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Engagement, Collaboration, and Commitment to Mission through Research

Jack McClure,² Rani Roy,³ and Patricia Kayser Vargas Mangan⁴

Sunday, September 25th through Tuesday, September 27th the fifth annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research was held on the Twin Cities campus of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, and was co-sponsored by the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN) & Saint Mary's Institute for Lasallian Studies. There were 130 participants from seven countries representing eighteen universities and nine other ministries present for the event. Among the welcome additions to the processes this year and important to acknowledge were simultaneous English/Spanish translation. The research agenda continues to grow in depth and scope. Much of the work is grounded in the objectives established by the International Association of Lasallian Universities⁵ to further the mission through research into educational innovation, work on the environment and sustainability, as well as improvements to health and nutrition. Participants present were also there in response to the invitation of the Institute's Lasallian Research and Resource Services in Rome. Additional opportunities to expand collaboration and research toward fulfillment of the mission of RELAN were also an important part of the desired action planning. Brother William Mann's opening communication to participants expressed hope for the forging of "strong and solid research partnerships between and among the people, institutions, and Districts represented."⁶

The opening keynote from Dr. Todd Reinhart, *HIV/AIDS Research: A Lasallian Response*, focused on his years of research on the pathogenesis of HIV-1. He focused on how chemokines play multiple roles in HIV-1 infection and AIDS through nonhuman primate studies of simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV). He has mentored over 25 masters, doctoral, and postdoctoral students, and through his many years of research Dr. Reinhart raised the challenges of finding the Achilles' heel of the virus. This keynote also proposed the use of plant-derived polyphenols, which might pharmacologically inhibit inflammatory chemokines and their receptors, as a potential way to better understand how these chemokine inhibitors can be used in the treatment of infectious diseases and other ailments such as cancer.

The Monday morning keynote address *Lasallian Youth and Family Ministries: Lasallian and Trauma Informed Care*⁷, was co-presented by Drs. Judy Van Wyk and Camela Steinke. Dr. Van Wyk described her work with Dr. Lawrence Grebstein focused on turning the tides of male juvenile delinquency. This work included a significant longitudinal study of how adolescents' experiences of victimization and crime perpetration are linked. The Ocean Tides program (a Lasallian residential program) was part of the study. Dr. Steinke went on to describe other work with trauma informed care they have been developing. They reported on their work with childhood trauma's far reaching impacts. The new poverty represented by this early trauma was investigated, grounding the work in Lasallian concepts. The nature of healing versus punishment was proposed as part of the model.

In the third keynote, Dr. Melchor Victor Frias IV, MD reported on an important study of pediatric issues and changing research methodology. *Challenges and Concerns in Conducting a Phase I Clinical Trial on a New Drug for Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB) among Children (a first in the world for MDR-TB)*⁸. He described his work with multi-drug resistant tuberculosis. The need for valid information about children has led to a change to accepted practices which has allowed conducting stage one clinical trials using children. The courage and commitment of the children to improving the lives of others was described as remarkable. Progress with new drug therapies seems likely, though Dr. Frias points out this is just the first stage in testing. Another important aspect of the work was the new research method which has included in depth qualitative work about the experiences of the patients and their families.

Attendees had the opportunity to hear from researchers in many areas in the break-out sessions. As might be expected, a fair amount of attention was devoted to issues related to educational practice. There were many important projects generally situated within the *Innovations in Education*⁹ track but being applied across an impressive array of contexts. Lugo-Cruz and Aguilar-Cervantes¹⁰ reported upon critical work targeting the improvement, success, and learning of indigenous communities in Mexico. In what would seem an important topic for all of us, there was a session exploring the nature of attention, and competition for it, within the brain¹¹. In a related vein, Kim and Heiberger¹² explored the use of mobile learning and its barriers. In another session a service learning project explored the juncture of industry and academia via the making of an animated movie about the lives of De La Salle and Saint Benilde Romancon.¹³ Saez¹⁴ also examined the value of a service learning endeavor, in this case as an approach to technical writing. Al-Arja¹⁵ interviewed families of Palestinian children under house arrest in Jerusalem and did a qualitative analysis of the findings. One of the research collaborations between faculty members at different United States universities¹⁶ explored the possibilities inherent in a Lasallian challenge to “Unbridled Capitalism” and what that might suggest regarding the maintenance of a foundational focus.

Contributions to Innovations in Education continued with a description of university faculty teaching practices in Mexico City¹⁷ and a look at public private partnership accountability, particularly around distribution of resources,¹⁸ also in Mexico. A comparative analysis of culturally responsive teaching was found to be quintessentially Lasallian.¹⁹ A Lasallian lens was used to look at inclusive teaching practices.²⁰ Oh²¹ showed work on a “calling based” approach for career development of college students based upon Lasallian spirituality. Dr. Steinke expanded upon her keynote address looking at trauma informed education and its relationship to Lasallian values. Fascinating work is being done exploring interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary experiences and “social memory” at Unilasalle in Brazil that might have implications for all those involved in higher education.²²

Another of the identified key research areas for study were *Health and Nutrition*.²³ Presentations associated with this focus included an exploration of behavior monitoring for autism therapy assessment.²⁴ The biomechanics of shoe height design²⁵, Zeitoun’s²⁶ evaluation of chemical compounds of oil, leaves, and fruits from regions in Palestine to aid in the local development of medicines, and Lynch and Giakos²⁷ examination of optical imaging techniques for early lung

cancer detection represented additional significant health and nutrition work. Also important was DiAnna-Kinder's²⁸ work on why parents refuse the HPV vaccine for their children.

The Environment and Sustainability focus²⁹ was addressed by presentations about water filtration, using personal solar powered filtration³⁰ and reducing biosorption of copper,³¹ upgrading wastewater treatment systems to operate with co-digesting systems³² and research on a significant increase in flooding in the Northeastern United States of America.³³

Another subset of presentations described as Lasallian Studies were focused on Lasallian history, principles, and applications to practice. In Colombia³⁴ efforts are being made toward social justice objectives. Education is being put to work via a program called Utopia to be a peace laboratory, research and transference center, and leadership school. In another session Munoz³⁵ previewed forthcoming work on Lasallian pedagogy exploring historical challenges and changing realities to help inform practice today. Pang³⁶ offered an analysis of De La Salle's focus on the lives of impoverished children in conjunction with Karl Rahner's work on a theological conception of childhood as an openness to mystery. Tristano³⁷ looked at the mental world of the founder. Colonna and Cremin³⁸ reported on research into art and discernment and the themes of stained glass at the Generalate. Boyle and Ahern³⁹ explored the challenge of Dorothy Day in a Lasallian framework and Parinas⁴⁰ presented on a capstone project about spiritual conceptions and practice of lay faculty and staff in Philippine higher education.

Two research panels were also held. The first (from Manhattan College) included a look at humanitarian concerns and the refugee crisis,⁴¹ socioeconomic status on news media consumption,⁴² and an analysis of "speaking geek" intertextuality and code switching.⁴³ The second panel (Unilasalle, Bogota) shared a look at the pedagogy of interiority and spirituality of the higher education professor⁴⁴ and an exploration of the value and challenges of humanistic formation.⁴⁵

This is not a comprehensive listing of the work but it is representative. The conference concluded with a series of round-table gatherings centered around particular identified interests or concerns in which participants could be involved. This represented next steps in the ongoing research and collaboration agenda. Among the topic areas were; emerging women's concerns, business departments, elderly, gaming in the classroom, health promotion for children, civic engagement, association between institutions, and Lasallian formation resources. The number of people in each group and the specifics of their respective agendas are unknown but the groups seemed committed to acting and member engagement seemed high.

Each presentation delivered this year contains suggestions, indeed, perhaps imperatives, for further research. Progress on the forging of partnerships is underway. All the positive energy generated by and for the work (associated by the mission) will surely continue to drive the established agenda forward and help to grow the vision of what more might be done.

Endnotes

1. This is a report on the fifth annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research.

2. Jack McClure is the Program Director of the EdD program and Associate Professor. He has been with Saint Mary's for more than 11 years serving as faculty and in an administrative capacity. He has a B.F.A. from Drake, an M.S. from the University of Wisconsin Stout and a PhD from the University of Minnesota in Adult Education-Human Resource Development.

3. Rani Roy joined Manhattan College 4 years ago, and is currently the AVP for Student & Faculty Development at Manhattan College, where she oversees departments including Center for Graduate School & Fellowship Advisement, Grants Administration, and Study Abroad. Rani is an alumna of Columbia University's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science where she received a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering. She continued on to graduate school where she received a NASA Graduate Student Researcher's Fellowship, funding her PhD studies focused on tissue engineering at Cornell University.

4. Patricia Kayser Vargas Mangan is the director of postgraduate research and extension at Centro Universitário La Salle Canoas in Brazil. She has a master's degree in computer science and a PhD in Systems and Computation Engineering from COPPE / Sistemas de Universidade Federale do Rio de Janeiro.

5. International Association of Lasallian Universities Call for collaborative research projects. Retrieved from <http://www.lasalle-ialu.org/ialu/files/IALU%20Research%20Themes%20and%20Focus%20Areas.pdf> January 2014.

6. Mann, W. (2016, September 25). "President's Welcome to the Conference." (letter to attendees) Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

7. Van Wyk, J. A. & Steinke, C. (2016). "Lasallian Youth and Family Ministries: Lasallian and Trauma Informed Care." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

8. Frias IV, M. V. (2016). "Challenges and Concerns in Conducting a Phase 1 Clinical Trial on a New Drug for Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB) among Children (a first in the world for MDR-TB)." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

9. International Association of Lasallian Universities Call for collaborative research projects. Retrieved from <http://www.lasalle-ialu.org/ialu/files/IALU%20Research%20Themes%20and%20Focus%20Areas.pdf> January 2014.

10. Lugo-Cruz, M.R. & Aguilar-Cervantes, S.E. (2016). "Opportunities to Achieve Higher Education Among Vulnerable Students from the Yaqui and Mayo Tribes in Mexico." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

11. Sable, J.J., Dahlke, L.A.M., Rogers, J.W., Woody, P.L., Perez-Munoz, A., Gabriel, D.B.K. (2016). "Distractibility: What We Are Learning from the Brain About Competition for Our Attention." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
12. Kim, S.H., & Heiberger, M.J. (2016). "Exploring Students' Mobile Learning Practices in Lasallian Universities." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
13. Marasigan, Jr. B.M. (2016). "The Toonbro Experience: The Making of the Animated Movie on the Life of Saint John Baptiste De La Salle and Saint Benilde Romancon." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
14. Saez, M.S. (2016). "It's La Salle's Business After All: A Service Learning Approach in Teaching Technical Writing." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
15. Al-Arja, N.S. (2016). "The Psychological and Educational Effects Resulting from House Arrest of Palestinian Children in Jerusalem." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
16. McCallum-Ferguson, S., Nawara, S., & O'Connell, E. (2016). "Toward a Lasallian Response to unbridled Capitalism." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
17. Fortoul Ollivier, M.B. (2016). "Characterization of Teaching Practices within the Classroom of the Social Sciences and Humanities Faculty at Universidad La Salle, Mexico City, Mexico." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
18. Rendon, E.M. (2016). "The Accountability of Public-Private Partnerships." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.
19. Hopkins, R., Diaz-Meza, C., & Taylor, T. (2016). "Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparation as Quintessentially Lasallian: Comparative Analysis and Initial Progress of Concept Integration." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

20. Fisher, M., Albee, L. (2016). "All Means All: Lasallian Education and Inclusive Teaching." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

21. Oh, H.S. (2016). "A Calling Focused Career Development Program for College Students Based on Lasallian Spirituality." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

22. Vargas-Mangan, P.K., Graeff, L., & Gomes Graebin, C.M. (2016). "Sharing Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Experiences: The Case of Social Memory and Cultural Heritage Graduate Courses at Unilasalle, Brazil." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

23. International Association of Lasallian Universities Call for collaborative research projects. Retrieved from <http://www.lasalle-ialu.org/ialu/files/IALU%20Research%20Themes%20and%20Focus%20Areas.pdf> January 2014.

24. Suarez, M.T., Cu, G., & Cu, J. (2016). Automatic Behavior Monitoring for Improved Autism Therapy Assessment. Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

25. Hall, C. & Saboori, P. (2016). "Biomechanics Associated with Variable Height Heel Shoes Design." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

26. Zeitoun, Reem Yacoub (2016), "Evaluation of Chemical Composition of the Essential Oils of *Laurus Nobilis* L. Leaves and Fruits from Different Regions in Palestine." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

27. Lynch, K.J., & Giakos, G. (2016). "Lung Cancer Detection, Data Mining and Classification using Efficient Bioinformatics Algorithms." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

28. DiAnna-Kinder, F. (2016). "Parental Refusal of the Human Papilloma Vaccine." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

29. International Association of Lasallian Universities Call for collaborative research projects. Retrieved from <http://www.lasalle-ialu.org/ialu/files/IALU%20Research%20Themes%20and%20Focus%20Areas.pdf> January 2014.

30. Keleher, J. (2016). "Personal Solar Powered Filtration System." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

31. Geronimo, E. (2016). "Evaluation of Biofilm Carriers for the Biosorption of Copper in Contaminated Waters." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

32. Conway, T., Bolen, T., & Azam, H. (2016). "Performance evaluation of Food Waste Co-Digestion Utilizing Biochemical Methane Potential." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

33. Barrett, K. (2016). "Is Flooding Getting Worse? Prevalence and Magnitude of Trends in Flows in the Northeastern United States." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

34. Gomez-Restrepo, C.G. (2016). "UTOPIA- A New Rurality and Territorial Development: Ways to Peace in Colombia." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

35. Munoz, D. (2016). "Lasallian Pedagogical Journey. The Brothers Walking at the End of 19th Century. The Difficult Balance Between Loyalty and Challenges." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

36. Pang, A.K.M. (2016). "What Child is This? A Rahnerian Interpretation of the Child in Lasallian Pedagogy." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, September 25-27, 2016.

37. Tristano, R. (2016). "The Mental World of John Baptiste de La Salle, International Lasallian." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

38. Colonna, D. & Cremin, D.H. (2016). "Studies: Reflections and Research SIEL 2015-2016." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

39. Boyle, A., Ahern, K. (2016). "A Prophetic Call: The Challenge of Dorothy Day for Lasallian Higher education." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on

Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

40. Parinas, N. (2016). "Lasallian Lay Partners' Spiritual Conceptualizations and Practices in a Philippine Higher Educational Institution." Paper presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

41. Gerard, R., & Pascoe, J. (2016). "An examination of the Humanitarian Concerns Surrounding Refugee Crises." Part of a panel presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

42. Capote, A. (2016) "Examining the Effect of Socioeconomic Status on News media Consumption in the Bronx." Part of a panel presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

43. Benevenia, A. (2016). "'Speaking Geek:' Intertextuality and Code Switching in Junot Diaz's 'The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao.'" Part of a panel presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

44. Polania, J., & Rivera, J.C. (2016). "The Pedagogy of Interiority and Spirituality of the Higher Education Professor from the Lasallian perspective: Understanding and Contributions to Comprehensive Training." Part of a panel presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.

45. Reyes Sanchez, G.M., del Pilar Buitrago, M. & Torres Serrano, J.M. (2016). "Humanistic Formation at La Salle University: Findings and Challenges." Part of a panel presented at the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 25-27, 2016.