

SIETAR | USA

Society for Intercultural Education
Training and Research

SIETAR USA NEWSLETTER

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1. Letter from the President: Heather Robinson

Dear SUSA Members,

It is the spring equinox and I am privileged to find myself in the foothills of the stunning Sangre de Cristo Mountains completing a Train-the-Trainer program in Personal Leadership at the Crestone Institute in Crestone, Colorado.

On our one afternoon off during the week-long program, a colleague and I set out on a hike. We were drawn to the mountains. We knew we wanted to climb, to come to a point that afforded us the satisfaction of a beautiful vista. We had some general directions from a local. As we started hiking we realized that we were not sure that we were on the path that had been described to us. Just then, we met with a hardy woman coming down the mountain with her two dogs. She told us of two possible trails, each of which sounded lovely. When we got to the fork in the path, we calmly took a breath and allowed intuition to guide us. We climbed through the snowy woodland, surrounded by beauty and drawn upward by

the blue sky. After an hour we were sharing a boulder and an orange, grinning from ear-to-ear as we looked out across a pristine frozen lake to breathtaking snow covered peaks on one side and the limitless horizon of the high desert valley on the other.

As I put one foot in front of the other on this hike, I thought of how much is afoot in SUSA.

I am immensely grateful to Peggy Pusch who as executive director and founding president, is gracefully directing me on the path of presidency.

I am positively stunned by the work Tatyana Fertelmeyster as Chair of the Conference Committee is doing along with her marvelous group of motivated contributors in putting together this year's conference in Bloomington, Indiana -- Thiago country! She, Peggy Pusch and Jeremy Solomons have secured several exciting keynote speakers as well as determined pre- and post-conference workshops. The call for proposals is already on the website (get your proposals in now!) and an exciting array of entertainment, activities and events are being scheduled for our best conference yet.

Tatyana and her team are inspiring us ever upward!

Ann Marie Lei has graced us with her marketing expertise in completing a wonderful new SUSA conference flyer which is being distributed widely at conferences, businesses and educational institutions. Please contact Susanne Taylor in the SUSA office to learn how to get the flyer and use it to invite those in your circles who would benefit from the conference.

Thanks to our successful 2003 conference in Austin and Peggy Pusch's careful stewarding of the SUSA coffers, we will be able to sponsor the SUSA board members to our first annual board retreat on June 3rd through 5th in Seattle, Washington. This will be an important opportunity for us to build community, craft vision and forge action plans. We see the momentum of the board retreat moving us upward to unexplored territory.

The hike this week reminds me of the journey SUSA is making. We are drawn upward to serve our members better. We know that we want to arrive at a beautiful destination. We have directions from the past, and we are doing things in intriguing new ways. We are receiving the support and advice of knowledgeable and skilled people on the path. We are making choices on what direction the organization would best take. With the inspiration of unlimited possibility we are set to realize breathtaking realities together.

And so I invite you to join us on our beautiful adventure; explore the website, get involved in the conference by contacting the webmaster and participating in the SUSAconf listserv or submitting a proposal for a conference session, talk to your friends and colleagues about SUSA and bring them along when you come to the conference.

See you in Bloomington!

Heather Robinson

2. 5th Annual Conference News

Here is an update on this year's conference from the Conference Co-Chair, Tatyana Fertelmeyster, tatyanaf@corecomm.net

SIETAR-2004 Update

Bloomington, IN promises to look wonderful in November when we will gather there for the SIETAR-USA 5th Annual Conference. We will be in the middle of the Indiana University campus with lots of attractions in walking distance from the conference center

www.imu.indiana.edu/hotel_conference_center/index.html.

You might also want to know that Bloomington is famous among interculturalists as a home base of Sivasailam Thiagarajan (Thiagi), a creator of numerous simulations, games and interactive training methods widely used in intercultural education and training (www.thiagi.com) and a host of the SIETAR-2004.

Are you planning on being there? Are you planning on presenting? There is still time to download the call for proposals from www.sietarusa.org and send your proposals in (priority deadline is April 30th). The Conference Committee has been working hard on figuring out many important details for the conference. However, there are things that committee cannot do without your help.

According to Esther Louie, who is in charge of the scholarship committee, eight SIETARians were awarded \$300 conference scholarships to attend the 2003 conference in Austin, TX. This money came from the silent auction of the previous conference. To continue this wonderful tradition we need to make sure that our silent auction this year will be filled with treasures. Please contact Ruth Mastron at kiki92057@yahoo.com to

donate to the auction and support this great cause.

Have you considered coming to the conference as an exhibitor? Do you know somebody who might be interested in doing so? Will your company be interested in sponsoring one of the conference events? Please contact Ursula Leitzman at Leitzman@earthlink.net and she will give you answers to all your questions regarding exhibitors and sponsors.

Be sure to put this conference on your calendar. The dates are November 19-21, with a pre-conference workshop day on November 18. It will be a great beginning for your Thanksgiving holiday season.

3. Local Group News

The new Local Group Liaison from the SUSA Board of Directors is Ursula Leitzman. She gathered the news from the local groups and is the contact person for local groups and serves the SUSA Board of Directors. The well-established groups are thriving and there are several new groups in formation.

SIETAR Metro New York (SIMNY)

SIMNY changed its meeting format from monthly sessions to four high-level sessions a year. UBS, a large Swiss bank, hosted the first meeting on March 1. UBS is an international institution which is very active in the intercultural and diversity field. Priya Trauber, Director of Global Diversity, spoke about the diversity program at the bank and cross-cultural trends.

UBS has established a global diversity team, which reports directly to the CEO of the bank. They meet regularly and they have diversity initiatives, not only at the senior management level but throughout the levels of the organization. Global diversity is part

of the company's mission statement, objectives, recruitment and daily operations. UBS was not the first corporation to develop global diversity initiatives but when they examined their diverse client base, senior managers felt that an effective diverse work force was absolutely essential for the bank's functioning and growth in today's environment.

In June, SIMNY holds its second meeting of the year, which will focus on the latest developments in China with a panel of country experts and business people. The third session of the year will take place in September. This will be a workshop, which will focus on new trends in the intercultural field. The last session will be a networking event in December.

In addition to a change in the meeting format, SIMNY is developing a new, more interactive website which will allow members to learn about each other and about the events occurring in the area. This website is still being tested by Marcus Longmuir, SIMNY's past president, and it will be launched at the beginning of April.

SIETAR Rocky Mountain

In early February, Jeff Arnold, President of the Children's Cross-Cultural Education Association (CCEA), gave a brief presentation on the organization followed by a lively discussion with members of the audience. Jeff found that there are many separate organizations, including school programs, individual teachers, educational exchange programs, global education projects, etc. who seek to teach children about other cultures, however, there is no organizing network to help share information or to facilitate global education for children. CCEA was formed to tie these separate efforts together and deliver their programs through Discovery Clubs.

Late in February, Kristin Moss presented research on mural art and intercultural communication. Kristin is currently working

on her PhD in Intercultural Communication at the University of Denver, and for her dissertation has collected data from Philadelphia, PA and Chemainus, BC, Canada, two cities where mural art has had a significant impact on diverse communities. Since her work is still in progress, she shared pictures of the incredible artwork and offered her preliminary findings.

SIETAR Austin

SIETAR Austin has begun the new year with a conscious focus on the "Diversity of the Intercultural Field".

In January, Ines Meneses led us through an experiential discovery of the finer points of "Communicating and Having Fun with Brazilians". In February, Paula Ramirez shared some "Cotton Pickin' Life Lessons" from her Mexican and American heritage. George Farmer will lead an investigation into "Whiteness" in March; "Creativity and Culture" will be explored in April in association with the newly formed Austin Creativity Association; Pam Henry will provide insight into "Diversity and the Bottom Line" in May; and the program year will be rounded out in June with an election lunch and culture quiz.

All visitors are welcome; more details can be found on the website:
www.sietaraustin.org.

SIETAR DC

The SIETAR DC group held a meeting in March in conjunction with the annual IMI (Intercultural Management Institute) conference. The evening program for S-DC was a repeat of a workshop addressing diversity and team building offered at the conference. The activity presented was titled Jurassic Spark: Experiencing Creative Energy in a Team. Through exploration of their own empowering experiences, participants were asked to ignite creative energy as a powerful force of synergistic relationships to address a global

challenge. The presenters are two well known interculturalists. Judee Blohm is a cross-cultural educator and training consultant in the Washington, DC, area. She specializes in instructional design, writing and editing publications, and delivery of training and educational programs targeted at youth, families, and adults working and living in multi-cultural settings. She has contributed chapters to various books in the intercultural field, including "An Analysis of Methods for Intercultural Training" (with Sandy Fowler) in the Handbook of Intercultural Training, Third Edition, Sage, 2004. Her book, Where in the World are You Going?, creatively helps children prepare for international moves. Carol Townsend, President of ChangeMasters Ltd, has over 20 years of experience as a manager, educator, counselor and consultant. Her passion is equipping emerging leaders. She uses models, metaphors and stories to develop self-awareness, uncover work/life potential and increase productivity. She is equally skilled in using future searches and scenario planning to help organizations articulate their desired futures. She is certified as a performance coach by the Center for Creative Leadership.

In February their guest was Dr. Michael Agar, professor of applied anthropology and principle in Ethnknoworks (a consulting firm in Takoma Park, MD). Agar showed how ethnographic field methods can be used to develop ongoing cultural learning in participants and discussed the implications of such an approach. He contrasted it with the "area studies" sessions often used in cross-cultural training. Michael Agar faculty appointments at the University of Maryland, College Park and the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology at the University of Alberta, as well as an appointment as Senior Research Scientist at Friends Research International in Baltimore. His work spans areas as diverse as intercultural communication, language and society, public health, transportation, and organization theory, and he has conducted

organizational development work for businesses, for educational institutions, and for public health. His two most recent books are *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography* (second edition) and *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation*.

SIETAR Houston

Over the past three months, SIETAR Houston members have participated in some varied and interesting presentations. In December, Dr. Deepa Reddy drew members into an exploration of race and caste in India. Her presentation, entitled "From Caste to Race to Ethnicity" reflected her ongoing research into the topic of how these social categories have been influenced by political struggle. The depth of the conversation was a credit to Dr. Reddy's ability to illuminate this subject. In January, members were treated to a dramatic presentation about the impact of internalized racism.

Kelli McLoud Schingen, a SIETAR-Houston member, gently lead us into her world and opened our eyes to the debilitating effects of internalized racism. The presentation, "Anything But Black" was something few will forget. The February meeting provided a presentation on the current situation concerning Immigration Law.

SIETAR-Houston Board Member, Joyce Sauter facilitated a presentation by well known Houston attorneys, Magali Candler and Richard Sindelar III. They explored the impact of the Homeland Security Act upon current immigration practices. S-Houston members have been pleased to see a growing number of visitors attending the monthly programs. Each presentation seems to draw a different group of interested students and professionals. The next meeting in March features a presentation by Michelle Lynsky, Ph.D. and Wayne Dorris, Ph.D. of People " People entitled "The Power of Connection."

SIETAR Baltimore

Thanks to the efforts and enthusiasm of Adriana Medina, a new chapter is forming in Baltimore, MD. This is how it came about:

The University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) in Baltimore offers an Intercultural Communication Master's program and a Language, Literacy, and Culture doctorate program. Both programs attract people from around the United States and the world who are committed to the intercultural field, whether through training, research or both. The work that is done at UMBC, the support that UMBC provides, the commitment of the interculturalists in Baltimore, and Adriana Medina's connection to SIETAR USA led to the natural decision (by Adriana!) to found a SIETAR chapter in Baltimore.

The first meeting was held at UMBC's Women's center on March 1st with 17 participants the presenter, Kathryn Liss. The presentation was called "Conflict and Culture" and it was "a look at the basic elements of conflict resolution, as developed in the United States." The presenter led a discussion of the impact of cultural differences on the ability of people to resolve conflict. The program was interactive and experiential.

The presenter, Kathryn Liss, is the national coordinator for Help Increase the Peace Program, a project of the American Friends Service Committee. HIPP empowers young people by teaching them how to get their needs met through effective communication, and allows young people to become leaders by facilitating workshops for others. HIPP also builds community by bringing people of different backgrounds together to share openly about their lives, Kathryn has a master's degree from the School for International Training (SIT) and has done extensive work overseas, particularly in Kenya and the Republic of Georgia.

A mission statement is being devised for SIETAR Baltimore and its key word will be "community. "

4. Announcements

A. SIETAR Sexual Orientation Special Interest Group has a new name - and a new egroup!

Members of the former SISON(A) Special Interest Group within SIETAR (a name nobody seemed to be able to remember the meaning of) voted to change its name to Pride Across Cultures - The GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual and Transgendered) Members of SIETAR and Their Allies. The short version will be: SIETAR Pride Across Cultures.

There is an egroup at sietararprideacrosscultures@yahoo.com. You can go to the site and ask to be signed up - or contact Rita Wuebbeler at rwuebbeler@aol.com to get more info. Rita expects to see some of you at Sietar Europa in Berlin very shortly!

B. SIETAR UK is pleased to announce the launch of a new Email Discussion Group open to SIETAR members from around the world!

The new SIETAR Europa Email Group is an interactive email discussion group exclusively for SIETAR members - where everybody is invited to discuss new ideas, exchange news and information - and of course stay in touch with the various SIETARs in Europe and around the world.

The principle is simple: Any email sent to the SIETAR Europa Email Group will be sent directly to all subscribers. This makes it easy and fast to communicate event details, ideas or news from your SIETAR across 'SIETAR borders', wherever you are in the world! To subscribe, simply go to

www.sietar.org.uk/europa/ and fill in your name and email address and select the SIETAR you are a member of. The subscription is free and open to all SIETAR members.

5. A Note from the Newsletter Editor

This is a brief explanation of the long lag time between your last issue of the SUSAN News and this current issue. The crux of the matter was a cross-country move, complicated by the San Diego fire. After 13 years in our house in DC, my recently retired husband and I sorted, purged, packed and moved to La Jolla. In the meantime, the Cedar fire destroyed the home of our son and his family. Perhaps I should have immediately delegated the construction of a newsletter to the two women who have volunteered to help with the newsletter: Kathryn Buck and Beth Volk. As often happens, I kept thinking the travails would end and I'd be able to devote myself to something I love doing-gathering and organizing the SUSAN news. In any case, here is your newsletter and my apologies for the long delay.

6. How to Reach Us

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