Study Tour of Asia Enhances Classroom Teaching

This summer, a team from Indiana University Bloomington's East Asian Studies Center (EASC) led 19 middle and high school teachers and one elementary school administrator on a study tour of Japan and South Korea. These teachers of history, literature, art, speech and language represented schools from California, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin. The goal of the tour was to enhance their ability to teach about Asia in their classrooms.

The group visited major cultural, historical, and religious destinations in Japan and South Korea, including Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, Himeji, Hiroshima, and Seoul, as well as Nikko and Gyeongju, two exceptionally significant historical locations in Japan and South Korea, respectively. The group also visited private and public grammar, middle, and high schools in each country. Particularly memorable were the visits to schools in Tochigi Prefecture, Indiana's sister state, and the impromptu discussions at a teacher training institute in Seoul.

The group was led by George Wilson, professor emeritus of the Departments of History and East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALC) and recently retired director of EASC; Jacques Fuqua, EASC associate director; Michael Robinson, EALC professor of Korean history and culture; Mary Hayes, EASC outreach coordinator; and Mayumi Nakano, EASC program assistant and interpreter.

EASC is one of five partners that compose the National Consortium for Teaching about Asia (NCTA), funded by the Freeman Foundation. As part of the NCTA's multiyear initiative to encourage teaching about Asia in world history, geography, social studies, and literature in U.S. middle and high schools, the EASC administers the NCTA program for Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and runs a weeklong residential summer program for high school English teachers, “Teaching East Asian Literature in the High School.” Alumni of these seminars who have shown a commitment to integrating the study of Asia into their curricula were competitively selected to participate in the study tour.

“In 1995 in Indianapolis, I met the crew of the Enola Gay and heard the story of the men who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima,” said John Frank, teacher of U.S. and world history at Center Grove High School in Greenwood, Indiana.

“So on the study tour, it was an incredibly moving experience to meet a Hiroshima survivor, and hear her story. Also, I want my students to understand better how WWII and the Cold War came to be played out in Japan and Korea. The photos I brought back—for example, of my trip to the DMZ at the border with North Korea—will enrich their understanding of this unique history.”

Alan White teaches world theater as well as literature and mythology of Eastern civilizations at Monticello High in White Heath, Illinois. “When I attended the literature workshop at IU, it was the most valuable educational experience I had ever had. . . . Imagination as a teacher can be limited if you've never seen anything like [what you are trying to teach]. . . . I got to see kabuki theatre in Tokyo, and noh and bunraku in Kyoto. The fall play I'm directing is Brecht's The Good Woman of Setzuan, and elements of these will be built into the performance. Brecht's idea of an epic theatre has much in common with Japanese performance styles and performers' relationship to the audience. Ideas I gained from the trip provide a framework that I think will engage our audience successfully.”

Having academic experts on the trip made the experience all the more enriching. They provided the historical and cultural context of the sites, guided discussion sessions, and served as general resources for the teachers. Wilson, the scholar-in-residence for Japan, conducted a tour of the Edo-Tokyo Museum in

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IUB Undergraduates Receive Prestigious National Study Abroad Scholarships

Three Indiana University students have received prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships that they'll use to study abroad this fall. Senior Aaron Hankins, junior Natoyia Johnson, and senior Adam O'Bara, all from the Bloomington campus, have each been awarded a $5,000 scholarship. Since the 2001 inception of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, seven IU students have received a total of $33,000 in scholarships.

Hankins, a double major in African American and African Diaspora Studies and Spanish, won the award to study for an academic year in Madrid, Spain. Johnson, a double major in political science and East Asian Languages and Cultures, will study for a semester in Tokyo, Japan. O'Bara, an East Asian Languages and Cultures major, will study for a year in Nagoya, Japan.

The Gilman Scholarship Program is part of a U.S. government policy initiative that encourages U.S. undergraduates to study abroad. The federal government, specifically the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, views study abroad as an important part of the undergraduate experience and fundamental to the nation's economic and diplomatic future. The scholarships are intended for students who demonstrate academic merit and already qualify for federal financial aid. There are two yearly deadlines for applications and supporting materials: April 15 for the following academic year or fall semester, and October 15 for the following spring semester.

For information about the Gilman scholarships: www.iie.org/gilman
For information about study abroad at IU: www.indiana.edu/~overseas

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Tokyo, led a small group of teachers on the Philosopher's Path in Kyoto, and prepared the group for its visit to the Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima. Robinson was scholar-in-residence for South Korea. His discussions—both historical and cultural and including the Korean War—were extremely helpful to teachers who were less familiar with South Korea than Japan.

Because of NCTA's success, EASC has partnered with the Indiana Department of Education to achieve even greater synergy in expanding education about Asia in Indiana schools. The department provided a $25,000 grant for educators from Indiana who participated in the tour. The joint program calls for these educators to develop a series of presentations, "Education about Asia in Indiana Classrooms," that will be shared with other educators at state conferences. They will also hold a series of round robin conferences throughout the state to discuss how best to incorporate Asia-related content into their lesson plans.

Teacher Rosemary Neves from Sacramento, CA, learns the tea ceremony at a traditional Japanese inn in Kyoto.

For more information: www.indiana.edu/~easc/study_tour/