

# **The Forum on Education Abroad**

## **2012 Annual Business Meeting**

Plaza Ballroom, Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel

Friday, March 23, 2012, 8:00 – 8:25 am

### **AGENDA**

- **Welcome Remarks:** Mary Dwyer, Chair of the Board
- **Report on Membership and Activities:** Brian Whalen, President and CEO
- **Financial Report:** Paul Davies, Treasurer
- **Forum Council Highlights:** Michael Morrison, Chair, Forum Council
- **Closing Remarks:** Mary Dwyer

#### **Welcome Remarks**

Dr. Mary Dwyer, President and CEO of IES Abroad and Chair of the Forum Board of Directors, opened the Annual Business Meeting by thanking everyone for coming to the annual conference. She thanked the many host institutions for their support of the conference, as well as the record number of sponsors and exhibitors, conference volunteers, and those leading workshops and sessions.

She noted that the organization is in the strongest shape ever in terms of member benefits and services, number of members (over 600), conference attendance (over 1,200) and finances.

Dwyer said that the Forum is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and it is therefore appropriate to thank the original founders who clearly had the foresight to build a solid foundation from which future success could be leveraged. Many of them are with us today and we honor their vision, know-how and persistence.

She then said that the elected Council members and all of the committee members over the past 10 years have toiled endlessly and effectively to contribute to the strong organization that all of our institutions now benefit from joining.

Dwyer cited the fact that over 40 individuals who served as Board members at various junctures over the past 10 years have made significant contributions to the strategic directions of the organization and the sound financial planning. Because the Forum founders had a planned Board member rotation system combined with normal turnover, the Forum has benefited from a very broad range of perspectives represented on the Board. She pointed out that this year is momentous in that the last founder (Dwyer herself) is rotating off of the board in June, and this represents an important milestone for the Forum. Historically, many grassroots organizations flounder and frequently become extinct when the original founders step aside. Dwyer said that it is clear to her that the Forum will continue to flourish without any of the original founders serving on the Board. Making certain that the organization would continue to thrive in the post-founder

era was one of several goals that she set as Board Chair these past 6 years, and she stated that she is very pleased to report that the goal has been achieved.

Dwyer then announced that Dr. Barbara Rowe from Penn State University, and the current Vice Chair of the Board, was elected by the Board to serve as the next Board chair. Dr. Gregg Kvistad, Provost at the University of Denver, was elected by the Board to serve as the Vice Chair. Paul Davies, Associate VP for Administration and Finance at Randolph-Macon College will continue to serve as the Board Treasurer and Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, Deputy Coordinator of the Program Directorate Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism in the US State Department will continue as Secretary of the Board.

She then mentioned that the Board is currently engaged in strategic and financial planning for the future.

Dwyer then acknowledged the outstanding staff of the Forum, stating that, while vision and innovation are vital elements of every highly successful organization, employing a leader and staff who are outstanding in the implementation phase is equally critical. She noted that the Forum has an exceptional leader in Dr. Brian Whalen, who is always expanding the horizons of the organization. It also has a fantastic staff in Natalie Mello, Executive Director for Member Services and Training; Annmarie Whalen, Executive Director for Publications and Programs; Jennifer Brown, Associate Director for Conference and Events; Annie Miller, Finance Manager; and Heather Harris, Assistant Director.

Dwyer then asked those in attendance to honor the founders, the Council, the Board and especially the president and staff of the Forum with a standing ovation.

Dwyer then turned her attention to what she said were the most significant accomplishments of the Forum over the past ten years, and the primary reason for its success: the substantial member services and benefits that have been produced to serve member institutions. She said that these services and benefits all support the central mission of the Forum—to advance the field by developing and disseminating Standards of Good Practice. The myriad ways that the Forum now offers education, training and support to its members is extraordinary. In a 10-year period through the complex effects of 9/11 and the Great Recession, it has developed into an effective, professional membership association that produces a continuous stream of services and benefits, which can be broken down into four areas:

- **Forum Events.** The Forum now convenes on average over two dozen events a year, including workshops around the world, Standards of Good Practice Institutes and Fireside Dialogues. In the past two years these events have been offered around the U.S. and abroad in a dozen countries. And, we look forward to the Forum's first European conference in Dublin later this year.

- **Forum Resources.** The many useful Forum Publications and web resources such as the Standards Toolbox, Surveys and Outcomes Guide, Glossary, and History of Study Abroad, and many others, are widely disseminated to the Forum membership and beyond, and offer the very best guidance on education abroad programming.
- **Forum Programs.** The Forum's Quality Improvement Program, better known as QUIP, and the guided Standards Assessments continue to offer Forum member institutions the most rigorous and comprehensive assessment and improvement methodology available for education abroad.
- **Forum Advocacy.** The Forum advocates for its members through focusing on critical issues and providing timely information to its members. This year it has advocated for changes to the visa requirements for Spain, provided information to members about education abroad and the Post- 9/11 GI Bill, the impact of the new U.S. federal financial aid regulations, helped members to interpret changes to the Clery Act, and advocated on behalf of program provider organizations in regard to licenses to operate in Cuba.

Dwyer said that the growth of these member services and benefits are what the founding Board members had hoped the Forum would achieve when we discussed the future of the organization over ten years ago.

She then stated that what the founders may not have predicted but is equally as critical to the mission of the Forum, is the global growth of the Forum. She observed that over 20% of member institutions are now located outside the U.S., and the Forum collaborates with and works in countries around the world to advance U.S. education abroad. The expansion of the Forum mission scope as an international membership association signals that the Standards and the accompanying member benefits and services are compelling, and necessary for any organization or institution involved with education abroad.

In closing, Dwyer said that as her tenure on the Board comes to a close this June as the remaining founding Board member, she is more confident than ever before about the Forum's future. She announced that at its January meeting, the Board voted to invite three outstanding new members, each of whom has accepted the offer to join the Board. Dwyer said that these new members will help to advance the Forum so that it achieves even greater success in the future: Dr. Joy Carew, Associate Director of the International Center, and Associate Professor, Pan-African Studies at the University of Louisville; Dr. Paul McVeigh, Associate Vice President, Global Studies and Programs at Northern Virginia Community College; and Patricia Scroggs, Director of the Charles Rangel International Affairs program at Howard University.

Dwyer then introduced Dr. Brian Whalen, the president and CEO of the Forum, to provide a report on activities and the membership.

### **Report on Membership and Activities**

Forum President and CEO Brian Whalen reported on the latest membership information and selected member benefits and services. He said that it has been an exciting year for the Forum and mentioned some of the ways that the organization has expanded its capacity to deliver member services and benefits.

He noted that the organization's financial position is outstanding and has allowed the Forum to continue to expand staff, which translates to enhanced benefits for members. This summer the Forum will hire a research analyst who will increase the capacity to collect and analyze data about education abroad. This will be a half-time position that is shared with Dickinson College, the Forum's strategic partner. In addition, the Forum was chosen by the American Council of Learned Societies to host a Public Fellow for the next two years. This person will be a recent Ph.D. in the humanities, and will be paid for completely by ACLS and allow the Forum to develop more resources, especially related to education abroad curriculum and pedagogy.

Whalen noted that the Forum has also expanded its capacity this year through the training of a dozen colleagues to deliver workshops and training in the Standards of Good Practice. This year the Forum is offering more than a dozen workshops around the U.S. and overseas, each customized to meet the needs of the hosting organization. Whalen said that if Forum member institutions or organizations are interested in hosting a workshop, they should contact the Forum. He said that this member benefit is an excellent, low-cost way to help to advance your organization's goals.

Whalen noted that the smaller events that the Forum sponsors involve more participants than the annual conference, and offering them is part of a strategy to bring the Forum to the membership. The most ambitious of these regional events, he said, is the Forum's Dublin conference, December 5-7 of this year, which will be hosted by University College Dublin. The theme of the conference is, "Reinventing the European Experience: Culture, Politics and Diversity in U.S. Education Abroad," and the Call for Session proposals is now open. He stated that convening a Forum conference in Europe will allow for a focus on the particular issues and topics related to Europe, and make it more convenient for colleagues who work in Europe to attend a Forum event.

Turning attention to the membership, Whalen observed that the Forum membership continues to grow, and much of this growth is due to an increase in member institutions located outside the U.S., which now make-up over 20% of the membership. The Forum recently surpassed for the first time 600 member institutions, and he told the audience that they have the breakdown of the various membership categories on the handout at the tables (see chart below). He pointed out that over 100 institutions and organizations have

joined the Forum year, and the membership renewal rate remains at a very high 96%. Whalen then said that the Forum has always been and will continue to be an inclusive, global organization that welcomes all institutions and organizations that are active in U.S. education abroad and that are committed to Standards of Good Practice and quality programs.

Whalen said that this is an important moment for the Forum and its members, noting that the Forum has never been an organization that rests on its laurels or is complacent. He said that the organization has aspired to improve continuously in the way that it both involves and serves its membership, and that a key to being a dynamic, forward-looking organization is the abroad and deep involvement of members. Whalen observed that hundreds of people have contributed to Forum projects, committees and working groups this year, and that is resulting in important resources, programs and events that benefit the entire membership.

He then told the audience that the Forum needs further contribution in another way. He stated that later this spring the Forum will be asking each institutional member for ideas about and feedback on the draft of a new strategic plan that will guide the organization over the next 3 – 5 years. He asked: What services and benefits should the Forum offer to assist your organization to advance its goals? What suggestions and ideas do you have for how the Forum should fulfill its mission as the Standards Development Organization for education abroad? What additional programs, resources, and events would you like to see the Forum offer? Whalen stated that when members receive the survey about the strategic plan, he hopes they will take the time to provide input about any aspects of the Forum and its future.

In closing, Whalen made the following comments about retiring Board Chair, Mary Dwyer:

I would like to thank and offer praise to Mary Dwyer. Mary was given a wonderful send off at the Forum Board meeting in January, where the Board presented her with a booklet of recollections from current and past Board members. It was a touching and well-deserved celebration of her tremendous service to the Forum over nearly a dozen years. As a founding Board member, Mary was involved with the Forum from its beginnings and formative stages. Over the past 6 years, I have had the privilege and the honor to work closely with her in her role as Chair of the Board of Directors. She has been a strong mentor for me as I grew into my position and we formed a strong bond over these last several years of sustained growth. What I want to say about Mary, however, is how much she has dedicated herself to the Forum over these many years. The Forum has benefitted immensely from her intelligence, strong leadership, and untiring advocacy of standards and quality in education abroad. She has contributed so much that it is impossible to measure the positive impact that she

has had on the success of the Forum. Thank you Mary for all that you have done for the Forum!

### ***Membership Summary***

<u>Member Type</u>	<u>Total</u>
U.S. Colleges/Universities	389
Universities outside U.S.	79
U.S. Education Abroad Provider Organizations	56
Non-U.S. Education Abroad Provider Organizations	36
<u>Affiliates and Reciprocal Organizations</u>	<u>47</u>
<b>Total Institutional Members =</b>	<b>607</b>

Notes: Over 100 new institutions and organizations have joined the Forum this year  
Membership renewal rate is 96%

### ***New and Upcoming Events***

- **Regional and Customized Workshops** on the Standards of Good Practice; Assessing and Developing Short-Term Programs; Developing an Assessment Plan for Education Abroad; Implications of the Clery Act
- **Standards of Good Practice Institutes**  
“Beyond the Basics of Health, Safety and Security” June 12, 2012 at The George Washington University
- **Forum Dublin Conference**, “Reinventing the European Experience: Culture, Politics and Diversity in U.S. Education Abroad,” December 5-7, 2012, University College Dublin

### ***The New Strategic Plan***

Later this spring, Forum members will be asked for ideas about and feedback on a draft of the new Strategic Plan that will guide the Forum over the next three to five years. Check the Forum News and the Forum web site in the coming weeks for more information. The Forum’s activities and agenda are shaped by its members; your input is essential!

Whalen then introduced Paul Davies, Vice-President for Administration and Finance at Randolph-Macon College and treasurer of the board, to give the financial report.

### **Financial Report**

Paul Davies, Vice-President for Administration and Finance at Randolph-Macon College, and Treasurer of the Forum Board of Directors, reported on the Forum’s financial position.

Davies reviewed the Forum’s fiscal year ended June 30, 2011 and its operating results. He announced that the Forum is in excellent financial shape as it continues to improve its financial position. The Forum finished the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011 with revenues exceeding expenses by \$242,765.

Davies noted that as Dwyer is finishing her sixth year as chair and rotating off the Board as the last founding Board member, he would like to highlight some of the key financial indicators that have been achieved under her tenure going back to the founding of the Forum in 2001.

- Net Assets have grown to almost \$900K. Those involved in the early years, know what a challenge it was to cover operating expenses, let alone establish a reserve.
- At the end of 2002, the Forum had 78 members. Today it has over 600. This is an increase of over 660%.
- Membership renewal is currently at 96%
- 200 attended The Forum's first annual conference in 2004. In Denver there are over 1,250. This is an increase of 525%
- The market value of the endowment was \$475,990 as of June 30

Davies noted that the reserves that have been accumulated are critical to the long-term success of the Forum. They provide financial security and stability, and will help the Forum to advance the new strategic plan that is being developed. Davies noted that over half of the Forum's revenue comes from the annual conference, and not only cover conference expenses but also help support the annual operating budget.

Davies then extended thanks to Dickinson College for providing approximately \$47,000 of in-kind annual services to the Forum. This includes, use of the facility, university services and supplies. In addition, Dickinson has allowed the Forum to invest its cash reserves through the Dickinson Endowment. This allows the Forum to invest these reserves in a prudent manner, with the purpose of enhancing the growth or the operating budget.

Davies stated that the Board is pleased to announce that its auditors, Boyer and Ritter, in their Independent Auditor's Report, have issued an unqualified or "clean" opinion on the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities for the financial year ended June 30, 2011. Davies said that this is the highest level of audit assurance and is a credit to Whalen and his staff.

He told the audience that copies of the audited financial statements can be found on the tables and will be posted on the Forum website next week. He then said that if there are any questions about the audited financial statements. People should feel free to talk to Brian Whalen or Davies during the meeting or email Davies at [Randolph-Macon College at pauldavies@rmc.edu](mailto:pauldavies@rmc.edu).

Davies then noted that the Forum's success would not be possible without the support of the members, the staff of the Forum and Dickinson College. The Board thanks the membership for its continued support as the organization works to ensure the Forum remains financially sound for years to come.

In closing, Davies thanked Mary Dwyer for giving him the opportunity to serve with her on the Forum Board, stating that it has been an honor and pleasure. Davies said:

One of the many things that always impressed me about Mary Dwyer was her ability to make sure all Board members were heard, while still keeping us focused and on task. I have learned a lot from Mary and will miss her sense of humor. Her management style has taught me to be a more effective Board member and leader. Due to her leadership, dedication, and hard work the Forum is well positioned for the future.

Davies then introduced Michael Morrison, Professor of Law at Baylor University, and Chair of the Forum Council, to review highlights from the Council's work this year.

### **Forum Council Highlights**

Michael Morrison, Chair of the Forum Council, reported on the activities of the Council during 2011-12. In doing so, he referred to the summary that was distributed at each table in the room (see below).

After explaining the purpose and scope of the Forum Council, Morrison stated that a focus of the Council this year was to consolidate its activities and polish its existing work. He noted that the Council has produced an impressive range of deliverables but that it recognized the need to organize them with greater efficiency and make them more user friendly.

He then said that the terms of the following Council members were expiring on June 30 of this year, and he thanked these individuals for their service: David Shallenberger and John Wells. He noted that the Forum sends Council members an official thank you and gift and a letter to their superior noting their service to the Forum. Morrison also mentioned that his term on the Council will also be up at the end of this fiscal year.

Morrison then asked all current and past Forum Council members to stand to be acknowledged and he thanked them for their current and past work in representing the membership and helping to produce the resources that are so critical to all Forum member organizations.

Morrison then took the time to acknowledge the extraordinary work of Michael Steinberg, who has been enormously productive in his service to the Forum. Morrison noted that Steinberg was thanked last year when he cycled off of the Forum Council, but he has remained as a co-chair of the Standards Committee this year to help with the transition to a new chair. Steinberg has done a masterful job in steering the Standards Committee for the past several years, and the results can be seen in the latest edition of the Standards and all of the supporting resources.

Morrison then announced that elections for open positions on the Forum Council will be held this spring, with details to be forthcoming. He encouraged anyone interested in finding out about the Council's work to visit the various tables that will be set-up outside this ballroom during the coffee break tomorrow. Council members and committee members will be available to speak about the Council's work and receive feedback and ideas from colleagues.

Morrison then praised Mary Dwyer for her strong leadership as Chair of the Board and said that it was an honor to serve on the Council as Chair and as an ex-officio member of the Board.

### **Forum Council Highlights 2012**

The Forum Council is a body elected by the Forum's members. The purpose of the Forum Council is to provide the expertise needed to advance the five content areas of the Forum through the production of deliverable products and services that benefit the membership and to advise the Forum staff in this regard. The Council works closely with the Forum staff to implement Board policy regarding the resources, services, and benefits which would be most important to the membership.

**Standards Committee:** The School of Record guidelines, developed in collaboration with AACRAO, have been disseminated. Numerous working groups have developed draft documents that are being discussed during the conference, including guidelines related to the following areas: language education abroad; health and pre-health studies in education abroad; undergraduate research abroad; and work, volunteering and experiential education abroad. More than 100 new resources have been approved and added to the Standards Toolbox, providing specific examples of best practices in implementing the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad*.

The **Outcomes Assessment and Research Committee** has researched and made available on the Forum web site a bibliography summarizing recent outcomes research in education abroad. The Committee is now working on a toolbox for Forum members that will support outcomes assessment in education abroad. The Committee coordinated the Standards Institute on Outcomes Assessment in Education Abroad, and the Undergraduate Research Awards competition, working closely with the student award winners on their presentations.

The **Curriculum Committee** is initiating a project to determine the range and nature of curriculum integration initiatives at colleges and universities, which will result in a collection of best practices. A second project will examine pedagogy and off-campus study, and seek to understand the roles of faculty and education abroad professionals in program design, as well as methods for determining learning objectives. The Committee is also developing a survey that will yield baseline data on offerings abroad in work, internships and service learning.

The **Advocacy Committee** assisted with the development of several resources to assist member institutions to advance their goals and programs. Resources have been produced related to a number of emerging issues such as the impact of new U.S. federal financial aid regulations and their impact on education abroad and using the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill benefits for education abroad. In addition, the Committee has assisted with advocacy efforts related to the granting of licenses to education abroad program provider organizations so that they may develop programming in Cuba.

The **Data Committee** conducted the 2011 State of the Field Survey with a 48% response rate, and the survey has debuted at the conference. Formed a new working group, STAIR

(Strategic Alliances Infrastructure and Resources), that is developing resources that will assist member institutions to assess and improve their operations. The Forum's Critical Incident Database has moved from the pilot to a Beta stage, and is featured in a session at the conference.

Morrison then turned the microphone over to Mary Dwyer.

**Closing Remarks**

Mary Dwyer thanked Morrison for his outstanding service to the Forum Council, particularly his last year as Chair, during which he contributed significantly to the Board as well. She then thanked those in attendance for coming and closed the Business Meeting at 8:27am.