



MINNESOTA'S PRIVATE COLLEGES  
COUNCIL • FUND • RESEARCH FOUNDATION

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Minnesota College Students Gain New Opportunity to Study in China Through Partnership with One-of-a-kind Liberal Arts College**

ST. PAUL, Jan. 30, 2007 — Student exchanges between Minnesota and China will grow, with the signing of a new agreement between the Minnesota Private College Council and a unique Chinese liberal arts college. Starting this year, students and faculty from 17 private colleges will begin studying and working at United International College (UIC) in Zhuhai, China.

“Minnesota’s unique and historic connections to China are further strengthened by this agreement, said Dan Miller, Ph.D., president and CEO, Excorp Medical Inc., and a board member of the Minnesota Private College Council. “By enhancing our understanding of the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s economic powerhouse, we greatly benefit both the academic and business communities in Minnesota.”

The 17 institutions in the Minnesota Private College Council have longstanding ties with China, with some dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The colleges have 15 exchange programs in place that will be complemented by the new partnership with UIC. Minnesota students from all member institutions will have an opportunity to study side-by-side with Chinese students in a Chinese institution where all courses are taught in English.

“This partnership is another sign of the private colleges’ commitment to deepening students’ understanding of the world we live in today,” said James Peterson, Ph.D., president, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter. “More than half of the Minnesota college students who study abroad come from the state’s 17 private colleges.”

There are many firsts associated with UIC and the partnership:

- UIC is the product of the first partnership between a mainland educational institution, Beijing Normal University, and a Hong Kong counterpart, Hong Kong Baptist College.
- When UIC opened earlier this year, it was the first fully sanctioned liberal arts college to be created in China in more than 50 years.
- The agreement with the Minnesota Private College Council is the first UIC has reached with an American college or group of colleges.

“Reaching this agreement with Minnesota’s private colleges — our first such agreement with American higher education — signals UIC’s commitment to the liberal arts and our commitment to creating meaningful international partnerships,” said Edmund Kwok, Ph.D., UIC vice president.

Located in the southeastern part of the country, near Macao and Hong Kong, UIC opened last spring and now has 1,200 students and 11 majors. Enrollment is expected to grow to 4,000 undergraduates

and 500 graduate students. Along with Minnesota students studying at UIC, Chinese students are expected to come to Minnesota to study as well.

“We have a meaningful opportunity to contribute to China’s reintroduction of the liberal arts into its higher education system,” said David B. Laird, Jr., president, Minnesota Private College Council. “As we’ve seen here in Minnesota, a liberal arts education has so many benefits, including the intellectual skills that are critical in our world’s rapidly changing knowledge-based economy.”

Minnesota is a leading state for educational ties to China. Along with the private college’s strong academic links, the University of Minnesota has been active for more than a century, including as an educator of large numbers of Chinese students.

### **About the Minnesota Private College Council**

*The Minnesota Private College Council represents 17 of the state’s most respected four-year, liberal arts colleges and universities as well as more than 57,000 students. These institutions award 30 percent of the baccalaureate degrees in the state. They are:*

<i>Augsburg College</i>	<i>Gustavus Adolphus College</i>
<i>Bethany Lutheran College</i>	<i>Hamline University</i>
<i>Bethel University</i>	<i>Macalester College</i>
<i>Carleton College</i>	<i>Minneapolis College of Art and Design</i>
<i>College of Saint Benedict</i>	<i>Saint John’s University</i>
<i>College of St. Catherine</i>	<i>Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota</i>
<i>College of St. Scholastica</i>	<i>St. Olaf College</i>
<i>Concordia College, Moorhead</i>	<i>University of St. Thomas</i>
<i>Concordia University, St. Paul</i>	

*MPCC’s mission is to preserve and enhance quality private higher education and to serve the education and economic needs of our region, while strengthening our cultural and economic fabric. For more information on the Council and its members, visit [www.mnprivatecolleges.org](http://www.mnprivatecolleges.org).*

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