

**The Forum on Education Abroad
2015 Annual Business Meeting
Friday, March 27
Sheraton New Orleans Hotel, Grand Ballroom**

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

- **Welcome Remarks:** Mary Anne Grant, Chair-Elect of the Board
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- **Report on The Forum:** Brian Whalen, President and CEO,
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- **Financial Report:** Mary Anne Grant
- **Council Report:** Kelly McLaughlin, Chair, Forum Council,
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- **Adjourn:** Mary Anne Grant

8:00AM

Welcome Remarks, Mary Anne Grant, Chair, Board of Directors

I hereby open The Forum's Annual Business Meeting. Welcome, and thank you for attending the business meeting

Welcome you to The Forum's 11th Annual Conference. I want to recognize the many host institutions for their support; the record number of sponsors and exhibitors; all the volunteers, session and workshop chairs and facilitators; and, of course, all participants, for you make this conference possible.

The Forum is stronger now than ever before in terms of member benefits and services; the number of institutional members (just under 700 member institutions); conference attendance (as of now over 1,200), and finances.

The Forum holds a strong and in some ways unique position among international education associations. It is the only membership association that focuses exclusively on U.S. education abroad. It is recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization for U.S. education abroad. As an institutional membership association, The Forum serves the varied needs of its diverse member institutions and organizations. And, over 25% of our members are located outside the United States.

The Forum's focus on quality education is what unites us. The Forum *Standards* provide guidance on how to achieve quality in our programs to benefit students. The 5th edition of the *Standards of Good Practice* is being debuted at this conference. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank the Council, the Standards Committee and the many colleagues who have contributed their time and expertise to revise and update this important resource.

The Quality Improvement Program (QUIP) is a rigorous and objective way to assess and improve programs and be recognized for quality. And, The Forum's Professional Certification in Education Abroad Program provides the field with a high quality professional credential that helps to advance all of us to a higher level. In addition, the conference itself is a way for The Forum to help its members to continue to improve.

I wish all of you a successful conference and encourage you to share your ideas and to learn from each other.

The Forum Board of Directors takes very seriously its oversight responsibilities in ensuring successful adherence to The Forum's mission. I am very pleased to work with this committed and engaged group of individuals both from within and outside the field of international education.

- I am here because our Board Chairman Barbara Rowe retired from Penn State a few weeks ago and relinquished her duties. She provided excellent leadership and set a tone of collegiality that I hope to continue.
- Two other Board members cycled off this year as well: Peggy Plympton, and Robin Craggs.
- All these individuals were recognized for their contributions at The Forum Board meeting in January, but I them to stand to be recognized here

Also, I would like to announce and to welcome two new Forum Board members, Annette Parker and Michael Nanfито, who will be joining us for the next Board meeting in Carlisle in July of this year.

8:06AM

Report on The Forum: Brian Whalen, President and CEO

I want to begin my report by giving thanks and praise to Jane Kucko and the Conference Committee for doing such a great job in developing our conference theme and selecting the sessions that have focused our attention on the many faces of education abroad.

This year, through the generous support of sponsors, The Forum has given out 12 Conference Grant Awards to make it possible for colleagues to attend the conference. Jim Ellis, our colleague well-known to us through his work in moderating the SECUSS-L listserv, is this year's Ron Koehn Conference Grant Award Winner. The Ron Koehn Conference Grant Award is named in honor of Ron Koehn. A long time education abroad innovator, Ron has played a significant role in advancing the education abroad field, especially through his contributions to innovations in program design. I'd like to ask Ron and Jim to stand and congratulations to them both.

This 11th Annual Conference with 1,300 attendees is a remarkable achievement for an organization that began in 2001 when 19 of our colleagues, the founding Board members of The Forum, (I know that a number of the founding Board members are here, and I would like to ask them to please stand). They created the vision for what has become a flourishing association of nearly 700 member institutions from around the world. I am pleased to report that since July 1st of last year we have welcomed nearly 100 new member institutions, and nearly 95% of our member institutions have renewed their membership this year, which is an outstanding rate among membership associations.

This conference is actually our second conference this year; the first was convened in October, the second European Conference of The Forum hosted by our dedicated colleagues at Universitat Pompeu Fabra. I'm pleased to announce that The Forum's 3rd European Conference will be held in October, 2016 in Athens, Greece, hosted by CYA College Year in Athens. We look forward to a wonderful conference in Athens with all of our wonderful colleagues in Greece.

This year three significant initiatives are providing important guidance to the membership and to the field, and I want to take this opportunity to say something about them. The 5th edition of the *Standards of Good Practice* is certainly a landmark achievement for our field, reflecting the strength and the maturity of our association, its mission and principles. The *Standards* provide guidance to our field during a critical time where we must meet the challenge of being even more accountable and transparent in all that we do to make the student experience abroad the very best that it can be. I want to give a special thanks to The Forum Council Standards Committee members, especially Andrea Custodi, Chair, and Mark Lenhart, Vice Chair.

A second key initiative that is based on the *Standards* and was launched this past year is the field's first Professional Certification Program. I am pleased and proud to announce that The Forum has certified the first 13 education abroad professionals and an additional 43 colleagues are currently enrolled in the program. The current participants in the Certification Program have diverse backgrounds, and various levels of experience and educational levels, demonstrating that Certification is for everyone. Today we can be proud that we have come together as a field to help to ensure that the future of education abroad will be as professional and of high quality as it can be. Certification of individuals demonstrates the seriousness with which we carry out our work. It also signals that we as a field have advanced to a higher level of professionalism. The certification in education abroad provides an essential, baseline credential. Our collective goal should be to encourage all colleagues to achieve Certification credentials to help raise the bar of both professionalism and quality assurance to benefit our institutions and organizations, and ultimately the students who participate in our programs. Certification residency, online workshops, certification workshops offered across the U.S. and around the world.

Finally, along with Certification, the Quality Improvement Program (QUIP) is critical to how The Forum implements the *Standards* to benefit its members, the field,

and students. This year marks the most active year of QUIP reviews ever. Besides the half dozen QUIP reviews that are in process or have been completed this year, we have supported IIE's Generation Study Abroad initiative by offering a specialized Capacity Review for Commitment Partners. 9 institutions have participated in these reviews. Through a grant from the U.S. Embassy in Delhi, we also offered a customized QUIP workshop and capacity review for 15 universities in India in December. This past year, in conjunction with the revising and updating of the *Standards*, QUIP went through an external review that included evaluations by peer reviewers, institutions that participated in QUIP, and external consultants. The result was a new and improved QUIP that we just announced. Besides being coded to the new *Standards*, there are several changes and enhancements that we believe will make QUIP a more useful and valuable program for members. In brief, these are:

- A more streamlined and user-friendly process.
- Alignment with higher education accreditation and quality assurance processes. Since QUIP is the education abroad field's most rigorous and comprehensive quality assurance program, it is essential that it adopt the best practices of international quality assurance programs. That is why we are an active member of the International Quality Assurance Group of CHEA and attend CHEA's conference and meetings. To be clear: We are not an accreditation group, but QUIP is based on the accreditation model and assists Forum members to assess and improve their programming, which is excellent preparation for accreditation.
- Forum staff member assigned to each QUIP review to offer support.
- Enhanced recognition for institutions successfully completing QUIP.

As these examples illustrate, The Forum remains a nimble association that is in close touch with its membership. Its priorities are determined and shaped by all of you in order to serve each of our 700 member institutions. I want to thank Kelly McLaughlin and our Forum Council colleagues who do such a wonderful job of representing these member needs and collaborate to develop the member services and resources that you need. There are many other examples of important services and resources that have been produced this year, and to find out more I encourage you to read The Forum's Annual Report, subscribe to our weekly electronic *Forum News*, and explore The Forum's new website. The Forum prides itself on its transparency, openness, and inclusiveness. Our association is stronger today than ever before, and it is due to the active participation of our members that results in meaningful, high quality resources that are improving the field of education abroad.

8:12AM

Financial Report: Mary Anne Grant, Chair, Forum Board of Directors

Our Treasurer Paul Davis could not attend this year, so I will give the financial report.

I am happy to report that The Forum is in excellent shape financially. Most of the organization's revenue comes from membership fees and the Annual Conference.

And in keeping with sound practice, the major expense goes to creating and sustaining member services and benefits.

I am pleased to report that for the 8th year in a role, The Forum finished the last fiscal year with a surplus. Last year's surplus just over \$43,000. The budget included a \$50,000 addition to The Forum's investment in the Dickinson College endowment portfolio. This fund performed very well last year, resulting in a 15% increase in the market value of The Forum's investment to approximately \$1.35 million. The investment serves as an endowment that now assists with operating costs by funding a staff position.

The Forum auditors, Boyer and Ritter, have once again given the organization a clean audit. You may read the Audit Report on The Forum [website](#).

Finally, on behalf of The Forum, I want to thank Dickinson College for continuing to host The Forum and providing nearly \$100,000 in in-kind contributions, including the building on campus that houses The Forum's offices, payroll, benefits, and human resource services for Forum staff, and technology and infrastructure support for operations. These contributions are critical to making The Forum the successful association that it is.

8:17AM

Council Report: Kelly McLaughlin, Council Chair

First, please allow me to thank the Council members whose current terms end in July, 2015:

- Jose Alvarez, Associate VP of Program Management & Development, CEA Global Education
- Steve Duke, Director, Center for International Studies, Wake Forest University
- Joan Gillespie, Vice President and Director of Off-Campus Programs, Associated Colleges of the Midwest; and
- Margaret Wiedenhoft, Associate Director, International Center, Kalamazoo College

Your contributions are deeply appreciated. In fact, The Forum will be sending each of you an official thank you and a letter of recognition to your provost or president. Some of you, of course, might be running for re-election, and I wish you luck should you decide to do so. Speaking of appreciation, might the Council members who are in attendance this morning please stand and be recognized? Thank you!

Our Council meeting in New Orleans revisited and rearticulated how Council members can best serve The Forum. In doing so, we took a little time to reflect on what we accomplished this year. Committee members:

- helped review proposed governmental regulations for health and safety in study abroad,
- mounted an outcomes assessment workshop that inspired the addition of an on-going assessment workshop through The Forum,
- revised and reintroduced with heightened clarity and visibility The Forum's signature *Standards of Good Practice*,
- gathered and are making accessible a range of curricular and co-curricular resources for such things as pre-departure and re-entry courses,
- pushed forward the process of gathering data about the study abroad profession that should highlight and elevate the importance of our profession,
- and drove the vital work of advocating for the ways in which study abroad can positively impact students' careers, personal development, and much more.
- Council members have also served on the European Conference Committee, the Annual Conference Committee, the selection committee for the Peter A. Wollitzer Award, and oversaw The Forum's Undergraduate Research Awards.

The Council serves all of those functions and more, including through involvement in major initiatives such as The Forum's Certification Program, which is off to a resounding start. In fact, after hearing such positive feedback from colleagues who have already undergone certification training, I applied for and will be attending the Professional Certification Accelerated Residency Program in Carlisle this summer myself. I am very excited about that. Certification is a prime example of how The Forum Council can impact a valuable program for the field that has quickly become a signature part of what The Forum does.

If any of that work appeals to you or might be a good fit for a colleague you know, please note that Council elections will be held later this spring, and I would be pleased to talk with anyone who might be interested. And I sincerely encourage you to become more involved in The Forum's work if are aren't already, be that by serving on the Council, getting involved in current projects, proposing new projects, by visiting The Forum web site, or by contacting The Forum directly. We are always open to ideas!

In closing, I thank The Forum Board and The Forum staff for encouraging and supporting not just the Council's efforts but also the expansive and vibrant work of The Forum as exhibited by yet another successful conference.

8:22AM Mary Anne Grant

Before closing the meeting, I want to remember a Founding Board Member of The Forum, Dr. David Larsen, who died earlier this month at his home in Pennsylvania. David was a wonderful friend and colleague to all of us. He was the 2008 recipient of the 2008 Wollitzer Award and served as Vice President and Director of the Center for Education Abroad at Arcadia University from 1988-2008. Prior to that he held leadership positions with the Fulbright Council in Greece and at the University of Tennessee. His leadership and support was critical to the founding and early development of The Forum. He stepped up immediately to serve as secretary and treasurer in the first days

of the organization, and served as our 'secretariat' before we had an actual home base. David kept track of membership forms and the dues, along with fielding a string of unending questions about our new organization. He also was essential in getting us incorporated as a legal entity with a set of bylaws.”

The Peter A. Wollitzer Advocacy Award recognized his extraordinarily effective work in influencing institutions of higher learning to understand and support education abroad through the dissemination of The Forum’s goals. In the Award citation that she composed in his honor, Lorna Stern, Vice President at Arcadia University and Executive Director, The College of Global Studies, wrote about Larsen: “Through all the various avenues of service to our field, the nominee has been led by a guiding principle which can best be summed up by the words– ‘Do the right thing.’” Please join me in a moment of silence for our dear colleague, David Larsen.

Again, thank you for attending the Annual Business Meeting which I now officially close.

For more information:

Current Strategic Plan: <http://www.forumea.org/about-us/mission/strategic-plan>

Committees and Working Groups: <http://www.forumea.org/about-us/who-we-are/committees-working-groups>

Audited Financial Statements: <http://www.forumea.org/about-us/policies-reports/financial-statements>

Tax Form 990: <http://www.forumea.org/about-us/policies-reports/financial-statements>

Business Meeting Minutes: <http://www.forumea.org/about-us/policies-reports/business-mtg-mins>