$1.3 Million Freeman Grant Renewed and other 2006-2007 Highlights

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Freeman Grant Renewed

It is quite thrilling to begin my summary of last year’s highlights with the announcement that for the fourth time, the Freeman Foundation gave us funding for the Student-Faculty Fellows program. This latest cycle will enable us to continue sending teams of students and faculty mentors to East and Southeast Asia in the summers of 2008, 2009 and 2010. While our proposal requested funding for 12 teams totaling 60 students and faculty mentors per year, it is possible that we will be able to award more grants using the unspent monies returned by grantees, as witnessed this year by the 14 teams and 73 researchers who traveled to Asia this summer. Once again, we are deeply grateful to the Freeman Foundation for continuing to support this program that to date has awarded 106 grants that have sent 429 students and faculty mentors from 68 institutions to Asia during the last ten years.

Annual Conference and Business Meeting

We hope to see as many if not more of you at the conference next spring that will be hosted by Trinity University.
At the Business Meeting last April, the proposal to increase membership dues was approved. Dues for Full Members will be $300 starting this academic year and $200 for Associate Members; this will entitle eight instead of six individuals per institution to receive paper and electronic mailings from ASIANetwork. We have not increased our membership dues for the last seven years but the costs of running the consortium continually increase. This year, even with this dues increase, our projected income of $177,250 and total projected expenses of $113,500 give us very little margin for unexpected expenses.

Strategic Plan, New Website and Other Board of Directors News

One of the initiatives that kept us very busy last year was our strategic planning. After a series of consultations and discussions with past board members and chairs, and with the Council of Advisors, the Strategic Planning Committee held a workshop during the deep of winter in Minnesota. A draft plan was revised throughout the spring semester and finally presented to the Board at the April meeting for approval. The Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board and presented to the membership at the Plenary Session on Sunday morning of the conference is reprinted on the back page of this newsletter. We welcome your inputs and suggestions as we now move to the implementation stage. Phyllis Larson is to be commended for her leadership in moving the strategic planning process forward and for bringing us to this point so quickly.

Another major undertaking was the complete redesign of our website. Board member Bob Eng of the University of Redlands, who chairs the Publicity and Website Committee, worked diligently and meticulously on this daunting task. He now reports that the ASIANetwork website has been re-designed, streamlined and re-organized for easier access to information on ASIANetwork news, programs, and services. In particular, navigational menus and aids on each page provide visitors with one-click access to the most significant and popular pages on the site. Visitors can open and download individual articles within an issue of the ASIANetwork Exchange instead of having to open the entire issue. Each individual project report of the Freeman-funded Student-Faculty Fellows Program has its own page. Photo galleries for past conferences back to 2001 are available. Please visit the website at www.asianetwork.org and send us your comments and suggestions about this new site. I am sure you will agree with me that Bob Eng deserves recognition for his excellent job.

In the Winter 2006 issue of the newsletter, we were able to publish information on only two nominees for the Board of Directors due to a last minute withdrawal. At the meeting last April, we presented the third Board nominee, Lisa N. Trivedi, who was subsequently elected to the Board. She is Associate Professor of History at Hamilton College where she teaches courses on South Asia and comparative Asian history. A cultural historian of politics and society, her interests include the history of women, comparative colonialism and nationalism, and the history of work. For more information on Professor Trivedi, please visit the website.

A Round of Applause and Thanks

In closing this report on the highlights of the past year I would again like to recognize all those who helped in the
smooth operation of the consortium. First
and foremost, thanks go to the members of
the Board for their continued dedication
and enthusiasm in executing the numerous
responsibilities assigned to them especially
the Strategic Planning Committee; to the
Past Chairs Advisory Council and to the
Council of Advisors for generously sharing
their time and giving us their wise counsel,
and to my Illinois Wesleyan ASIANetwork
team, who continue to assist me in the
myriad operations of the headquarters. The
consortium will not be running as
effectively without all your contributions.
Though space limitation does not allow me
to list names of people, I would like to
specifically thank deeply Phyllis Larson
and Patra Noonan for all their support this
past year and more importantly for stepping
up to the plate and taking the reins of the
April conference when I had to be away
for my mother’s funeral. Thanks very much
to all of you who pitched in at various
points during the conference but most
especially, thanks for your expression of
sympathy and support. It is very comforting
to be surrounded by such a caring
community of friends and colleagues!

We begin this year with a strong
membership roster: 138 full members, 24
associate members and 12 affiliate
organizations for a total of 174 members. I
look forward to another exciting and
energizing year as we continue to move
toward our vision for the consortium. To
all of you, Maraming Salamat at Mabuhay!

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**ASIANetwork Initiatives**

**Student-Faculty Fellows Program**

**funded by the Freeman Foundation**

Now in its tenth year, this grant enables individual faculty at liberal arts
colleges to take up to five students to East and Southeast Asia to conduct
undergraduate research activities. Faculty mentor and students apply as a
team. During the past nine years, 429 persons have participated in this pro-
gram. Funding is available for up to sixty persons (mentors and students
combined) to study in Asia during the summer of 2008. **Deadline for appli-
cation is December 1, 2007** with notification by January 30, 2008. For addi-
tional information contact Dr. Van J. Symons, Program Director, Augustana
College, 639 – 38th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201-2296, (vanjsymons@
augustana.edu, phone 309-794-7413).

The ASIANetwork Consultancy Program

The ASIANetwork Consultancy Program is a service to ASIANetwork member institutions seeking outside advice on ways to
strengthen the study of Asia on their campuses. Drawing from a pool of over thirty experienced consultants who have served in the
program from 1994 to the present, the ASIANetwork Consultancy Program can recommend a list of possible consultants to interested
institutions and help with the planning of the campus visit. ASIANetwork charges no fee for this service, although colleges who wish
to make use of it should plan on covering the travel expenses of the consultants selected and provide consultants with a reasonable
honorarium. For more information, please contact Professor Phyllis Larson, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057-1098,
(larsonph@stolaf.edu; phone 507-646-3744).

For additional details on these programs, visit our website at www.asianetwork.org.

**Exposing Incoming Students to Asian Studies** (continued from page 25)
happened anyway, with the current media
attention focusing upon the increasing
impact China has had on the American
economy. Yet we continue to believe that
with the emphasis of FYS upon discussion
and our attempt to incorporate an
experiential component to the China part
of the course, we have caught the attention
of students who might otherwise have paid
little attention to media hype. At the very
least, we will have 1500 students who feel
some connection to East Asia through
achieving a better understanding of Chinese
society and culture than when they began
college a year ago.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my appreciation to
the School for International Training in
Brattleboro, Vermont, and especially to Asian and
Pacific Studies Director, Linda Lewis, to on-site
program coordinator Lu Yuan, to our liaison with
Kuming TCM Hospital Wen Zheng Zhi, and to
the other teachers and my co-participants in the
program. I am grateful to the Freeman Foundation
for their support of the Access Asia faculty
development project at SIT. The opportunity to
turn this personally enriching learning experience
into a part of the First Year Seminar curriculum
was due to the support of Dean Linda Eisenmann
and the efforts of FYS Directors Lauren Bowen,
Robert Kolesar, and Sheri Young at John Carroll
University.

*This description of the JCU First Year Seminar
refers to the way the program was established
in 1996 and continues to operate through Fall,
2007. During the 2006-2007 academic year, this
program underwent review, and some
organizational changes have been
recommended for future years.