



Oberlin Shansi Memorial Association

Executive Director

About Oberlin Shansi

Founded in 1908, the Oberlin Shansi Memorial Association (“Shansi”) is among the oldest international educational exchange programs in the United States and takes great pride in its multifaceted approach to building bridges between the United States and Asia. Shansi seeks to promote understanding and communication between Asians and Americans through its varied connections with its partner institutions, including teaching and service exchanges of faculty, staff, and students. Shansi partners with Oberlin College and with universities and NGO’s in China, India, Indonesia, and Japan. The defining programs offered by Shansi are: two-year fellowships for recent Oberlin graduates to teach or engage in service projects at partner institutions in Asia; faculty and staff exchanges among Oberlin and the Asian partner institutions; and travel grants for Oberlin students to pursue independent research or service projects during winter term or summer.

Role of the Executive Director

The Executive Director is the chief executive of Shansi and reports to its Board of Trustees. S/he is responsible for carrying out the Association’s mission, projects, and day-to-day operations. While Shansi has managed successful programs both in the U.S. and in Asia for more than 100 years, the Association is also highly flexible and has always recognized that it must adapt as the world changes around it. Therefore, the Executive Director will be expected to drive strategic planning to develop a vision for the future of Shansi, and then take the lead in executing that vision.

Shansi currently maintains teaching and service fellowship programs at eight sites in four Asian nations: China, India, Indonesia, and Japan. It sponsors several visiting scholars on the Oberlin campus and numerous on-campus programs. The Executive Director operates at the center of these activities, maintaining friendly and effective relationships with Shansi’s institutional partners in Asia, overseeing academic and cultural enrichment programs on the Oberlin campus, coordinating fund-raising activities,

managing Shansi's annual budget of approximately \$700,000, and overseeing its \$12.5 million dollar endowment.

The Executive Director is responsible for analyzing difficult problems and making carefully considered decisions within a global context. In the past year, Shansi has addressed concerns regarding the proximity of its fellows to such events as nuclear contamination in Japan, volcanic ash fall on Java, and terrorist threats in Banda Aceh.

The Executive Director must be forward thinking and open to new means of fulfilling Shansi's mission. While some of Shansi's relationships are more than one hundred years old, especially in China, the organization has also strategically branched out in recent years to form partnerships in India, Indonesia, and Japan. For instance, in 2006 Shansi developed a new program in the area of Indonesia hardest hit by the 2004 tsunami and in 2007 Shansi began a partnership with a women's empowerment initiative in northern India.

Primary Responsibilities

Program Development and Management. The Executive Director manages Shansi's programs in China, Japan, India, and Indonesia. The structure, design, and operation of these programs – which vary considerably from one country to another – are the responsibility of the Executive Director. As part of this oversight, the Executive Director travels regularly (approximately two international trips per year, each of two to three weeks in duration) to the sites where Shansi operates in order to maintain close and mutually beneficial relationships with Shansi's institutional partners, to assess the status of the programs, and to provide advice and assistance to Shansi fellows in the field. In addition, the Executive Director identifies potential partnership opportunities in keeping with the strategic goals of the organization and pursues those relationships as appropriate.

Fund Raising. The Executive Director develops and implements a robust fundraising strategy and travels domestically in support of development efforts. The Executive Director works with the board and association staff to develop and implement fundraising targets and serves as the primary contact with individual and institutional donors and grant providers.

Administration. The Executive Director manages a small but effective staff currently consisting of an associate director, an office manager, an Oberlin campus coordinator and a returned fellow. In addition to managing the staff, the Executive Director is responsible for all financial matters related to Shansi: developing and managing the Association's annual budget, cash flow, and communications with the Association's investment managers, accountants, and auditors. The Executive Director also meets twice per year with the full board of trustees and four times per year with its executive committee.

External Relations. The Executive Director serves as the public face of Shansi, communicating effectively with a wide range of constituencies. In addition to managing relationships with administrators and faculty from partner institutions in Asia, s/he also interacts with donors, board members, former fellows, and Oberlin faculty, students, and administrators. The Executive Director is expected to develop

creative and innovative strategies – such as social media and online tools - for keeping friends of Shansi connected to the organization and to each other in order to advance Shansi’s mission.

Interface with Asian Partners. Shansi’s relationships with its institutional partners in Asia are essential to its success. The Executive Director is the key to maintaining and developing those relationships, which require constant attention and an acute awareness of both institutional interests and cultural differences. Shansi currently operates programs in partnership with the following institutions:

- China
Shanxi Agricultural University
Beijing Normal University
- India
Lady Doak College
Jagori Grameen
Study Center for Indian Literature in English and Translation (SCILET), located on the campus of American College
- Indonesia
Gadjah Mada University
Syiah Kuala University
- Japan
J.F. Oberlin University

Interface with Oberlin Campus. While organizationally independent of Oberlin College, Shansi benefits greatly from its location on campus and its historical affiliation with the College. Shansi Fellows are selected from Oberlin graduates, Oberlin undergraduates are eligible to apply for several grants for study in Asia during winter term and summer break, and Oberlin faculty and staff may apply for funds to visit partner institutions in Asia. In addition, Shansi sponsors visiting faculty from its university partners in Asia at Oberlin College. The Executive Director oversees this program and coordinates its operation with appropriate Oberlin College administrators and faculty. Finally, Shansi sponsors numerous Asia-related events on the Oberlin campus and helps organize academic and cultural symposia.

Opportunities and Challenges

Among the priorities for the new Executive Director will be imagining new frontiers for an organization that has enjoyed more than a century of strong and successful partnerships abroad. More specifically, the Executive Director should be ready to undertake the following:

- Assess the current state of Shansi’s programs and evaluate whether they are optimally designed for the changing global context, how they compare to best practices within peer organizations, and to what extent they currently meet Shansi’s high quality goals;
- Seek new ways to enhance the cultural and educational exchange objectives of the Association by identifying new partners, programs, and sources of revenue;

- Identify, develop, and execute a sound development strategy (including grants, major gifts, annual gifts, and bequests) for Shansi and serve as its lead fundraiser;
- Continue to strengthen Shansi's relationship with Oberlin College in ways that further serve Shansi's mission; and
- Reorganize the administrative structure of Shansi as appropriate to ensure efficient use of current resources, including an examination of the organization's current technology capabilities and future needs.

Qualities and Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have a passion for the mission of the organization and a personal understanding of the transformative power of intercultural experiences. The new Executive Director may have experience in the worlds of nonprofit management, philanthropy, academia, public service, or business. An advanced degree is preferred but not required. Proficiency with an Asian language is highly desirable.

Other desired qualities and qualifications likely to be found in strong candidates include the following:

- Strong leadership and management skills; an ability to manage the current operations of the organization while also developing a vision for its future;
- A sophisticated sense of cultural competency; an ability to build and maintain relationships across cultures and a solid understanding of contemporary Asia and its relationships with the United States;
- A zest and talent for fundraising; the ability to passionately and persuasively articulate Shansi's mission and interests, and develop and implement programs to identify and seek potential gifts and grants;
- Flexibility and creativity; an ability to adapt to an ever-changing global context and to the consistently unpredictable nature of the work; and
- An understanding of the values and culture of a dynamic liberal arts college such as Oberlin.

Letters of nomination, confidential inquiries, and questions about the search should be sent to OSMA@storbeckpimentel.com.

Anticipated start date: January 1, 2013

Shansi is committed to creating an institutional environment free from discrimination and harassment. Thus, discrimination and harassment based on the following categories are prohibited: race, color, sex, marital status, religion, creed, national origin, disability, age, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.