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NSU pursues recruiting efforts in China

Tahlequah, Okla. — Northeastern State University representatives attended recruitment fairs in China this spring as part of efforts to enroll students in a global learning center planned for the NSUBA campus.

Northeastern faculty and staff attended the fairs with the assistance of CIBT Education Group Inc., a Canada-based education management company, which will establish the global learning center at NSUBA, the company's first in the United States.

CIBT's global learning centers allow students in Asia to begin international studies in China, South Korea, Vietnam and the Philippines, then transfer accumulated credits to the GLC at NSUBA. By transferring to the center, a student from Asia can later enroll in a degree program at Northeastern. The GLCs are equipped with video conferencing capabilities which allow students to work live with professors and other students abroad.



Photographed with keepsakes from the trip abroad are NSU President Don Betz; Emily Konieczny, assistant director of high school and college relations; Jana Krebs, graduate assistant; Jason Jessie, director of high school and college relations; and Dr. Martin Tadlock, provost.

"This wasn't about getting Chinese students on campus next week or next month," said NSU President Don Betz. "We're doing some deep seeding. I also think CIBT being there with us demonstrated our level of commitment."

Jason Jessie, director of high school and college relations, attended fairs in Shanghai; Emily Konieczny, assistant director, in Beijing; and Jana Krebs, graduate student, in Guangzhou.

"All three represented some of the best of what NSU has to offer," Betz said. "Many Chinese people now have a perception of America and Oklahoma and NSU because they met our representatives."

Jessie said the presence of Americans in the NSU booths drew interest. Most universities, even those from Oklahoma, were represented by Chinese.

"I think we did a lot of good things by being there," he said. "Students were able to interact and ask questions that perhaps they couldn't with Chinese representatives of American schools. We made contacts with agents through the people from CIBT."

In China, agents often represent families of students wishing to attend college abroad, particularly those wanting to choose a U.S. institution.

Konieczny said few Chinese students knew the whereabouts of Oklahoma, but liked the location when told.

"I think they were excited about our central location, which would allow them to travel around the continent in less time and at less expense," she said. "They also liked the possibility of working on campus and there were a lot of questions about our MBA program."

Krebs said questions about the MBA offering and technology were anticipated, but that an array of interests became apparent.

"I did get more questions about the MBA than anything else, but I also got questions about physical therapy, optometry, drama, music, art and education," she said.

Any initial perceptions Jessie might have had before entering China were erased during his interaction with students. He,

too, was surprised by the breadth of discipline inquiries and by what the students hoped to do with their degrees after graduation.

"A wrong assumption of mine was that these students wanted to come to the U.S., study and go home to China," he said. "That's not necessarily the case. Several inquired about jobs and visas. Some want to stay here."

With so many Chinese students fascinated by the prospect of continuing their educations overseas, Jessie said NSU had taken positive steps toward recruiting within a vast pool of academic talent.

"There are other college pavilions involving other countries, but the American pavilion is where the action is," he said. "Sure these students want to study abroad, but they particularly want to study in America. By attending the fairs ourselves, we were an attraction. I think our efforts will eventually translate into a student population coming to NSU from China."

NSUBA plans to admit its first GLC students this fall. CIBT has more than 20 GLCs operating in Asian countries and a broadcasting studio in Beijing, China, from which courses are delivered to the centers. The company plans to expand its network of GLCs in China, elsewhere in Asia, the U.S and Canada.

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