

USIA Initiatives for North American Trilateral Exchanges

By Marianne Craven

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Since 1992, The United States Information Agency, an independent federal agency whose mission includes promotion of mutual understanding through exchanges and cultural programs, has supported North American higher education cooperation among Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Activities have included funding for university linkages and Fulbright programs, establishment and coordination of an ongoing task force and working groups in the three countries, and creation of an Internet listserv on North American exchanges. Instructions for subscribing to the listserv are provided at the end of this article.

The initiative began with a conference at the Wingspread Center in Wisconsin, where a task force of distinguished citizens of the three countries was established to plan and develop trilateral activities. In September 1993, a second symposium was held in Vancouver, Canada, where working groups were established to study and develop projects in such areas as electronic information, student exchanges and training, faculty partnerships, enterprise and education, distance education, North American studies, and corporate and foundation activity. A third trilateral symposium is planned for Guadalajara, Mexico, April 23-30, 1996.

USIA has funded six university affiliations since 1993 to promote trilateral exchanges. These grants provide up to \$120,000 over a three-year period to a U.S. university; working with foreign counterparts, to support travel and per diem costs for faculty and staff exchanges. Eligible fields include the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Grant recipients to date are:

Fiscal Year 1995

- Georgetown University, the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, and Carleton University, Canada, for a project on the forces that drive environmental change in each country;

Fiscal Year 1994

- the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, and the University of Guelph, Canada for a project on the forces that drive environmental change in each country;

Fiscal Year 1993

- The University of Connecticut, the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, and the University of Calgary, for a project on public opinion of NAFTA;
- San Diego State University, Colegio de la Frontera Norte, and the University of Calgary, for a project on curriculum internationalization;
- the University of California at Santa Barbara, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and McGill University/University of Toronto/University of British Columbia, for a project on economic development and environmental protection; and
- Duke University, El Colegio de México, and McGill University, for a project to enrich teaching on the environment, labor, and culture in North America.

The listserv on North American exchanges, NACHE-net, is administered by the Institute of International Education for USIA. To subscribe, send message to:

MAJORDOMO@LISTSERV.IIE.ORG

with the words "subscribenache-net" (without quotes) in the body of the message (and no message in the subject line) followed by your e-mail address and name. The Nache-net coordinator at the Institute for International Education is Patricia Link (PLink@iie.org); fax: (212) 984-5393.

USIA now has a gopher on the Internet, which includes information about Fulbright and other exchange programs, grant awards, and all requests for proposals published by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The address is:

WWW.USIA.GOV/USIAHOME/EDUCATIO/HTML