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SUAPP strengthens UD ties with Beijing Normal University

2:18 p.m., Oct. 7, 2008—Two Chinese graduate students are taking courses at the University of Delaware's School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy (SUAPP) this fall and next spring, part of a new partnership between the school and the Institute of Social Development and Public Policy (ISDPP) at Beijing Normal University in China.

Tibor Tóth, assistant policy scientist in the Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, which is sponsoring the two students, said the cooperation between SUAPP and ISDPP builds on a broad agreement that UD signed with Beijing Normal University in December 2006.

"This allows the students from Beijing Normal University to be enrolled in regular classes as non-degree students at UD to enrich their experience and then go back and continue their program," Tóth said. "Their presence will expose students in SUAPP to what these two students bring to the classroom and add an international component to the curriculum. We would like to see this continue in the future."

The students Qiuje Zhang, a master's degree student, and Yongfang Cai, a doctoral degree candidate, recently met with UD President Patrick Harker, who visited Beijing Normal University last year. The students were accompanied by Tóth and Maria Aristigueta, director of SUAPP.

Tóth said the partnership will expand to include collaborative research on evidence-based policy-making, student exchange opportunities, visiting scholar positions at ISDPP and opportunities for professional education for Chinese public administrators and policy-makers at UD.

ISDPP focuses on health statistics, health care and service delivery, cross-cultural comparisons of aging, long-term care, social assistance program management and social welfare provisions.

The institute's founder and director, Xulan Zhang, has consulted for many agencies, including China's Ministry of Civil Affairs, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, UNICEF, the Ford Foundation and the U.S. Department of Justice.

SUAPP offers a bachelor's of science degree in leadership, a master of arts in urban affairs and public policy program, a doctoral degree in urban affairs and public policy, and a master of public administration degree.

Before she joined UD in 1997, SUAPP Director Aristigueta was on the faculty at the University of Central Florida and held administrative and consulting positions in federal, state and local governments, primarily in the areas of program evaluation, performance measurement and strategic planning.

Article by Martin Mbugua
Photo by Kathy F. Atkinson



Qiuje Zhang (center), a master's degree student, and Yongfang Cai (second from right), a doctoral degree candidate, recently met with UD President Patrick Harker (second from left), who visited Beijing Normal University last year. The students were accompanied by Tibor Tóth and Maria Aristigueta.

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