

Ex-envoy to helm university's new center

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TAIPEI, Taiwan -- William Stanton, a former United States representative to Taiwan, has been named director of National Tsing Hua University's newly established Center for Asia Policy, the school said yesterday.

Stanton, who served as director of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) Taipei Office from 2009 to 2012, will be Tsing Hua's "Yeh Kung-chao chair professor" and the head of the university's new Asia policy center, said the

school's president, Chen Lih-jun.

Chen said at a news conference in Taipei that Tsing Hua University has maintained close ties with the U.S. since it was first established in Beijing in 1909 with funding from the Boxer Rebellion indemnity returned by the U.S. government.

A few of Tsing Hua's graduates and faculty members, including Hu Shih and Yeh Kung-chao, even served as the Republic of China's ambassador to the U.S., Chen said.

After the Chinese Civil War, some academics and staff from mainland China's Tsinghua University created the National Tsing Hua Institute of Nuclear Technology in Hsinchu in 1955, which later became National Tsing Hua University.

Because of Asia's rise as a new global economic powerhouse, Chen said, Tsing Hua University has decided to set up a new Asia studies center to strengthen domestic research on democratic development and consolidation in major Asian countries and also offer impartial policy recommendations.

"The center will act as a think tank and will invite outstanding diplomats and scholars in relevant fields to join its research teams," Chen said, adding that he also hoped the center would boost Taiwan's role in regional affairs.

Chen said Stanton will contribute a lot to the new center's operations and development because of his wealth of experience as a diplomat throughout the Asia-Pacific region, including postings in Australia, South Korea, China and Taiwan.

Describing the establishment of the Center for Asia Policy as a formidable task, Stanton saw the new center emerging as a platform for policy analysis, research, dialogue and communications to help promote Tsing Hua University's influence in international relations.

Noting that Taiwan occupies an important strategic position in Asia, Stanton said Tsing

Hua's new Asia policy center will help strengthen interaction among Taiwan, the U.S. and China as well as promote Asia's peaceful development.

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