

ASIANetwork Spring Conference to secure conference rates. **Reservations must be completed by Monday, April 1, 2002.** Reservations received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis. Although the Hickory Ridge Conference Center has set aside a given number of rooms for the ASIANetwork Conference, the Center is not a hotel, and therefore it is important for conference attendees to make their housing reservations in a timely fashion.

The complete meeting package rate is a **per night** charge and includes guestroom, all meals plus refreshment breaks, and the use of the fitness center and recreation facilities. The rates are subject to applicable state and local taxes in effect at the time of check-in.

Meeting package rates are: single room \$150 per night; double room \$245 per room per night (you are responsible for making your own room-sharing arrangements).

If you plan to attend the conference but **not** stay overnight, the day rate charged by HRCC to use their facilities and for lunch and refreshment breaks is \$55. Please make check payable to ASIANetwork.

To make reservations for limousine service from and to O'Hare

Airport or Midway Airport, call the American Limousin Company, 630-920-8888. Ask for current rates.

If you are traveling by car, ask for directions to Hickory Ridge when you make your room reservations.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE

Conference registration fees must be paid by **Friday, March 29, 2002.** ASIANetwork members \$50; non-members \$60. Late registration fees (those received after March 29, 2002) are \$60 for ASIANetwork members and \$70 for non-members.

PRE-CONFERENCE FIELD TRIP

See enclosed flyer for information on the field trip. Field trip fees must also be paid by **Friday, March 29, 2002.**

Participants will be accepted until van space is occupied.

Please send checks (credit card payments cannot be accepted) made out to **ASIANetwork** for your registration fee to:

Van J. Symons, Executive Director

ASIANetwork

Augustana College

639 - 38th Street

Rock Island, IL 61201-2296

Dynamics of Asian Studies and Challenges for ASIANetwork: Words from Members of the Council of Advisors Yi Sun Board of Directors

It has been an honor and a privilege for ASIANetwork to have the indispensable support from our dedicated members of the Council of Advisors. On the occasion of commemorating the 10th anniversary of the organization, we are once again benefiting from their insight and wisdom concerning the dynamics of Asian studies as well as the hopes, opportunities and challenges for ASIANetwork.

Dr. Thomas Benson, President of Green Mountain College, was instrumental in the founding of ASIANetwork. A consultation meeting that he organized at Pinehurst, North Carolina, marked the inception of the consortium. He served as the first Chair of the ASIANetwork Board of Directors, and remains strongly committed to the organization. Dr. Benson regards ASIANetwork as "indispensable" in providing opportunities and resources for faculty members

interested in teaching and promoting Asian studies at liberal arts institutions. He points out that, while the Association for Asian Studies and other more research-oriented academic organizations are concerned more with the scholarly dimension of Asian studies, ASIANetwork plays an invaluable complementary role by emphasizing the teaching of Asia. While elated at the growth of ASIANetwork and marveling at the dedication of its participants, Dr. Benson cautions that the consortium should remain true to its mission and "sustain its rich diversity of institutional membership" by paying special attention to colleges in need of help with developing their Asian Studies programs, and by effectively connecting the "have" and "have not" institutions. Meanwhile, warning against the danger of losing the "passionate commitment to powerful undergraduate teaching" on the part of faculty due to disproportionate emphasis on research and publication at some colleges, Dr. Benson expresses his earnest hope for ASIANetwork to continue its essential role in preserving the value of teaching, and thereby safeguarding the "rich heritage" of the nation's liberal arts colleges.

Dr. Elizabeth Buck has been a member of the Council of Advisors since 1999. As Co-Director for the Asian Studies Development Program, a joint effort of the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii, Dr. Buck has long devoted herself to promoting Asian studies in the U.S. In recent years, she visited more than twenty-two academic institutions as a consultant for their curricula and faculty development designed to infuse Asian studies into their existing curricula.

While conducting a collaborative project on China several years ago with Colorado College, one of the earliest member institutions of ASIANetwork, Dr. Buck became familiar with the mission of the organization. She is extremely impressed by the various programs and activities offered by ASIANetwork. Convinced that Asian studies constitute an integral part of a liberal arts education in an increasingly globalized environment, Dr. Buck hopes that ASIANetwork will continue to serve as an "an important catalyst" for the development of Asian studies on American college campuses, and will exert more effort at reaching out to historically black colleges and universities. To carry out its mission and commitment, Dr. Buck believes that the ensurance of "institutional and financial stability" of ASIANetwork is an essential task.

Dr. Ainslie Embree, Professor Emeritus of History at Columbia University, and renowned leader in the field of Indian studies and international affairs, was invited to join the Council of Advisors in 1997 after giving the keynote speech at ASIANetwork's annual conference. In his various capacities as a distinguished teacher, scholar, and diplomat, for which he has received numerous honors and awards, Dr. Embree has been a tireless champion for the cause of incorporating Asian studies into the core curriculum of the American liberal arts education. "Asia," in his words, "should not be 'supplemental' but rather 'integral' to the study of world history." To this end, Dr. Embree co-edited, with Dr. Carol Gluck, the volume *Asia in Western and World History*, and contributed to *Asia in the Undergraduate Curriculum*, an ASIANetwork publication edited by Drs. Suzanne Barnett and Van Symons. In his article "Where We Came From, Where We Are Going," Dr. Embree traces the origin and development of Asian studies in American higher education, and points out that "the sense of mission to have our students share in the heritage of Asian civilizations" is what propels the energetic promotion of Asian studies. Emphasizing the need to "maintain the momentum for developing innovative programs to meet new challenges," Dr. Embree suggests that, in addition to the existing endeavors, offering courses based on major themes or issues, incorporating Asian material into these courses, providing language training, as well as sharing information and resources with communities are effective means of deepening and widening students' interest in Asia. He compliments ASIANetwork for having played "a vital role in the promotion of Asian studies as a vital part of humanistic education" by providing the necessary networking and other tangible support for Asian Studies faculty at various small colleges, where intellectual exchange and resource-sharing among colleagues in similar fields may not be possible. Equally important, Dr. Embree insists, these faculty members "will have to work in their own colleges and with colleagues to insist on the fundamental importance of Asian studies for the educational enterprise in the United States."

Mr. Donald Gregg, Chairman of the Board of the Korean Society, also joined the Council of Advisors in 1997. His interest in Asia spans half a century, and his knowledge

of Asian affairs both as an academic and a government official is widely acclaimed. After working as the National Security Advisor for then-Vice President George Bush, Mr. Gregg served as the American Ambassador to Korea during the late 1980s and early 1990s. He has received numerous awards from both the government and academic institutions for his contribution to the enhancement of Americans' understanding of Asia. Mr. Gregg has lent his ardent support to ASIANetwork, and is particularly interested in raising the academic and public consciousness of Korea. Commenting on the historical role of Korea as a focal point of both imperialistic and ideological struggles among major world powers, the current dynamics within the Korean society as well as the increasing importance assumed by Korea in international affairs, Mr. Gregg laments the fact that there is still "a dearth of studies of Korea in the United States." He hopes that ASIANetwork will provide more exchanges and stimulation for the study of Asia, "a region that Americans still don't understand." More specifically, Mr. Gregg argues, the bilateral relationship between Korea and Japan as well as the triangular relationship between Korea, China and Russia warrant more attention in order for us to "understand the intertwining complexities of Asian politics and diplomacy." Emphasizing the need for good teachers dedicated to Asian studies, Mr. Gregg believes that two of the responsibilities of ASIANetwork are to encourage colleges to hire quality teachers and to inspire students to teach or pursue graduate work in Asian countries, especially Korea and Japan. While feeling gratified to see more colleges "waking up to the need of teaching Asia," Mr. Gregg stresses the necessity to learn the Asian languages. Furthermore, he predicts that there will be a tremendous need for Americans to study North Korea as it opens up to the outside world.

Dr. Barbara Metcalf, Professor of South Asian and Comparative History with emphasis on Islamic studies at the University of California, Davis, will soon become a new member of ASIANetwork's Council of Advisors. During her term as President of the Association for Asian Studies in 1995, she came to know the consortium well through several of its active participants. Dr. Metcalf expresses her admiration for ASIANetwork for the numerous projects that it has undertaken and for its impressive achievements. She considers the organization to be particularly successful in designing programs to enhance academic exchanges both among liberal arts colleges in the U.S. and between American institutions and their Asian counterparts. She also finds the *ASIANetwork Exchange*, conferences and other activities to be effective vehicles for "stimulating ideas about how to best foster the study of Asia in undergraduate institutions." Dr. Metcalf is confident that the heightened awareness of the interconnectedness among different regions of the world, coupled with the presence of a growing American population of Asian origin, will generate new incentives and resources for improving Asian studies on college campuses overall.

Dr. David Vikner has been closely associated with ASIANetwork from the very beginning. As President of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, which

supports over eighty colleges and universities in twelve Asian countries, he built a close relationship between the two organizations. Born into a missionary family, Dr. Vikner spent his early years in China and Japan, and later worked in various countries and regions in Asia for a total of fourteen years. He recalls fondly that ten years ago over lunch at the Columbia University Faculty Club, he and Dr. Benson "got the whole thing going." Their common vision for the need of a consortium to coordinate the Asian Scholar program and the Visiting Professor Program, both of which had just been established by the United Board, led to the meeting in North Carolina, which in turn became the first step in the formation of ASIANetwork. Dr. Vikner has nothing but the highest praises for the organization. Pleasantly "astonished at its growth with a broad constituency," Dr. Vikner attributes the development of ASIANetwork to its effective and beneficial focus on pedagogy and curriculum construction. He adds that the consortium has become "the most valuable component of AAS," for it offers a "rare intimacy" with which people with common interests in Asian studies have interacted, a quality unrivaled by other academic organizations.

Dr. Vikner hopes that ASIANetwork will function as a bridge between Asian and American institutions by coordinating programs such as study abroad initiatives, by recruiting and training those who are interested in teaching in Asia, and by rejuvenating and sustaining American students' interest in Asia. When suggesting that ASIANetwork get a small endowment to cover its administrative costs so that 100% of external contributions can be used for running various programs, Dr. Vikner quickly adds that it should not be too well-endowed lest it would breed bureaucratic tendencies in its management, which would in turn change the nature of the organization. He also sees a need for ASIANetwork to constantly reevaluate its contributions to Asian studies, and to continually strengthen itself through innovation and creativity.

Dr. Anthony Yu, Carl Darling Buck Distinguished Service Professor in Humanities at the University of Chicago, joined the Council of Advisors in 2001. Dr. Yu's vast expertise on the comparative study of both Western and Eastern literary and religious traditions shines through his profound reflections on the "defining character" of ASIANetwork. He effectively highlights the significance of the study of Asia and other non-Western cultures within the framework of American liberal arts education. Attributing the widening interest in Asia to the emergence of area studies in the U.S. during the post-WWII era, which has witnessed ever-rising cultural pluralism, as well as to the dramatic increase of Asian immigrants, Dr. Yu concludes that Asian studies can no longer afford to be the exclusive object of scholarly inquiries; rather, they have to be broadened into the curricula of liberal arts institutions, since "the knowledge and understanding of foreign cultures and languages must form an integral part of an American student's basic education." In light of the demands by "both the irreversible process of globalization and the common humanity of our own diverse society," Dr.

Yu maintains that ASIANetwork, through its concerted efforts at building and strengthening Asian studies among liberal arts colleges, "can play a prodigious role in our total educational enterprise."

Needless to say, all members of the Council of Advisors have contributed immensely to the growth of ASIANetwork during the past ten years. As distinguished teachers, scholars and cultural ambassadors themselves, they have not only demonstrated a genuine interest and an abiding faith in the organization, but have also provided invaluable advice and support. Their vision and collective wisdom will continue to guide ASIANetwork through its future development

(Two other members of the Council of Advisors, Dr. Carol Gluck, George Sansom Professor of Japanese History at Columbia University, and Dr. Timothy Light, Professor of Comparative Religion and East and Middle Languages at Western Michigan University, are currently on professional leave. Their comments on Asian studies and the role of ASIANetwork will appear in the next issue of the *ASIANetwork Exchange*.)



**Plan to attend the
10th Annual
ASIANetwork
Conference
April 19-21
Hickory Ridge
Conference Center
Lisle, Illinois
The conference program
begins on
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