future.

Despite being on opposite sides of the world, Pittsburgh and Shanghai, you say, have some common ground. What, to you, do these two cities have in common?

Pittsburgh and Shanghai share a common industrial and manufacturing legacy. As such, both cities have needed to transform their economies to reflect modern advancements and realities. These transformations have created many challenges for both Pittsburgh and Shanghai, particularly in respect to managing environmental concerns. Moving forward, Shanghai is working to create a new, green, sustainable model for itself, much like the model Pittsburgh successfully set out to create for itself 30 years ago.

Which lessons learned by Pittsburgh during its 30-year transformation can be of value to Shanghai?

Pittsburgh has many unique partnerships that engage citizens, government, businesses and civic organizations. This unique partnership approach has played a significant role in Pittsburgh's transformation and growth, I understand. I think that Shanghai can learn much from Pittsburgh about how to partner. More businesses in my country are eager to get engaged and help shape Shanghai's future. Pittsburgh can also be a model for Shanghai about how to transition into a greener, more environmentally responsible city.

Pittsburgh and Shanghai: is there a relationship in their future?

Absolutely. Large businesses in Pittsburgh can see the potential of the Chinese market, so they will continue to expand their operations and investments within China. These business relationships will grow very quickly in the next 10 years. And with many students in China being educated in Pittsburgh's universities, bridges based on knowledge exchange will be built between Pittsburgh and China.

Considering business investment, what about Pittsburgh do you think will most pique China's interest?

Many of the industry sectors in Pittsburgh have a great potential to pique China's interest, particularly nuclear energy and materials science. Since many of Pittsburgh's core industrial sectors have widespread global relevance and importance, the capacity for establishing and enhancing relationships between China and Pittsburgh on the foundation of business investment is truly substantial.

How did Pittsburgh surprise you?

Pittsburgh is a genuinely beautiful city. I cannot imagine it was once an awfully polluted city.

How did your colleagues and friends react to the news that you'd be on assignment in Pittsburgh?

Many people in China don't really know about the real Pittsburgh. They said it was a small city, a steel city. They wouldn't imagine the reality that is Pittsburgh: a region with enormously influential corporations, such as Westinghouse, and a large and influential university community that is globally connected.

The Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, an affiliate of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, markets the benefits of conducting business in southwestern Pennsylvania to companies all over the world that are growing, relocating or expanding. For more information, visit www.pittsburghregion.org. More information about opportunities in Pittsburgh's energy economy is available [here](#).

The Allegheny Conference on Community Development and Affiliates – the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Economy League of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance – work in collaboration with public and private sector partners to stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania. For more information, visit www.alleghenyconference.org.