

PROJECT REPORT

Dr. Van Symons, Project Director

September, 2005

From June 25th to July 18th 2005, ASIANetwork (AN) and the Hong Kong-America Center (HKAC) conducted a faculty and curriculum development program for 15 college teachers in the Pearl River Delta area and South Coastal China. The program provided an intensive look at the dynamic social and economic changes currently occurring in this part of China, the fastest growing economic region in the world.

Participants, drawn from a pool of applicants recruited through an open selection process, included faculty from the following colleges and universities: American University, Augustana College, Central Washington University, Colby College, Connecticut College, Dickinson College, Gettysburg College, Lafayette College, Marietta College, Occidental College, St. Vincent College, University of Redlands, Warren Wilson College, Washington and Lee University and Webster College.

The program was interdisciplinary and involved five economists, three political scientists, two business and management faculty, two historians, and single faculty members from Asian religion, sociology, and anthropology.

Dr. Glenn Shive, Director of HKAC, Dr. Christopher Smith, HKAC Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence, and Dr. Richard Bohr, the AN representative and a Chinese historian at the College of Saint Benedict and St. John's University, planned the program and worked with the Pearl River Delta scholars while they were in China. The \$107,000+ program was primarily funded by a \$65,000 Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program grant from the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, program costs for the study in Shantou were provided by the Li Ka-shing Foundation, and administrative support was given by AN and HKAC. An institutional fee of \$1200 was also secured from each participant's college or university. Travel expenses to and from China were covered by the program.

PRD Scholars were divided into five groups of three individuals to focus on particular themes of interest to them and relevant to the study of South Coastal China. These were: 1) the development of new business enterprises and their interaction with international and domestic markets; 2) the impact of economic growth on Chinese society, especially migrant laborers from other parts of China; 3) the impact of economic growth on traditional Chinese "high culture" and popular culture; 4) the roles of government at national, provincial, county, and local levels in fostering social and economic development; and 5) the development of regional planning strategies and the impact on the environment of rapid economic development.

The program was packed with meetings, briefings, site visits, and opportunities for interaction with Chinese faculty and students. Substantial time was spent on the

campuses of nine major Chinese universities in the region including: Hong Kong University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The University of Macau, Shenzhen University, Sun Yat Sen University, Jinan University, Shantou University, and Xiamen University.

The program was richly textured. For example in Hong Kong, PRD scholars visited important museums and historic landmarks, the Maryknoll House, public housing estates, squatter communities, and the HIT container port (the world's largest). They received briefings from the US Consul General of Hong Kong, representatives of the Hong Kong American Chamber of Commerce, and lectures from the faculty of several Hong Kong universities. Scholars traveled from Hong Kong to Macau, Shantou, Xiamen, and Guangzhou during their time in China. The experience concluded with their participation in panel and plenary sessions of a student leadership conference on "Urbanization in the Pearl River Delta" held in Guangzhou.

It is already apparent that the program is having a significant impact on the teaching of the PRD scholars as they integrate what they discovered into courses they are currently teaching. A significant number of new courses are being developed based on the summer 2005 experience. Websites are being created based on what was discovered. Over a dozen conference papers, a number of journal articles and chapters for edited books are also being prepared by PRD scholars. Two panels involving PRD scholars will also be included in the forthcoming annual spring conference of ASIANetwork to be held at the Hickory Ridge Conference Center, near Chicago, on April 21st-23rd, 2006.

ASIANetwork and the Hong Kong-America Center are currently seeking a second round of funding from the Department of Education to run a PRD2 program focused on the rich history and culture of the Pearl River Delta and South Coastal China. If funded, it will be run from July 21st-August 10th, 2006. Sites visited will include Hong Kong, Macau, Guangzhou, Shantou, Xiamen, Quanzhou, and Fuzhou. PRD2 scholars will be broken into smaller study groups that focus upon: historical memory and interpretations; philosophy and religion; national identity and ethnic relations; South China's connection to the world; and traditional and contemporary culture in the PRD. Please see the posting on our website for further details.