

Pre-Conference Field Trip in Chicago

Asian Art, Culture, and Community in the Chicago Area

On April 28 ASIANetwork is sponsoring a pre-conference field trip in the Chicago area to see some sites related to Asian and Asian-American cultures. Departing from the Hickory Ridge conference center at 8:30 a.m., the group will visit four main sites and will return to Hickory Ridge by 5:00 p.m.

The first stop will be the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago in south suburban Lemont. Founded in 1977, the temple became a functioning house of worship in 1986. "Besides providing a congenial atmosphere for spiritual advancement, it also serves as a focal point for celebrating the cultural diversity of the Hindus." The temple, which sits on a wooded hillside above the Des Plaines River, is "one of the most impressive feats of devotion outside of India." The temple complex consists of two buildings, the Rama temple and Ganesha-Shiva-Durga temple, built by master artisans and sculptors from India.

The trip will continue by traveling to Chinatown on the near south side of Chicago and a visit to the Chinese American Service League. This organization exists to sustain Chinese culture by helping to maintain a sense of community. It provides a full array of social services which are important for people trying to function in a major metropolitan area. These services include "family learning" for families with children under five years of age, immigration assistance, social work, child development, limited nursing services, etc. The stop will remind us that sustaining a culture in America involves

more than religion, history and art.

Following lunch in Chinatown, the group will continue to the Midwest Buddhist Temple on the near north side of downtown Chicago. Primarily serving the Japanese-American community, it is a temple of Buddha Dharma and the way of Nembutsu. It is rooted in the Nishi Honganji in Kyoto, practicing the Jodo Shinshu, the Pure Land School founded in 1173-1262. The Chicago temple was founded in 1944, and the current temple, with its plain walls, landscaped garden, and pagoda-like roof, was dedicated in 1971. It is an integral part of the community, and the solemn tolling of the temple bell is a familiar sound in the area.

This trip concludes with a short stop at The Art Institute of Chicago to look at some of the Chinese and Japanese pieces in its collection. The Institute's distinguished Asian collection comprises work spanning nearly five millenniums from China, Korea, Japan, India, Southeast and Southwest Asia. Particularly notable are its holdings of Chinese bronzes and ceramics, archaic Chinese jades, and Japanese prints, considered one of the finest collections outside of Japan, and Chinese and Japanese printed books.

While traveling between these sites, other features in the urban landscape of Chicago, including the spectacular juxtaposition of lakefront and skyscrapers, will be identified and discussed by the trip leader, Professor Norman Moline. Director of the ASIANetwork College in Asia Institute, Dr. Moline is a cultural-urban geographer at Augustana College who grew up in Chicago and regularly takes his classes to the city.

The cost of the trip will be \$20 plus the cost of lunch in Chinatown. Participants will be selected in the order in which applications are received. Interested persons are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible.



**Villagers gather with Eckerd College Freeman Student Fellow Jan Brunson
and Faculty Mentor Victoria Baker in Sri Lanka**