

Introduction

The Asian University for Women (AUW) is being established as a leading institution of higher learning for women from across Asia. The campus located in Chittagong, Bangladesh, is designed by renowned architect Moshe Safdie, and is being constructed on land donated by the Government of Bangladesh. The University is a regional institution dedicated solely to women's education and leadership development. AUW will be international in outlook but rooted in the contexts and aspirations of people across Asia, offering a curriculum that combines liberal arts and the sciences with graduate professional training. The principal institutional financial supporters of the project to date include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Goldman Sachs Foundation, the Open Society Institute, Citigroup Foundation, and USAID.

The mission of the Asian University for Women is based on the firm belief that education—especially higher education—provides a critical pathway to leadership development, economic progress, and social and political equity. AUW will educate promising young women from diverse cultural, religious, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds from across South and South East Asia and the Middle East—with a particular emphasis on the inclusion of women from poor, rural, and refugee populations. AUW will enable its students to become skilled and innovative professionals, service-oriented leaders and promoters of tolerance and understanding. With an initial student body of 200, and growing towards an enrollment of 2700, the target student/faculty ratio is 13:1.

Access Academy

In March 2008, AUW opened its Access Academy, a year-long, pre-collegiate bridge program; designed to ensure that promising students who lack adequate secondary school training have an opportunity to acquire the requisite preparation for a rigorous University education. The Access Academy currently houses 129 students from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka who will matriculate to the new university in September 2009. AUW also partnered with WorldTeach, a non-profit organization affiliated with the Center for International Development at Harvard University, to identify, recruit and train teachers for the Access Academy.

Building International Relationships

Stanford University

Recognized world-wide as a leading educational institution, Stanford University has offered to send two of its brightest post doctoral fellows to serve as part of the founding faculty for the year 2009-2010.

The relationship between Stanford University and the Asian University for Women highlights AUW's dedication to bringing world-class education and international faculty to Chittagong. AUW students will be prepared for careers working side-by-side with their peers from around the world—including those from Stanford.

Aalborg University

Internationally renowned for "the Aalborg Model of PBL," Aalborg University in Denmark is renowned for its inter-disciplinary, problem-oriented approach to innovative research and education. The University has entered into an agreement with the Asian University for Women to collaborate on establishing a graduate program in Information & Communication Technology.

As part of the initiative, Aalborg University will provide AUW with its own faculty members until a full Computer Science faculty has been recruited. Aalborg University is also developing an initiative to recruit South and South East Asian students to complete their doctoral degrees at Aalborg, before returning to Bangladesh to teach at the Asian University for Women.

Governance

The hallmark of AUW's institutional identity is a far-reaching Charter that establishes the University as an international, independent organization with privileges and immunities akin to those generally accorded to UN agencies. The Charter was approved and ratified through an Act of the Parliament of Bangladesh in September 2006. It provides AUW with institutional autonomy, guarantees full academic freedom and wholly enshrines the principle of non-discrimination—unique privileges in a region where universities frequently suffer from the fragility of such commitments.

The development of the University is being guided by an international network of proven leaders in the educational, financial, and developmental sectors. The Asian University for Women Support Foundation (AUWSF), incorporated as a non-profit organization based in the United States and located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, serves as the principal planning and fundraising organization for this effort. The Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors, and a list of its members appears at the end of this documents.

In 2007, AUWSF began developing the slate of the University's founding Board of Trustees, drawing from the region's leaders in business, academic, and non-governmental sectors. A number of prominent personalities have agreed to be nominated, including: Mr. Fazle Abed, Chairman of BRAC; Madame Lone Dybkjaer, Former Minister of Environment of Denmark; Ms. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairman of Biocon, Ltd.; and Mr. Ratan Tata, Chairman of the Tata Group.

The Foundation has adopted strict transparency policies as part of its partnership with BRAC, the leading and most highly reputable NGO in the region. It has also engaged Transparency International—the global watchdog on corruption—as an independent monitor. The creation of the Asian University for Women is therefore anticipated to serve as an exemplary regional model for integrity, accountability, and transparency.

Kamal Ahmad, Founder and CEO, AUWSF

Kamal Ahmad serves as the President and CEO of the Asian University for Women Support Foundation. Mr. Ahmad was educated at the Phillips Exeter Academy, Harvard College, and the University of Michigan Law School. He has combined a career in private transactional law practice and international development. He focused on corporate mergers and acquisitions, as well as U.S. federal securities laws, while at the New York offices of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson (1996-2000) and the London office of Mayer, Brown, Rowe and Maw (2001-2002). Immediately prior to joining AUWSF, he was on the staff of the General Counsel of the Asian Development Bank based in Manila, Philippines. He has also worked with the World Bank, the Rockefeller Foundation, and UNICEF. In 1998, Mr. Ahmad helped launch the World Bank/UNESCO Task Force on Higher Education and Society, which he co-directed with Professor David Bloom of Harvard University. Mr. Ahmad currently serves on the Board of Trustees of BRAC USA and as a member of the Jury for Cartier Women's Initiative Awards-Asia.

Chairman of the Board, Jack Meyer

Jack Meyer is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Asian University for Women Support Foundation. He is CEO and Senior Managing Partner of Convexity Capital Management, LP in Boston. Prior to founding Convexity in 2005, Mr. Meyer was President and CEO of the Harvard Management Company, which oversees the University's endowment assets, pension funds, charitable trusts, and pooled income funds, which totaled over of \$31 billion by the end of his term. Prior to HMC, he was Treasurer and Chief Investment Officer of the Rockefeller Foundation, where he managed the Foundation's endowment, valued at \$2 billion. Mr. Meyer also served as Deputy Controller of New York City, where he managed \$20 billion in total assets, including the City's pension funds, sinking funds, and treasury funds. Mr. Meyer currently serves on the Board of Directors and the Investment Committee of The Boston Foundation.

He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Denison University, where he was also awarded an honorary doctorate degree in 2004. Mr. Meyer received his Masters in Business Administration from Harvard Business School.

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2006

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AUW

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