



Monday, May 13, 2002

OU China delegation checks in with updates

The Oakland University delegation of Oakland County's Automation Alley trade mission currently is in China participating in global outreach meetings and events with Chinese government officials, business leaders and educators. The purpose of the trip is to provide opportunities through global partnering to Oakland University and Chinese university faculty and students.

Oakland University Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Virinder Moudgil, School of Education and Human Services Dean Mary Otto, Associate Professor of Anthropology Richard Stamps and Executive Events Consultant Joy James Williams left for China May 5 and will return to Michigan May 17. During their time overseas, they will file periodic reports on this Web site. Here is the first entry, submitted by Otto:

Monday, May 6: Virinder Moudgil, Joy Williams, Richard Stamps and I arrived safely in Beijing, China, at 9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 7: The Automation Alley delegation spent the day visiting Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. This tour provided an important reference point for understanding Chinese history and helping establish a context for our work in China. In the evening, we attended a reception at the home of Thomas Boam, Ph.D., minister-counselor, Commercial Affairs, U.S. Embassy. Many of us were able to initiate discussions with our colleagues from Automation Alley and China at the reception.

Wednesday, May 8: We started the day with an official commercial briefing by Dr. Boam and Dr. Ross. The briefing described both the successes and the potential pitfalls of doing business in China. With 1.3 billion people and an official economic growth of 7.3 percent, China seems like the best place in the world to do business. In fact, 25 percent of all success stories in foreign commercial services are from China. However, there are more trade disputes with China than with all other foreign embassies. I met with Ms. Zhang, vice president of the Guiyang People's Congress, for lunch to discuss the Summer English Language Institute and to make plans for meetings with the Oakland delegation on Thursday.

In the afternoon, the Oakland University delegates met with Robert Kemp, visa consulate at the U.S. Embassy. We provided him with information about Oakland University and discussed the importance of international student exchange programs. The information we left will become part of a reference library. He suggested that it is important for universities to keep the embassy visa office well informed and thanked us for taking time to meet with him.

SUMMARY

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