



The Center in Action **December 2005-February 2006**



Jonathan Choi was awarded an honorary doctor of humanities from MSU

Jonathan K. S. Choi, president of the Hong Kong-based Sun Wah Group, was educated in Hong Kong and Japan. He continues to make donations to universities and schools in China and has worked with MSU to establish the US-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence to integrate Western and Eastern educational programs. Due to his significant contributions, Choi was awarded an honorary doctor of humanities from Michigan State University on Friday, December 9, 2005. Choi was the speaker and addressed candidates for advanced degrees at the 7 p.m. Friday, December 9, commencement ceremony. He reminded us of just how much technology has transformed our world and how it's given us the ability to make connections that we might not have been able to imagine 30, 20, or even 10 years ago.

“Our commencement speakers are recognized globally for their innovations, discoveries and boldness in their respective fields,” said MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon. “We are pleased our students, who soon will be making their marks in societies throughout the world, will be able to draw upon experiences of individuals who have successfully met challenges and who continue to work to improve our society.”



Confucius Institute

The US-China Center and China Central Radio and TV University are in the first stages of collaboration with China National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Second Language on establishment of a web-based Confucius Institute—Michigan to teach and spread Chinese language and culture.

With the increasing development of China's all-round national power, the upsurge of learning Chinese language and culture has been ascendant. However, traditional models of teaching Chinese as a second language is encountering several problems, which blocked Chinese teaching out of the mainstream educational system, and finally confined Chinese language from disseminating and increasing. Hence, in order to meet the great needs of Chinese language teachers due to the ascendant upsurge of Chinese language, disseminate Chinese language worldwide more effectively and more conveniently, spread the brilliant culture of the Chinese Nation, and finally promote the better understanding and friendship between China and the World, the US-China Center is planning to co-establish with China Central Radio and TV University the web-based Confucius Institute by means of modern multimedia information and technology. More information will be updated.



Education for Global Citizenship Project (EGC)

In the US, the EGC Project is continuing its negotiations to establish two EGC Schools in Michigan. We hope to have two preschools started by fall of 2006. We have found that there is intense



interest in such a program on the part of both school districts and their local politicians and community members. In the interim, we are planning to start a K-5 after-school program in the Lansing area in March. The program will offer 1.5 hour sessions twice a week for 10 weeks. The program will focus on developing Mandarin language skills and exposure to Chinese culture.

We are in the process of writing grants to expand the EGC Schools model to other districts and states. We are planning to approach private foundations to seek their support for this innovative project. We hope that we will shortly have funding that will allow us to bring the EGC School model to other locations and to provide support for their start up.

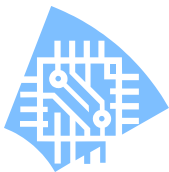
Nancy Romig and Nicole Ellefson will be visiting the Portland Oregon Public Schools Mandarin immersion school in February. While there, they will have a chance to learn more about how a public school bureaucracy works to create innovative language immersion programs.

In China, the EGC Project pilot school, the 3E International Academy, continues in its first year. Using their experiences with students, the staff is providing the US-China Center with important feedback that we are using to refine the school model. Please visit the school's website at www.3eik.com.



“Why Johnny Can’t Count” and “Can Asians Think”: Explaining the Learning Gap between America and China

This book will examine why Chinese students outperform their American counterparts in some international comparative assessments. It will analyze from five perspectives: teacher and teaching, learner and learning, curriculum, administration, and community and family. In the chapters about the US educational system, the authors deal with how the American school system fosters creativity, individualism, and professionalism in its students and allows teachers the freedom to creatively plan and teach. At the same time, it identifies aspects of the system that contradicts that notion and how these contradictories play in the big picture of the system. In the chapters about China, both advantages and disadvantages of Chinese exam-oriented education system are identified. In addition, it is believed that the single standard of student evaluation may result in lack of intrinsic motivation, flexibility and creativity.



PROM/SE

Beijing Normal University has completed the data collection of a pilot study with 12,861 participants in 49 schools in Beijing. Dr. Linyan Li, who is in charge of the PROM/SE Project at Beijing Normal University, visited the US-China on Feb. 23, 2006. During her two days stay on MSU Campus, Dr. Li talked with Dr. Richard Huoang and Dr. Wenzhong (Eric) Yang about the data process of the pilot study. Collaboration of data analysis and report writing will be conducted soon.



Comparison of US-China Academic Journals

The US-China Center is currently comparing research articles published in the past two years in top education journals. The Center reviews the American Educational Research Journal and the Chinese journal Education Research for this teacher education review project. It is not surprise to see both sides have substantial percentages for the following topics, teaching/teacher education, schools/educational structures and foundations. Moral education and mental health, however, are two major topics that can be found in China but not well represented in U.S. Moral education and mental health has existed as an independent subject from Kindergarten to higher education in China for a long time. It has been the core component for citizenship education in China. In addition, the majority of the ER articles do not employ any well recognized research methodology. It may be based on the authors' personal hunch or hypothesis that is not well supported.

The Center in Action is the quarterly newsletter of the **US-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence**. The newsletter is designed to document and disseminate information on the Center's activities.