

## Northeast Asia Regional Program



**Victor (Kuo-Lin) Kuan** | CHINA (TAIWAN)  
Chairman, Citibank Taiwan Ltd.  
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Victor Kuo-Lin Kuan leads all Citibank Taiwan businesses, including consumer, commercial, corporate and investment banking, with total assets of \$35.5 billion and 5,000 employees serving 2.5 million customers. Mr. Kuan took on a number of increasingly challenging senior roles in Taiwan and Singapore, assuming the position of Country Consumer Business Manager in 2003 and becoming the youngest Citibank Country Business Manager across all of Asia. During the Taiwanese consumer credit crisis in 2005 – 06, he played a key role in introducing international risk management and remedial practices that helped stabilize Taiwan’s banks. Mr. Kuan has been invited by the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce to serve on its financial committee. In addition, he is supervisor of the Bankers Association of the R.O.C. While on fellowship, he studied U.S. financial reforms, particularly with regard to financial service oversight principles and marketplace rules. In addition, he explored programs and mechanisms to improve consumer financial literacy as well as digital banking developments.

Mr. Kuan met with government officials, bank executives, entrepreneurs developing and marketing mobile banking technologies, and academics. With respect to the financial crisis and banking regulation, he visited the U.S. Treasury, FDIC, Financial Services Forum, professors, and CME Group. He concluded that Taiwan can learn from the experience of the United States and suggests that regulators both within and across countries cooperate closely in establishing solutions and that emphasis should be placed on requiring transparency rather than instituting price controls.

To learn about his second area of inquiry – financial literacy for consumers to enable them to make sound financial decisions – he visited FDIC, American Bankers Association Education Foundation, Money Clubhouse, and Center for Financial Services Innovation. This led him to identify certain criteria that must be included in financial education programs to ensure their success. Among these are to create different programs for different segments of society and to educate consumers on the disclosures and requirements of the financial products they are using.

A highlight of Mr. Kuan’s visit to the United States was attending the dinner hosted by Peter Carpenter at the home of Peter and his wife, Jane Shaw. In addition to the dinner conversation, Victor started a discussion with Mr. Carpenter about leadership that carried over to their next meeting at the Grand Canyon for the mid-program retreat. Mr. Kuan looks forward to a continuing relationship with Mr. Carpenter acting as his mentor.

Of his fellowship experience and his future plans, Mr. Kuan said, “[t]he seven-week Eisenhower Fellowships program not only gives me great opportunities to have in-depth explorations of my study area, connecting with experts/executives in professional areas, but also inspires me on how a leader could influence and lead. Firstly, I will share my study with Taiwan regulators, and play an advisory role to regulators and industry associations in work related to financial reform issues or actions. Secondly, I will share the diversity of US financial education programs with NGOs and foundations that could further explore and develop more effective programs to improve Taiwanese financial literacy. Thirdly, I will keep an ongoing dialog with players in the virtual banking and mobile payment, and together create solutions and services that can provide consumers with a convenient and innovative life. Lastly, I learned, ‘[i]f walk alone, walk faster. If walk with the group, walk farther.’ As a result, I will allocate more time to develop leaders, delegate power to uprising managers, and guiding them to make tough decisions in challenging situations. I believe this is the true realization of Eisenhower Fellowships core value: Leaders bettering the world around them.”

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