

WASLI North American Representative Report

Debra Russell

Greetings from WASLI! As you begin preparing for the 2009 RID National Conference, we hope you will make time to stop by the WASLI reception that is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, August 2. We are thrilled that Bill Moody will also be presenting at RID, which will provide all of us with a great overview of the development of WASLI and the importance of such international collaboration.

Recent Highlights

Latino America: For those of you interested in the work of the Latino American region, they are planning a conference, July 7 – 10, in Bogota, Columbia, and are welcoming participants from around the world. If you would like further information, please check the following Web sites: www.aniscol.org
www.fenascol.org.co

Conference Calls: I was able to hold a fall conference call with the presidents of AVLIC and RID where we were able to speak about issues facing both organizations and to share ideas across the borders.

Agreements with Deaf and Interpreter Associations: Congratulations to RID and AVLIC for moving forward to sign agreements with the Deaf associations. I look forward to being present when RID and NAD jointly sign this historic agreement. We also anticipate that the Mexican association will be able to send a representative to RID, and we will hold a face-to-face meeting of all three associations that comprise the North American region.

Sponsorship for the 2011 Conference: We are working closely with our colleagues in South Africa to ensure the conference can be held in Durban. Watch for information in the near future. To those of you who responded to my last RID column, please know that we appreciate your efforts to pay the *entire* costs of the delegates, and to *deal directly* with a sponsored delegate. As your regional representative, I am inviting you as individual members and state organizations to begin fundraising now to cover the *entire* costs of one delegate from a developing nation. Our region has the potential to sponsor more than 50 delegates, and by beginning now, each of us can raise the funds needed to address the needs of Latino America, Mexico and Africa.

Education Committee: One of the major tasks ahead of us is to form an international committee to develop education parameters that can work in countries that have little or no access to formal training. Thanks to those who have applied to be part of the committee; we are awaiting representatives from the other regions and then can finalize the committee.

Sponsoring Memberships: We really appreciate those of you whom have responded to our invitation to join WASLI as a sponsoring member - especially the response from RID chapters and the donations from the RID regions. We

have had a great response from Canada and the United States to the sponsoring membership campaign, which isn't over yet! For the cost of a few teas or coffees (\$50), you can join WASLI and support WASLI in its international work. Here is my challenge: I am out to recruit 10 memberships over the next 10 weeks, and I invite each of you to go out and recruit 10 members. Each of us have a wide sphere of influence so now is the time to use it! We have the chance to make a substantial contribution to developing the field at a global level. Visit www.wasli.org to purchase a sponsoring membership.

As well, it is possible to pay the membership fee for an interpreter or association from another region. Here is an example – covering the costs of membership for an interpreter from an African nation is often as little as \$10. It is a tremendous gift to the sponsored member and leads to significant opportunities for information exchange, as well as interpreter and Deaf community development. When you join, you can indicate a willingness to sponsor a member, and pay online. It is simple to do and makes a tangible difference in international development.

Conference Proceedings: The *2007 Conference Proceedings* is available for sale, and it is a great bargain given the richness of the international perspectives highlighted in it. Plans are underway to translate the abstracts into Spanish and International Sign. Purchase it online and know that your learning also contributes to the bottom line for WASLI.

Newsletter: We are still looking for a team who can provide Russian translation. Please contact me if you are able to volunteer to provide English-Russian translation. A large part of the WASLI world includes Russian speakers, and we want to address this need.

Next Board Meeting: Planning has begun to hold our next WASLI Board meeting of 2009. We are considering holding the meeting in the Latino America region.

If you have questions of WASLI's work and that of our region, please contact me. I know that many of you are interested in participating at the international level, and please know how much we appreciate your membership and donations, whether financial or in-kind. Each and every contribution is welcome and appreciated.

Wishing each of you well,

Debra Russell

EMAIL: russelldl@shaw.ca or northamerica@wasli.org