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For Immediate Release

Directors of GSU International Trade Center Attends White House Forum on Asian Trade

University Park, Illinois, May 31, 2013 - Hongxia (Mary) Ma, director of the Illinois International Trade Center at Governors State University, recently participated in the "Doing Business in Asia" forum at the White House in Washington, D.C.

"It was a great experience to attend the event at the White House," Ma said. "I am honored to be the only representative from the SBA Illinois International Trade Center to attend this important event."

Dr. Ellen Foster Curtis, Dean of GSU's College of Business and Public Administration, thanked Ma for attending the White House forum and praised her work at the International Trade Center. "This is a great honor for you, the ITC, and the University and is a tribute to all of the great work you have done in expanding exports from Illinois," Dr. Foster Curtis said.

During the forum, Ma said, she explained the work of the International Trade Center at GSU, which helps clients throughout the Chicago area increase their trade opportunities with China and other Asian nations.

"About 80 percent of U.S. businesses are small and medium sized, but currently only 1 percent of them are doing exports," Ma said. "Our ITC is committed to providing strong assistance to support small business exports and to strengthen their capability to compete with the global giants in the world market. The Asian Pacific economies represent approximately 2.7 billion consumers, 58 percent of global income, and 48 percent of the world’s trade in goods. There is a great potential export market for U.S. businesses."

"Doing Business in Asia" was attended by more than 80 U.S. executives currently doing business or interested in exporting to that region. Executives were told that U.S. economic leadership in the region is critical in rebalancing trade.

Representatives from the Department of Commerce, the Department of State, and the U.S. Trade Representative’s Office spoke about the record level of $2.2 trillion in annual exports achieved under the President's National Export Initiative. They described how agencies are working together to help U.S. exporters expand to international markets through market information, advocacy, and programs that connect U.S. companies with in-country resources.

Governors State University is located at 1 University Parkway, University Park, Illinois.