

## **2007 CALA 21st Century Librarian Seminar Projects in China**

Haipeng Li

Chair, 21st Century Librarian Seminar Task Force  
Chinese American Librarians Association

With China playing more and more a prominent role on the world stage, the need for collaboration and exchange among libraries in the US and China has become more critical. The Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) is taking the lead in the effort of collaborating with Chinese libraries, both academic and public, to promote librarianship in the two countries. Last year, the CALA Board approved the implementation of an important project which would put CALA on the world stage of libraries, the CALA 21st Century Librarian Seminar Series.

After a very successful experimental project with Yunnan University Library last year, four CALA (Chinese American Librarians Association) seminar teams this year, led by Haipeng Li, at Oberlin College and CALA Immediate Past President, Xudong Jin, at Ohio Wesleyan University and CALA Vice President/President Elect 2008-2009, and Guoqing Li, at Ohio University and Co-Chair of the CALA International Relations Committee, successfully conducted training seminars during the month of July at four institutions in China which include:

- Northeast Normal University in Changchun, Jilin Province,
- Shanxi Agricultural University in Taigu, Shanxi Province,
- Yunnan Normal University in Kunming, Yunnan Province
- Yunnan Provincial Library, also in Kunming, Yunnan Province.

Three of this year's seminar hosting libraries were academic and one was a public. The goal of the project is to promote collaboration and exchange between American and Chinese libraries.

In its second year with the project, after a year-long preparation, CALA selected sixteen members, including former president of ALA, Barbara Ford, currently Director of the Mortensen Center for International Library Programs at the University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign, who participated in the seminars as presenters this year. Of the sixteen CALA presenters, twelve are academic librarians and four were public librarians or with public library background.

The seminars focused on the practical aspect of librarianship. Topics covered included a wide range of issues, from reference services to digital libraries, library consortia to virtual library services, information literacy to future of academic librarianship, among many others. More than 50 presentation sessions were conducted and over 20 discussion sessions were held. More than 300 attendees from all over China benefited from these seminars this year.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive at all four sites. Particularly noted in the evaluations were the lively presentations, enthusiastic discussions and new ideas and practices in academic librarianship. Participants very much appreciated the opportunity for exchanging ideas on librarianship with Chinese American librarians, and the efforts of CALA and its members who devoted time to this meaningful and important project.

Many representatives from other library institutions in China that were present at this year's seminars expressed interest and requested that more similar projects be conducted, if possible, at other locations in China. Since the CALA Board has approved this project to be an ongoing CALA event, we expect more projects of this kind to take place every year.

If anyone is interested in getting involved or more information on the project, please contact: Haipeng Li at [haipeng.li@oberlin.edu](mailto:haipeng.li@oberlin.edu). For more information about this year's projects, please go to: <http://tiger.uic.edu/depts/lib/projects/resources/calamw/project/2007/2007.shtml>