OSU organization gives students chance at international experience

By Andi Gates
Dispatch Business Reporter

An Ohio State University organization is looking for companies willing to make a foreign "investment" at home.

The OSU group, one of 400 on college campuses worldwide, is the International Association of Students in Economics and Business. Known by its French acronym, AIESEC is dedicated to "preparing internationally educated managers and increasing international understanding," said OSU local committee President Jennifer Mysona.

FOUNDED IN 1948, the organization is rooted in post-World War II efforts by young people to rebuild Europe.

The vehicle for AIESEC's efforts is a traineeship exchange, "Hire a Brain," through which U.S. and foreign firms hire and pay students for temporary work at less than $8 per hour. In 1982, AIESEC raised 4,087 traineeships worldwide and placed 4,480 students.

The role of the OSU committee, Mysona said, is to find Ohio companies willing to create traineeships for foreign students, either on special projects or for seasonal work loads. Each foreign student placed in an Ohio firm opens up a traineeship for an OSU student in an overseas company, she said. About 30 OSU students are AIESEC members; two are now abroad, one in the Netherlands, the other in West Germany.

Three Ohio companies have made traineeships available: Columbus-based Battelle Memorial Institute, The Steelastic Co. of Akron and Kirby Co., the Cleveland vacuum cleaner division of Scott & Fetzer Co., Lakewood, Ohio. Kirby's most recent student, marketing graduate Frank Reussel, just returned to Germany, where he will set up Kirby's first independent vacuum cleaner distributorship in West Berlin.

KIRBY PAID Reussel $1,000 a month, routed him through the company's management training program and sent him on the road with a supervisor.

"He experienced what a lot of guys experience in 20 years, and we benefited from some fresh, young ideas," said Babi Scott, Kirby sales administrator who works with the students. "We couldn't have hired a person with that much marketing knowledge for $1,000 a month."

Kirby takes an Australian student this month for a year. To pair needs and expertise, Mysona said, students and companies are computer matched with companies specifying the student's nationality, language ability and degree requirements.

"Usually students are the cream of the crop," she said. "It's very competitive. In West Germany, students are discouraged from applying for traineeships unless they have a master's degree."

Traineeships last six weeks to 18 months.

Students are responsible for their own insurance and travel to and from the United States. The companies, in turn, pay a tax-deductible fee of $850 for the student's visa and reception, plus a salary of $175 to $300 per week. The company also is responsible for finding the student housing and transportation to and from work.

"Most firms find that cost effective," said Mysona, an international business administration and marketing major.

"If a company is planning to go overseas, hiring a student is the best chance to get knowledge about that market," said Linda Campbell, vice president and international business administration major.

"Plus, when you expose employees to a foreigner, they frequently get a new perspective on their own jobs," she said. "And if you let it be known you support such a program, the company's image is raised."
Business seminar lures 145 students

By TODD A. SEDMAK
Lantern staff writer

One hundred and forty-five college students from across the Midwest converged on campus Saturday for the fifth annual International Association of Students in Economics and Business winter workshop.

The Ohio State chapter sponsored the workshop.

Students from 11 different university chapters taught seminars in fundraising, public relations, marketing and human resources. These universities included Purdue, Michigan State and Indiana.

Scott Rieze, public relations director for the association, said, "Everyone learns from everyone. These are the people who will move up in the organization."

Ted Steidle, who has taught marketing in the Soviet Union, China, France and Belgium, discussed international characteristics and policies of today at the seminar. He said participation in the association will help students to better understand foreign countries and cultures when doing business with them.

Rieze said the goal of the association is to increase international understanding through the exchange of business students.

"The international exchange of jobs is the vehicle to bring students to different countries," he said.

Brad Arlen, a senior from Beachwood majoring in computer information science, is going to Japan this summer to work for an electronics company. Arlen is the president of the OSU chapter of the association.

"I'm going for the job experience but my main goal is to understand a different culture," he said. "I really don't think people in the United States understand other countries."

James Bartos, faculty adviser of the association, said, "The association provides the chance to experience things you wouldn't in school."

The Ohio State chapter is currently sponsoring three foreign students.

Ryuji Sato, an international economics major from Tokyo, is working at an insurance brokerage firm.

"As a sightseer, you don't get to talk to the people of the country," Sato said. "As an intern, I get to talk to the people."

Sato said his experience will be valuable to a Japanese company when he returns.

Leo Del Rosario, a hotel and restaurant management major from the Philippines, is interning at Domino's Pizza.

"I'm becoming a citizen of the world," Del Rosario said.

"As I travel, my biases are cleared up," he said. "At first, Americans appear cocky. Then you learn that Americans inherit the attitude to always strive forward."

"You never appreciate your country until you travel," Del Rosario said. "It's home."