



TIEC GAZETTE

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More About TIEC...

Overview

A unique association of 32 public universities in Texas

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TIEC Global Programs

Trip to Korea and Japan Lays Groundwork For Revitalized International Partnerships

TIEC President Ronald Aqua recently spent several days each in Korea and Japan to explore opportunities for further strengthening and building upon TIEC's existing institutional relationships. The Gazette talked with Dr. Aqua upon his return.



Shown above meeting with Dr. Aqua are, left to right, Dr. Hee Yhon Song, Chairman, Asia Development Institute (Seoul), who is championing the concept of Korea as a hub for knowledge-based service industries in northeast Asia; Dr. Choong-Yong Ahn, Foreign Investment Ombudsman, Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), whose office seeks to promote a positive investment climate for foreign companies in Korea; and, at Nihon University's College of International Relations (Mishima, Japan), Prof. Akira Takahashi, Director, International Exchange Committee; Dr. Saburo Sato, Dean; and Mr. Yoji Nishigaya, Chief, Academic Affairs Office.

Gazette: *Why did you select Korea and Japan for your visit?*

Dr. Aqua: Education has always been a high priority in East Asia, and over the years TIEC's 32 member universities as well as our own Texas Intensive English Program (TIEP) have welcomed thousands of students to our state from both Korea and Japan. TIEC has also been conducting professional development programs for teachers from throughout the Asia-Pacific region for some time now.

Gazette: *What were your goals for this trip?*

Dr. Aqua: Both of these countries are facing great economic challenges. But financial uncertainties also present new opportunities, and I felt that this might be a propitious time to build upon our past successes. In particular, I wanted to explore ways to broaden the scope of our academic exchanges while also drawing a more diverse group of people and institutions into our activities.

Gazette: *How would you accomplish this?*

Dr. Aqua: Between TIEC (including TIEP) and its affiliated institutions, we have fantastic resources here in Texas. There is much we have to offer, ranging from affordable and high-quality study abroad opportunities to advanced graduate training in many specialized fields to cutting-edge collaborative research involving our state's dynamic high-technology sector. TIEC is looking for growth opportunities in all of these areas, and what better place to start than with two of our closest overseas partners?

Gazette: *Whom did you meet and what did you discuss?*

Dr. Aqua: I had a very busy trip, meeting with academic leaders at public and private universities, representatives of non-profit organizations and government agencies, as well as some of our existing

partners in the student advising field. So I saw a good cross-section of people, institutions, and resources, and there seemed to be a lot of interest in forming new alliances with TIEC and Texas universities. Wherever I went, I was careful to stress that we are not necessarily looking for "quick wins" or ambitious new programs; rather, we are hoping to begin small and build incrementally, a model for new business development that I have termed "sustainable growth."

Gazette: *How would programs like these benefit TIEC's member universities?*

Dr. Aqua: Universities that want to extend their reach overseas don't always know where to start, and they don't always have the financial resources to launch programs on their own. TIEC can help to coordinate the flow of useful information and pool resources—this is part of our reason for being—so that no single institution has to go it alone and face the risk of becoming overextended.

Gazette: *What would be the benefits for students and educators in East Asia?*

Dr. Aqua: For countries such as Korea, whose currency relative to the dollar has dropped almost 30 percent since last summer, the benefits could include more opportunities to participate in high-quality American-led training programs locally rather than have to deal with higher-cost international travel. Japan, on the other hand, faces other challenges, such as the rapid "graying" of its population and the resulting growth in demand for lifelong learning opportunities. Most American institutions have been watching these developments from the sidelines. A "sustainable growth" model, however, could allow for some new initiatives in each country tailored to specific local needs.

TIEP Programs for Educators

Chilean Teachers Learn From Many Classrooms

Six high school teachers who came to Austin from Chile for two weeks in February took home not only lessons in American culture and methodologies for teaching English from the Texas Intensive English Program (TIEP) but also first-hand observations from a local high school program that focuses on global education.

"For me as a teacher, having the experience to see a different school system with my own eyes (because I knew about it, but it's different to 'see' it) was interesting," wrote Andrea Espinoza Tapia. "It made me wonder if that's possible to make here in Chile, for example classroom organization, technology resources in the classroom itself and even decoration."

The visit to the Academy for Global Studies at Austin High School was one of a number of extracurricular activities for the teachers participating in the American Studies Institute-English Language and American Culture Program for Teachers of English, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Other activities included visits to the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, an evening at the traditional Texas dance hall The Broken Spoke, a trip to the nearby city of San Antonio, and an overnight stay with an Austin family.

In-class activities included sections on American heritage, values and beliefs, diversity, education, business, government, and the family—as well as a "micro-teaching project" in which the attendees demonstrated teaching techniques to their colleagues.



Chilean teachers of English visited the campus of The University of Texas at Austin during their two-week study at TIEP.

Japanese and Americans Learn From Each Other

For the 15 students from Japan's Nihon University, Mishima Campus, who studied at TIEP for four weeks in February and March, learning from their classroom teachers provided the solid foundation they need for expanding their knowledge of written and spoken English. Learning from American college students, however, may have been the most unique part of both expanding their capabilities with the language and immersing themselves in American culture.



In addition to four hours a day in class, living with an American family, and extracurricular trips and activities across Texas, the students participated three afternoons a week in a conversation exchange group with Americans studying Japanese at The University of Texas at Austin.

"It was fun for me," wrote Mai Aoki at the end of the term. "UT students and I talked about each hometown, favorite food, music, major, and family. I talked about these in English, and they corrected my mistakes. And I taught them Japanese. My most special experience is that I made friends. I didn't have any foreign friends in Japan, so I wanted to make foreign friends in America."

For more information on custom-designed programs available through the Texas Intensive English Program, visit http://www.tiec.org/tiep/program_custom.php