

2004 Spring – Taiwan Post Fair Report

For thousands of Taiwan's students this spring, attending the American International Education Foundation's (AIEF) 2004 Spring American Education Fair was a major step toward studying in the USA on their "Path to Success," which was the event's theme. We are pleased to report that there were excellent turnouts at each of the Fair's three venues in the cities of Taipei, Kaohsiung, and Taichung.

In this post-Fair report you will find a summary of the events that took place during the 2004 Spring American Education Fair in Taiwan, including information about the American Language Teachers' Training Workshop, AIEF's local school outreach program, feedback from fair participants, news about our student information system, our student interpreter service, an update on Taiwan's recruitment market, AIEF's Taiwan student profile analysis, attendance statistics, AIT briefings, Spring Fair highlights, AIEF scholarships, and the schedule for AIEF's 2004 Fall Fairs in Taiwan and Korea. Your participation and support for the 2004 Spring American Education Fair in Taiwan are much appreciated. We warmly welcome you to join us again in our upcoming events in Fall 2004.

American Language Teachers' Training Workshop

Organized by the AIEF in cooperation with Taiwan Knowledge Bank (TKB), the American Language Teachers' Training Workshop in Taiwan was held on March 6th and 7th, 2004, at the Taipei International Convention Center concurrently with the American Education Fair. Sponsors of the workshop included UCIEP (a consortium of U.S. university and college intense English programs) and ETA (English Teachers Association of Taiwan). The workshop was designed to provide professional development opportunities to enhance the teaching skills of English language teachers in Taiwan's schools.

Focusing on English as it is used and taught at U.S. institutions, the two-day workshop introduced the latest trends and materials in ESL/EFL teaching, covering such topics as state-of-the-art CALL (computer-assisted language learning) technology, Communicative Language Training (CLT), vocabulary acquisition, grammar teaching and assessment, and other practical subjects. Interactive teaching demonstrations engaged the participants in stimulating activities that could be adapted and applied immediately to their classroom environments. Insights into the new generation TOEFL were also highlighted.

Invited to present at the workshop were Prof. Christa Hansen (U. of Oregon), Dr. James Purpura (Columbia University Teacher's College), Dr. Alexandra Rowe (U. of South Carolina), Prof. Kathy Trump (George Mason University), and Prof. Deanna Wormuth (Georgetown University).

The 2004 spring workshop was designed to be a precursor to a major event in Taiwan on TESOL teacher training that is planned for the spring of 2005.

AIEF's Local School Outreach Program Benefits Undergraduate Recruitment

Through optional visits to high schools and colleges in the Taipei and Taichung areas, as well as through special sessions arranged for groups of high school students at the fair venues, AIEF continued its successful local school outreach program. American school representatives were given the opportunity to introduce their institutions to students during visits to the local schools. In addition, many high school students attended special sessions arranged for them at the fair venues by AIEF to ease their transition to studying in the USA. AIEF initiated its local school outreach program to help U.S. schools more effectively recruit undergraduate students from Taiwan.

Fair Participant Feedback

AIEF is grateful for the feedback and suggestions from the participants who completed our post-Fair survey. We are constantly striving to improve our services, and your recommendations are taken seriously. Many fair participants expressed their positive impressions of the Fair's professional organization, interpreter services, promotional efforts, and the quality of the students who visited their booths.

Student Information System Facilitates Recruiting Efforts

Online pre-Fair registration was offered by AIEF to the exhibition's visitors. Students who visited the American Education Fair were encouraged to register their educational goals and contact information in AIEF's post-Fair student information system. AIEF adheres to confidentiality and privacy practices with regard to student information, and expects the same of U.S. educational institutions that receive the data from students who visit their booths. AIEF pioneered its online student information database in 2001, and has offered the database as a service exclusively to U.S. schools since 2002. AIEF's emphasis on service, quality, and integrity explains why its current database, the largest of its kind in Taiwan, has accumulated a membership of more than 90,000 student names in two years. Participating U.S. schools will receive a list of the student contacts that visited their individual school's booth during the Fair.

Student Interpreter Service

An always-popular feature of AIEF's Fairs is the student interpreter service that is provided at no additional cost to fair participants. Enrolled at local institutions, the student interpreters not only help to translate and disseminate information at the fair, but potentially could also serve as ambassadors to their own institutions on behalf of U.S. schools.

Taiwan Market Update

In 2003, the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) issued 11,373 student visas to students from Taiwan. This figure indicates a reduction in the total number of Taiwan's students studying in the USA to 28,017, which represents a 3.2 percent decrease from 2002. Of this amount, approximately 54 percent were studying at the graduate level, 34 percent at the undergraduate level, and 12 percent as non-degree or ESL students. Possible factors contributing to this drop include the SARS epidemic, the war in Iraq, safety concerns, and uncertain economic conditions. Despite these factors, the potential of the Taiwan student recruitment market

remains strong, as Taiwan continues to rank among the top five sources of international students who choose to study in the United States.

AIEF's Taiwan Student Profile Analysis

At the orientation for U.S. school representatives held in Taipei, AIEF shared data from its recently completed Taiwan Student Profile analysis. The analysis was made based on data collected from 17,568 students who attended AIEF's events held in Taiwan in 2003, including the American Education Fairs. Of the students responding to our surveys, approximately 93 percent indicated that the USA is their first choice for a study abroad destination. Nearly 64 percent of respondents expressed interest in pursuing a graduate degree, 15 percent wanted to enroll in undergraduate studies, 10 percent favored studying at a community college, and another 10 percent planned to participate in language programs. The analysis showed that the top twelve majors for students from Taiwan are business and management, language programs, education, art and design, engineering, the social sciences, computer science, communications, biological sciences, medicine, law, and the humanities.

Strong Recruitment Competition From UK And Other Countries

As of this writing, the updated 2003 data on Taiwan's students studying abroad was not available from the Ministry of Education. The data for 2002 reveals that the UK experienced a nearly 25 percent increase in the number of students recruited from Taiwan compared to 2001. Other countries, including Australia and Canada, also boasted considerable growth during that same time period, while the U.S. saw a 7.5 percent drop. It is expected that competition from the UK and other countries will continue to be keen in Taiwan's recruitment market in the foreseeable future. AIEF is committed to working with American educational institutions to maintain the USA's position as the most popular study abroad destination for students from Taiwan.

2004 Taiwan Spring Fair Statistics

The Taipei International Convention Center was the opening venue for the three-city 2004 Spring American Education Fair in Taiwan. The two-day event in Taipei was held from 12:30-5:30 PM on Saturday, March 6th, and from 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM on Sunday, March 7th. In Kaohsiung, the exhibition took place at the Grand Hi Lai Hotel from 4:00-9:00 PM on Monday, March 8th. The last stop of the three-city exhibition was Taichung, where the fair was held on Tuesday, March 9th, from 4:00 – 9:00 PM at the Evergreen Laurel Hotel. The US-Taiwan Business Council is an honorary sponsor of these events, which were open to the public free of charge. Attendance estimates for the three Fair venues were 5,220 visitors for Taipei, 1,332 for Kaohsiung, and 1,638 for Taichung, or a total of 8,190 visitors.

AIT Briefings Provide Valuable Information at the Fairs

Consular Officer Rachel Brunette-Chen of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) provided an overview of the student visa application process in Taiwan and the latest student visa statistics to the education delegation during AIEF's Fair orientation held on March 6th at the Howard Plaza Hotel. Ms. Brunette-Chen also offered presentations on student visas for students and parents

at the Taipei fair, while AIT-Kaohsiung's William Johnson addressed this topic at the Kaohsiung venue.

Spring Fair Highlights

Free advising for students was available at the American International Education Foundation's booth at each of the fair venues. Students were encouraged to register their contact information and academic preferences in AIEF's student information system in order to receive individualized materials from U.S. educational institutions.

For the benefit of students and parents, a series of free symposia on topics such as educational and visa issues, as well as individual school presentations, were held at all three venues of the Fair.

Free copies of AIEF's Summer Program Catalog were distributed to visitors at the American Education fair. The color catalog features a variety of summer programs at U.S. schools, each designed for a specific purpose, such as mentoring for pre-MBA students, teacher training, intensive English language instruction, and much more. Summer Program Catalogs were also provided to local libraries and schools free of charge.

A popular attraction at the Fair were the drawings held for discount coupons valued up to USD \$500 for study at summer programs offered by U.S. institutions.

AIEF Scholarships

In 2003, AIEF administered scholarship awards totaling more than US \$100,000 to students from Taiwan. On an annual basis, AIEF's Scholarship Committee awards a limited number of scholarships to qualified students from Taiwan who have been accepted by accredited American educational institutions. The scholarship application deadline is April 1st, 2004, for students enrolling at an accredited U.S. community college, four-year college, university, or graduate program during the Fall term of 2004. Application materials were available at each of the American Education Fair venues.

AIEF is honored to have been chosen to administer a new scholarship program on behalf of ETTV for graduate studies at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communications. Created to encourage promising students from Taiwan to follow a career path in mass communications, the purpose of the ETTV Scholarship Program is to help to cultivate future professionals who will be able to use their expertise gained at USC to develop quality programming for Asian, American, and international communities. Scholarship support from ETTV, one of Taiwan's fastest-growing television networks, is US \$100,000 per year.

2004 Fall Fair Dates

Registration is now open for AIEF's 2004 Fall American Education Fair in Taiwan and Korea. The Fall Fair schedule is as follows:

Seoul, Korea - September 18-19 at COEX Exhibition Center

Taipei, Taiwan – October 23-24 at Howard Plaza Hotel
Kaohsiung, Taiwan – October 25 at Grand Hi Lai Hotel
Taichung, Taiwan – October 26 at Evergreen Laurel Hotel

Online registration is available at:

http://www.aief-usa.org/services/signup_fair.htm. For more information, please view the flyer at: <http://www.aief-usa.org/eposter/fall04flyer.htm> or call the AIEF office in California at 626-965-1995.