

President's Perspective

by Dr. Linda L. M. Bennett, President

China trip: learning from international study



USI's strategic plan emphasizes the importance of "experiential learning." Enhancing international study opportunities is one part of this goal. Most program development focuses on students, but a college president can learn a great deal from a study-abroad opportunity, too! I was delighted to have just such an opportunity

in October when I traveled to Beijing, China, for a higher education conference and student recruitment exposition.

The Beijing student recruitment "Expo" brought together more than 35,000 Chinese students and parents to explore educational opportunities at universities around the world. I was proud to see the USI banner posted in the recruitment booth where I worked representing state college and universities in the United States. Watching students milling from booth to booth, I thought about the 23 students from China

already on USI's campus. After five days in China, I could appreciate how challenging it must have been for them to move so far from home, adjust to a different culture and language, and absorb the knowledge necessary to continue their education.

The highlight of our sightseeing tours was, without question, visiting the Great Wall — a remarkable edifice that took more than 2,000 years to build. It snakes along mountain ridges as far as the eye can see. I also was delighted to have the opportunity to visit with the president and administrative team from Minzu University in Beijing, where I attended an art exhibit and toured an impressive campus museum featuring costumes of the diverse peoples of China.

I left China with the hope of returning to learn

more. With USI's selection as one of 10 universities in the nation to participate in a program to develop partnerships with Chinese universities through the Institute of International Education, that hope will be realized and shared with faculty and students. Learning is going global at USI!



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