

■ News

Start-up conference held to launch tri-nation 'Campus Asia'

At Okayama University we are delighted to join forces with Jilin University in China and Sungkyunkwan University in South Korea to launch Campus Asia, a three-way cooperative to help develop a globally capable workforce. The cooperative was launched on March 3 with a start-up conference at a hotel in Okayama City.

The three universities have come together to participate in the Program for Core Human Resources Development: For the Achievement of Common Good and Re-evaluation of Classical Culture in East Asia. The program has been selected by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science, and Technology for its Re-Inventing Japan Project 2011 (type A 'Campus Asia').

The conference was attended by approximately 100 people. These included the presidents, vice presidents, and various faculty members of the three universities, as well as representatives from the local economic community, local government, and other universities whose projects were accepted for the ministry initiative.

In a speech at the conference Kiyoshi Morita, president of Okayama University, said that the program was a means by which we could "overcome the differences in values and cultures between the three participating countries and aim for shared goals." It was, he said, "the beginning of a journey for Okayama University towards genuine internationalization."

Kim Jun Young, president of Sungkyunkwan University, and Wu Zhen Wu, vice president of Jilin University, also spoke of their enthusiasm for the project.

The program is managed by Professor Masahiro Taguchi of the Okayama University Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences. He explained that the program would involve faculty from each participating university conducting



President Kiyoshi Morita addresses the audience at the commemorative ceremony.



President Kim Jun Young speaks about his enthusiasm for the program at the commemorative ceremony.



Vice-president Wu Zhen Wu makes a speech to everyone involved in the program.

lectures at schools and workshops for the other two universities. The aim is to bring students from all three institutions together in the same place. Vice president Masaru Araki, who serves as concept supervisor, gave a keynote address. Seeking to promote the benefits of the program inside and outside the university, Professor Araki opined that there is a need for "unique education methods that are easily acceptable to East Asians." The program would, he said, "foster a deep sense of teamwork among the participants."

A plenary session and sub-committee meetings were held with faculty members from the three universities in attendance. The eager exchange of opinions helped boost morale among the already highly motivated participants.