Oregon State University, and Vang Lang University in Vietnam to develop an international M.B.A. program. Faculty and students are being recruited for this new program.

Other international students whom Payap strives to serve are from Southeast Asia, including Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Southern China. These students have few options for higher education in their own countries. Payap has received scholarships for Burmese and Chinese students through the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. We are continually seeking to increase our scholarship aid for students from neighboring countries.

We invite ASIANetwork students and faculty to check out the programs at Payap University. We also welcome the opportunity to send our students and faculty for exchanges abroad.

Contact: Martha Butt, <martha@payap.ac.th>; http://www.Payap.ac.th

ASIANetwork LISTSERV HOSTED BY DRURY COLLEGE
ACCESS DIRECTIONS

The asiant-1 listserv is intended to facilitate communication among ASIANetwork members. To subscribe to the list, send an e-mail message addressed to: listproc@lib.drury.edu (Leave the “subject” and other mail header lines blank.)

In the first line of the message type: subscribe asiant-1 Your-first-name Your-last-name. (You don’t have to put your name in caps. You might also remove any signature information if it is added automatically by your mailer.) Once you’ve sent the message, you should receive a message within a minute or two indicating that you’ve been added to the list, plus instructions for receiving additional information about how to use the list.

If you have any difficulty with subscribing, please send e-mail to Charles Ess at either <asianet@lib.drury.edu> or <cmess@lib.drury.edu>.

Contact: Charles Ess, Philosophy and Religion Department, Drury College, 900 N. Benton Ave., Springfield, MO 65802; Tel.: 417-873-7230; Fax: 417-873-7435
http://www.drury.edu/info/departments/phil-relg/ess.html

JAPAN INFORMATION ACCESS PROJECT
THE ASIA SCHOLAR’S ACCESS TO POLICY

Mindy Kotler
Director, Japan Information Access Project

Mindy Kotler studied Chinese culture and language at Smith College and received an M.A. in International Studies at Yale University. She was a member of a 1999 ASIANetwork Conference panel, “ASIANetwork and Public Policy Debate.”

The Japan Information Access Project is a non-profit research center strengthening understanding of Japanese and Northeast Asian science, technology, finance, security, and public policy. Established in 1991, the project educates its members, policymakers, and the public to use knowledge of Japan and Asia to increase national strategic competitiveness and security. The goal is to expand the intellectual infrastructure of the policy community.

Never has the need for good information and analysis of Asian politics, economies, and cultures been greater among Washington’s policymakers. Unfortunately, the range of expertise and opinion available to officials and journalists is limited. Washington relies on a handful of think tank scholars, journalists, and consultants with a narrow range of specialties.

To expand the policy community’s knowledge of Asia, the Japan Information Access Project seeks to introduce the best of American Asian scholarship to our
nation's capital. It hopes to further this goal by working with scholars and other experts to make their research on Asia timely and policy-relevant and with the Washington policymaking community to design appropriate publications and programs. We inform those outside the Beltway about emerging Asia-relevant issues, and we assist those in Washington to locate and use the best information and analysis about Asia.

Unifying the project's work is a belief that the Japan and Asia scholars should not be content with satisfying the needs of those who already are knowledgeable. The new information professional can not rest as a gatekeeper or a distant authority of exotica. The Asia expert needs to be a guide, a trainer, and an innovator. The goal is not to create an avalanche of information, but to create citizens who are independent problem-solvers and who possess the know-how to use, Asia-related information to address contemporary business and policy challenges.

Why Japan?

Despite the Japan Project's name, the focus of our work is not solely Japan. China, Taiwan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and South Asia are included in our publications and programs. However, Japan serves as a prism through which to view Asia's trade, economic, security, and foreign relations. As the region's most important economic and military power, Japan remains the country from which Asia-Pacific policy decisions must be weighed.

JIAP activities

The Japan Information Access Project organizes meetings and private briefings that bring together experts and policymakers on Japanese and Northeast Asian science, technology, finance, security, and public policy. It publishes directories, newsletters, translations, and regular reports designed to give researchers and policymakers consistent and easy access to information and experts on Japan and its neighbors. It tracks legislation and policies in Washington and Tokyo affecting trade, finance, information technology, science, security, and U.S.-Japan/Asian relations.

JIAP develops and identifies innovative electronic means to deliver information resources, research, and policy information. It assists members on how to structure and disseminate their policy research on Japan and Northeast Asia, and identifies scholars and innovative research on contemporary Japan and Northeast Asia for the policy community.

Background

The Japan Information Access Project evolved from the current director's efforts in 1991 to organize an informal American delegation to the Third International Conference on Japanese Information in Science, Technology, and Commerce held in France. Working closely with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Asia-Pacific Technology Program, Japan researcher, Mindy L. Kotler, raised funds to cover partially the costs to commission twelve American academic papers and send nine representatives to the conference.

In the course of the fundraising, it became clear that a need existed for a consistent, neutral effort to study and understand how Japan generates and holds science, technology, and policy information. Despite all the scholarship on Japan, little was being distributed or used effectively. A program was needed to make information about and from Japan meaningful and relevant and to show the relationships between Japan and the rest of the world. Thus, the Japan Information Access Project evolved into a resource for both scholars and decision-makers.

Funding

Currently, the Japan Information Access Project is funded by revenue from memberships, publications, and cooperative efforts with universities and other nonprofit organizations. The project has received small grants from the Japan-United States Friendship Commission, Kearny Foundation, Council on Library Resources, Asia-Pacific Technology Program of the Department of Commerce, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, National Center for Manufacturing Sciences, and the University of Michigan.

The project has collaboratively planned programs and conferences with the Japan Documentation Center of the Library of Congress, the University of New Mexico U.S.-Japan Center, University City Science Center, the Asian Law Program of the University of Washington/Seattle, and the twelve university-based U.S.-Japan Industry and Technology Management Training Programs (JIMT). The project neither receives nor solicits funding directly from Japanese sources.

Publications

The publications of the Japan Information Access Project help scholars, researchers, and policymakers find, use, and understand Japanese and Northeast Asian information. The programs are accompanied by briefing materials and resource guides, most of which can be found on the project's website. Scholarly working papers on Asian public policy issues are designed especially for the website. The project's conference proceedings have included research on Asian intellectual property, Japanese public policy, international antitrust issues, Japanese deregulation, and Japanese telecommunications.
Japan Washington Watch (JWW), a weekly e-mail, provides a snapshot of the news events, hearings, meetings, reports, and editorials that might concern a Washington policymaker. The Watch is intended to encourage experts outside the Beltway to respond to breaking events. The Japan Access Alert Bulletin is a bi-monthly guide to information resources on Japanese and Asian science, technology, economics, politics, and security. Recent issues have addressed topics such as Asian values, Asia's financial crisis, and Washington's Asia policymakers.

Programs

The Japan Project holds public programs and private briefings on emerging policy issues. Most programs are open to the public and are covered by the press. We also hold major policy research conferences.

The private briefings range from the Pentagon Study Group on Japan (PSG), a discussion series for defense technology officials, to individual meetings between scholars and officials on current issues such as Japanese antitrust and regulatory reform, bureaucratic change, telecommunications, banking, and security. Thomas Cargill, University of Nevada/Reno, for example, briefed the Senate banking committee and IMF officials on Japan's banking crisis.

To facilitate research dissemination, the project maintains and updates a database of Washington government, think tank, and media professionals whose work concerns contemporary Japan and Northeast Asia. Specialized topical lists (such as antitrust information) are researched and drawn up for specific programs. Each program invitation list is tailored to the speaker's expertise.

The project has worked with the Library of Congress, the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission, and a number of universities to plan relevant and timely Japan and Asia-related programs. Major conferences with scholars and policy officials have been held on Japanese deregulation, international antitrust issues, Japanese public policy, Japanese telecommunications policy, Asian manufacturing, and Asian intellectual property.

Recent public lunchtime briefings ranged from a formal National Press Club presentation with Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Richard Fisher to a brown bag lunch discussion with two young scholars on their dissertations examining Japan's aerospace industry. Over this past year, scholars from Purdue University, the University of Georgia, Rice University, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology have given talks on Chinese and Japanese export controls, Asia's financial crisis and Japan, Japan's science and technology policy, German and Japanese competition policy, and Asia's energy security and the potential of Central Asia.

Membership

The Project's membership includes over 300 individuals and 30 institutions representing a wide variety of academic, governmental, research, and corporate institutions, as well as trade groups, the media, and other nonprofit organizations from around the United States and the world. Among our members are U.S. governmental offices and agencies concerned with Asia such as the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Department of Commerce's Asia-Pacific Technology Policy Office, the Department of State's Office of Japan Affairs, the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research, the National Science Foundation's Office of East Asia and Pacific Affairs, the U.S. Peace Institute, and the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission.

Academic centers of research on Asia include the MIT Japan Program, Harvard University's Program on U.S.-Japan Relations, University of Michigan's Japan Technology Management Program, and the Utah Asian Studies Consortium.

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A VOTE OF THANKS

The ASIANetwork thanks the retiring members of the Board of Directors whose terms expired in April of 1999: Teodora Amoloza, Illinois Wesleyan University and Thomas Coburn, St. Lawrence University. It is customary for the retiring Chair of the Board to serve a fourth year on the Board in an ex-officio capacity. As the 1998-1999 Chair of the Board, Suzanne Barnett, University of Puget Sound, holds the ex-officio position during 1999-2000. ASIANetwork Board members volunteer much time on each of several Board committees. The ASIANetwork is grateful for their devoted service.