

SUSA News



The **SIETAR**USA Newsletter

Society for Intercultural Education
Training and Research

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NEW!

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Colleagues,

President Obama has often said that "Change is coming to America." In keeping with that theme, change is coming to SIETAR, change in the leadership of our organization. Our esteemed Executive Director, Peggy Pusch, has retired.

Many of you know Peggy had some health issues recently when she suffered a stroke. She is today in great humor with her unflinching wit intact. The stroke has not been physically debilitating. Still, the experience has sapped some of her amazing energy and prompted some changes in her priorities. Peggy feels it is time to seriously reduce her involvement in the many organizations in which she has worked--including SUSA.

We, as a board, and I, personally, want to thank Peggy for her many contributions to SUSA and to the intercultural field in general. She has given immense gifts to the field during her more than 3 decades of service. In addition to serving as our Executive Director, Peggy has been tirelessly involved in a myriad of activities and events such as:

- founding and managing Intercultural Press
- advising foreign students at Syracuse University, New York
- being the glue for the maintenance of SIETAR International
- playing a significant role in development and implementation of the recently completed SIETAR Global congress.

Clearly this list is just a snapshot of her breadth and her reach. One of her most stunning accomplishments--one for which we all should be grateful--was her starting and providing direction for SUSA. In the late 1990's, Peggy used her incredible energy and organizing talent to get SUSA incorporated and structured. Peggy led the effort and, as usual, enlisted the support of many. I have been told that Sandy Fowler and Giles Asselin were key as the

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first officers of the organization, working closely alongside Peggy.

From that time in 1999 to today, Peggy has lovingly shepherded our organization as Executive Director. She did all of this while traveling the globe--training, consulting, and advising. She did all of this on a voluntary basis, and unquestionably played a significant role in SUSA's ability to grow.

Peggy's retirement presents the SUSA Board with an exciting opportunity going forward. Since we currently don't have the resources to hire a full-time Executive Director, we must and will be creative as we develop further direction. At our annual planning retreat earlier this month, a consultant named Stephanie Pollack guided the Board through thinking how we will function for the next 6 months. Two major decisions resulted: how we will handle the operational issues that Peggy dealt with as Executive Director, and how we will develop a structure for the organization that will carry SUSA forward. This latter plan will be presented to our membership for approval at our annual conference in Spokane, Washington, in April.

Peggy's decision to retire is at once a loss and an opportunity for SUSA. The loss is self-evident. The opportunity presented is to pause, take a serious look at the organization and structure SUSA for the future. In the months ahead, little will change externally at SUSA. The new structure developed will allow us to operate in as transparent a way as possible and position ourselves for the future.

Andy Reynolds

SIETAR-USA President



Closing Gala at the 9th Annual SIETAR-USA Conference in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina in April 2009.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROPOSAL DEADLINE EXTENDED TO NOV. 9TH

SIETAR-USA invites you to submit proposals to present at its Tenth Annual International Conference in Spokane, Washington April 14-17, 2010. For more info go to www.sietarusaconference.com

JOB BOARD

Check it out... www.sietarusa.org now has an active Job Board open to everyone who wishes to post a position or who is looking for one. You are invited to look or to post on the Job Board. If you know of people who are filling positions, urge them to post on the Job Board. Easy to use and a benefit of membership in SIETAR USA.

GLOBAL SIETAR EVENTS

3rd Annual Conference of SIETAR India in Pune, India - October 30 to Nov 1, 2009

Theme: "Connecting Worlds: Solutions through Intercultural Insights." www.sietarindia.org



10th Annual Congress of Young SIETAR in Cairo Egypt - November 12 to 15, 2009

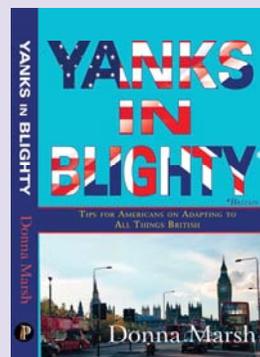
Theme: "Young SIETAR Unplugged!! Creative Approaches to Interculturalism." Visit Umm al-Dunya (Mother of the World), better known as Cairo. www.youngsietar.org



NEW BOOK FROM SIETAR UK MEMBER

Donna Marsh, a SIETAR UK member, is the author of the new book *Yanks in Blighty: Tips for Americans on Adapting to All Things British*. Specifically written for Americans, the book will give practical advice by making references

that are familiar to Americans, helping American negotiate the frustrations one may encounter before, during and after a move to the UK. The book is available through Amazon in the US and the UK. The ISBN is 978-1-906710-37-8.



SPECIAL FEATURE: NOTE FROM PEGGY PUSCH, RECENTLY RETIRED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

Caring across cultures.

The past two months have been a lesson in the need for strength and relationships in our lives. During the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication (SIIC) in Oregon, a group of participants attended a one-day workshop led by John Condon on the monumental work of Edward T. Hall. Those participants had the opportunity to talk with Hall by phone, which delighted him. A mere 72 hours later, Ned Hall died.

Ned had a series of debilitating strokes over the last 6 or so years and it was becoming clear that the end was near; so his passing was not a total surprise. Still, his passing was no less distressing to those who knew him personally and admired his work. Though he was surrounded by people who cared about him up to the end, including the SIIC workshop group that I just mentioned, one is struck by the loss of giants in the field and Ned Hall is a huge loss.

Soon thereafter the husband of a friend and colleague--Pari--was arrested in Iran. After being held for many months, Bijan has now finally been released. The charges, once actually stated, made no sense. Pari, their small daughters, his Mother and other family members found out where Bijan was after an excruciating wait, and then tried to visit to bring him comfort, ensure he was not mistreated and that he received essential medication (Bijan is diabetic.) It is almost impossible to imagine being in their situation and I have kept in regular touch with Pari since the arrest as have other SIETAR friends. Pari writes that messages of support and love kept her comforted. She and her family are very brave, and we are very grateful that her husband Bijan has now been released. We need to continue to keep them in our prayers and thoughts. The pain around this kind of event is dreadful and we hope that the work of people like Ned Hall and all who follow him can make a difference in the world.

As for me, I have often sent healing and caring thoughts and prayers to people who are ill or in some sort of difficult situation. I have often wondered if they arrived or brought any level of comfort. I now know first hand.

I had a stroke a couple months ago and have been in the



hospital, but I am now home and am having various kinds of therapy. In the midst of my hospital stay, I suddenly had a sense of being surrounded by a huge loving presence. Flowers, cards, visitors, emails from around the world, phone calls, and even food arrived. It was this feeling of loving support that just engulfed me—it was amazing and my first thought was “it works!”

I know many of you sent those thoughts and I am most grateful. It was surprising and wonderful to feel so loved. I don't know how to describe how these vibes arrived but I do know that they moved across borders, cultures and time zones. I've always loved the idea of 'Paying forward' and this is another form of paying forward. Keeping the atmosphere so clogged with loving and caring thoughts may have more impact than we can imagine. So let us send our caring thoughts to prisoners, to refugees, to the people of Gaza and Darfur—whether you know them or not. I believe and now know it can make a difference.

Though I am now no longer the Executive Director of SUSA, I am still and will remain an active member. And as such, I look forward to what lies ahead for us all.

With wide-open arms,
Peggy Pusch



CONFERENCE UPDATE: SIETAR USA'S 2010 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

APRIL 14-17, 2010 SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

The SIETAR-USA 2010 conference is being held in Spokane, WA. Historic, yet modern and vibrant, Spokane's past contrasts with cutting edge creativity, forming a city rich in heritage and innovation. As the second largest city in Washington State, and the largest between Seattle and Minneapolis, Spokane is home to over 200,000 residents with a metropolitan population of more than 500,000. Continuing to grow, Spokane is in the midst of a major renaissance that has led to the rebirth of a thriving artistic culture as well as nearly \$3 billion of renovations and improvements to its downtown core.

The theme of the 2010 conference is *Living and Working in an Intercultural World*. We invite you to submit your proposals by the deadline of November 9, 2009. The Call for Proposals is now available and you can review the information at: www.sietarusaconference.org

Why should you attend the Tenth Annual SIETAR USA conference? Our SIETAR-USA membership goals provide the focus for our annual conference. As a participant or presenter you can benefit in the following ways:

1. Business Opportunities. Helping members grow their careers and businesses. Being able to exhibit and/or present provides an opportunity to demonstrate your capabilities to an audience that can "get the word around" about what you do, find a job (we're amazed how often this happens at our conferences), and create and expand your business connections. This past April 2009 conference at Cary, N.C. included participants from across the U.S. and from England, France, India, Germany, Canada, Brazil, Iran, British Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

2. Networking. Connecting intercultural professionals from around the USA and from around the world. Connecting professionals in the field in various ways, electronically as well as face-to-face. Professional networking has been uppermost in our plans for conferences with long coffee breaks and group lunches, and relaxed evening activities.

3. Professional Development. Providing opportunities to gain professional recognition and to expand skills, knowledge and resources. Conference programs and workshops increase participants' knowledge and skills. Be part of the action and join in the on-going effort to explore future directions for intercultural relations in the three areas represented in SIETAR: education, training and research.

4. Giving Back. Providing opportunities to grow the profession. Volunteering to serve the Society by joining committees associated with the conference and becoming a SIETAR USA volunteer as well as mentoring aspiring colleagues (or being mentored), and sharing resources and knowledge demonstrates your professionalism.

Conference Co-chairs, Ann Marie Lei (annmarie@annmarielei.com) and Esther Louie (elouie@whitworth.edu), are excited as the conference committees are at work. Please let them know if you would like to volunteer and help with the planning of this year's conference. Areas where we'll need volunteers are: proposal reviewers, technology, fundraising, Silent Auction, marketing and getting the word to everyone you know about the conference.

The conference registration website is open—watch for our announcements. Find out how you can be a part of the 2010 SIETAR USA Conference! Remember, to download more conference information, go to www.sietarusaconference.com

LOCAL GROUP NEWS

SIETAR DC

In April we welcomed staff from the National MultiCultural Institute who conducted a session on how developments in neuroscience impact diversity and intercultural training and education. Based on studies on unconscious association and bias from Harvard University's Implicit Association test, we learned how practitioners and educators help individuals become aware of their own cultural stereotypes and assumptions. In May, we held a panel discussion with Board members of the Benin Education Fund who discussed obstacles and successes related to launching a grassroots NGO and issues girls in developing countries encounter in their ability to obtain an education. We also had an event in June with a reception at George Washington University followed by a presentation by Eric Weiner, NPR correspondent and author of the NY Times bestseller "The Geography of Bliss" who discussed his book and his research on happiness across cultures. Contact Julia Gaspar-Bates for more information on how to become involved in SIETAR-DC at jgaspar@interculturalalliances.com

SIETAR Houston

We have managed to continue with our monthly Saturday morning programs, with around 15-25 attendees per program. We welcome members, guests, professors and students to attend. For non-dues paying members, the fee is \$7 or \$5 for students. Currently, our paid membership is around 50. We are also actively looking for those with interest in serving as officers and leaders in the organization. Please contact Syed Zafar if you would like to get more information about how you can become involved: syed4zafar@gmail.com

SIETAR Minnesota

SIETAR- Minnesota had a full spring with a great line-up of monthly meetings. We were proud of our 8th place finish (out of 40+ teams) in the Minnesota International Center's (MIC) annual "Worldquest Competition," which is a fundraiser for MIC's International Classroom Connection Program that our dear friend and fellow interculturalist, Robin Bragge, directed for several years. While we're not always overly competitive, we think we may have had the highest number of attendees from a local group at the wonderful SIETAR-USA Conference in April in North Carolina. We all came back from the conference re-energized for the intercultural work we do.

We had a "Minnesota cultural experience" - a snow blizzard (the worst in the state all year) leading to the need to reschedule our February meeting, a video viewing and discussion of, Jerusalem is Proud to Present, a great film about the controversy surrounding Jerusalem hosting the 2006 World Pride events. Members enjoyed a special Pangea World Theatre outing and discussion of the play, Conference of the Birds based on a 12th century Sufi poem by Farid ud-Din Attar. We also learned about cross-cultural comparisons of education and culture from a distinguished panel of teaching fellows representing 7 countries in the International Leaders in Education Program, hosted by the University of Minnesota in spring 2009.

SIETAR-Minnesota members also planned a summer social event on Sunday, July 12th, at the Lake Harriet Bandshell to hear the Minneapolis Pops Orchestra and share in a Midwestern potluck picnic. To join our SIETAR-Minnesota e-mail list, send us a message to sietar.mn@gmail.com and check out our fan page on Facebook!

SIETAR Spokane

The 10th Annual SIETAR-USA conference will be enthusiastically hosted in Spokane, WA with the help of the Spokane Local Group conference committee ably co-chaired by Kara LaSota and Yvonne Montoya Zamora. We've set up a Facebook page for SIETAR SPOKANE; check out the beginning of our local group and the members. Facebook group <http://www.new.facebook.com/group.php?gid=109861060296> and the public website: <https://sites.google.com/site/sietarspokanepublic/>

Our local group was on summer hiatus, and began meetings again in August. Keep in touch as we post information about our upcoming activities.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

SUSA News invites our readers and members to submit their article ideas. For example, consider:

- **Authoring a Book Review:** We invite book reviews of publications likely to be of interest to our membership. If you would like to complete a book review for a future SUSA News issue, please contact us for our book review template. (Check out past issues for ideas.)
- **Writing a SIETAR USA Member Profile:** Members representing the diversity found across our membership of Education, Training and Research professionals. If you would like to either serve as an interviewer or interview subject in a future newsletter issue, please contact us.
- **Recommending any other ideas:** Your own or someone else's, for articles or contributions. If you think it's a good idea we probably will, as well.

To discuss article ideas or how you might contribute to the newsletter, contact us at +1 206-859-4351 or via Email: info@sietarusa.org



NEED TO REACH SIETAR-USA?

With the recent retirement of Peggy Pusch as our Executive Director, please direct any queries for SIETAR-USA to us by email, phone, or fax:

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