



Gambian President accorded Honorary doctorate degree by Taipei Tech



Interview with Dr. Walter Chen, advisor and director of Gambian Civil Engineering Class



Taipei Tech: Training ground for Gambia's Top Technicians





National Taipei University of Technology

Issue No. 3 · Sept 2012

TAIPEI TECH POST

Gambia Special

Unprecedented in the 100-Year History of Taipei Tech: Gambian President Accorded Honorary Doctorate Degree

by Kevin Lan

H.E. Sheikh Professor Alhaji Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh, the President of the Republic of the Gambia, was accorded by Taipei Tech President Leether Yao an honorary doctorate degree in Business Administration at the Hong-Yu Technology Building on June 27, 2012 in the presence of the university's faculty, students, and alumni. An honorary membership was also conferred on him by the Alumni Association of National Taipei University of Technology.

The event was attended by nearly 300 dignitaries and guests, including President Ma Ying-jeou; the Minister of National Defense; the Minister of Foreign Affairs; the Director-Generals of the Department of Protocol and the Department of African Affairs from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Taiwan's Ambassador to the Gambia; the Director of Technological and Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education; the Ambassador from the Republic of the Gambia, Mr. and Mrs. Alhagie Ebrima N. H.Jarjou; the President and the Dean of Office of International Affairs of National Pingtung University of Science and Technology; officers of the Alumni Association of Taipei Tech; nearly sixty Gambian Students from NYMU, NCCU, MCU, and TMU; and students from the Gambian Civil Engineering Class and Architecture Class of Taipei Tech and the Agriculture Class of NPUST.

The special occasion was also graced by a 76-member delegation from the Gambia including several senior government officials, namely the Gambia's Minister and Permanent Secretary I of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Trade Regional Integration & Employment, Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology, Minister of Works, Construction & Infrastructure, and Secretary General & Head of The Civil Service. The Kabake-Culture, a 16-member Gambian cultural dance group, also came to perform.

Before the ceremony, ten students from the Architecture Class performed an African Welcome Dance, which impressed President Ma and President Jammeh. Students' works were also on display outside the entrance to the main auditorium. Shown at the onset of the ceremony were photos of President Jammeh's visit in 2005, as well as those capturing the Gambian students' life in the campus; the slideshow was accompanied by traditional Gambian music.

(continued on p.2)

f TaipeiTech Ntut

NTUT1

Email : oia@ntut.edu.tw

Editorial Team

Helen Yang
Scully Chiu
Michael Tanangkingsing
Jenny Chen
Lio Lin
Kevin Lan



"From left: Muhammed Dukuray, President Ma, President Jammeh, Alsha Durkuray and President Yao, meeting a 6 month old boy, the product of "Taiwan-Gambia love"

(from p.1)

In his welcome address, President Yao of Taipei Tech remarked that the university's sustained cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2004 has afforded the people from the Gambia an opportunity for further education through the Programs for the Diplomatic Allies. At the same time, President Yao also expressed appreciation for the unique opportunity of being able to assist in the Gambia's national development. As a result of his good governance, outstanding diplomacy, and technological education, President Jammeh was conferred the honorary doctorate degree in Business Administration and the honorary alumni membership on his fourth term as leader of his nation. President Yao also reminded the people of the Gambia and Taiwan that the excellence in which President Jammeh governed his country and his outstanding educational background has inspired him to encourage bilateral cooperation in both diplomacy and education, which has in turn strengthened the ties between both countries. As Taipei Tech was recently accorded the "Model of Technical and Vocational Universities", quality of education for the Gambian students is guaranteed, and coming to Taipei Tech has proven to be the best choice for them.

President Ma Ying-jeou is grateful to Taipei Tech for the efforts exerted in assisting an allied country by offering quality education. This Taiwanese kindness and friendship not only helped enhance the learning of the students but also impressed them very much. "The close cooperation between the two countries has made the Republic of China, Taiwan, and the Republic of the Gambia become more like brothers," President Ma said. He also expressed his

admiration for President Jammeh and congratulated him for obtaining the doctorate degree at a younger age than him.

During the ceremony, President Yao gave President Jammeh a special gift of "Mee-Pang", a product of academic-industry collaboration, as well as a plaque bearing the words, "Geniuses Generating Developments Everywhere", which refers to returning alumni becoming the main contributors of development. Moreover, also present at the occasion which was a pleasant surprise to President Jammeh was a six-month-old boy, the product of "Taiwan-Gambia love" between Muhammed Dukuray, a Gambian student of the Civil Engineering Class, and Alsha Durkuray, a Taiwanese. The baby boy's charming eyes looking at the President and sweet smiles earned sweet kisses and warm hugs from him. This perfectly shows the warm and solid friendship between the two countries. As a symbol of this strong friendship, a pair of chopsticks carved with the names and the maps of the two countries on each side was presented to President Ma by the students from the Civil Engineering Class. Chopsticks always come in pairs; they represent close cooperation, wherein a win-win situation can always be created. Also, a wooden box with every student's signature and blessings from the Architecture Class was also given to President Ma as a gift.

President Jammeh underlined the expression, "very glad," in his speech several times to show the heartfelt honor in receiving the degree as if it were the very first academic degree obtained in his life. More than feeling grateful to Taiwan, President Jammeh

also encouraged the Gambian students to treasure the opportunity of learning in Taiwan. In addition to his gratitude to Taiwan and Taipei Tech for the assistance to the people of Gambia, President Jammeh awarded Taipei Tech with a National Order Medal for its efforts in helping the Gambian students through these recent eight years. Furthermore a Gambian painting was given to President Yao of Taipei Tech as a token of gratitude. The ceremony was concluded by the exciting and interesting performance of African Dance brought by the crew of Kabake from the Gambia.

An easy moment ensued with the lovely rendition of a Chinese song, "You are My Superstar," by Genevieve Haddy Drammeh, a student from the Civil Engineering Class, in front of President Jammeh, after three years of preparation. As the song was being sung, words of thanks by the students were projected on the screen showing their gratitude for the opportunities made possible to them by President Jammeh.



President Yao presents honorary doctorate degree to President Jammeh



African dance performance by the crew of Kabake from Gambia

Interview with Dr. Walter W. Chen, Advisor and Director of Gambian Civil Engineering Class



by Scully Chiu

Dr. Walter W. Chen is a professor at the Department of Civil Engineering, and is the advisor and director of the Gambian Civil Engineering Class. He owns a high reputation of taking care of his students like his own children. In this interview, Dr. Chen shares his stories and relationships with the Gambian students.

Q : Firstly, please tell us a little bit about yourself and your Gambian students.

Chen: I am not someone special. However, the Gambian students that I have had the privilege to work with for the past 4 years are quite exceptional. They were selected by the Gambian government from hundreds of applicants to study at the NTUT campus in Taipei. Everyone in the program is a top student. As Mencius said, 'A Gentleman has three delights,...get from the whole kingdom the most talented individuals, and teach and nourish them; this is the third delight.' (<http://ccontext.org>) This is about it for me.

Q : You've been supervising the Gambian students since 2008, what brought you to work with them particularly?

Chen: I volunteered to supervise the Gambian students and oversee the Gambian Civil Engineering program. I enjoy interacting with international students. This reminds me of the time when I was an international student myself.

Q : Please tell us about some of your personal experiences with the Gambian students which have impressed you the most.

Chen: I enjoy working with the Gambian students and share their enthusiasm for learning. There was no shortage of surprises and excitements. I was constantly amazed by their diligence and creativity. Just recently, one of the students won the 7th ISPRS Student Consortium and WG VI/5 Summer School best presentation award. And another student participated in the 2011 National Design Competition of Commercial Application of Digital Archives (culture and art design group), and became one of the finalists in the competition.

Q : What are the problems/difficulties that you've found your students have?

Chen: I think they have underestimated the difficulty of learning Chinese. Chinese is one of the most difficult languages to learn, and yet they thought the language would come naturally to

them if they study in Taiwan. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Q : Have you had any conflict with your students? How did you overcome them?

Chen: I reason with them and respect their opinions. We haven't come across an issue that we couldn't resolve.

Q : What are the changes that you would like to see in the future in the status of the Gambian students?

Chen: The offering of an all-English Gambian program was an attractive point for the students lacking the basic Chinese language training. But, the students are also missing out on a great opportunity to experience the Chinese/Taiwanese culture through the native language. I'd like to see future students taking intensive Chinese lessons before entering the program.

Dr. Chen always puts himself in the Gambian students' shoes; he is a teacher when he is at school, but he is also a great chaperon of the Gambian students when they are outside of class. He is a great friend that enjoys hanging out with the Gambian students during leisure time and exchanging cultural experiences with each other. Last but not least, he is a bridge between the students and the school. It is great honor to have a wonderful person who teaches at Taipei Tech. Dr. Chen is fluent in English as well as highly competent in his profession in Civil Engineering. Yet, he is humble and possesses a passion for teaching and helping his students. Thank you, Dr. Chen!





TAIPEI TECH: Training Ground for Gambia's Top Technicians

by Lio Lin

With the emerging 'borderless' higher education market, the demand for higher education is increasing world-wide. National Taipei University of Technology (TAIPEI TECH) has set up an excellent example by establishing the Gambian Elite Programs.

In 2004, TAIPEI TECH signed an agreement with the Republic of the Gambia to establish the Gambian Petroleum Program, which offered curriculum specially designed to cultivate gifted Gambian students in developing professional knowledge and technical skills over their four-year undergraduate study. After graduation, these students were awarded bachelor degrees in engineering and expected to contribute to the development of their country. Due to the success of the Gambian Petroleum Program, in 2006, the Republic of the Gambia decided to continue the partnership with TAIPEI TECH and establish more Gambian Elite Programs (Information Technology, Civil Engineering, Architectural Planning, and Mechanical Engineering). It was not only for preparing professional elites to assist the Gambia to achieve the prospect of becoming the "Silicon Valley in Africa", but also for conducting educational and diplomatic exchanges between the Gambia and Taiwan.

As an application- and research-oriented university, TAIPEI TECH values the concept of "learning by doing" and specializes in the cultivation of technical professionals. TAIPEI TECH has designed a series of comprehensive and well-rounded training in English for each of the Gambian Elite programs, which include technical skills development, company visits, and internship opportunities for actual practice. Take the Gambian Petroleum Program for an example, the curriculum was customized and supported by six different departments to ensure that the students acquired the necessary knowledge and skills they needed. Furthermore, the students would participate in a four-week summer internship program every year with China Petroleum Corporation (CPC), the biggest government funded company in Taiwan, to learn about company management and apply their technical skills into practice.

Besides the technical training, TAIPEI TECH also offers outside-of-class learning experience for the students of the Gambian Elite Programs. Each program has an assigned director/advisor and assistant to provide necessary support for students' learning and for adjustment needs, such as arrangements to

enable the Gambian students to gather and commemorate Ramadan, Muslim fasting tradition, so they can maintain their religious practices even when abroad. Moreover, Gambian students are also encouraged to participate in field trips like visits to the National Palace Museum and Taiwan Storyland, and to join in cultural events on campus including Chinese Moon Festival, Lantern Festival, International Student Singing Contest, International student festival, and so forth. These trips and events allow the Gambian students to enrich their knowledge and experiences in the historical and cultural aspects of Taiwan, and share their tradition by performing their dances as well as get to know other international and domestic students.

The Gambian Elite Program is a successful example of international higher education and has demonstrated high-quality technical training and provided outside-of-class experience for student learning. It is hoped that the experiences of these Gambian students and alumni at TAIPEI TECH and in Taiwan would benefit their professional and personal growth, contribute to their country's development, and further solidify the relationship between the Gambia and Taiwan.



Gambian students visiting China Petroleum Corporation

The Gambian Elite Program -Time Table-

Academic Year	Program	Number of students
2004.09-2008.06	The Gambian Petroleum Educational Elite Program	25
2007.09-2011.06	The Gambian Information Technology Elite Program	25
2008.09-2012.06	The Gambian Civil Engineering Elite Program (I)	24
2011.09-2015.06	The Gambian Architectural Planning Elite Program	24
2012.09-2016.06	The Gambian Civil Engineering Elite Program (II)	25
2013.09	The Gambian Mechanical Engineering Elite Program	25

Wish you have a great day ahead,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wenlung Li". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President

TAIPEI TECH

Tel:(+886)(2)27712171#1000

Fax:(+886)(2)27518845

No.1 Chung-Hsiao E. Rd. sec.3

Taipei, Taiwan 10608