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## News From the Dean for International and Border Programs

### It's Time to Open the Door More Widely

My column this month was written as an essay and is currently under publication consideration by several newspapers in New Mexico and surrounding states. In the essay's byline, I used both my NMSU title and my elected position at NAFSA: Association of International Educators (President-Elect). NAFSA is the world's largest international education association with nearly 10,000 members. The association's goals are to increase awareness of and support for international education and exchange in higher education, government and the community. NAFSA members believe that citizens with international experience and global awareness are crucial to U.S. leadership, competitiveness and security.

At one time, our great nation welcomed the world's "poor, tired and huddled masses." At one time, we accepted boatloads, planeloads and carloads of refugees from Asia, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere, promising them new lives, new beginnings, new starts. And at one time, we openly received foreign students who wanted to study at our institutions of higher learning, exposing us to their brilliant minds and beautiful cultures while learning from our top professors. It was a win-win situation. Everyone benefited.

Much of this has changed since the events of Sept. 11, 2001. While overall immigration policies can be discussed in another article, I want to focus on the huge mistake we are making with our policies that, in effect, tell some foreign students we don't want them.

"The numbers tell us that international student enrollment at America's colleges and universities has declined for three years in a row. That has never happened before," testified Marlene Johnson on June 29 before two U.S. House of Representative subcommittees. Johnson is executive director and chief executive of NAFSA, Association of International Educators.

"If growth trends in the years before 9/11 had continued, enrollment last year would have been more than 700,000," she said. (The actual number of international students enrolled in U.S. higher education institutions in 2005-2006 was 564,766, which was within a fraction of a percent of the previous year's totals, according to **Open Doors 2006**, the annual report on international academic mobility published by the Institute of International Education (IIE) with support from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs).

Johnson advised Congress to establish an International Education Council to help remove barriers that obstruct international students from studying in the U.S. by affecting their desire to come to the U.S. and their ability to enroll in American colleges or universities. She said many world leaders who are our closest allies graduated from American institutions of higher education and that "the more friends and allies we generate through these kinds of exchanges, the fewer sources of conflict we have."

She also called on Congress to review the relationship between the State Department and the Department of Homeland Security, both of whom are responsible for visa policy. Furthermore, she asked Congress to repeal the requirement that the State Department interview virtually everyone who applies for a visa. And she implored Congress to enact strong provisions to make the U.S. more attractive to international talent as part of an immigration law overhaul.

Johnson's requests are not only reasonable; they are critical and should be acted upon immediately.



NAFSA studies show that international students comprise more than half of all graduate students learning about engineering and science at American institutions. After receiving their degrees, many of them stay in the U.S., contributing to our country's research and technology and helping to keep us economically competitive. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Commerce reports that our country's fifth-largest export is international education. This product brought in \$13.5 billion during the 2005-6 academic year. Unfortunately, visa and entry restrictions imposed after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks have drastically reduced the American share of the overall international student market.

Massachusetts Representative William Delahunt, chair of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee, says we have to "ratchet up and deal with this reality." Ratcheting up will not be accomplished through baby steps. Only meaningful, purposeful strides will help us deal with this reality.

Opening more doors to foreign students will positively and dramatically affect our economy. More importantly, opening these doors will lead to more exposure to the students' cultures, possibly leading to pathways to peace. And there's nothing wrong with that. International students are our allies. We should be their allies, too.

*Ernett Egginton*



Universidad Autónoma de Cd. Juarez faculty and administrators' visit to NMSU on September 14, 2007.

## 2007 International Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient

**Mr. Aberlardo Escobar-Prieto** received his Master of Science degree from NMSU, in Animal Science in 1968. He has had a long and distinguished career as an educator, director of a school, university professor, Dean of Agriculture, private business owner and investor and more recently in public service. In 1992 Mr. Escobar-Prieto was appointed by then Mayor of Ciudad Juarez, Lic. Francisco Villarreal, as Municipal Secretary. The Municipal Secretary position is the second in command after the mayor and serves as the Acting Mayor in the mayor's absence.

In 2003, he was appointed by then Mexican President Vicente Fox to become the National Director for RAN which is the National Registry for Agrarian Reform. He was selected to work specifically on the conversion of "ejidos" from government to private ownership. Ejidos are defined as farms or portions of property which are provided to individual Mexicans as communal property. The property title was not given to individuals but remained with the Mexican federal government. The government of Mexico no longer provides land for the development of ejidos and current owners of ejidos, who can be found throughout Mexico, began to petition the government for individual property rights early in 1990. The task was and still is very difficult and Mr. Escobar did such an outstanding job that his position was elevated by President Fox to that of Cabinet Secretary for Agrarian Reform which is equivalent to a Minister's position in 2006.

When a change in government occurred and Mexican President Felipe Calderon was elected, Mr. Escobar was kept in the same cabinet position, which is extremely rare in Mexican politics. Mr. Calderon continues in this position to date and is making great strides in the transferring of ejidos property to private ownership. This is a difficult yet extremely important task to the country of Mexico. In addition, he is also making changes in Mexican agriculture to assure that women and small growers are not excluded from the Mexican agriculture industry.

## Launching of International Relations Institute

The International Relations Institute at New Mexico State University began early in 2007 with an appropriation of \$200,000 of recurring funds from the New Mexico Governor and Legislature. The Founding Director is Ambassador Delano Lewis, Senior Fellow at New Mexico State University. The official launch of the Institute is scheduled for **November 7, 2007**. The opening sessions, with the theme of The Future of U.S. Foreign Policy – Resolving Border Issues Around the World, will be in the afternoon at the Physical Sciences Laboratory on the NMSU campus. A major address will be given by the Governor of Kansas, and the Chair of the Democratic Governors Association, Kathleen Sebelius. Earlier that day, an organizing meeting will be held of the Institute's Advisory Board, a group of eminent international practitioners. Members of the Board, along with NMSU faculty and students, will also participate in the afternoon sessions with presentations and discussions on international issues around the world. For additional information please contact Paul Kolp at 646-7041 or 646-7506.

## Announcements

The President's Office is hosting the **Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua Ballet Folklorico Dance Group** during homecoming weekend. The group is scheduled to perform on Saturday, October 20, 2007 at 11:00 am or immediately following the Homecoming Parade. The group will be performing on the outdoor stage east of Corbett Center (remember to bring a blanket or folding chair). The group will also participate in the Homecoming Parade scheduled for the same day at 10:00 am.

## Globalizations Awards

The Office of International and Border Programs (OIBP) is now accepting Globalization Award nominations. OIBP provides up to three awards per academic year to NMSU faculty, staff, students, and individuals from the community. The award recognizes individuals whose actions and deeds promote international understanding, cooperation involvement, and development. For more information about the awards call 646-4528 or to submit nominations, please contact Ida Baca at MSC 3567 or at [ibaca@nmsu.edu](mailto:ibaca@nmsu.edu), indicating who you want to nominate and describing in approximately one page what the person has done and/or is doing internationally to warrant the award and include a copy of their CV. Nominations will be accepted through March 15, 2008. If you would like to review the list of past recipients, please go to our web site at: <http://www.nmsu.edu/~ip/pages/GlobalizationAward.html>.

The **Center for Latin American and Border Studies** will host a **book presentation** by **Professor Carlos Murillo**, Colegio de Chihuahua, on Thursday October 18, 4 pm, at the Nason House. The title of Professor Murillo's talk is "Explaining Voter Abstentionism and Political Participation in Ciudad Juarez" and will include analysis from his 2006 book "La sociedad anonima: los factores socioeconómicos y políticos del abstencionismo en Ciudad Juarez, 1992-2004" (Ed. La Gota, Chihuahua), updated with information on municipal elections held in 2007. For more information, call Megan Shannon at 646-6814.

**Neil Harvey, Department of Government**, presented two papers in the Symposium on International Relations at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. The papers are entitled "El zapatismo y la otra política: lecciones para América Latina" and "Indigenous knowledge and intellectual property: lessons from biopiracy disputes in Chiapas"

**2007-2008 International Travel Grants** will not be provided this year due to lack of funding.

## Twenty-Fourth Annual World Food Day Teleconference – Cancelled at NMSU

Due to a lack of facilities, we will be unable to broadcast the 24th Annual World Food Day Teleconference, which is scheduled for October 16th. Any faculty who would like to obtain the study guides and/or the teleconference packets can call 202-653-5760.

Hopefully we will be able to once again provide this annual teleconference next year, if classroom space is available.

**EDITORIAL NOTE:**

THIS NEWSLETTER IS RELEASED THE BEGINNING OF EACH MONTH. THE CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF NEWS ITEMS IS THE 25TH OF EACH MONTH. PLEASE SUBMIT ITEMS WHICH ARE PLANNED AND/OR ARE SCHEDULED FOR SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE. THIS NEWSLETTER IS INTENDED TO SHARE INFORMATION AND TO INFORM OTHERS ON CAMPUS OF UPCOMING AND PENDING ACTIVITIES, TRAVEL, VISITORS ON CAMPUS, ETC. FOR THIS REASON, ITEMS WHICH ARE SUBMITTED FOR ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE ALREADY TAKEN PLACE WILL ONLY BE UTILIZED IF THEY HAVE SOME RELEVANCE TO FUTURE ACTIVITIES. PLEASE MAKE SUBMISSIONS TO [CIP-ADM@NMSU.EDU](mailto:cip-adm@nmsu.edu). IF YOU WISH TO REVIEW OLD ISSUES OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS ISSUES FOR THE LAST 12 MONTHS CAN BE FOUND ON THIS SITE.

For news contributions and/or comments on this newsletter, e-mail [cip-adm@nmsu.edu](mailto:cip-adm@nmsu.edu) or send comments to MSC 3567.

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