

AASSA NEWSLETTER

The Year in Review

As I approach the end of my first year at AASSA, I am amazed at not only how rapidly the year has passed but by how much has been accomplished this year. My tenure began with a survey of the membership that provided me the input needed to move forward in reshaping AASSA. The membership overall was pleased with the various services offered by AASSA but there was a perceived need for raising the bar in terms of the quality of those offerings. And that quest for quality, which I detail below, has been the focus of our work this year.

The Board and I began at the governance level by updating the association's constitution and developing a Board Policy Manual based on the Carver model. With roles clearly clarified, I set about the major task of incorporating two new staff members and instituting a new financial system and software to more accurately and efficiently track the substantial funds that flow in and out of our office annually. New banking arrangements were established with Merrill Lynch and Commerce Bank, a credit card facility was established whereby schools could pay for AASSA's services by credit card, all aspects of the "business" side of AASSA were investigated with the realization of substantial savings, and all legal and compliance matters for a business located in the US were reviewed and updated.

I have worked to build bridges and increase membership. AASSA now has 51 member schools in good standing with 2 new members joining us from July 2008: Colegio Albert Einstein in Quito and The School of the Nations in Brasilia. We have 25 affiliate members—with new affiliate members joining us from July--who have been very active as exhibitors and vendors. These members have generously offered \$ 7,700 in conference sponsorship this past year and over \$ 11,000 is already pledged for next year.

An area that received particular attention was our purchasing service. A new contract clearly specifying the workings of our service was developed and all fees and procedures were regularized. It is my aim to secure substantial discounts from major vendors on behalf of our member schools who order through us as another benefit of membership.

Communication—another major goal—was enhanced by designing a new and soon-to-be-launched AASSA website. Newsletters appeared not only on our website, but for the first time were emailed to heads and principals for distribution to their staff members. I also made an effort to keep in constant email contact with our member schools and to have our staff respond as quickly as possible to any and all requests. So that I could personally see the schools and meet with staff, I made visits to 20 of our member schools this year in Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Brazil and I look forward to visiting Colombia in October.

Our recruiting fair was very successful this year and next December's in Atlanta should be rather revolutionary since we will soon launch an online candidate and recruiter registration system akin to the other established recruiting agencies. Recruiters will be able to search the registered candidates and access their full dossiers prior to the

fair. Candidates will, likewise, be provided more complete information on our member schools.

Lastly, we held four successful conferences this year: a Business Managers' Conference in July in Miami featuring a facilitator from Rockhurst University on the topic of effective communication; a Governance Conference for Heads of school and board members in September in Miami featuring Pat Bassett of NAIS and Marc Frankel of Triangle Associates on educating students for the future; an Educators' Conference for administrators and teachers in Rio de Janeiro on the theme of Putting the Heart Back Into the Art of Teaching; and, for the first time, AASSA was an equally contributing partner with Tri Association and AdvancEd in organizing the Latin American Administrators' Conference held in Orlando in December. Unfortunately, our already-planned spring conference which was to be held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, was cancelled because of the political situation at the time.

A couple of major steps forward in conference planning were the development of a three-year conference plan so that members would know where and when future conferences would be held and the development of a conference planning guide which clearly delineates the responsibilities of a host school and of the AASSA office in co-organizing conferences.

While the year is not yet over, I feel it has been one marked by many successes and the laying of a very solid foundation for future progress. I would like to thank everyone for your support of our efforts and for the warm welcome I have received literally everywhere I have visited.

A Glimpse at Upcoming AASSA Conferences

Information on next year's conferences appears on our website: www.aassa.com

****Please register—if possible—before the end of this school year for the Business Managers' Conference and the Governance Conference since both deadlines fall during many schools' summer break.

Business Managers' and Administrative Assistants' Conference

The first two days of this year's conference will focus on dealing effectively with the rapid pace of change that is characterizing our professional and personal lives. Our facilitator, Ms. Cindy Kubica—contracted through Rockhurst University's Continuing Educational Center and a featured speaker of the National Seminars Program—will take participants through a program that will focus on understanding and effectively dealing with the physical and emotional stress that accompanies both personal and professional change. She will work with participants as leaders who must be able to effectively and strategically communicate with colleagues and customers so as to create a positive school culture and a work environment that harnesses the power of change. The third day of the conference will consist of workshops for business managers and administrative assistants. The absolute deadline for registration is July 14th!!!!

Governance Conference for Board Members and Heads of School

This year's conference, facilitated by Jim Ambrose and Paul Poore, will explore the principles of exemplary Board practice with the aim of improving governance and leadership within our schools. The NAIS International Trustee Handbook will be provided to each participant and serve as a point of departure in exploring the overarching roles and relationships, fiduciary and strategic responsibilities of a Board and provide participants with the tools and strategies to meet the challenge of effectively governing our schools.

The conference will strive for a balance of instruction and interaction with a focus on dialogue and engagement with colleagues, case studies, activities and role play. The conference structure will provide for differing sessions involving the whole group, heads of school, and board members.

Each participant will also receive a CD-ROM of materials with which to conduct their own Board orientation. Ideally, those heads and board members attending from each school will have the tools and materials to conduct their own on-going orientation and training sessions with their boards. The absolute deadline for registration is September 2nd.

Latin American Administrators' Conference

The Conference will take place in Atlanta from December 7-9 (immediately following the AASSA Recruiting Fair from December 5-7) and, thus far, will feature Bill and Ochan Powell and Debbie Welch. The conference will be designed around the theme of Leadership for Learning and is designed for both heads and principals. Prior to the close of this school year, requests for presenters will be announced and we hope we will receive strong support from our colleagues.

AASSA Educators' Conference in Bogota

The conference will be designed around the theme "Building a Community of Excellent Teachers, Students and Parents" and will be held on the following dates:

Pre-conference sessions for Administrators/Principals, College Counselors, Librarians and Teachers: March 18 & 19

Main conference: March 19 pm – 21

One of our main consultants has recently pulled out of the conference, so the program is back to being incomplete!

Pre-Conference for Administrators/Principals::

Day 1: Ventures for Excellence: “Developing Teachers in Pursuit of Excellence”

Day 2: TBA

Pre-Conference Strands for Teachers:

Strand I (March 18 and 19): Best Practices in Mathematics, Janis Heigl and Jim Short

Strand II (March 18 and 19): Pre-AP and AP Training (College Board)

Day 1: Pre AP: Topics for Vertical Teams in Science

Pre AP: Topics for Vertical Teams in World Languages

Day 2: Pre AP: Strategies in Science – Creating a Learner Centered Classroom

Pre AP: Strategies in World Languages and Cultures – Building Proficiency

Strand III: (March 19) Cultural Adaptation and Assimilation, Cate Brubaker

Strand IV: AERO Standards-Based Curriculum, Tom Oden and Naomi Woolsey

Day 1: Introduction to AERO (basic standards, mapping, unit design)

Day 2: AERO: New Developments (assessment of and for learning, MAP, E2E, unit review)

Pre-Conference Strand for Counselors: March 19th

COIS will hold a full-day institute on college counseling

Pre-Conference for Librarians: March 19th

Follett will hold a full-day institute on Follett software. The first half of the day will focus on old generation software, and the second half will focus on Destiny software.

Main Conference: March 19 pm – 21, 2009

Keynoters:

Dr. Vic Cotrell: Partnering for Excellence

Dr. Janie Pollock: Improving Student Learning, One Teacher at a Time

The conference will feature four main strands led by our hired consultants:

Strand I: Janie Pollock

Session Titles:

One Teacher at a Time: Planned Instruction

One Teacher at a Time: Grading and Record Keeping

Strand II: Ventures for Excellence: Dr. Vic Cotrell and Dr. Tom Morgan

Session Titles:

Power of Partnering: Teachers and Students

Power of Partnering: Teachers and Parents

Strand III: Dr. Cate Brubaker: Cultural Adaptation and Assimilation

Likely Sessions:

Implication/activities for teachers

Implications/activities for students

Implications/activities for parents

Strand IV: TBA

Teacher Workshop and Institutes:

Teacher and administrator-led workshops and institutes are an essential element of our conferences and we anticipate the need for 100+ such sessions. Interested presenters and facilitators will be requested to submit proposals in the coming weeks on our soon-to-be-launched new AASSA website.

Conference Costs:

Once the contract with the hotel in Bogota is signed, the cost of the pre-conference sessions and the event fee for the main conference will be announced.

Conference Registration:

Conference registration will commence on our website in the coming weeks and participants will book their hotel accommodations directly on the hotel's website. Stay tuned....

2009 Conferences and Beyond

The following are the venues and dates for future conferences:

Santiago, Chile Pre-conference: October 21-22, 2009

Main Conference: October 22-24, 2009

Campinas, Brazil Pre-Conference: October 20 & 21, 2010

Main Conference: October 21-23

Quito, Ecuador October 2011

Paul Poore

Executive Director

James "Jim" Morris



WE REMEMBER . . . James 'Jim' Morris passed away on April 8, 2008, after several years of courageous struggle against cancer. Jim was born in Etowah County, Alabama, on October 10, 1941. His family moved to Rome, Georgia, in 1947 where he graduated from Darlington Preparatory High School. He attended Auburn University and received his graduate degree from the University of Alabama studying with the legendary Paul G. Orr. Jim's first assignment overseas was in Bucaramanga, Colombia. He was a principal and head of school at the Escuela Americana, San Salvador, El Salvador, and at a private school near Vera Cruz, Mexico. He then was named Executive Director of the Association of American Schools in South America (AASSA) until his retirement in 2007.

During his almost 25 years of administration AASSA grew from a small limited association to a greatly expanded membership of dozens of schools. AASSA offered a variety of services to its members including purchasing, freight consolidation and forwarding, salary administration, an annual association meeting, and an annual recruiting fair to meet the special needs of Latin American schools. He served on AAIE's Executive Board for almost two decades.

He was an avid golfer, and a fervent fan of Auburn football and Atlanta Braves baseball. Jim was a member of St. Luke Methodist Church. He was preceded in death by his father, James Roy Morris. He is survived by his son, James W. Morris Jr., Northport NY; daughter Christina Morris, Baton Raton, LA, grandchildren Catherine, Jimmy, Kelly Morris, all of Northport, NY, mother Mary Jim Morris, Rome GA; and best friend Michele Morris, Boca Raton, FL.

Funeral services were held at the Jennings Funeral Home in Rome, GA, on Friday April 11. Cliff Strommen, former head in Sao Paulo, Santiago and Recife, and wife, Bette; Frank Anderson, former head in Valencia, Venezuela and currently with SACS-CASI and wife Sally; Ron Marino, AAIE treasurer; and Paul Poore, current Executive Director of AASSA, represented the international school community among the 170 people in attendance.

Frank Anderson and Ron Marino gave eulogies that represented the thoughts and feelings of everyone in the international community who knew and worked with Jim. Dr. Marino also extended condolences to the family and friends on behalf of the Department of State's Office of Overseas Schools in recognition and appreciation of the 30 years of service that Jim devoted to American schools abroad.

Memorials may be sent to: Heyman Hospice Care at Floyd, P.O.Box163, Rome GA 30162

The following are some expressions of condolences received:

It was very sad news we all received this morning. In my heart I believe that Jim was ready to find peace and it is our pray he has now. He has been a friend and colleague for 40 years since I was a young principal going to an IRC workshop in Barranquilla. We will all miss him greatly and recognize the contribution he made to the schools in all of Latin America and Caribbean during his years working in the region and through his building of AASSA.

May he rest in peace, Mary Virginia Sanchez, Executive Secretary, Association of American Schools of Central America, Colombia-Caribbean, and Mexico

Thank you for sharing this sad news. I only met him at two regional meetings during which he was pensive. He was so courageous. I admired that he continued to lead an active life when many would have given up. I am sure this extended his time with us. Linda Sills, East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools

Thanks for sharing the news. Though not unexpected, it is just so sadly final. Jim will be missed by so many. Another turn of the wheel.

Celebrate life! David Chojnacki, Executive Director, Near East South Asia Council of Overseas Schools

He was a good man and will be missed. May he rest in peace. Reina O'Hale, Executive Director, Mediterranean Association of International Schools Jim Morris was my mentor and friend, and he excelled in both roles. Jim hired me as a high school counselor at the Escuela Americana, El Salvador in 1974. As Director General of the school, Jim promoted me to Elementary Principal and mentored me along the way. With Jim's guidance and modeling, he groomed me to take his place when he left to pursue other opportunities with AASSA. I was successful because of Jim Morris. Although we weren't close in the last few years because we moved in different professional worlds, we managed to meet and play golf occasionally. I will cherish those memories, and I will miss him.

Tom Valesky, Professor and Program Leader, Educational Leadership, Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, FL (Dr. Valesky is former head of the American School of Sofia, Bulgaria.)The biggest impact for me was that Jim was simply a good friend – a working colleague, for sure, but also someone on whom I always knew I could rely when trouble arose, or if I needed little helps, or if I just was looking for someone to have a cold beer with and joke around. Having him as my friend made my life richer. I really DO believe that his last wish was to be left alone... I hate that he died that way but he is now at peace. Bill Johnston, Director, Academia Cotopaxi, Quito, Ecuador.

Uruguayan American School celebrates its first 50 years



Uruguayan American School Pre-K students, US Ambassador Frank E. Baxter and Inspector Muñiz of the Education Ministry place one of the 50 trees planted on the school's 50th anniversary.

By Martin Wells

On April 14th 2008 in a party held at its new campus in Montevideo and attended by US Ambassador, Mr. Frank E. Baxter, local education authorities, 260 students, parents and staff, the Uruguayan American School (UAS) celebrated its 50th anniversary. During the festivities Elementary students sang "Happy Birthday" in the 4 languages of the school: English, Spanish, Portuguese and French. Later all those present enjoyed two huge cakes which were decorated with the flags of Uruguay and USA. Speeches by US Ambassador Baxter, Inspector Muñiz of the Uruguayan Education Ministry, Director Tom Oden and Board Member John Hamilton focused on the school's rich cultural diversity and unique High School degree recognized by both the Uruguayan educational authorities and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Illustrating the very positive outlook for the school's next 50 years, Middle School students sang the Hairspray classic "You Can't Stop the Beat". To bring the party to a close, 50 trees were planted on the new school grounds, one for each year of UAS's existence.

Over the past 50 years, the Uruguayan American School has clearly developed into the international school in Uruguay. While English is the common language of students and staff, about 70% of its students are from countries outside of Uruguay. Walking through the school and seeing the broad cultural diversity of its students, it is evident why many educators and parents believe that studying at UAS is an excellent preparation for truly global lives and careers.

In Uruguay, UAS is the school of choice for students interested in continuing studies in US universities. Virtually all UAS graduates go on to university with more than 50% going to the US and 20% staying in Uruguay. According to UAS Director, Tom Oden, the excitement of a Golden Jubilee year comes at the perfect time for the school. “We are proud of the rich history of our first 50 years and excited about the possibilities of the next 50 years. Last year, our AP Spanish students had the best scores in the world. This year, we won our first SCAC championship in sports. Next year our students and community have set even more ambitious goals. We’re small enough to be a school where every student is truly known and nurtured, yet our reach and programming is big and getting bolder. UAS is a great place to be.”

For more information about the Uruguayan American School, please visit its website: www.uas.edu.uy

Cotopaxi Students Defy Gravity!



Students from Academia Cotopaxi in Quito, Ecuador became the first outside the US to participate in NASA’s “zero gravity” experiment. The high school student team traveled to NASA for an amazing science, math and technology experience where they flew their experiment on NASA’s Reduced Gravity Jet.

An Academia Cotopaxi team of seven students led by High School Teacher E.J. Lux was selected in the fall of 2007 to participate in the NASA Project in Houston in March 2008. Academia Cotopaxi, an American International School, is the first and only US school that has been selected by NASA to participate.

The student team studied the solubility of various substances on Earth vs. in microgravity (zero gravity). Starting work on October 2007, they designed, built and tested their experiment in preparation for the project. Three of the students, accompanied by three teachers and a parent, travelled to NASA’s Network of Educator Astronaut Teachers and the Reduced Gravity Flight Office at Johnson Space Center in Houston. There they flew their experiment on NASA’s Reduced Gravity Jet on March 13 and 14, 2008. Accompanying teachers flew in the aircraft while students performed ground-crew activities following the experience from Earth.

Results from their experiment will be available in late April from NASA. Activities like the above take learning to the highest levels of analytical reasoning and practice. We hope the contributions from our students will continue to extend and further our global society.

ACADEMIA COTOPAXI SCHOOL-TO-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP WITH CARSON CITY, NEVADA SCHOOLS

During the week of April 20-27, Academia Cotopaxi Superintendent Dr. Bill Johnston hosted his School to School Partner from Nevada for their visitation to Quito. This partnership is sponsored by Dr. William Scotti of the Office of Overseas schools and is similar to many such partnerships. But, a major difference is that the State of Nevada is also providing funds for the program and is the only state department of education to contribute funding for this type of program.

The visitors from Nevada included the Associate Superintendent of Carson City District Susan Keema, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Keith Rheault, and the ranking State Senator W.J. Raggio. Max Tudor of AASSA also attended as he assisted in the development of the partnership while he lived in Nevada.

COLEGIO ROOSEVELT THRIVES WITH A NEW POOL



The Roosevelt Swim Team makes a splash at the Pool Opening Ceremony!

Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the American School of Lima, began the second semester of their 2008-9 school year with the incorporation of the Aquatics Unit in the Physical Education curriculum. Students ranging from Early Childhood program through

Grade 10 are currently enjoying the exercise benefits of aquatics familiarization and swimming. Parent volunteers are encouraged to accompany their childrens' classes. In addition, the pool has helped Roosevelt Swim Team grow and improve, resulting in top placements at local interscholastic swimming championships. Inaugurated on December 19, 2007, the Roosevelt Pool is a 25-meter 6-lane indoor state-of-the-art facility made possible by the generous donations of individual Roosevelt families and a major donation by the Parents' Association.

The Spirit of a Tight-Knit Community **By: Regan Ashker – Colegio Bolívar, Cali, Colombia**

**“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress.
Working
together is success.” –Henry Ford**



During the 2007-2008 school term, the Spirit Committee helped to organize a high school and whole-school Spirit Week, various dress-up days, challenges, contests, multiple fundraisers, and class-building activities. For each spirit event, points are awarded to the grade level that demonstrates the most participation and effort. Spirit points are tallied throughout the year, until the grade level with the most points is revealed in May. The winning class receives a special whole group excursion on a school day as an award for demonstrating class bonding, teamwork, and a commitment to school spirit.

There is a small committee of students and teachers at the high school level working together to create ideas and plan spirit activities for the school. In this committee, the students offer valuable advice and energy in order to implement new events into the Bolivar high school community.

As a high school educator, it is very refreshing to see large groups of students working together to reach a common goal. During the last Sports Day, for example, the Grade 9 students became veritable cheerleaders as they screamed and chanted for their fellow classmates. The upper grades followed the youngest students' example and created cheers of their own. Each class built on the energy and excitement of another class. Fellow teachers remarked that the school spirit evident on this particular Sports Day was a sign of great things to come for future high school classes.

It is my hope that the spirit in the high school section continues to grow throughout the coming years. The inception of the Spirit Committee was based on the desire to allow students to participate in fun spirit events common to North American high schools. Although we have not yet held a pep rally (truly North American!), this year's Copa de Amistad was an example of school spirit at its finest. The students worked together to show their school spirit: they brought huge flags in white and blue, they painted their faces, and they cheered until their throats were hoarse. It was a great moment to see just how much spirit our upperclassmen can demonstrate when they are striving for a common goal. With this amount of participation and energy, the students will truly learn the meaning of the words "teamwork" and "success."

CLASSROOM WITHOUT WALLS



The International School of Curitiba is pleased to announce that it now has in place a "Classroom Without Walls" program that encompasses grades 6 through 12. Secondary School Principal, Paul Combs, recently reported that the newly implemented CWW program has given ISC students the opportunity to connect their classroom studies to the real world by going on out-of-school excursions to interesting places for the purpose of studying curriculum topics first hand. This year both the 6th and 12th grade levels traveled to a remote island on the coast of Brazil called Ilha Rasa where students camped,

hiked and taught local residents about the importance of wildlife conservation of the endangered Red Tailed Parrot .. Our seniors not only reinforced environmental awareness, but they also spoke to the Ilha Rasa community about various hygiene issues. The 7th grade studied the amazing rock formations at Guartela and Vila Velha. The 8th grade participated in electricity and environmental studies within the region around Morettes and the 9th grade travelled to Florianópolis, where they visited museums and other pertinent Brazilian historical sites. And for the first time our 10th and 11th graders went to a cultural trip to São Paulo. They visited Portuguese Language Museum, MASP Museum, and Ibirapuera Park, reinforcing Brazilian Literature Content and learning from real world context. The ISC administration and faculty are pleased that the main objectives of the CWW program have been met, which include enabling students to take responsibility for their own learning, as well as helping students discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, others, and the world around them through experiences in unfamiliar settings.

Astronaut Visits Colegio Franklin D. Roosevelt in Lima, Peru by Ginny Tori, Elementary SSL Teacher



Dr. Nicholas Patrick, a NASA astronaut and one of the seven crew members of the STS-116 Discovery that completed a 12-day mission in space in December 2006, came to school on April 10, to talk about space and his experience as an astronaut. Dr. Patrick is married to Colegio Roosevelt alumna, Ms. Rossana Palomino.

Students were enthralled as he talked about the road that led to his becoming an astronaut and his voyage on the Space Shuttle. They were able to see pictures and a video of Dr. Patrick in space. He showed students how astronauts experienced the lack of gravity in underwater training, and how they eat, sleep and even exercise in space.

Dr. Patrick carried a Peruvian flag with him on his mission into space. That flag has been given to the President of Peru. He also presented a framed collage of photos from his mission and a flag and patch that he took with him on the shuttle to Dr. Carol Kluznik, Colegio Roosevelt's Superintendent.

Three-Year Reading Initiative at Escola Americana De Campinas

The Escola Americana de Campinas in Campinas, Brazil, under the leadership of Steve Herrera, Headmaster, and Luci Garcia, Elementary School principal, has begun a three-year reading initiative. The goals of this initiative are to increase teacher knowledge about the science of learning to read, improve curriculum and assessment, and coordinate literacy activities pre-Kindergarten through high school. Increasing professional knowledge about the link between reading, spelling, and writing and the nature of reading problems or dyslexia will be the focus of this three-year project.

In October of 2006, Luci Garcia participated in the AASSA conference in Paraguay and attended sessions presented by Susan Lowell, M.A., B.C.E.T., a reading consultant for the international schools. At the 2006 AASSA conference, Ms. Garcia became interested in starting a long-range literacy project at her school. Ms. Garcia's goals of providing teacher training, consultation, program evaluation, and mentoring for remedial and learning support staff began with Susan Lowell's week-long visit in January of 2008. The Buffalo State, S.U.N.Y. course, 'Teaching Reading in the International School,' taught by Susan Lowell, began this three-year initiative. Also included in the first visit were consultations with the E.A.C.'s psychologist regarding assessment and student evaluation, meetings to discuss program and curriculum review, and collaborative long-range planning with school administrators and professionals. Future research-based curriculum training opportunities for remedial learning support staff were researched by Ms. Lowell and have been scheduled for the summer of 2008 and 2009. Faculty and staff at E.A.C. have continued the conversation with Susan Lowell by frequent email contact throughout the school year to support the work completed during and after the first visit.

Future work is planned for the second year of the initiative during the 2008-2009 school year, when middle and high school teachers will attend Susan Lowell's workshops in January of 2009 on reading, spelling, and writing as well as helping the older struggling reader. Consultation will continue with elementary and remedial support professionals. This will include collaboration and coaching of elementary school teachers in workshops and directly in the classrooms.

Submitted by Susan C. Lowell, M.A., B.C.E.T.
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