

***UC Davis Provost Forum: Public University and Social Good – May 8, 2013  
Perspectives on how administrators, faculty and students are dealing with the rapidly  
changing international environment***

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**From Mandalay to Memorial Union: How Public Universities Keep Dreams Alive**

Two months ago, I was privileged to lead the Institute’s first International Academic Partnership Program delegation to Myanmar. Ten universities were part of the effort, almost all of them public. On our third day, we visited the University of Medicine in Mandalay. The Rector, Dr. Than Win, spent most of the morning with us and made the case that we had come to make: it was time for universities throughout the country to be open to the West and for faculty and staff to learn best practices. The more we listened to his approach, the less we thought we had to offer since he was already doing just about everything we thought we could suggest. He even invited us to watch his progress by becoming a fan on his Facebook page; when I last checked it, there were over 8007 “likes.” Since our visit was very, very early in Myanmar’s transition we began to wonder why things here appeared to be moving so fast and at the highest levels.

The answer, in part, lay in an old photograph album. Dr. Than Win retrieved it from a closet and showed me pictures of his father and other Burmese friends in 1949 and 1950. They stood proudly in front of West Hall (where of course the Union now stands), picnicked on the Quad, and enjoyed driving a very large automobile through the town. “Now I want our students to have what my father had in California and what I missed for 40 years.”

It was quite a moment. Indeed, it illustrated the power of international education to transcend both space and time and to represent a dream that can be shared as well as passed along. And as it turned out, many of the senior faculty and government ministers we met had a family member who came to America on a Fulbright – and who were eager for the next generation to do the same.

This University is linked to Fulbright in many ways both in history and today. In the past two decades, UC Davis has had approximately 90 students receive Fulbright U.S. Student Program awards to study, conduct research, or serve as an English Language Teaching Assistant overseas. In the past five years, this campus has hosted more than 50 international students who enrolled in graduate programs here through the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. And 11 students have come here since 2006 to help teach Arabic, Urdu and Hindi through the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program. This is a wonderful way to help expand your language teaching capabilities and better prepare your students to address global issues.

UC Davis faculty members have also been very active in the Fulbright Scholar Program. Over the past decade, this campus has had 46 faculty members go overseas as Fulbright U.S. Core Scholars or Specialists – in fact, six UC Davis faculty members have Fulbright Scholar Grants for

the current academic year, making the campus tied for the #1 spot as the top-producer of Fulbright Scholars in the 2012/13 academic year.

Faculty from UC Davis who are lecturing or conducting research abroad this year as part of the Fulbright U.S. Scholars Program include Mark Mascal, chemistry; Richard Mines, research economist; Pamela Ronald, plant pathology; Henry Spiller, music; Ruxandra Vidu, chemical engineering and materials science; and Yin Yeh, applied science. Professors Mascal and Ronald received awards in the Fulbright Distinguished Chairs Program, appointments that are viewed as among the most prestigious in the Fulbright Scholar Program. Professor Mascal is currently the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Alternative Energy Technology at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden, and Professor Ronald holds the Fulbright-Tocqueville Distinguished Chair at France's Montpellier II University. The projects that these professors are doing are very strong examples of how faculty are dealing with the rapidly changing international environment – and when they return to campus, they will bring a new international dimension to the work they share with their students and colleagues.

Another way that UC Davis faculty foster international engagement is by hosting international scholars – in our Annual *Open Doors* census of international student mobility, UC Davis has consistently ranked among the top ten campuses for hosting international scholars. The campus was #9 this past year, with 2,217 international scholars. Six of the international scholars who are here this year are here as Fulbright Visiting Scholars, and the campus has hosted 93 Visiting Scholars over the past decade. The individual personal and professional ties they form go a long way to building relationships with the scholars' home institutions and countries.

UC Davis has been a host to 21 cohorts of Humphrey Fellows, having hosted the Humphrey Program from 1986-1996 and then again from 2001 to the present. The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program at UC Davis is a very special program that allows the campus not just to host visiting professionals for a year, but to engage in substantial interaction with individuals who are selected based on their potential for leadership and their commitment to public service in either the public or private sector. UC Davis is one of 18 universities in the U.S. selected to host Humphrey Fellows. Along with Cornell University, UC Davis welcomes scholars with primary interests in agriculture or environmental science. Over the years, Davis has hosted a total of 216 Humphrey Fellows from 86 different countries.

This year, UC Davis has hosted 11 Humphrey Fellows, from Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Botswana, China, Chile, Kenya, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, and Tanzania. The program is headed by Director Mark Bell, Assistant Director Gwynn Brenner and Associate Program Coordinator Sasha Ferreira. UC Davis Extension has hosted the Humphrey Pre-Academic English Program continuously since 1994, and in fact they were recently selected once again to provide this valuable service for our Humphrey Fellows. Since 1998, under Tina Castillo's direction, they have hosted 289 Fellows from 100 different countries. IIE anticipates that approximately 40 more Humphrey Fellows will be joining them this year for both eight- and twelve-week programs. And this year, UC Davis hosted its first Humphrey Enhancement workshop. The inaugural International Innovation and Entrepreneurship Academy brought 30 Humphrey

Fellows from other host campuses together with 10 UC Davis Fellows to hear from venture capitalists and veteran entrepreneurs, visit start-ups in the area and tour the UC Davis Robert Mondavi Institute. Your colleagues did a tremendous job of providing the tools and insights to move forward with a venture, whether it is an idea for improving social well-being or development of a technical or novel solution to a problem.

All of the Humphrey Fellows have extremely impressive stories. But a few current Fellows are particularly illustrative of how these mid-career professionals can engage with the campus and community to further the public good through their Professional Affiliations -- a six-week work experience with an organization which provides Humphrey Fellows the opportunity to engage in hands-on work with their professional counterparts in the United States. The Fellows in return offer host organizations expertise in their professional fields, an international perspective, and potential networks and contacts in their regions of the world.

Richard Bruno from Tanzania is working at Freedom From Hunger in Davis, focusing on a business model that is affordable for poor communities in Tanzania, targeting farmers and entrepreneurs. He is looking at the possibility of using mobile apps, leveraging the already existing huge consumer base of mobile phone users, to deliver training and market information to farmers in rural areas, which would increase the number of targeted clients and reduce the cost of delivery.

Jaqueline Nesi from Brazil will complete two affiliations this spring – one learning about how the Port of Oakland handles their environmental issues, including air, water, waste, resource management and emergency response, and another examining the World Resources Institute's programs to minimize the impact of economic growth on the environment and society in Brazil.

Tika Thapa from Nepal is working with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and USDA. Tika recently visited organic farms in San Diego's Puma Valley, where he reports that he was able to interact with three groups of refugees from Burma, Vietnam and Somalia, learning about the production costs on their farms and gaining first-hand experiences of the work of small farmers. He had a chance to visit Nepali speaking Bhutanese refugees who are completing a training program for farming, and to interact with IRC Food Security and Community Health staff.

Victoria Torres from Chile is completing her six-week professional affiliation at Columbia University in New York City, where she is working with the Director of the Center on Globalization and Sustainable Development at the Earth Institute. She is exploring new business models that include aspects of environmental, social and economic sustainability, with an emphasis on developing approaches that support and strengthen rural family farmers and small and medium enterprises in that sector.

Hearing about the work that these Fellows do, you can imagine that they go back to achieve major accomplishments in their countries. We learned of one particularly timely achievement by an alumnus who came from Myanmar to spend a year at Davis in 2010, and now writes, "I

was recently elected Vice President of the Myanmar Rice Traders Association. It was the first election in decades; Executive Committee Members were nominated democratically by voting. My country's political situation is changing day by day right now.”

Pericles Weber, who came from Brazil in 2009 writes, “I am very proud to inform [you] that I was named to be the new Director of Sustainability of my company, Sanepar, by the Parana’s Governor. Sanepar is the company responsible for providing drinking water and sanitation services to 350 cities and 10 million people. Its annual revenue is around US\$ 1 billion and one of the main Brazilian companies in the water sector. I am sure that my Humphrey experience prepared me and gave me confidence to carry on this new position. All the leadership seminars, courses and information I got will be priceless for me. I am thankful to the American government, the Department of State, IIE, UC Davis and Fulbright Commission for this opportunity. I hope I can establish some partnerships with UC Davis, and American companies in order to meet Sanepar’s sustainability goals and enhance the Humphrey Program in Brazil.”

Daniel Somma, from Argentina, has recently become the new Regional Director for the regional center North Buenos Aires of INTA (the National Institute of Agricultural Technology). He writes “This regional center is among the principal agricultural regions of the country and this position is a great honor and, at the same time, a great responsibility. Because I consider myself a UC Davis Aggie, I would like to share this achievement with all my friends at UC Davis, as a way to give thanks to UC Davis and its people for my time of scientific and managerial training there. That time in Davis was a very special period and I remember it as a very strong mark. Certainly, that stage was essential in my professional life.”

These stories – and countless others over the decades that you have hosted international students, including Fulbright and Humphrey Fellows – demonstrate the rich web of connections the university has all over the world, and the impact you have made on lives and societies around the world.

Another important way that IIE has worked with your campus in recent years is through the Scholar Rescue Fund. IIE has worked to help scholars and faculty in danger and preserve academic freedom since our founding in 1919. In 2002, IIE created the Scholar Rescue Fund to formalize this commitment to help scholars around the world wherever they are threatened with violence, imprisonment, surveillance, censorship or even death as a result of their academic status and work.

UC Davis served as one of first host partners for our newly created Fund, hosting a Bangladeshi scholar of human rights and Islamic law, in cooperation with UC Berkeley. As chair of his department at his home university, this scholar had refused to remain silent about the endemic corruption and political interference at the university, and he frequently published on human rights issues, drawing the ire of both university and government officials. After armed student groups used violent acts to intimidate him, he fled Bangladesh and eventually received a fellowship from SRF. With your help, he was able to continue his academic work at the UC Davis

School of Law, where he taught until 2006. He has now returned to his native Bangladesh, where he is a Professor of Law at the University of Dhaka.

This morning I took part in a very powerful UC Davis Human Rights symposium, titled “Syria’s Universities in a Time of War: Violence Against Students, Academic Refugees and Prospects for Rebuilding”, looking at current conditions in Syria and possible ways to address the needs of refugee students and academics. The symposium was organized by Dr. Keith Watenpaugh, the founding director of the UC Davis Human Rights Initiative and a UC Davis historian of the modern Middle East.

The IIE Scholar Rescue Fund has benefited immensely from the passion and expertise of Dr. Watenpaugh, dating back from 2006 when he provided a reference for one of our Iraqi scholars and later helped us secure a partnership with the American University of Cairo’s Desert Development Center. In the past year in particular, he has been an indispensable resource, sharing his insights generously with our staff and selection committee as our program is learning to navigate the complicated realities of the crisis in Syria and the challenges facing Syrian academics. Most recently, we partnered with Dr. Watenpaugh on a research trip to Jordan to learn more about the circumstances of Syrian refugee students and scholars. We are confident that the information he gained will be extremely useful as we respond to this tremendous crisis. We hope that this partnership and collaboration between UC Davis and SRF will continue to grow.

In addition, UC Davis has been among the most active hosts for undergraduate students from Brazil on the Brazil Scientific Mobility Program sponsored by the Government of Brazil. You have hosted about 60 students from the first two years of the program, and it looks like you will have another 30 or so for the coming year. We have heard extremely positive feedback from the students and your campus colleagues, and we are very pleased that this has worked out so well for all during the initial years of these exciting new scholarships.

*"In these first weeks I have been studying in Davis I have already noticed some of the reasons that make this university one of the best in USA. From the huge campus to the excellent students, it is visible everywhere that UC Davis is indeed an amazing place to be a student. It has exceeded all of my expectations. Thanks to the Brazilian government and to the Global Study Program staff I am having the experience of a lifetime, one which is enhanced by UCD's quality. I hope to excel in my studies and to bring all the best from UC Davis back to Brazil."*  
– Igor Rodrigues Barroso, Instituto Tecnológico de Aeronáutica (ITA), Brazil.

*"These first days at UC Davis have been a great mix of feelings. On the one hand I need to be alert to keep up with my academic tasks and to get used to how everything works, but on the other hand UC Davis has given me everything that I need to succeed. My classes are thrilling, my professors are inspiring and I am amazed with how much I've learned in that short time! As an international student and even more as a scholarship student I want to take as much as I can from my time at UC Davis; so far it is has already been the best experience of my life!"*  
–Isabella Oliveira da Cunha Hines, Universidade de Sao Paulo (USP), Brazil.

So these are just a few of the ways that IIE has engaged deeply with UC Davis, and that the campus has become more international through its work with these scholars and students. The aim of this Forum and your Provost's office team all year long, I suspect, is to achieve even further excellence in using international programs to prepare your American students for global citizenship.

Such effort is still very much needed. Those of us engaged in international education tend to forget how few U.S. university students today are really connecting to the world. Each year, only about 1% of all students enrolled in U.S. colleges study abroad for academic credit. About 14% of all undergraduate students getting four-year degrees will study abroad during their undergraduate careers. A few colleges – mostly smaller, baccalaureate granting institutions, have a much higher participation rate. Our *Open Doors* report shows that 33 campuses had study abroad participation rates of more than 70 percent of their student body. But overall and particularly at large public institutions, the participation rate tends to be much lower. Maybe that is why in surveys of what college students know about the world, fewer than half can find the countries making headlines on a map, or name the Secretary General of the United Nations, or identify correctly the region where the world's newest country, South Sudan, exists.

So there is a great deal of work we need to do to make international a part of every Californian's education. UC Davis Alumna Ann Pitzer has made an exemplary gift to help more of your students explore and take advantage of the Quarter and Summer Abroad opportunities that the Education Abroad Center organizes. The new endowed scholarships funded by this gift will help between 20 and 40 students annually who otherwise might not have the financial support to participate in study abroad programs.

The UC Davis Education Abroad Center offers more than 200 program options in 50 countries around the world. Approximately 1,400 students participate in Education Abroad Center programs each year; 1,100 are UC Davis students and more than 250 students participate from other UC campuses. The administration makes sure that financial aid can apply to all programs offered through the Education Abroad Center.

Together with Vice Provost Bill Lacy's team, you get the sense here that the administration and the faculty are constantly looking for ways to reduce the barriers and widen access to the opportunities for study abroad. International partnerships are one way they make this happen.

In a chapter that Bill Lacy and Jennifer Wade from the University Outreach and International Programs team contributed to IIE's book on *Developing Strategic International Partnerships*, they write about four UC Davis case studies that illustrate how these relationships are key to the mission of the institution. They describe partnerships with Zhejiang University in China, which created a Center for Academic Partnerships in Agriculture, Food and the Environment and has expanded to include many levels of cooperation; a program for staff exchanges with Kyoto University in Japan; an extensive collaboration between this university and several universities in Chile which played a historic role in helping Chile to become a major fruit

exporter, and has expanded in recent years into new areas of agricultural innovation; and a more unusual partnership with British professional theater and television organizations for performing arts studies. Writing about these linkages in our IIE.Networker magazine a few years ago, Professor Takoi Hamrita Tartir said, “The most effective international linkages, regardless of their size, scope, goals, and context, begin with people who put the common good before their own and cut across barriers to pull together whatever it takes to form that bridge.” This is really the true spirit of international engagement.

We are also extremely grateful to UC Davis’ Nicole Ranganath for serving as a mentor to other colleges who are taking part in IIE’s International Academic Partnership Program for India, helping this program to guide U.S. institutions through the complex Indian higher education system as part of a year-long program through which they are learning about Indian higher education institutions’ priorities and challenges in forming sustainable international partnerships. She has been a mentor since we started the program in 2010, and her service is indicative of how faculty members can be resources for U.S. higher education in engaging in strategic relationships with higher education around the world, by identifying areas of common interest that will help students and faculty in both countries to collaborate on many levels.

As our partnership programs and services expand, we are seeing more public universities getting involved. The recent IAPP delegation to Myanmar, and our plans for delegations to Cuba and Vietnam in the coming year, are good examples of ways that universities can engage not only in partnerships to help their own students and research collaborations, but in efforts that help advance higher education and talent development in the partner countries.

In this tough fiscal environment, and in the increasingly competitive world our students face upon graduating, public universities are pulled in many directions. They are asked to prepare global citizens, perform cutting edge research, develop innovative teaching methods, maintain active alumni networks, and fulfill a host of other requirements; and all on diminishing budgets. Strategic international partnerships are addressing all of these elements by acknowledging that counterparts in other countries face similar challenges, and have complementary ways of addressing them. Strategic international partnerships help universities align their goals across the campus so that student, faculty, staff, and administrator experiences are interwoven and share a common international fiber. Most of all, these partnerships act as a catalyst for internationalizing the campus, catapulting institutions onto the global stage through study abroad programs, faculty exchanges, joint research, dual degrees, and an endless number of other collaborative activities.

In looking at all the ways that a campus like UC Davis engages with the world, I am also reminded why it is so important to continue to keep our doors open to international students. As suggested by my reference to Dr. Than Win’s father, the opportunity for people to study and conduct research here pays many dividends over many years, and in some unexpected ways.

Last fall, I had the chance to welcome Fulbright graduate students to our UN Plaza Headquarters in New York. During the course of the reception, I got the chance to talk to one young Muslim woman. She was heading to the Stony Brook campus of SUNY. I asked her about the flight over and what may have initially worried her. The answer I got was quite different from the one I expected.

“I was really worried about my water.” She had brought with her in a special container 150 water samples from lakes and rivers in her country. At Stony Brook, she would have access to a machine that tested each for arsenic that also determined the age of the chemical. Her aim was to determine which was naturally occurring and where. This was to be her PhD dissertation research.

I asked why she had to come so far to do this work. “In my country, there is only one machine. Here there are many. In my country, there is a long line of waiting to use the lab. Women come last. In fact, in my country the senior professors are nearly all men. They do not want women to get PhDs or teach. So if I stayed at home, I would die.”

The spring before, my work took me to Beijing where our office arranged a dinner with the American Fulbright students then in the middle of their China projects. Most were working or teaching at universities and libraries in the capitol or within an hour or two train ride away. The woman next to me, however, told me it had taken her two days to get to Beijing.

She explained that she is an environmental science graduate student from the Ohio State University, doing her PhD on river water micro-organisms in Northwest China. Her field research project involved collecting samples in a very remote village. To get to Beijing, she told me, you had to take several busses, then a train, and finally an air flight. She assured me there were plenty of things in Chinese river water to analyze.

Naturally, I assumed she was in town to get some of her samples tested.

She said no and, in fact, had not brought any of her water with her. She had come to Beijing to try to arrange a surgery for a young girl in the village who was badly injured in a car crash. The father had been killed, the mother crippled, and the nine-year-old girl sustained many problematic head injuries.

Now this remote village rarely sees any outsiders. Perhaps this tall, blonde, Buckeye from Ohio was the first American in the village’s five-thousand year history that had ever gone there. She is certainly someone they will never forget.

“What else could I do? If the girl did not get help, she would have absolutely no future. And no one would care for her when I left. And maybe I was the only person that could find a medical mission group that could help her. I can always collect water samples. This was Liang’s only one chance, maybe, at living her life.”

International education exchange, Senator Fulbright once observed, “transforms nations into people.” And soon, I suspect, new photographs will be taken by the next generations of Burmese who will study here and return home to build their country and share their dreams. Indeed, it is the best investment any country may make in making the world a less dangerous place.