



FLORIDA  
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BLOG – From China

May 8, 2011

*Welcome to President Mark B. Rosenberg’s blog chronicling his visit to China. The president is sharing commentary, photos and video from his international trip, so be sure to check back in the days ahead to learn more about FIU’s Marriott Tianjin China Program and the students, faculty and administrators who make it a success. Click [here](#) to check out his entry from May 7th. The president wrote today’s entry following the graduation of nearly 170 Chinese students from FIU’s School of Hospitality Management and Tourism on the campus of Tianjin University of Commerce in Tianjin, China.*

You have heard me say many times that we are very good at FIU in turning the impossible into the inevitable. How many times did I hear as FIU’s provost that it would be impossible to develop a fully operational School of Hospitality Management and Tourism in China? If I heard it once from skeptics a decade ago, I heard it countless times.

Yet today, there we stood in a retro art deco-looking auditorium on the campus of Tianjin University of Commerce (TUC) awarding FIU degrees to about 170 hopeful Chinese students. As their families looked on, our students paraded across the stage, receiving their degrees from Interim Dean Joan Remington, and then paused for the obligatory photograph with me. As the new graduates approached me, diploma in hand, I usually gave them a happy “congratulations!” I was startled when one of the first graduates, turning to face the camera, said to me, “I am going to Miami!” Similar statements were made by numerous graduates as the morning proceeded, reminding me that better than 60 of our Tianjin undergraduates are now headed for the Biscayne Bay Campus to complete advanced programs in hospitality.

So today, we have significant teaching capability in China, a major campus presence at the Tianjin University of Commerce, and the confidence of more than 1,000 attending students, many of them graduating and continuing their studies in our hospitality post-graduate courses at Biscayne Bay Campus.

Our presence in Tianjin was made possible by dreamers and doers. On the Chinese side, much credit needs to be given to TUC’s youthful president, Liu Shuhan, a Japanese trained economist, who has been leading the institution for nearly a decade. He was joined by another dreamer and visionary—Wang Shuzu, the city’s former can-do vice mayor. For FIU, former Dean Joe West and then-Associate Dean Joan Remington believed in the initiative from its inception. Remington, in particular, has been powering this initiative over the past few years.

Just how do you turn the impossible into the inevitable? In this case, dreamers and doers collaborated across the oceans and found a way, sometimes against great odds, to ensure that one day FIU's program could benefit thousands at a campus on the other side of the world. Now, paradoxically, those who are benefitting in Tianjin have announced that they are "going to Miami" to continue their advanced educations! There are many sweet ironies in life—this, however, is the one worth mentioning today!

Our most sincere congratulations to our graduates and new FIU alumni!