

From the Board Chair



Dear ASIANetwork members,

It gives me great pleasure to greet you at the start of this academic year and to sketch out a few of the opportunities and programming that 2004-05 holds in store for ASIANetwork.

A number of years ago, returning home after my first ASIANetwork meeting, I thought, "This is it—the most useful and enjoyable of all of the professional meetings I have ever attended." Since then, I haven't missed an annual meeting. When I ask myself why, several reasons come to mind. The conference is focused, with few distractions and scheduled so as to avoid the exigencies of having to cancel classes for several days in order to attend. It is constructive, with sessions based not only on scholarly content, but also with sessions on relevant pedagogy and programs that are of practical value for one's home institution.

As important as all of the formal aspects of the conference program, however, is the exceptional opportunity to meet and learn from colleagues who share a focus on undergraduate Asian studies at a liberal arts institution. Over meals, during coffee breaks, and in other informal settings, we share just what is working (and sometimes what is not working) on our own campuses, and that may be the most practical benefit of all.

Plans for next spring's annual meeting are currently in the beginning phases. You should already have received in the mail the call for panels for this meeting. As many of you know, our annual conference alternates between a meeting, like this past year's, at the Hickory Ridge Conference Center in Lisle, IL, and campus meeting locations in various parts of the country. Next year, April 21-24, 2005, the ASIANetwork annual meeting will be held in southern California, hosted by Whittier College, located in the hills that

ring Los Angeles. A first for next year's meeting will be the sharing of time, space, and programming with the annual meeting of the Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP) of the East-West Center and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, ASDP, which sponsors on-site programs and summer seminars and has a strong outreach that borders on our own. We anticipate that joining forces in this way will enrich both the program and the discussions that are such an invigorating part of our annual get-togethers. So, mark your calendars for April 21-24, 2005 and make plans to be there.

Special programs this year include the recently renewed, Freeman Foundation-funded Student-Faculty Fellows Program; the ongoing ASIANetwork Consultancy Program, this year directed by Paul Watt; and a new program, just funded by the Luce Foundation, that will bring a consultant to your campus to explore its holdings in Asian art. Our thanks go to both the Freeman Foundation and the Luce Foundation, for their generous support for the kinds of programming that have distinguished ASIANetwork from the start, and made it tick. Also upcoming, we hope, is the Pearl River Faculty Development Program, expected to run in summer 2005, with funding pending, at this writing. Executive Director Van Symons has more to say about these programs in this issue.

Finally, it is with some satisfaction that I note that our membership has climbed this year to a total of over 160 institutions. Deep appreciation for their efforts goes to Paul Kjellberg and Chia Ning of the Membership Committee, and a warm welcome for the coming year goes out to all new and renewing members.

Joan O'Mara