Columbia Engineering Around the World

As part of the University’s global initiatives effort and in recognition of the important role that alumni and friends from Asia have played in the history of Columbia, Engineering Dean Feniosky Peña-Mora, Columbia College Dean Michele Moody-Adams, and other senior administrators from Columbia visited Asia in June for a series of alumni, parent, and student gatherings. Receptions were held in Hong Kong, Seoul, and Bangkok bringing together over 450 Columbians to meet the Dean on his first official visit to Asia. The incoming undergraduate students in each city were also officially welcomed to the Columbia family.

There were many highlights on the trip. In China, the dean stopped in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hangzhou to discuss international research collaborations with top universities and corporations. In Bangkok, he met with the Prime Minister of Thailand to explore educational partnerships between Columbia Engineering and Thailand. In Shanghai, Donglei Zhou ’00 hosted a dinner for Chinese alumni who were Fu Foundation Scholars. In Seoul, Parents Council member Seung Hoon Lee and Sun Kee Chung P’13 hosted a dinner for parents of current students, where Dean Peña-Mora spoke of the need to increase the connection of international parents.

Dean Feniosky Peña-Mora, center, joined Columbia Professor of Chemical Engineering Jingyue Ju, right, and Jing Cheng, left, a research partner at Tsinghua University in Beijing, outside the lab where they are engaged in collaborative research. Professor Ju, the principal investigator, is also head of DNA sequencing and chemical biology at the Judith P. Sulzberger, M.D. Columbia Genome Center. He is a leader in the global race to develop the $1,000 genome platform for personalized medicine.

Dean Feniosky Peña-Mora, third from right, was an invited presenter at the FUNGLODE Symposium on disaster preparedness conducted this summer in the Dominican Republic. The dean, whose expertise is in managing large-scale projects and disaster management, spoke to more than 100 engineering professionals and government officials on ways to train, deploy, and utilize first responders as well as manage the disaster recovery cycle, including damage assessment, restoration of services, and temporary shelter. Shown in the photo above are, from l. to r., Federico Cuello, Permanent Ambassador of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations; Valerie Julliand, United Nations Representative to the Dominican Republic; Dean Peña-Mora; and Marco Herrera, Executive Director of Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo (FUNGLODE), an organization founded by Dominican Republic President Leonel Fernández.

Regina and John Lee ’81, right, parents of Andrew Lee ’13, left, met the dean for lunch in Seoul, South Korea, and also attended a dinner for parents of current Engineering students.

Chatchai Piyasombatkul ’86, P’11, ’13, a member of the School’s Board of Visitors, left, joined Dean Peña-Mora, center, and Prime Minister of Thailand Abhisit Vejjajiva in the Government House in Bangkok to discuss educational partnerships between Columbia Engineering and Thailand. Prime Minister Vejjajiva presented Dean Peña-Mora with a depiction of the royal barge as a memento to mark the occasion of their meeting.

The Debian Project, an organization which is behind the free Debian GNU/Linux operating system (Debian, for short), held its 11th international conference at Columbia in August in cooperation with the Department of Computer Science. It marks the first time the conference has been held in the U.S., and it was attended by more than 300 software developers from around the world. (The tartan seen in the kilts and ties is “Debian,” a unique plaid contained in the Scottish Tartan World Registry.) Photo by Aigars Manhinovs.