

NETWORK NEWS

From the Executive Director



\$1.3 Million Freeman Grant Renewed and other 2006-2007 Highlights

Teddy O. Amoloza
Illinois Wesleyan University

Freeman Grant Renewed

It is quite thrilling to begin my summary of last year's highlights with the announcement that for the fourth time, the Freeman Foundation gave us funding for the Student-Faculty Fellows program. This latest cycle will enable us to continue sending teams of students and faculty mentors to East and Southeast Asia in the summers of 2008, 2009 and 2010. While our proposal requested funding for 12 teams totaling 60 students and faculty mentors per year, it is possible that we will be able to award more grants using the unspent monies returned by grantees, as witnessed this year by the 14 teams and 73 researchers who traveled to Asia this summer. Once again, we are deeply grateful to the Freeman Foundation for continuing to support this program that to date has awarded 106 grants that have sent 429 students and faculty mentors from 68 institutions to Asia during the last ten years.

Annual Conference and Business Meeting

We are again pleased that attendance at the April 2007 Conference, held for the second straight year at Hickory Ridge in Lisle, Illinois, drew more than 200 attendees. The steady number of conference participants is encouraging and is inspiring the Board of Directors to continually respond to the suggestions from the membership about the content and format of future conferences. In this regard, please make plans to attend the next conference that will be held on March 14-16, 2008 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on the Riverwalk of historic San Antonio, Texas. The theme of the conference "Scholar-Teachers of Asia: Past and Present" is already drawing international interest with panelists for one proposed panel coming from Beijing Foreign Studies University in China and Ghent University in Belgium.

We hope to see as many if not more of you at the conference next spring that will be hosted by Trinity University.

At the Business Meeting last April, the proposal to increase membership dues was approved. Dues for Full Members will be \$300 starting this academic year and \$200 for Associate Members; this will entitle eight instead of six individuals per institution to receive paper and electronic mailings from ASIANetwork. We have not increased our membership dues for the last seven years but the costs of running the consortium continually increase. This year, even with this dues increase, our projected income of \$117,250 and total projected expenses of \$113,500 give us very little margin for unexpected expenses.

Strategic Plan, New Website and Other Board of Directors News

One of the initiatives that kept us very busy last year was our strategic planning. After a series of consultations and discussions with past board members and chairs, and with the Council of Advisors, the Strategic Planning Committee held a workshop during the deep of winter in Minnesota. A draft plan was revised throughout the spring semester and finally presented to the Board at the April meeting for approval. The Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board and presented to the membership at the Plenary Session on Sunday morning of the conference is reprinted on the back page of this newsletter. We welcome your inputs and suggestions as we now move to the implementation stage. **Phyllis Larson** is to be commended for her leadership in moving the strategic planning process forward and for bringing us to this point so quickly.

Another major undertaking was the complete redesign of our website. Board member **Bob Eng** of the University of

Redlands, who chairs the Publicity and Website Committee, worked diligently and meticulously on this daunting task. He now reports that the ASIANetwork website has been re-designed, streamlined and re-organized for easier access to information on ASIANetwork news, programs, and services. In particular, navigational menus and aids on each page provide visitors with one-click access to the most significant and popular pages on the site. Visitors can open and download individual articles within an issue of the *ASIANetwork Exchange* instead of having to open the entire issue. Each individual project report of the Freeman-funded Student-Faculty Fellows Program has its own page. Photo galleries for past conferences back to 2001 are available. Please visit the website at www.asianetwork.org and send us your comments and suggestions about this new site. I am sure you will agree with me that Bob Eng deserves recognition for his excellent job.

In the Winter 2006 issue of the newsletter, we were able to publish information on only two nominees for the Board of Directors due to a last minute withdrawal. At the meeting last April, we presented the third Board nominee, **Lisa N. Trivedi**, who was subsequently elected to the Board. She is Associate Professor of History at Hamilton College where she teaches courses on South Asia and comparative Asian history. A cultural historian of politics and society, her interests include the history of women, comparative colonialism and nationalism, and the history of work. For more information on Professor Trivedi, please visit the website.

A Round of Applause and Thanks

In closing this report on the highlights of the past year I would again like to recognize all those who helped in the

smooth operation of the consortium. First and foremost, thanks go to the members of the Board for their continued dedication and enthusiasm in executing the numerous responsibilities assigned to them especially the Strategic Planning Committee; to the Past Chairs Advisory Council and to the Council of Advisors for generously sharing their time and giving us their wise counsel, and to my Illinois Wesleyan ASIANetwork team, who continue to assist me in the myriad operations of the headquarters. The

consortium will not be running as effectively without all your contributions. Though space limitation does not allow me to list names of people, I would like to specifically thank deeply **Phyllis Larson** and **Patra Noonan** for all their support this past year and more importantly for stepping up to the plate and taking the rein of the April conference when I had to be away for my mother's funeral. Thanks very much to all of you who pitched in at various points during the conference but most

especially, thanks for your expression of sympathy and support. It is very comforting to be surrounded by such a caring community of friends and colleagues!

We begin this year with a strong membership roster: 138 full members, 24 associate members and 12 affiliate organizations for a total of 174 members. I look forward to another exciting and energizing year as we continue to move toward our vision for the consortium. To all of you, *Maraming Salamat at Mabuhay!*

* * * * *

ASIANetwork Initiatives



2006 Elon University Student-Faculty fellows experiencing Japanese hospitality.

Student-Faculty Fellows Program funded by the Freeman Foundation

Now in its tenth year, this grant enables individual faculty at liberal arts colleges to take up to five students to East and Southeast Asia to conduct undergraduate research activities. Faculty mentor and students apply as a team. During the past nine years, 429 persons have participated in this program. Funding is available for up to sixty persons (mentors and students combined) to study in Asia during the summer of 2008. **Deadline for application is December 1, 2007** with notification by January 30, 2008. For additional information contact Dr. Van J. Symons, Program Director, Augustana College, 639 – 38th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201-2296, (vanjsymons@augustana.edu, phone 309-794-7413).

The ASIANetwork Consultancy Program

The ASIANetwork Consultancy Program is a service to ASIANetwork member institutions seeking outside advice on ways to strengthen the study of Asia on their campuses. Drawing from a pool of over thirty experienced consultants who have served in the program from 1994 to the present, the ASIANetwork Consultancy Program can recommend a list of possible consultants to interested institutions and help with the planning of the campus visit. ASIANetwork charges no fee for this service, although colleges who wish to make use of it should plan on covering the travel expenses of the consultants selected and provide consultants with a reasonable honorarium. For more information, please contact Professor Phyllis Larson, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057-1098, (larsonph@stolaf.edu; phone 507-646-3744).

For additional details on these programs, visit our website at www.asianetwork.org.

Exposing Incoming Students to Asian Studies (continued from page 25)

happened anyway, with the current media attention focusing upon the increasing impact China has had on the American economy. Yet we continue to believe that with the emphasis of FYS upon discussion and our attempt to incorporate an experiential component to the China part of the course, we have caught the attention of students who might otherwise have paid little attention to media hype. At the very least, we will have 1500 students who feel some connection to East Asia through achieving a better understanding of Chinese

society and culture than when they began college a year ago.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my appreciation to the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont, and especially to Asian and Pacific Studies Director, Linda Lewis, to on-site program coordinator Lu Yuan, to our liaison with Kunming TCM Hospital Wen Zheng Zhi, and to the other teachers and my co-participants in the program. I am grateful to the Freeman Foundation for their support of the Access Asia faculty development project at SIT. The opportunity to

turn this personally enriching learning experience into a part of the First Year Seminar curriculum was due to the support of Dean Linda Eisenmann and the efforts of FYS Directors Lauren Bowen, Robert Kolesar, and Sheri Young at John Carroll University.

*This description of the JCU First Year Seminar refers to the way the program was established in 1996 and continues to operate through Fall, 2007. During the 2006-2007 academic year, this program underwent review, and some organizational changes have been recommended for future years.