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Potential explored for establishing ties with universities in the Middle East and India

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The Morocco Initiative is just one part of the University's ongoing effort to promote international understanding and opportunities both on campus and abroad.

In addition to Al Akhawayn University (AUI) in Morocco, members of IWU's administration made recent visits to Al Zaytoonah University and Arab Open University in Amman, Jordan, as well as several universities in India.

The initiatives with the universities in Morocco and Jordan began two years ago, when President Richard F. Wilson attended a conference in Istanbul, Turkey, hosted by the Hollings Center, a U.S.-funded, non-governmental organization, which helps promote ties between the United States and predominantly Muslim countries.

During the conference, Wilson met with representatives from higher-education institutions in Muslim countries, including AUI and Al Zaytoonah. IWU submitted a grant request to the Hollings Center and received funds for University faculty and administration to make initial trips to these universities.

This fall, Illinois Wesleyan also welcomed two Moroccan professors to campus. Saloua Zerhouni, a Fulbright Visiting Scholar from Mohammed V University--Souissi in Rabat, will teach courses in Arab history as well as "Women, Gender and Politics in North Africa." Accompanying her was her husband, AUI Professor Driss Maghraoui, who will serve as an adjunct political science professor.

"We are building bridges," said Provost Beth Cunningham, who was one of 10 people nationwide chosen to visit universities in India as part of a program through Fulbright and the United States-India Education Foundation. Traveling in March, Cunningham and other administrators worked with university officials in the cities Delhi, Mumbai and Bengauru.

"When we meet face-to-face with faculty and administrators from other nations, we create links and the foundation of international and cultural understanding," said Cunningham. "Illinois Wesleyan is becoming a global campus. We are carving paths that will help students for generations to come."



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