



IA Update

Newsletter of the International Assembly of NCSS

Volume 3, Issue 1

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHAIR CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**International Assembly of NCSS
Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland
Deadline May 1, 2004**

Dear Colleagues:

I am very pleased to share with you that the International Assembly in Chicago had the largest attendance of scholars, as well as the highest numbers of presenters, since its inception as a permanent arm of the National Council for the Social Studies. A total of 28 presentations on a wide range of topics informed attendees about the most current issues in national and international education. The universality of problems in curriculum and instruction—that educators shared across this planet and how much we have in common in our efforts to improve the human condition—never cease to amaze me. Particularly rewarding to see was the number of international scholars attending our roundtable sessions who were invited by some of our leading American scholars in democracy education.

We hope that each of you will continue to submit proposals for the forthcoming IA/NCSS Annual Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. All proposals are due May 1, 2004. Writers will receive notification of their acceptance by July 1. All presentations will take place on Friday, November 19. The call for proposals is available on the IA web site, <http://www.tandl.vt.edu/IA>. Proposals should be sent to:

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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Omiunota N. Ukpokodu, Ph.D.
Chair, International Assembly
National Council for the Social Studies
University of Missouri-Kansas City
Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Dear Colleagues:

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a restful and wonderful holiday season. I wish you all the best in 2004!

Bravo to 2003 Conference Participants!

First of all, let me thank those of you that graced our annual conference in Chicago last November. What a wonderful conference program we had with the many stimulating and enriching presentations. As I mentioned before in the Fall newsletter, the presentations are the highlights and central thrust of our conference program. We all benefit from the great ideas, perspectives, and pedagogies that are shared. We were very fortunate to have such a diverse and representative group from all corners of the globe. Thank you. Let me also encourage each one of you to reach out to colleagues and friends and bring them to the 2004 conference. One of our goals is to increase our membership.

In addition to thanking presenters for the intellectually stimulating presentations, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Mr. Bruce Harris for his engaging and heart-rending presentation based on his crusade to save the street children. Let me use this opportunity to congratulate him for his victory on his recent court case in Guatemala. We are never wrong when we speak the truth. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., put it well: "The arc of a moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice."

What's the IA Executive Committee Doing?

I am pleased to inform you that the IA Executive Committee has been working diligently to provide a bold and invigorating direction for the organization. At the Chicago conference, the committee held its executive meeting for about four hours. This meeting involved stepping back and reflecting on where we have been and where we should be going, but more importantly, what initiatives we must embrace. In particular, the executive committee discussed the importance of elevating IA's image within NCSS. To accomplish this, we discussed the possibility of collaborating with NCSS to continue the international conferences originally scheduled to be held every three years.

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International Assembly Keynote Speaker Bruce Harris Exemplifies “The Power of One”



It is estimated that there are 100 million street children worldwide of which 40 million are in Latin America. The children are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, torture, cruel and inhumane treatment, and murder, often by those who have the responsibility for their care, their own families and the police. In order to survive on the street without adequate food or shelter, the children turn to drugs that suppress their cold, hunger, and loneliness. Young children are also kidnapped into forced prostitution and may be taken to other countries (Costa Rica in particular where prostitution is legal). Babies are taken away from their mothers by trickery and thousands are adopted internationally.

Bruce Harris, Executive Director of Latin American Programs for Casa Alianza (Covenant House) and internationally respected child rights advocate, brings compassion and conviction to his work with street children in Latin America. Casa Alianza provides food, shelter, medical care, counseling, education, skill training, and other services to children who are abandoned or those who have left abusive home environments for life on the streets. As Mr. Harris speaks about the success of their programs, he focuses on the courage of the children who have succeeded in leaving the dangerous but addictive life of the streets. His hero is a 13-year-old boy, Nahaman Carmona Lopez, who was kicked to death by policemen in Guatemala in 1990.

“Mr. Harris personally led the campaign in Guatemala to bring a halt to the murder and torture of local street children. By the end of 2001, more than 420 judicial cases were initiated against police officers and others in Guatemala suspected of committing . . . offenses against local street kids. Much of the evidence that made the prosecutions possible was gathered by Mr. Harris and his team of outreach workers. He has represented Casa Alianza in the presentation of 10 accusations of human rights violations against the States of Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras before the InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights. In January 1999, he also [witnessed] before the InterAmerican Court of Human Rights in San Jose, Costa Rica in a case brought by Casa Alianza which led to the December 1999 ruling against the State of Guatemala, the first ever ruling by the Court for a case involving human rights abuses against children.” (Casa Alianza web site)

Mr. Harris and Casa Alianza have also challenged companies who produce the inhalants to which so many Latin American street children have become addicted: H. B. Fuller (no connection to the Fuller Brush Company), a multinational Fortune 500 Company headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, known for its social responsibility and for endowing the Business Ethics Chair at the University of Minnesota, and Henkel Chemical Company of Germany. H. B. Fuller is thought to have 70% of the Latin American market for their Resistol contact cement. It is so well known that the children who use it are called “Resistoleros” in countries like Honduras. There are an estimated 20 million homeless Latin American children using this toxic substance. They consume about a gallon a month of glue, or 20 million gallons a month! The inhalants cause many physical and psychological problems (e.g., hallucinations, pulmonary edema, kidney failure, and irreversible brain damage).

It would be possible to use an additive that would make the glue unpleasant to sniff, as the Testors Company in the U. S. did with airplane glue years ago. But H. B. Fuller has not responded ethically to the need for change. When national attention was drawn to the problems with the products of the H. B. Fuller and Henkel companies, they gave in to international pressure. Fuller stated that they would “discontinue sales of solvent adhesives wherever these products [are] known to be abused as inhalants.” Later Fuller called that “a poor choice of words.” Fuller chose not to stand behind its word and continued production and sales in four of six Latin American countries, withdrawing sales in countries where Casa Alianza has programs and, at the same time, touting themselves as an ethical company that puts community and staff before profits. Henkel, however, switched to a water rather than a solvent based glue.

Not only are there miserable conditions of life for street children, but there is “systematic, pro-active, state-sponsored ‘cleansing’ of street children often accompanied by torture,” and the buying and selling of children. International networks that steal and sell babies and young children for international adoption have become commonplace. Mothers are told that their babies are ill or are otherwise persuaded into giving them up, records are falsified by getting illiterate women to put their thumbprint on blank legal papers that become statements abdicating their rights to the child, and mothers are drugged and their babies stolen, so that a select few professionals get rich by speeding up the adoption process. Thousands of children are estimated to be involved in adoptions annually in Latin American countries. More than 50,000 women of unknown ages in the Dominican Republic are involved in the sex industry abroad. Guatemala is the fourth largest exporter of children worldwide where there is no law against the trafficking of babies. The industry was cited to gross \$40 million annually.

To learn more about these issues and how you can become involved in educating others in stopping the abuse of the children, see <http://www.casa-alianza.org>. Click on the British flag for the English language version. Click on How Can I Help? to order a curriculum guide that will be published this year.

Bruce Harris has received many national and international awards for his work with Casa Alianza, the Save the Children Federation, and other international organizations. One of these is the Conrad Hilton Humanitarian Prize of \$1 million — the largest humanitarian prize in the world. He has worked diligently to call attention to the irregular adoptions of children, the jailing of children with adults, and cases of torture. Casa Alianza has worked with Amnesty International, the World Organisation Against Torture and other individuals and human rights organizations worldwide to support children’s rights. Each of these battles is an extraordinary story of courage.

Photograph © Casa Alianza / Covenant House América Latin. Content drawn from the IA presentation and Casa Alianza web site.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



Omiunota Ukpokodu and Toni Fuss Kirkwood-Tucker, Chair and Vice-Chair of the International Assembly.



Josiah Tlou wins the Fasse Raffle. Congratulations, Josiah!



Roundtable sessions, sharing important ideas and gaining inspiration from others around the world.



NCSS President, Denee Mattioli, greets Julie Dyer of Deakin University, Australia, a first time IA attendee.



Mrs. Josiah Tlou, IA Board Member Rosemary Mulraney and her husband at the IA Reception.

Greetings from the Chair (con't. from page 1)

We thought that with our international character and connections, we could revive and facilitate the NCSS International Conferences. Talks have begun with the International Activities Committee to help realize this goal. Let me ask each one of you to help us in this endeavor. For NCSS to successfully host an international conference, it is imperative that it has a strong local support and work group. We need the help of those of you with strong local social studies organizations to help us. Please contact me or the members of the IA Executive Committee if you can help us.

A second goal of the executive committee is to revive the tradition of publishing the papers presented at the IA roundtable sessions. The executive board members-at-large have been asked to take on the responsibility for selecting and editing the papers for publication. We would like to begin with the 2004 conference papers. Please be prepared to submit quality papers for publication. Another priority is to develop a handbook that will consist of bylaws and guidelines for the work of IA officers. This will help with the transition for new officers as they take office.

IA & NCSS Need Your Help

NCSS has requested that we submit names for the following committees that still have openings: Academic Freedom, Ethics & Equity; Archives; Assessment; and Instruction. The appointments will begin July 2004 and will end June 2007. Please email me if you are interested. Thanks for volunteering.

What's Ahead?

We are excitedly looking forward to the 2004 NCSS Conference. Our Vice-Chair, Toni Kirkwood-Tucker, has already begun work on the conference plans. Please submit proposals and remember to encourage a colleague to do so. We look forward to seeing you in November. I salute you!

Vice-Chair, Newsletter Editor, and Members-at-Large Sought for the Executive Board

Would you like to become more involved in the work of the International Assembly? The executive board meets each year at the NCSS conference and directs the work of IA throughout the year. Terms of the Vice-Chair, Newsletter Editor, and Members-at-Large, will be completed this year. Members who are interested in these positions described below are encouraged to submit a statement of interest to Omiunota Ukpokodu, Chair, at ukpokodun@umkc.edu with a copy to Gloria Alter, Newsletter Editor, at galter9@comcast.net by September 1, 2004. The statement (50-75 words) should consist of a brief bio to introduce yourself and describe your vision for IA. Position statements of those running for offices on the IA Board will be printed in the fall newsletter.

Vice Chair

The primary role of the vice-chair is to conduct the annual program of the International Assembly for two consecutive years. This includes procurement of the speaker for the Annual Jan L. Tucker Memorial Lecture; timely announcement of proposals for the forthcoming annual meeting placed on the web; and selection (with members of the board or university colleagues) of proposals to be accepted for presentation at the roundtable sessions. A second role of the vice-chair is to make arrangements for the IA continental breakfast, refreshments, and annual reception. The vice-chair is to work in close cooperation with the IA Executive Board and the staff of NCSS, serving on the NCSS Annual Conference Planning Committee. The vice-chair attends the NCSS Conference Planning Meeting in March and attends the

Associated Groups Meeting at the NCSS annual meeting. After the successful completion of duties, the vice-chair will assume the role of chair for two consecutive years.

Newsletter Editor

The newsletter editor's duties include requesting submissions, doing the layout and editing of the newsletter electronically, obtaining and updating the current membership address/email address list, sharing this with IA and NCSS, and copying and sending out the newsletter twice a year on a regular schedule via email and standard mail as needed. The newsletter editor meets with the executive board at the annual meeting of NCSS and presents an annual report. The position is for a term of three years.

Members-at-Large

Members-at-large serve one-year terms on the executive board. They assist the conference program chair in identifying and securing the keynote speaker and in preparing the call for proposals. They may also review conference proposals and serve on the Conference Proceedings Publication Committee.

Did You Miss the Meeting?

Minutes of the International Assembly's General Meeting are posted on the IA web site. Some great plans are in the works. Check it out at <http://www.tandl.vt.edu/IA>.

Sharing Great Websites

Send your favorite web sites for global social studies to David Hicks, Web Master for IA at hicks@vt.edu. He will post them on the IA web site in the resource section, and soon we'll each have hundreds of new "favorites."

IA Executive Committee 2003-2004

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Dr. Vicki Green (Canada) (2004)
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