Two years of work went into planning the Indiana University International Alumni Conference and Reunion that took place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, November 19-21, 1999. Some 160 alumni from seven Asian countries gathered for a three-day program of workshops and discussions around the conference theme, *Globalization: Challenges of a Changing World.*

Deans and senior faculty members from professional schools on both Bloomington and IUPUI campuses conducted the workshops on a range of topics. They led panel discussions on such subjects as science and professional education in the twenty-first century, legal systems in a time of globalization, worldwide issues in health and recreation, and achieving world-class productivity. Prominent Asian IU alumni who are distinguished educators, corporate executives, and government officials led the plenary session as well as panel discussions on the global challenges in business, education, government, and technology. Despite a busy schedule, there was time to listen to updates on “what’s new at IU” and time for socializing.

The event was jointly organized and co-hosted by the IUAA Club of Thailand, the IU Alumni Association, the IU Foundation, and the Office of International Programs. “There was a uniqueness to this event,” says Patrick O’Meara, dean for International Programs. “It was the first time IU has done something like this, and I don’t think many other universities have organized such events overseas.”

Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis, vice president for Academic Affairs at Indiana University and chancellor of Indiana University Bloomington, led the delegation. Professional school deans had planned their annual trips overseas to coincide with the Thailand reunion. They were able not only to meet their alumni, but also to give presentations, work on agreements of cooperation with universities in the region, and talk to prospective students who were in the process of deciding which university to attend.

Speaking of the conference’s impact, Gros Louis said, “The affection of the alumni for IU underlines one of the major reasons why the conference seemed so important to me. Since alumni came from seven different countries, they were clearly responding to our interests...”

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**Governor Pravit Sihsobhon of Chiang Mai Province extends an official greeting to Chancellor Kenneth Gros Louis.**
in keeping them informed about Indiana University. What they seemed to enjoy most, at least in my conversations with them, was asking about particular faculty members, how they were, asking me to pass along their greetings and good wishes, and in general reminiscing with fondness about their experiences at IU. A special moment for all was when Chancellor Gros Louis greeted everyone and then read a message from Herman B Wells, chancellor of the university, for whom the alumni hold great respect and affection.

Angela Barron McBride, dean and distinguished professor at the IU School of Nursing, said, "I know that setting up this alumni reunion was very time consuming, but it seems to me it is a model for what an internationally oriented university should do. We are very mindful of our national ranking, but we may forget the wonderfulness of our international connections and what they can mean for our own students and faculty. As a woman who has two children, one of whom lives in Chile and one in Hong Kong, I know that the world is getting smaller. An opportunity like this gives one the chance to see how important it is for IU to look beyond America's boundaries for all sorts of reasons, including how the connections can lead to very good research and educational opportunities for our own students and faculty."

The reunion was planned to coincide with the Thai Buddhist Loy Krathong "Festival of Lights." Chiang Mai was chosen as the site because of its relaxed and regional appeal. The reunion drew participants from Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea, according to Pamela Eddy, IU coordinator of the event. Thai IU alumni involved in the planning included Asavin Chintakananda, president of the IUAA Club of Thailand and chair of the IUAA Thailand General Committee; Boudin Tamthai, chair of the Chiang Mai Planning Committee; and Chawalit Putthawongs, chair of the Chiang Mai Co-hosting Committee.

The goals set for the event were not only met but exceeded, according to Kenneth A. Rogers, associate dean and director of International Services. "We were enormously pleased with the number of alumni who attended, which far exceeded our expectations. What impressed me especially was that among them were some extraordinarily accomplished and distinguished alumni. From beginning to end, the event was filled with memorable moments. One that many of us will never forget took place on a beautiful moonlit Saturday evening. At the conclusion of an exquisite program of traditional Thai music and dance in celebration of Loy Krathong presented by students of Chiang Mai University, the audience of alumni burst into a medley of IU songs including our alma mater, 'Hail to Old IU!'"
Chintakananda reported that the excitement began the minute alumni started to arrive in Chaing Mai and continued during remarks from Gros Louis and O'Meara and throughout the presentations. It reached its peak when Jerry F. Tardy, executive director of the Indiana University Alumni Association and university director of Alumni Affairs, addressed the assembly. "We could feel the room charge up. He made us all feel like we were in Assembly Hall again—only this time Coach Tardy and not Coach Knight took charge."

The keynote alumni speakers who led the plenary session were Sippanondha Ketudat, senator and chairman of the National Economic and Social Development Board of Thailand, and Farouk A. Ahmed, president of ICC Consultant Centre and president of IUAA in Malaysia. Prominent alumni who were panelists at the conference included retired Justice Flerida Ruth Romero of the Supreme Court of the Philippines, and James Chung-Yuan Wang of Wang Film Productions, Taiwan, and a member of the International Committee of the IU Foundation Board of Directors. There were many new faces, among them Margaret Fung of Taiwan, Bipin Kamdar of Singapore, Yasuko Suzuki of Japan; some gave brief reports on behalf of their respective alumni clubs. Dennis Ng, president of the IU Alumni Association in Singapore, felt that such a meeting should be organized on a regular basis because it would allow everyone who attends to "connect again with our alma mater." He personally appreciated the opportunity for some "fantastic networking."

Roger Schmenner, associate dean of Indianapolis Programs at the Kelley School of Business, said, "It was wonderful to see how interested the alumni are in what the university is doing and how willing they are to help us—even in ways that we probably haven't figured out yet." In another vein, McBride found the insights of nursing alumni about providing culturally sensitive health care to be particularly informative.

Both prior to and following the conference, IU deans and other administrators traveled to other countries, pursuing Indiana University's interests in Southeast Asia. An important postconference trip was to Bangkok, where the IU visitors were the guests at a reception of the IUAA of Thailand attended by more than 200 Thai alumni, including an impressive array of high-ranking Thai government officials as well as business, professional, and community leaders. The IU visitors were also the luncheon guests of Senator Dr. Saisuree Chutikul, who earned a M.S. as well as an Ed.D. from IU, and were able to meet The Honorable Richard Hecklinger, the American ambassador to Thailand, at the evening reception.
Another important visit in Bangkok was to the Civil Service Commission (CSC), which administers the government's various scholarship programs, the most prestigious of which is the Kings' Scholars Program. The CSC also operates a center on study abroad that advises Thai students. Deans and administrators met with the staff and answered questions about IU programs and discussed priorities for Thai government scholars. The second half of the morning was spent interviewing 63 students who had been selected for scholarships and would be coming to the United States in 2000-2001.

Lawrence I. Goldblatt, dean of the Indiana University School of Dentistry, visited seven of Thailand's eight dental schools during his trip. IU has exchange agreements of friendship and cooperation with five of the schools. IU faculty members present lectures and courses at the dental schools in Thailand, and Thai faculty members pursue various types of advanced training at IU. An additional agreement was signed while Goldblatt was in Thailand, and it is his goal to establish agreements with the other dental schools there.

McBride formally signed an agreement with the School of Nursing at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, one of the major universities in Thailand. It calls for the universities to work together particularly in the development of graduate education and research. She also had preliminary talks with Srinakharinwirot University about a possible affiliation with their optometry program. In Hong Kong, she made a presentation at Hong Kong Polytechnic on the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Schmenner visited the City University of Hong Kong, with which the Kelley School of Business has a couple of linkage programs, one undergraduate and one at the graduate level. As part of the program, M.B.A.'s at IUPUI consult Chinese businesses on the mainland in tandem with M.B.A.'s from the City University of Hong Kong. "We also have an entrepreneurship course in Bloomingtom taught by Marc Dollinger, who is head of the undergraduate program, that involves teams from both universities working together on a project through teleconferencing and the Internet," he says. Schmenner also visited with the vice rector at the National Economics University in Hanoi, which is now offering an M.B.A. They took tentative first steps toward a potential collaboration.

Giles Hoyt, associate dean for International Programs, began his trip in Malaysia with visits at the University of Malaya and with the Malaysian-American Commission on Educational Exchanges. Following the Chiang Mai conference and meetings in Bangkok, he went to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, for a series of meetings, including ones with representatives from Ho Chi Minh City Open University, National University of Vietnam, and Hung Yuong University.

Following the conference, Joseph Hoffmann, professor of law and director of International Programs for the IU School of Law visited several universities in South Korea. He also had a meeting with Shin Ho Yoon and Kang Soon Lee, the parents of slain IU student Won-Joon Yoon, for whom Indiana University has created a memorial scholarship.

Other IU administrators who led workshops at the conference were Dean Tony Mobley of the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, which has several linkages in the region; Dean David Stocum of the IUPUI School of Science; University Dean Donald Warren of the IUB School of Education, who also traveled to Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines; and Dean H. Oner Yurtseven of the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology at IUPUI, who visited IUPUI's training center in Malaysia.

—Ruth Albright

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