

WACA National Update

Monthly Newsletter of the World Affairs Council System

June 2006

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Welcome Barbara!
Jerry Leach Steps Down
Workshop in Washington
Educational Travel

Meet WACA's New President

Many of you need no introduction to WACA's new President. For over 23 years Barbara Propes has been involved in the world affairs council system, serving for the last 10 years as the Executive Director of the Anchorage council.

In addition to her non-profit experience, Barbara has over twenty years experience in the business world where she owned Scandinavian furniture stores. She has served as a staff member in the office of a former Alaska Governor Jay Hammond and was on the Washington, DC staff of Senator Ted Stevens. She holds degrees in Political Science and Accounting.

Since she arrived in Washington in May, Barbara has been actively planning the 2007 National Conference which will examine the Middle East. She has already visited councils in New York and Vermont and represents WACA on the Coalition for Citizen Diplomacy Steering Committee.

She looks forward to hearing from you. Reach her at 202-833-4557 or barbara@worldaffairscouncils.org.

Send-off for National President

Jerry Leach finished his ten and a half year tenure as national president today. He was feted at a testimonial dinner at the Army-Navy Club in Washington. Some 50 people attended from around the country and from overseas.

Chairman Jim Jones presided and testimonials were given by Sir Eldon Griffiths, Dr. John Rielly, Linda Wuest and a poem from Yvonne Shilling. Jerry was recognized for the turnaround he stimulated in the national association and the many flow-on effects that it had in councils around the country. He also was responsible for revitalizing the national conference and starting many new programs such as Academic WorldQuest, national program series, and adopting flagship programs, generating an enhanced reputation for the council system nationally.

The board has made Jerry a Patron of the world affairs council system, joining Sir Eldon and John Rielly in that role. It also gave him an engraved captain's chair and created a conference scholarship fund in his name.

Jerry plans to be at home over most of the coming year, writing a book and being a part of the arrival of a first grandchild. In future years, he and Marianne hope to be a part of an overseas university, probably in the Middle East, possibly in Egypt or Turkey or Kazakhstan. He can be reached at 703-476-6093 in Washington and by email at: jerry.leach@yahoo.com.

We all join in thanking him for his service and in wishing him well as he shifts gears into the next phase of his life.

National Teacher Workshop on Africa

Last week teachers from across the country attended our second teacher's workshop. This year our teachers met with representatives from the State Department, World Bank, Moroccan Embassy, and think tanks to gain a deeper understanding of the continent of Africa.

Special attention was paid to development issues with the teachers hearing from Raymond Baker on corruption, John Hatch of FINCA International on microfinance, and Prof. George Ayittey of the Free Africa Foundation. Teachers also learned more about the problems of child soldiers in Uganda from Rory Anderson of World Vision, the causes of the differing situations in Botswana and Zimbabwe from Steve Morrison of CSIS, and progress on alleviating AIDS, TB, and Malaria from Nicole Bates of the Global Council on Health.

Featuring Council Programs: Travel Programs for Students and Teachers

Summer trips abroad are a great way to encourage participation in council education programs. This year, a number of councils are participating in programs connecting students to other countries.

This year, the Hawaii council sent 20 students on a 15 day journey through Japan. The adventure was funded generously by the Freeman Foundation and includes visits to schools, factories, and a homestay. Previously, the council has taken students to South Korea and China. Contact Natasha Chappel at hs@paachhawaii.org for more information

For several years, Philadelphia has sponsored teacher and student trips to Japan and Turkey. This year they sent 12 teachers to Japan to learn about *Multicultural Japan*. While there, teachers will meet with different groups as well as even teach a couple of lessons. The trip to Turkey focuses on *Western Civilization* and will include many visits to archeological sites in western Turkey. The Japan trip is sponsored by the US-Japan Foundation and the Turkey Trip is sponsored by the Turkish American Friendship Society of the US. Teachers are chosen based on their participation in Philadelphia's Education Network and a competitive application process. Contact Margaret Lonzetta at 215-561-4700 or mlonzetta@wacphila.org for more information.

Active teachers in the Houston council's Educational Outreach program can travel abroad as International Travel Institute Fellows. In the past year the institute has traveled to Vietnam, Cambodia, Turkey, and most recently Russia. Fellowships include round trip airfare, hotel accommodations, and two meals per day. Contact Jennifer Giglotti-Labay at 713-316-4475 or edu@hwac.net for more information.

The Pittsburgh council partner's with the World Learning program *Experiment in International Living* to send 5 to 6 students each year to a different country. This year students will go to

Japan, Argentina, Chile, South Africa, and Thailand. While each country program is different, the main activities include language study and community projects. Students are chosen through a rigorous application process involving nomination by a teacher, essays, and an interview. The program is funded by local foundations, council funders, and board members and is open to all students in Western Pennsylvania. Contact Annie Prucey at 412-281-7028 or annie@worldaffairspittsburgh.org for more information.

During July, the Washington, DC council will send students chosen by the DC Public School System for 3 weeks in Costa Rica. The trip will consist of 2 weeks of language immersion and homestay with 1 week of travel. At the end of the trip, the students will give a presentation to their peers and follow up with a research paper. Contact Amanda Stamp at 202-293-1051 or astamp@worldaffairsdc.org for more information.

NewsNotes

- * The 2007 conference will be held January 31 to February 4 in Washington, DC at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. We will focus on opportunities and challenges in the Middle East. Look for more information soon.
- * Welcome to Mary Heslin who joins the council system as Executive Director of the New Hampshire council. Her predecessor, Lily Wahl-Tuco, has just joined the Foreign Service.
- * Congratulations to Buntzie Churchill who after four decades with the Philadelphia Council retires this month. She is replaced by Claudia McBride as President.

**Nothing is so admirable in politics as a short memory.
- John Kenneth Galbraith -**

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