

HighScope China Holds First Annual Conference

HighScope Staff

More than 300 early childhood educators attended the first annual HighScope China Conference and Inauguration Ceremony of the HighScope China National Institute, held in Beijing from October 27–28, 2016.

Sean Zhang was named board president of the new Institute. Speaking at the conference, he reported on HighScope’s China launch, the sum of three years of preparation.

Zhang called the conference a “great start” to the new program. “Many of the most influential policymakers, researchers, and practitioners in China attended and endorsed the event,” he said.

Among those in attendance were Professor Minyuan Gu, who serves as Honorary Chairman of the Chinese

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Society of Education; Professor Zhenguo Yuan, Vice President of the China Society of Education and Dean of the School of Education of China East Normal University; and Houqin Yin, former superintendent of the Shanghai Municipal Education Department. Liyuan Ho of Beijing Normal University, a well-known researcher on the HighScope Curriculum, was named president of the HighScope China National Institute. HighScope board members Sue Bredekamp and

Deborah Stipek were also appointed to the board, as was HighScope President Cheryl Polk.

“It’s taken some time to lay the foundation for this partnership, but it’s all about co-creation,” said Polk. “We’re very enthusiastic about building a consistent, ongoing relationship. As you can see,” she added, motioning to the crowd in attendance, “educators and professionals from the Institute and all over China are pretty enthusiastic about it too.”

Zhang couldn’t agree more, adding that the awareness of the HighScope Curriculum in the Chinese research community has positioned the Institute for increased influence on early educational practices throughout the country. “We are honored to work with the HighScope Foundation to promote HighScope in China,” he said, “and confident that we will reach the goals that we have been pursuing jointly for a long time.” ■





HighScope Indonesia Celebrates 20 Years

Iis Zatnika & Wahyuni Ratna Lingga

Twenty years ago, eight preschoolers gathered in a rented house in Jakarta. They wouldn't have known it, but their little group was the beginning of what would go on to become HighScope Indonesia.

From its humble beginnings in 1996, HighScope Indonesia has expanded to 11 locations in 7 cities across the country, serving thousands of students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. That success was memorialized on October 7, 2016, with more than 700 teachers and staff gathering to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of HighScope Indonesia.

The celebration was the grand finale of HighScope Indonesia's 6th Annual Conference, the theme of which (Redesigning the World — the Journey) demonstrated the ambitious scope of an institute committed to "leading the human development paradigm." Participants at the Annual Conference sang along with the famous pop rock band Kotak, chuckled with Indonesian comedian Cak Lontong, and watched in silence and sincere gratitude a special video tribute, *HighScope Indonesia: A 20-year Journey*. Throughout the two-day conference, attendees were inspired, refreshed, and reinforced with concepts and new strategies from Rick Smith, founder of Conscious Teaching and author of *Conscious Classroom Management*, as well as a host of consultants and education experts from leading Indonesian universities and around the world.

"We want teachers to continue to learn and develop themselves," said Antarina S.F. Amir, founder and CEO of HighScope Indonesia, of the Annual Conference. "One of the most important

focuses of HighScope Indonesia at this time, in addition to developing a curriculum and systems, is making sure teachers teach effectively in the classroom every day," she said. "The educators who attend the conference come year after year because they believe that all

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of their efforts are made wholly for the sake of what is best for the children of Indonesia."

Antarina credits the consistency underlying HighScope's research findings for the institute's early success. Initially, the biggest obstacle was overcoming the resistance of parents who doubted the relevance and effectiveness of the HighScope philosophy in Indonesia. Though the research was clear in the US, some questioned its application outside of the West. Two decades later, Antarina is proud to reflect on the number of graduates she has watched go on to achieve success in their careers and their lives.

But perhaps what Antarina is most proud of is how the institute further developed a system and expanded it to include not only early elementary but students in elementary and upper grades as well.

Lee Ann Jung, an editorial board member for Young Exceptional Children (YEC) and *Journal of Early Intervention*, agrees. "HighScope Indonesia is the first example I've been able to see in action of a school that has taken the early childhood principles into the K-12 program," she said. "My colleagues and I have been saying for years how wonderful it would be if K-12 would make use of the early childhood principles that we advocate: child-centered learning and following children's lead."

Implementing the HighScope Curriculum in K-12 classrooms started when Antarina and her colleagues participated in HighScope's elementary training in 2000. "We hired consultants and built the system, and then we invited educational experts from all over the world to come over and analyze and validate our curriculum," said Antarina. "Then, we trained teachers, applied the curriculum in the classroom, and analyzed its effectiveness."

Antarina is optimistic that HighScope Indonesia will continually improve and attract qualified, progressive educators from all over Indonesia, and is quick to point out that the institute and its influence on K-12 education in Indonesia will continue to grow. "Together with members of my staff, I persist in regularly attending international conferences, and upon returning home, we continue our study," she said. "Remember, we are life-long learners — the development process is a continuum." ■



K-9 teachers and Antarina S.F. Amir danced together at the 20th Anniversary celebration.



As part of HighScope Indonesia's 20th Anniversary celebration, staff were recognized with awards for 5, 10, 15, and 20 years of service.