An international student exchange program and continued collaboration on research of Chinese herbs to fight cancer are a few of the opportunities resulting from a recent visit to the People’s Republic of China by an ISU contingent including College of Pharmacy professor Dr. Alok Bhushan.

Dr. Bhushan, associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences, met with faculty and administrators from Soochow University’s Department of Pharmacy to propose the student exchange program between the two colleges.

Soochow University is located in the ancient city of Suzhou, about 50 miles from Shanghai. With a student population of over 45,000, the university consists of six campuses and about 4,150 faculty and staff members.

The university currently offers a four-year pharmacy degree and masters program. The proposed student exchange program with ISU would provide qualified students with an opportunity to earn a joint doctor of pharmacy degree from both universities, Bhushan said.

According to his proposal, pharmacy students from Soochow University would attend the ISU College of Pharmacy during their second and third years of the professional program.

Prior to attending ISU, students must complete required courses including those in immunology and physiology.

Only the top five percent of students who meet the criteria for the exchange program would be eligible to apply for admission at ISU, Bhushan said.

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After the Soochow University students are admitted to the exchange program, they would attend the ISU College of Pharmacy for two years, partaking in module classes and case studies.

Following their education at ISU, the exchange students would return to Soochow University for their final year of classes.

In exchange, ISU College of Pharmacy students would have an opportunity to attend Soochow University during the fourth-year of the professional program for their advance practical experience and to study Chinese herbal health care, Bhushan said.

“That would be an opportunity for our students to study Chinese health care and to learn alternative medicine,” he said.

The program also would provide an opportunity for faculty of both universities to teach at each respective college.

“There would be an exchange of faculty from both universities to teach short-time courses during the summer,” Bhushan said.

Before the exchange program is implemented, which may take about two years, approval is required by the administration of the College of Pharmacy, ISU and the State Board of Education.

In addition to the student and faculty exchange programs, Bhushan said, graduate students from ISU and Soochow University also will conduct collaborative research projects. Currently, ISU College of Pharmacy graduate student Tara Johnson is conducting tests on the medicinal qualities of mushroom indigenous of China.

For more information about the study of the medicinal qualities of Chinese mushrooms, look for a complete story of the China trip in the upcoming issue of ISU Outlook alumni magazine.

Pharmacy professor co-authors Christmas songs for family CD

Dr. Kerry Casperson, College of Pharmacy clinical assistant professor, has assisted his wife Deanne, ISU alum, 2002, MEd, as coauthor of a few of the songs on her new CD, “God Bless America, Again and Other Songs from the Casperson Collection.”

Deanne, a music instructor at Snake River High School, Blackfoot, wrote the title song following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the New York City World Trade Towers and Pentagon.

The Casperson Carols, written by Kerry and Deanne, include “Christmas Allelujah, She Holds Her Son, He is Come! Immanuel Is Come! And Angels in Disguise.”

Deanne also is the composer of “In Idaho,” the song performed by her high school students when the Capitol Christmas tree passed through Blackfoot on its way to Washington, D.C.

Following the local performance, Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson invited her choir to sing in Washington for the lighting of the national Christmas tree on Dec. 11.

Kerry will join Deanne and the 26 students from Snake River High School in Washington, D.C. The Chamber Singers will perform “In Idaho” and “God Bless America, Again” during the lighting ceremony of the Edelman spruce furnished by the state of Idaho.

They will also perform to national and international dignitaries at a reception following the ceremony hosted by Sen. Larry Craig.

For a copy of the CD, lyrics, sheet music or minus tracks, contact Deanne Casperson at caspd@d55.k12.id.us or at Casperson Publications, 755 S. Shilling Ave., Blackfoot, ID 83221. Carl Watkins at Mountain America Sounds can also be reached at watkins@srv.net.

Happy Holidays to all

from the ISU College of Pharmacy