

## Role of UIUC Librarians at 2007 IFLA Congress

Barbara J. Ford, member of IFLA Governing Board and Academic and Research Libraries Section Standing Committee, presented poster session on Revitalizing African University Libraries, introduced speaker at plenary session

Nelly Gonzalez, attended the pre conference on East Asian Studies

Lisa Hinchliffe, presented paper for Newspapers Section on Digital News: Key to Global Literacy and Information Literacy Education: Using East Asia as the Focus. Co-authored with Dawn Schmitz and is grounded in the Global News VILLAGE project.

Shuyong Jiang, presented paper at satellite meeting on scholarly information on East Asia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century on Is Faster Better? An Observation of Chinese Vendor Records

Al Kagan, Free Access to Information and Free Expression Committee, FAIFE Program Chair for "Access to HIV/AIDS Information: A Life and Death Issue"

Jo Kibbee, presented paper on the intersection of virtual reference and document delivery at a satellite pre-conference from different countries.

Lynne Rudasill, Social Science Libraries Standing Committee

Susan Schnuer, Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Standing Committee, presented poster session on Revitalizing African University Libraries, moderated the Preservation and Advocacy Fair

Yoo-Seong Song, presented at the IFLA Satellite Pre Conference in Shanghai

Tom Teper, presented paper for Preservation and Conservation with Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning on Planning for the Unexpected: Developing Innovative Disaster Training Exercises for Library Personnel

Karen Wei, presented paper at satellite meeting on scholarly information on East Asia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century on Academic Publishing and Information Service to China Scholars in North America

Priscilla Yu, presented paper for Library History Section on the History of Modern Librarianship in East Asia

Jin Ha Lee (GSLIS), volunteered to be an assistant/interpreter for Dr. Alex Byrne, the IFLA president

Muzhgan Nazarova (GSLIS), participant

Sarah Park (GSLIS), Korea Study Abroad Program (see below for details)

Terry Weech (GSLIS), Education and Training Standing Committee

Steve Witt (Center for Global Studies), Social Science Libraries  
Standing Committee Chair

Some of papers are available online at [www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org) and  
[http://ohmyvocabulary.com/ifla/ifla\\_program.php](http://ohmyvocabulary.com/ifla/ifla_program.php)

### **Highlights of the 2007 IFLA Congress**

Daeje Chin, former Korean Minister of Information and Communication, presentation on Current Status of Korean ICT Industry as Well as New Growth Engines for Korean Economy; Governing Board and committee meetings; Cultural evening and Opening General Session. (Barbara)

There were many highlights for me, both in committee work and in the social and cultural events surrounding the conference. Meeting the individuals who presented papers at the Social Science/Government Libraries sessions was very gratifying. Their presentations were well thought out and well done. One doesn't normally get to meet people from Spain, Cuba, Canada, and China everyday, and it was a pleasure to sit down with these individuals and hear of the rich and meaningful work they are doing in librarianship. We noted in our committee meeting that the conference allows us to meet with people who have very positive attitudes about the profession and what they are engaged in doing. I also was very happy to get together with my colleagues from the committee. Although we frequently are in contact during the year, the face-to-face communication on shared issues of interest is always delightful. Tom Teper's presentation on emergency planning was also one of the highlights of the conference for me. I was sorry I couldn't get to presentations by others from UIUC because I know they were equally interesting and well-presented. The cultural events were superb! The drum performance during the cultural evening was absolutely stunning! The food was incredible everywhere I went and the conference venue was one of the better ones I have seen (especially with the shopping mall on the lowest level). (Lynne)

The pre-conference was great since it was relatively small (about 50 people), with participants from 15 countries, and focused on the convergence of collection development, reference, and interlibrary loan. It was very interesting getting perspectives on these issues. I also attended several programs at IFLA and again found the multiplicity of perspectives to be enlightening. The most interesting event I attended was an OCLC meeting on global virtual reference where we talked about the idea of multilingual service. (Jo)

I believe very strongly in international librarianship and was delighted to be invited to give a paper on "The History of Modern Librarianship in East Asia" at the Library History Section. It was exciting to meet other presenters from other parts of the globe and to hear their papers on Korea, Singapore, and Sri Lanka. The meeting was very well attended, with fruitful discussions and exchange of ideas afterwards. (Priscilla)

I attend IFLA every other year or so and find it mind-opening to interact with colleagues from around the world. Information literacy is an increasingly important international topic and UNESCO's attention and programs in this area make to more so. I hope to someday be nominated to serve in the Information Literacy Section. It is always the opportunity to meet and talk with librarians from around the world with a great diversity of perspectives, challenges, and interests. The opening plenary with the talks by the First Lady of Korea and Nobel Prize Winner/Past-President Kim Dae-Jong was also quite memorable. (Lisa)

The Satellite meeting in conjunction with WLIC Seoul, 2006, titled "Scholarly Information on East Asia in the 21st Century" was organized by the Council on East Asian Libraries (CEAL) of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS), and sponsored by: The IFLA Asia and Oceania Section (RSCAO), The Korean Library Association (KLA), The Korean Education and Research Information Service (KERIS), and Yonsei University where it was held. The meeting was well attended by more than 120 participants from Australia, China, Japan, Korea, and the US. (Karen)

I've attended the pre conference on East Asian Studies (the day before the opening day of IFLA). My objective was to contact librarians and see the state of the libraries and acquisition of materials dealing with Latin America and the Caribbean and East Asian countries. As you know, through the years this region has received many many immigrants, and there are large concentrations of Chinese in Cuba, Mexico, Peru; Japanese in Brazil/Bolivia and lately Koreans. As I expected, it was very informative. Highlights: I met librarians from all places as well as exhibitors (visited the exhibit room). However, I was a little disappointed, because it was not as comprehensive as the exhibits at ALA. (Nelly)

There were really three highlights: The experience of attending a conference with so many individuals from around the world that held a common purpose; talking with librarians from the American University of Cairo and the National Library in Norway after my presentation; having dinner with the national librarian of Denmark, his number two, the head of LC's Center for the Book and the Director of the Smithsonian's Libraries. (Tom)

As a long-time IFLA participant, it is always wonderful to be part of the temporary international community that results from an IFLA meeting. I enjoy meeting and working with my friends and colleagues, advocating issues, and getting fresh perspectives. (Al)

The phenomena IFLA brings to the region. There are 7 satellite meetings in the area, (4 in Seoul, 2 in China and 1 in Japan). The magnetism of IFLA also stimulates many other international exchange activities, for example, the 1st Leadership Forum for Chinese-American University Directors and Strategies and Practices in Digital Library Frontier in Beijing before the IFLA. The satellite meeting that I attended had attendees from China, Japan, Korea, Australia and US. A rare opportunity to connect, exchange and communicate with colleagues from many different countries. (Shuyong)

Meeting with international colleagues and learning new developments from each other or simply catching up with one another. I was reunited with 2 former Mortenson friends: one from Vietnam and the other from Japan. (Karen)

I always enjoy the opening session since I think that every country takes the opportunity to set the conference within the culture of the country. In Korea, the opening session allowed us to reflect on the past and to be introduced to the technology in Korea (theme for the conference), interwoven with some cultural acts. (Susan)

Due to my responsibilities, I was only able to attend a few sessions. Among the ones I attended, I would have to say the FAIFE discussion about the notorious Danish Cartoon. I was very much impressed by the delegates' civilized manner in arguing about such a sensitive issue. (Jin)

I was on the UW-Milwaukee (Prof. Wooseob Jeong) LIS Korea Study Abroad program which included IFLA. I am ethnically Korean, I am a third generation Korean American, and I was born in Korea. I travel frequently to Korea to visit my grandparents and have visited many museums and libraries, but being able to tour all the facilities and speak so extensively with the library/museum staff was an exceptional opportunity and experience. Moreover, when I attended IFLA, I ran into many of the same staff members, and that made IFLA more meaningful for me. I enjoyed learning more about the ways that Korea has contributed, and continues to contribute to libraries, museums, information etc. I'm really proud of Korea's accomplishments, especially with creating the first moveable metal type, and being so advanced in terms of digitization projects, etc. I also enjoyed the LIS education panels at Ewha (on Tuesday), as one of my interests is LIS education. The best part, however, was probably dancing with Alexander Byrne on Monday night. (Sarah)

### **What IFLA is about**

Participation expands one's ability to see broad and varied perspectives on issues and to share ideas with a wide range of librarians.

IFLA offers me the opportunity to expand my horizons and network with individuals who have shared interests and who are confronting similar professional questions. It is in many ways an educational experience as well as a social one. It provides the opportunity to explore other cultures, and causes me to think more deeply about the concept of globalization - how do 6 billion individuals live and work together on this small planet?

IFLA provides a global perspective of librarianship and the opportunity to compare and contrast the development of libraries around the world and to understand the cultural impact of each country and its influence upon library development.

Making connections with an awe-inspiring diversity of librarians engaged in the scholarly and human work of librarianship.

It should be a forum that could attract librarians from all over the world in all the disciplines and regions, and should be more accessible (i.e. the registration fee was very very high and almost impossible to pay. Considering that there are other associations that are directly related to one's line of work, that one must attend and pay dues there also IFLA's high fees restrict membership and participation for many professionals.

IFLA is an opportunity to network with librarians from throughout the world, learn about our differences, and learn about the common issues that we face within the profession. For example, I saw a very interesting presentation about developing preservation outreach activities to Maori communities in New Zealand. One would think that the commonality is lacking, but a lot of what was discussed was directly related to American publications about preservation outreach to public libraries. Similarly, a presentation by the conservator at the National Library in Taiwan struck me as interesting in that they are pretty much in the same boat that we were in five years ago when the Preservation and Conservation program was just starting.

At its best, IFLA is about sharing ideas and moving projects along that can benefit not only the immediate participants but also librarians who can not afford to attend meetings. I especially like getting African and other third world perspectives. At its worst, IFLA is still too much of a rich establishment club. The meetings are still dominated by librarians from the rich countries, so it is important to advocate for more poor country participation.

IFLA is about international connection and interaction, global perspective, collaboration, inspiration, opportunity, and sharing experience.

IFLA is my favorite conference because it offers me the opportunity to talk with colleagues who are involved in library professional development around the world. I hear more about the efforts of others, about successes and challenges. These conversations allow me to bring back ideas that might be successfully implemented at the Mortenson Center. It is also a thrill to talk with former Mortenson Associates since frequently they have been promoted into more senior positions within their organization or have become more involved with local professional associations. It is an informal way of checking on the impact of the Mortenson Center program and, at the same time, catching up with friends.

Although I have known about IFLA for many years and I recognize the important role of the organization, I must confess that I have not been able to associate myself strongly to the organization, and I believe this is true for many other doctoral students. Part of the reason was, at least for me, that I have not been able to attend the past congresses, thus I was unfamiliar with what IFLA is really about. Here, I am not referring to just the aims and core values the organization supports, but the kind of people involved and the interactions among them, the kinds of activities and their influences, and so on. This was my first time attending the congress, but I am very glad I did and I hope to be a part of IFLA from now on. I am glad that I had a chance to meet more practitioners in our field,

particularly from many different regions of the world and learn more about their issues and concerns.

IFLA is about learning what is going on in other parts of the world in terms of libraries and information. Although the American Libraries magazine has the "US and International" and world map news pages, IFLA is a dynamic opportunity to learn about LIS in other countries. We can dialogue directly with scholars and professionals from other countries. And of course, the cultural experience is phenomenal. Although I've been to Korea many times, it was the first time I attended a conference, saw such an amazing collection of cultural performances, and met so many professionals.

### **Why it is important to be involved**

As part of a large diverse library as librarians we need to be aware of and involved in global library issues. The impact that IFLA was able to have during the World Summit on the Information Society shows the power of organizing globally for libraries.

It is extremely important for us as professionals at one of the finest libraries in the U.S. to be actively involved in this organization. We have the opportunity to learn from other cultures, expand our professional horizons, and inform the debates that are currently being held in a variety of areas from e-collections to copyright to cooperation. If we are not at the table, we will have no impact on the agenda of many organizations that will dictate the way we do our work in the global future.

UIUC is the no.1 graduate library school in the U.S. and we are the largest public university library in the world. We should show the flag and interact with other libraries globally.

One fascinating experience is meeting people at the conference who know and revere the UIUC Library and have incredible respect and gratitude for all of the collections and services we offer. So many people told me about either visiting UIUC themselves or a colleague who had. Many had used our website. Our presence at the conference and interaction with our world-wide colleagues enhances all of our knowledge and connections and leads to many new opportunities as well. I have a stack of business cards, notes, etc. - many that come with ideas and invitations for international collaborations.

IFLA is important for us at UIUC because it helps to keep-up-to-date on International librarianship.

It's very easy to get wrapped up in "our" concerns, and I believe that it is important that we keep the needs of others in mind as well. I think that the same could be said about the involvement of members of the Library at UIUC. Our concerns are not the concerns of the world in all cases, and it is good to be reminded from time to time that we (meaning Western nations, libraries, etc...) are not at its center.

The movers and shakers of the library world meet at IFLA. Interacting at this level can be very effective in moving policies, guidelines,

projects, and programs that can have important results throughout the world.

A rare opportunity to connect, exchange and communicate with colleagues from many different countries.

It is always important that an institution of UIUC's stature be presented internationally. IFLA is the window to that involvement for libraries and librarians in the global community.

I think it provides a great opportunity to meet library and information professionals from all over the world, make partnerships, and learn from each other's experiences. Here at UIUC, we have one of the best library schools and the best libraries in the United States - I believe there is much that we can contribute to the field by sharing our experience.

UIUC, as one of the top ranked universities and LIS schools in the nation, must stay current with what's going on globally with LIS. IFLA is definitely one of the best ways to connect internationally, which will help our LIS school think more globally.

#### **Future IFLA Congresses**

IFLA 2007    Durban, South Africa  
IFLA 2008    Quebec City, Canada  
IFLA 2009    Milan, Italy

[www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org)

Compiled by Barbara J. Ford  
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