



**Address to the United Association of Chinese Students
Scholars and Alumni in Miami (UACSSA)**

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on November 12, 2011**



This speech was presented to UACSSA (United Association of Chinese Students Scholars and Alumni in Miami) was officially recognized with certification from the State of Florida. The group is a non-profit organization which unites the CSSAs (Chinese Students and Scholars Associations) from FIU, UM, STU, MDC, FAU, and Nova on November 12, 2011.

Good morning. It is my pleasure to welcome you to Florida International University. At FIU, we believe in the power of partnerships to address the world's most critical issues, including providing our students with a 21st century education that allows them to compete in the global marketplace. As such, we are proud of the collaborations we have formed to increase educational opportunities for students in South Florida and students in China.

A shining example is the groundbreaking program established by FIU's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management in partnership with the Chinese government at the Tianjin University of Commerce. This program has been successful in increasing opportunities for students in China to pursue careers in this competitive industry. At the same time, it has allowed FIU students from Miami to study in Tianjin as well, giving them the opportunity to learn firsthand about China's emerging tourism industry. Our mutual success in Tianjin has sparked a number of exciting and promising opportunities. We are establishing new programs in Tianjin in public administration, management information systems and teaching English as a second language.

We also are working on programs at Tianjin Foreign Studies University, Qingdao University, Qufu Normal University, and Binzhou Medical University. We also are excited about our partnership with the Tianjin Hi-Tech Holding Group to establish the Tianjin Science and Technology Innovation Incubation Park. This park will be an innovation and incubation platform and FIU is proud to play a role in promoting it here in the United States, helping to attract high-tech projects and collaborative ventures that will help make the park a success. Another great example is our collaboration with Qingdao to establish a Wine and Food Festival. This festival demonstrates how we are able to promote cultural and economic exchanges by leveraging our respective strengths.

FIU brings its experience with the South Beach Wine and Food Festival and Qingdao brings its experience as one of the most important wine-producing regions in China, and a major tourism center. FIU is fortunate to be located in one of the world's most exciting international cities and the gateway to Latin America. Because of our unique position and our relationship with Chinese institutions, we have established an

Academy for Sino-Latino Trade that will allow us to explore economic development opportunities between China, Latin America and the United States.

The real success of these partnerships and programs is in the person to person exchanges that they foster. Just as you have come together as a community of scholars who are promoting multicultural exchanges, many of our students both here and in China have taken advantage of the unique educational opportunities our institutions have created. These opportunities include a dual degree program established between our College of Business Administration and four universities in China. This program allows students to obtain graduate degrees at their home universities in China and a second graduate business degree here at FIU, in less time than it would typically take to complete two master's degrees.

These are just some of the many Chinese students who have enriched FIU's student life and contributed to the vibrant, international energy on campus. Since 2008, the number of students who have enrolled at FIU from China has doubled, from 211 to 449. I'd like to tell you about one of those students. It's a story that begins with a billboard and a young woman named Yue Wang. Yue is from Tianjin, China. After obtaining her bachelor's degree in English, she began thinking about studying abroad. As she contemplated her educational future, one day, in her hometown, she passed by a billboard that caught her attention. It was for a school called Florida International University.

Later, she discussed this university with her uncle, who knew someone who had attended FIU's hospitality program in Tianjin and liked it. She also consulted with a college coordinator who said that if Yue were accepted to FIU in Miami it would change her life. Yue applied to FIU and was accepted in the Asian Studies program. She was excited about living and studying in South Florida, although it brought its challenges. She had learned formal English back home and had to get used to everyday American English - classmates who greeted her with a "Hey, how are ya?" instead of "Hello. How do you do?" But she adapted and learned from the cultural differences, picking up phrases in other languages from fellow students, tasting food from different countries, even co-founding a ballroom dancing club on campus. And while most people Yue met at FIU were friendly I'm sad to say that she ran into one student who was not. In one class, a classmate told her she should not participate in a group presentation because she spoke English with an accent. Yue was hurt by his comment, but the other group members spoke up in her defense. She remembers that a classmate said "This is an international university. We all have something to contribute." They asked the group member who offended Yue to leave the group and, encouraged by her classmates and professor, Yue made a successful presentation to the entire class. Last May, Yue graduated with her master's in Asian Studies and she's currently exploring job opportunities where she can use her language skills and her knowledge of Chinese and American culture. Her life goal is to become an entrepreneur and eventually move back to China, where she can continue to apply her skills and experience.

Yue's story represents how small our 21st Century world really is. A billboard for a university in Miami can change the life of a student in China. And that student's journey shows us how we can learn from one another. In doing so, we break down the borders between us in a way that contributes to a bright and prosperous future for both of our countries.