

South Florida Business Journal - November 18, 2008

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**South Florida
BUSINESS JOURNAL**

Tuesday, November 18, 2008 - 6:45 PM EST

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South Florida's connections to China poised to grow

South Florida Business Journal - by [Bill Frogameni](#)

Miami on Wednesday will become the official home of the [Asia America Equity Exchange](#) (AAEE), a group that will promote investment between North and South America and China.

The group will partner with the China Beijing Equity Exchange, “the largest platform in China for the privatization of state-owned assets,” according to a press release.

AAEE will perform a networking function by connecting investors with venture opportunities, but it will also provide some data and analysis services to members. The extent of those services won’t be released until a press conference later on Wednesday, however.

AAEE is locating in Miami because its president and founder, Slenda Chan, is based here. The region is also strategically located to do business in Latin America.

Jerry Haar, professor of management and international business at [Florida International University](#) and also board member of the [Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce](#), said China is becoming an increasingly important investor in Latin America. China needs to import resources it can only find abroad, but it’s also investing in infrastructure projects across the world. Latin America figures into this dynamic.

“[China is] moving up the value chain and they’re looking also for investment opportunities. Remember, they have huge cash reserves – they have favorable trade reserves – and what are they going to do with it?” Haar asked.

China is one of South Florida’s top trade partners, according to data from World City, a Coral Gables-based media company that compiles trade statistics. In 2007, China had a \$4 billion dollar trade relationship with South Florida, said Ken Roberts, World City president. That made China the region’s fifth largest trading partner, up from number 13 when World City began tracking China in 2000, Roberts added.

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