

The University in a New Era of Global Education



by Michael A. McRobbie

President

Indiana University

IU President Michael McRobbie is a frequent speaker and lecturer on the globalization of the university. Presented here are excerpts from "A Presidential Vision for an Internationalized Institution," an address to international educational leaders by President McRobbie in Washington, D.C., on November 20, 2008. During the address, McRobbie outlined key aspects of IU's new International Strategic Plan, one of the first such plans at any college or university and a guide for IU as it extends its global reach. The photographs come from a recent IU presidential delegation to Asia as part of IU's ongoing effort to put this plan into practice.

▲ *Indiana University President Michael McRobbie (center) with IU First Lady Laurie McRobbie and Sungkyunkwan University President Jung-Don Seo at the signing of an agreement of friendship and cooperation between IU and SKKU.*

Colleges and universities here in the United States, and around the world, are in the vanguard of a new international era in higher education. Our engagement is becoming truly global at a time when national boundaries are ever more porous. Trade, energy, access to water resources, the impact of information technology, and population movement: each of these issues and countless others affect humanity on a global scale. Addressing such issues requires collaboration, intercultural and international understanding, and competencies in every field, key features of the world's best universities.



Indiana University's legendary 11th president and first university chancellor Herman B Wells had a vision to deliver the world to IU students, many of whom—at least in the middle of the 20th century—had yet to experience all that Indiana had to offer, let alone India. Wells' deep appreciation for the global community led him to initiate IU's concerted efforts to become an international force in higher education. Over many years, he succeeded in attracting world-class international faculty, particularly in the liberal arts and humanities, developing new international alliances with governments and institutions, establishing area studies programs, and dramatically expanding IU's foreign language curricula.

After the delegation had completed work in China and Korea, Vice President O'Meara (seated, center) and Director Shawn Reynolds (standing, far left) continued on to Japan. Here they meet with IU alumni in Tokyo.

From that deep and lasting commitment can be traced the fact that Indiana University now offers over 70 world languages—perhaps the largest number in the United States—and is home to nine federally funded Title VI Area Studies Centers, including seven National





The delegation meets with officials at Sungkyunkwan University (founded in 1398).

Resource Centers, again equal to the largest number, I believe, at any institution in the United States.

Wells' vision remains highly relevant for today's college and university leaders. However, no longer is it enough to bring the world to American students. To meet the challenges of the 21st century, we must fully engage with the world. Such engagement requires that we be as clear-sighted as possible about the practical realities of international education and the most effective ways to build on Indiana University's strengths. Such efforts also require strategic planning and coordination throughout the university.

Four elements form the basis of Indiana University's new international strategic plan: global faculty research, global educational opportunities, institutional partnerships, and other institutional outreach.

The Greek philosopher Socrates once said that he was not a citizen of Athens, nor a citizen of Greece, but he was a citizen of the world. That sense of global community exists in nearly all areas of research. It represents the imperatives of academic freedom and grows out of the free flow of ideas. It calls on the world's researchers to challenge, question, explore, and create new knowledge, using logic, reason, rational inquiry, and the scientific method. Building on this shared intellectual foundation, researchers around the world work to understand the causes of disease and discover cures, to develop new and cleaner sources of energy, to address poverty and hunger, and to gain a deeper understanding of the moral, physical, and metaphysical universe. National boundaries recede in the

interest of understanding our global human condition.

Just as we are part of a thriving international research community, so too must we continue to cultivate an international community of students who are prepared for the challenges of the global future. Whether our graduates are in Bloomington or Bangkok or Beijing, they will be living and working in a global environment that demands international educational experience. We must find ways for more students to study abroad. At the same time, we need to retain our diverse population of international students, who raise awareness through sharing their different cultures, histories, and languages, and through their day-to-day interactions in and outside of the classroom.

Expanding international opportunities for faculty and students depends on institutional alliances with premier research universities around the world that have the potential to enhance research and educational programs in every academic discipline. Already Indiana University has strong and growing partnerships in areas such as Africa, Europe, Latin America, and Russia.

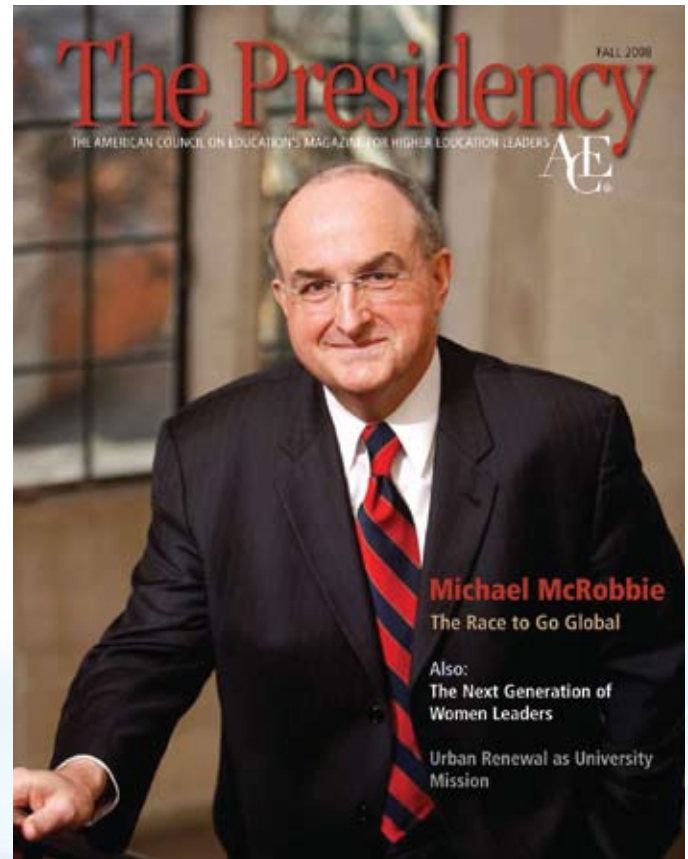
However, we have been giving special attention to technologically advanced and rapidly growing areas of East and South Asia, in particular China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and India. In the last two decades, I have visited the region dozens of times and perhaps my strongest impression has been of the phenomenal growth taking place there. I have been particularly impressed with the transformations taking place within higher education. I have seen firsthand the new laboratory and teaching

facilities, have visited classes at our partner institutions, and have met the faculty who teach those classes. The deans of our Schools of Law, Informatics, Business, and other schools, have had the opportunity to meet their counterparts at these institutions to discuss partnerships.

In my most recent visit to Korea and China, we established new partnership agreements with institutions of international renown, including Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul National University, and Peking University. We discussed future partnership opportunities with officials at Yonsei University, with whom IU has had an active agreement since 1986.

Global outreach and service projects may not always seem directly relevant to our fundamental education and research missions, but they can be in the national or regional interest, have humanitarian importance, and contribute to institutional prestige. As with other international activities, we must be strategic in order to determine which projects are best suited to Indiana University. Still, one must not confuse such projects with the narrower interests of the institution. Indiana University's involvement in helping rebuild democratic and educational institutions in Afghanistan or treating HIV-positive patients in Kenya represents far more than just the university's interests.

Universities around the world are working to achieve similar aims for a new era in international education. It will be an era of greater educational opportunity for all students; an era of deeper global collaboration and cooperation among universities around the world; an era of stronger alliances in the interest of mutual progress.



President Michael McRobbie's article on the globalization of U.S. universities is featured in the fall 2008 issue of *The Presidency*, a member magazine of the American Council for Education. The full article can be found at: www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ProgramsServices/Publications/presidency/index.htm



Sungkyunkwan University confers upon President McRobbie (at right) an honorary doctor of science degree.



IU Delegation

Michael McRobbie, President

Laurie McRobbie, First Lady

Patrick O'Meara, Vice President for International Affairs

Dan Smith, Dean, Kelley School of Business

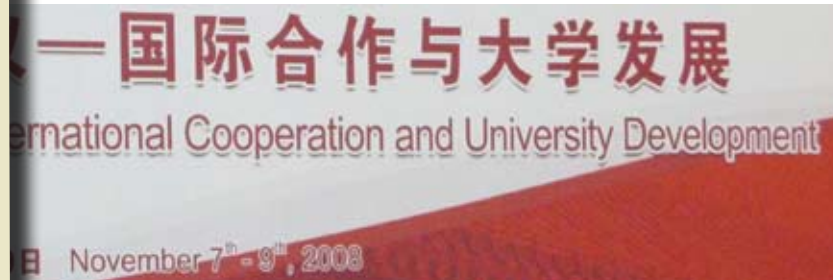
Robert Schnabel, Dean, School of Informatics

Shawn Reynolds, University Director, International Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives

Rebecca Wood, Senior Communications Assistant

Link: www.indiana.edu/~pres/asia/index.shtml

(In the foreground, from left) Vice President for International Affairs Patrick O'Meara, President McRobbie, and the Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) Vice President for International Affairs tour the historic Sungkyunkwan University campus. The stunning gingko trees are a national monument.



President McRobbie participates in the Beijing Forum 2008 Roundtable for Research Universities—International Cooperation and University Development. He delivered remarks titled "Cooperation and Connections: Universities in a Global Context."





After discussing potential institutional affiliations, President McRobbie and the IU delegation meet with IU alumni who are members of the Yonsei University faculty, which includes 17 IU graduates in music, physics, business, English, public affairs, biology, and a number of other fields.



President McRobbie speaks at the IU Korea Alumni Association Dinner about the importance of global cooperation and collaboration and Indiana University's International Strategic Plan.



Bok Joo Jhong, IU alumna and former dean of the Ewha University College of Music, and Shawn Reynolds, university director for international partnerships and strategic initiatives, chat with audience members prior to the IU Korea Alumni Association Concert.



Laurie McRobbie and President McRobbie with placard announcing the IU Korea Alumni Association Concert.