

SUSA News July 2012: Annual conference three months away, contributor calls for ethical standards, Young SIETAR sponsors webinar and more...



## President's Letter

### SIETAR-USA teams up with Young SIETAR, global network expands



Greetings Friends,

I hope this letter finds you enjoying your summer and finding time for friends and family. As usual, your board is hard at work to bring you more opportunities to connect with other interculturalists around the world and keep your skills honed. We are proud to share that we have been working closely with Young SIETAR to help promote their new, free professional development webinars. They offer a wealth of information on topics such as integral communications, non-violent communication, post-graduate education, and the immigrant experience, to name a few. They have been well-attended, and enlightening, and I look forward to future ones.

The global SIETAR network continues to grow and I would like to announce that SIETAR Argentina has recently been established. Please join me in sending them our best wishes at [www.sietarargentina.org](http://www.sietarargentina.org). We look forward to their contributions in the field and welcome them to the global SIETAR family.

As we near the end of my term as President, I have been working with Christopher Deal, our President-Elect to ensure a seamless transition. We are fortunate to have a structure in place that allows the President and the President-Elect to overlap for a year. This allows in-depth information sharing and continuity. We don't want to miss a beat.

Your board continues to plug away at your suggestions created by the graffiti wall last year and I will work to develop a document that reflects how we have addressed these concerns. That document will be shared in email form, in the October newsletter, and

hard copy for those in attendance at the conference. Your opinions and suggestions are what keep our beloved organization moving forward and growing.

I look forward to seeing you all in Minneapolis!

Kelli McLoud-Shingen  
President, SIETAR-USA

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## 2012 Conference: Celebrate an Autumn Week of Learning in Minneapolis!

Three months and counting....yes, that's how soon the 12<sup>th</sup> annual SIETAR-USA conference will be happening in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We hope you have marked the dates of October 17-20th in great big letters on your calendar to come join fellow interculturalists for some serious networking, learning, and fun!

Our large conference planning team of 20-plus members has been working hard these past months to build a memorable conference—one that will address this year's theme of ***Navigating Complexity in an Intercultural World***. You can learn more about the planning phase at [www.sietarusaconference.com](http://www.sietarusaconference.com).

We highly encourage you to come a day early to attend one or two of the stellar Master workshops taking place on October 17<sup>th</sup>. On the conference days, you will want to set your alarm early enough to be sure to hear the timely, thought-provoking, and inspirational speeches by our keynote speakers - Gary Weaver, Terence Brake and Luby Ismail.

And that's not all! This year we received a record number of proposals for our concurrent sessions from people in 29 states of our country as well as from 17 countries overall. The good news is that the submitted proposals address a nice balance of topics that focus on our business and education tracks as well as a range of other categories.

Our local Minnesota team has been quite busy organizing the Dine-Around and Game Night, which will be held on Thursday evening. There will be an opportunity to participate

in both events. You can look forward to enjoying some delicious cuisine at some of the nearby restaurants AND learning some new intercultural activities.

Finally, now that the conference has gone live online, early registrations are encouraged by all as it assures you discounted early bird costs, hotel rooms at conference rates, and helps us with final planning details. Why not also take an extra step and let others know about the conference as well? You can easily do so by sending them the link to the conference website at [www.sietarusaconference.com](http://www.sietarusaconference.com). We look forward to seeing you in October! In the meantime, stay cool and enjoy these summer months!

Candice Hughes & Alisa Poehler  
2012 SIETAR-USA Conference Co-Chairs

Minnesota Local Team Co-Chairs

Master Workshop Co-Chairs

Program Co-Chairs

Sponsors, Exhibitors and Advertisers Co-Chairs

Marketing Co-Chairs

Volunteers and Registration Co-Chairs

Finance

Silent Auction

Roommate Connections

Eye on Ethics

Technology

Conference Oversight

Scholarships

Basma Ibrahim DeVries and  
Deirdre Opp

Sandy Fowler and

Barbara Kappler

Kara LaSota and Holly Emert

Naomi Ludeman-Smith and

Patricia Coleman

Cate Brubaker and

Annika Bowers

Lauren Dickinson and

Nancy Tom

Monica Mumford

Patricia Coleman

Jamie Gelbtuch

Maria Thacker

Rob Pusch

Ann Marie Lei

Tamara Thorpe

Interested in volunteering? Please send a note to the following email addresses indicating the committee you would like to assist: [Alisa2012sietarusa@sietarusa.org](mailto:Alisa2012sietarusa@sietarusa.org) and [Candice2012sietarusa@sietarusa.org](mailto:Candice2012sietarusa@sietarusa.org).

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## Webinar Highlights Role of Post-graduate Study in Life's Endeavors

On June 5, Christopher Deal, President-Elect of SIETAR-USA, presented a webinar for Young SIETAR entitled "Choosing a Masters Degree: How It Fits Into Your Career and Life Paths."

"Christopher offered a new perspective on choosing a Master's Degree and invited us to consider the role postgraduate study plays in our life, how it can take us where we want to go, and how it fits into our life paths," Melissa Hahn, Education Coordinator for Young SIETAR, said. "From his standpoint as a U.S. professional who has worked across different sectors, he discussed the extent to which an M.A. is necessary in the U.S. and in the field generally. He encouraged Young SIETARians to consider ways that his advice fits or contrasts with their own cultures."

The webinar was organized by Young SIETAR and attended by members in Asia, Europe, and North America.

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## Young SIETAR Sponsors Webinar on 2012 Conference

Thinking about attending the SIETAR-USA conference on October 17-20th? This webinar, "The Ins and Outs of the 2012 SIETAR-USA Conference," will give you more information about the conference location (Minneapolis, MN), the conference hotel (Marriott City Center), and the wonderful workshops, sessions, keynotes speakers, and networking opportunities that will be a part of this wonderful and fun gathering of intercultural professionals.

Space is limited. Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/659293760>

Presenters:

Annika Bowers is relatively new to the intercultural/international education field, but she is not new to Minneapolis! Having lived in the Twin Cities for most of her life, she is an expert on the awesomeness these cities have to offer. Annika received an M.A. in Comparative International Development Education from the University of Minnesota and is hoping to launch a career in international education in the Twin Cities area very soon!

Cate Brubaker, Ph.D., teaches intercultural education at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, consults for educational organizations, and offers professional development at SmallPlanetStudio.com. She was recently elected to the SIETAR-USA Board and heads up the Marketing and PR portfolio. Cate currently lives in Carrboro, North Carolina and has previously studied, worked, and traveled throughout Europe, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

**Date: Thursday, August 9, 2012**

**Time: 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM BST (1:00 PM - 2 PM EST)**

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## Are We Ready Now?

SIETAR was founded in 1974 by intercultural professionals from several disciplines to exchange ideas, learn from and strengthen bonds with one another. The founders also intended to fortify the theory and practice of intercultural communication through interdisciplinary approaches. We currently describe ourselves ([www.sietarusa.org](http://www.sietarusa.org)) as an “educational membership organization for those professionals who are concerned with the challenges and rewards of intercultural relations.” We present SIETAR as “a point of connection for people from many cultural and professional backgrounds” who “work to expand worldviews and build skills for successful interactions in intercultural arenas.” We “work to model what we say we believe,” and “believe that we must all work toward effective and peaceful relations among the peoples of the world - not despite differences but because of them.” We are “caring and concerned individuals who support each other in moving purposefully toward this common goal.” Membership “is open to all individuals and institutions who support the organization’s mission and purpose” (described above). To date we have little more than the words above regarding a shared expression of personal and/or professional conduct ethics.

Are we ready now to highlight ethical behaviors and standards for the intercultural arena/field? Working backwards, I argue that we are now a field. SIETAR has been around for almost four decades and SIETAR-USA for over a decade. Other networks, associations, and groups (i.e., on LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.) have been formed for

professionals who do work that could be described as intercultural. We are supported by and affiliated with a professional journal (International Journal of Intercultural Relations), which has been publishing articles for three and a half decades. Intercultural Press Inc., a publisher primarily of intercultural books and other materials, has been in business since 1980. Thousands of books and even more articles have been written on topics described as relevant to intercultural communication/relations. A Google search on “intercultural communication” produces more than 3 million results. An *Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence* is currently being edited by Dr. Janet Bennett of the Intercultural Communication Institute and published by Sage. Based on this and more evidence, I conclude that we are now a field. We have yet to set professional practice or preparation standards/certifications (other than graduate degrees and certificates of program completion). Agreement on this matter will likely take another decade. However, the lack of formal “certification” is not a barrier to establishing a benchmark of ethical standards necessary for the field.

Continuing to work backwards, examples of appropriate behaviors for interculturalists have been implied, suggested or recommended by other *Eye on Ethics* authors in this series. Collectively they encourage us to build on the global code of ethical conduct established by the United Nations as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), not get frozen by cultural relativity, consider accepting responsibility for the psychological health of our clients, foster mutual understanding, overcome fear and distrust, build inner/self-awareness, and sell with integrity. We have also discussed ethics at conferences and leadership meetings. Many formal ethical codes of conduct already exist. Professional organizations in long-standing fields have both standards for practice and ethical conduct. Even ones in existence for shorter periods of time have at least ethical standards of conduct. Many other entities such as businesses, colleges and universities, religious institutions, fraternal and sorority organizations, communities, and clubs have such standards. There are more than enough samples with enough history to guide SIETAR-USA.

When any of our members engage in unethical behavior, harm is done to the field and to individuals. We all suffer. When such inappropriate behavior occurs, even by a broad generally accepted standard, little happens...except karma and perhaps informal feedback or action outside of the professional societal context. We have the tools (knowledge, facilitation and research skills, abilities, organizational structure, will, desire, examples to build upon) to codify the behaviors that support our mission and purpose into a general code of conduct, even if initially only aspirational. We also have the caring and compassion to act wisely when violations of that code occur.

Just as our founders intentionally acted to strengthen bonds between the theory and

practice of intercultural communication, it is time for us to stand on that foundation and act now to fortify the future of our field.

We are ready now.



Robert Hayles, Ph.D. (Manzanita, Oregon) is an independent consultant serving clients with intercultural, inclusion and diversity skills. He has been practicing since 1974 and has served as an internal professional in government, education, not-for-profit and private sectors and as an independent consultant for more than 100 clients. He has held the Ethics Portfolio for SIETAR-USA and served on the organization's Advisory Council.

*The Eye on Ethics initiative is designed to invigorate an organization-wide conversation about the role ethics plays in every SIETAR-USA member's work. The series will culminate this fall at the annual conference in Minneapolis, MN. At that time we will look at how far we have come and plan strategies for the future. Read the submissions every month at [www.sietarusa.org](http://www.sietarusa.org), and consider writing one yourself. Be part of the SIETAR-USA conversation about ethics in our workplace. You can also contact Maria Martin Thacker, SIETAR-USA Ethics Portfolio Board Member, directly at [mthacker@c.ringling.edu](mailto:mthacker@c.ringling.edu).*

## Local Chapter News

### SIETAR-FL

#### Board Member welcomes new addition to family

SIETAR FLORIDA is growing! Saskia Meckman, a SIETAR Florida volunteer, board member and officer sends you word from motherhood to let you know that Baby Serena was born at 1:58 pm on Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, weighing 6lbs. 14oz. and measuring 20 inches. It has been a huge transition for the couple's life and they are all growing and learning daily! Serena is currently being spoken to in French, English, Spanish and Arabic and has inspired the topic "Intercultural Parenting in Florida" for the Fall and "Back to School" gathering.



Patricia Coleman, SIETAR-FL Chair

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**Next Issue of SUSA News: October 2012**

**Mark your Calendars!  
SIETAR Conferences Abroad**

[Young SIETAR](#)

September 6-9, 2012, Belfast, Ireland

[SIETAR Germany](#)

September 27-29, 2012, Berlin, Germany

[SIETAR India](#)

February 2 and 3, 2013, Mumbai, India

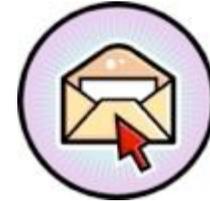
[SIETAR Europa](#)

May 22 – 25, 2013, Tallinn, Estonia



**Job Board**

Check it out!  
SIETAR-USA's  
website has an active  
[job board](#). Feel free to  
post and browse jobs!



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