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Prairie View A&M University College of Business

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Summer 2010 Field Trip to South Korea

The Prairie View A&M University Center for International Business Education (CIBE) organized a field trip to S. Korea on May 23-30, 2010. The primary objective of the trip was to enhance the experiential learning opportunities in our international business program. Funded by the BIE grant from the U.S. Department of Education, this was our 1st field trip to S. Korea. The CIBE had arranged 4 similar field trips to Mexico over 2005-2008.

The field trip was attended by eight participants - two PVAMU faculty members, five students, and one high school teacher. The field activities were organized by our partner university - Daegu University. The group spent two days in Seoul (the capital city of S. Korea) and four

days in Daegu (the fourth largest city after Seoul, Busan, and Incheon). Prominently located at the center of ancient Korea's Three Kingdoms (*Goguryeo*, *Baekje* and *Silla*), the city of Daegu hosts an abundance of historical and cultural heritage sites.

While in Daegu, the group attended lectures presented by a Daegu University professor (Mr. Patrick Travers) on the Korean history, culture, and cuisine, and participated in a traditional musical instrument class (*Samulnori* - traditional percussion quartet). The field activities included visits to the Daegu Tower and downtown Daegu.



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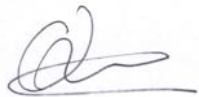
Editor's Note

Greetings. It gives us immense pleasure to present to you the 24th issue of the *Prairie View International Business Digest*, an electronic quarterly newsletter produced by the Center for International Business Education at Prairie View A&M University.

The main section in this issue (*Summer 2010 Field Trip to South Korea*) presents an overview of our recently organized summer field trip to Korea. This feature also presents excerpts from the participants' assessment of the trip and some photographs taken during the trip. The trip was funded by the Business and International Education (BIE) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The section on *Upcoming Events* presents a brief overview of upcoming events organized by the Center.

We hope you continue to find this e-newsletter a valuable channel for important information relating to international business. We do hope our efforts will inspire greater number of local firms to seek out new opportunities in international business. Should you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you for your support,



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Dr. Rahim Quazi
Editor

Upcoming Events

- A free seminar for local business community will be organized in late July. The seminar will include speakers from the U.S. Export Assistance Center, U.S. Small Business Administration, EXIM Bank, and other trade agencies.
- A free training workshop for local high school educators will be organized in early August. All participants will receive teaching tips and materials suitable for course and curriculum design, unit and lesson planning, and CPE letters.
- A subsidized trade mission to South Korea will be co-organized with the U.S. Export Assistance Center in early fall. The primary objective of the trade mission is to provide selected firms with first-hand opportunities to establish direct contacts with Korean buyers, identify market needs, opportunities, and trends, visit selected markets, and facilitate trade contacts.

Summer 2010 Field Trip to South Korea

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The most informative part of the trip was a tour of a Hyundai automobile plant in Ulsan, the world's largest integrated automobile manufacturing facility, and the Pohang Iron and Steel Company (POSCO) in Pohang. POSCO is the world's second largest steel maker and has been the bedrock of Korea's industrial development (particularly in shipbuilding and automobiles) over the last 40 years.

While in Seoul, the group visited several famous tourism landmarks - Seoul Plaza (city center), *Changdeok Palace* (one of the "Five Grand Palaces", built by the *Joseon* Dynasty in 1412), and the famous informal markets at *Insadong* and *Namdaemun*. This part of the trip provided us with an international setting and some of the best cultural, culinary and sightseeing spots in all of Korea.

One of the biggest delights for us was to see the students interact with a new culture and try to come to terms with it. The students came away with a broad understanding of Korea and its economic success, business etiquette, history, culture, geography and most importantly the Korean people. The participants generally felt that the trip was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to broaden their educational, cultural, and intellectual perspectives. The rest of this article features excerpts from the participants' assessment of the trip and some photographs taken by them. (Continued on page 4.)



Summer 2010 Field Trip to South Korea

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The purpose of this trip was to introduce the participants to Korean culture and get a glimpse into Korean business practices. I believe the trip was successful in meeting its objectives.

Growing up in the military, I have always been respectful to my elders and those in authority, but bowing, according to age or position, was a new addition to respectfulness. For Americans, it IS rude to ask the age of someone, especially an elder or a woman, but it is very necessary to do so in Korea in order to discover how deeply one should bow, or if at all. As Americans we are taught to hold eye contact, especially if we are being instructed or corrected. In our culture this is a sign of respect and attention, but for the Koreans this is a sign of aggression.

Both Hyundai and POSCO, super giants in the Korean business community, touted their “greenness” and the amount they give back to the world community. I was impressed with POSCO’s ability to capture steam generated in the steel process and convert it to cover 80% of their energy needs. Both the manufacturers had large quantities of greenbelt areas on site, giving the impression their operations were much cleaner than their respective industries.

Our hosts, professors and administrators at Daegu University, and all the student helpers that volunteered were fabulous. Everyone was interested in our comfort and enjoyment and made the trip a much more personal experience than if we had stayed in a hotel. I believe the Koreans who served us during this trip were very indicative of the Korean culture as a whole. The people seemed much more gentle and gentile than we are in the U.S. I always felt honored and special. Our every desire was accommodated as much as possible.

The only thing I would have changed about this trip was to extend it for three days allowing us to experience more of Seoul. I have been acquainted with many expats doing business abroad and it is a career maker. Students of international business should be encouraged to explore overseas opportunities and many times this includes living and working in large cities. Learning how to navigate the metro or read a city map – in a foreign language - are skills that would be helpful and make the students more confident about working abroad.

This experience was wonderful with learning opportunities at every turn. I thank Prairie View A&M University for allowing me to experience this with its professors and students. My life has been affected and enriched both personally and professionally.

Tammy Koonce
Teacher, Klein Forest High School

I thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of this trip. Overall, the experience was outstanding. From a professional perspective, I will draw on what I observed regarding the technical and environmental advancements by South Korea. The fact that the country is entirely 4G compatible is completely fascinating to me. The focus on green or environmentally conscious practices that the entire country participates in is also interesting. This is ingrained into the culture; everywhere you turn there are recycling bins. Every single restroom that I entered had hand blowers instead of paper towels. I get the impression that green policies are a major priority for the government.

The classes that we attended on Korean culture will also help me on a professional level. I do business with Samsung and other Korean companies. Understanding the importance placed on respect based on age even when the age difference is insignificant is vital when doing business at a certain level. As I reflect on previous business interactions, I can recall instances that may have been offensive as it relates to the age hierarchy.

Nicole Rogers
Graduate Student, PVAMU
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The business side of the trip was extremely enlightening. The company that stood out the most to me was Samsung. In the United States we know Samsung as primarily an electronics company, but in reality they are truly a conglomerate. The fact that Samsung not only makes electronics, but they produce cars as well as housing units, showed me the power of a business in its home country and how loyal the people are to the company. When we toured POSCO, one of the largest steel mills in the world, the Korean ingenuity stood out. The fact that they were able to build such a huge factory on land that was reclaimed from the sea was remarkable.

An experience of a lifetime is an understatement when describing the experiences I had while traveling to the wonderful country of South Korea. I truly feel blessed to have had the opportunity to experience such a program. As a leader on campus I feel that because of this opportunity I will push the administration to make it an initiative to include more of these trips in PVAMU students' experiences.

Malcolm Copeland

Undergraduate Student, PVAMU

While going on a charter bus, we were amazed to see the beauty of South Korea. I never thought Korea to be such a natural beauty. Picturesque mountains were on both sides of the road and it was unimaginably green... Seoul was very different from the other cities that we had visited in Korea. Seoul is the country's economic, political and cultural center. It has a technologically advanced infrastructure with numerous skyscrapers all around the city. The transportation system is very impressive, especially the subway which covers almost the entire city.

It was an unforgettable trip for me as I have made some strong bonds within this short time of seven days. I experienced great traditional music, delicious gourmet cuisine, jaw-dropping views, picturesque Korea and above all the people, who are even better. This trip gave me the opportunity to extend my international network. Moreover, as a business student I believe that the trip was extremely educational and it has taught me to view life from a different perspective altogether. Professionally, I feel my interpersonal communication skills have enhanced and now I can adapt to working in teams better than before.

Syed Irtiza

Graduate Student, PVAMU

It seems that Americans have a lot of misinformation associated with South Korea. To be honest, I thought I was going to starve in Korea because I assumed dog meat was the general meal there. As I later learned, consumption of dog meat is a big controversial issue and is rarely practiced in Korea today. I was unaware of how westernized South Korea has become today. It has one of America's most prominent fast food chains, namely, McDonalds, and there are huge shopping malls. The people are just as fashionable as people in the United States. Seoul is like New York City, except that it is cleaner.

I am going to become a strong advocate for the international field trips, study abroad semesters and the international business minor. These opportunities will increase students' knowledgebase and significantly enhance their marketability for employment.

Michael Mathews

Undergraduate Student, PVAMU

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I was very impressed with the economic growth South Korea has achieved over the last 60 years, since the split of the peninsula. Leading the world in car sales and quality, Hyundai is setting the standards for car industries domestically and abroad. When visiting the Hyundai manufacturing plant, I had no idea of how large-scale their business operations was. My favorite part was seeing the huge ships that the cars traveled on to their destinations all around the globe. Although the Hyundai plant intrigued my inner entrepreneur, I was most impressed with the POSCO steel plant. There we were able to see elements in their rawest form, mixed, poured, and processed into pure steel sheets. It was mind blowing to see that the “plant” was actually its own little city. On the plant property, there was a 25,000-seat stadium, restaurants, stores, and apartment buildings.



Anywhere there is room for agriculture, Koreans have utilized it to the utmost, growing fresh produce. Because of their hands on approach to agriculture, they don't experience many cases of diabetes, high blood pressure, or cholesterol problems. It is very uncommon for South Koreans to cook with oil or use a lot of dairy products, which may have also contributed to their high health quality.

Joi Reece

Undergraduate Student, PVAMU

It was an educational opportunity for mainly PVAMU students to gain a better understanding of Korean culture, social systems, and economy. The field trip was organized into three major activities: exploring Korean cities using different forms of

transportation (on foot, by bus and by bullet train), attending seminars, and visiting major industrial sites.

Overall, the field trip was well organized. Daegu University provided comfortable accommodation with a variety of food that included Korean delicacies and the group had a chance to observe the Korean lifestyle in both urban and rural areas. Of special interest were visits to the POSCO steel mill and the Hyundai automobile plant, which manifest the economic miracle Korea has achieved during recent decades. Thus, the field trip offered a good educational opportunity to Americans, business students, in particular, to open their eyes and experience the social and cultural diversity of an affluent and dynamic civilization more than 6,000 miles away from the U.S. Such an experience will contribute to building a global village where different ethnic groups live harmoniously together.

Brian Lee, Ph.D.

Accounting Faculty, PVAMU



PVAMU College of Business Vision and Mission Statements

Vision Statement:

Our vision is to empower students from diverse backgrounds to become productive and ethical business professionals who are among the best in the world.

Mission Statement:

We provide a diverse student body with an education that creates highly productive professionals who are ethical, entrepreneurial, and prepared to succeed in the global economy. The College achieves this through excellence in teaching, research and service, and engagement with the business community and other stakeholders. The student experience is distinguished by personal attention, teamwork, leadership training, and appreciation of the social responsibility of business.



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