



## Letter to the Membership: October 2013

We're excited to introduce to our members the SIETAR USA LIVING CODE OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOR as a guide to performing exceptional intercultural work. This document was many years in the making and has its origins in the 1980's work of SIETAR International on ethical standards in intercultural work. After the formation of SIETAR-USA in the year 2000, members such as Andy Reynolds, Sandy Fowler, Rebecca Peterson, and Dr. Robert Hayles continued to see the urgent need for such a document in the new organization and worked to bring it about for over ten years.

In 2011, the *Eye on Ethics* series was launched, with seventeen essays addressing various ethical issues encountered by SIETAR-USA members. At our conference in Minneapolis in 2012, the Ethics Working Group was created and charged with bringing recommendations to the Board of Directors for a document on ethical standards in our profession. During the past year, the seven dedicated members of this group researched and collaborated on the creation of this groundbreaking document. The code was submitted to the Board of Directors at the Board Retreat this April. By unanimous vote, the Board adopted The SIETAR-USA LIVING CODE OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOR for the organization.

The LIVING CODE is offered to all SIETAR-USA members as an aid to their intercultural work. This includes members working in education, training, consulting, research, and other related work. The LIVING CODE, although strongly supported by the leadership of the organization, is voluntary for each member.

Many members have long called for a mechanism by which prospective employers can judge SIETAR-USA members' ethical standing. Toward this goal, the Ethics Working Group created a simple process whereby members may publicly commit to the ethical standards professed by SIETAR-USA. Each member who chooses to sign the LIVING CODE will be designated as an "Ethical Interculturalist," making them eligible to have their names listed as such on the website.

In addition to the personal benefits for members who sign and use the LIVING CODE, we think this development heralds an important milestone in the professionalization of the intercultural field. The LIVING CODE includes not only many of the aspects of ethical codes of related fields; it also has elements unique to our field, elements that we believe reflect the unique nature of our profession. We also believe this ethical code improves the standing of our field in the eyes of our clients, prospective employers, and other professionals.

We kicked-off the SIETAR-USA LIVING CODE OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOR at our thirteenth annual conference November 6 to 9, 2013 in the Washington, DC area. The theme this year is *Exploring Intercultural Boundaries: Innovation, Inclusion, and Inspiration*.



We now invite members to electronically sign the Living Code. Those who do (and we hope you will be among them) will become a part of the history of our field, demonstrate their commitment to ethical standards and camaraderie with like-minded interculturalists, and raise the field to a new level of professionalism. We hope to see you there!

Christopher Deal, President SIETAR-USA

Maria Thacker, Ethics Portfolio Chair SIETAR-USA

Ethics Working Group:

Michael Tucker, Director

Kyoung-Ah Nam

Ann Ehringhaus

Naomi Ludeman Smith

Lisa Singh

Virginia Citkin