



## From the Office of Secretary of State John A. Gale

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**Contact:** Laura Strimple

402-471-8408

[laura.strimple@nebraska.gov](mailto:laura.strimple@nebraska.gov)

### **Gale wraps up international activity in 2015 with ambassador's visit**

LINCOLN – Secretary of State John Gale welcomed the ambassador and consul general of the Republic of the Philippines to the State Capitol on Friday, December 18. Ambassador Jose L. Cuisia, Jr. and Consul General Generoso Calonge are among nearly 200 international guests who visited with Sec. Gale this year.

“Those we receive annually represent a wide range of positions and interests,” explained Gale. “Many have titles, hold positions in government or have business interests. We also get journalists, members of the military, teachers and students.”

Sponsoring organizations have included: the International Visitor Leadership Program, Bilateral Migrant Education Program, Napier Exchange, Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, Open World Program, State Department of Agriculture, Mayor’s Committee for International Friendship, and the Confucius Institute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL).

Gale, who serves as chief protocol officer, has worked to strengthen cultural, educational and commercial ties with other countries since taking office in 2000. Hundreds of visitors come to the Secretary of State’s office annually, and are often recognized with a certificate, making them honorary citizens of Nebraska.

“As far as I know, Nebraska is the only state to bestow such an honor,” said Gale. “Foreign guests often remark about the friendliness of Nebraskans and this certificate is a small token of our friendship that they are proud to show off when they return home.”

Expanding on his international duties this year, Gale was recently appointed by UNL Chancellor Harvey Perlman to serve on the Board of Directors of the Confucius Institute; a partnership between University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Xi'an Jiaotong University of Xi'an, China.

"My office has had a long-standing relationship with Confucius Institute. We've assisted and supported this partnership since its formation in 2007," explained Gale. "We've had the opportunity to meet with and recognize the teachers who have come from China to teach language and culture in classrooms across Nebraska. We have also taken part in many celebratory events hosted by the Institute."

The Confucius Institute at UNL was the 20<sup>th</sup> such institute to be located in the United States. There are now more than 350 worldwide. The Confucius Institute Board at UNL consists of seven members, chaired by Chancellor Perlman.

In addition to hosting educational programs and events in classrooms and for the general public, the Confucius Institute also sponsors educational and cultural tours annually to China for state officials, educators, and high school students.

Secretary Gale traveled to China in 2010 and 2014 as part of annual tour for state and school district officials selected for the program.

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