

# Labor Rights Violations in Walmart and Home Depot's Supplier Factory



China Labor Watch

December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Cuori is located in Zhejiang, and is a factory that manufactures products for their own brand, in addition to various international brands. According to information from the factory, there are around 3000 workers, and they manufacture kitchen appliances. Over the period that students worked at Cuori, brands that had products manufactured at the factory include Hamilton Beach, ALASKA, Cusinart, Tefal, E'noca, Russell Hobbs and George Foreman. Many of these brands are sold at Walmart and Homedepot.

Cuori web site: <http://www.cuori.com/>

Address: NO.48 Developing Road, Zhouxiang Town, Cixi City, Zhejiang China

On November 22, China Labor Watch contacted Walmart and Homedepot regarding labor rights violations at Cuori. Walmart responded, saying that they were currently undergoing an investigation. Homedepot stated that the factory has been asked to pay workers for their wages in arrears. However, a follow-up investigation by CLW reveals that there are still hundreds of student workers who have not received their wages in full. We also received 23 letters from students, and we have translated 8 of them, which is attached below. The original letters can be assessed through this [link](#).

Li Qiang-Executive Director of China Labor Watch said, "The cost of Walmart and Home Depot's low prices is exploited laborers working under extremely stressful and exhausting conditions. The enforcement of Walmart and Home Depot's ethical sourcing standards at Cuori is a total failure."

In their respective CSR standards, [Walmart](#) and [Home Depot](#) promise that they will respect labor and treat every worker that manufactures for them fairly. They should be responsible for the exploited workers and students at Cuori, which has been audited and authorized to manufacture their products by Home Depot and Walmart.

#### **Summary of Cuori's Violations:**

1. Illegal deductions. Labor agencies used a variety of methods to make students pay hundreds of yuan in deposits.
2. Illegally detaining student's IDs.
3. Signing blank contracts. Labor agencies stated there was a lack of time, and subsequently forced students to sign blank contracts.
4. Failed to buy social insurance as stipulated by law. Force students to sign a statement to give up the purchase of social insurance.
5. Fire safety loopholes. Students discovered that the boxes that were supposed to contain fire extinguishers were used to hold employees' cups.

6. Excessive overtime. Workers and students worked at least 12 hours a day, and sometimes put in up to 15 hours.
7. Forced overtime. Workers who refused to work overtime would be recorded as being absent from work.
8. Continuous work. According to China's labor law, employees should have at least one day off each week. However, in Cuori, workers and students could only rest for one or two days each month.
9. As stipulated by China's labor law, overtime work should be paid according to a certain rate (1.5 times to 3 times the base wage), but in Cuori, overtime was paid the same rate as regular work.
10. Lack of occupational safety protection. The workshop was very hot and dusty, but workers did not receive any protection. Many workers had contact with volatile chemicals such as silicone oil and alcohol, but they did not have any protection either.
11. Inspection fraud. Cuori required employees to use alcohol to clean its products when there was an audit or inspection. However, usually, silicone oil was used, which was cheaper but more harmful to workers.
12. Did not provide job and occupational safety training to workers.
13. Did not provide paystubs to students.
14. Verbal abuse. Grassroots management personnel regularly cursed at students.
15. Constrained resignation. Management personnel would procrastinate to prevent students from resigning.
16. Terrible living conditions. The dormitories were dirty, and a student said that her bed was on the verge of collapsing.
17. Terrible working conditions. The workshop was very hot, and there were no air conditioners. A worker died of heart disease that was triggered by heat stroke.
18. Wage arrears. In addition to the illegal deductions of students, senior employees also stated that Cuori would hold their wages for one month.
19. Lack of protection for juvenile workers (aged between 16 to 18).

In October 2016, China Labor Watch received complaints from college students who worked at a cookware factory as employees over the summer vacation. CLW was informed that

students were cheated by the company and had worked under terrible working conditions. After students had finished up work over the summer, wages were in arrears. Since then, we followed this issue closely, and gained a further understanding of the working conditions of students.

Before the summer vacation, many students would look for summer vacation jobs, and some college students in Henan Province and Hubei Province had heard of Cuori through labor agencies. Labor agencies promised working conditions which appeared to be acceptable, and these included working no more than ten hours per day, paying 10 RMB for each hour, double pay for overtime work, and free food and accommodation. Students were promised that they would be working in Shenzhen. They paid a deposit and were prepared to begin work. However, many students said that the day before they left, the labor agencies said that they weren't able to go to Shenzhen to work, and told them that they would instead, go to Zhejiang to work at Cuori. Students felt that they had been cheated, however, to earn some money, they agreed to the conditions. They then went to Cuori to work.

When students were onboard the bus to Cuori, the labor agency told students that wages would be paid at a rate of 9 RMB an hour, and there was no overtime pay. Factories would not provide free food, and instead, would pay workers an 8 RMB food allowance every day. The labor agencies then used various means to make students pay 450 RMB in deposits. Students then felt that something was wrong, but as they had already boarded the bus and paid the deposit, they decided to just keep quiet. The labor agency also made students sign blank work contracts. Before students were able to thoroughly read the terms of the contract, they were made to sign it. In addition, students had to sign a statement giving up the purchase of social insurance.

The working conditions at Cuori couldn't be worse. Cuori didn't treat students as employees, but rather as commodities that would be thrown away after two months. For this reason, Cuori increased the working hours of students. Labor agencies initially promised that students would work no more than 10 hours a day, but at Cuori, they worked at least 12 hours a day, and on some days, they even worked for 15 hours. Students only had two days of rest a month. Overtime was forced. Students who asked for leave, even sick leave, would be threatened with wage deductions. Students did not have any breaks other than during meals. They worked continuously, just like machines. For Cuori, students were just a disposable workforce, so they did not provide any occupational safety equipment. Students had regular contact with various chemicals, which could potentially lead to chronic poisoning, but they were not provided with masks and glasses, the most basic protection.

Temperatures at the workshops were very high, however, no air conditioners were installed. Students and full-time employees were sweating all the time. One employee even died of a heart attack triggered by heat stroke. However, for Cuori, students were already commoditized. Students were exploited, and Cuori cared little about the mental and physical health of students. Working in such an environment, managers were also rude and disrespectful. They often cursed workers, even girls. Also, since students were disposable commodities, Cuori failed to provide good accommodation to students. Students lived in a

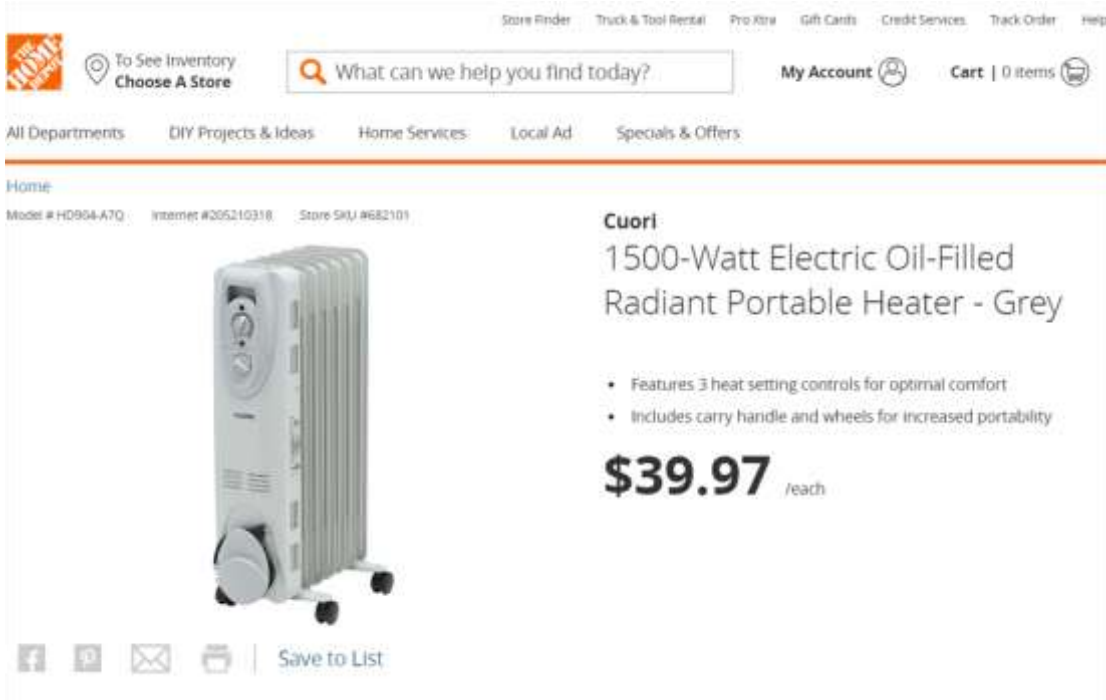
compact room that accommodated eight people. It was overcrowded, and people had no privacy in the dormitory. A student reported to us that every time she went to bed, she had to ask her roommate to hold the bed, because otherwise, the bed would collapse. One girl's room had no lock, and despite having reported the dormitory to factory management several times, they were not provided with a lock.

Many students could not tolerate the working conditions at Cuori and left half way. But most chose to stay because they wanted to earn some money and to also pay their school fees. However, much to their surprise, more labor violations were awaiting them. Through not calculating overtime, over reporting absence, and various other ways, Cuori and labor agencies illegally deducted an average of 1000 RMB from students' wages in August. This is almost half of the students' total wages. When students contacted Cuori and the labor agencies, both were slow in addressing the issue and neither wanted to bear the responsibility. Students needed to call many times before someone answered the phone, and when someone finally spoke with students, he or she was always rude, impatient, and arrogant. Until now, two months have passed and students have yet to receive their full payment.

Cuori's product sold at Walmart and Home Depot  
(screenshots of Walmart and Home Depot's web sites)



The screenshot shows the Walmart website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Walmart logo, a search bar, and links for account management and shopping. Below the navigation bar, there are several promotional banners, including "Cyber Week Deals" and "FREE Walmart Grocery pickup". The main content area features a product listing for a "1500-Watt Electric Oil-Filled Glass Faced Digital Radiator Portable Heater" by Cuori. The product is shown in a black color. The price is listed as \$99.99 with free shipping, and a list price of \$129.99 is crossed out, indicating a \$30.00 savings. The product is sold and shipped by "My Quick Buy". There are options to "Add to Cart", "Add to List", and "Add to Registry". A "CYBER WEEK DEALS" banner is visible at the bottom of the product listing.



The screenshot shows the Home Depot website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Home Depot logo, a search bar, and links for account management and shopping. Below the navigation bar, there are several promotional banners, including "To See Inventory Choose A Store" and "What can we help you find today?". The main content area features a product listing for a "Cuori 1500-Watt Electric Oil-Filled Radiant Portable Heater - Grey". The product is shown in a grey color. The price is listed as \$39.97 /each. The product features 3 heat setting controls for optimal comfort and includes a carry handle and wheels for increased portability. There are options to "Save to List" and social media sharing icons.



Brands: Hamilton Beach, ALASKA, Cuisinart, Tefal, E'noca, Russell Hobbs, George Foreman  
(all of the following photos are taken by students working at Cuori over the summer)





A student during work





Students at work



A student's arm after working at Cuori

浙江卓力集团有限公司  
煎烤器事业部四部考勤簿

月份: 8 类别: 班 班长: 王保:

序号	工号	姓名	项目	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
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备注1. 考勤簿作为管理人员对下属员工的考核记录, 各班组长或相关考勤人员必须真实公正填写。  
 2. 考勤时间栏内填写出勤时间, 及相关项目。  
 3. 标示方法: A. 按实际上班时间填写  
 B. 开会及公出△ C. 矿工○ D. 迟到× E. 早退× F. 请假⊖ G. 口头请假未...

Attendance record indicates that students have on average 4.5 hours of overtime each day, with total work time amounts to 12.5 hours per day

## Students' Letters

### 1. Xu

I'm a first-year college student. After finishing the finals on July 4<sup>th</sup>, I began to pack up in the afternoon and went to Cuori following a student agent before boarding in front of the college main gate. We paid the leading agent Li Bing 100 RMB deposit and 250 RMB for transportation. The trip took quite a while, and we arrived at the factory in the afternoon of the 5<sup>th</sup>. On the bus, agent Yu Xiaochuan told us that we would need to work at least 12 hours a day and earn 9 RMB one hour, which was different from previous information that we would work 11 hours a day. Furthermore, we were told that dormitories were equipped with air conditioners and fans, but they already broke.

After arriving at the Building 3 of Cuori (employees' dormitory), we paid Yu Xiaochuan 100 RMB security deposit, which Yu guaranteed would be fully returned to us upon the termination of contract. Dormitories were assigned to us in the afternoon, and we proceeded with enrollment procedures on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> and signed labor contracts. We began work on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Different from the initial agreement that food was free, we paid for meals out of our own pockets. After working for about half a month when I had almost run out of money, I still did not receive the food allowance. The representative of Cuori's labor dispatching agency Jueqitiancheng-Zhang Hong said that they can prepay part of our wage, but there was no following actions.

It was very hot in the factory. Because the workshop was on the top level of the building, the roof was made of steel, and the only cooling facility was a small fan, our clothes were always soaked with sweat. We worked at least 12 hours a day, from 7am to 10pm, and sometimes worked overtime until 11pm. We spent all the money brought with us and had to ask for money from parents to feed ourselves. It was promised that part of July's wage would be paid to us, but we'd never heard back since then.

We applied for resignation on 28<sup>th</sup>. Afraid of they there might be unreasonable deductions, we asked the labor agency whether our wage would be deducted if we left on 28<sup>th</sup>. They replied that there wouldn't be any deductions as long as we adhered to the contract. We worked until 11pm on 27<sup>th</sup> and packed up after returning to the dormitory. We had to ask our parents to finance us for a bus ticket. From beginning working here until leaving, we had never seen a penny. July's wage was paid to us on August 30<sup>th</sup>, and August's wage was made on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Nevertheless, we found that we were deducted 1000 RMB!

We students organized and asked Zhang Hong and Yu Xiaochuan for our wage, but they have been procrastinating. Zhang Hong claimed that he was also deducted 100 thousands by Cuori and asked us to share this loss with them! We contacted a representative of Cuori, who replied that all students' wage was made to the labor agency and they made full payment to the labor agency. Both sides were shirking their responsibilities, and we did not know the truth. From September 30<sup>th</sup> to mid-October, we had been leveraging the internet and social actors to help us. However, Zhang Hong only wanted to muddle through by making empty promises and turning of his cellphones.

Name: Xu, Work ID: 9516049734, cell phone: 187391395XX



## 2. Dai: Cheated During My Summer Job

My name is Dai, and I am from Huangshi, Hubei and studied in Wuhan. The following is my painful experience of being cheated during my summer job:

During the summer holidays of 2016, I found out from a group message that an electronics factory in Ningbo was recruiting for workers over the summer. I subsequently contacted an agent regarding work over the summer, and the labor agency was called “Gongying Tianxia” and the company was located in Guanggu Wuhan, Hubei. Wages were 9 RMB/hour (\$1.33/hour), with 10 hour work days, and the monthly wage was over 3000 RMB (\$442.63), and includes meals and accommodation. He informed me that we would all gather and depart at Wuhan’s Dongguang Square on July 5<sup>th</sup>. On the day, there were around 200 to 300 students, and we were to pay 400 RMB (\$59.02) to the contact person at the station, who told us that this was for transportation expenses to Ningbo.

On July 6<sup>th</sup>, we arrived at Ningbo Cixi Hangzhou Bay New Development Zone, to the entrance of a factory called “Zhuo Li Group”. Whilst we were onboard the bus, an agent called Yu Xiaochuan, told us about the summer job, and said that the wages were 9RMB (\$1.33) an hour, the monthly wage was over 3000 RMB (\$442.63), and would include accommodation but not meals. Every day, there would be an 8RMB (\$1.18) allowance for meals (In reality, we did not receive any meal allowances, and paid for meals ourselves. The food was also expensive, and I relied on steamed buns and biscuits to survive the summer). Each of us was also required to pay 100 RMB (\$14.75) which was mandatory, and we were told that the 100 RMB (\$14.75) fee was to determine our posts. They also promised us that if we worked until the 25<sup>th</sup> or the 28<sup>th</sup>, then the fee would be refunded to us. After adding the transportation expenses we paid previously, we were charged 500 RMB (\$73.77) altogether for each person. If we also add the living expenses we incurred after, we spent around 1800 (\$265.58) to 2000 RMB (\$295.09).

Between July 6<sup>th</sup> and July 9<sup>th</sup>, Yu Xiaochuan and Zhang Hong from Ningbo Anzhi Human Resources Co. Ltd, emphasized that if someone from the company’s human resources asked us if we were a permanent worker or here for vacation work, we had to reply that we were a permanent worker, and could not say that we were there for vacation work. We had stayed in Ningbo for a number of days, and as the food inside the factory was quite expensive, and we still had not been arranged to go inside the factory, a few people decided to leave. They went to ask Yu Xiaochuan for a refund of the fees related to determining our posts (as they had not entered the factory yet), however Yu Xiaochuan did not refund the fees, and would not answer our phone calls. We went back and forth between him and Zhang Hong, and we didn’t end up having the fees returned to us.

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, we finished the procedures related to entering factory, and were able to begin work at the workshops. I worked on the assembly line which was producing a type of fryer/grill, and the position I was in required me to wipe finished products with alcohol. However, in reality, we did not use alcohol, and instead, used a greasy liquid with a distinct smell. This was not petrol, but the smell was unpleasant, and according to a senior employee at the factory, the liquid was silicone oil. We usually used silicone oil to wipe the products, however, when our superiors’ or





clients came to inspect, we would switch to using alcohol to wipe the products. After they left, we'd return to using silicone oil. Originally, the recruitment message for the summer job had stated that we would be working 10 hours every day, when in actual fact, we worked an average of 12 hours a day. Sometimes, when we did not reach the specified production output, we would work overtime overnight, until 1am or 2 am in the morning. The work environment was also terrible, and it was especially hot during the summer, and the work was tiring and dirty. When I'm at work the whole day, I would be covered in sweat. In one month, I had lost 4 pounds.

In mid-July, I asked many times when I would receive my pay card, because previously, Zhang Hong had told us that our pay would be loaded onto a card and given to us. They did not give us our pay cards until the start of August. Also, the agent, Yu Xiaochuan told us that if we worked until the 25<sup>th</sup> or the 28<sup>th</sup>, then we would receive wages of 9 RMB/hour (\$1.33/hour), a food allowance and wages would be paid via a pay card. The fees related to determining our posts would also be refunded via Alipay. I worked until the 25<sup>th</sup>, and then underwent the resignation procedures, however, in the end, I had 1000 RMB (\$147.54) deducted from my wages, and did not receive a food allowance. I also did not receive a refund for the fees for determining our posts. I hope that you will be able to help us to obtain justice, and to expose the terrible ways of these agents and dispatch companies, and to decrease the number of student workers who have been deceived. Thank you.

Name: Dai, Work ID: 9516049742, Phone Number: 188714509XX

### 3. Ming

Hello everyone, I am a sophomore from Henan, and my name is Ming. This year, during summer vacation, to help my parents ease their burdens, and to earn enough to cover my school fees and living expenses, I went with some friends to work over the summer. I originally thought I could cover my school fees with the wages I earned, little did I know that the money that I took great pains to earn, had many deductions made to it. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, after my exams, I didn't return home, and went with an labor agency to Ningbo, and before going, he asked us to pay him 100 RMB (\$14.75) as a deposit. He said that this would be returned to us as long as we worked until the 28<sup>th</sup>. However, when we worked until the 28<sup>th</sup>, he did not return the deposit to us, and said he did not receive the money and told us not to chase him for it. This is his number: 13838279956.

At that time, they also had us pay 250 RMB (\$37) for transportation expenses to Ningbo, and passed us over to another agent named Yu Xiaochuan. He asked us to pay another 100 RMB (\$14.75) as a deposit. We are students, how on earth do we have this much money?! They want a deposit for this, and then a deposit for that, and if we don't pay the deposit, they will not let us enter the factory. They did not arrange dormitories for us, and at that time, we waited outside for a very, very long time. It was raining outside the whole time, we didn't bring umbrellas, and there was nowhere to take shelter from the rain. Because of this sort of oppression, we could only choose to pay the 100 RMB (\$14.75) deposit, and we went to the dormitories at around 7pm. We opened the door to the dormitories, and I will remember the state that the room was in for the rest of my life. The room was in shambles, and it appeared as though no one had lived there before. The bed, air-conditioning and even the fans were broken. There was only one electrical socket, and our phones had run out of batteries, so we couldn't even inform our family that we were safe. The bed was terrible, and when you sit on it, it felt like it was about to collapse. Every time you wanted to go to sleep, you needed someone to hold onto the bed, as we were afraid that the bed would be slanted. The bed itself was extremely dirty, and the bed was made of iron, and all the paint had come off. At around 8pm, we went somewhere quite far to buy a small quilt. I'm not just trying to complain. We are working for someone else, we are able to accept some issues. But are they able to pay us the full amount of our hard earned money?

We officially began work on July 8<sup>th</sup>, and because they knew we were here for summer work, the workshop manager specifically started a new production line for student workers to produce the 6200 fryer/grill. This was to be shipped internationally, and they said that as long as we were able to reach the specified production quantity, we could finish work early. Our work load increased every day, and on one day, we were expected to finish 1600 products. This was more products than what senior employees in other lines had to produce. They said that there would be no overtime, however, sometimes we worked overtime until 11pm. We are on holidays, but we are humans as well! It is so obvious that this is unfair, our wages are lower than others, earning 9RMB/hour (\$1.33/hour), and we were told we would receive a meal allowance of 8RMB (\$1.18) a day, but we didn't receive anything. For senior employees, they have meals of 3 dishes and 1 soup, and there's even meat. For us, we don't have money, so we can only eat instant noodles, and there are some women in our dormitories that can't afford to even eat cup noodles, they only eat steamed buns. They ate this for 2 months, and there were even some men who told us that they

were never full. No matter how difficult the circumstances, or how often we are bullied by senior employees, we will persevere. This is to ensure that we are able to receive what we deserve.

We worked until 28<sup>th</sup>, and because we had to begin school immediately, we resigned and went home. They had not paid us anything, and told us that they would pay us at the end of the month. We did receive payment at the end of the month, and they paid us for wages in July. I received 2370 RMB (\$349.68), when I actually worked 23 days in July, and had 85 overtime hours. I shouldn't have received such a small amount! We called them, and they said they hadn't paid us the meal allowance, and would send it next month, we didn't say anything and waited until the end of the next month. They paid us our wages, and when I saw the amount, I was so surprised that I received 1800 RMB (\$265.58), when I had worked 25.5 days in August, and clocked in 103 overtime hours. In addition, I also needed to be paid the meal allowance for 48.5 days, so I shouldn't have been paid such a small amount, I was paid 1000 RMB (\$147.54) less. At that time, I blanked out, why was I paid so little? Some of the students at Wuhan sent a message to the Weibo, hoping someone would see this and help us out. Cuori saw the message, and said that the wages were all paid to the labor agency, and the labor agency told us something else, and ultimately wouldn't pay us. In the end, as the impact of the situation was relatively large, Cuori was afraid that it would affect the reputation of the company, so they were prepared to pay us the meal allowance. However, they only paid some workers, some of us are yet to receive the payment. We called Cuori, and they said they would take care of it, however, on the second day, we couldn't get through to them, and until now, we still can't get through to speaking with them. I don't know where their integrity is, whether it is Cuori Group or the labor agency, I don't really care what the agreement between them was. However, if it's our wages, you should us our wages. We are only students. We only want to earn money to cover our school fees, and we are also humans. If your children encounter this sort of situation, won't you feel heartbroken? We are also our parent's treasures.

Name: Ming

Work Number: 9516049738

Number: 187391776XX

Work Days: 48.5 days

Work hours: 576 hours (including overtime hours)

Deposit: 100 RMB (\$14.75)

Utilities: 121.25 RMB (\$17.89)

Meal Allowance: 388 RMB (\$57.25)

Total wages: 7588 RMB (12.5 RMB/hour) \$1119.56 (\$1.84/hr)

Wages received: 4270 RMB (\$630.01)

Deducting utilities, there is a difference of 3196.75 RMB (\$471.66, not including the deposit)

#### 4. Li

I'm Li Wanli. Thanks for your time to listen to my painful experience.

We firstly paid the student representative (of the labor agency) 250 RMB for transportation. In the evening of July 4<sup>th</sup> after the final exam, we convened in front of the college gate. The student representative asked us to pay a 100 RMB security deposit that was requested by an agent-Li Bing, so we paid him the deposit.

At about 8pm, we got on board and departed for Ningbo, Zhejiang Province. We arrived there at around 3pm on July fifth. As we approaching there, an ageng-Yu Xiaochuan got on the bus and told us that as long as we adhered to the regulation when leaving the factory, our wages wouldn't be deducted. Getting off the bus, Yu Xiaochuan asked the student representative to charge us another 100 RMB as security deposit and promised to return to us as long as we worked there until August 28<sup>th</sup>. In total, we paid 450 RMB. Then, we went to the dormitory and finished the relevant procedures with enrollment, and started working on the 8<sup>th</sup>. However, coming as a surprise to us, instead of working 11 hours a day, we worked at least 12 hours a day, and sometimes even put up to 13 hours and a half. They promised that food and accommodation were included, but they did not pay us food subsidy and we had to spend the money brought from home. In July, it was very hot in the factory, and with only a small fan, we kept sweating all day.

In August, the labor agency said they would pay part of the wage in July, but they did not. Until finishing work at night on the 27<sup>th</sup> and went back home on the 28<sup>th</sup>, we did not see even a penny. We asked the labor agency whether they would deducte our wage, and we got the answer that they wouldn't. However, I was shocked to see that I was deducted more than 1000 RMB when I received my wage. We asked Zhang Hong and Hu Zhifeng, representatives of the labor agency Jueqitiancheng, and Yu Xiaochuan, representative of a Zhuoli's labor agency-Anzhi for food subsidy, deducted wage and security deposit, but they always procrastinated. Zhuoli was aware of this situation and promised to handle this issue, but we never heard back. After our continuous efforts, some of us have received food subsidy and a part of the security deposit, but the wage deducted and some security deposit has not been returned to us. I have not received my deducted wage and the security deposit of 100 RMB paid to Li Bing.

I knew that labor agencies made money from us, but they went too far. They did not even pay us the full wage to guarantee our living. I suffered a lot while working there and thought for many times to give up. Nevertheless, I persisted, just to share some financial burden with my parents. While working there, my hands were wore to , my fingerprints were removed, my fingers and arms were cut and bleed. The temperature was high in the factory, and I just kept sweating all day. My hands and arms were always dirty. Because we did not have time to rest, sometimes I even chose not to have meals just to have more rest. However, I never thought it would end like this. It was heard breaking to have such a shocking first work experience.



I'm really angry with these labor agencies. If we do not fight back, they would only become worse. However, I'm only a college student and do not have much experience. I do not know how to deal with this issue. I hope you can help us get our wages back. Thanks very much!

Name: Li

Work ID:9616049732

Cell Phone:187391370XX



## 5. Yang: My summer job experience

In the two months of summer vacation, I wanted to go and earn some pocket money. Through a recommendation from a friend, I paid a 100 RMB (\$14.75) fee to sign up to Hui Chu Human Resources Company. At that time, they told us they would arrange for us to go to a company in Shenzhen. They also said that the salary was over 5000 RMB (\$737.72), and there would be free accommodation. However, the day before we went, we were told that we weren't going to Shenzhen, instead, we would be going to Zhejiang. They said that the reason was that our holidays had begun too late, and Shenzhen no longer needed any summer vacation workers.

Only July 6<sup>th</sup> we met at Wuhan Vocational Technical Institute, and we took a bus arranged by the labor agency, and went to Ningbo Cuori Electrical Appliances Group. We arrive at the factory entrance on the 7<sup>th</sup>, and someone called Yu Xiaochuan took over. He said he was from "Anzhi Human Resources Company", and was in charge of student workers. He then led us inside the factory. We were taken an office inside, and someone else also appeared, and his name was Zhang Hong. Zhang Hong introduced himself and said he was from "Jue Qi Ltd. Co." and that he was responsible for student workers, as such, would be in charge of our dormitories and procedures related to employment at the factory. At night, we paid 100 RMB (\$14.75) in administrative fees for the accommodation, and then we entered the factory's dormitories. We sat for a whole night on the bus, and were tossed about for a long time, my head was spinning and I was physically exhausted. I did not have the strength and energy to think about whether there were any hidden secrets in this.

On the 8<sup>th</sup>, we had our factory cards created and our fingerprints were taken. We officially entered the factory to work on July 10. We were randomly assigned to different workshops, and the workshop manager distributed us across different lines to work. On each line, there were different ovens to be produced. I was assigned to the number 3 line of workshop 3, and at first, I merely did odd jobs such as cleaning, coating silicone gel and wiping the ovenware. The work was relaxed, but the work hours were quite long. Within a few days, I was assigned to the pre-processing position, and my work here was not set. You have to do as you are told by the line leader, such as threading, putting on screws, putting on the electric hot plate, there were all sorts of work. Like senior employees, we woke up at 6am every day and officially started work at 7am, and finished work at 9.30pm. Under normal circumstances, we would work 12 hours a day, and if we do not reach the production quota, we would have to work overtime and there is no limit to this. We worked day after day, and we were like robots. Every day there was always someone who couldn't deal with the high work load, so they decided to leave. Later, they realized that this was the correct choice.

In July/August, the hottest two months of the year, there was no air-conditioning, and with so many people, there was only hot air blowing from the fans. We were working like machine every day, were told off by line leaders and were ordered about by senior employees. I don't know what the impetus to continue was. In the end, I worked until the end of August.



On August 25<sup>th</sup>, we were preparing to undergo the resignation procedures, however, the line leader rejected our resignation form. Without the resignation form, we aren't able to leave. If we do leave then this would be regarded as improper resignation, and there would be fees deducted. In the end, a representative from the labor agency asked us to give him the factory card and he would help us with the resignation procedures. At that time, we asked him whether or not this was regarded as normal resignation, and if they would deduct our wages, and he said there were no fees. He seemed convincing, so we trusted him, gave him our factory cards and left.

At the end of August, I received wages for July, and other than some deductions for utilities, the wages in July were correct. At the end of September, I received wages for August which were 1000 RMB (\$147.54) less than what I should have received. When I asked them, they told me that I hadn't finished my work, so they made deductions to my wages, when they showed me records of my work hours, there were wrong. The 8 RMB/day (\$1.18/day) meal allowance and the accommodation administrative fee which they spoke about previously was not paid to me. In the end, they did not pick up our phone calls. Until now, they still have not paid us our full wages, and I feel really helpless. I will never find a labor agency, they cheated us, and left us speechless!

Name: Yang

Work ID: 9616049960

## 6. Yang

I am a worker who was arranged to go to Ningbo Cixi Cuori to work over the Summer in 2016. On June 25, after vacation began, because I was unable to find a suitable job in Wuhan, I went with a few friends who were also unemployed to find a summer job. I had a friend, who, at that time was a representative of the labor agency, and because I thought he was reliable, I went along with them. As my other friends began vacation on July 5<sup>th</sup>, I waited, so I could go together with them on the bus to Ningbo for a summer job. Through my friend, I had signed up at the Cuori Labor Dispatch Company in Shenzhen, however, when it was close to my friend's vacation, we were told that we couldn't go to Shenzhen as it was full. We could only go to Zhejiang Yida Electronic factory, however, we had already bought food for the trip, and other daily supplies. We were there about to leave anyway, so we could only agree to go to Zhejiang Yida. At that time, the labor agency told us that for the job, we would have one rest day during the weekend, and work hours would not exceed 10 hours a day, and meals and accommodation would be covered. Upon hearing these conditions which seemed normal to us, we decided to go. At first, we paid 300 RMB for the transportation expenses, and my friends also paid 100 RMB for fees relating to determining our posts. I didn't pay, as I joined a bit later. As we were boarding the bus, the labor agency said that there were some changes, that we had to work 12 hours a day which includes meal times, however, meals were not covered and we would instead receive an 8 RMB meal allowance. We had already boarded the bus by then, and had already paid the transportation fee, and I thought about whether we still wanted to go, however there weren't many jobs in Wuhan. We decided to go.

We sat on the bus for the whole night, and after 15 hours, the bus with around 50 or 60 people arrive at the entrance of Cuoxi Cuori group. Despite arriving, they did not immediately let us enter the factory, and we instead, waited outside. A representative from the labor agency (Yu Xiaochuan) was outside, and told us many times that when we go inside, we cannot say that we are here for summer work, and said that they were not responsible for anything. When we asked about wages, Yu Xiaochuan said that our wages would be settled altogether on the day we leave, and wages would not be paid in arrears. He said that our wages would be paid at the rate of 9 RMB/hour. We would need to pay 100 RMB as an administrative fee for the dormitory (in fact, this so-called administrative fee of 100 RMB for the dormitories which is to be paid to companies, doesn't actually exist). We were told that we would have to work until the 28<sup>th</sup> to have this fee returned to us and the meal allowance is 8 RMB a day. We were unable to accept some of the conditions, and there were some who were unhappy about it, and subsequently left. However, we'd already arrived, especially from somewhere quite far away, and had spent a few hundred dollars, so giving up now wouldn't make sense. Therefore, the majority of people accepted these conditions. At that time, we were foolish enough to believe them. After, we even asked him when wages would be paid. Yu Xiaochuan at that time,

replied saying that wages would be paid once a month.

At around 1pm or 2pm, they led us into the factory, and we were taken to undergo training. There was someone, who was apparently was a representative from the factory, who asked us if there was anyone who was willing to work in the workshop with high temperatures. He said that the wages were higher, 10 RMB/hour, and said that it was better if boys go because they could endure the conditions. At that time, they arranged the boys in many groups, and we waited until 5 or 6pm until they arranged our dormitories. On the second day, we signed the labor contract, and they kept one copy. They only allowed us to choose the method of payment for wages and bank cards, and to fill in our personal information such as our name and ID number. They did not arrange for us to start work that day, and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, we still had not begun work. They had already told us the working conditions, we had given them our IDs so that we could receive our factory cards, had been assigned to our workshops, and had our fingerprints recorded. However, we still did not begin work that day. On the 4<sup>th</sup> day, we went to the factory, and were allocated work in the second and third workshops. I was in the first workshop, and in that workshop, the manager told us to go home and return the next day. I went home by myself, whilst my other friends went to work.

After working for a period of time, we heard from some senior workers that the conditions at the factory were at least 12 hour working days, with two days of rest per month. It goes without saying that the work intensity is quite high, some had worked for a few days and couldn't take the work load, and chose to leave. The factory regularly has overtime work. Working 13 hours a day is quite common, and because I was lucky, I was not assigned to these workshops and instead was assigned to a small workshop next to an office. However, the work hours were no less, and there was once where we were rushing to finish, and the factory leader needed us to work overtime until 12. On the second day, we went to work as per usual. There was once where there was an inspection at the factory and we were told to say that we worked 8 hours a day, and had weekends off and we were not to tell them the actual conditions. The factory had a lot of workers from various locations who were here for summer vacation, and some summer workers did not earn much. After working for over 10 days, they had only received a few hundred RMB and their wages were 12 RMB/hour. We panicked at that time, and continuously called Yu Xiaochuan to ask about the issues with wages, and after a few days, he came to the factory. This time, he said that as long as we work until the 28<sup>th</sup>, there would definitely be no problems with our wages, and that we would receive our wages on the day we left. Someone asked about insurance, and he said that the company would help us purchase insurance and we shouldn't worry about it. He went on talking for a bit, telling us not to worry about it. If there are any issues with wages, he would definitely help us out. At that time I didn't want to work anymore. My friends said that we're here working already, and if we leave now, we definitely wouldn't receive our wages. Because of this, we toiled until the end of August.

I worked until August 24<sup>th</sup> and on the 25<sup>th</sup> I went to ask for leave, as Yu Xiaochuan, the representative had told us. We would have half of the administrative fee (50 RMB) returned to us. As school was starting, we could not work until the 28<sup>th</sup>. Afterwards, we returned the factory card to the representatives from the labor agency. They said that they would be able to undergo the normal resignation procedures and there would be no fees for this, after we asked them specifically. We then returned home. When we received our wages at the end of August, the amount seemed correct, and we remember that they had deducted 50 RMB and we thought this was for utilities, so we thought there were no issues with the wages in July. However, at the end of September, we saw that 1000 RMB had been deducted, and some of us didn't even receive any wages. We did not receive the food allowance, nor did we have the dormitory fee refunded to us. We spoke to Cuori Dispatch Company on many occasions, and they said that we had not worked until the 28<sup>th</sup>, as such, the factory deducted 150,000 RMB from them, and they had no choice but to deduct this amount and share it amongst us. As for the food allowance, because they had not received our timesheet when we left, they were not able to pay the allowance to us. They asked us to give them some time, as they would go to Ningbo to speak with them.

A month has passed already, and they have been shifting the factory and dispatch company have been shifting the responsibility onto each other. Previously, I received 1217.5 RMB less than what I was supposed to receive, which includes the meal allowance and dormitory fees. I called many times, and Cuori Labor Dispatch Company's (Ningbo Jueqi Tiancheng Trading Co., Ltd) boss told me that they would pay the meal allowance to us on behalf of Ning Bo Anzhi Human Resources Co., Ltd, another branch of Cuori. The meal allowance would be paid to us on Wednesday. In addition, Jueqi's boss Hu Zhifeng, asked us to send him evidence that they had paid our meal allowance on behalf of Anzhi. But we didn't even receive the meal allowance. Afterwards, we realized that a lot of student workers we were working with had not receive the meal allowance. Only a portion of the workers had received it.

When we first applied for the position, they knew about our situation, and had promised us that the wages would be paid in full, and would not be anything less. If there were any deductions, it would be from the labor agency. Afterwards, we saw that there were wages deducted, and we called Cuori. Cuori said that they hadn't deducted anything from us. We called the manager, and he said that he wanted us to Weibo, because no deductions had been made to our wages. They reassured us that they would help us out with recovering our wages. However, currently, nothing has occurred. In addition, at the Cuori factory, we faced many issues such as excessive overtime which wasn't counted as work, and when it was very hot, we still had to work overtime. Apparently, when accidents occur at the factory, the factory will not bear any responsibility.





Cuori Labor Dispatch Company includes Wuhan Huichu Talent Enterprise Management Consulting Co., Ltd, Ningbo Jueqi Tiancheng Trading Co., Ltd.

Ning Bo Anzhi Human Resources Co., Ltd contact: Yu Xiaochuan

Ningbo Jueqi Tiancheng Trading Co., Ltd: Zhang Hong, Hu Zhifeng

In total, both Cuori Ningbo Labor Dispatch Companies (Anzhi and Jueqi) owe us around 100,000 RMB

Name: Yang

Contact: 159719254XX

## 7. Liang

I'm a college student in Henan Province. In July this summer we had an agreement with (the labor agency) to work in Suzhou. Nevertheless, one day before departure, we were told that we would be sent to Ningbo. I and my friends in the same college came to Cuori to work as summer employees. The labor agency-Jueqitiancheng promised that they would be responsible for everything and asked us to pay a 100 RMB accommodation fee, which would be returned to us if we worked there until August 28<sup>th</sup>.

They asked us to pretend as full-time employees and threatened that we must be responsible for all consequences if the factory knew that we were summer employees (so that they could deduct our money). Then, they cajoled us into signing a contract. We enrolled on July 7<sup>th</sup> and started working immediately. They initially said the hourly wage was 9 RMB and 12 RMB for overtime, and we would work 8 hour a day. Nevertheless, we worked more than 13 hours a day, and in three occasions, we had overtime after 12am. What was worse, the record only indicated work before 9:30pm, and thus we had no rest and no overtime pay neither. And sick leave would not be approved.

Working with sickness would influence the speed of the whole production line, and if we were threatened by line leaders with fines if we were late for work or disobeyed them. I got all sorts of small injuries, but I could only put on a bondage and continue to work. In the last week, I was assigned to the ware house. I thought this should be much easier. However, working in a closed space with five or six colleagues with only two fans, my clothes were never dry.

My living expense was from my parents. During the fifty days at Cuori, I only rested for two days. There should have been two addition days for rest, but because in the labor contracts with Cuori we agreed to work 300 hours each month, we had to work at a die-casting department, which was very hot, for two days to meet this requirement. Initially they promised there would be an overtime pay of 200 RMB each month, but they did not pay us. The food allowance of 8 RMB each day was not paid to us either. I wanted to leave but I couldn't, because when I asked, they would threaten to deduct the security deposit of 450 RMB. They agreed to not deduct our money, but until today, October 25<sup>th</sup>, They still owe me 1500 RMB for August's wage, not to mention the food allowance. (as far as I know, the security deposit of 450 RMB will never be returned to us, regardless how they would do with our wage) All what I said above is true and based on evidence. According to them, we are easy targets for bullying, and it does not matter if they do not pay us the food allowance.

Name: Liang Guoying

Work ID: 96160497XX Baking pan department I

Cell phone: 15936673360

## 8. Tian

I found a summer job from a labor agency which was introduced to me by another student. On July 4th after I had finished my exams, I took a rest for a day and on the night of July 5th, I took a bus to Ningbo. At first, we were told that we would be going to Ningbo. We would work 8 hours a day, wages were 10 RMB/hour, and any addition time would be counted as overtime. The overtime pay was 12 RMB and we were not told about the sort of work we would be doing. I also paid a 300 RMB transportation expense. We arrived at Cuori Electrical Factory on the second day at noon, and it wasn't even located in Ningbo. On the bus, we were told that we would work 12 hours a day, and receive 9 RMB/hour, and an 8 RMB meal allowance. We were very angry, but then we thought about the fact that we'd arrived here anyway, we may as well earn some pocket money. We didn't go home and decided to work hard.

We then paid a pre-work fee of 100 RMB. The employment procedures were still not completed by the afternoon, so we could only have our dormitories allocated and then proceed with the employment procedures after. It took 2.5 days for the employment procedures to be completed and then we could start work. On the 9th, we begun work on the assembly line, and worked for around 12 hours a day, only receiving 9 RMB/hour. We worked overtime almost every day. We worked for half a month and realized that we were short of money, so we wanted to apply at the labor dispatch company for an advance payment of our wages. They told us that they would handle this for us, but until now, we ended up with nothing. In August, the factory told us that summer workers must work until the 25th, or else there would be wages deducted. I worked until the 25th accordingly, and when it was close to the 25th the manager told us that workers from Jueqi (Labor Dispatch company) were long-term workers and would not be allowed to resign. I then called a representative from the dispatch company, Zhang Hong, and he said that it would be fine, as long as I just undergo the normal resignation procedures. I asked if they would deduct wages and he said no. Now, I have less work hours and had wages deducted.

In July, I worked for 21 days, for a total of 247 hours and received 2177 RMB. I then called Jueqi and asked them why I hadn't received the meal allowance. They said that this would be paid together with the meal allowance for August. However, in August, they only paid me 1890 RMB. They did not pay me the meal allowance and I had also received 715 RMB less than what I was supposed to receive. I called again, and the labor dispatch company said that utilities were around 100-200 RMB and the 450 RMB. They said that the factory had deducted money from them, they could only share these deductions amongst us. In August, I had worked 25 days with a total of 289.5 work hours, and should have received 2605.5 RMB. After we made a scene, the dispatch company paid us the meal allowance, which amounted to 268 RMB. However, they still made deductions to our wages. They think students don't know anything, so they can bully us, and that there weren't many regulations protecting students so they could deduct our wages.