



MESSAGES FROM THE DIRECTORS

Greetings,

It is our greatest honor to present to you the newly established **NYU-ECNU Institute for Social Development at NYU Shanghai**. The Institute brings together the scholars and professionals at the East China Normal University School of Social Development (ECNU SSD) in Shanghai, China with the faculty members at the New York University Silver School of Social Work (NYU SSSW). This partnership aims to create a vibrant and collaborative institute that will produce high quality social scientific research as well as scientifically informed research to help shape practice and policy response that will improve the well-being of both societies. The Institute will sponsor world-class research that informs social policy and practice, prominent academic programs that are locally and globally relevant, and conferences and professional training activities that contribute to the outstanding academic reputation of NYU-Shanghai and both sponsoring institutions. An essential mission of this research institute is to apply both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives to address the issues of poverty and inequality experienced by both societies (China and US) but that manifest in unique ways in each country.

With this mission in mind, we were honored to hold our inaugural conference on June 28–29, 2014, in Shanghai, China. We brought together renowned scholars from around the world to share their expertise on poverty and inequality. Throughout the weekend, feedback and many valuable ideas were exchanged and shared among the audience members and with the Institute. Suggestions included adopting a research focus on imperative issues that cut across nations and hold great implications for global development (e.g., child well-being, aging and global aging, migration and immigration, and global poverty); becoming the leading forum for scientific exchange on global issues of poverty, inequity, and social policy; developing a depository to house cutting-edge scholarly research to inform public policy-making; providing opportunities to bring scholars from across globe together; training and mentoring the next generation of young, promising scholars.

It was a wonderful event, and we express our greatest appreciation to all of those who joined us in our inaugural June conference. And most of all, we sincerely thank our supportive staff who made this conference a great success.

Wen-Jui Han, Ph.D., & Jun Wen, Ph.D.

Co-Directors, NYU-ECNU Institute for Social Development at NYU Shanghai

NYU Shanghai Hosts International Forum on Social Policy and Social Development

On June 28–29, 2014, NYU Shanghai hosted the International Forum on Social Policy and Social Development. The forum was organized and sponsored by the NYU-ECNU Institute for Social Development at NYU Shanghai, directed by Professors Wen-Jui Han at the NYU Silver School of Social Work and Jun Wen at the ECNU School of Social Development. With the theme of “The Future Prospect of Social Development in China and around the World,” the forum aimed to provide a platform for scholars, stakeholders, and policy-makers from around the world to present and exchange knowledge about the issues surrounding social policies and social development in the Western and Eastern societies.



Chancellor Jeffrey S. Lehman provided remarks at the opening session.

The conference strengthened the ties among social science researchers. Prominent scholars from China and abroad gathered to present their current research and discuss the future prospects for social development in China and around the world. The speakers included Dr. Sheldon Danziger, president of the Russell Sage Foundation; Dr. Xinping Guan of Nankai University; Dr. Sandra Danziger of the University of Michigan; Dr. Hirokazu Yoshikawa and Dr. Sumie Okazaki of New York University; Dr. Ka Ho Mok, vice chancellor of the Hong Kong Institute of Education; Dr. Yeun-wen Ku of National Taiwan University; and Dr. Yuegen Xiong of Beijing University.

“The conference was an important step in establishing the Institute for Social Development as a leader in global research on poverty, social inequality, and the future of children in global

societies. The conference was a forum for outstanding papers from scholars from Asia and the U.S.," says Dr. Lynn Videka, dean of the NYU Silver School of Social Work.



Keynote Speaker Dr. Sheldon Danziger, president of Russell Sage Foundation, United States



Keynote Speaker Dr. Xinping Guan, professor at Nankai University, China

Building upon the mission of the Institute, the conference's keynote speakers—two leading scholars on poverty and inequality issues, Dr. Sheldon Danziger, president of the Russell Sage Foundation of the United States, and Dr. Xinping Guan, professor at Nankai University—shared their expertise on issues related to poverty and inequality in the United States and China, respectively. They also shared their perspectives on the lessons learned in the two countries that could be applied to other regions and nations across the globe. Their speeches set the stage for the lively discussion and exchanges that followed during the day-and-a-half conference.



Conference themes included child and family well-being, adolescent development and well-being, the ageing society, immigration and migration, and urbanization. Scholars from diverse background in psychology, sociology, social work, and public policy presented their work and exchanged their views on the historical development of social issues as well as corresponding social programs and policies. The experiences and lessons learned from Western and Eastern countries were also discussed. In addition to social development topics affecting children, adolescents, and the elderly, presenters discussed issues related to social mobility, poverty, and income inequality from sociological, psychological, and public policy perspectives.

"The papers facilitated important knowledge exchange and set the stage for ongoing international scholarly exchange on poverty, human development, and social policy," said Dr. Videka of the NYU Silver School of Social Work. "Scholars in attendance supported the idea of broadening and deepening exchange and collaboration among this group of scholars."



Importantly, the Institute's pilot project—the 2014 Child Well-Being Study in China, which aims to establish a data depository with longitudinal information on children in contemporary China—was introduced to the public and received with enthusiasm. Carried out in the spring of 2014, the Child Well-Being Survey used a sample of 2,282 first-grade children who are currently attending elementary schools located in 7 of the 17 districts in Shanghai. The pilot project aims to provide contextual understanding of child well-being by paying attention to familial socioeconomic and migration status. Information was collected from parents, teachers, and school administrators on children's learning experiences. Information collected from parents included children and parents' sociodemographic characteristics, parenting behaviors, and home environment. Both the parent and the teacher provided information about the child's academic, socioemotional, and health well-being. Finally, information on the school environment came from both school administrators and teachers.

At the conference, researchers provided essential information on the project's data set and presented preliminary results on children's well-being for the overall sample as well as by children's gender, family socioeconomic status, and Hukou status.



Dr. Wen-Jui Han spoke on the pilot project

Throughout the conference, lively discussions ensued among scholars and attendees after each panel spurring collegial debate over the direction of social development and social policies in the years to come. The Institute envisions its role as an open international platform for more collaboration among universities at home and abroad in terms of resource pooling, comparative research, and multi-disciplinary development.

"The conference was a great success. The presentations suggest that the field of social development is a promising area in which NYU Shanghai can be an important bridge between the Chinese and U.S. research communities," concluded Dr. Jeffery S. Lehman, vice chancellor of NYU Shanghai.