HPER Strengthens Links to China

This spring, a high-level delegation of sports education administrators from the People's Republic of China paid a week-long visit to IU's School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER) in Bloomington.

The delegation was part of an ongoing program of short-term exchanges that was first worked out in the spring of 1989 between HPER and the Beijing University of Physical Education (BUPE), China's most prestigious institute for sports education. According to HPER Dean Tony Mobley, the linkage came about through the early efforts of Chi Chienhong, an important sports administrator from Taiwan with strong ties to the People's Republic of China who has been an important contact for HPER.

The group was headed by Ma Qingyong, director of the Sports Science & Physical Education Department of the All-China Sports Federation and deputy secretary general of the Chinese Olympic Committee. He was accompanied by President Jin Ji-Chun of the Beijing University of Physical Education; Zhu Peilan, division chief of the Sports Science & Education Department; Pan Zhichen, deputy director for the Division of the Physical Education Institution Administration overseeing all university physical education degree programs; and Gao Yuanyi, deputy chief for the General Office of the Department of Participation Sports.

According to the Chinese, a visit to China by IU's great swimming coach, Doc Councilman, now retired, was the prime event that led to training Chinese swimmers by more scientific methods, thereby improving their competitive edge.

Over the past few years, several IU faculty have collaborated closely with BUPE colleagues on research, teaching, and consulting. Barbara Hawkins (Recreation & Park Administration) and Susan Eklund (IU Center on Aging & the Aged) worked with BUPE professor Yang Jingyi and another colleague from Australia on lifestyle factors and health outcomes among older adults in China. Faculty members of HPER's Applied Health division James Crowe, Mohammed Torabi, and Nangnoy Nakornkhet worked with BUPE's Wang Anli to conduct a cross-cultural study of the attitudes, knowledge, and behavior of U.S. and Chinese adolescent smokers, showing the all-important influence of the family in the resulting patterns of difference between the two populations.

On the Chinese side, more than 25 visitors, including government officials, university administrators, researchers, educators, and entrepreneurs have come to consult at IU since the linkage was established. The agreement also provides for BUPE students to study and train at HPER. Current graduate student Pan Zhiwei, who is pursuing his master's in Recreation & Park Administration, has frequently acted as the interpreter for these visits and during this last meeting, he helped host his older brother, Pan Zhichen, a member of the April delegation.

One of the goals of the delegation was to introduce Beijing University of Physical Education President Jin, here on his first visit, to HPER administrators and faculty. The delegation met with David Gallahue, Harold Morris, Daniel McLean, and Lynn Jamieson, renewed their ties with Crowe and Hawkins, and toured some of IU's sports facilities and laboratories.

The Chinese delegation also spoke with Brian Winchester (Center for the Study of Global Change) on the possibilities of distance education.

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This photo from 1989 shows Tony Mobely (second from right) accompanied by Chi Chienhong (second from left) in Beijing to sign the original agreement with BUPE's then-president, Yang Fulu (right) and two former BUPE presidents, Wang Shian (left) and Zhang Shitong (center).
IU's Puri Ranks Among World's Top Statisticians

A recent survey by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, has ranked Madan L. Puri (Mathematics, IUB) fourth most prolific statistician in the world. Among statisticians in universities, such as IU, which do not have a separate department of statistics, he is ranked first.

Puri has published more than 200 research articles on statistics, probability, and mathematics, coauthored two advanced research monographs, and edited or coedited proceedings at nine international conferences in the United States, Europe and Japan.

The international scope of Puri's career is truly impressive. A fellow of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics, the American Statistical Association, and the Royal Statistical Society, Puri is an elected member of the International Statistical Institute and has twice received the Senior U.S. Scientist Award of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

Puri has been honored by the government of the Federal Republic of Germany “in recognition of past achievements in research and teaching,” and has also been invited by the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Sciences to visit Japan under its Visiting Professorship Program, to conduct cooperative research with Japanese scientists. In 1991, Puri was distinguished visitor in the London School of Economics and Political Science at the University of London, England. His visit was sponsored by the Suntory-Toyota International Center for Economics and Related Disciplines.

This year, the Citizen Ambassador Program of People to People International has invited Puri to lead a delegation of 25 professionals specializing in statistics to visit the People's Republic of China in October. The delegation will exchange information and ideas with Chinese counterparts and obtain firsthand impressions of the statistical information system of China.

Last year, Puri was presented with a book, Research Developments in Probability and Statistics: Festschrift in Honor of Madan L. Puri on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday. The editors of the book, professors Manfred Denker and Edgar Brunner of the University of Göttingen, Germany, came to Bloomington to present the book. Fifty-two authors from around the world wrote articles in honor of Puri.

A graduate of the University of California at Berkeley (Ph.D.) and Punjab University in India (D.Sc.), Puri came to IUB as a full professor in 1968 from the world renowned Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences, New York University. He has held visiting professorships at numerous universities in Auckland, New Zealand; Berne, Switzerland; Göteborg, Sweden; and Göttingen, Germany.

Puri's research at IU has been supported by several federal agencies for sums totalling more than $1.2 million.

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technology and with Richard E. Stryker regarding overseas study student exchanges.

Ma and his colleagues were especially eager to explore possibilities for developing a new curricular program concentrating on community sports and recreation. Such a program would be consistent with the Chinese government's commitment to promote recreational sports among the general populace through the “National Sport For All Project.”

During their week here, the members of the Chinese delegation worked out the basis for Lynn Jamieson's (Recreation & Park Administration) trip to Beijing in May-June to set up a pilot course on the philosophy and management of recreational sports.

Jamieson taught the intensive course with the help of a BUPE colleague acting as interpreter. The community sports and recreation curriculum will eventually include courses on leisure and recreation, recreational programming, leadership techniques, and administration.

As increasing numbers of international students come to Bloomington to continue their studies in the areas of allied health, kinesiology, and recreation and park administration, the numbers of international students from the People's Republic of China will also continue to grow.

— RMN

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written partially while he was in Bloomington as a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study. More recently, he helped to initiate a joint agreement between IUP and the Finnish Academy of Sciences to publish a series of edited volumes, “Acta Semiotica Fennica.”

His publications—approximately 300 books and articles about semiotics, aesthetics, and music theory and analysis—are available in English, Finnish, French, and German.