

# “IE Generation” Leaders Reflect (I)

AIEA Interviews Highlight “Arc of Change” in International Education

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AIEA has sponsored a series of extended interviews led by Dr. Joan Gore (Foundation for International Education) with "senior" Senior International Education Administrators, including those who have served as past president of the Association. At or near retirement from SIO positions, several of the interviewees have also charted new, often unique, roles in the field following leadership at one or more US institutions.

Taken together, these IE veterans truly embody an entire generation of leadership, innovation and change in international education.

The interviews are available on the [AIEA Website](#).

What follows is a discussion of the main themes from these conversations. Readers are encouraged to view the complete interviews.

Interestingly, the four interviewees discussed here (Stephen Dunnett (Univ. of Buffalo), Arlene Jackson (AASCU), Earl Kellogg (Univ. of Illinois) and Bill Lacy (UC Davis)) came into international education as a professional field from somewhat non-traditional backgrounds. These included agricultural economics, rural sociology, English as a second language, and independent consulting – including Jackson's work with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Kellogg's with Winrock International. Their familiarity with and management of big, ambitious initiatives may well have helped drive their change agendas in international education.

The key elements of the "arc of change" in IE over the past 25 years are familiar by now. The interviewees named the following: Increased senior level coordination/advocacy for international initiatives on campus; increased visibility of international/global priorities in institutional mission/strategic planning; increased professionalization of IE as a field; striking growth in participation in student mobility (though still a very small percentage of US and global student enrollment); the creation of branch campuses abroad; an increased focus on internationalizing the curriculum, including STEM fields of study; broadening of faculty involvement in all aspects of globalization.

But challenges remain. Dunnett speaks of a dark side to the professionalization of the field. He sees a decline in volunteerism that used to provide critical support to international engagement. He also sees an increased commercialization of support services to campus international units and, indeed, to the potential exploitation of international students as a "cash cow" in an era of declining public support for higher education. Lacy notes the still limited success on many campuses to adequately prepare for the dramatic influx of international undergraduate students and to create truly integrated living/learning experiences for

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all. Kellogg sees the potential for the marginalization of the SIO when the campus president comes to think that he/she invented "this thing" (campus internationalization) and doesn't need the SIO's experience and guidance for its future development.

From years leading international initiatives at AASCU, Jackson notes that some of the most impressive initiatives in recent years have emanated from associations committed to the increased internationalization of their members. For example, AASCU institutions' mission to serve as a "steward of place" now means to integrate campus international initiatives with needs of the local community. Moreover, this process has helped institutions both establish sustainable linkages abroad but also create new exchanges to strengthen one-on-one education among administrators, staff and students.

Lacy reflected that the relatively modest staffing and budgets of IE units requires a focus on innovation and experimentation to match funds and build coalitions across campus and beyond. These too are persistent challenges for SIOs but also a source of great satisfaction - even joy! - when they are overcome and global learning is enhanced.

A final theme that the interviewees spoke to is the need for IE leaders to address "big ideas" well beyond the management of growth in the several traditional IE domains.

For example, Kellogg takes pride in inviting Amy Chua (Yale law professor and author of "World on Fire" (2003)) to speak to the AIEA annual conference in 2004. Chua offered a challenging interpretation of global relations in the post-9/11 era! encouraging future AIEA conferences to highlight these kinds of conversations. Likewise, Lacy points out that the Association of Pacific Rim Universities offers 12 diverse US campuses an opportunity to take on global problems such as climate change, public health and geophysical (earthquakes, tsunamis, etc.) issues on an ambitious regional basis with 33 global partners.

Note: A second installment will follow next month highlighting themes from interviews with JoAnn McCarthy, Gil Merckx, Susan Buck Sutton and Michael Woolf.

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