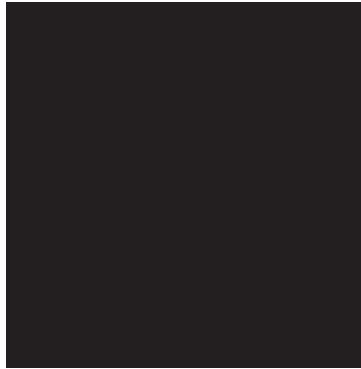


## *From the Executive Director*



I am pleased to announce that ASIANetwork recently received word from the Freeman Foundation of their renewal of support for our Student-Faculty Fellows Program. The \$1.25 million grant will provide funding for an additional 180 students and faculty mentors to conduct undergraduate research in East and Southeast Asia over the next three years.

In June, we were also notified that the Henry Luce Foundation has funded an *Asian Art in the Undergraduate Curriculum* project. This \$370,000 grant will enable ASIANetwork member colleges to invite art historians and art connoisseurs to their campuses to evaluate Asian Art and material resources. Based on these consultancies, a book will be compiled, along with an accompanying DVD and web materials that will focus on the historical connections between American colleges and Asia as evidenced by these collections.

This fall, ASIANetwork, working with the Hong Kong American Center, will also submit a grant proposal to the Fulbright-Hayes Programs of the Department of Education seeking support to fund a faculty development program to study the rapid social and economic changes occurring in the Pearl River Delta region. If funded, fifteen faculty from ASIANetwork member institutions will spend June of 2005 studying in China.

ASIANetwork is deeply indebted to the Freeman and Henry Luce Foundations, and other organizations as well, for their ongoing support of the consortium. During the last decade, we have secured over \$4.8 million to help meet the basic costs of ASIANetwork and to run our various student, faculty, and curricular development programs. Despite our success, raising such resources to sustain ASIANetwork pre-

sents the leaders of the consortium with what is perhaps our greatest challenge.

I wish to spend the remainder of the column clarifying the challenge faced in seeking foundation support by commenting briefly on how funding for the *Asian Art in the Undergraduate Curriculum* proposal evolved.

It is important to note that unlike most non-profits, ASIANetwork has no full-time administrators, and thus no full-time development office. The preparing of grants is, therefore, a highly collaborative process (potentially frustrating to many involved, also amenable to producing solid and well thought out grant proposals). Grant ideas are often suggested by members-at-large and subsequently discussed by board members. When an idea is approved by the board, former ASIANetwork officers or current board members often volunteer to do the actual grant writing. These writers are given solid guidance by our development committee, initially comprised of Stan Mickel (Wittenberg University), and Cathy Benton (Lake Forest College). When Stan's term ended recently, Marianna McJimsey (Colorado College) joined the committee. The development committee is also charged with the task of locating foundations or other agencies who might consider funding a proposal and ultimately with presenting the proposal to them.

The *Asian Art in the Undergraduate Curriculum* proposal flowed out of the spring 2001 ASIANetwork conference hosted by John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio. Many will recall that the Saturday afternoon session of the conference, held at the Cleveland Museum of Art, gave members the opportunity to view their splendid collection of Asian art. As leaders of ASIANetwork worked with key personnel of the CMA, we agreed that we should

jointly prepare a grant proposal that would utilize digitized images of the CMA Asian art collection along with expert commentary provided by Asian scholars at ASIANetwork member institutions to create discrete study modules on Asian art and culture for utilization in college classrooms throughout the world. Jim Lochtefeld (Carthage College) and Van J. Symons (Augustana College) agreed to prepare a draft proposal, while Cathy Benton and Stan Mickel, as the development committee, worked to locate foundations with a focus on Asian art and distance learning.

Once the initial draft was completed, it was determined that face-to-face conversations were needed to fine tune it before presenting it to foundations. Consequently, in the summer of 2002 ASIANetwork flew Cathy Benton, Jim Lochtefeld, and Paul Watt (the incoming board chair) to Cleveland, where they were joined by Paul Nietupski (a fine scholar at John Carroll University with close connections to the CMA) to meet with our CMA colleagues. A chief concern of ASIANetwork was that costs for the grant had mushroomed to over \$1million because the CMA felt it needed to build staff hires and image digitization expenses into the grant.

That fall, Paul Watt wrote a second much-improved draft of the proposal based on discussions held the previous summer. At the same time, Stan Mickel and Cathy Benton begin contacting a number of different foundations to gauge whether they might be interested in funding the project. Through the winter of 2002 and spring of 2003, eight foundations were sent grant prospectuses, and a couple agreed to review the full grant proposal. However, in the end all concluded that the proposal was simply too expensive to fund (remember the stock market had plummeted and foundations were struggling).

As a result, leaders of ASIANetwork asked our friends at the CMA if they could reduce costs for their part of the program. When they were informed that this would not be possible, further affiliation with the CMA was no longer feasible.

At this crucial juncture, Paul Watt and Van J. Symons, by chance, met Helena Kolenda of the Luce Foundation at the *Freeman Symposium on Asia in the Curriculum* meetings in New York City. Helena and Terry Lautz, also at Luce, had both been involved in a program run at Wesleyan University on *The International Context of China's Christian Colleges*, which explored the wide-ranging resources provided by missionary archives at liberal arts colleges. Having discovered the richness of missionary archives at small colleges, Helena suggested a new course of action for ASIANetwork not involving the CMA. She noted that since significant but less widely known works of Asian art are found on the campuses of a great many North American liberal arts colleges, we might wish to help survey them and bring them to the attention of a wider audience.

Upon being apprised in late spring of 2003 about both the nonviability of the joint AN/CMA proposal and Helena's suggestion that this new course of direction be considered, the Board of Directors unanimously agreed to

adopt this new formula. Joan O'Mara, a fine art historian at Washington & Lee University, agreed to conduct online and also on-site surveys of Asian art collections at a number of liberal arts colleges throughout the summer of 2003. She, Paul, Cathy, and Marianna also began to work on a third and final draft of the proposal.

While the spirit of this draft was much the same as embodied in the first two, the new draft stipulated that Asian art would now come from the campuses of liberal arts colleges, and the scholarship related to this art would now be presented as an edited book, entitled *Asian Art in the Undergraduate Curriculum*, accompanied by a DVD and web-based images of the most significant artwork from the surveyed college collections. In retrospect, this new proposal seems a much better fit for the consortium, focused as it is on the art at liberal arts campuses, relying as it does upon ASIANetwork's long experience in consultancy work to help discover it, and finally producing a book which is modeled after ASIANetwork's 2000 publication entitled *Asia in the Undergraduate Curriculum: A Case for Asian Studies in Liberal Arts Education*.

Still, it took three years of dedicated effort by a dozen or so individuals, all working *pro bono*, to finally complete a solid grant proposal. Despite this hard work, we are all certain that those of us involved in this project, and also our friends at the Luce Foundation, especially Terry and Helena, will ultimately be well compensated for our efforts as we observe the impact of the consultancy visits on small college campuses and the discovery of the art and material culture that is therein revealed.

## Van Symons



Van and Ruth Symons working hard at a Board meeting.  
Photo provided by Diane Clayton.