In this issue:
Our 2014 Annual Report, including our Year in Review Highlights.
Message from the Chair and President

All educators look to the future: nurturing young minds, after all, is an investment in the professionals of tomorrow. But university leaders also pay close attention to institutional needs — both short- and long-term — and consider ways to identify, train, and empower the individuals who can successfully address them. It takes commitment to invest time and human resources in meeting tomorrow’s challenges, but effective leadership development begins early and continues over the course of careers.

Leadership development is an especially rewarding part of our work because it engages us in issues of central importance to Asia’s higher education institutions. For example, earlier this year, our Asian University Leaders Program immersed 50 university administrators in a three-day strategic planning and resource development exercise. As each participant described his or her university and its goals for the future, we gained a more nuanced understanding of the competitive environment in which they operate and the strengths they want to build upon.

Leadership development also connects us to the many creative and ambitious individuals in our network. Their spirit and dedication translate the goals of student-centered learning and values-based education into concrete action. To spend a week with our 2012-2014 and 2014-2016 classes of United Board Fellows — as our program staff did in August — is to gain new appreciation for the deep pool of talent and interest in Asian universities. Our challenge is to secure the resources that will enable even more emerging leaders to similarly benefit from a cross-border and cross-disciplinary exchange of ideas and best practices.

We are pleased to introduce a new look for Horizons. Our goal in redesigning the newsletter is twofold: increasing the number of stories we share about the educators in our network and providing a more attractive showcase for their innovative work. This issue also includes our 2014 Annual Report, which gives us an opportunity to recognize, with deep gratitude, the contributions of our donors. Their generosity has made it possible to enrich the lives and careers of the people described in these pages and so many others throughout Asia.

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Dr. Sompan Wongdee
Fellow, Colleague, President

The United Board extends warm congratulations to Dr. Sompan Wongdee on being named the new President of Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Dr. Sompan was a United Board Fellow from 2006 to 2008 and, as Payap’s vice president for academic affairs, she participated in our 2013 Asian University Leaders Program.

Silliman University
Hands-on Learning at College of Nursing

Silliman University inaugurated its new Simulation Laboratory and Resource Center on September 25, opening a new chapter in educating students from its own College of Nursing as well as from other universities, allied health programs, and healthcare organizations in Visayas and Mindanao provinces. Silliman received support for this major project from the U.S. Agency for International Development’s American Schools and Hospitals Abroad Program (ASHA), through a grant to the United Board.

Since 1976, the United Board has administered nearly $15 million in ASHA grants on behalf of universities in its network.

First Anne E. Ofstedal Fellow

Dr. Mei Li, a 2014-2016 United Board Fellow, has been named the first Anne E. Ofstedal Fellow. Anne Ofstedal was a dedicated member of the United Board staff for 17 years, and her talents and dedication made the United Board Fellows Program flourish. This award enables Dr. Li to spend her first fellowship placement at International Christian University in Tokyo. Dr. Li directs the Master of Public Administration program at Yunnan University, where her team manages student recruitment, curriculum design, field trips, oral defense, and other program components. She also has conducted research on HIV/AIDS policies and administrative reforms in China.
Today, there is so much terrific scholarship produced in Asia.

The United Board is grateful to the Harvard-Yenching Institute (HYI) for the generous grant it makes in support of our programs each year. We look to each other for mutual support and learning as we pursue our shared goal of strengthening higher education in Asia.

— Nancy E. Chapman

“Over the span of the Harvard-Yenching Institute’s history, there has been a change in the terms of intellectual trade between Asia and the United States,” says Elizabeth Perry, director of the Institute and a former trustee of the United Board. Since its founding in 1928, HYI has remained true to its mission of advancing higher education in Asia, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. But in the subsequent decades — and through periods of political, intellectual, economic, and technological revolutions — HYI has reshaped its programs to better serve Asian scholars.

“In the 1930s and 1940s, most of our activities were at the Christian colleges in China and at Harvard in the United States,” Dr. Perry says. The institute broadened its geographic focus in the 1950s, but continued to employ an academic “missionary approach” as it brought Asian scholars to the Harvard University campus to learn “modern” methods of scholarship. “Today, there is so much terrific scholarship being produced in Asia,” she finds, as well as first-rate Asian universities offering advanced degrees in the humanities and social sciences.

Study on the Harvard campus remains a key component of HYI’s programming and, over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year, more than 50 Asian scholars will pursue their research interests or participate in specialized training programs at Harvard on HYI fellowships. Scholars find extraordinary resources at the Harvard-Yenching Library, particularly in the field of East Asian studies. They also use their time at HYI to share research findings, connect with other specialists, and sharpen their skills in writing for English-language publications. “One of our major goals is to provide a platform to bring better recognition in the United States for this Asian scholarship,” Dr. Perry says.

HYI now collaborates with more than 50 universities and research institutes and new opportunities are emerging for partnerships. A program for Southeast Asian faculty combines PhD study at either the National University of Singapore or Hong Kong University with a year and a half at Harvard for writing dissertations. China’s rise is catalyzing greater interest in Chinese studies in South and Southeast Asia, so HYI is working with the Institute for Chinese Studies in Delhi together with partner universities in China to develop a cadre of China specialists in India, a model it may extend to other countries.

A gift from the estate of Charles M. Hall led to the birth of the Harvard-Yenching Institute. Hall died in 1914, but his belief in the potential of higher education in Asia finds expression in the HYI’s dialogue with Asian scholars.
“This opportunity made all the difference in my life.”

As a young man, Wei Zhao was determined to go abroad for his graduate studies. But in 1980s China, the opportunities were few, and the financial and administrative barriers were high. “At the time,” Dr. Zhao recalled in an interview, “there was no awareness of GRE and TOEFL in China and no means to take those tests. So how could a Chinese student even apply to an American graduate program?” Dr. Zhao considers himself fortunate that Barbara Burn, then director of international programs at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, persuaded her university’s graduate program to accept him, and that the United Board provided scholarship support. “Without Barbara Burn and the United Board, the door would not be opened,” he said. “This opportunity made all the difference in my life.”

After earning his PhD in computer science, Dr. Zhao embarked on an academic career at several distinguished institutions, including the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Texas A&M University, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. In 2008, however, he decided to accept a new challenge: to become rector of the University of Macau and, as he says, “make a difference” in the lives of its 8,600 students. He and his colleagues launched ambitious plans to build a new campus — which became fully operational in August 2014 — and to reform undergraduate education.

“We want a more holistic approach to education,” Dr. Zhao explains, and so the university’s 4-in-1 approach combines coursework for a student’s major, general education courses, research and internships, and peer education. The University of Macau is the first university in the world to require all four of these components for graduation, he says, underscoring the importance it attaches to learning both inside and outside the classroom. “Higher education is a process for students to discover themselves and to learn to fit into society,” Dr. Zhao believes, and through the 4-in-1 approach, he wants to help young adults open doors to their future.

Dr. Zhao’s University of Macau students may find it hard to imagine the obstacles he faced as a student and instructor at Shaanxi Normal University in the late 1970s and early 1980s. “But my story tells them that no matter who you are, if you work hard, opportunity will come,” he said.

Fellows Seminar in Macau

The University of Macau graciously hosted the August 4-8 seminar for the United Board Fellows Program on its new campus, providing a welcoming environment for the 2012-2014 and 2014-2016 Fellows to delve into the topic of “Student-centered Education in Asian Universities.”

United Board Fellows tour the new campus.
China is now part of an international drive to safeguard intangible cultural heritage — the wealth of cultural knowledge and skills transmitted from one generation to the next — and this opens exciting new possibilities for educators and researchers in ethnography, history, religious studies, and other fields. “This has completely changed the environment for fieldwork,” claims John Lagerwey, a professor of Chinese studies at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. So, with a United Board grant to CUHK, Dr. Lagerwey and his colleague Tam Wai Lun, a professor in the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, designed a program to introduce Chinese graduate students to the rigor and rewards of fieldwork.

During preparatory lectures, the tight-knit team of professors from CUHK, Fujian Normal University, and several other Chinese universities reminded the 17 graduate students that, for the field researcher, “everyone in local society is a teacher.” So, over the course of three and a half days, three teams of professors and students listened to people from communities in Fujian province’s Zherong, Fu’an, and Xiapu counties as they shared their local religious practices and traditions.

“Your first job is to describe what you observe.” That’s the charge Dr. Lagerwey gave the students in his group. During observations and interviews in 13 sites in Zherong county, they heard residents describe how the traditional goddess Maxian is carried from one village to another; how, in times of drought, people pray to her for rain; and how village alliances have grown up around shared worship of local gods.

The professors who led the student teams hope the fieldwork experience will catalyze ideas for thesis and dissertation topics among the participants. They also hope the experience ignites a new approach to learning. “People who engage in fieldwork have a passion,” Dr. Lagerwey says, a desire “to see how people really live and to understand the ways in which they take charge of their own society, culture, and destiny.” It’s a humanistic approach to learning, quite different from what students may have experienced in their universities, but one that can open new doors of respect and appreciation for China’s cultural and religious heritage.
Community service has been the underlying theme of our lives.

“Community service has certainly been the underlying theme of both our lives,” said Marilee Scaff, an educator, community activist, and United Board supporter. She and her late husband, Alvin, went to the Philippines as Congregational missionaries in 1940 after finishing degrees at Chicago Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago. In the decades that followed, the Scaffs found ways to help young scholars — in America, Asia, and Africa — connect their academic interests to the needs of surrounding communities.

“The growing involvement of colleges and universities in experiential learning — community service, internships, international exchanges — makes a remarkable contribution to the education of young people. Putting ideas into use helps scholars correct and refine theoretical knowledge,” Dr. Scaff said in a recent interview. “That is so ingrained in me that it is hard to say where it came from.” That belief guided her, after earning a PhD in educational psychology and counseling, in her work with teachers, social workers, counselors, probation officers, and judges on issues related to children and adolescents. It continues to guide her, at age 99, as she advocates for protection of water and environmental resources in her California community. “Learning by doing is a sound principle for both growing children and thoughtful adults.”

Service-learning develops values as well as knowledge and practical skills. “Service-learning is increasingly recognized for its importance in the education of college and university students and faculty,” Dr. Scaff said. “Every student needs this experience; every college or university should encourage it. If some of this time can be spent in a country other than one’s own homeland, it is even better.”

Building understanding across borders is an interest Dr. Scaff shares with the United Board. “One of the really significant contributions of the United Board’s work in Asia is its sponsorship of faculty exchanges among Asian nations, so that many colleges are contributing to building a new generation of scholars who know and understand their neighbors and are learning to work together for the good of all. As far as I know, the United Board is the only group that focuses so much of its program and its budget on these exchanges. That is a major reason I think it is the most worthy of all educational efforts for my financial support.”

Join the United Board Legacy Society

Since its founding, the United Board has been blessed with loyal supporters who generously entrusted it with the financial resources that eventually grew into our endowment. That endowment and the ongoing donations of people like you — friends of the United Board and alumni and friends of the institutions with which we work in Asia — have provided crucial program support to institutions throughout Asia for nearly a century.

The United Board legacy giving program has been a longstanding labor of love, beginning with the William P. Fenn Society. This year marks the launch of the United Board Legacy Society, which honors those who have made a future planned gift commitment to the United Board. We hope you, too, will consider including the United Board in your estate plans. Legacy gifts are a significant source of support for our work, and more importantly, a very special way of supporting the United Board’s mission and partners throughout Asia.

To discuss joining the United Board Legacy Society, please contact us at: 1.212.870.2612 or by email: legacysoociety@unitedboard.org
A Creative Learning Environment
Jema Pamintuan

“
To help establish new, meaningful networks.
”

The late Elisabeth Luce Moore was a long-serving United Board Trustee and champion of developing leadership in women. We are pleased to recognize Dr. Jema Pamintuan, assistant professor in the Filipino Department at Ateneo de Manila University, as the 2012-2014 Elisabeth Luce Moore United Board Fellow. This award is based on her commitment to learning new approaches to leadership and teaching, her willingness to make constructive changes at her institution, and her potential for academic leadership.

Jema Pamintuan returned to Ateneo de Manila University in June 2014, full of fresh energy and ideas from her experiences as a 2012-2014 United Board Fellow. After her placement at Georgetown University, she wrote that she was eager “to further push myself in helping our department design new courses and teaching tools, and foster a creative and critically engaging learning environment within and outside the classroom.” Now Ateneo de Manila has offered her an opportunity to put those goals into practice: it named her executive director of the Ateneo Library of Women’s Writings (ALiWW), an archival facility that promotes writing by and about Filipino women among contemporary readers.

Dr. Pamintuan feels she is still a leader-in-training, so she relies on questions to guide her vision for the library. “What are the materials that ALiWW provides?” she asks. “How can we come up with projects that will make these materials accessible, useful, and meaningful to the academic community, as well as the outside community? Who are the marginalized women’s voices that our library might need to attend to, and how can we amplify those voices?”

Her experience as a United Board Fellow provides some answers. Dr. Pamintuan enjoyed attending the Georgetown Friday Music Concert Series, and she learned from its director how the concert music was integrated into students’ classes and research. So she reached out in similar fashion to Ateneo departments to publicize an ALiWW exhibit honoring former Filipino comfort women, which featured the diaries, sketches, and artwork of these women. Students from the English, Filipino, history, political science and other departments visited the exhibit and took the information they gleaned back to their classrooms.

On other occasions, a mini-exhibit about the martial law period in the Philippines and a Visayan cultural performance created pathways from ALiWW to the classroom and community. These types of events, like those Dr. Pamintuan observed during fellowship placements at Georgetown University and Tunghai University, open windows to understand a country or culture and to “help establish new, meaningful networks that will prove helpful in one’s own work and research.”

Jema Pamintuan, far left, welcomes former Filipino comfort women to an ALiWW exhibit.
United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia

2014 Annual Report

This year, we include the United Board’s 2014 Annual Report within the pages of our newsletter, Horizons. As we match Horizons’ stories of individual educators with the Annual Report’s accounting of our varied programs and recognition of our donors, we hope you gain some sense of the depth and breadth and impact of our network. These colleagues and friends share our mission of supporting a Christian presence in Asian higher education, which we implement through strengthening the ability of academic leaders and faculty to address the varied academic, professional, personal, and spiritual needs of their students.

Our work has long promoted the values and practices of whole person education in the liberal arts tradition, preparing students for fullness of life in their families, communities and societies. Whole person education is the core of all our program areas, as the diagram below illustrates. Through these programs, the United Board seeks to respond in the most effective, sensitive, and creative ways to the diverse needs and opportunities facing our colleagues in higher education throughout the Asian region, in 2014 and in the years to come.

Financial Review

For the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2014, the United Board had total support and revenue of $8,256,727; total expenses of $7,550,537; and total net assets of $132,907,953. Support and revenue is comprised of contributions (both restricted and unrestricted) from individuals; foundation grants; U.S. government grants; and endowment income.

The United Board’s statement of Financial Activities and Changes in Net Assets Information and Form 990 can be found on the Giving section of our website (www.unitedboard.org).

United Board Program Areas

- Supporting New Leaders for Higher Education
- Service-Learning and Campus-Community Partnerships
- Faculty Development for Enhanced Teaching, Learning, and Research
- Special Initiatives
- Culture and Religion in Asia
- Whole Person Education
Investing in Innovation

The United Board made
53 grants to 34 institutions totaling $700,000

Leadership Development

50 rising university leaders joined two classes of United Board Fellows.

United Board Fellows Program
Class of 2012-2014 and Class of 2014-2016

Clear Goals and Strategies

50 administrators from 28 universities refined strategic planning skills.

Asian University Leaders Program:
Strategic Planning and Resource Development Workshop
February 26-28, 2014

Research and Reflection

Cross-disciplinary exchange for
14 scholars from 9 countries and regions of Asia.

Institute for Advanced Study of Asian Cultures and Theologies
June 2-July 6, 2014

Strengthening Faculty

Scholarships for 52 young faculty members pursuing Master's degrees and PhDs at Asian universities...

United Board Faculty Scholarship Program

and for 63 faculty members in intensive English language programs in Asia.
Higher Education Reform

150 educators from

Asian University Leaders Program:
Higher Education Leadership Program- Myanmar
February 4-7, 2014

40 Myanmar universities embraced new approaches to higher education.

Service-Learning

220 faculty and students from

Learning from Yolanda
June 28-July 11, 2014

9 Asian countries and regions experienced the resilience of communities struck by disaster.

Our Network Expands

Cambodia
China
East Timor
Hong Kong
India
Indonesia
Japan
Korea
Macau
Myanmar
Philippines
Taiwan
Thailand
Vietnam

The United Board now works in 14 countries and regions of Asia, as Macau joined our network.
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