

Public Intellectuals Program Update

The Public Intellectuals Program is comprised of 20 young scholars of China who participate in various activities geared toward expanding and deepening their knowledge of aspects of China beyond their own specialties and encouraging their active engagement as public intellectuals. Since our last issue of NOTES, we have completed the first of two planned Fellows trips to China, several Fellows have run their required local outreach projects and two have served as escorts on National Committee projects.

Some people were surprised when we made a trip to China an integral part of the Public Intellectuals Program (PIP). After all, each of the twenty PIP fellows has not only traveled to China, but all twenty have lived there for varying lengths of time. So why take them on a group visit? Two reasons – both of which fulfill the two primary goals of the program. The first is that few of them have had the opportunity to meet Chinese policy leaders. Earlier in their careers, many of today's established scholars were able to meet senior Chinese leaders and policy-makers by participating in delegations of the National Committee and the Committee on Scholarly Communications with the People's

Republic of China (CSCPRC). With the phase-out of the CSCPRC and the limited number of slots on National Committee high-level delegations, such opportunities are much rarer these days and it is unusual for the younger generation of scholars to have the chance to meet anyone but their academic counterparts in China. Thus, an important aspect of such a trip is to give the Fellows an opportunity to meet and interact with people who make and implement policy in various fields in China.

A second important aspect of the trip stems from the program's purpose of broadening the perspectives of the various PIP fellows beyond their specialty. Changes in American graduate education and in the China field over the past two decades have meant that younger American scholars focus primarily on their specific areas, without the opportunity for the cross fertilization that earlier generations enjoyed. Area Studies are no longer as important as they once were in American higher education and most universities channel young scholars into focusing on their disciplines early on. So the jam-packed schedule was designed to be eclectic as well as productive, fulfilling our goal of instilling more breadth in the younger scholars and

creating more connections among those who focus on different aspects of China.

This, perhaps, turned out to be the most successful aspect of the trip. We took advantage of the National Committee's extensive contacts, but also heavily relied on the range of contacts amongst our PIP fellows, in some cases having them set up meetings within their own area of expertise. Thus, the ten-day trip to Beijing, Shanghai, Wenzhou and Hong Kong in June featured meetings with artists, choreographers, public health specialists, dot com entrepreneurs, environmentalists, manufacturers, public interest lawyers, playwrights, novelists, journalists, judges, government officials at the central and local levels, NGO leaders, academics, think tank analysts....and that list isn't exhaustive. The Committee is grateful to our counterpart organization, the Chinese Foreign Affairs University (CFAU), for its assistance and to the many members and friends of the Committee who were so generous with their time.

We are also most grateful to the Luce and Starr Foundations for their generous underwriting of the program and we were very pleased that National Committee Board member and Luce Vice President Terry Lautz could accompany the group as one of its escorts.

The grant proposal had called for the inclusion on the trips to China of a senior China scholar who could be a role model for the PIP Fellows. We decided to go for the most senior of that group, the founding chairman of the National

PIP Fellows with escort Bob Scalapino (far left) and colleagues at the Shanghai Institute of International Studies.



Committee and public intellectual par excellence, Robert Scalapino. Those who heard him speak in May at the kick-off of the Committee's 40th Anniversary celebration know that he is still going strong at the age of 86! Bob was, indeed, a great role model at the intellectual level, always asking thoughtful penetrating questions and regaling the Fellows about various aspects of his fascinating career during long bus rides or the occasional meal where there was no speaker. He also set the standard as the ideal delegation member: he was generally the first one up in the morning and always ready and waiting for the group to assemble, and he showed how one can ask a politically sensitive question in a way that will not irritate people and maximize one's chances for a useful response.

We are looking forward to the second tranche of PIP Fellows going to Beijing, perhaps Fuyang (where one of the vice mayors is a Fellow in our Young Leaders Forum), Guangzhou (where former National Committee staff member Robert Goldberg is now Consul General), and Taiwan in 2007. In the meantime, all of the PIP Fellows are working on fulfilling their commitment to run a local education outreach project or series of projects; the following outlines those that have been held over the past few months.

Allen Carlson (Assistant Professor of Government, Cornell University) organized a two-day teacher training workshop that targeted secondary teachers from upstate New York, but also included some teachers from as far away as Colorado and Indiana. The first session focused on China's rise and the implications for the United States and the rest of the world: it featured MIT's Taylor Fravel (security issues related to China's rise) and CFR's Adam Segal (economic issues). The second session consisted of a panel discussion including Allen and his colleague

Chen Jian (history of U.S.-China Relations, Cornell); Richard Bush (Brookings); Minxin Pei (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace); and Jia Qingguo, Wang Jisi, and Zhu Feng (International Security Program, School of International Relations, Beida). Another session focused on source materials for teaching about China. Allen's outreach program provided the teachers with an invaluable opportunity to learn from some of the most respected Chinese "America watchers" and American "China watchers" and to acquire new knowledge and materials to improve their curriculum on China.

Allen also worked in conjunction with Cornell's International Labor Relations School (ILR) to organize a program that brought together the heads of labor unions based in Syracuse and Rochester together with visiting Professors Jia Qingguo and Wang Jisi for a roundtable discussion of U.S.-China trade relations. The goal was to provide an opportunity to address the deep concerns of upstate New Yorkers regarding jobs and the perceived looming economic threat from China. The very successful discussion helped improve understanding on both sides as it was the first time that the union leaders had had a chance to talk in person with Mainland Chinese and hear their perspective and the problems that China faces and vice versa.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Hank Levine met with the PIP group during its initial meeting in Washington, D.C. in September 2005 and impressed everyone with his knowledge, forthrightness and humor. Based on that meeting, PIP Fellow David Pietz (Assistant Professor of History, Washington State University), in partnership with the Spokane International Trade Alliance, the World Affairs Council of Spokane, and Washington State University, conceived of a program that brought Hank to Spokane for a day packed with three different events.

Now retired from his long government career and a senior vice president at Stonebridge International, Hank nonetheless kept his commitment and on September 13 was part of a two man team that held an executive roundtable over lunch and an afternoon seminar, both on U.S.-China trade and both targeted at the local business community. Hank's partner for those two activities was Joe Borich, now executive director of the Washington State China Relations Council and Hank's predecessor as Consul General in Shanghai. These events were followed by an evening address Hank gave for the general public on "The China Trade and America's Foreign Policy."

On the same day, Elizabeth Economy (C.V. Starr Senior Fellow and Director for Asia Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations) flew to Kentucky for two back to back public outreach programs organized by Kristin Stapleton (Associate Professor of History, University of Kentucky) in collaboration with the Louisville Committee on Foreign Relations, Crane House, and the World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana. Elizabeth first spoke on "U.S.-China Relations – Opportunities and Challenges" to a group at the Kentucky Center for the Arts. The second program was held at the University of Louisville, where Elizabeth addressed faculty and students on the state of China's environment and efforts to improve it.

Wu Weiping (Associate Professor of Urban Studies, Geography, and Planning, Virginia Commonwealth University), in collaboration with the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, organized a public education program for K-12 teachers on September 30 and October 1. Additional funding came from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. The workshop, attended by 26 educators from across the state of Virginia, was scheduled to coincide with the Second Annual

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benefited from the expertise of several Beijing-based specialists in HIV/AIDS and/or journalism.

The National Committee's five experts repeated their presentations in the days that followed in workshops in Changsha and Guangzhou, receiving a great deal of local support and enthusiasm. After their return to the United States, the delegation members continued making efforts to maintain or deepen the ties formed during their China trip. Mr. Russell wrote a long

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piece in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on China's recent efforts to fight HIV/AIDS, drawing from his interviews in Changsha and elsewhere. Ms. Collins met Chinese reporters again in August during the international AIDS conference in Toronto. Some seeds of future collaboration were also planted during the trip between Xiangya School of Medicine in Changsha and Johns Hopkins University. The two sides are exploring possible ways to work together on HIV/AIDS and other public health issues in China, with the National Committee lending its support. ■

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China-America Festival of Film and Culture in Richmond.

PIP Fellows are also encouraged to serve as scholar escorts, rapporteurs and participants in various National Committee events. Evan Medeiros (political scientist, RAND Corporation) was one of about 25 participants in the U.S.-China Strategic Security Issues Workshop. The day and a half meeting, held in Honolulu September 28-30, was the eighth in a series of meetings sponsored by the Preventive Defense Project (a research collaborative of Stanford and Harvard Universities, chaired by former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry and Assistant Secretary Ash Carter) in cooperation with the National Committee and the China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies.

Susan Whiting (associate Professor of Political Science, University of Washington) went directly from the June China PIP trip to Beijing, where she attended a conference on Central-Provincial Fiscal Relations cosponsored by the National Committee and Renmin (People's) University. Funded by the Ford Foundation, the conference examined central-provincial relations in the United States and China from the perspective of fiscal relations between the central government and individual localities.

In addition to activities directly tied to the program, our twenty fellows have kept themselves busy with "public intellectual" activities including publishing articles and appearances at congressional hearings, television and radio shows, academic fora, and each other's events. ■



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Corrections to the winter/spring 2006 issue of *NOTES*:

National Committee member and Associate Professor at Towson University, Steven Phillips' name was spelled incorrectly in the listing of his book *Dangerous Strait: The U.S.-Taiwan-China Crisis*. We also inadvertently left Margot Landman's name off the staff list. Our apologies for these errors.