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News from Western

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WESTERN AND SOUTH AMERICA BRIDGE HIGHWAYS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Bowling Green, Ky. -- Western Kentucky University and Austral University in Valdivia, Chile, today officially bridged the some 6000 miles over the equator when representatives from both schools met on the Western campus.

The meeting between Western officials and Dr. Raul Grandjean, director of special development at Austral University, designated the official signing of a contract under which Western is providing technical assistance to the South American University.

The contract was awarded by Valdivia to Western under loans by the Bank for Inter-American Development, an international financial organization which is aiding South American countries in rebuilding their campuses.

Key officials at the signing of the contract besides Western President Dero G. Downing and the leader from Austral were six members of Western's faculty who have spent most of their summer in Chile at Valdivia. While there, they shared ideas in their academic areas with their South American counterparts.

This idea of "sharing" was generated throughout the meeting by the educators from the North and South Americas, expressed in a statement by Dr. Grandjean, who emphasize that the involvement between the two universities is rewarding to both schools:

"Much more important than the money this contract represents is the friendship and sharing between us," Dr. Grandjean told Western's representatives.

"We feel that this is an opportunity for us to reveal ourselves as persons, not as institutions in this new relationship with you," he told his Western hosts.

Dr. J. T. Sandefur, dean of the Graduate College, who served as spokesman at a luncheon following today's meeting, replied to Dr. Grandjean that "our involvement with Austral as well as other South American Universities is first and foremost to promote an intellectual understanding not only between our two universities, but of countries as well."

At the invitation of the Inter-American Bank, Western first provided technical assistance last spring to the National University of Trujillo, Peru, which is undergoing structural changes similar to those at Valdivia.

Western faculty who went to Chile this summer under the leadership of Dr. Edmund Hegen, head of Western's Department of Geography and Geology who acted as coordinator, were: Dr. Marvin Russell, Dr. Kenneth Cann, Dr. Paul Hatcher, Dr. Chester Davis, and Dr. William Nolan.

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