

University of Hawaii Asian Field Study 2023



The University of Hawaii, Shidler College of Business, completed its 38th Annual Asian Field Study. With Covid travel restrictions eased, 24 Shidler EMBA's and Global MBAs undertook an epic 20-day business tour through Tokyo, Kyoto, Bangkok, Phnom Penh and Seoul.

Program Focus

The objective of the six-credit Asian Field Study (AFS) is to enhance student preparation for business careers in the Asia-Pacific region. This is accomplished by identifying Asian market opportunities, improving language skills, learning management and financing methods and adapting to unique marketing, culture and business practices. Of particular emphasis are industries where Hawaii has links with Asia and therefore students can seek career opportunities while promoting Hawaii as a business hub for the Asia-Pacific region.

Asian Company Tours and Market Themes

In total, AFS 2023 toured and engaged executives at 25 companies in the Healthcare, TV & Media, Banking, F&B, Agriculture, Insurance, Real Estate Development, e-Marketing, Energy, Logistics, Biotech, AI and Venture Capital industries. Major themes included:

Healthcare: We visited two hospitals and five healthcare related ventures. In Japan, the focus was on combatting an aging society and developing digital, robotic and biotech tools to improve healthcare outcomes. In Thailand, it was about healthcare tourism and how hospitals can provide affordable, quality healthcare services on a global scale.

Frontier Economies: Visiting Cambodia, a country rising from the ashes of civil war to become the fastest growing economy in Asia, was a first for the AFS. Seeing companies like PPM, Kirusu Farms and World Bridge overcome market challenges to raise the standard of living of the Cambodian people was inspiring.

Digital Transformation: For Asian financial markets it was all about developing consumer friendly digital platforms to make banking, insurance, payments and investing services seamless and available to all.

Academics

Rigorous course work of twelve 3.5-hour classes led by Program Director Ben Bystrom complemented the 20-day field study travels. Pre-trip classes covered foreign

exchange markets, Asian corporate equity analysis, management and marketing case studies, Economist Intelligence Unit reports and culminated with student group presentations and analysis on Japan, China, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. Guest lectures included UH Professor Tung Bui speaking on "Doing Business in Vietnam", Dr. Tomo Koyonagi from Kyoto University Hospital on "Developing a Biotech Ecosystem in Kyoto" and UH Professor Liang Wang on "Economic and Business Trends impacting China". The post-trip program wrapped up with a reflective session and final trip-inspired student research presentations. To actively engage in Asian businesses, AFS students collaborated with companies on consulting projects. For example, helping Fuji Television develop strategies for increasing tourism to the Odaiba area of Tokyo and expanding foreign markets for a Cambodia indigenous coffee venture.

Alumni and Scholarships

Alumni played an invaluable role in arranging site visits and hosting networking events in Tokyo, Bangkok and Phnom Penh where students actively engaged business executives and UH graduates from across Asia. A record \$94,500 in student scholarships and fellowships were provided through the Freeman Foundation Asian Fellowship Program, Ralph S. Inouye Endowment in honor of Professor K.K. Seo, Michael and Judy Pietsch Endowed Study Abroad Scholarship, Asian Field Study Scholarship Fund and James P.D. Thropp Scholarship. A special Mahalo to the Freeman Foundation for their continued support as AFS's largest supporter.

A new initiative this year was the Asian Field Study Association (AFSA) established by AFS 2022 graduates. The AFSA objective is to organize the 800 plus AFS Alumni, now business executives worldwide, into a resource for building Hawaii into an economic Asia-Pacific hub. AFS graduates can look forward to participating in future AFS reunions, trips and events.

Cultural activities

Students traveled to the temples of Kamakura and Kyoto, the Korea War Museum in Seoul and the river markets of Bangkok. All the while sampling local cuisine from Japanese sushi to Thai spring rolls.

Japan



SOMPO Insurance, Developing new digital ventures, Tokyo



AFS Healthcare EMBA's test out Cyberdyne Robotics, Tokyo



Japan Executives and UH Alumni Mixer, Tokyo

Thailand



Siam Commercial Bank visit, Bangkok

Cambodia



Kirisu Farms state-of-the-art Milk Dairy, Phnom Penh

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SHIDLER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

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