



**Office
of External
Affairs**

THE BRIDGE

The Official Newsletter of the Office Of External Affairs

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Editor's Message

Welcome to the second issue of The Bridge. With so many events to report on during March and April, we decided to divide the travel reports between this issue and the next one. Herein you will learn about the NSU delegation trip to the U.S. (01 April – 14 April) which included its annual International Advisory Board (IAB) meeting. We also had a number of workshops and activities for NSU students and its alumni as they consider study abroad opportunities and other possible enrichment activities. We hope you will enjoy reading this issue of The Bridge.

Editor

Dr. Katherine Li

Reporter

Sumaita Shaira Hasan

Illustrator

Haidaruzzaman Sujon
Sumaita Shaira Hasan

Photographs

Public Relations Office

NSU Delegation Team's Visit to the USA

An NSU delegation team, led by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Mohammad Shajahan flew to the United States on the 1st of April, 2018 to promote NSU to American universities and institutes. The members of the NSU delegation team included the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Mohammad Shajahan, the Vice-Chancellor of NSU, Professor Atiqul Islam, Members of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Benajir Ahmed, Mrs. Rehana Rahman, Mrs. Yasmin Kamal, the Director of the Office of External Affairs, Dr. Katherine Li and the External Affairs Officer, Dr. Hasanuzzaman.

On 2nd of April, the NSU delegation team went to Google, Inc. for a meeting with the Google Next Billion User team. In the meeting, NSU proposed to establish a Google Center at NSU where researchers from Google could come for research purposes and to create internship opportunities for Engineering students.



The next stop for the NSU delegation team was Stanford University. On Tuesday, 3rd of April the delegation team met with the Senior Associate Dean, Dr. Michele Barry and the Director of Research, Dr. Stephen Luby from the Center for Innovation in Global Health, Stanford University during which a strategy for international faculty recruitment was discussed. Later on, the delegation team met with Dr. Arnold Milstein, Professor of Medicine, School of Medicine and Dr. Lee Sanders,



Associate Professor of Pediatrics, School of Medicine, Stanford University to discuss possible areas of research collaboration. Afterward, the NSU delegation team met with Sangeeta Medriatta, Associate Director, Center for South Asia to learn about the research work of the Center for South Asia. Lastly, the team met with the Outreach Program Manager, Ms. Maritza Rae M. Santiago and the Managing Director, Ms. Alyssa Morrison of the Knight-Hennessy Scholar's Program, Stanford University. In the meeting, they discussed excellent opportunities for NSU's staff who wish to get a

doctoral degree.

On 4th of April, the NSU delegation team went to the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley) where Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice Chancellor of North South University, gave a public address at the invitation of the Institute of South Asia Studies. The topic of his address was "Higher Education in the Private Sector in South Asia: Trends and Challenges". The Vice-Chancellor's delivery covered the history, factors contributing to the rise of private institutions, the administration, governance, and the financing of private Higher Education institutions in South Asia. He also discussed the role of regulatory authorities such as the University Grants Commission and Higher Education Commissions in South Asian countries. Afterward, the delegation team sat down with Professor Karl A. van Bibber, Associate Dean for Research, College of Engineering, UC Berkeley and explored the possibility of signing an agreement.

The following day, 5th of April, the NSU delegation team visited San Francisco State University (SFSU) where they met with the Dean, Dr. Linda Oubre, the Associate Dean, Dr. Yim-Yu Wong, and the Faculty Director, Dr. Sanjit Sengupta from the College of Business and discussed how SFSU and NSU could collaborate and in the future sign an MOU. Later, the delegation team was given a tour of the campus where they learned about the facilities of SFSU.



On Friday, 6th of April, the NSU delegation team met with the International Advisory Board (IAB) members of NSU for the Annual IAB meeting. The IAB members present in the meeting were: President of the IAB, Dr. Rita Colwell, and members, Sir Dr. Richard Roberts, Prof. Earl D Kellogg, Dr. M. Zahid Hossain, Dr. Shelley Feldman, Dr. Taher Saif, Dr. Anwar Huq and Prof. Haider Khan.

The NSU delegation team attended the NSU USA Alumni Reunion 2018 organized by the NSU Alumni Association – Silicon Valley Chapter, USA on 8th of April. It was a joyous celebration where the delegates could connect with the alumni of NSU in the USA. During the event, the executive body of the alumni association announced

a pioneering initiative where they would introduce fellowships and scholarship opportunities for meritorious students who cannot afford to pay the tuition fees at NSU.

The NSU delegation team resumed their university visits from 9th April by visiting the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). There, the delegation team met with the Vice Provost for International Studies & Global Engagement, Professor Cindy Fan, the Director of the Center for India & South Asia, Professor Akhil Gupta, and Dean of the Fielding School of Public Health, Professor Randall Kuhn and found that case study-based research on tropical diseases might be a possible area where the institutes could collaborate. Both institutes ended the meeting on a congruent note agreeing that joint research between the two universities was possible.



On the following day, 10th April, the delegation team went to the University of California, Irvine (UC Irvine) where they met with the Assistant Vice-Chancellor of Environmental Planning and Sustainability, Professor Richard Demerjian, the Senior Director of Global Affairs, Dr. Susan Bender, the Director of Center for Embedded & Cyber-physical Systems (CECS), Prof. Fadi Kurdahi, and the Faculty advisor of the UCI Cybersecurity Policy & Research Institute, Prof. Al Faruque. In the discussion, it was proposed that short courses offered at NSU could lead to research projects and that UC Irvine has project funding available for Climate Change. The delegates also discussed the possibility of introducing a 3+2 Undergraduate degree program at NSU and Graduate degree program at UC Irvine.

Finally, on 14th April, the NSU delegation team concluded their successful visit to the USA by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Texas A&M University. The MOU was signed by NSU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Atiqul Islam and Texas A&M Dean of Public Health, Professor Jay Maddock. The purpose of this MOU is to initiate student/faculty exchange and joint research collaboration between the two universities. Dean Maddock expressed his desire to visit NSU this August with several faculty members to activate the MOU and meet NSU faculty and students.



Applying to UniSA: Opportunities and Prospects for Applicants



On 22nd April, 2018, the Office of External Affairs (OEA) hosted an informational seminar titled, “Applying to UniSA: Opportunities and Prospects for Applicants” where the representative of the University of South Australia (UniSA), Mr. Juan F. Ospina, Manager of International Business Development came to North South University (NSU) to inform students about how they could apply to UniSA. This seminar was a result of a recently renewed MOU between NSU and UniSA. Mr. Ospina informed the participants that UniSA is the largest university in Adelaide having more than 33,000 students of which more than 6,000 are international students. Mr. Ospina explained that only 1% of Business Schools in the world are accredited by European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) and UniSA is one of them. He informed the participants about another attractive aspect available at UniSA, which is that students can complete the Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in 4 years instead of 6 years. Furthermore, he stressed the point that education in Australia may be expensive, but UniSA allows students to work during the four weeks of Summer School and eight weeks of Winter School which can play an essential role in paying the tuition fees. Additionally, students applying for Permanent Residence in Australia will receive 5 extra points by simply choosing South Australia. After the presentation, a Q/A session was followed where participants’ queries were answered by Mr. Ospina. Later on, when the seminar ended, Mr. Ospina was given a tour of the campus by members of the OEA.

International Faculty Member Feature



Dr. Frank Henry Wade is an international faculty member at NSU. Dr. Wade obtained his Bachelor of Business Administration, Major in Accounting from California State University East Bay, his Masters in Professional Accountancy from West Virginia University, and DBA from Golden Gate University in San Francisco. He has four professional accounting qualifications; CPA (USA), CIA (Certified Internal Auditor), CMA (Certified Management Accountant), and CISA (Certified Information Systems Auditor). He worked thirty-five years as Manager of Internal Audit Departments, Controller, or Accounting Manager in various industries such as international retail stores, construction, engineering, pension investment trust, support service contracts, government and NGOs. Frank Wade founded and managed six professional Internal Audit Departments from inception. He developed several audit departments over contract compliance for Saudi Arabian service contracts. In 1985-91, He ran a USAID government program to develop CPA and CA firms as auditors for OMB A-133 government contracts and grants in Africa and the Middle East called the NFA or Non Federal Audit Program. Today, USAID uses his audit documents to verify that food commodities have been accurately distributed to refugees such as the Palestinians and Rohingyas. In education, He has taught hundreds of non-American CPA candidates for the CPA (USA) exam since 1978 in conjunction with his duties as Internal Audit Manager for various firms. Since

obtaining his doctorate, he has taught for ten years at Wits University in South Africa, Putian University in China, Wenzhou-Kean University in China, American University Afghanistan, and now NSU.

Interviewer: You have quite a lot of corporate experience. What inspired you to switch to teaching?

DW: It began in 1976 in Lesotho, South Africa and Saudi Arabia where Public Accountants asked me to teach them the USA CPA exam. The rules in the USA allowed foreigners to qualify as USA CPAs. This gave me a great deal of satisfaction. Later when I managed audit staffs for over thirty-five years I trained subordinates and helped them prepare for the CPA (USA) exam. After managing staff for thirty-five years I decided to devote fulltime to training and education.

I: What influenced you to come to Bangladesh, specifically North South University?

DW: I support the NSU DAF academic program and NSU concept of having an American style university in Bangladesh. In the same way, I chose WVU's Masters in Professional Accounting Degree program and GGU's DBA program as a student because they were superior programs. NSU is a superior university with constructive academic programs which prepare Bangladesh people for international careers and careers in the USA.

I: What is it like to be an international faculty member at NSU? Can you share some anecdotes?

DW: I have had the honor of meeting three Nobel Laureates at NSU so far. It is an honor to be working with highly qualified faculty and highly motivated students.

I: What are the differences that you notice in the teaching paradigm of NSU and other universities?

DW: The main difference is the emphasis on the independence of the professor to run the course.

I: Since you have been teaching here for a while, can you understand some words or phrases in Bangla? Have you ever heard or understood Bangla conversations about you?

DW: Because English is the main medium at NSU and used everywhere in Dhaka, I have only learned a few phrases.

I: What would be your advice for your future students?

DW: *First*, every Bangladesh student should recognize the potential they have for working in the USA. Language skills, the culture, and the academic program translate into the fact that NSU graduates can be hired as professionals successfully in the USA.

***Secondly*,** students should take notice of all the opportunities they have for professional development. For instance, there are scholarships for USA Master's and Doctorate programs which can be accessed at the American Center US Embassy Dhaka. International student loans are available at FAFSA website with a USA citizen co-signer. For DAF students, additional Accounting certifications such as the CPA (USA), CIA, and CIMA are available to graduate DAF students. These certifications enhance earning power.

***Thirdly*,** students should be aware that USA universities promote diversity. USA universities like to have international students. Bangladesh students with the USA student visa can work while they are students and have work permits for two years after graduating. Temporary two year H-1-B Visas are relatively easy to obtain into perpetuity after that.

***Fourthly*,** There are two groups of universities that Bangladesh students should apply for; State universities with the name of the state in the title such as "California State University" and federal land grant universities with the state location in the title such as "University of California". Because the name of the state is in the title, there is international recognition for the caliber of the university. Also universities with the name of the city in the title are well known secular universities that have international recognition such as University of San Francisco.



Dr. Wade teaches BUS 505 Accounting Principles and EMB 510 Principles of Accounting and Finance to the students of MBA and EMBA programs. The Office of External Affairs is grateful to Dr. Wade for sharing a bit of his life with us.

Seminar on "Government jobs: A potential sector for career"

On 19th April, 2018, the Office of Alumni Affairs (OAA), a division under the Office External Affairs (OEA), arranged a seminar titled, "Government jobs: A potential sector for career". In this program, NSU alumni who are working in public service came as panelists to share their stories and encourage the students to view government jobs as a valuable sector for a career. The panelists of this program were Commissioner of Bangladesh Customs, Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain, Military Estate Administrator (Deputy Secretary) of Dhaka Cantonment, Ms. Kazi Nurun Nahar, Additional Special Superintendent of Bangladesh Police, Mr. Ahmedul Kabir, Senior Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Ms. Syeda Nahida Habiba, and Deputy Accountant General of the Supreme Audit Institution of Bangladesh, Mr. Muhammad Khademul Basher. All of them came to NSU with the aim of informing the students of the ins and outs of working for the government and how students can prepare themselves for the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination.

There were three goals for organizing this event. They were: Panelists informing students about the different aspects of Govt. jobs and what they have learned from their experiences, creating a platform where the panelists and students could bond and connect, and lastly, encouraging students to engaging themselves in the public sector. The seminar was moderated by the Director of Public Policy and Governance (PPG) Program, Professor Sk. Tawfique M. Haque and the session was chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (D) of NSU, Professor Dr. G.U. Ahsan. The program started with the panelists sharing their experiences in their particular fields and how any student can easily prepare themselves for any of the 22 cadres. Later on, a Q/A session followed during which many students asked questions to understand the current trends of the public sector and the value of working for the government. After the Q/A session, the Chair of the session, Professor Dr. G.U. Ahsan gave the vote of thanks to the panelists and proudly claimed how NSUers can excel in any sector, be it private or public, and emphasized that the panelists are the incandescent examples of that. Furthermore, the Pro Vice-Chancellor expressed his wish to have the panelists come again and encouraged more students to opt for the civil service and serve their country.



A group picture of the panelists with the Session Chair, Prof. Dr. G.U. Ahsan, Moderator, Prof. Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, and the members of the OEA.

Alumni Feature



Syeda Nahida Habiba, a graduate of the MPPG program of North South University has been awarded 'The Best UNO (Upazila Nirbahi Officer)-2016' of Bangladesh considering her contribution to Primary Education. Ms. Habiba worked hard to ensure 100% student presence in Govt. Primary Schools preventing 'Drop out' from schools. She started the 'Mid Day Meal Program' for students by gifting a 'Tiffin Box' to each and every student with a slogan 'Hat Dhue Khabar Khai, Niyomito Biddyaloye Jai'. North South University, for its 25 years celebration, awarded Ms. Habiba the "Most Outstanding Alumnus Award" for her dedication and service to the Bangladeshi citizens and for her extraordinary contribution to the primary education of the Government of Bangladesh. Currently, she is working as Senior Assistant Secretary in Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh Secretariat.

Interviewer: What was it like to be awarded by our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina? Can you shed some light on the experience?

Syeda Nahida Habiba: Our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is a role model for women's empowerment and leadership. I was absolutely stunned when the Hon'ble Prime Minister awarded me the "National Primary Education Award-2016". At that moment, what I felt was indescribable. I just cannot

explain in words what was going inside my head. I was delighted and honored. This award will shine as the most memorable achievement of my life. Whenever I see it, it boosts up my confidence and inspiration to work more for the people, and for the country.

I: From your bio, it can be seen that you are highly passionate about the education and welfare of children. Is there any reason behind this passion?

SNH: When I look at a child, I feel like he/she is my kid. Every child deserves a good future and it is our responsibility to make it beautiful. I love to spend time with children. Along with all departmental works as an Upazila Nirbahi Officer, I enjoy most visiting schools and seeing the faces of children who are our future. We have achieved the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Now, it is our challenge to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To ensure Quality Education (SDG-4), students' presence in the classroom is a must. Thus, I have given my best for the betterment of education, especially primary education and will continue to do so as education is the means to help children and to change their lives.

I: What is it like working as Senior Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce?

SNH: The Ministry of Commerce is the apex body for trade and commerce at home and abroad. Bangladesh aims to be a middle income country by 2021 where the Ministry of Commerce is playing a pivotal role. As a part of this Ministry I have ample opportunities to expose my country to the world market and I am highly committed to my work.

I: How did you feel about NSU recognizing you as a distinguished alumna?

SNH: I was very humbly grateful that North South University (NSU) recognized me as a distinguished alumna on the very occasion of its celebration of its Silver Jubilee. I would like to express my special gratitude to the Master in Public Policy (MPPG) Program (now under the Department of Political Science and Sociology) of NSU. The PPG program has prepared me to work both in public policy formulation and execution. As a UNO, I can implement what I have learned from the program at local level governance and help the people.

I: Recently, you came back to your alma mater after a long time as a panelist for the seminar titled, 'Government jobs: A potential sector for career'. What was it like to come back to NSU? How did you feel to be part of the panel?

SNH: I was so glad to come back to the university that taught me so many things. By coming back as a panelist, I felt like I was returning something back to the university that gave me so much. I was delighted to encourage students to consider civil service as a viable option for a career. I believe that day, I and the other panelists were able to give them an idea of working for the government and how to shape this country for the betterment.

I: What are your future interests now? Do you have any desire to do something to represent NSU in any way?

SNH: As a civil servant all my interests are centered around serving the people. I also have a passion to work for education and children in the future. Obviously, I will find myself honored to represent North South University, whenever I get the opportunity.



Requirements of Higher Studies in the USA

On March 19, 2018, the Office of External Affairs (OEA) organized a seminar titled, “Requirements of Higher Studies in the USA” in the Syndicate Hall at North South University. The program was facilitated by EducationUSA of the American Center. This event was a follow-up to the tremendously successful visit by the U.S. Embassy for the Pop-up American Center on 30th January, 2018 where students got to know how they can apply for graduate programs in the United States. EducationUSA, at the American Center in Dhaka, offers a variety of services for prospective students who wish to pursue higher education in the USA. As the center noticed that a good number of students from NSU are interested in furthering their education in the USA, the representative from EducationUSA, Mr. A. Q. M. Mushfiq Hassan attended the seminar to answer all the queries of the students. Mr. Hassan is an EducationUSA Student Adviser and Outreach Coordinator for the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The program was attended by many students and faculty members of NSU.

The purpose of this seminar was to offer comprehensive accurate information regarding higher education opportunities in the universities of the USA in terms of application technique, admission criteria, students’ visa relevant aspects and many other prospects. All this information was presented with a pleasing PowerPoint presentation and through Mr. Hassan’s articulate explanations. After the presentation, the guest speaker opened the floor for the Q/A session where the participants not only got answers to their questions but also received goody bags for their participation. At the end of the program, in lieu of Dr. Katherine Li, Director of the OEA, Dr. Frank Henry Wade gave the vote of thanks to Mr. Hassan for coming to NSU and providing knowledge and dispelling the myths of applying to universities in the USA.



International Student Feature

Dr. Arun is an MBBS graduate and one of the Nepalese students studying at NSU. He is a student of Master of Public Health and his major is Epidemiology. He is interested in cancer research and during his leisure time likes to play chess. Arun is fluent in Bangla.

Interviewer: Tell us something about yourself.

Arun Shahi: Hello, I am Dr. Arun Shahi from Nepal. I was brought up in a small town called Tikapur which is situated in the far western development region of Nepal. My father is a banker and my mother is a university teacher. I completed my studies up to HSC from Nepal and then did my MBBS from PR China. I am married and have a son. Now I am doing my Masters in Public Health (MPH) at NSU.

I: What made you choose NSU?

AS: After my MBBS, I worked in several premier hospitals in Nepal as well as in top hospitals like Dhaka Medical College, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital in Bangladesh. I am a medical oncologist by profession. During my medical practice and as a medical oncologist, what I realized is that preventive medicine is the main demand of this time and we need more research in Health Sciences. As my interest is in cancer research, I wanted to learn the proper way to do research and the MPH is the program that teaches the application of preventive measures to promote health and research techniques. So, I started searching for MPH programs that had excellent research exposure and reputation. Some renowned researchers had advised me to go to NSU as it is the best private university in Bangladesh. Thus, to verify, I did some research about the information I received regarding this university. And, to my surprise, the information on this university and the quality of teaching it offers are absolutely accurate. It is a fantastic institute that offers the best education in the country. I had no second thoughts and rushed to NSU to get admitted. That's how I chose NSU. Actually, it's the opposite. That's how NSU chose me.

I: How is your experience with NSU so far?

AS: My experience at NSU so far is amazing. I have enjoyed each and every day here by learning new things. For me, NSU is not just a university. It is a revolution, a metamorphosis in students' lives. NSU, in other words, is known as the center of excellence in higher education and it cannot be truer. It brings the best out of each student. It empowers and helps each student to find his/her real strength. The faculty members teaching here are highly qualified and competent.



Every day there are different educational and extra-curricular activities going on at NSU that foster the strength hidden within every student. I consider my decision to join NSU as one of the best decisions of my life. There cannot be an alternative to what NSU gives us. NSU is the journey one must experience to grow and rise.

I: As an international student, do you see cultural diversity in NSU? If yes, can you illustrate it a bit?

AS: One of the strengths of NSU is accepting cultural differences in a beautiful manner. There are students from more than 15 nations and the way they are interacting and studying together with the local students is pleasing. During my one year of studentship at NSU, I was always supported and appreciated by the local students, faculty and staff members of NSU. The way they welcomed me, I never felt like I was away from home. It was like Bangladesh is Nepal, just in a different geographical location. So, there is cultural diversity and differences and you will be aware of them. But, at the same time, you are accepted and considered a part of the Bangladeshi culture which is very heartwarming. I often speak in Bangla with people so that they could feel how proudly I had embraced Bangladesh and its culture.

I: Can you share some early stories when you first came to Bangladesh?

AS: Well, I do have a funny story to share. When I first came to Bangladesh, I had an encounter, which at that time was a little frustrating. But, now that I reflect on it, I find it quite amusing. Basically what happened was that when I left from the airport, one of the CNG drivers was screaming at me saying “Mama, mama, ashen ashen”. I was dumbfounded. I kept thinking I am not this guy’s “Mama” (maternal uncle), so why is he calling me that? While I was looking at him in a confused manner, he took my silence as acceptance and started taking my luggage. I got a fright thinking this guy was mugging me. So, without a moment's delay, I started yelling for help. The police almost immediately came and intervened. When the police officer understood the situation, he started laughing. I was very annoyed seeing his audacity to laugh at my miseries. I mean, I was about to get mugged and this officer is laughing! But, the officer, very politely, explained the misunderstanding between us and told me to go with him to my expected destination. After reaching my destination, I shook hands with the CNG driver and we just shrugged this entire thing off. As I said, while it was happening it was quite frightening to me as Bangladesh was a foreign country where I knew no one and had no idea about it. On top of that, if I got mugged, I would have been completely lost. Fortunately, the people here are polite, welcoming and especially, and do not hold grudges easily. Ha, ha, ha!

I: Anything you wish to tell the prospective applicants of NSU?

AS: For the prospective and new students, my message to you is choose NSU (trust me, you'll thank me later on). NSU is the university you would want for higher education and personal growth. I want to say confidently from my educational experiences in Nepal and China that NSU is the best university and your decision to join here will be one of the best decisions of your life. I feel blessed to be a student of NSU and I am sure you all will feel the same. Lastly, I want to thank the entire NSU--the Board of Trustees, the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (D), the Deans, the Chairs, faculty members and especially all the staff of External affairs-- for keeping this institute as the center of excellence and making our days at NSU as the best part of our lives. Wish you all the best. NSUer for life.