New Asian Culture Center Opens on IUB Campus

On Oct. 3, 1998, a decade-long vision of Indiana University Bloomington’s Asian and Asian-American students became a reality with the colorful grand opening of the Asian Culture Center, inaugurated by Bloomington Chancellor Kenneth R.R. Gros Louis. Over the past few years, the chancellor has worked closely with administrators, faculty, and a coalition of student groups to plan such a center.

The new center will give these students visibility and a voice within the university and the community, be responsive to their needs, and enable them to promote intercultural awareness and understanding. In his opening remarks, Gros Louis said, “The Asian Culture Center represents a great opportunity not just for Asians or Asian Americans, but for all of us who live and work in an enriched, enhanced, and progressive community.”

At the dedication ceremony, additional speeches were made by Director of International Services Kenneth A. Rogers, Project Director Roxana Ma Newman, Asian Student Union leaders Jason Chi and Eloiza Domingo, and IU alumni David Chi, Joon Park, and Mona Wu, some of the past student activists who led the drive to develop the center.

A proclamation signed by Indiana Governor Frank O’Bannon was also read which declared October 3 “Asian Culture Center Day” for the state. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was followed by a festive Lion Dance to consecrate the building, and a catered reception. Afterward, the several hundred visitors toured the facility and saw the many displays set up by various Asian student organizations (see p. 17).

In the evening, a special banquet honored returning alumni to celebrate the culmination of their years of effort and persistence.

The center, funded by the Office of the Bloomington Chancellor and a Strategic Directions start-up grant written by then-student Joon Park, is a newly renovated house offering a homey atmosphere for students. It houses a small resource library, an audio/visual room for multimedia presentations, and a computer lab with the latest on-line resources.

In addition to support services such as peer tutoring and general counseling, the center will promote diversity outreach programs which educate and celebrate the many cultures of Asia. IUB has almost 1,400 international Asian students and about 700 Americans of Asian descent, the two groups constituting six percent of the total student population.

For further information on the Asian Culture Center, contact the staff at 807 E. 10th Street, IUB; tel: 812-856-5361; fax: 812-856-5030; E-mail: acc@indiana.edu; Web site: http://www.indiana.edu/~acc.

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