

SUSA News



The **SIETAR**USA Newsletter

Society for Intercultural Education
Training and Research

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NEW!

President's Letter

AS THIS YEAR ENDS

My Dear Sietarians,

It is hard to believe that it has been a month since many of us got together in Kansas City for the 8th Annual Conference – Culture and Conflict: Courageous Conversations for Caring Communities. It was indeed a wonderful conference, as your emails and evaluations tell us loud and clear. Most importantly – it helped us to engage in some really courageous conversations, not to run away from discomfort. It helped us not to pretend that we really know when somebody else is hurting and that we even when uncomfortable, we do need to hear them out. We practiced staying there through uneasiness of disagreement and conflict, and practiced meeting each other on the other side.

We are now stepping into a new year with a bit of a better sense of what it will take to make this world a better place, a place with less conflict. We understand that we need to keep practicing what we preach, what we teach, and what we study about respecting differences and bridging gaps.

Andy Reynolds, our next president, will lead SIETAR-USA in that process in 2008 and 2009. It is a change for the organization to have a 2-year presidency. Andy is the first one to take it on and he will need all of us to be there with him as he leads S-USA through the next steps of its' growth.

Even the best leaders like Andy need those who follow; one of the new ways for you to get involved and stay connected is through our new blog. It can be accessed at <http://sietarusa.com>. I very much encourage you to go there, read what your colleagues have to say and let your voice be heard.

Another website that I would very much hope you will visit (if you have not yet) is <http://www.sietar.org/granada2008>. The year 2008 will be the year of the SIETAR Global Conference in Granada, Spain. You can register now to take advantage of a 20% earlybird registration rate. Also remember that proposals to present are due February 1st.

As I am finishing up my year as your president, what can I wish you, my dear friends, in this upcoming year?

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Let it be a year of rest for the world – may it take a break from hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes and raging wild fires. May it go without any kind of man-made disasters and wars. Let this year find all of us hard at work because what we do is so badly needed, not just because we mistake “busy” for “happy”. And let us all remember to stop and take a much-needed breath. When we get much too tired, we forget what we do is worth our effort. And it is worth our every effort.

Have a wonderful year, filled with love and success, health and happiness. Let all our tears be tears of joy, let all our journeys bring us where we want to go, and let us all be favorites of the gods of air travel!

Tatyana Fertelmeyster

SIETAR-USA President

Executive Director's Note

There is a lot of satisfaction in producing a conference that receives excellent reviews and many compliments. The conference in Kansas City was such an event and we are grateful to Patricia Coleman and her many actively engaged committee members for another annual gathering that allowed for a great deal of learning and an opportunity to be with the intercultural “family.” We greeted many new members from the United States and visitors from SIETAR groups around the world. It was a terrific week.

The plenary sessions this year were right on target, fitting into the theme of Culture and Conflict in a way that was integrative and enlightening. We are indebted to all the plenary speakers: Mitch Hammer, Leila Buck, and Lenora Billings-Harris; and the mini-plenary speakers: David Paterson and Mijnd Huijser, Dianne Hofner Sapphiere and Emmanuel Ngomsi, and for the Beyond Iraq panel: Lt. Gen. David Barno, Edward Rhetta, Cynthia Brink, Brian Selmeski, and Sandy Fowler. We are also grateful to all the presenters who truly make the conference throb with the texture of debates, new ideas, and interesting processes woven into a full and rewarding experience. The exhibitors and sponsors made a lot of this possible and we continue to appreciate the support as well as information and products that they bring.

Perhaps I should have started with a headline: S-USA Member Discounts on IPI books

One of the things that transpired during the conference was reaching an agreement with the Intercultural Press, Inc. that adds to the benefits of being a member of SIETAR USA. We are

delighted to seal this deal and be able to offer all members of SIETAR USA a 20% discount on all Intercultural Press books. For each sale, SIETAR USA will receive 5% which obviously helps support the operation of the Society. This occurs when you place your book order through the S-USA website. The system for ordering books through the website will be in place very soon. You will need a S-USA member code; this will be sent to members in January. Periodically, that code will be changed so be alert to the notices that bring this code to you. We are delighted to become associated with the Intercultural Press in this manner and hope you will take advantage of the discounts throughout the year. It is a bit of a holiday gift to all of us.

We wish for each of you a holiday season that permits you to wallow in meaningful and delightful moments with those who are important in your lives (wallow: to immerse yourself in a self-indulgent way).

May 2008 allow you to live in ways that you think life should be with greater understanding and less conflict in the world.

Peggy Pusch

SIETAR-USA Executive Director

SIETAR USA 2007 ELECTION RESULTS

Board elections were completed and results announced at the annual conference in Kansas City, MO. We welcome our new and returning Board members who will begin their terms of office beginning in January 2008 and continue through to December 2010. Two incumbent Board members were reelected to their positions; Glen Sebera, Careers and Mentoring, and Candice Hughes, Public Relations and Marketing. New Board members elected are Jeffrey Cookson, Volunteer portfolio, and Rob Pusch, Communications portfolio. Brief summaries of the backgrounds of our new Board members, Jeffrey and Rob, are included below.

We thank Basma DeVries (Volunteer portfolio, 2005-2007) and Jan O'Brien (Communications portfolio, 2005-2007) as our outgoing Board members. They have devoted many hours of service, energy and great enthusiasm to SIETAR-USA.

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Jeffrey Cookson

New SIETAR-USA Board Member: Volunteer Portfolio

An organizational development consultant at Employers Association, Cookson provides services related to cultural competency regarding both domestic and international diversity. With 15 years experience spanning the arts and intercultural fields, an M.F.A. in Acting and Directing, and certification as Senior Professional in Human Resources, Cookson has worked professionally as an actor, director, community organizer, intercultural coach, corporate trainer and management consultant. Certified as an administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Cookson works regularly as an IDI feedback coach.

Cookson's expertise includes bias reduction and competency development related to race, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, generation, sexual orientation, cultural interaction, immigrant integration, affirmative action, equal opportunity, and workplace harassment and discrimination. Cookson also has extensive experience helping organizations manage change and conflict, improve customer service, and benefit from the power of applied creativity.

Cookson's been active in the local Minnesota group for the past year having recently accepted an invitation to join the local planning committee. He's been active with the SUSA Pride Across Cultures Group since 2003.



Rob Pusch

New SIETAR-USA Board Member: Communications Portfolio

Rob Pusch is an instructional designer at Syracuse University Project Advance. As an instructional designer, Rob designs and develops online courses and works with instructors on the integration of online tools in their classrooms. One of the specific projects on which Rob works involves working with high school teachers to use online discussion forums in classes that provide students with the opportunity to communicate with students in other schools. He also works with faculty on the production of podcasts, video DVDs, and interactive materials. Along with this, he also advises PA on how new technologies can be used for communication, professional development, community building, and for use in the classroom.

Rob is also an active member within the University community where he is currently co-chair of Syracuse University's University Senate Committee on LGBT Concerns, on the Syracuse University Advisory Board for the LGBTQ Youth Center Aids Community Resources of Central New York.



SUSA 2007 CONFERENCE CHAIR CONFERENCE REPORT

POST-EVENT GRATITUDE

My fellow Sietarians,

Reflecting on 2007 before leaping into 2008, I am honored to say that the highlight of my year was the SIETAR-USA 8th annual conference in Kansas City, MO. We had a great conference followed by thanks pouring in from so many of you during our Thanksgiving holiday at the end of November. I am very grateful for all the participants, presenters, sponsors, exhibitors and advertisers.

Our theme "Culture and Conflict: Courageous Conversations for Caring Communities" was in my opinion very well embraced and targeted by our outstanding keynote and plenary speakers, as well as the many concurrent sessions' presenters.

Mitch Hammer really set the pace and Lenora Billings-Harris gave us a warm yet very realistic and eye opening wrap up. What I believe all speakers and presenters did especially well was engage us into thought provoking, informative and sometimes uncomfortable conversations forcing us to step outside of our comfort zone and reflect on what the world is really made of. Even as interculturalists, consultants, educators and researchers, it is hard for us to accept someone else's perspective at times. And for that reason, ladies and gentlemen, a major goal of our conference was to set a platform where we could freely discuss topics difficult to bring up and/or accept elsewhere.

Looking back at the conference overall, the special touch of the excellent staff at the Westin Crown Center was a driving force of its success. We will also never forget the amazing finale to the conference with the very lively performance of BrasilCultura and its message: embrace, enjoy, live life to its fullest! Obrigada!

For all those who were not able to attend, we really missed you and you missed a superb conference.

Our next conference is not until 2009, and I honestly think we need a year off to top our Kansas City SUSA 2007 conference. Together: we did it! Thank you!

Wishing you all a safe and warm holiday season,

Patricia M Coleman

2007 Conference Chair

SPOTLIGHT ON SIETAR-USA CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

By Kyoung-Ah Nam

Editor's Note: At the 2007 conference in Kansas City, several winners of the SIETAR-USA Conference Scholarship presented their stories during a Panel discussion regarding what value the award of their scholarship and their participation in SIETAR-USA has meant for them. We invited 2006 Scholarship winner, Kyoung-Ah Nam, to share some of her thoughts of how the scholarship has been helpful to her.

SUSA NEWS: Congratulations on receiving the SIETAR scholarship! Could you introduce yourself? How did you come to join the SIETAR family?

I come from South Korea. I worked in international organizations and as a broadcast journalist before becoming a doctoral candidate in the Comparative International Development Education (CIDE) program at the University of Minnesota. I also teach Korean language classes at the University of Minnesota, as well as an on-line program on Maximizing Study Abroad. I've been facilitating cross-cultural training workshops for International Teaching Assistants here, too. It's a busy life. Professionally, apart from the university, I work with local companies (3M, for example) conducting training for US-American expatriates who are suddenly being sent to Korea, and doing training for their Korean counterparts who have been sent to the U.S.

I discovered SIETAR as an intern at the Summer Institute in Portland, Oregon. I go back to SIIC every summer, and am now an active member of SIETAR Minnesota.

SUSA NEWS: How did intercultural communication become your passion?

I have been fortunate working with various international, media and business organizations both in the U.S. and abroad for the past 10 years. While working for United Nations Headquarters in New York and for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Bangkok, I learned what it is to work with a truly multicultural team. For example, in a team of 10 people, often each will be from a different country.

Also, when I was a media planner and global public relations manager at Ogilvy & Mather (Los Angeles) and at Samsung (in Korea), it was vital to understand different expectations and communication styles among nations, organizations and individuals. It was during that time in Korea that I encountered a



huge re-entry culture shock after years of working abroad. Working as Special Correspondent for Radio Free Asia in Washington, D.C. gave me the opportunity to meet and interview people from all over the world.

I feel so fortunate that my work history has brought together so many experiences --foreign language teacher, international student advisor, broadcast journalist, and a special correspondent in international media. What I treasure is the opportunity to respond to the challenges of cross-cultural communication and understanding. That's where I find the strength and support that have molded who I am today. Wherever I go, whatever I do, and whomever I work with, what matters the most is always centered on intercultural communication.

SUSA NEWS: Korea features prominently in the news, politically and economically, but perhaps many people don't really know much about intercultural issues with Korea. What do you think is the hardest thing for people to understand about Korea?

Hmmm... Obviously, Korea is a lot more than 'Kimchi!' Although geographically close, Koreans are very different from Chinese and Japanese. I could talk for hours about intercultural issues with Korea, but from my consulting experience, people seem to be doubly surprised with Koreans. At first, they are surprised at how Koreans often seem closed to outsiders. Once they get to

know Koreans a little better, however, they are surprised at how open Koreans are. Sometimes it can be overwhelming, as you are expected to share everything about your life including your family and some very personal topics. In order to cross this boundary to become part of an in-group, the concept of "정 (pronounced as Jeong)" plays an important role. This is a very intimate and delicate emotion shared in Korean society, one of those 'difficult to interpret' words. It takes time to build this relationship and requires continuous effort and caring that comes from the heart. However, the relationship should not be aimed for a specific goal or reason, but should be purely personal and sincere.

While consulting with people who work with Koreans, I notice a lot of failures to communicate due to an immediate 'get-to-the-point' approach by many non-Koreans. For Koreans, intangible feelings and relationship building is often regarded as more important than a tangible written document. That's why I urge people who want to work with Koreans to fly to Korea, meet face to face, spend time and have tea, dinner and a couple of drinks. You will learn how to read between lines and have a much better outcome than by exchanging millions of written documents with letters and e-mails. What Koreans care about more is not always what you have, but who you are. Once they become your friend they are often want to be your friend for life.

Intercultural issues are not just related to business. These days marriage between rural Korean men and young women from Vietnam and China are increasing in Korean society, so that intercultural communication issues are becoming prominent in Korea.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions on intercultural issues with Koreans. I will be happy to talk with you.

SUSA NEWS: What do you do for fun?

I play piano, tennis, and enjoy yoga, swing dance and calligraphy, but I especially love to travel. And the more I travel, the more I realize the world is the best intercultural classroom. I have traveled to 26 countries, but have not had a chance to visit any countries in Africa yet.

SUSA NEWS: What would you like to do after completing your Ph.D. degree?

I am open to work both as an intercultural educator and /or in business consulting and training. I would like to become a bridge between cultures, societies, and organizations. It could be a bridge between East and West, between Asia and other parts of the world, between Korea and the U.S., and between education, training and research – in the spirit of SIETAR!

ANNOUNCEMENTS



SIETAR2008

Society for Intercultural Education
Training and Research | World Congress

IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR SIETAR GLOBAL CONGRESS

How Globalization Affects Cultures & Cultures Shape Globalization

Granada Spain October 22-26, 2008

Earlybird Registration Deadline—for a 20% Discount—is January 30, 2008. Click here for details:
<http://www.sietar.org/granada2008/registration.htm>

Call for Papers, Poster Sessions & Workshops Deadline is February 1, 2008. Click here for details:
<http://www.sietar.org/granada2008/presentations.htm>

You are cordially invited to submit proposals to present at the 2008 SIETAR Global Conference in Granada, Spain and to take advantage of earlybird registration discounts.

The theme of the conference is ***How globalization affects cultures & cultures shape globalization***. The Presentation Committee will be looking for a rich mixture of presentations that show solid academic research, best practices in organizational development, consulting and training interventions in both private and public sectors, as well as arts and literature with a clear focus on the interplay of culture and globalization. The purpose of the conference sessions is to inform, update and stimulate participants in their work. Therefore the emphasis is on the value added by the research or practice in terms of breaking new ground and questioning assumptions, demonstrating innovative tools and techniques, and showing creative expression. Contributions are welcome from all academic disciplines that deal with intercultural issues and all fields in which intercultural work is and can be exercised and applied.

Proposals may be made in English and/or Spanish. Presentations in concurrent sessions may be made in the language of your choice, realizing however that this choice may limit the number of participants. If language is an issue for you please let us know and we will strategize the best approach with you.

The next SIETAR-USA Conference will be held in New Orleans in April 2009. So make plans now to join together with us and the larger Global SIETAR community in Grenada next October!

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE: “MOVING BEYOND MOBILITY”

Berlin Germany, October 13-14, 2008

The conference is part of the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue and is organized with the support of the European Commission. It will bring together researchers, practitioners and experts in the field of international youth exchange and intercultural learning, to focus on the educational impact, success stories and obstacles of exchange programs. The Conference is organized by EFIL (European Federation of Intercultural Learning)/Brussels, AFS Interkulturelle Begegnungen/Germany and IDRI (The Intercultural Development Research Institute)/Milan, in cooperation with AFS Intercultural Programs/New York, and the Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena. The conference stands under the patronage of Ján Figel, Member of the European Commission responsible for Education, Training, Culture and Youth.

The conference will take place in both English and German. You will find further information on the conference and the call for proposals under www.movingbeyondmobility.org.



SIETARUSA.org

NEW FEATURE! SIETAR-USA MEMBER PROFILE

Editor's Note: Starting with this issue, SUSA News will profile the work of SIETAR-USA Members representing the diversity found across our membership of Education, Training and Research professionals. This issue we profile the "R" in SIETAR, or "Research," with an interview by Jeffrey Cookson of researcher, Kate Berardo, who has been exploring the intercultural field itself. In future issues, we look forward to profiling the work of Educator and Trainer SIETAR-USA members, as well. If you would like to either serve as an interviewer or interview subject in a future newsletter issue, please contact us.

Researcher: Kate Berardo—Researching the Intercultural Field

By Jeffrey Cookson

Kate Berardo's been conducting research internationally about intercultural practitioners and our field. At the recent SUSA conference her presentation on the latest findings was standing-room only and generated quite a bit of discussion during and after. I caught up with Kate via email shortly after the conference to discuss some of the implications of her findings. She was kind enough to indulge my inquiries.

JC: Thanks for connecting with me Kate. You've been a professional interculturalist on a part- and full-time basis for over a decade and have been involved in SIETAR Global, Europa, UK and USA - what do you get out of SIETAR?

KB: SIETAR to me provides a sense of community. Many of us interculturalists work alone. SIETAR is our chance to come together with like-minded people who have similar passions and interests and exchange thoughts and ideas. You get to jump straight into deep conversation at SIETAR, and never have to explain what it is you do. That makes the environment at SIETAR conferences both rare and stimulating.

JC: The conversation during your presentation was stimulating on a number of levels - what kind of feedback are you getting from the field?

KB: I was surprised by the turnout and interpreted this as a hunger for information about our field and the general lack of information available. As such, people have been responding with curiosity and interest generally to the data. I've been humored by the number of people who also want more personalized cross-tabulations relevant to their specific area or interest. Hopefully the full report will address some of these areas in more detail, although the data unfortunately can't be customized for every person.

Research to me should spark discussion, and that is what I saw our session doing. The last data that I reported on that day was the top

challenges in our field, and I think we could have used all our time together there just on this question. I don't believe we stop nearly often enough to hold and entertain some of these Meta discussions, and I hope we can create more contexts to do so as we move forward, at SIETAR congresses or other venues.

JC: What are some of the challenges you're uncovering?

KB: One of the biggest challenges people report in our field is the outdated models, approaches, and tools we're using. I will be personally spending considerable time investigating some of the less traditional tools and methods people reported using, in the hopes that they may offer clues to new alternatives and innovative new approaches to the field.

Credibility of the work we do was a big theme in 2004 and a big one in 2007. How will we address this actively? What research is being done at the moment to document the value of the services we provide, for example?

Finally, one of the real challenges in doing this kind of research is that we have no clear parameters of what does and does not fall under 'intercultural' work, nor standards for what qualifies you to do 'intercultural' work. We don't know the total population of people who do the work we are defining as 'intercultural.' In other words, just attempting this kind of research highlights the challenges we face in our field around defining who we are and what areas we should be and can be concentrating our efforts.

JC: What have you discovered about who works in the intercultural field?

KB: I remember attending my first SIETAR congress in Berlin in 2003 and being surprised by essentially how white, European and North American, and largely female we were as a group (all categories, which, by the way, I fit into). I expected more diversity. We didn't have it in the survey in 2004 and I don't see much change in 2007. We could spend a day discussing this alone, why this is the case, what historical roots are at play, etc, but I do see the data continually suggesting this.

JC: What do you think are some of the interesting findings?

KB: The industries we're not working in as much - I see these as opportunities for growth and would encourage interculturalists to look for ways to develop niches in some of these areas.



Also, salary rates and day rates for trainers...this seemed to be a more popular finding in the study during our session, as I think it gives people a comparison, and this is the kind of information people often withhold!

JC: Why are you conducting this research and how are you publishing it?

KB: To follow-up on the 2004 version I conducted with George Simons as part of the SIETAR Europa communications committee. I think we both felt it was something the field needed and that we didn't really have. I decided to take it upon myself to do it again in 2007 as it seems a type of research that needs to be continually updated.

I share many of the concerns raised by others in this field around our visibility, credibility, and professionalism. I also see us at an important turning point where many of the founding contributors to this field are retiring or leaving us. This combination sparked my commitment to really try to do my part to move the whole field forward. This research of course doesn't do that, but it at least helps us understand who we are, which I think is the first step in defining who we want to be and where we want to go as a field.

I'm working at the moment on doing some 2nd cuts on the data and writing up the full report of the findings. Once I have the final report ready, I'll distribute this to participants of the study and work on an article for publishing.

I'm also in the process of trying to address this issue of retiring talent in our field and making sure we're equipping the next generation to build on the great work done by our predecessors. I'm working closely with a colleague of mine, Darla Deardorff, in exploring ways to ensure we transfer knowledge to the new generation of interculturalists-so you may hear something from us on that front shortly.

JC: Are there additional topics people (or you) are interested in adding to the study?

KB: Where to start! People have suggested all kinds of additional topics, from looking at how interculturalists are using online media and marketing themselves through websites and blogs to exploring how intercultural firms are addressing competency building in their work.

To me, these suggestions are great areas for research, but are separate and more in-depth projects around specific areas of intercultural work. They highlight to me again the hunger among interculturalists to understand more about how we're working and in what ways. It would be fantastic if one side-effect of this kind of research is more of its kind.

*About the Study: The Intercultural Profession: A snapshot of current professionals, practices, and challenges faced in the field, surveyed 237 interculturalists around the world. Kate's questions focused on who are interculturalists, where and how they work, and what opinions and advice they have about the intercultural field. To download the preliminary presentation shared at the SUSA congress, go to:
<http://www.culturocity.com/presentationmaterials.htm>*

Kate Berardo is a consultant specializing in cultural awareness, international transitions, and multicultural teambuilding. Her work enables individuals and teams to be more effective in international settings and has been the focus of media worldwide, including CNN's Business Traveller and the Dubai daily Gulf News. She is founder of Culturocity.com and co-author of Putting Diversity to Work.

Jeffrey Cookson, SPHR is an organization development consultant specializing in domestic and international diversity at Employers Association, Inc. He's recently been elected to the SUSA national board and begins his term as volunteer coordinator in January 2008. You can reach Jeffrey at sietarjeffrey@employersinc.com.



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