Wednesday, November 11, 2009

CORRECTION June 13, 2016. "When this year's spring trip was in jeopardy, long-time OU SBA supporter George Seifert stepped in -- not only making this trip possible, but creating a **fund** to ensure it continues to be an annual event. "

OU supporter helps makes global experience possible for grad students

By Dawn Pauli

MGT 681 students outside the U.S. Embassy

Gaining first-hand knowledge of the global marketplace is the goal of the MGT 681 Globalization Impact-Case Study Europe graduate class. Through the class, students travel to Europe or to China and India to learn how economic, political and social issues impact business decisions.

As tough economic times hit OU students, the trip was cancelled in 2008. When this year's spring trip was in jeopardy, long-time OU SBA supporter George Seifert stepped in -- not only making this trip possible, but creating an endowment to ensure it continues to be an annual event.

Seifert coordinated a $2,000 gift from the Community Foundation of Greater Rochester, where he is vice chair. Combined with additional support from other annual donors and the matching gift from the Elliott-Stinson Challenge, these gifts provided six students with $1,000 scholarships each, making it possible for them to experience life - and business - abroad.

The two-week whirlwind trip included stops in Austria, Germany, France and the UK, where the group visited small, medium and large corporations, toured plants, universities and banks, met with embassies and the European Parliament, providing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience international business.

Seifert, a long-time fan of OU's School of Business Administration, joined OU as an adjunct professor in 1984 when he transferred to Michigan to work at the new Ameritech Publishing Enterprises.

"I met Frank Cardimen when I started at OU, and he invited me to project presentations by his MBA students," says Seifert. "I was always impressed with the quality of his classes. Gaining international experience and exposure gives students an important perspective."

Derek Weyand, post-master's certificate student, knows international experience is an imperative component of an MBA program. He's thankful for the scholarship that made his trip possible, "I'm not sure if I would have been able to go without it."

Cardimen is not surprised that Seifert came through for the students.

"George is a philanthropist in the purist sense," says Cardimen. "Along with his foundation, he has done some very unique things behind the scenes. He's just a wonderful neighbor and community supporter and likes to help young people at the university."

For Seifert, it's just another way he can support the university he has come to appreciate.

"OU is not only an outstanding academic institution, it's a tremendous community asset," he says. "My wife and I continue to be supporters of Oakland University not only because of the academics, but because of its relationship to the community."

Seifert is retired from Ameritech and currently runs Seifert & Associates, a consortium of academicians and business professionals who work with profit and non-profit organizations on a wide array of business and human resources issues. In 2001, Seifert was awarded the Oakland University Alumni Association Honorary Alumni Award for his outstanding service to the university.

SUMMARY
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