

Yancey, Nan Russell and Jack Curran. "Promoting the Lasallian Mission through Engagement in Research: A Report of the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research." *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education* 6, no. 3 (Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota: 2015).

© Nan Russell Yancey, Ph.D. and Jack Curran, FSC, Ph.D. Readers of this article have the copyright owners' permission to reproduce it for educational, not-for-profit purposes, if the authors and publisher are acknowledged in the copy.

Promoting the Lasallian Mission through Engagement in Research: A Report of the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research

Nan Russell Yancey, Ph.D., *Lewis University, Romeoville, IL, USA*

Jack Curran, FSC, Ph.D., *Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY, USA*

Continuing the momentum of promoting research initiatives among Lasallian educational institutions, the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research was hosted by Saint Mary's University of Minnesota (SMUMN) at its Twin Cities Campus, September 27-29, 2015. Co-sponsored by the SMUMN Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary's and the Christian Brothers Conference of the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN), this three day event brought together 121 educators and administrators from around the world plus 12 students to share their experiences with Lasallian research, network, and explore possibilities for future collaborative Lasallian research projects, focused on the research agenda articulated by the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU, 2014).

All five Lasallian colleges and universities in the United States were represented as well Lasallian institutions from Brazil, Colombia, France, Indonesia, Mexico, Palestine, Philippines, and Spain. Representing primarily institutions of higher education, participants also came from other Lasallian ministries, including the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the Midwest District, the District of Eastern North America, the Lasallian District of San Francisco and New Orleans, the International Association of Lasallian Universities, Saint Mary's Press, and various Lasallian secondary institutions.

The Symposium opened with a dynamic and challenging Keynote Address by Brother Robert Schieler, FSC, Ed.D., Superior General of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Rome, Italy. Contrasting Lasallian research of the twentieth century which was internally focused on the founding of the Institute and the Lasallian movement, Brother Robert noted that as demographics changed, new structures of Lasallian education emerged, and the Second Vatican Council brought the Church into the modern world. As the world has morphed into the post-modern world, twenty-first-century Lasallian research is becoming more externally focused. As the strength of Lasallian colleges and universities has grown, so has the focus on research in these institutions around the world. Quoting Pope Benedict XIV, Brother Robert noted that research instills curiosity, which in the Lasallian tradition is mission-focused in addressing the needs of the poor in the world, evolving into a research agenda that promotes advocacy. Brother Robert challenged symposium participants through Lasallian research to seek new ways to meet the needs of diverse peoples around the globe, especially those in underserved, impoverished areas. He also asked participants to consider if a new pedagogy for twenty-first-century Lasallian education is emerging, a pedagogy which honors and respects our diversity and yet seeks increasing collaboration among our secondary and higher education institutions around the world.

The second Keynote Address was delivered by Dr. Hashem Yousef Shahin, Professor of Human Genetics, Bethlehem University, Palestine, who presented a very compelling story about the

impact of research on the lives of people within Palestine. Noting that political reality significantly limits free movement of peoples in the region, Dr. Shahin identified the potential impact on heritable genetic disorders as intrafamily marriages increase when people cannot travel from the area, thus limiting their freedom to make choices. Sharing his story about his own evolution as a biologist and researcher, Dr. Shahin talked about the coincidence of a classmate's experience leading to his work on cleft lip/palate. As well, he shared the powerful impact of collaborative efforts across political boundaries, countries, and institutions to bring essential research and health care assistance to people in need within Palestine.

Following Dr. Shahin's address, a panel of six educator practitioners shared diverse ways Lasallian universities in the United States are seeking to meet the needs of the underserved. Moderated by Alisa Macksey of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, panelists included Dr. Stephen Kaplan of Manhattan College in Riverdale, NY, Dr. Mary Fisher of Lewis University in Romeoville, IL, Dr. Juan Olabe-Basogain of Christian Brothers University in Memphis, TN, Joanne Woods of La Salle University in Philadelphia, PA, Dr. Carole Swain of Saint Mary's College of California in Moraga, CA, and Dr. Nathan Lien of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota in Winona, MN. Sharing ideas about supporting students who face diverse challenges, panelists discussed programs at these Lasallian institutions that address the needs of students who are at risk, first-generation, bilingual, or veterans or who are challenged with issues related to computational thinking or ableism. These presentations led to an engaging discussion with the audience stressing the importance of using the Lasallian network to promote the power of collaboration in seeking significant, multi-site grants and sharing best practices to enhance programs for meeting the needs of the underserved across Lasallian campuses and institutions.

For most of the remainder of the conference, an impressive 34 presentations by researchers followed across four break-out sessions, with projects focused on the three IALU themes (food, nutrition, and health; sustainability and the environment; and education and learning innovations) as well as the theme of Lasallian studies. The challenge for attendees was to select only one group of presentations in each of the break-out sessions, given the intriguing projects being presented. A new addition to the symposium this year were the multiple student research projects presented (Basha & Nossoni; Hoey, Torres, Sullivan, & Horn; Hussey, Budziszewski & Nossoni; Piccorelli, Hamm, Toscano, & Saboori; Saeed, Eraifej, Ramirez, & Mayer; Tei, Reid, Presta, Kowalyk, & Mayer). The power of the interdisciplinary collaboration of the kinesiology and mechanical engineering students was evident in the presentation by Piccorelli et al. The expert guidance of gifted faculty researchers with a strong foundation as Lasallian educators created an environment for sharing disciplinary expertise, learning, and action research focused on preventing knee injuries in student athletes. Student learning and service to the community were clearly supported in these research projects. The students added a new dimension and contagious enthusiasm for Lasallian research to the symposium.

Also evident were international collaborations that involve Lasallian institutions sharing responsibilities and resources to enhance the reach of Lasallian research worldwide (Minnerath, Pethke, Medicilo, & Supetran; Sauvee, Onuh, Hernandez, & Rose; Vidar et al.). Given the many networking opportunities afforded by the International Symposium on Lasallian Research, future symposia should see additional collaborations emerge and the power of Lasallian research and outreach continue to grow in meeting the needs of the underserved across international boundaries.

The Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research closed following Round Table Discussions on various topics of interest as identified by the participants. Facilitated by Dr. Roxanne Eubank of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, this concluding session allowed attendees to reflect on lessons learned at the symposium, network with other Lasallians with shared interests, and consider future Lasallian research projects to continue and expand this important work.

The hospitality of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota once again provided an environment rich with sharing and exploring the many opportunities for promoting the Lasallian mission through collaboration across institutions and continents. As planning begins for the Fifth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, which will again be hosted by Saint Mary's University of Minnesota and co-sponsored by the Christian Brothers Conference, Lasallian researchers are encouraged to save September 25th, 26th, and 27th of 2016 for continuing and advancing the important work begun in the first four symposia. Proposals for presentations will be due to Roxanne Eubank (reubank@smumn.edu) by June 30, 2016.

Notes

1. Both authors were enthusiastic participants in the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research. Dr. Yancey is Dean of Graduate Studies at Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois since 2010. A faculty member at Lewis since 1993, Dr. Yancey previously served as Director of the Graduate Nursing program in the College of Nursing and Health Professions. She holds the Bachelor of Science in nursing from The Ohio State University, the Master of Science in nursing from Villanova University, and the Ph.D. from Loyola University, Chicago.

Jack Curran, FSC, Ph.D., is Vice President for Mission at Manhattan College in Riverdale, NY. He previously served in senior administrative roles at two other Lasallian higher education institutions, Bethlehem University and Saint Mary's College of California. Throughout his more than 30-year career in education, Br. Jack has researched and published various works concerning the relationship between human rights and religion based on empirical data involving Muslim and Christian adolescents and young adults. He is also part of an international comparative human rights and religion project developed through Radboud University, The Netherlands. He completed his bachelor's degree at Manhattan College, entered the Brothers of the Christian Schools in 1979, and went on to earn his master's and doctorate in social work from the State University of New York at Albany.

References

Basha, F. & G. Nossoni. "Utilizing Mine Talings (Chat) in Reinforced Concrete to Inhibit Corrosion of Steel Reinforcement." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Hoey, C., N. N. Torres, C. Sullivan, and J. Horn. "Possibilities of Change: Summer Research that Makes a Difference." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

Hussey, D., M. Budziszewski, & G. Nossoni. "Viability of Bacteria Encapsulated in Lightweight Aggregate to Produce a Self-Healing Concrete." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

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.

Minnerath, J., B. Pethke, M. Medicilo, and A. Supetran. "Lasallian Research that Spans the Globe: Analysis of the Medicinal Properties of Plants Native to the Philippines and Minnesota." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Piccorelli, S., E. Hamm, L. Toscano, and P. Saboori. "An Experimental and Modeling Study of Injury Prevention Knee Brace." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Saeed, S., M. Eraifej, M. Ramirez, and G. Mayer. "Investigation of Interactions between Antimalarial and Antiretroviral Drugs." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Sauvee, L., W. Onuh, L. F. R. Hernandez, and F. Rose. "Food Safety Practices in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Philippines: A Summary Proposal." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Schieler, Robert. "Lasallian Research in the 21st Century." Keynote Address presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Shahin, HashemYousef. "Human Genetics and Cleft Palate: A Lasallian University's Research Contribution." Keynote Address presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Tej, F., J. A. Reid, M. A. Presta, S. Kowalyk, and G. Mayer. "Survey of Cryptosporidium Parvum in Bivalves (*Mya Arenaria*) from Orchard Beach, New York." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.

Vidar, W. S., X. Chen, M. Decker, J. Heilmann, B. Wan, S. G. Franzblau, A. M. Aguinaldo, G. A. Cordell, and A. P. G. Macebeo. "Globospiramine, a Potent, Anti-Alzheimer, and Anti-Cancer Spirocyclic Bisindole Alkaloid from *Voacanga Globosa*." Paper presented at the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, September 27 – 29, 2015.