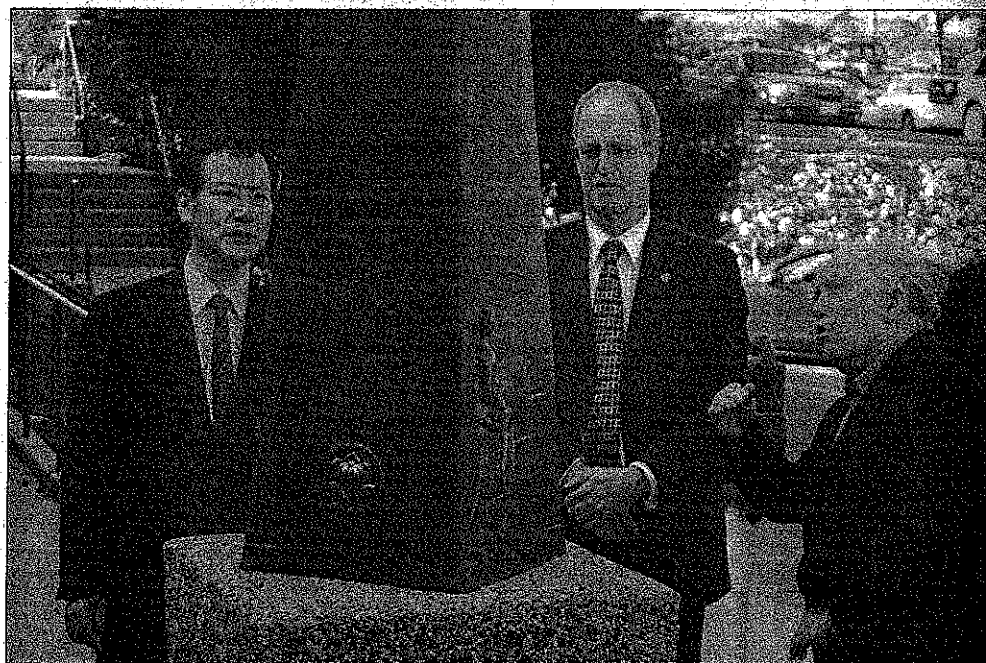


News



BRENT MUTIS/MORNING STAR
 Yutaka Umemoto of Tachibana University (from left), Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton and artist Geert Maas check out Maas' sculpture, *Destiny*, at its unveiling at the Kalamalka campus Tuesday.

College unveils artwork

BRENT MUTIS

Morning Star Staff

To commemorate a successful exchange program that's spanned 20 years, officials from Okanagan College and Tachibana University helped unveil a sculpture Tuesday at the college's Kalamalka campus.

Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton was one of several to address the assembled crowd of about 100 people. He spoke to the strength of the relationship with Tachibana University, noting it's the oldest international partnership the college has.

"This relationship has brought together our institutions and our cultures. It encourages our students to grow and invest themselves in their communities as global citizens."

Yutaka Umemoto, chairman of the board of directors for Tachibana, highlighted his appreciation for the opportunity Okanagan College has afforded students

"(Vernon) is a place full of very nice people that allow Tachibana students to experience the full Canadian culture."

He went on to point out the exchange program has allowed Tachibana to accomplish the important goals of putting Japanese students in an English-language setting and in a

place of great multiculturalism.

Since the partnership between the two schools began, more than 400 students have been able to take part.

The sculpture, by Geert Maas, represents the significance of the exchange program. The metallic piece is an obelisk with four sides tapering with height. Students

ascending stairways are depicted on each side of the column.

"It is a symbol of our relationship over the past 20 years," said Hamilton. "It also serves as a promise that the relationship will continue to flourish."

A sister sculpture will be unveiled at Tachibana's campus in Kyoto on Oct. 24.