

**“I am amazed at how much being immersed in an international environment contributes to the excitement and process of learning.”**

**-Myles T. Jones**



# **EdD Students** *explore* **CHINA**

Students in the Institute’s Executive Ed.D. program enjoyed exceptional access to institutions of higher education and top faculty during their study abroad in China this summer. The group toured campuses and participated in presentations on national strategies aimed at building world-class universities by Professor Baocun Liu, director of the Institute of International and Comparative Education at Beijing Normal University, and on crucial issues in Chinese education by Professor Xiao Guang Shi at Peking University. They were welcomed at the Ministry of Education, where Dr. Han Min, the deputy director general of the National Center for Education Development Research, and Dr. Haixia Xu, a graduate of the IHE, gave a presentation on the reform and development of higher education in China and then hosted everyone to a 5-course luncheon.

During their four days in Beijing, students explored the Great Wall, the Ming Tombs, Tiananmen Square, the Summer Palace, Lama Temple, the night market and some of the Beijing hutongs. To Georgia Strange, a professor in the Lamar Dodd School of Art at UGA, “Travel to China for the first time was like jumping into fast-moving water. The country seemed so different at first and yet familiar – from food to fashion and even to the research universities. The China trip made my world bigger and now pushes me to think bigger about goals

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for education in the 21st century.” Ginger Durham, manager of faculty development at the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, pointed out the advantages of a cohort-based program, “What enhanced the experience for me was to travel with a cohort of my peers, whom I have come to know over the past 17 months, and whose expertise and perspectives I could add to my own observations.”

Rather than flying to Shanghai for the second part of the trip, students caught the 200 mph bullet train from Beijing, which travels between the two cities in five hours. In Shanghai, the group visited Shanghai Jiao Tong University where Professor Nian Cai Liu, director of the Center for World-Class Universities and dean of the Graduate School of Education, whose team originated the Shanghai ranking system, discussed the global university rankings and the performance of Asian universities and how he and his colleagues compiled and interpreted the data. At Shanghai’s East China Normal University Professor Guangcai Yan, vice dean of the School of Education Sciences, gave a presentation on how the elite education system functions. For the final two days in Shanghai students chose to explore the city and visit the Shanghai Museum, the Bund, the Pearl Tower, and the Yu Gardens.

The packed schedule was best summed up by Arlene Cash, “Within 24 hours I enjoyed a lecture by one of China’s leading scholars in higher education, toured a university campus which had previously been the estate of an emperor, deployed to another region of the country on one of the world’s fastest rail systems, and ate fungus. In so many ways, this experience was an intellectual, cultural, political and social feast!”

*Elisabeth Hughes*