

**Remarks at the A.C.E. 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event: May 28, 2014**  
**By Brother Shamus McGrenra, upon his retirement from Saint Francis University, Pennsylvania**

David and the Associates in Cultural Exchange family, colleagues and friends:

It is indeed a distinct pleasure and privilege to be here today to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Associates in Cultural Exchange. And, I am honored to be here with you to celebrate 40 years of business excellence.

Forty years is a long time! I can think back 40 years to when I was a young, newly minted admissions counselor at Saint Francis University, forty years ago was a very different time. In 1973, one of Billboard's number one hits was *Time in the Bottle* by Jim Croce and that seems so very appropriate to this walk down memory lane. The year was 1973 . . . gas was 53 cents a gallon; a first class stamp was 8 cents; a loaf of bread was 35 cents; and, Harvard's tuition was \$3,200 per year. This was also the year that the catch phrase "tastes great; less filling" from Miller Lite bounced around in the heads of more than a few college students. And, when you did get home on holiday break, everybody was watching *The Jefferson's*, *Chico & the Man* and, of course, *M.A.S.H.*

It was also forty years ago that I got my first taste of international recruiting and I never looked back. I would not trade the experiences I have enjoyed these past 40 years while representing U.S. higher education to the world at various ports-of-call around the globe. I have had the pleasure of meeting so many wonderful people and I truly cherish the relationships that have grown over these past 40 years. My involvement and interactions with A.C.E. is one of those cherished relationships.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to share in your success over these many years. As A.C.E. marks its 40 anniversary, I also take this opportunity to thank the many colleagues who make up the A.C.E. family. It takes a great deal of involvement and personal dedication of many individuals to make an organization like A.C.E. reach such an important historical milestone.

Your dreams, aspirations and hard work have make Associates in Cultural Exchange a successful and important partner in the International sector and today allow me to express the sentiments of the international community in thanking you for that vision and dedication.

Throughout the 2013-14 academic year, A.C.E. is commemorating its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a series of celebrations and reflections to mark the occasion. From local events in Japan and Seattle to global receptions at NAFSA in St. Louis and here in San Diego, Saint Francis is honored to share in this milestone with the many friends of A.C.E. here present today.

While humans are increasingly living longer, few businesses do so. The average lifespan of a company in the top 500 US companies has decreased by more than 50 years over the last century, from 67 years in the 1920s to just 15 years today. Only those companies that are well founded on a clear vision and beliefs, and are able to evolve and adapt, to survive. A. C. E. is one of those great success stories, in fact, 40 years of success stories.

Saint Francis University is very proud to be part of that success. And it all started out with a simple phone call and a modest proposal four years ago that has turned into a quintessential success story for Saint Francis University, for the A. C. E. organization and the international community in general.

Consider:

- Before our relationship with A. C. E., our international enrollment numbered in the 50's; as of this summer, we will top 100 international students.
- Before our relationship with A. C. E., we had no Intensive English program, this semester; we hired two additional ESL teachers to cover the increase enrollment in the intensive English program.

- Before our relationship with A. C. E., campus internationalization was an afterthought at faculty meetings; today, with the able assistance of A.C.E., internationalization of the Saint Francis campus is a vital part of every aspect of our strategic planning.

Yes, the A. C. E. organization assists Saint Francis University in the continued development of our international programs. Yes, the A. C. E. organization guides Saint Francis University in the ever changing rules and regulations with SEVIS and the U.S. government. But, even more importantly, the A.C.E. organization has become part of the Saint Francis University community of educators, part of our shared success story, and part of our family.

Therefore, to David Woodward – President of Associates in Cultural Exchange, and all our colleagues at A. C. E., the Saint Francis University educational community thanks you; the international students at SFU thank you; the larger international community of scholars thanks you. And, I thank you for your continued guidance and support that has made the Saint Francis University partnership with Associates in Cultural Exchange a success story with a shared goal of mutual understanding, that working together we can build a better world of internationalization for all.

May the Lord continue to bless the Associates in Cultural Exchange organization with many successful years ahead.