Ohio State ADA Coordinator to Provide Assistance in Indonesia

L. Scott Lissner, The Ohio State University’s Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, has been invited to provide technical assistance in Indonesia on disability policy and practice. The trip, from September 15 – October 2, 2013, is sponsored by the Department of State’s Public Diplomacy Program. Focusing on advocacy, access and inclusion at all levels of education, preparing teachers and university faculty to work in inclusive settings, and the benefits to society of an inclusive approach to education, Lissner will speak broadly on how the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) translates to policy and practice.

The tentative itinerary includes visits to Jakarta, Surabaya, Central Java, Medan, and the surrounding areas. In addition to visits with officials from the Ministry of National Education, policy makers, non-governmental organizations, social activists, and university professors and students, the U.S. Embassy, along with Helen Keller International Indonesia [a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) partner] and Indonesian universities are organizing seminars and workshops that will bring together disabled peoples organizations, teachers, and education officials from nearby cities.

Education is the number one priority of the U.S.-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership, and the two countries highlight in particular educational opportunities for vulnerable children implemented through USAID’s Opportunities for Vulnerable Children (OVC) program. The OVC program prepares the foundation for an inclusive education system by focusing on educational rights and needs to serve children with disabilities. This initiative is a cornerstone of the U.S. government assistance program in Indonesia, directly responding to Indonesia’s priorities and reflecting a joint Indonesia-U.S. commitment to revitalize education for the next generation of Indonesia’s leaders.

This and other initiatives have led to a substantial increase in the number of children with disabilities attending school and increases in the availability and quality of inclusive education services. Replicable models have been implemented in Aceh, South Sulawesi, and Central Java. In partnership with the Ministry of National Education, local universities, disabled persons organizations, and the Hilton Perkins International, a university-level program is being developed to equip new teachers with effective teaching strategies and clear understanding of children with special needs.

For an interactive map of where Scott will be traveling, click here.

Housed within the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the ADA Coordinator’s Office was created to guide Ohio State’s efforts to move beyond compliance and toward seamless access. As the university’s focal
point for disability related initiatives, the ADA Coordinator's Office collaborates with university offices, governmental agencies, and advocacy groups to inform decision-making and ensure university compliance with State and Federal mandates. Lissner frequently balances compliance and social justice to ensure seamless access in developing university policies. His work with city, state, national and now international communities addresses advocacy through policy and practice that supports positive disability identity development and universal design.