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CHINA APPROVES CONSTRUCTION OF WENZHOU-KEAN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS IN ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

300 Universities Applied; Kean One of Three Selected

UNION, NJ—The national education ministry in China has approved preliminary plans for construction of the proposed Wenzhou-Kean University campus in Zhejiang Province, authorizing an investment of 1.5 billion RMB (approximately \$236 million) for the project that will become operational in 2013.

This approval from the national Ministry of Education moves the major education initiative forward after more than five years of planning and negotiations.

“This initiative is a tremendous opportunity for not only the students and the faculty of Kean University, but also the state of New Jersey overall as well,” said Dr. Dawood Farahi, president of Kean University. “Education is a highly desirable commodity, and we will provide the people of Zhejiang Province with the graduate and undergraduate programs that we do best—education, public administration, business and computer science—to start.”

More than 300 universities applied to build campuses in China, and only three were approved, according to President Farahi. NYU and the University of California at Berkeley were approved to build campuses in Shanghai, and Kean was approved to build a campus in Wenzhou, a city of 9 million people about 250 miles south of Shanghai.

Acting Secretary of Higher Education Rochelle Hendricks said the Chinese were impressed with New Jersey's commitment to higher education during a visit with Governor Christie in July.

"This is very exciting," Hendricks said. "It is an excellent opportunity for New Jersey to increase its presence in the world -- and in the world's economy."

Wenzhou-Kean University is slated to have an initial enrollment of 5,000 in full-time students by fall 2016. All classes will be taught in English by American professors with all accreditation standards being held to those established here in the United States. Students will earn degrees issued by Kean University. Kean University will supply all academic personnel, programs and course materials; Wenzhou is responsible for construction of the new campus and supporting all operations. Over the next three years, American and Chinese authorities will focus on finalizing academic plans, structures and securing necessary approvals from American and Chinese authorities.

Kean University officially announced that it would open an extensive university campus in China during a historic ceremony held on May 8, 2006, on its Union campus that included leading officials from the state of New Jersey and Zhejiang Province. The agreement establishing Wenzhou-Kean University was signed by Kean University President Farahi and the President of Wenzhou University.

Work and negotiations continued on the initiative for several years, and saw real progress in July 2011 when Zhejiang Party Secretary Zhao Hongzhu visited New Jersey to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Sister State/Province agreement between New Jersey and Zhejiang. Governor Chris Christie hosted a luncheon at Kean University as part of the celebration that included government and business leaders from around the state. The events of that day and discussions between two state leaders had a major impact on moving the Wenzhou Kean University project forward, according to Secretary Zhao.

As it was announced at the time of the initial signing, the construction project and all costs of operating the university will be paid for through tuition and financing provided by the municipal and provincial governments in China. The national government authorized the initial \$236 million (1.5 billion RMB) as part of its recent announcement. There will be no cost to Kean University or the state of New Jersey.

Furthermore, students in China will have access to the Kean University library system through the Internet while ensuring that all available materials are accessible. All academic matters will mirror those used in the United States. Kean students will also have opportunities to study in China while paying only the in-state tuition and fees they would pay if residing in New Jersey.

China has witnessed an internationalization of higher-education institutions this year, following Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's call in early March inviting world-class universities to establish campuses in China. Construction began in late March for New York University Shanghai. In addition, University of California, Berkeley sealed an understanding with Shanghai in November to open a campus there as well.

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