

# SUSANews



## The **SIETAR**USA Newsletter

Society for Intercultural Education  
Training and Research

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Colleagues,

Well, it's almost time for the SIETAR Global Congress in Granada, Spain to convene. It promises to be a fun and enlightening time (go to [www.sietarglobal2008.org/](http://www.sietarglobal2008.org/) to see what's planned.) At last count more than 152 people from the United States are registered to attend. I am pleased there is so much interest from our country. I hope to meet all of you while there. You should soon be receiving a small gift from SIETAR USA to assist in your travel.

Planning is well underway for the SIETAR USA (SUSA) conference in April '09. Our chair, Kelli McCloud – Schingen, has things moving apace. Soon you will receive a request for proposals for presenting at our conference. To assist you in your preparatory thinking, I want to remind you the theme is "Intercultural Solutions for Changing Times." It's a theme that unquestionably is timely when you consider the current events with which we are faced nationally and globally. Many of the issues require an intercultural perspective to resolve or at least improve.

I also want to alert you about our upcoming board nomination period. We have some positions open, including the position of president-elect. This person will be in line to take over presidency of SUSA in January 2010. Chair of the Nominations Committee is Tatyana Fertelmeister. Official information as to the positions open and how to nominate yourself or anyone else will be posted in the not-too-distant future.

See you in Granada. Or in the words of the Governor of California, "Hasta la vista, baby!"

Until next time,

**Andy Reynolds**

*SIETAR-USA President*

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**NEW!**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear Friends:

It is an amazing experience when a group of people from different cultures become a team, working across language and cultural differences to reach a goal that they all agree is important. I am writing this column in Vienna where I have just had the privilege of working with such a group—representatives of six Life Science universities. Some schools sent 5 or 6 people, others just 1 or 2, depending on their resources.

They came from Poland, Austria, Italy, Denmark, Spain, and the Czech Republic; they were charged with creating a project directed toward discovering the level of intercultural competence in their institutions, the best practices their institutions exhibit, and a process for learning more about how to help institutions become more accessible to people from other places. They are motivated by the move toward internationalization of higher education in Europe, especially in their particular sector within that “industry,” by the challenges international students face within their institutions, and by the lack of learning on the part of the home students about other cultures.

People in Life Sciences are working on fundamental issues in agriculture, climate change and dozens of other areas that impact the lives of everyone on the planet. It is essential that they find ways to cooperate with each other. A Dutch colleague and I were tasked with facilitating this process and emerging from a three day workshop with the questionnaire for the research formulated and agreement on a plan for how this work was to proceed.

We started with a group of people representing various locations and ended with a team that was ready to roll. My colleague and I could say that “we did it” but that would be dishonest. We provided assistance in getting the work done but it struck me how the entire process could have been scuttled very quickly if good will and a commitment to the goal and to each other did not exist. They disagreed (though never about the expected outcome), they debated, they talking about what was being done in their institutions, they talked even more about what was not being done, they considering the meaning of specific words for each of their cultures, they ate together—every single meal—and they worked hard right down to the last minute. It was, as I said, an amazing experience and it could have gone so badly. Probably the most important decision, made far before we arrived here, was being sure the right people were in the room. Then it was a total investment on their part and some able facilitation (we can take credit for that) that made this happen and what a pleasure it was to be part of this process.

We depart for the United States after three weeks in Europe and I'm ready to sleep in my own bed again. However, it has been a trip of highlights which included receiving the EAIE Bo Gregersen Award for Best Practice for an innovative contribution to international education at the final plenary of the European Association for International Education in the Opera House in Antwerp as well as celebrating the 16th birthday of a friend's daughter.

It is now time to look forward to the SIETAR Global Congress in Granada which is shaping into a wonderful time for mutual learning and for becoming acquainted with the culture of the area. We are also looking forward to the next S-USA conference in North Carolina and , most important, coming together with a community of interculturalists in each of these locations.

**Peggy Pusch**

*SIETAR-USA Executive Director*

## LOCAL GROUP NEWS

### SIETAR DC

We had our advisory board meeting last week to discuss our strategy for this year. Our first meeting will take place next week and the focus will be on Icebreaking Best Practices. We also recently sent out a survey to all our members (90 in all) to find out what their interests are so we can target our events. We will also continue our partnership with George Washington University and are hoping to generate increased interest from the student body there.

### SIETAR Houston

In September, SIETAR Houston had a presentation by Syed Zafar, on Pakistani culture and the impact of culture in counseling. This workshop was based on the speaker's personal experiences of working with Norwegian psychologists who provide assistance to Pakistani immigrants in family violence cases in Oslo, Norway. Psychologists were able to significantly improve their success rate when they began to incorporate Pakistani cultural knowledge in their counseling sessions.

For more information on this event or future events contact Joanne Dodd at [jcd@hal-pc.org](mailto:jcd@hal-pc.org) or visit [www.sietarhouston.org](http://www.sietarhouston.org)

### SIETAR Rocky Mountain

The SIETAR Rocky Mountain local group is reorganized under new leadership. A letter and short survey have gone out to approximately 60 people in the Rocky Mountain region. We are very excited about revitalizing the group and bringing in new participants and members. Anyone in the greater Denver/Boulder/Fort Collins/Colorado Springs area that is interested in joining the group, please contact Robert Strauss at [robertstrauss@instructionaldesignresources.com](mailto:robertstrauss@instructionaldesignresources.com)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SEEKING CONFERENCE MARKETING TEAM MEMBERS

By Candice Hughes, SUSA Board Member & Marketing Chair

- Have you ever decided to attend a professional conference based on its promotional materials?
- Have you ever missed a very important conference because you did not know about it until too late?
- Have you ever registered for a conference when you learned about it through your professional network?
- Have you ever read a newspaper article, heard a radio interview, or watched a television clip about a conference sponsored by a professional association that has made you decide to attend future conferences of that organization?

Why so many questions? To raise your awareness that a professional conference needs carefully crafted marketing and publicity to assure good attendance as well as to bring greater visibility to the sponsoring association and to attract future participants. We are in the initial stages of organizing SUSA's next national conference. I would like to invite you to join the 2009 SIETAR-USA Conference Marketing Team to help make these goals achievable.

Here are some of the core activities of the Conference Marketing Team:

- *Creation of Conference Promotion Materials – Creating paper, electronic, and media materials to promote the conference to prospective attendees and sponsors*
- *Marketing Database Development – Gathering local and national names and contact information of individuals and organizations to identify:
  - o Prospective attendees
  - o Prospective sponsors
  - o Publicity opportunities (e.g. local radio station)*
- *Conference promotion – Creating and implementing ways to recruit conference attendees, sponsors and publicity opportunities*

As you can see, there is a lot to be done! Please contact me via e-mail at [bridgingcultures@aol.com](mailto:bridgingcultures@aol.com) if you would like to join the 2009 Conference Marketing Team. Feel free to volunteer even if you do not have a marketing background as your enthusiasm and motivation will also be very greatly appreciated. If you have ever wanted to become more involved with SUSA, this is a great opportunity to do so!

## SIETAR GLOBAL CONGRESS 2008: VIRTUAL CAFÉ

*How globalization affects cultures & cultures shape globalization  
Granada, Spain October 22-26, 2008*

Whether you plan to be in Spain or relaxing in front of your laptop at home... join the Granada Congress Virtual Café! Peter Hayward of SIETAR USA has constructed the Virtual Intercultural Café for the Global Congress.



This forum serves as a virtual intercultural café where SIETAR members from around the world can drop in for an informal chat, cross paths with new and old SIETARian friends, share points of view, have discussions about the upcoming congress, and form work or presentation collaborations for this event and beyond. Some of the discussion groups will be moderated while others will be self-moderating, all will be monitored to insure appropriate online etiquette. This site is open to all SIETAR members and others interested in the intercultural field. Join today at:

<http://www.sietarglobal2008.org/participation/virtual-cafe/>



## SIETAR2008

Society for Intercultural Education  
Training and Research | World Congress

## SPECIAL FEATURE!

# SIETAR MEMBER PROFILE

*Editor's Note: Occasionally, SUSA News profiles the work of SIETAR-USA Members representing the diversity found across our membership of Education, Training and Research professionals. In December of 2007, we featured Researcher Kate Berardo and in April we featured Educator Yvonne Montoya Zamora. In this issue, we profiling the work of one of our "Training" SIETAR-USA members: Ann Marie Lei. If you would like to either serve as an interviewer or interview subject in a future newsletter issue, please contact us.*

### SIETAR-USA Member Profile: Ann Marie Lei

by Cate Brubaker

Ann Marie Lei was 10 years into her international marketing career at Nike and wrapping up three years working in the Netherlands when she discovered the intercultural field.



Just before returning to the U.S., Ann Marie met Julie Resnick, an interculturalist who was facilitating pre-departure orientations for Nike employees moving abroad. "I was really intrigued by what she did and especially her knowledge." Although Ann Marie always loved to travel and meet people from different cultures, at that time she had no idea that there was a field of study dedicated to intercultural relations. On Julie's recommendation, Ann Marie soon pursued a Master's degree with the MAIR program (Master of Arts in Intercultural Relations). "I was simply really interested in the subject matter and thinking that it would be great if I could somehow help other people avoid some of the mistakes I've made along the way."

Then, after more than 17 years working in international marketing, Ann Marie left Nike to develop the thriving consulting practice she has today. Ann Marie's clients have described her as a consultant, facilitator, and program designer. "I believe that some of my strengths in working with clients are that I ask really relevant questions, am good at synthesizing the answers, and work with my clients to select the right topics, activities, and tools." Although Ann Marie has an affinity for working with brand marketing teams, she also works with clients in information technology, product design and development, human resources, and retail. She particularly enjoys working with long-term clients who are committed to collaboration and has consulted for companies such as Nike, Nike de Mexico, and Catholic Network of Volunteer Service. (Visit Ann Marie's website for case studies describing her work with these clients: [www.annmarielei.com](http://www.annmarielei.com)).

Also an educator, Ann Marie teaches graduate level intercultural competence and communication courses for the Master of International Management program at Portland State

University. In this capacity, Ann Marie prepares students to be culturally effective global managers.

When asked about her top tips for new intercultural trainers, Ann Marie made several suggestions. "Be an aggressive learner," was her first. Ann Marie spends a significant amount of time each year connecting with other interculturalists and enhancing her skills. She has attended the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication several times and is looking forward to the upcoming Global SIETAR Congress in Granada, Spain.

Ann Marie also recommends that trainers teach what they love. "It really shows if you're passionate about the subject." Her final suggestions? "Be generous. Know yourself and your strengths. And most of all, just get started!"

Talking with Ann Marie, her passion for, knowledge of, and dedication to the intercultural field becomes quickly evident. Asked about a challenge that the intercultural field currently faces, Ann Marie gave the following thoughtful answer.

I think one of our biggest challenges is gaining the visibility and credibility in the "mainstream" to really have the impact in the world that most of us believe we should have. There is such a wealth of useful knowledge, research, and talent in this field and such a great need in the world for it. We need to get better as individuals and a field at letting people know who we are and what we can offer to help them directly to illuminate issues, solve problems and bring people with different talents and beliefs together in more productive ways. Ultimately, I think this comes down to marketing, and many of us are not inclined or equipped to do it well.

Perhaps offering marketing workshops for interculturalists is in Ann Marie's future?

A native of Portland, Oregon, Ann Marie first joined SIETAR when she was a MAIR student. "I was told that it was THE professional society for the intercultural field." Formerly on the Board of Directors, Ann Marie is currently serving as an advisor to the board and a member of the Marketing Committee. She also manages the marketing efforts for the annual SIETAR-USA conferences. Ann Marie has stayed involved with SIETAR "because of the people and to stay current with the latest research, training tools, and best practices in the field."

*Cate Brubaker is President of SIETAR-North Carolina. Cate is also an Intercultural Specialist at the Visiting International Faculty Program and about to launch a new website for teachers that explores education and culture around the world. Visit her at: [www.culturallyteaching.com](http://www.culturallyteaching.com)*

