

Alfred University joins SUNY's China 150 initiative; to welcome five students

8/01/08

Five students from the Sichuan Province of China, an area badly damaged in a massive earthquake in May, will arrive at Alfred in mid-August to spend the next academic year at the Kazuo Inamori School of Engineering at Alfred University. The students are coming to Alfred as part of a State University of New York initiative (<http://www.suny.edu/sunyN...>) that will allow them to continue their education and return to their country "to help rebuild the local economy and infrastructure in the earthquake impacted region," according to the SUNY press release. Twenty-two SUNY units will be enrolling a total of 150 Chinese students for the coming academic year. SUNY is seeking \$3.5 million in donations to cover the cost of educating the students for a year. Four women and one man, all of whom are enrolled in materials science curricula in their home institutions, will be enrolled in materials science classes, which are offered through Alfred University's statutory unit, the New York State College of Ceramics. The state-supported engineering curricula also include biomedical materials engineering science; ceramic engineering, and glass science engineering. "We are delighted to be part of SUNY's effort to assist these students," said Dr. Suzanne Buckley, Alfred University's provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. "I appreciate the work of all those on campus who were able to bring this initiative to fruition in such a short amount of time." "We believe we can offer the students access to an internationally acclaimed program in their chosen field of study in a welcoming environment," said Dr. William C. LaCourse, associate provost for Statutory Affairs; as such, he is the head of the College of Ceramics, which includes the School of Art & Design as well as the engineering programs. No special classroom accommodation will be required. The students have all passed a rigorous test indicating they are fluent in English. Buckley and LaCourse are working with Petra Visscher, director of International Programs at AU, to make sure the students receive a warm welcome to Alfred. The students are scheduled to arrive at the SUNY Maritime campus Aug. 15. Someone from the University will meet them, said Visscher, and accompany them on a tour of New York City and then to Alfred, where they will arrive Aug. 17, just in time for the start of the University's international student orientation program. "Several engineering graduate students will be acting as mentors," said Visscher, and each will also be assigned a "friendship family" who will host them for dinners, take them shopping, help them become immersed in the community, and welcome them as guests during University breaks. "We are still looking for some host families, Visscher said, asking that anyone interested contact the Office of International Programs: 607.871.2269. While housing will be arranged for the students, they and other international students will likely be arriving on campus without bedding or towels. Anyone with good quality new or used items to donate is also asked to call the Office of International Programs, 607.871.2269.