

## The Global Challenges Project

The Global Challenges Project was financially supported with a grant from the Title VI B Business and International Education Program of the United States Department of Education; the DaimlerChrysler Education Foundation; The Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Oakland University; and the School of Business Administration. The two year Title VI B BIE United States Department of Education matching grant (\$181,969) ended June 30, 2007. The objectives for the Global Challenges project were:

- (i) Strengthen the international content of business curricula and to begin to introduce new courses that focus on the challenges of the complex global business environment
- (ii) Develop study abroad and internships opportunities to help students gain international business experience
- (iii) Enhance the capability of small and medium businesses to meet the challenges of globalization
- (iv) Generate greater awareness of foreign business environments through networking with academic and business associations abroad and
- (v) Establish the Center for International Business to plan and implement all activities.

The **Center for International Business Initiatives (CIBI)** within the School of Business Administration was established on June 1, 2005 with Professor Ravi Parameswaran as the Project Director and Professor Nivedita Mukherji as the Associate Project Director. Listed below are some of the accomplishments:

**Curriculum:** MGT 536: Global Policies and Strategies and an international business electives course (MGT 681) focusing on emerging markets (both graduate) were developed.

**Study Abroad Trips:** India: 12 students, 3 SBA faculty, OU Director of International Education, 3 local area business people; China and South Korea: 20 students, 4 SBA faculty, SBA Associate Dean, OU Director of International Education.

**Foreign Internships for OU students:** Three MBA students did internships in India for 3-4 weeks respectively at Tata Technologies Ltd., Pune, ITC, Ltd., Bangalore and Voltas Ltd., New Delhi. An undergraduate student interned for a month at Gallagher Ltd. in Brisbane and Melbourne, Australia.

**Area and Business Environment Studies:** Graduate assistants: Ms. Tracy Handler, Mr. Daniel Aguas, and Mr. Jason Simcoke, interned at the Pontiac Export Assistance Center (PEAC) with a focus on helping small and medium sized businesses in SE Michigan research exporting opportunities. Ms. Handler and Mr. Shahar Ben-Dor helped area businesses develop export business development plans and surveyed area SME's knowledge of exporting support from organizations like PEAC and Automation Alley.

**Need Based Courses, Workshops, and Seminars:** CIBI supported, both financially and through active participation, the following:

- (i) Automation Alley's series of six workshops on exporting directed at small and medium sized firms in South East Michigan,
- (ii) The District Export Council for East Michigan, which on May 14, 2008 held a Trade Week focusing on Brazil attended by over 120 participants from Michigan and San Paulo, Brazil. Featured two Oakland University professors (Professors Mary Karasch and Janell D. Townsend) and Mr. Yannick Greiner, Durakon Industries (an OU SBA alum).

(iii) Face East, Face West conference at Western Michigan University was partially supported by a Title VI B BIE grant.

**Faculty Teaching Exchanges:**

Two SBA faculty members taught at TAPMI in Manipal, India and one at SIIB in Pune, India in each of the grant years. In return each year, two faculty members from TAPMI and one from SIIB visited and taught at OU during the Spring/Summer terms.

**Faculty Research Exchanges:**

Professors Sugumaran and Bhargava collaborated on research with their counterparts, Professor Park (Sogang University, South Korea) and Research Associates Sofka and Grimpe (ZEW Center for European Economic Research, Germany) respectively.

**International Business Seminar:** On May 16, 2008, the CIBI hosted a major conference on how the globalization of the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy has severely impacted the domestic Michigan based automotive industry and what are its future consequences. The conference was titled: **Michigan in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Globalized Economy: A Requiem or Renaissance?** More than one hundred participants, including area business executives and SBA alumni besides faculty and staff attended the conference.