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Freeman Foundation Awards \$400,000 Grant to Illinois Wesleyan

Jan. 28, 2016

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Thanks to the success of 17 Illinois Wesleyan University students [interning in Asia last year](#), the Freeman Foundation has approved a grant of \$400,000, payable over two years, to provide the same opportunity to nearly double the number of students.

The Freeman Foundation grant covers airfare, housing, a living allowance, and all internship placement and visa costs for up to 32 students to intern in Asia this summer or while studying abroad at Lingnan University in Hong Kong during the next academic year. The program is open to current sophomores or juniors of any major who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

“The principal goal of the IWU Freeman Asia Internship Program is to provide Illinois Wesleyan students with experience working and interacting with Asians in a real work environment,” said Professor of Sociology Teddy Amoloza, who has served as director of the project from its inception.

“This grant will provide a large number of students the opportunity to experience Asia not as tourists or short-time travelers, but as workers who rolled up their sleeves and did the nitty-gritty work their on-site supervisors assigned to them. They will learn and experience both the culture of the work place and that of larger society.”

She added, “This will be a transforming experience in their undergraduate careers.” Amoloza has worked closely with staff at the [Hart Career Center](#) and the [International Office](#) and with Asian studies and International studies faculty to implement the program.

Provost and Dean of the Faculty Jonathan Green noted the IWU Freeman Asia Internship program engages three core tenets (social justice, environmental sustainability and global citizenship) of the University’s mission within the context of experiential learning.



The famed rice terraces in the Philippines seen in this photo from the blog of 2015 Freeman Asia Intern Kirsten Slaughter '16



Hong Kong

In addition to increasing the number of students who can participate, the additional funds will allow Illinois Wesleyan to expand to more locations. Additional placement opportunities under the new grant include the Institute of East and West Studies at Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea; Akita (Japan) International University; the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, the Philippine government’s principal food and nutrition research arm; and Human Nature, a top Filipino brand of natural and organic cosmetics and personal products.

Because of the success of last year’s program, the following organizations again will participate: the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Los Baños, Philippines; Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm, a social business incubator in Bulacan, Philippines; Lingnan University in Hong Kong; and Technos International College in Tokyo.

With offices in New York and Honolulu, the Freeman Foundation works to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the United States and countries of east Asia. An additional benefit of the program introduces Illinois Wesleyan students to work and live alongside people from other nationalities as well as those from the host country. Nicole Chlebek '16, an environmental studies and sociology double major who interned last year, [wrote of the international experience in her blog](#): “From just walking down the hallways of my dorm, we have met people from India, London, France, all over the States, Iran, Korea, and Australia....which has made for deep, fun, and intellectual conversations I never thought I would have...It’s crazy how fast a group of people can become your family away from home.”

