

Spring 2009

Newsletter Spring 2009

Grant Center for International Education
Ouachita Baptist University

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DANIEL & BETTY JO GRANT CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY
SPRING 2009



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From the desk of Grant Center Director

The world economic crisis has highlighted the interconnectedness of our planet before the eyes of a watching world. Who can deny that the future of global relationships is growing stronger and that the need to have a high international IQ is essential? The Grant Center's programs represent a serious commitment to provide a laboratory where our students can experiment and become competent citizens of our world.

In a seminar which I teach each semester, I give students who have studied abroad the following sentence to complete:

When you studied abroad, you experienced freedom from ____ and you experienced freedom to ____.

Here are some of the ideas offered:
They experienced freedom from ...
their routine
cultural bounds,
patterns of thought,
old habits of behavior,
emotional norms.

On the other hand, they experienced ...
the freedom to think new thoughts,
visit new places,
make new friends,
develop new understandings,
and express new views and emotions.

Students and parents alike want to see personal growth during the college years. There is surely no better way to grow and develop as a person than to explore God's world through the opportunities offered through the Grant Center for International Education.



Ian Cosh
Director of the Grant Center for
International Education



Renamed international center honors Dr. & Mrs. Grant

A birthday party last August for Daniel and Betty Jo Grant became the occasion to celebrate a new name for Ouachita Baptist University's outstanding international center. Named in 1988 for retiring OBU President Daniel Grant, the honor was broadened by current President Rex Horne and the OBU Board of Trustees to include the former first lady, renaming the center the Daniel and Betty Jo Grant Center for International Education.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Mrs. Grant was actively involved in promoting global relationships on campus. She also traveled extensively with President Grant, including the historic 1974 trip to Fukoka, Japan, which resulted in Ouachita's first exchange program with Seinan Gakuin University.



Visiting professor profile: Qian Qing

This year, Ouachita Baptist University hosted Professor Qian Qing who serves with Beijing University's English Department. She has been the guest of the Grant Center for International Education and the Ouachita Foreign Language Department. She holds a BA degree in English from Fuzhou University and an MA in linguistics in TEFL from Beijing Normal University. She has taught at Lanzhou University of Technology and has, since 1999, taught at Beijing University. She is the 15th visiting Chinese professor at Ouachita and has taught Chinese language to students in the fall and spring of this academic year.





International Food Fest

Type the following link to view a video report from the Ouachita Show about OBU's 2009 Food Fest:

http://www.obu.edu/ouachitashow/Int.foodfestivalMed_Prog.swf

Russian student's OBU experience

Slava Timokhin first arrived at Ouachita Baptist University in the spring of 2009 after many prayers and donations on his behalf.

Born in 1985 and raised in Penza in an orphanage since the age of 9, Slava and some of his friends began doing Russian traditional dancing. Under the supervision of a professional choreographer, they started creating contemporary dances and were soon doing break dancing and hip-hop.

While at a camp in the summer of 2002, SpokenFor, an international outreach organization from the United States, visited the orphans and as a gesture of gratitude, the boys danced for them.

The visitors were so impressed that their leader, Scott Wentz, decided to sponsor the boys' way to Texas in 2003, where they traveled and performed widely.

Slava, who was born with a cleft palate, met Josh Kane on that trip. Josh offered to help Slava with his speech problem that resulted from the cleft palate. He was able to find qualified doctors who performed several surgeries on Slava, all free of charge!

After returning to Russia, Slava completed high school and later made a few more trips to the U.S. On his last visit, John and Sue Kane and Scott Wentz suggested that he apply for college. Since the Kanes' daughter, Ashley, is currently a student at Ouachita, they brought him to visit OBU. With their help, he enrolled in the ESL program in the spring and will enter the undergraduate program in the fall.

Slava is enjoying the small campus community of Ouachita, and has already made many friends and has won the hearts of those who know him.

Dear Friends,

In the tradition of educating world citizens, international education has long been a vital part of the philosophy of Ouachita Baptist University. The first recorded international student came from China and graduated in 1925. Since then, Ouachita has earned a strong reputation for quality education with its impressive world outreach.

This international flavor did not just happen overnight; it is the result of conscious planning and strong administrative and faculty leadership for the past several decades. In 1961, two students from Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) enrolled, identifying Ouachita as an early leader in racial desegregation in Arkansas colleges.

The beginnings of the current, strong international presence unfolded in 1975 when OBU President Daniel Grant and the president of Seinan Gakuin University signed an exchange student agreement which has successfully continued without interruption.

Hundreds of international students from more than 70 countries have studied at Ouachita. Japan has been the country with the most international students and Uzbekistan has followed as No. 2. In addition to the "Study Abroad/Exchange" program with Seinan Gakuin University in Fukuoka, Japan, Ouachita has offered American students an opportunity to study for a semester or year at universities in Austria, Belize, Costa Rica, China, England, France, Israel, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Russia and Spain.

Another vital part of the international program is English as a Second Language (ESL) which offers language instruction to non-English speakers and introduces them to American culture.

Ouachita International Travel offers alumni and friends of the university opportunities for guided group travel to many parts of the world.

A few weeks ago, a group of interested people formed a new organization called **The Friends of the Daniel & Betty Jo Grant Center for International Education (FGCIE)** with the purpose of supporting the programs of the center. We are offering individual annual memberships for \$35 or \$50 per couple. These funds will help support the programs listed above as well as the scholarships awarded to both international students and American students who desire to study abroad.

Some friends, in addition to their memberships, have expressed an interest in making a tax-deductible gift for these programs and scholarships. The membership entitles supporters to a newsletter, special events on campus and a special invitation and ticket to the International Food Fest. We hope that you will seriously consider joining many others in becoming a "Friend" and donor for this vital program of the Grant Center.



Sincerely,

Bill Dixon

President, FGCIE

Emeritus Vice President for Student Services



Ouachita International Travel offers affordable group travel opportunities with a personal touch for Ouachita alumni and friends. All trips are personally escorted by Bill Dixon, retired dean and vice president at Ouachita.

In March, Ouachita International Travel took 37 people to the Holy Land and Greece.

Other trips planned include:

May 15-28, 2009

Oct. 16-28, 2009

March 15-28, 2010

April 16-27, 2010

Early summer 2010

June (TBA), 2010

The Heart of Alaska cruise and land tour
Treasures of India

The Holy Land and Greece

The Tulip Festival (Holland & Belgium)

Iceland (tentative)

China

For information about any of these trip, contact Bill Dixon (dixonb@obu.edu) at 870-246-7271 or 870-245-8804.