Indiana-China Year in Review
2017
This year was monumental not only for ACSI, but for US-China and Indiana-China relations. A new president, a new governor, a new set of stakes for foreign and trade policy. The nomination and confirmation of former Iowa-governor, and friend of China President Xi, Terry Branstad as the U.S. Ambassador to China represents a huge step forward in strengthening relations between our two countries.

2017 was also the 30th anniversary of Indiana and Zhejiang’s sister-state relationship and we were delighted to co-host a celebration with Governor Eric Holcomb and Zhejiang Party Secretary Che Jun in August. Along with re-affirming our sister-state relationship, we brought together 150 Hoosier and Zhejiang businesses for a matchmaking session to cultivate continued trade and investment dialogue between our states.

With China’s middle-class continuing to grow, the demand for U.S. and Indiana goods is swelling to an all-time high. With this in mind, we hosted an outbound-focused China Business Conference with e-commerce giant Alibaba to help small- and medium-sized Hoosier companies sell their products into the China market.

On the inbound investment side, we saw increased traction from Chinese firms locating operations in Indiana. BeijingWest Industries announced plans to locate its first U.S. manufacturing center in Greenfield, investing $80 million to create 441 jobs; SF Motors acquired an assembly plant in Mishawaka, investing $30 million to create environmentally friendly electronic vehicles; and Hangzhou Hidea Power Machinery located its first U.S.-based distribution center in Brownsburg.

From the surge of new business activities to participating in the prestigious US-China Think Tank Symposium, we’re helping to cultivate and support more opportunities for Hoosiers and showcase Indiana as a state that works.

Colin Renk
Executive Director
America China Society of Indiana
On August 24th, Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb joined economic and cultural stakeholders from Indiana and Zhejiang Province to commemorate and reaffirm the 30th anniversary of the Indiana-Zhejiang sister-state relationship, celebrating economic, cultural and educational efforts shared between the two states. As part of the celebration, 120 government, educational and business leaders from Indiana participated in a business matchmaking seminar with 30 Chinese businesses, allowing China-based firms and Indiana companies to strengthen trade opportunities. Guests also had the opportunity to visit a tourism exhibition, which highlighted Zhejiang’s culture and tourist destinations.
Sutong China Tire Resources (Anderson)

On February 8th, Sutong China Tire Resources announced plans to purchase a former General Motors plant in Anderson. The Houston-based importer of tires from China plans to hire 20-40 workers to service the utility and recreational vehicle trailer industry, large retail chain stores and independent tire retailers and wholesalers.

BeijingWest Industries (Greenfield)

On April 13th, BeijingWest Industries (BWI), a chassis supplier that designs and manufactures brake and suspension systems for the global automotive market, announced plans to locate its first U.S. production facility in Indiana, creating up to 441 jobs by 2021. The Beijing-headquartered company, which supplies parts to Audi, BMW, Ferrari, Ford, General Motors, Honda and Porsche, will invest more than $80 million to build and equip a new manufacturing facility in Greenfield’s Progress Park.

SF Motors (Mishawaka)

On June 22nd, Chinese-owned SF Motors announced an agreement to acquire AM General’s commercial assembly plant in Mishawaka. SF Motors, a subsidiary of Chongqing Sokon Industry Group, plans to retain the facility’s full workforce and invest $30 million to produce environmentally-friendly, intelligent electronic vehicles.

Hidea Power Machinery (Brownsburg)

On November 30th, Hangzhou Hidea Power Machinery, a Chinese manufacturer of outboard engines and motors, announced plans to locate its first U.S.-based logistics and distribution center in Brownsburg. The company will invest approximately $500,000 to lease and equip the distribution center.
On November 14th, ACSI hosted its second China Business Conference at the Conrad in downtown Indianapolis. The half-day event focused on outbound opportunities for Hoosier businesses looking to do business with Chinese counterparts. Presentations included a Chinese Political Update by Russell Menyhart (Taft Stettinius & Hollister); a China Market Update by Kok-Chi Tsim (JP Morgan); eCommerce Opportunities by William Ashworth (Alibaba Group); and a panel on Opportunities and Challenges for Hoosier Businesses in China with Harrison Ding (MLN.com), Ralf Lorenzen (Telamon) and Craig Seidelson (University of Indianapolis).
Indiana Delegations to China

Columbus Mayor Lienhoop Visits China

In mid-September, Columbus Mayor Jim Lienhoop joined Jason Hester, executive director of Greater Columbus EDC for a weeklong trade mission to China. The group met with government officials, trade associations and FDI prospects in Shanghai, Huzhou, Zhejiang and Beijing.

Kokomo Strengthens Ties with Dongyang

In December, Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight and other city officials embarked on a delegation visit to Dongyang, Kokomo’s sister city. The group toured several Chinese factories, met with potentials business prospects and government officials in order to collaborate on bilateral business, educational and cultural partnerships.

State Officials Visit China

In December, Indiana Secretary of Commerce Jim Schellinger along with Indiana Economic Development Corporation officials and ACSI Chairwoman Naomi Kwang traveled to Zhejiang and Beijing. On their trip, the group met with the Department of Commerce of Zhejiang Province, Heng Feng (parent company of Indianapolis-based Westfield Outdoor), BeijingWest Industries, Cummins, Sokon, Alibaba Group and more.
On August 29th, ACSI hosted its sixth Annual Gala at the Conrad in downtown Indianapolis. The evening event, which hosted more than 200 business and community leaders, featured remarks by Mr. Jim Schellinger, Secretary of Commerce of Indiana and Mr. Hong Lei, Consul General of the People's Republic of China. In addition to performances by Indianapolis Chinese Performing Arts, Inc., ACSI presented JBS United with its Friend of China award and Ms. Weilin Long with its Friend of Indiana award.

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ICCCI’s Chinese New Year Gala

In January, the Indianapolis Chinese Community Center, Inc. (ICCCI) hosted its annual Chinese New Year Gala featuring traditional Chinese music and dance featuring local performers.

Chinese New Year Spectacular

The 2017 Chinese New Year Spectacular at Carmel’s Center for the Performing Arts featured world-class artists from the Guangdong Performing Arts Troupe from China with performances in acrobatic show, dances, martial arts, singing, and traditional folk music.

Peewinkle’s Chinese New Year Celebration

Peewinkle’s Puppet Studio hosted the Chinese New Year’s Celebration & Family Festival at the Indiana State Museum. The event, which celebrated the Studio’s 20th anniversary, included authentic Chinese performing arts, entertainment, foods, craftmaking, puppetmaking and booths.

Indianapolis Chinese Festival

The city of Indianapolis hosted the eighth annual Indianapolis Chinese Festival downtown at IUPUI’s Wood Plaza. This festival is held during the month of Chinese Moon Festival, which is the second largest Chinese festival after Chinese New Year.
Other Activities

MOU with Zhejiang Int’l Investment Promotion Center

In August, ACSI signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the Zhejiang International Investment Promotion Center. Witnessed by Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb and Zhejiang Party Secretary Che Jun, the agreement aims to strengthen the business and economic ties between Indiana and Zhejiang.

US-China Think Tank Symposium

In June, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences hosted the US-China Think Tank Symposium in Des Moines, Iowa. The day-long event, which featured two dozen speakers including former Ambassadors J. Stapleton Roy, Kenneth M. Quinn and Julia Chang Bloch, featured topics on the US-China relationship under the Trump Administration, US-China trade and economic cooperation and the future prospects of cooperation between the world’s two largest economies. ACSI Executive Director, Colin Renk, presented to the Symposium on state/province exchanges and cooperation.

Analysis of Immigration Reform Seminar

In March, LHP and ACSI co-hosted the Analysis of Immigration Reform Seminar. Immigration attorney Blair Wheat provided an overview of the current trends of immigration reform and the likely outcomes for international employees and multinational organizations.
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