

## **Higby named an honorary citizen of Jingdezhen, China**

10/14/04

Internationally renowned ceramic artist and Alfred University professor Wayne Higby was named an honorary citizen of Jingdezhen, China, for his efforts in co-founding an institute of ceramic art in the city where porcelain has been made for more than a thousand years. Jingdezhen mayor Xu Aimin presented Higby with the distinction during a ceremony in the historic city - the first time a foreign national has been named an honorary citizen of the city that is famous for producing some of the world's finest pottery. The mayor also presented Higby with a Ming Dynasty farmhouse and land, which is being turned into a museum honoring Chinese hand-made objects such as wooden buckets and bamboo chairs. "All of the hand-made culture is disappearing," Higby said. The artist first visited China in 1991 to present a lecture on his work at an international ceramic arts conference. Since then Higby has become one of the most recognized and respected international ceramic artists known in China, and he has visited the country many times. Together with Jiansheng Li, who earned an MFA in ceramic art from Alfred, Higby established The San Bao International Ceramic Art Institute. Literally meaning "three treasures" in Chinese - rice, tea and porcelain - San Bao is a studio center near Jingdezhen where ceramic artists from around the world can come and work. Higby, who was also recently elected vice president of the International Academy of Ceramics, has established ties between Alfred University and the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, which today has become Jingdezhen University. Higby, who arranged for the first three Chinese nationals to earn MFAs in ceramic art in the United States - all from Alfred, said being named an honorary citizen of Jingdezhen is "an extraordinarily important event in my life." "I think it's also really a milestone in the history of ceramics at Alfred because it's a recognition of the role Alfred has played in Jingdezhen and in facilitating contemporary Chinese ceramic art," Higby said.