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International Programs Receives State Award

The West Virginia State University (WVSU) International Programs received one of the top honors and a check for $5000 during the annual Cyrus R. Vance Awards ceremony held on November 15, 2007, in the Great Hall at the Cultural Center in Charleston. WVSU was recognized for its efforts in international initiatives, while Sherry Strow of Princeton High School received the other major award for her work with secondary students exchange programs. Twenty additional individual educators and programs were also acknowledged.

James Natsis accepts Cyrus Vance Award from WV Secretary of Education and the Arts, Kay Goodwin

The Director of the Office of International Affairs, James Natsis, accepted the award from Secretary of Education and the Arts, Kay Goodwin. Assistant Vice-President for Academic Affairs, John Teeuwissen, was also present for the event. "These are excellent examples of the quality educators we have in West Virginia," said Secretary Goodwin. "The influence from all of the nominees is raising the bar in international education for this generation of students and future students to come."

The Office of International Affairs was established in September 1998, thanks in part to a U.S. Department of Education Title VI-A grant designed to enable institutions of higher education to better develop international programs. The University also established a Minor in International Studies and hired a full-time coordinator (now director) during the same year.

The Cyrus R. Vance Awards were created by the Office of the Secretary of Education and the Arts in 2001 to honor West Virginia educators who best exemplify Vance's dedication to the understanding of international issues and affairs, and promote greater international understanding among West Virginia students. A native of Clarksburg, Vance served as Secretary of State under President Jimmy Carter, Deputy Secretary of Defense under President Johnson, and Secretary of the Army under President Kennedy. He also served as a special presidential envoy to many of the flashpoints of the 20th century: the Panama Canal Zone, Cyprus, Vietnam, South Africa, and Croatia. After a very distinguished career in public service and diplomacy, Vance passed away in January 2002.

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