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GSU Students, Faculty Explore China’s Business and Culture

University Park, Ill., July 17, 2012 - Governors State University students and faculty experienced China's rapidly expanding economy during a recent two-week trip that included tours of Chinese corporations, a visit with business students, and participation in an international trade show in Shanghai.

GSU's entourage consisted of 16 undergraduate and graduate students, two College of Business and Public Administration (CBPA) faculty members, one CBPA advisory board member, and two family members. Most student participants were enrolled in a special topics course, "Business and the Culture of China," taught by Management Professor Jun Zhao.

"Our students got to talk to people in China about how their businesses work," said Dr. Zhao, who organized the tour. "That's different from reading about the Chinese economy in a book or magazine cover story."

After arriving in China, students and faculty had a full agenda. In Beijing, they visited the U.S. Embassy and the National Institute of Clean and Low Carbon Energy. They toured Chiatai Qingchunbao Pharmaceutical Co. and Wanxiang Group in Hangzhou, and American Medical Center and C&U Group in Shanghai.

The group also traveled to Zhejiang Gongshang University in Hangzhou, meeting with MBA students and listening to presentations by a business professor and a local entrepreneur.

In Shanghai, GSU's group attended the Transport and Logistics Trade Show, a biennial event drawing more than 450 businesses from around the world. Students worked with eight Illinois businesses, helping them promote their products and services. "It was a great way for our students to learn how international corporations operate," Dr. Zhao said.

One GSU student made such a good impression at the Transport and Logistics expo that she was offered a job by the company she worked for at the trade show. She expects to begin the job in December, Dr. Zhao said.

The trip also included sightseeing and cultural tours. Group members visited the Great Wall, Forbidden City, and Ming Tomb in Beijing; the Terra Cotta Warrior Museum and Great Mosque in Xi'an; and other famous attractions.

Dr. Zhao said the Illinois Office of Trade and Investment and GSU's International Trade Center were instrumental in developing contacts in China and organizing trip activities. Financial support for the trip was provided by the GSU Foundation, Indiana University CIBER, and GSU Student Life.