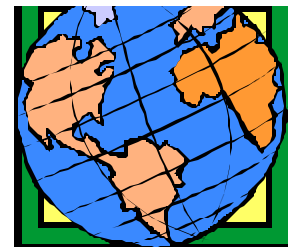


NEWSLETTER ... April 2004

Oklahoma City International Visitors Council

Editor – Kay Bickham



"Pleasure is very seldom found where it is sought. Our brightest blazes are commonly kindled by unexpected sparks"

–Samuel Johnson

NEXT IVC MEETING

THURSDAY,

April 1, 2004

11:30 – 1:00

International House

Oklahoma City University

Corner of N.W. 27 & Blackwelder

297-8973

International Marketing will be the topic for the April IVC meeting.

Jack G. West, a former National Football League participant will be the speaker. Thru his experiences in the NFL, Jack developed the, "Professional Players Career Path Program", which encourages NFL players to make strategic career plans for the transition from professional sports to other careers in Corporate America. The program continues to be used today by multiple Career Investment Organizations.

State Department Visitors in March and April

Feb 29 – Mar 3

"Aircraft Disaster Management" -- Hungary

March 24 – 27

Communications between Elected Officials and their Public - Mr. Francisco Etelvino Biondo – Brasilia DF, Brazil -- Director, Under Secretariat of Public Relations, Federal Senate

April 7 - 9

Ms. Patricia Alexandra Costa GASPAR, from Portugal – Coordinator, Portuguese National Service for Fire and Civil Protection.

Home hospitality requested. Please call 341-3169 if interested.

International Awareness Day at the State Capitol

Was a huge success. More than 400 high school and university students gathered to hear comments from the Governor and House and Senate leadership. Statistics show that close to 10,000 international students attend schools in Oklahoma while only around 900 Oklahomans attend classes abroad.

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

will host their Annual Founder's Day Dinner on Tuesday, April 20, 2004, at 6:30PM, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1800 NW 36th, in Okla. City, OK. A music program will be presented with piano playing and singing. This is a potluck dinner with drinks, plates and utensils provided. Bring your favorite dish and join us for an evening of fellowship and fun. For additional information please call Lillian Earwig at 405-525-3218.

World Neighbors' next Chief Executive Officer

Melanie Macdonald is the new President and CEO of World Neighbors effective April 1, 2004.

Macdonald has more than 26 years of experience in nonprofit management, both at the local and international level. Prior to establishing her own firm, Macdonald was executive director of CUSO, the Canadian, non-governmental version of the U.S. Peace Corps.

She also served as chief financial officer for the United Church of Canada in Toronto, where she coordinated a \$50 million budget, oversaw a staff of 95 and delivered services to 4,000 member congregations.

Macdonald earned a Bachelor of Social Work from McGill University and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Guelph. She has traveled throughout Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Caribbean, where she visited rural and developing communities.

Feedback from our visitors

From an Italian Senator's state department escort interpreter ...

Dr. Valditara had a very significant and instructive day. He visited the Northeast High School; a magnet school located in a completely different socio-cultural substrate then one previously seen in another city. He learned the concept of ROTC, which interested him

greatly, and toured the school facilities with Assistant Principle Cox. Later, the comprehensive visit of Francis Tuttle Career Technology Canter was eye opening for Dr. Valditara, whose idea of vocational schools was completely different than the one he was familiar with, back in Italy.

From a group of reporters from the Basque region of Spain.... (as reported by the escort-interpreter)

EXCELLENT

The half day spent at the Classen High School, School of Advanced Studies was truly excellent and beyond anything the visitors had expected. This public school is a model for what education should be at any level. In addition to having a very competitive International Baccalaureate program it is a Performing and Visual Arts High School of the highest order. Even though the building was old and in obvious need of an influx of resources, the teachers were qualified and obviously extremely committed.

We visited an advanced guitar class rehearsing a very original rendition of Tchaikovsky's Nut Cracker Suite (orchestrated by their teacher) and were moved by a 9th grade soprano's beautiful voice with amazingly sensitive intonation as she sang an Italian aria.

In addition we spent time with two Spanish classes. The visitors asked them their views on the Death Penalty, individual rights and freedoms and the balance for security in the face of terrorism as well as the Iraq War, pre and post and US troops. The thoughtful and well considered and informed responses surprised the visitors by their maturity. Their teacher had the insight to ask the students to in turn tell the visitors their background in order that they might truly see the diversity of a typical class in the US school system. There were students whose parents were from different states in the US, some with Native American ancestors. Others were new immigrants from Laos/Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka/Venezuela, the ex-Soviet Republic of Nagorno Karabach, there were African/Native American/Irish and Norwegian/Irish among other broad ethnic combinations of first generation Americans

News from NCIV

Wingspread Conference on Citizen Diplomacy

From March 24-26 the leaders of various nonprofit organizations with complementary international missions will gather at the Johnson Foundation Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin to focus on "Planning a Summit on Citizen Diplomacy." This meeting is an NCIV initiative, which has its roots in a concept paper developed after the 2002 Board Retreat in Dallas. Last summer, Tom Gittins, President of Gittins and Associates, took the concept paper and turned it into a proposal that the Johnson Foundation accepted. NCIV convened a Steering Committee that met since last summer to recruit participants and define an agenda. Led by Tom Gittins, the Steering Committee included: Malcolm Butler, Partners of the Americas; Akram Elias, Capital Communications Group, LLC; Tim Honey, Sister Cities International; Amb. Kenton Keith, Meridian International Center; Jerry Leach, World Af-

fairs Council of America; Mike McCarry, Alliance for Educational and Cultural Exchange; Sherry Mueller, National Council for International Visitors; Bill Reese, International Youth Foundation; Tom Stillitano, People to People International.

International opportunities for teachers available

Teacher Exchange Opportunities

The Fulbright Teacher and Administrator Exchange is currently seeking applications from U.S. school administrators at the elementary, middle, and high school levels to participate in a two-way, non-simultaneous exchange program with counterparts from Argentina. The deadline is May 31, 2004. For more information about this program please visit:

<http://www.fulbrightexchanges.org/View/ViewOtherOps.asp>

National Geographic Teacher Grants -- The National Geographic Society Education Foundation is offering grants to educators to facilitate their work in the classroom, school, district, and community that helps prepare children to embrace a diverse world, succeed in a global economy, and act as stewards of the planet's resources. This year, the program will place a special emphasis on "cultural connections." The foundation plans to make approximately \$100,000 available, in grants of up to \$5,000 each. Applications may be submitted by a single teacher or by a project team leader on behalf of a group. The app deadline is June 10. See the National Geographic Education Foundation for complete application guidelines and examples of projects funded in the past.

http://nationalgeographic.com/education/teacher_community/get_grant.html

Gilman International Scholarship -- The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship program is open for applications. This congressionally funded program is sponsored by the US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. It is administered by IIE through its office in Houston, Texas. The program awards grants of up to \$5,000 for US-citizen, undergraduate students to pursue study abroad opportunities worldwide. The Program aims to diversify and expand participation in international education by assisting those students who have been traditionally under-represented in US study abroad. The application deadline is April 15, 2004. For details and access to the online application and timeline, visit

<http://www.iie.org/gilman>

OKC – RIO Sister Cities

Rio de Janeiro and Oklahoma City officially became Sister Cities on February 17, 2004, during a signing ceremony at the City Palace ("Palácio da Cidade") in Rio de Janeiro. You can read it by going to the embassy website: <http://www.embaixada-americana.org.br/index.php?itemmenu=83&submenu=107&action=rio.php>