

## THE WATSON INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

BROWN UNIVERSITY

### Chinese Ambassador Meets Local Community Leaders

**4.03.07** - A dinner co-hosted last month by the **Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC)** and the Watson Institute gave local business and government leaders a chance to discuss common interests with Zhou Wenzhong, China's ambassador to the United States.

Zhou was in Providence to give a lecture at Brown, at the invitation of Watson Overseer William R. Rhodes. The Institute and RIEDC took the opportunity to introduce the ambassador to community leaders as well.

Welcomed by Brown University President Ruth J. Simmons, the ambassador and his delegation met with business representatives from American Power Conversion Corp., of West Kingston; GTech Corp., of Providence; Teknor Apex Co., of Pawtucket; and Textron Inc., of Providence. Also on hand were officials from the lieutenant governor's office and the Providence city solicitor, as well as representatives of RIEDC and Watson.



RIEDC's Saul Kaplan and Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong

All of the businesses represented at the meeting are already active in China. For instance, Gtech supplies computerized keno games in Beijing; APC and Textron have manufacturing operations in China; and Teknor Apex supplies polymers there.

"It was a pleasure to talk with Ambassador Zhou about how both China and Rhode Island are going through economic transformation," says RIEDC Executive Director Saul Kaplan. "Ambassador Zhou was very interested in our strategy to build a 21st century innovation economy. He was very open to discussing potential collaboration in areas including technology based businesses in life sciences, material sciences, information technology, and marine sciences."

Watson aims to build on this initiative. "While the Watson Institute's focus is on the international arena, we are eager to play a leadership role locally, in Rhode Island," said Institute Associate Director Geoffrey S. Kirkman '91. "There is a lot of international activity in Rhode Island. We look forward to additional collaborations with RIEDC and other Rhode Island groups to help connect local and global interests."

The Institute's next local collaboration will also focus on Asia, as Watson and Bryant University's John H. Chafee Center for International Business co-host a two-day conference, titled **The Rise of the New Asian Giants: Adaptive Strategies in the World Economy**, on April 13-14. The conference, which will feature academics, business leaders, and policymakers, is open to the public.

Visit the RIEDC website [here](#).

A summary, webcast, and transcript of the ambassador's lecture are available [here](#). Information on the New Asian Giants conference is available [here](#).

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