

## From the Executive Director

Teddy O. Amoloza

### *Headquarters Transition*

As this newsletter goes to press, we are getting ready for the 135-mile drive across Illinois to Augustana College in Rock Island to pick up the numerous boxes of ASIANetwork materials that include current documents and archived materials. Such a trek seems to be part of the rites of transition for the ASIANetwork headquarters. In 1999, Van Symons, my predecessor, made a similar journey to Colorado College where ASIANetwork, under the able leadership of Marianna McJimsey, was headquartered since its founding in 1992. Since 1999, the consortium has grown by more than 50% and has run a number of programs; I therefore hope that the boxes of files will fit in the rental van. I have been working closely with Van Symons since last spring to ensure a smooth transition of the headquarters, and although my term as Executive Director started after the business meeting at last April's conference in Whittier, California, it does not quite feel yet that ASIANetwork is headquartered at Illinois Wesleyan University. I am sure that when those files get here, the reality will sink in. The transition is initially occurring in stages: Van got me involved in conversations about all ASIANetwork business that will carry over after the spring; in the summer, I kept a number of e-mail conversations going about our different initiatives and attended to a number of administrative matters including the publication of this newsletter; as soon as the files arrive, things will go into full swing as the fall semester begins. Thanks to Van's meticulous planning, Mary Doonan, our financial controller, will continue to manage ASIANetwork finances at Augustana until the end of our fiscal year on August 31. In September, bookkeeping will move to Illinois Wesleyan, completing the transition. Allow me then to introduce the new Headquarters of ASIANetwork and the team of people who will support the operation.

Illinois Wesleyan University is located in Bloomington in central Illinois. Bloomington and its twin city, Normal, have a combined population of more than

110,000 and are centers for insurance, manufacturing and higher education. The twin cities provide a wealth of experiences and opportunities in the community. The university is located on a 76-acre residential campus and is home to approximately 2,100 students. We have a 4-4-1 academic calendar (two 15-week semesters followed by a 3-week May Term) that allows for numerous opportunities for travel, research, and internships. Every year, more than 200 students go abroad either through one-semester or yearlong study abroad programs or May Term travel courses. IWU has 160 full-time faculty members teaching in the liberal arts and in four professional schools; it has a student-faculty ratio of 12:1. The faculty provides comprehensive liberal arts education in the best sense of that tradition and works with an administration that is highly supportive of international education. Because of this strong commitment, there was no hesitation in supporting me to bring ASIANetwork to this campus, and for that I am very grateful to the university administration. I am also thankful to my supportive cadre of colleagues who readily accepted my invitation to help me run the consortium.

### *The Illinois Wesleyan ASIANetwork Team*

Ablly assisting me as I discharge my various administrative duties will be **Patra Noonan**, administrative assistant in the Division of Social Sciences. She has been at this university for 18 years, having worked at Purdue University for several years before then. She has assisted me in my numerous projects in my department (sociology), and gave me secretarial support throughout the seven years that I was director of the Freeman-funded Student Faculty Fellows program. Having established a solid working relationship with her, I did not think twice about asking her to be my administrative secretary when I accepted this position. Patra is a whiz at various computer software programs (e.g. word processing, spreadsheet, photo

editing, and desktop publishing) and an all-around trouble-shooter. She loves desktop publishing and has done the layout of two undergraduate journals in the past few years, *Res Publica* for our Political Science Department and *Constructing the Past* for our History Department. Given her publishing skills, the co-editors are fortunate that she has agreed to assist in the publishing of this newsletter.

The task of managing our finances falls on **Linda Tuttle**, CPA, assistant controller at Illinois Wesleyan. Linda joined the university in 2001 after spending six years as Chief Financial Officer at Marc Center, a local non-profit social service agency; prior to that she worked as a CPA at a public accounting firm. As assistant controller at IWU she supervises student accounts, is responsible for the operating funds of the university and helps prepare for the annual audit of the university. In September, she will inherit from Mary Doonan a well-organized financial management operation and will learn from her how to use the updated version of a computer software program designed to manage the finances of small nonprofit organizations like ASIANetwork. She will disburse our funds upon my instruction and will continue to provide monthly budget reports to the Executive Committee as well as prepare our accounting books for the annual financial review by an accounting firm. As I do not have any accounting training, I will rely heavily on Linda to help me maneuver the intricacies involved in managing the monetary transactions. (Oversight of our fund invested with Vanguard remains on the hands of the Board of Directors.)

The two co-editors of the *ASIANetwork Exchange* were very modest in introducing themselves, stating simply that they are "an Asian historian and a comparative educator" so I will say more about them. Both of them have been active members of the International Studies Program and I have had the privilege of working with them in various activities sponsored by the Asian Studies and the Development Studies teams. Their

contributions to deepening the international consciousness of the university have been invaluable. Needless to say, both are deeply committed to the study of Asia. Professor **Thomas Lutze**, our Asian historian, earned his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His research interests and publications focus on 20th century China, in particular on the social and political history of the Communist revolution and on the origins of the Cold War in Asia. He was among the first Americans to travel to China after the thaw in US China relations in the early 1970s and for several years afterward lectured widely on China as a member of the East Coast Steering Committee of the US-China People's Friendship Association. He is currently completing a volume reevaluating the failure of U.S. China policy in the late 1940s. When he joined the university in 1996 he brought with him a contagious enthusiasm about Asia that energized the members of the Asian Studies team. His addition to our faculty was critical in having the Asian studies curriculum approved by the university. As coordinator of the Asian Studies team, he initiated Asian-focused programming that solidified campus interest on Asia. The Chinese New Year celebration started out as a small event at the International House attended by about 50 people and has grown to a festive event with broad participation by faculty and students from China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam. This event is attended by over 300 guests who are treated to Chinese food and musical performances. The Asian Studies Colloquium features student and faculty presentations on their current research or most recent Asian experience. Every other year, he takes students to China on a May term travel course titled "Emperors and Revolutionaries: Chinese History through Travel" that is co-sponsored and hosted by the History Department of Peking University.

Professor **Irving Epstein**, whose Ph.D. is from the University of California Los Angeles, joined the department of Educational Studies in 1996. He has extensive international experience, having traveled, taught and lectured in over 20 countries; he spent two years in Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China studying Mandarin and doing his dissertation research. Through his advocacy, IWU joined the Scholars-at-

Risk Network, an international network of colleges and universities aimed at promoting academic freedom and defending human rights of scholars worldwide. (The network arranges short-term academic positions for international scholars who confront danger in their home countries because of their writing and research. Last year, IWU hosted its first Scholar-at-Risk visiting professor, Emmanuel Tatah Mentan from Cameroon.) He brings to his task as co-editor numerous editorial experiences; he has been serving on the Editorial Advisory Committee of *Chinese Education* since 1990 and was guest editor of its summer 1986 issue. He has been a member of the editorial board of the *Comparative Educational Review* since 1998 and was an associate editor from 1989 to 1998. He is currently serving as editor-in-chief of the *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Children's Issues Worldwide* due to be published in 2007. Both Tom and Irv are strong advocates and supporters of ASIANetwork and are committed to making the newsletter a useful resource for our members.

#### *The Status of the Consortium*

The consortium is in very solid standing as this transition occurs. Thanks to the membership committee's hard work, we ended last academic year with a total of 167 institutional members: 124 full, 34 associate, and 9 affiliate organizations. With careful financial management by Van Symons and Mary Doonan, we are looking at over \$240,000 in operating funds as of the end of June. This money includes the budget for the different programs we are currently administering. Before the management of finances moves to Illinois Wesleyan University, we anticipate transferring about \$20,000 of that money to our funds at Vanguard, adding to a total that is approximately \$780,000; this will bring us closer to the goal of a million-dollar "contingency fund" that would yield enough interest to tide over the consortium during the lean years. Without doubt, our membership and finances are in great shape. We are also administering four solid programs, the

ASIANetwork Initiatives, that address our core purpose: to prepare the succeeding generations of undergraduates for an interdependent world in which Asian societies play prominent roles. Two of these programs, Asian Art in the Undergraduate Curriculum and Student-Faculty Fellows, are already funded for the next two years, the Vietnam Academic Exchange is funded for next year, and we are hopeful that we will be able to run another Pearl River Delta Faculty Development Seminar next summer with funding from the Fulbright-Hays program. (See ASIANetwork Initiatives on pages 8-9). It will be a challenge to coordinate the operation of these different programs but I am confident that under the competent administration of their respective program directors, they will run smoothly. My task is to enable them to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

#### *What Lies Ahead*

This summer, I got a sense of what fulfilling the administrative responsibilities of the consortium entails. It involves numerous virtual and telephone conversations with different people, board members and all those involved in our various projects. And summer is supposedly when everything slows down! Toward the end of summer, we prepare the materials for the usual mass mailing that will go out in early September to the over 1,000 individuals at our member institutions. I will also have to prepare all the materials needed for the fall Board meeting in October and work with the Program Committee to organize the April 2006 conference. In November, I will travel with the Development Officers to New York City to meet with representatives of our current and potential benefactors to explore funding possibilities for the programs we have on the horizon. Somewhere in there, I have to learn the details of our finances and budget. Although these are routine operations, I will be undertaking them for the first time, and chances are I may falter along the way. When this happens, I hope you will be patient and let me know what else needs doing.

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While I look forward to mastering the routine tasks of running the head office and coordinating the administration of ongoing projects, I am also very excited about the initiatives that are already in different stages of conceptualization. This summer, the Board approved the conceptual framework for the book series project we are undertaking with the Association for Asian Studies. We plan to publish six to seven volumes under the AAS *Resources for Teaching about Asia* series. Rita Kipp, Dean of Sewanee: the University of the South and a founding board member of ASIANetwork is the editor-in-chief of the series. The first volume on Asian art will be the end product of the Asian Art in the Undergraduate Curriculum grant and is targeted to be in press in Fall 2008. A grant proposal to fund the second volume on Asian missionary archives is being developed by Martha Smalley (Yale University) and Rita Kipp; we will present the proposal to the United Board during our trip to New York. We have a commitment from EastBridge press to publish these two volumes. The topics for the next four or five volumes will be discussed and hopefully will be finalized and approved at the Board meeting in October. Possible Asia topics include: the

performing arts, the diaspora, cartography/geography, the media, and religious texts. We are hoping to craft one proposal for funding the rest of the volumes. This book series will definitely take more than a few years to complete and is dependent on the generosity of interested foundations that will find this book series invaluable in the study of Asia.

The other project that has taken off the ground is a joint program with the Hong Kong-America Center that focuses on religion, the state and international relations in contemporary Asia. The general goal is to organize collaborative research activities between American and Asian scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds. Several teams, each focusing on a different region in Asia and/or Asian religious tradition, will study the changing relations among religion, the state and society in the Asian regions. During the first summer, team leaders will meet for a planning meeting in Hong Kong. Other scholars and resource persons will be identified and collaborative work will be done throughout the academic year mostly over

the internet. Publishing a book based on the collaborative research is also part of the plan. This is a project that will take three years to complete but also depends on the receipt of funding. Hong Kong-America Center has approached the Luce Foundation, and, given our track record running grant-funded programs, our

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involvement will help strengthen the chances of our receiving funding of the proposal.

As I review the details of running the head office, coordinating the different on-going projects and anticipating those projects on the horizon, I cannot help but recall that same feeling of concern and trepidation that I felt when I accepted this position. It will be a daunting challenge fraught with many difficulties and seemingly insurmountable hurdles. But with the help of a truly hard-working Board of Directors, Development Officers and the various project directors, as well as the strong support of the membership, I do not see any reason why these things will not get done. I am here to do my very best to ensure that the vitality of our organization continues and I thank all of you for trusting me with this job.



*The ASIANetwork personnel at Illinois Wesleyan University. From left to right: Linda Tuttle, Irv Epstein, Teddy Amoloza, Tom Lutze and Patra Noonan.*



*Some members of the Board at the April board meeting in Whittier, CA.*