

May 19, 2011

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Riki Jackson, Assistant Director, Confucius Institute/Asian Studies & International Trade
University of Memphis, riki.jackson@memphis.edu, 901-678-3166

**The Confucius Institute at the University of Memphis
Awards Seven Additional Confucius Classrooms**
“Public, Private Tennessee Schools Secure Prestigious Confucius Classroom Grants”

Memphis, Tenn. –Students across Tennessee are getting a leg up on their global competition by learning Chinese and studying China in depth, thanks to grants to seven schools from the Confucius Institute at the University of Memphis (CIUM).

Bristol Tennessee City Schools, Campus School in Memphis, Hillsboro High School in Nashville, Hutchison School in Memphis, Greeneville Middle School in Greeneville, Tusculum Elementary School in Greeneville, and Dyersburg Intermediate School in Dyersburg are the newest recipients of the prestigious Confucius Classroom grant from CIUM and the Office of Chinese Language Council International (HANBAN). Tennessee’s newest Confucius Classrooms include private and public schools. In addition to the seven new Confucius Classrooms, there are five existing Confucius Classroom programs across Tennessee working in partnership with the CIUM. The twelve Confucius Classrooms in conjunction with over 30 partner schools across the state provide an opportunity for the CIUM to teach the Chinese language and culture to students as young as preschool up to post graduate school and continuing education in public, private, parochial, and charter schools across the state including colleges and universities.

Confucius Classroom recipients who have made a 1:1 match with time and resources receive 500 – 750 donated books on Chinese language, culture, history, and art along with \$20,000 worth of technology, start-up funds for Chinese language and cultural programs, and a full or part-time Chinese language teacher if needed provided by Hanban through the CIUM. Each prospective school must be in the research stage, development stage or implementation stage of a Chinese language program. Prospective applicants must be committed to providing a global education for their students in multiple ways including an emphasis on Chinese language and Asian studies.

Mandarin Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world and one-fifth of the world’s population lives in China, which has the world’s second largest economy behind the United States. Chinese and Spanish are expected to become the two most widely spoken languages in the United States surpassing English as the primary language within 10 years.

“More than ever, it is critical that we prepare our students for a global economy,” stated Dr. Hsiang-te Kung, Director of the CIUM and the Asian Studies and International Trade Program at the University of Memphis. “There has been a sharp increase in the world’s demand for Chinese learning as a result of China’s exponential economic growth. The CIUM is pleased to

serve as a resource center for Chinese language and culture in Tennessee and throughout the Mid-South. We are very proud of all of these wonderful schools and applaud their commitment to provide a world-class, global education to their students.”

“We were thrilled to learn that we had received a Confucius Classroom grant,” noted Bristol Tennessee City Schools Superintendent of Education Dr. Gary Lilly. “As the world becomes smaller and flatter, it has become imperative that we prepare our students for success in the global community.”

“It is an honor to be chosen as a Confucius Classroom. Campus School’s commitment to diversity and excellence in teaching and learning can be further developed through this growing and ongoing collaboration with the Confucius Institute at the University of Memphis and the many opportunities it provides,” said Dr. Susan Copeland who serves as Campus School’s director and principal.

“We are excited that Dyersburg Intermediate School was selected as a Confucius Classroom recipient,” exclaimed Dyersburg City School Superintendent of Education Lloyd Ramer. “We look forward to working with the Confucius Institute at the University of Memphis to enhance learning opportunities for our students in the field of Chinese language and culture.”

“We are honored to have been selected,” noted Greeneville City School Director Dr. Lyle Ailshie. “The Greeneville City School District is committed to providing its student body with a well-rounded and rigorous curriculum that includes exposure to national and international perspectives. I commend the University of Memphis for developing a Confucius Institute as a way to assist school systems produce students who are globally competent.”

“At Hillsboro High School, we offer a rigorous academic program so every graduate is prepared for college and career,” said Dr. Terry Shrader, school principal. “With the Confucius Classroom grant, our students will have even greater opportunities for in-depth study of Chinese culture and language.”

“The Confucius Classroom at Hillsboro High School will be a capstone experience for Hillsboro cluster students, many of whom will study Chinese from kindergarten through 12th grade,” said Dr. Jesse Register, director of Metro Nashville Public Schools. “CIUM and HANBAN are helping us expose our students to the world’s largest culture.”

“Hutchison is thrilled to be designated as a Confucius Classroom by the Confucius Institute at the University of Memphis and the Office of Chinese Language Council (Hanban),” stated Dr. Annette Smith, Head of School at Hutchison. “Over the course of the last three years, we partnered with the Confucius Institute at the University of Memphis in developing our Chinese language program which now extends from preschool through Chinese III in high school.”

“Our partnership with the Confucius Institute has been invaluable. They assisted us in finding local teachers, provided cultural enrichment activities for the students on a number of occasions, afforded the opportunity for travel to China for girls and school leaders and provided educational resources for our teachers,” said Assistant Head of School Laurie Stanton at Hutchison.

Confucius Classrooms are non-profit educational organizations managed by local Confucius Institutes and by HANBAN headquartered in Beijing. There are 345 Confucius Classrooms in 98 countries across the world.

Please visit the CIUM's web site at www.memphis.edu/cium or HANBAN's web site at <http://english.hanban.edu.cn/> for additional information about Confucius Classrooms or about the Confucius Institute at the University of Memphis.