The IIE Andrew Heiskell Awards For Innovation in International Education

The Institute of International Education (IIE) created these awards in 2001 to promote and honor the most outstanding initiatives being conducted in international higher education by IIENetwork member universities and colleges. We are particularly interested in highlighting innovative initiatives that address a specific need, remove institutional barriers, and broaden the base of participation in international teaching and learning on campus. A winning initiative does not have to be the biggest or oldest. It should bring new approaches and new resources to bear on addressing a need or taking advantage of a new opportunity. By recognizing excellence and innovation, the Institute hopes to encourage the expansion and creation of programs based on these successful models. There are four award categories for 2012.

For more information and to view profiles of previous winners, please visit www.iie.org/HeiskellAwards.

Award Eligibility and Details

- Only IIENetwork member institutions are eligible to apply. *(**Note**: AACC members are also eligible to apply for the Internationalizing the Community College category. For partnership categories, at least one of the partnering institutions must be an IIENetwork member)*.
- Nominations will be reviewed by the internal and external Heiskell Award Selection Committees in October and November. Winners will be contacted in December 2011.
- Winning programs will be recognized at IIE's Best Practices Conference in New York City on March 9, 2012. All winning programs will be showcased on the IIENetwork website and in the *IIENetworker* magazine. Winners will be presented with an award certificate and a $1,000 prize (shared by winning institutions in the partnership category).

The 2012 Andrew Heiskell Award Categories

Category 1: Internationalizing the Campus

Advancing curriculum development, fostering international opportunities and creatively integrating international students into university life.

Category 2: Study Abroad

Providing innovative programs and services to make study abroad accessible to a broader student population.

Category 3: Best Practices in International Partnerships

Recognizing strategic, comprehensive and innovative international partnership efforts.

Category 4: Internationalizing the Community College Campus

Creating innovative programs and services, including study abroad, to make international opportunities accessible to community college students. *(IIE & AACC members are eligible to apply.)*

Note: *With the exception of Category 1, please submit nominations that focus on a particular program or initiative.*

Application Instructions

- Please complete the attached application by **October 14, 2011** and email your nomination, along with a letter of support from your institution's President or Chief Academic Officer, to **HeiskellAwards@iie.org**.

- If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Reader X (10.1.0), please download this free program before completing this form.
- Each time content is added to the application, please use the ***Save As*** option to save your application.

With questions about nominating your program for the IIE Andrew Heiskell Awards for Innovation in International Education, contact (212) 984-5367 or HeiskellAwards@iie.org.

INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Part I: Basic Information

Heiskell Award Category: 3: Best Practices in International Partne

Name of Institution: Victoria University, Australia and Univer

Carnegie Classification (for U.S. institutions): N/A

City/State/Country: Australia

Name of Program: VU/UTEP Partnership program

Total Student Population: VU - 54,000 UTEP - 27,000

Program Website: vu.edu.au and utep.edu

Name of Main Contact: Susan Young

Title of Main Contact: Executive Dean, Victoria University College

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Name of Press Contact: Nick Gadd

Title of Press Contact: International Communications Manager

Tel of Press Contact: + 61 3 9919 1525

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How long has your program been in operation? Four years (2007-2011)

How many participants are involved in your program or specific program activities annually?

Overall involvement is around 200 students and flow on impact to many more within the Libraries.

What is the targeted audience(s) for your Program? ☑ Current Students ☑ Faculty ☑ Administrators

☐ Alumni ☑ College/University Community ☐ Local Community ☐ Other (Specify)

Part II: Short Answer

Summary of Program (100 word limit):

Victoria University, Australia (VU) and University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) share the goal of providing an excellent and accessible educational experience for the new student populations of the 21st century. Our students are from culturally diverse and educationally disrupted backgrounds, who are often the first in their families to gain a degree. Our partnership links students, faculty and staff in both institutions and has led to major innovations in the way both universities operate. Three programs are the cornerstones: the Global Learning Community, Student Employment and Exchange, and Library Exchange. Many other initiatives are being added as the partnership evolves.

Part II: Short Answer Continued

How does your program contribute to internationalization on campus? (240 word limit)

Through the Global Learning Community, students of both institutions study joint subjects, learn about each other, and link up via video conferencing and social networking in collaborative classroom experiences. Initially offered to entering students, course offerings have been expanded to include advanced students and graduate programs. This is the first step for students in building a relationship with their peers in the United States or Australia, achieved without expensive travel.
The Student Employment and Exchange Program brings students from each university to spend a semester studying and working at the partner institution. As most students are from low income backgrounds, they need to work to support their studies, hence a traditional exchange experience would be beyond their means. Many students have little experience of interacting with people outside their own community and the impact has been profound. UTEP students have shared their cultures (mainly Hispanic) on campus at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia, and have visited Queensland, Sydney and New Zealand as well. VU's students have shared their cultures on campus at UTEP, and visited locations in Texas and New Mexico. The student employment exchange currently involves seven students per year from each university, with further growth planned for future years. Several additional disciplines are exploring ways to map VU and UTEP curricula onto each other, creating opportunities for joint courses and student exchanges.

Describe how your program is replicable and innovative, relative to your target audience, for your institution and/or in the field? If your program is more than 10 years old, what are you doing to keep it current and/or make it more innovative? (230 word limit)

The crucial breakthrough came when we realised that because many students at both universities are from low-income backgrounds, we needed solutions that did not involve great expense and enabled them to earn an income. So we have enabled the students to gain an international experience through extensive use of technology, without costly travel, and we have set up an exchange system that sees students trading jobs as well as locations. While a Students as Staff program was well established at UTEP, it is relatively new to Victoria University.
We have worked together to create innovative joint subjects relevant to students of both universities, and we have made these courses accessible through videoconferencing technology and shared resources on social networking sites. These experiences prepare students to interact with others in a globalised economy. We are expanding the program with initiatives in areas such as creative writing, health sciences, accounting, education and social work, so more students can benefit.
The Library Exchange has led to a major innovation at UTEP, which has transformed its library from a traditional library to an active hub for student learning, after seeing VU's unique library/learning commons.
The success of this program depends on our partner institutions sharing key characteristics and goals, in providing an excellent student experience, and could be replicated by other universities in similar circumstances.

What has been the impact of your program on your target audience and/or on your campus (include specific data on program and student outcomes)? (240 word limit)

The Global Learning Community (GLC) has greatly enhanced students' understanding of each other's countries and the contexts in which they live and study, without leaving their home campus. The learning extends from challenging basic stereotypes to intellectual engagement with new joint subjects. The experience of using technology across international boundaries is valuable preparation for the globalised workforce.
The Students as Staff concept, whereby students are employed on campus, did not exist at Victoria University until VU staff learned about the idea from UTEP, where it was well established. Today, VU has an active Students as Staff program involving 1,000 students - a major achievement in just a few years. This is a particularly important program for universities such as ours which have a large cohort of low income students, who need to work to support their studies. The students who have participated in the exchanges have been profoundly impacted - for many it has been their first experience outside their own community.
UTEP learned from Victoria University the concept of the library as a learning commons. Their interest originated from the visit made by a UTEP delegation to VU, during which UTEP delegates were impressed by VU's innovative library learning space and service delivery involving student rovers and peer support. As a result, UTEP has revisualised the university as a place for active student learning, adapting the Australian concept to fit its own setting and its own students.
An outstanding level of collaborative collegiality has developed between VU and UTEP academic and administrative staff, extending to joint conference presentations, research based on the Global Learning Community, visits and delegations.

Part III: Program Description (1,300 word limit)

Describe the key components of your institution's initiative.

The partnership has three key components which over the period 2007-2011 have achieved a notable maturity and success:

1) Global Learning Community
Through the Global Learning Community, students of both universities study joint subjects, learn about each other's countries, and link up via video conferencing and social networking.
The two universities have worked together to create innovative joint credit-earning subjects such as 'Imaging nations, imagining regions: the making of cultural diversity in Australia and on the US-Mexican border ' and 'Stories across cultures: mobile worlds and the politics of belonging amongst diasporic communities in Australia and the United States'. The classes comprise a mixture of on-site classes in each location, student web interaction, and videoconferences. A new Ning.com site was launched to increase the amount of collaboration between students of VU and UTEP. The course material is totally collaborative and assessment is integrated, so VU and UTEP students undertake the same assignments. Plans are well advanced to expand joint programs into other faculties and disciplines, in particular creative writing, advanced accounting and a graduate seminar for health science students.
The Global Learning Community (GLC) has enhanced students' understanding of each other's countries and the contexts in which they live and study. This extends from correcting basic stereotypes (such as the misconception that Australians live among kangaroos bouncing down the street) to the sophisticated concepts covered by the new joint subjects. These collaborative learning experiences are the first step for students in building a relationship with their peers in the partner university. As many of our students have never interacted with people outside their own community, this way of learning is transformative. It opens their eyes to the world and provides experience that will enhance their future employability in the global economy.
2) Student exchanges
Our student exchange program is unlike those offered by traditional universities. Because our students are from low-income families, they need to work to support their studies. Therefore, we have developed a program enabling students to trade positions with their peers at the other university. For example, an undergraduate computer science student working on web design for online courses at UTEP is exchanging his position with a VU student with a similar major and work assignment. Five students from each university were exchanged for combined study and on-campus employment in the second half of 2010; in 2011, the number increased to eight students from each, with a plan to grow this number every year. Video conferencing and social media communications took place between students and supervisors during the exchanges, with evaluations indicating the experience was very positive for the students, their supervisors and the universities. Students self report development across a range of graduate capabilities such as working autonomously, collaboratively, and managing learning and career development opportunities.
Teleconferences have been held between VU Student Leadership Council and UTEP student leaders to explore differences and commonalities in student leadership roles at the two universities. The discussions led to the inaugural VU Students leadership conference, developed with planning input from UTEP, attended by more than 150 students. A UTEP exchange student, employed within VU, was involved in the development of a new website for the VU student union.
The Students as Staff program is a new innovation for Victoria University, and has in a short time become very popular with our student body. VU now has 1,000 of its own students employed on campus in areas such as IT and student amenities - a substantial and rapid take-up that demonstrates the value of the program to our students and has a significant impact on their ability to finance their studies.

Part III: Program Description (1,300 word limit) Continued

3) Library collaboration
Since 2008 the libraries at Victoria University and UTEP have developed a strong relationship of co-operation and shared projects. They have many areas of common interest, in particular the desire to improve the model of integrated educational services at both locations.
During a visit to Victoria University, UTEP's Nancy Hill explored the innovative learning space design of the VU Learning Commons sites and its service model. This includes a student rover service, in which students provide mentoring and peer support, as well as customised learning and discussion spaces. Since returning to UTEP, Nancy has formed a committee of Learning Commons partners (Library, IT, Writing Centre, Maths Centre) to develop a version of VU's service model tailored for the UTEP library environment. The UTEP library has been transformed into a place with computers, coffee shop, collaborative learning spaces, printing, and enrolment services available after hours. The new approach makes the library a more accessible and appealing place for the UTEP student body. One of the exchange students from UTEP, Karen Richart, worked as a Student Rover and student assistant at VU, and although she was new to the university, she achieved an above average level when her capabilities as a Rover were tested. Library staff from both universities have collaborated and shared experiences on areas of common interest, including selection of library search engines and installation of cataloguing systems. Staff have contributed information resources to support the Global Learning Communities program, and provided support for the Ning.com social networking site.

There are several other areas in which UTEP and VU are working together, sharing knowledge and best practices. Although the three programs above are the most developed, the following are also worthy of note:
- VU and UTEP are collaborating on a program titled 'Flag and Follow' which links educational researchers, institutional researchers, and computer science data mining experts to develop a research plan of what it means to work with the 21st century student. This collection and analysis of student demographic data will be of enormous value in understanding our student populations and developing services for them.
- The faculties of Business and Law at VU and School of Business at UTEP are working together on a range of projects, including the delivery of International Financial Reporting Standards, global business and management simulation activities using CAPSIM, and shared professional development activities for faculty.
- UTEP and VU are mapping curricula across Education programs to identify two semesters at different year levels that lend themselves to student exchange. The mapping focusses on programs in bilingual education, special education, and maths and science. The aim is to exchange five students studying Education each year. Similar work is proceeding in the area of Social Work, and again the plan is to move quickly to exchanging five students per year.

A wide range of activities, including but not limited to those cited, will be reported on in November 2011. The current memorandum of understanding is due to be redrafted in early 2012, taking account of the development of the relationship. This partnership now touches each university in a multitude of innovative ways, with the overarching goal of enhancing the international experience of our student populations.

Part IV: Endorsement Letter(s):

Please attach a signed letter from your President or Chief Academic Officer endorsing your program's nomination when you email your completed nomination form. Nomination packages may also include one additional letter of support. *(**Note**: Institutions applying for the Partnership category should include a letter from each of the partnering institutions, and may include up to one additional letter of support).*