Remarks made by Dr. Denise DiPuccio, Assistant Provost of International Programs, at the opening reception of International Education Week on Monday, November 14, 2011.

Welcome one and all to the Opening Reception of UNCW’s International Education Week.

Everyone in OIP looks forward to this event because it gives us the opportunity to recognize sustained global engagement by UNCW’s students, faculty, and staff. So, get ready for lots of applause, congratulations, and general basking in global goodwill.

What better news for the opening day of International Education Week than to learn that UNCW jumped up another 4 notches in Open Doors rankings, from 13th to 9th. Five years ago, we weren’t even listed in the top 40 Master’s Institutions that send students abroad. Then, in 2005, we were listed at 40; in 2006 & 07, at 18; 2008, at 13; and in 2009, at 9. (I know. It’s a bit weird that a report that only came out this morning is based on statistics from 2009-10 but such is the snail-paced world of institutional reporting.)

These rankings are rewarding proof that commitment to strategic goal # 4 among faculty, staff, and administrators at UNCW is nurturing a culture of global preparedness and that that culture is gaining national attention. Moreover, these statistics are part of bigger piece of growing evidence that UNCW is a leader in the field.

Earlier this month, Chancellor Miller received a letter from the President of the Institute of International Education, the same org that publishes the Open Doors report, congratulating University of North Carolina Wilmington on being one of this year’s Fulbright Scholarship “top producers.”

Later this week, UNCW will be one of five institutions profiled in a conference session, sponsored by the Council on International Education Exchange, on how institutional mission, curriculum, and education abroad align. Our rapid rise in the Open Doors rankings caught the attention of leaders at the Center for Capacity Building in Study Abroad and we are characterized in this panel as an example to follow.

Let’s move now from the general to specific examples of how global awareness fits into the personal lives of some members of the UNCW community.

Sandra Koza Frank Travel Scholarship

I’ll begin by recognizing two individuals. One gave; one received; both share a desire to learn about other cultures.

A definite highlight this past year in OIP was when we learned that community members Mr. David Frank and his children wanted to create the Sandra Koza Frank Travel Scholarship in memory of their wife and mother, Sandra Koza Frank. This $25,000 endowment directly supports UNCW’s efforts to graduate global citizens. As you all may already know, the overwhelming majority of incoming students indicate that they plan to study abroad while at UNCW. A survey conducted by the time these students are sophomores indicates that the biggest perceived obstacle to making that journey is expense. By
creating this award, David, a global citizen in his own right who has travelled abroad extensively and had an international career, is assisting Seahawks going abroad or international students coming to the U.S.

The first student to benefit from the Frank family’s award is Neil Greenberg, a major in international business with a minor in Spanish. Neil currently has a 3.85 gpa. He will be studying at the U of Belgrano in Buenos Aires, Argentina during spring 2012.

Competition for these awards is fierce since need far exceeds our resources. The selection committee and the professors that wrote recommendations for him, however, agreed that Neil is most deserving of this award. I state the obvious when I say that Neil is going to learn a lot about Spanish, Argentina, and business. Neil, however, has grander plans as indicated by the following statement from his application essay: “I hope to do volunteer work that will teach me the appreciation of service and humility that will further lead to my development as a morally, culturally astute global citizen.”

It turns out that Neil was one of those incoming first-year students who wrote on his UNCW entrance essay that he hoped to study abroad. A happy outcome here is the fact that, thanks to the Sandra Koza Frank Travel Award, Neil can worry a lot less about the financial demands often associated with an immersion experience.

Student Global Citizenship Award

Upon returning to the U.S. after studying abroad, students like Neil have the opportunity to apply for the Student Global Citizenship Award. We invite students to submit a “product” (essay, youtube video, poem, photo gallery, etc.) that demonstrates how UNCW has prepared them to become a Global Citizen. This year, we had many worthy applicants for this award and, therefore, decided to also recognize a runner up.

An honorable mention of the Student Global Citizenship Award goes to, Ashley Jarrell, a senior with a dual major in Spanish and Criminology, who studied in Ecuador. Like her other global peers, Ashley has incorporated this transformative experience into her life after returning home. She is currently a Study Abroad Ambassador, serves as a mentor for international students, and is writing an honors research thesis that focuses on the Hispanic population of the correctional system in North Carolina.

Alexandra Favory, a dual major in Anthropology and Studio Art, is the recipient of this year’s Student Global Citizenship Award.

I invite you to read an excerpt from her application essay in which Alexandra describes the literacy project she organized from start to finish in a township school while studying abroad at our partner institution, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. This project culminated in a memorable day on which Alexandra and her peers delivered books so that teachers could spend 30 minutes each day to teaching reading skills. This remarkable act of civic engagement is one of many in which Alexandra participates. At UNCW, she mentors Latino high school students as they navigate the application process to UNCW; in Wilmington, she interns for the Full Belly Project.
Further afield, she continues her international community engagement with trips to Haiti, where she gives art lessons and assists at an orphanage in a rural village.

In her essay, Alexandra states, “I evenly split my love for anthropology with... art. My passion for art stems from a desire to represent and analyze human experiences in creative form... While composing my art, I hope to expand limited perceptions and cultural boundaries by leading audiences to question beliefs, rituals, and social structures.” With such varied academic interests and passions, we can safely assume that this Seahawk will continue down a global pathway.

**Staff Global Travel Grant**

We’ll now shift focus a bit to the UNCW employees who contribute to the creation of an academic environment that encourages our students to become global citizens.

A new initiative at UNCW, the Staff Global Travel Grant, provides a global professional development opportunity for non-teaching employees. In their proposals, applicants are asked to describe the purpose of their travel (attendance at an international conference, presentation at a seminar or workshop; a site visit to a partner school, etc.), what they hope to gain from the experience, and explain how this experience will make them do their jobs better. Proposals are reviewed by the Staff Senate Scholarship Committee and recommendations are made to me.

Last year, Frank Nye, Project Manager, and Robin Bennett, Administrative Associate in CSB, went to Australia and Spain, respectively. This year, two more staff will get a similar opportunity.

**Jessica Baker**, Admissions, will visit seven high schools in Austria, England, France, Germany & Italy. Each school is dedicated to preparing its students for entrance into a U.S. American university and Jessie will be showing them that UNCW might be just the choice for them. Jessie’s travel directly relates to UNCW’s goal to increase the presence of international students on campus.

**Patricia Fox**, Office of Research Services, will be visiting partner institution, the U of Wollongong. She’ll consult with counterparts to learn how they handle pre- and post-award procedures, electronic systems and billing processes for grants. This experience will allow her to look at her daily routine with fresh eyes, perhaps adapt some of UW’s procedures at UNCW, and share new perspectives with colleagues.

**Faculty/Staff Global Citizenship Award**

The last piece of business on today’s agenda is to recognize the recipient of the Faculty Global Citizenship Award.

**Cara Cilano**, Professor in the Department of English, fosters global citizenship in every aspect of her teaching, research, and service contributions at UNCW.

As a specialist in post-colonial theory and literature, she has created numerous courses that expose undergraduate and graduate students to international concerns with titles such as Indian Diaspora and Women Writers of the Subcontinent. Moreover, Cara received a GC grant to develop five new courses with a global emphasis for the “Living in a Global Society” section of the University Studies curriculum.
As noted by Don Bushman, chair of the Dept of English, Cara’s research is equally global in scope. In his nomination letter, he writes: “in addition to publishing more than a dozen essays on post-colonial literature and theory in leading peer-reviewed venues, her first book, From Solidarity to Schisms: 9/11 and After in Fiction and Film from Outside the US—was published in 2009. Another book, Acts of Contrition: The 1971 Pakistani Civil War in English- and Urdu-Language Literatures, was published in 2010.”

Cara has been involved in globalizing the Common Reading program for first-year students, exposing the local community to international perspectives at College Day, coordinating visits by international scholars, directing and serving as a reader for theses that deal with themes beyond our U.S. borders, and sending Wentworth scholars to France, Egypt, India, Greece, and eastern Europe, among other places.

Committed to sharing her global work abroad as well as here, Cara was a Visiting Research Associate at the Institute of Islamic Studies, at McGill University in 2008. As a Fulbright scholar, she lectured at Yanka Kupala State University, in Belarus in 2007. This trend will continue. In spring 2012, Cara will serve as the resident faculty director for UNCW’s study abroad program at Swansea University. Rest assured that the students will fare well under capable leadership.