



Hanoi Conference: “Symbolic of Changed Relationship”



EWC President Charles E. Morrison addresses the conference participants.



Conference co-chair Thanh Lo Le-Khac Sananikone and EWC Board of Governors Chairman Roland Lagareta

“Your burdens are heavy; your accomplishments are great, and the opportunities greater still. Let us today, and every day, rededicate ourselves to making a difference for our region and the world by converting challenges into opportunities.”

EWC PRESIDENT
CHARLES E. MORRISON

The East-West Center’s largest alumni gathering outside of Hawai’i took place in Hanoi in December 2006. More than 550 alumni from 36 countries convened in Vietnam to address the challenges of “Building an Asia Pacific Community for Sustainable Development.” Panel presentations focused on more than 40 topics ranging from Disaster Management and Prevention to Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Economic Growth, from Emerging Infectious Diseases to Vietnam-U.S. relations.

Reflecting on the changes in the region, EWC President Charles E. Morrison stated in his keynote address, “The Asia Pacific region, in contrast to other parts of the developing world, has made truly great strides, undergoing a rate of development and change that is totally unprecedented in world history.” He further stated that Hanoi’s selection as the venue for the gathering was “symbolic of the changed relationship between Vietnam and the United States” from warring enemies to partners in a dynamic and changing region.



EWC alumna Madame Ton Nu Thi Ninh, vice chair of the Vietnam National Assembly’s Foreign Affairs Committee was a featured speaker at the conference.

Acknowledging the vital role EWC alumni play, President Morrison said, “You are among the scarce leadership resources of the Asia Pacific, individuals who can think and act with the best interest of the region at heart ... Your burdens are heavy; your accomplishments are great, and the opportunities greater still. Let us today, and every day, rededicate ourselves to making a difference for our region and the world by converting challenges into opportunities.”

EWC Association President Larry Foster noted, “While the world changes around us, the mission — the core values of the East-West Center — has remained constant since its founding nearly 50 years ago in Hawai’i: community building, mutual understanding, tolerance and civility.

Current Asia Pacific Leadership Program (APLP) students and alumni also attended the conference and led seven different panel sessions. On the participation of the APLP, EWC Alumni Officer Gordon Ring said, “It is important for our alumni to connect with current students at the Center. This coming together of the generations reignites the EWC spirit amongst the alumni, reinforces the ties



EWC Alumni Chapter Leaders, EWC Board of Governor members, and other conference participants attended a reception hosted by U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Michael Marine (front row, 4th from left) at his residence.



EWCA President Larry Foster (left) and EWCA Chairman Kok Kian Poh

in the network, and paves the way for future collaborative efforts.”

Ring added, “We have demonstrated that there is no other organization in the region that can match EWCA’s breadth, depth, scope and multi-national participation.” The EWC Association (EWCA) is a global network of 47 chapters and more than 50,000 government, business, NGO, and education professionals who have participated in EWC programs over the years.

Key Vietnamese government officials, including Deputy Prime Minister Pham Gia Khiem, Vice Foreign Minister Le Van Bang and EWC alumna Madame Ton Nu Thi Ninh, vice chair of the National Assembly’s Foreign Affairs Committee

also addressed conference-goers. At the closing dinner, the EWC honored the 2006 Distinguished Alumni, Outstanding Volunteers, and Outstanding Alumni Chapters (*see page 41 for a list of awardees*) along with the Chapter Award of Merit recipients.

Co-chairs Thanh Lo Le-Khac Sananikone of Hawai’i (an EWC alumna originally from Vietnam) and EWCA Hanoi Chapter Leader Hoang Hoe were instrumental in organizing the conference, and the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA) worked in cooperation with the EWC alumni office and Hanoi chapter on conference logistics. Conference sponsors included the Ford Foundation; PacMar, Inc.; Sovico



EWC Alumni Officer Gordon Ring and conference Co-chair and Hanoi Alumni Chapter Leader Hoang Hoe

Group; Gary and Bach Mai Larsen; DACO Duyen Trading & Tour Service Co., Ltd; Indochina Capital; the Foreign Trade University; FEDEX; Gannon Corporation; and the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi.



Asia Pacific Leadership Program fellows led several panel presentations at the conference.



EWC Students in the Field Having an Impact

East-West Center students are making a difference! While pursuing their studies, they have engaged in research, internships and service projects in the field. These featured student fellows reflect the diverse range of EWC educational programs and scholarships. Taking the Center's mission to heart, they are actively building an Asia Pacific Community.



Louis (right) in the field with traditional farmers.

EAST-WEST CENTER GRADUATE DEGREE FELLOWS



Elizabeth Cedar Louis

Ph.D. student in Geography from the U.S. with Indian roots

Venturing into the foothills of the Himalayas, Louis sought solutions to the challenges of India's rural farmers. Advocating for traditional sustainable agriculture, she calls for governmental policy change to improve socioeconomic equity, environmental health, and economic profitability.



San Tun Aung

Ph.D. student in Sociology from Burma

In collaboration with the Red Cross Society, Aung is working to improve HIV prevention strategies for Burmese youth.



San Tun Aung, accompanied by a Myanmar Red Cross Society representative (seated left), explains his research survey objectives to Burmese youth.

Caleb O'Kray

Ph.D. student in Natural Resources and Environmental Management from the United States

Bridging the worlds of energy and agriculture, O'Kray's research with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Beijing explored the development of biofuels in China. He recounted, "I visited an ethanol production site in Jilin and met with government officials, academics, and industry representatives. This was an unforgettable experience!"



O'Kray presenting his research findings.

Wilmar Salim interviews a village woman beside the remains of her home.



Wilmar Salim

Ph.D. student in Urban and Regional Planning from Indonesia

Within the earthquake-devastated Bantul District of Indonesia, Salim focused on the lives of those most in need. Connecting with destitute villagers, he assessed the progress made by the local government's poverty reduction initiatives.



ASIA PACIFIC LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FELLOW

Karin Ekdahl

APLP fellow from Sweden

Mobilizing Sri Lankan communities to navigate change, Ekdahl's passion for community development motivated her to raise funds and coordinate the improvement of two child development centers. She expressed, "It was inspiring to see the community realize their ability to bring about change through their own initiatives."

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FELLOW

Nazgul Shabdanbekova

M.P.A. student (Public Administration) from Kyrgyzstan

As an office representative of Kyrgyzstan's Prime-Minister, Shabdanbekova worked to augment the economic conditions of her country by assisting with the Country Development Strategy program and serving as a liaison to capital market representatives.



EAST-WEST CENTER GRADUATE DEGREE FELLOW, EWCA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT, AND PREVIOUS FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOW

Qiong Jia

Ph.D. student in Comparative and International Education from China (Tujia ethnic minority group)

Qiong paved the way for women in China as the youngest and one of the few female deans in the country. Applying her research, she strives to improve the Chinese educational system focusing on equality, sustainability, and the elimination of poverty.



(L to R) Siamomua, Kantha, and Maia at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

U.S.-SOUTH PACIFIC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FELLOWS

Tony Vaefanga Tuli Siamomua

M.P.A. student (Public Administration) from Samoa

On Capitol Hill, Siamomua reported on hearings and NGO briefings as a representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Focusing on child labor and poverty alleviation issues, he reflected, "This experience has made me realize that my life's calling is in international development."



Siamomua with a UNDP staff member at their Washington headquarters.



Kantha (left) with Papua New Guinea's ambassador to the U.S., Evan Paki.

Solomon Kantha

M.A. in Political Science from Papua New Guinea

Drawing leaders together from throughout the South Pacific, Kantha helped coordinate an ambassadorial conference for the United States Asia Pacific Council in Washington, D.C.

U.S.-EAST TIMOR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FELLOW

Francisca Maia

B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies (Academy of Creative Media program) from East Timor

After interning at a production studio that creates documentaries for the Discovery Channel, Maia went on to produce an award-winning documentary on the turbulent situation in her home country of East Timor.





East-West Center Washington Celebrating Five Years

Five years after opening its doors, East-West Center Washington has distinguished itself in carrying out the Center's mission in the nation's capital. Under the leadership of Muthiah Alagappa, East-West Center Washington was established in September 2001 to bring the results of the Center's research, educational, and seminar activity to Washington.

The office has been instrumental in generating discussion on key issues and problems in U.S.-Asia Pacific relations as well as disseminating new research to policymakers and their staff. In five short years East-West Center Washington has established the popular Congressional Study Groups on Asian Security, the Asia Pacific Economy, the Pacific Islands, and country-specific areas such as Japan; a prolific publication program, and two research projects on conflict reduction and nuclear weapons and security in 21st century Asia.

RESEARCH WITH IMPACT

Research conducted by EWC Washington is policy-relevant. The "Dynamics and Management of Internal Conflicts in Asia," a multi-year project funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York investigates the domestic, transnational, and international dynamics of internal conflicts in Sri Lanka, Burma, southern Thailand, Nepal, and northeastern India and explores ways to manage the conflicts and bring about peaceful settlement.

"Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia" is a six-year project funded by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership that initiates a comprehensive and systematic study of the nuclear situation in Asia through research, publications, and training.



East-West Center Washington Director Muthiah Alagappa (left) with then-Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs James A. Kelly (center) and Hawaii's Lieutenant Governor James R. "Duke" Aiona in Washington.

PUBLICATIONS THAT INFORM

East-West Center Washington publications are peer-reviewed and reflect rigorous scholarship. "Studies in Asian Security" book series promotes analysis, understanding, and explanation of the dynamics of domestic, transnational, and international security challenges in Asia. This series is published by Stanford University Press.

The "Policy Studies" series presents analysis of key contemporary domestic and international political, economic, and strategic issues affecting Asia. This series provides new policy insights and perspectives based on extensive fieldwork and scholarship.

ACTIVE DIALOGUE

East-West Center Washington also organizes dynamic forums that engage participants in lively discussion and debate.

The Congressional Study Groups provide forums on key issues of concern to members of the U.S. Congress and their staff. These have included study groups on Asian Security, the Asia Pacific Economy, the Pacific Islands, and country-specific areas such as Japan.

Experts from government, think-tanks, and academic communities also participate in the Asian Policy Forum; the Asia Scholars Forum; the Asian Security Forum; the Democracy and

Human Rights Seminars; and the United States Asia Pacific Council.



THE UNITED STATES ASIA PACIFIC COUNCIL

In 2003, with the support of the U.S. Department of State, the United States Asia Pacific Council (USAPC) was launched by the East-West Center. Under the leadership of USAPC Director Mark Borthwick; chair Stapleton Roy, former U.S. ambassador to China and Indonesia; and honorary chair former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, the USAPC brings together key individuals involved in U.S.-Asia Pacific relations as a forum to inform and enhance U.S.

engagement with the region. Members participate in the Council as private citizens who advise, promote, and facilitate the work of official and private institutions in the Asia Pacific region. Among the institutions that USAPC supports are the regional organizations of the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) whose U.S. representation has been consolidated under the auspices of USAPC.



During its inaugural meeting, then-U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell noted,

“It is a testament to the importance of the council’s mission that it has been able to assemble such a stellar group of leaders from industry, academia, the media, and government.”



USAPC conference participants (L-R, top row): a) Amb. Sandra J. Kristoff, former senior director, Asian Affairs, National Security Council; b) Amb. Soogil Young, chairman, Korea National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation; c) Amb. Robert B. Zoellick, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State. (bottom row): d) Amb. J. Stapleton Roy, USAPC chairman; then-U.S. Rep. James T. Kolbe (R-AZ); and the Hon. Patricia F. Saiki, member of the EWC Board of Governors and former congresswoman (R-HI); e) Amb. Thomas S. Foley, chairman, Trilateral Commission and former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives

EAST-WEST CENTER WASHINGTON ACTIVITIES:

- Conducts collaborative research on key domestic and international political and security issues and problems in and affecting the Asia Pacific.
- Facilitates study groups to inform and stimulate discussion of vital issues in U.S. Asia relations.
- Hosts visiting fellows from Asia Pacific countries and the United States.
- Convenes forums for the presentation of alternative viewpoints on significant issues in U.S.-Asia Pacific relations.
- Features a strong publications program on contemporary issues of regional significance.



EWC's Islam Initiative Fosters New Understanding



Professors and Muslim Student Association advisors participate in an Asian Studies Development Program workshop on Islam in Asia at Tulsa Community College.

“East-West Center activities have always included Muslims and issues involving the Muslim community. However, in the aftermath of September 11th, questions about relations between Muslims and the United States (or the ‘Western world’) have gained new prominence.”

RICHARD BAKER

COORDINATOR OF THE ASIAN MUSLIM INITIATIVE
AND SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE EWC PRESIDENT

In the aftermath of 9/11, the East-West Center undertook ways to search out answers to the questions raised about relations between Muslims around the world and the United States. That search led to the establishment of the EWC's Asian Muslim Initiative in the fall of 2003. The Initiative addresses the misconceptions and misunderstandings that have arisen between Asia's Islamic societies (home to more than half the world's Muslim population) and the United States. Since its inception, the Initiative has met the challenge head-on in the Center's time-tested approach of bringing people together in a neutral setting to share views and explore important and topical issues, with the objective of building a base of longer-term relationships and understanding.

One of the most visible undertakings has been the establishment of the Senior Journalists' Seminar. Journalists are chosen due to their role as communicators, a role that allows them to impact people far beyond their own numbers. Before taking part in the program, many of the American journalists know little of the Islamic world. What they do know is largely colored by the images and stories coming from the Middle East. The



David Crumm, Detroit Free Press' religion writer interviews Ameer Nizami, chief of Jamaat-e-Islami fundamentalist party and former Bangladesh Industries Minister in Dhaka.

Asian Islamic journalists tend to know more about the United States than their American counterparts do of the Islamic world, but here, too, prejudices run deep. The Asian journalists' perception and knowledge of the U.S. often fits neatly into stereotypes of a nation leading an international crusade against Islam.

But the program has demonstrated how direct exposure can reorient perspectives and perceptions. Last summer seven journalists from Asian Islamic communities and six American journalists took part in overlapping two-week study tours of American and Asia, respectively. The participants found the experience enlightening and, as a few characterized the trip, uplifting.

Many of the deeply engrained negative stereotypes will take a long time to be changed, if they ever are. But, by taking part in the Center's Asian Muslim Initiative, participants do come away with a more sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the countries they visit. They also come face-to-face with the reality that most people, no matter where they live or what their religion, share similar values, interests and concerns.



Teachers from Indonesia and Southern Thailand in AsiaPacificEd's Best Practice Institute visit schools in the United States.





EWC Media Programs Coordinator Susan Kreifels (top row, 2nd from right), Asian Muslim Initiative Coordinator Richard Baker (top row, left) and American journalists gather with students at Ma'had Al-Zaytun, the largest Islamic boarding school in Indonesia.

The EWC Education Program also contributed to the diverse range of projects stemming from the Initiative. In 2006, AsiaPacificEd's Partnership-for-Youth program sent 24 American high school students to predominately Muslim southern Thailand for a three-week home stay and study trip. Twenty-four Thai students from the same area came to Honolulu later in the year to experience first-hand life in America and to discuss youth leadership issues across cultures. In the fall, a similar program was held this time focusing on the teachers. The Best Practice Institute brought together 22 teachers from Indonesia and southern Thailand with their American counterparts to explore cross-cultural differences and best teaching practices.

The Asian Studies Development Program has also played an active role in carrying out this Initiative. In 2006, they conducted the eleventh Islam in Asia workshop for U.S. college and university educators, in an on-going series that highlights the vast diversity of Islamic cultures in Asia.

The Initiative ensures that participants from Asian Islamic

communities also take part in other East-West Center programs such as the New Generation and Women's Leadership seminars, and the Asia Pacific Leadership Program. This ensures greater input and representation of Islamic values and points of views are represented, and that the Islamic participants are presented with realities that may run counter to many of the negative stereotypes so prevalent in their home communities.

Islamic scholars have also been welcomed to the EWC under the Initiative to pursue their research and to interact with interested colleagues at the Center, the University of Hawai'i, and the broader Hawai'i community.

One direct outcome of these visits is a better understanding of the Islamic communities in the Asia Pacific region and their interactions with other communities in the region as well as the broader Western world. The Center's ongoing involvement with the Ar-Raniry State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) in Banda Aceh, Indonesia is another example of the Initiative at work. After the December 2004 tsunami destroyed the school and took the lives of many staff and faculty, the Center reached out to enable the Muslim students to complete their college degrees in Jakarta. The EWC and the IAIN also agreed to develop further cooperative activities.



Timothy Connolly, international editor at the Dallas Morning News (right), meeting with leaders of the Ahmediya community (minority Muslim sect) in Dhaka, Bangladesh as part of the 2006 EWC Senior Journalists Seminar.