

**Associated Colleges of the South**

**Final Report to the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation**

**New Initiatives in Cost Containment**

**December 31, 2004**

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**I. Introduction**

The Associated Colleges of the South is pleased to present its fifth and final report on the activities made possible by the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation Cost Containment Grant that was received in May 2000. This report covers the twelve-month period ending December 31, 2004. A financial summary is included in Appendix A.

2004 was a year of solid activity in the program areas funded by this cost-containment grant. The Purchasing officers reorganized and agreed to meet annually, at their own expense. REALIA (Rich Electronic Archive for Language Instruction Anywhere), which debuted in March 2003 and received national recognition in October 2003, continued to be well received and applauded nationally for its work. The Cuban Art Exhibit, which is part of the Latin American Studies Cuban Connections program, made its ACS debut at the March 2004 Latin American Studies Symposium and will travel to two ACS institutions in 2005. In addition, the Latin American Studies program completed negotiations for affiliation with the School for Field Studies (SFS), which owns research centers in Baja Mexico and Costa Rica. The chief financial officers completed a third ratio analysis project and an accounts payable benchmarking study. Two technology workshops brought together constituents in drama/theatre and in education who continue to explore ways technology can provide collaborative opportunities and enhance the teaching and learning environment within their respective disciplines.

**II. Organization and Structure of the Grant Program**

In 2004, the general program review of the grant funded activities continued to rest with the ACS Council of Deans, who received full reports at their March, May, and November meetings. The ACS presidents received full program reports at their annual meeting in June. Both the Council of Deans and the Presidents received interim reports throughout the year via e-mail. The day-to-day program and fiscal oversight was provided by ACS staff working collaboratively with program committees.

**III. The Program Initiative - Cost Containment on the ACS Campuses**

The following report presents the programs undertaken in 2004 that were made possible by the Foundation grant. Collaborative academic initiatives are presented first. Administrative collaborative efforts are presented next. Each report was written by an ACS staff member in consultation with members of the respective program committees.

## **A. Academic Collaboration**

### **1. Collaborative Initiative in Languages ("ALIANCO")**

In 2004, ALIANCO (Allied Languages in a Networked Collaboration Online) efforts again focused on further development and sustained operation of the REALIA (Rich Electronic Archive for Language Instruction Anywhere) Project, which is an online, searchable archive of high quality media for use in teaching modern languages and cultures. It is found online at [www.realiaproject.org](http://www.realiaproject.org).

The REALIA Managing Board (composed of faculty, librarians, and technologists) focused on transitioning the project from a prototype phase to full production. Currently, this project contains over 1,000 images representing French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Russian, but project participants have laid plans to expand to over 20,000 images in the next three years. Work this year has included extensive cataloging of current material, the creation of editorial boards for each language, establishing workflow practices, and the promotion of the project through partnerships and presentations.

The REALIA collection doubled in size from 2003 to 2004 and now contains over 1,000 images. While the prototype collection represented only Spanish and Russian, new participants have added material for French, German, and Japanese. Much of this work occurred at a June workshop, which involved faculty, students and librarians in cataloging images and creating learning objects (online learning materials) based on images in the collection. In addition, the project employed librarians throughout the year to add extensive metadata to existing entries. To facilitate this growth, the managing board established editorial boards for each language and recruited 21 new faculty from 8 ACS (Davidson, Hendrix, Millsaps, Morehouse, Rollins, Southwestern, Spelman, Washington & Lee, ) and 7 other institutions to serve on these boards. Following the model of traditional journals, senior language editors will supervise the acquisition and distribution of materials to associate editors for vetting, while senior catalogers will work with language faculty in creating and editing metadata. The senior editor for each board will also serve on the REALIA Project Managing Board.

Two custom software features have been developed to support the workflow of the REALIA Project. Developers at the ACS Technology Center and the Midwest Instructional Technology Center created the Online Acquisition Station and Imaging System (OASIS) which allows contributors to easily submit objects to the REALIA collection online. This software has been released as open source so that other users of CONTENTdm (the software that supports the REALIA Project digital collection) may benefit from the technology created for the REALIA Project. In fact, the IDEAS (Image Database to Enhance Asian Studies) project, a searchable multi-media database of Asian materials sponsored by the Midwest Instructional Technology Center, also will use this application. The ACS Tech Center has adapted a second tool for CONTENTdm that allows users to submit feedback on individual objects directly to REALIA Project staff. ACS Tech Center staff rewrote a plug-in to send comments, suggestions, corrections, and other pedagogical applications to project staff and editorial boards. This simple tool will facilitate development of existing materials even with collaborators widely separated geographically. It also has the capability to track how the objects in the collection are used, as users report back to the collection.

In order to promote the use of the REALIA Project Collection, the Managing Board is exploring strategic partnerships. After discussions in summer 2003 between the World

Languages Board of MERLOT (Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching) and representatives of the REALIA Project, the two organizations have signed a partnership agreement and begun collaborating on a variety of projects. Both REALIA and MERLOT are freely accessible resources designed primarily for faculty and students of higher education. MERLOT, found at [www.merlot.org](http://www.merlot.org), provides links to online learning materials with annotations such as peer reviews and sample assignments. MERLOT recently posted a peer review of REALIA Project and awarded REALIA five stars, the highest possible rating. The partnership will strengthen the reach of both resources by continuing to expand the quantity and ensure the quality of online learning materials and services that can easily be incorporated into educational programs. A representative of MERLOT participated in the June workshop for REALIA Project, helping to produce learning objects incorporating the use of images and other material from REALIA Project. Two REALIA Project participants attended the MERLOT Conference in August 2004 and made a presentation on the REALIA Project. Finally, the two organizations also are working on a mechanism to allow simultaneous searches of both the REALIA Project and the World Languages portion of MERLOT. The combined search will be available from both the REALIA Project and MERLOT web sites. In addition, the REALIA Project made its contents available in two other places. First, its metadata has been exported so that it can be searched by OAister, a project of the University of Michigan Digital Library Production Service whose goal is to create a collection of freely available, previously difficult-to-access, academically-oriented digital resources that are easily searchable by anyone at [www.oaister.org/o/oaister/](http://www.oaister.org/o/oaister/).

Second, the collection also has been exported to the ARTstor repository ([www.artstor.org](http://www.artstor.org)). The ARTstor initiative has a mission to use digital technology to enhance scholarship, teaching and learning in the arts and associated fields by providing a repository, tools for using images, and a restricted use environment to protect copyright. The REALIA Project collection was exported to ARTstor as part of a pilot project to explore ARTstor's ability to host institutional collections of images. Since this pilot has been organized by the National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education (NITLE, [www.nitle.org](http://www.nitle.org)), which supports 81 colleges, it is our hope that our collection will be shared by all NITLE institutions that subscribe to ARTstor.

Project participants made the following presentations in 2004:

- Southwest Regional Educause Conference 2004, Arlene Forman, Oberlin College "The REALIA Project: Collaborative Online Archive for Teaching Language and Culture", Thursday, February 26, 2004.
- Southeast Regional Educause Conference 2004, Jeffrey Overholtzer, Washington & Lee, and Teresa Wise, ACS, "REALIA Project: Building a Collaborative, Digital Collection for Teaching", Wednesday, June 9, 2004.
- MERLOT 2004 Conference: Glenda Carl, Southwestern University, and Rebecca Davis, ACS Tech Center, "REALIA Project: A Collaborative Resource for Teaching Languages", Thursday, August 5, 2004.
- Educause 2004, Jeffrey Overholtzer, Washington & Lee, "REALIA Project: Building a Collaborative, Digital Collection for Teaching", Thursday, October 21, 2004

Those who have worked on the ALIANCO and REALIA projects are most grateful for the funding received from the Woodruff Foundation. The collaborative opportunities made

possible through this grant have enhanced the learning/teaching environment for both faculty and students and have incubated resources that will be continue to have an impact within and outside of ACS.

## **2. Collaborative Effort and Program in Latin American Studies (LAS)**

ACS institutions maintain a strong interest in Latin American Studies (LAS), and efforts in this area continue to be supported and advanced through the LAS advisory planning group. The advisory group is comprised of academics from a variety of disciplines with interests in Latin American Studies. Throughout the year, the group's discussions are facilitated through the acs-las (ACS Latin American Studies) email listserv which includes faculty, study abroad administrators and librarians from all sixteen ACS campuses. In addition, key members of the group gather each year at the Latin American Studies Symposium, which takes place annually at Birmingham-Southern College. Details concerning the 2004 symposium and the planning group's discussions are given below in 2.a.

### **a. Latin American Studies Symposium**

The twelfth annual Latin American Studies Symposium took place at Birmingham-Southern College on April 2-3, 2004. See Appendix B for the symposium program. This symposium gives ACS undergraduate students the opportunity to present original research in an encouraging and supportive atmosphere. Frequently, faculty members have mentored their students throughout the semester in preparation for these presentations that take place in both English and Spanish.

In 2004, there were 85 participants in this Symposium. In addition to the ACS institutions, twenty-three institutions from outside of ACS that were represented. The 2004 keynote speaker was Michael J. La Rosa, professor of history at Rhodes College, who spoke on "Columbia in Contrasts: Change Amidst Continuity and the Dangers of Losing Hope." Having just returned from Columbia under a Fulbright grant, Dr. La Rosa was able to give a current and compelling perspective on this important but troubled country.

Another particularly important and engaging component of this year's symposium was the exhibition of an **art exhibit from Cuba**. With support from the Woodruff Cost Containment Grant, planning group members first began working on organizing such an exhibit in 2001. The curator of the University of Richmond Museums and a Richmond faculty member were instrumental in bringing this effort to fruition with the exhibit, *Cuba Plástica: Recent Art from Cuba*, making its debut at the 2004 symposium. The exhibit features ten Cuban artists whose works span a variety of mediums, including video, woodcut and etching paper, screenprint on paper, acrylic on canvas, oils, watercolors, crayon on paper, and gelatin silver print on paper. These pieces strive to transcend politics and engage issues of universal consciousness and art. The works are currently on display at the University of Richmond and will travel to Southwestern University in the fall of 2005. Other ACS institutions have expressed interest in the exhibit, and we are currently working with Richmond to coordinate additional travel sites.

At the same time that the LAS planning group began working on the art exhibit, they also entered into negotiations with two Argentine filmmakers on the development of a **documentary film** profiling Cuban artists. Their film, entitled *Cuba Plástica: It's Not Easy*, was completed in the fall of 2003 and had its first showing in October 2003 at the University of Richmond. The

film also was screened for the 2004 symposium. One of the filmmakers who attended the Symposium spoke to several Birmingham-Southern classes and conducted an open question and answer forum following the showing of the film, which is an excellent complement to the art exhibit. Copies of the film were distributed to all ACS campuses following the symposium. One faculty member commented: "I have received and watched the documentary "Cuba Plástica" several times. I think it is an authentic product and a very well made one. I have been presenting films like "Lista de Espera", "Fresa y Chocolate", "Fidel", "Bitter Sugar," and I am sure "Cuba Plastica" will be an interesting addition to my classes. I will pass the information along to my colleagues as well. Thank you for the copy and for the good job all of you have done."

The symposium's focus on Cuba continued with a presentation by a Rhodes College professor and student who had participated in a service learning trip to Cuba along with a Thomas Jefferson University professor. Their case study provided insight into Cuban culture and health care practices and also initiated a discussion of recent changes in U.S. government regulations concerning travel to Cuba. These regulations continue to be tightened, invoking tremendous concern in the higher education community. The planning group maintains a high interest in Cuba but understands the current difficulties of academic exchanges.

#### **b. HAPI (Hispanic American Periodicals Index)**

Starting in 2002, the planning group recommended negotiating a consortial contract with the HAPI (Hispanic American Periodicals Index) on-line reference service. This contract became effective in August of that year. The arrangement provides ACS institutions with a 20% savings over non-consortial subscription rates. The group expressed satisfaction with this arrangement and recommended continuing the contract. In August 2004, the contract was extended through August of 2005, and six schools currently are participating.

#### **c. Affiliation Agreements for Latin American Programs**

In 2003, on the recommendation of the planning group, ACS signed a consortial affiliation agreement with the School for Field Studies (SFS), which owns research centers in Baja Mexico and Costa Rica. This agreement provides ACS students and faculty with priority access and discounted rates to these SFS centers and to other SFS facilities in Australia, Kenya and the British West Indies. Now, similar agreements are being explored with the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS), based at Duke University, which maintains three premier biological stations in Costa Rica. Discussions also are underway with the director of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) program in Costa Rica, in an effort to determine how ACS and ACM might work together in the area of Latin American Studies.

#### **d. Languages Across the Curriculum**

At this year's planning meeting, the group members also discussed the status of languages across the curriculum (LAC) programs on each of their campuses. Since this is an area of great interest to the group, there will be ongoing discussions regarding the possibilities of sharing faculty development workshops on the topic of LAC.

### **e. Digital Archive Project (REALIA)**

In addition to the above projects, members of the LAS planning group continue to be actively involved in working on and contributing to the REALIA project, a digital archive for language teaching, which was described above in item A.1

### **3. Technology Workshops**

Cost Containment Grant funds were used to host two technology related workshops in 2004. Both workshops were held at sites other than the ACS Technology Center, because of specific technology that was of interest to the participants and available on the host campuses. Actually being able to have hands-on experiences with new technology enabled ACS faculty to explore functionality, ask questions of those who use the technology on a daily basis, and evaluate it for their own use and application.

#### **a. Drama/Theatre Workshop**

Nineteen ACS faculty and students met in San Antonio, Texas, at Trinity University, July 15-18, 2004, for the third ACS Drama/Theatre Summer Workshop. Nine students and ten faculty members represented Centre College, Furman University, Hendrix College, Rhodes College, Rollins College, Southwestern University and Trinity University. This workshop was the first time that faculty were encouraged to bring a student with them to the workshop, and it was a popular feature for all participants. An Evaluation Summary of the workshop is included in Appendix C.1.

Trinity University was selected as the host for this workshop because its Jane and Arthur Stieren Theatre was equipped with some of the latest lighting technology in a recent renovation. The day-long, hands-on lighting session explored new lighting technology and equipment, including computer lighting consoles, intelligent lights, pattern rotators, color scrollers, and more. Tim Francis, workshop host and technical director, Speech and Drama Department, Trinity University, and John Ore, Sound and Light Designer, Southwestern University, led this session exploring new lighting technologies and applications. By the end of the workshop, interest was expressed in exploring the possibility of consortial agreements with at least two providers of specialty lighting equipment.

In another workshop session, Bob Hupp, Artistic Director of the Arkansas Repertory Theatre, engaged participants in a discussion about preparing students at liberal arts institutions for life in the theatre, how important it is for students to read as many plays as possible to become acquainted with the profession through literature, the pros/cons of going to graduate school directly from the undergraduate experience, the importance of students forming connections with professional theatre groups, and how important it is for students to see their faculty at work. In another session, Mr. Hupp led the faculty and students in exercises that focused on tips for teaching Shakespeare.

One highlight of the workshop was a visit to the nearby Marion Koogler McNay Art Museum (<http://www.mcnayart.org>), which has a strong collection of 19th- and 20th-century European and American paintings and sculpture. Some of the artists featured include Rodin, Cézanne, Picasso, Gauguin, Matisse, O'Keeffe and Hopper. Of special interest to the workshop participants was the Museum's outstanding collection of original models, scene and costume

designs covering 500 years of scenic art collected by Robert L. B. Tobin. The nearly 10,000 item collection concentrates on designs for ballet and opera with particular strengths in original renderings for Ballets Russes productions, Broadway musicals, and 20th century designs for European productions.

## **b. Technology Software Review**

The Education Department at Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama, hosted education faculty and department chairs from Centre College, Furman University, Hendrix College, Millsaps College, Southwestern University, and Washington and Lee University for the third annual Teacher Education Summit, on April 23, 2004. An Evaluation summary of this meeting and workshop is included in Appendix C.2.

One of the main purposes of the meeting was to explore technology software resources in the areas of e-portfolios, lesson planning, classroom management, special education, and reading. Since BSC had reviewed a number of e-portfolio technology options before choosing their current software program, participants found it extremely helpful to learn about the review process BSC used to review and to choose an e-portfolio program, the implementation process, the advantages and disadvantages of using e-portfolios and the chosen product, as well as the student and faculty evaluations of e-portfolios and the specific software program.

As a result of the technology reviews held during the 2004 and 2003 Summits, Education Department chairs identified technology related materials that would enhance their curriculum/courses and student computer labs, and three mini-grants were awarded to Furman University, Birmingham-Southern College, and Rhodes College. A description of the individual mini-grants is included in Appendix C.3.

Topics of interest for future Education Summits include responsible technology course integration and use; assessment that closes the loop (assessment methods such as those required by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], etc.) and the use of appropriate technology to assess student learning and teacher competencies; teacher education programs vs. degree only programs; qualification issues; how to show the impact that both student teachers and new teachers have on K-12 learning; and how to involve principals in assessing competencies of teacher education graduates in such areas as content, knowledge, classroom management, interaction with parents, and student impact.

## **B. Administrative Collaboration**

### **1. Joint Purchasing**

ACS purchasing officers decided that their collaborative efforts to date have been so beneficial that they wanted to continue meeting annually, at their own expense, after the Woodruff Cost Containment Grant ended. The first meeting under this new arrangement was held October 11-2, 2004, at Furman University. Representatives from Richmond University, Rollins College, Davidson College, Rhodes College, Southwestern University, Washington & Lee University, University of the South, and Furman University participated. Susanna Baxter, TICUA (Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association), was a special guest who presented information on the J.P. Morgan Chase P-Card that is designed especially for smaller liberal arts colleges and offers considerable cost savings for these institutions.

Since acquiring consortial contracts has been a major emphasis of prior meetings, a primary agenda item at this meeting was a review of existing ACS Consortial contracts and agreements. Special attention was paid to where there was vendor overlap with other regional/national buying consortiums to which the ACS institutions belong. Since ACS member institutions frequently belong to multiple buying cooperatives, the group decided to focus future attention on vendors that are not available through other regional and national sources. This means that contracts/agreements will be kept with Arnold World Class Relocation, Herman Miller, Human Scale, Interface Flooring, KI, Southwest Contract, Teknion, and Virco. Consortial contracts/agreements will be terminated with Office Depot, Boise/OfficeMax, and VWR Scientific because better pricing is available through other buying cooperatives to which ACS institutions belong. Consortial contracts/agreements with the Foundation of California Community Colleges (FCCC), InFocus/Proxima and Kimball International will be terminated because of lack of use by ACS member institutions. At the same time, they would like to explore an ACS agreement with Fischer Scientific, which is a major supplier of science laboratory chemicals and equipment to ACS science faculty.

Purchasing Cards (P-Cards) are a hot topic on ACS institutions because of the cost containment possibilities that exist by using them. Typically, the use of P-cards means that purchase orders no longer have to be submitted and processed because there is a pre-approved purchase limit for each transaction. This in itself creates significant cost savings on a campus. When initiating a P-Card system, the first items usually included in this arrangement are office supplies, office furniture, and small equipment. Some ACS institutions are experimenting with extending P-Card activity to travel costs, utility payments, etc., which will produce even larger rebates from the P-Card vendor with whom they have contracted. Several larger ACS campuses already have P-Card programs and indicate that they have realized significant savings in personnel costs and administrative expenses as a result of implementing such a system.

Since P-Card programs typically are geared to larger institutions, smaller campuses have difficulty finding a beneficial program to use. However, the Tennessee Independent College and University Association is negotiating with J.P. Morgan Chase to provide a P-Card program that is designed specifically for institutions with less than \$5 million spend. Susanna Baxter, a TICUA representative, shared information on their negotiations with J.P. Morgan Chase and invited ACS to join TICUA in this program when negotiations are completed. If ACS does so, all ACS institutions would be eligible to contract with J.P. Morgan Chase for this P-Card. The purchasing officers agreed to review the document when it is ready and, if all looks well, recommend this particular P-Card program to their chief financial officers for consideration at their March 2005 meeting.

Other agenda items included updates on “green” practices; reviving the ACS Purchasing Measures and Practices Benchmark Study; interior design practices and policies, campus activity updates, including new buildings and renovations, bookstore and food service operations, retirements and new hires in business offices; diversity issues; and the diverse responsibilities of the purchasing officers on small campuses. In addition, the representative from Washington & Lee University shared information on WLU’s Travel Portal ([www.campustravel.com/university/wlu/](http://www.campustravel.com/university/wlu/)), which allows faculty and staff to make local and out-of-state travel arrangements via a campus web-site, which includes information on discounts for hotels, airlines, rental cars, etc.

The purchasing officers also discussed the future direction and emphasis for this group. The consensus was to focus on issues, policies, and practices, while maintaining an interest in

securing beneficial vendor agreements that are not available through other higher education buying cooperatives. There is strong sentiment among the members of this group that meeting with their ACS colleagues is the best peer group opportunity around, because nothing of this type exists on a regional or national level for purchasing officers at smaller institutions.

The October 2005 meeting of ACS purchasing officers will be held at Washington & Lee University, and the 2006 meeting will be hosted by Rollins College.

As in previous years, there are five additional ACS cost containment consortial efforts that deserve to be mentioned as examples of cost containment efforts in other ACS programmatic areas:

a. In 2004, three ACS libraries again participated in OCLC's First Search database project, with unlimited access, at a five percent discount.

b. Twelve ACS member institutions and one non-ACS institution saved \$23,283 in 2004 through a joint subscription to a social science database from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

c. The ACS contract with Adobe Software began in 2001 and is up for renewal in 2005. The savings this year are even more dramatic than in previous years', primarily because of the increase in pricing on Adobe's "non-contractual" TLP licensing. Savings on some products now is nearly 50% of the cost of the same licenses without a CLP contract in place. Total expenditures this year by twelve ACS member institutions and one non-ACS institution were \$78,702.84, with a savings of \$62,518.31 over the same licensing on a "non-contractual" basis.

d. In 2004, six ACS institutions again participated in the consortial agreement with HAPI: Hispanic American Periodicals Index. The regular subscription rate is \$1,400. With the consortial discount of 20% on the subscription rate, each institution paid \$1,120, for a collective savings of \$1,680.

e. ICCS: Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome. Eleven ACS institutions participated in the ACS consortial membership with ICCS, at a cost of \$2000 total. Under this agreement, each institution pays an annual membership fee of \$181.82. Without the consortial agreement, the cost for eleven institutional memberships would be \$8,250 or \$750 each. The consortial membership yields an annual savings of \$6,249.98, or \$568.18 per institution per year.

## **2. Benchmarking Activity in the Business Area**

The chief financial officers continue to use their email listserv to share information about policies, practices and issues, and to conduct quick surveys throughout the year. Topics addressed in 2004 e-list discussions included investment objectives, IT funding, tuition and fees, donor reports, structure for Trustee committees, administrative rates for medical insurance, and various aspects of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

Once again, all 16 of the ACS chief financial officers participated in the 2004 Ratio Analysis Update. This third Ratio Analysis Report, presented at the March 2004 CFO meeting at Davidson College, now provides an invaluable five year credit profile of ACS member institutions, both individually and collectively. The CFOs plan to continue participating in annual Ratio Analysis updates. Other benchmarking possibilities are being considered. The Associate VP for Finance at Rollins College has adapted/developed a computer software program that

enables the ACS benchmarking studies to be completed and submitted online. Once he receives the completed surveys, he collates the material and provides appropriate summary commentary for everyone's edification.

During the late Spring and early Summer of 2004, Rollins undertook an energy efficiency audit to update the 1996 pilot study that was conducted for the benefit of its own campus as well as for other ACS institutions. AdvanTek Consulting Firm, Melbourne, Florida, was engaged to conduct the study. The outside consultants worked closely with Rollins' facilities management staff and their HVAC, boiler, and electrical technicians during the onsite surveys of the ten buildings/facilities that were selected to be studied. The final 40 page report provided an overall energy cost analysis and specific recommendations for each building/facility included in the survey. The Vice President for Business & Finance and Treasurer at Rollins indicates that a list of the recommendations and Rollins' plan for implementation of them is being developed and will be shared with other ACS chief financial officers when it is available. A copy of the final report has been sent to each ACS chief financial officer.

The 2005 CFO meeting will be hosted by Trinity University.

### **3. Diversity Pilot Program**

Twenty-one participants, including two students, from five ACS institutions, experienced the National Coalition Building Institute's (NCBI) model of **Leadership for Diversity Training** on May 22, 2004, at Furman University. In addition to Furman, the participating institutions were Davidson College, Rhodes College, Rollins College, and Southwestern University. Robert Dungey, director of the Canada NCBI office, and Idella Glen, Director of Multicultural Affairs at Furman and a trained NCBI trainer, facilitated the workshop. With an active NCBI campus chapter already operating on campus, Furman was the ideal host site and one where participants could talk with persons who use the model on a regular basis.

This preview was a direct result from a recommendation made by the participants in the Students/Diversity Officers/Chief Student Affairs Officers meeting at Birmingham-Southern in June 2003, to the ACS Diversity Initiative Planning Committee. After exploring different prejudice reduction models, the Diversity Planning Committee chose to promote the NCBI model because of its focus on leadership development and a component that is tailored specifically to the higher education experience. Objectives of the NCBI Leadership For Diversity Program include:

- Expanding one's understanding and appreciation of diversity.
- Learning approaches for encouraging respect and teamwork.
- Identifying information and misinformation learned about other groups.
- Listening with interest to people who are different [from one's self].
- Learning the interests, strengths, and difficulties of groups other than your own.
- Discovering strategies for reducing and eliminating prejudicial attitudes on campus, in the classroom, and in the workplace.

Participants in the May 22<sup>nd</sup> workshop said they were energized by the open and honest dialogue that took place, the possibilities for community building, the straightforward model itself, and the opportunity to learn more about it. Interest also was expressed in taking this model back to the campuses and exploring the possibilities of starting NCBI campus

chapters. At least one campus, Rhodes College, began an NCBI campus chapter in the fall of 2004.

#### **4. A Consortial Banner Ad**

In November 2004, ACS ventured into a new cost containment and diversity promotion area when it ran a consortial banner ad in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Under the name of each of the eleven participating ACS member institutions, the advertisement listed anticipated tenure-track faculty openings for the remainder of the 2004-05 academic year and for the beginning of the 2005-05 academic year. Also included were individual campus websites where more information about the openings could be found. In addition, the ad promoted the consortium's and the member institutions' commitment to diversity and on-going efforts to create a "diverse learning community where individuals and the campus community as a whole may safely and respectfully explore unfamiliar ideas, convictions, and practices." The ACS Council of Deans approved this venture, and the Office of Academic Affairs on each campus coordinated and submitted information for the ad. The ad ran in the November 4, 2004, print edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and was posted on their on-line job postings site for 30 days. At the end of three weeks, the ad had been viewed on line 9088 times.

#### **5. Exploring Collaborative Possibilities with Emory University and Vanderbilt University/Peabody College of Education and Human Development**

Developing linkages and collaboration with private research universities, such as Emory and Vanderbilt, will be important ongoing activities in ACS in the future. The ACS Presidents and the Council of Deans see great potential and value in entering into such relationships.

Initial conversations with Emory indicate that Emory is very interested in exploring collaborative opportunities with ACS. Ideas for exploration include undergraduate research and opportunities for post-docs and/or graduate students to teach at ACS institutions and to experience the liberal arts college environment.

After several preliminary conversations with key administrators at Vanderbilt in late 2003 and early 2004, seven representatives from ACS traveled to Vanderbilt on May 17, 2004, to meet with representatives from Vanderbilt and Peabody to explore possible collaborative efforts in the area of teacher education. This seemed a good place to start since two ACS institutions already have negotiated an agreement with Peabody regarding courses that may be applied to Peabody's graduate school requirements for a master's degree and licensure, provided all of Peabody's other admission and degree requirements are met.

Since this meeting in May 2004, the key Vanderbilt person with whom we were working has moved to another state and another Vanderbilt administrator has become the key contact person. While the ACS exploration with Vanderbilt/Peabody is alive, it is moving slowly, due in part to this change in contact persons. However, one ACS institution is so energized by the possibilities of collaboration that they are pursuing, on their own, an agreement with Peabody like the one already in place at the two other ACS institutions.

As a result of the May 2004 meeting at Vanderbilt/Peabody, several possibilities for collaboration/cooperation in teacher education were identified, including the following:

##### **I. Undergraduate Research**

- Inventory and share information on current research efforts

- Invite joint participation in upcoming ACS Undergraduate Education Research Symposium
- Sponsor collaborative student research
- Offer research internships
- Explore summer exchange programs
- Use ACS sites for student and/or faculty research - e.g. Mississippi delta, other rural areas, and Memphis area

## II. **Graduate Education**

- Share basic information about ACS teacher education students - where they are going to grad school
- Expand the collaborative model that Vanderbilt/Peabody has with Rhodes and Sewanee to other ACS institutions
- Raise the visibility and nature of Vanderbilt/Peabody grad programs on ACS campuses
- Do licensure at Vanderbilt/Peabody rather than on ACS campuses - for example, at Rhodes
- Explore a 5 year, dual degree program
- Offer reciprocal student teaching assignments
- Jointly seek student aid funding, particularly to support minority students

## III. **Faculty Research**

- Inventory and share information on current faculty research interests
- Offer broad research opportunities at Vanderbilt/Peabody for ACS faculty, perhaps during sabbatical years and/or in the Summer, including library privileges and housing information
- Use ACS sites for Vanderbilt/Peabody faculty research - e.g. Mississippi delta, other rural areas, and Memphis area.

## IV. **Post-doctoral Students**

- Offer opportunities for Vanderbilt/Peabody post-docs to serve as sabbatical replacements on ACS campuses
- Provide appointments for post-docs of 2-3 years at ACS institutions
- Explore opportunities for minority post-docs in particular

## V. **Assessment**

- Share information on what currently is being done in terms of assessment
- Continue the dialogue on challenging assessment issues
- Identify the needs of pre-service students

## VI. **Fundraising**

- Consider joint fund raising ventures to fund projects designated as the highest priority for cooperation/collaboration
- Jointly prepare a planning grant proposal

#### IV. Grant Summary and Conclusion

The original proposal for the Cost Containment Grant, which was received in May 2000, built upon an earlier grant from the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation and outlined specific cost containment/reduction projects in the three areas of academic applications of technology, joint purchasing, and other administrative efficiencies.

In identifying the area of academic applications of technology, ACS recognized that technology can leverage the resources of the individual institutions to expand academic offerings for the benefit of all and in a manner that is both cost effective and of high quality. Modern Languages and Latin American Studies (LAS) became the two “laboratory” areas for the application of technology to link the appropriate faculty at each ACS institution to create a coherent, interactive whole. As a result of the Cost Containment Grant, the collaborative initiative in Languages, known as ALIANCO (Allied Languages in a Networked Collaboration Online), made great strides. The Russian Mosaic project, for example, resulted in a course that will be taught in the Spring of 2005 and will be available for the member institutions of ACS, GLCA (Great Lakes College Association), and ACM (Associated Colleges of the Midwest). What otherwise would be difficult to achieve because of limited resources in a particular area at a small number of institutions now, through collaboration, becomes available to a much larger student audience, resulting in cost savings for the institutions involved and broader exposure for the students.

One of ALIANCO’s more celebrated achievements is the REALIA database project (Rich Electronic Archive for Language Instruction Anywhere), which was launched in March 2003, with 200 annotated images for the teaching of Spanish and Russian. Since its debut, REALIA has been showcased at national conferences and workshops and received a five star rating (the highest rating available) from the MERLOT (Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching) World Languages Editorial Board. The distinguishing characteristics of this database include:

- acceptance of contributions from both faculty and students.
- A straightforward contribution mechanism that enables instructors to readily share materials.
- An easy to use search mechanism and interface that encourages use of contributed materials in the classroom.

The collaborative efforts in the Latin American Studies (LAS) project blossomed with energy as faculty from a variety of disciplines, study abroad administrators, and librarians from all sixteen ACS member campuses explored possibilities and engaged in various activities. The annual Latin American Studies Symposium, held at Birmingham-Southern College, became a lively venue that attracted an increasing number of participants from a large geographical area, including California and Puerto Rico, and one where undergraduates could present original research in a supportive and congenial atmosphere. Through the broader LAS project:

- a consortial contract was negotiated with HAPI (Hispanic American Periodicals Index), an online reference service about Central And South America, Mexico, the Caribbean basin, the United States-Mexico border region, and Hispanics in the United States.
- developed an LAS website within the ACS parent website.
- six faculty and four students from ACS institutions and Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN, visited Cuba in March 2003, to examine a wide range of

topics, including health care and educational systems, organized and traditional religion, the role of women in Cuban society, economic development, and environmental sustainability.

- a Cuban Art exhibit was brought to the University of Richmond Museums and made available to other ACS institutions.
- members of the LAS planning committee and ACS staff worked with two Argentine filmmakers during the creation of a documentary film profiling Cuban artists. Copies of the film were distributed to all campuses.
- secured an affiliation agreement with the School for Field Studies (SFS), which owns research centers in Baja Mexico and Costa Rica. This agreement will provide ACS students and faculty with priority access and discounted rates to these SFS Centers along with facilities in Australia, Kenya, and the British West Indies.
- several members of the LAS planning group maintained active involvement in the REALIA project.

Also in the area of technology application, ACS proposed Cooperative Technology Training opportunities designed to support more broad-based technology training for ACS faculties through the ACS Technology Center. Since the inception of the grant, over 300 faculty and students have participated in a variety of technology application workshops, learning new skills, developing new courses/modules, all of which enhance the learning/teaching environment. Workshop topics included Macromedia Flash, Digital Video, Website Production, Online Database Development, IT Staff Training, and Music and Technology. Almost all of the workshops initiated under this grant continue to be held at an advanced level of work.

The Orpheus Alliance was created as a direct result of the Music and Technology Workshop. Dedicated to creating successful music collaborations for ACS faculty and students, this Alliance uses technology to exchange data; to engage in online discussions; to create online learning objectives; to provide webcasts, instreaming video and audio segments. The Alliance also promotes live performances, such as Luna Nova, the ACS New Music Ensemble that was founded in 2003 to begin a series of performances of classics of the 20th century for the annual ACS New Music Festival. Another feature is the Composer's Forum, which brings together faculty and student composers to create and perform new music at the annual New Music Festival and Technology Workshop held at the ACS Technology Center.

In the area of Joint Purchasing, the three year implementation plan specifically called for:

- creating a process to negotiate contracts.
- partnering with Emory University's Purchasing Department to add significant economies of scale to joint purchasing activities.
- developing, monitoring, and updating an ACS buying group web site.
- conducting on-going evaluations of products and user satisfaction, and, where possible, to re-negotiate existing contract arrangements.
- developing model contracts.

In the four plus years since the grant was received, all of the above goals were met. With the very able assistance of Emory University's Director of Purchasing, who acted as a consultant to this group:

- a process was created to identify potential vendors and negotiate contracts.
- a standard (model) vendor contract was created and has been in use for three years.

- Emory contracts were extended to ACS institutions, thereby providing the potential for a larger buying volume, which was attractive to prospective vendors.
- an ACS Joint Purchasing web site was created which includes lists of and provides links to current consortial contracts and provides access to a list of the ACS purchasing contacts.
- product evaluation and user satisfaction assessment has occurred in an informal manner.

The very process of meeting these original goals led to the development and realization of others. The purchasing officers developed a mission statement and criteria for vendor selection, which are included on the purchasing web page. They began to talk about best practices and campus issues that had implication for purchasing activities. They evaluated possibilities, accepting some and rejecting those that did not make sense (economically or otherwise) for their size institutions. An example of the latter would be the decision not to create an ACS e-commerce site, because most of the ACS institutions would not generate enough purchasing volume to justify the initial cost and annual renewal fees. This group even made a brief foray into the world of RFPs (Request for Proposal). They became interested in “Buying Green” and purchasing practices to support such activities, and they became a group of peers who found value in exchanging information, ideas, and concerns.

Were substantial savings realized through these efforts? Absolutely. Can these savings be documented with hard numbers? In some cases they can be, like the Adobe contract and some of the on-line journal subscriptions that have included in the annual grant reports. However, in most cases the hard savings cannot be documented. Why? First, the vendors themselves cannot document the actual savings realized. While vendors can provide information on discounts offered/used, they do not keep the kinds of records that provide this kind of hard data on savings. Second, the ACS institutions do not keep this kind of hard data either. None of the ACS agreements are exclusive, so the institutions typically use multiple vendors for the same type of product, even within the same office or project. Third, most of the ACS campuses have decentralized purchasing practices, which means that there is not one person who provides coordinated purchasing oversight to make sure the best price is used for an item. If ACS institutions could negotiate some exclusive contracts, like in office supplies, then real savings could be tracked and would be more visible.

Perhaps more important at this juncture is that through the meetings, discussions, and the development of vendor agreement templates, a mission statement and vendor selection criteria, the purchasing officers began to develop a broader view of their responsibilities and of their importance on campus. They sharpened their own negotiating skills and discovered better practices and policies to implement. All of these skills will enable the individual purchasing officers to be more effective and efficient on their own campuses, which ultimately improves the institution’s bottom line.

In the area of **Administrative Efficiency** the focus was on benchmarking as “an approach to facilitate change by systematically and creatively borrowing ideas from others.” Comparing administrative policies and practices across 16 institutions, enables individual campuses to identify “best practices” and adapt these to their own specific situations, often resulting in notable efficiencies, improved operations, and cost containment, as well as more efficient administrators and leaders.

During the life of this grant, the chief financial officers engaged in the following four benchmarking activities:

- the Ratio Analysis project (an individual and collective credit profile of ACS institutions)
- the Financial Best Practices Survey in the areas of financial reporting, accounts, payable, budgeting, and financial operations
- the Accounts Payable Benchmark Study
- the Energy Audit Update at Rollins College

The formal projects undertaken through this grant and sharing information informally through the e-mail list that was created solely for their use enabled the CFOs to address real-time issues, change/adapt policies and practices based on information received, and identify issues/concerns for further study and discussion. The CFOs found the benchmarking activities to be so helpful that they have decided to continue this activity on their own. In fact, one of the associate vice presidents for finance developed survey software capability, installed it on a secure server on his campus, makes it available for use by CFOs and Purchasing officers, collates the collected data and generates reports, which offers tremendous cost savings to these two groups.

The admissions officers emphasized technology and how it could be used in the admissions process, including communications with prospective students before, during, and after the application process and campus visits. In 2001, thirteen ACS admissions officers participated in a two-day Enrollment Technology Summit held at the Microsoft Campus in Redmond, Washington, and sponsored by ACS, Microsoft, College Board, and the Sequitur Corporation. At the close of this workshop, the ACS participants spent an additional one-half day in an individualized discussion session with representatives from Sequitur Corporation, reviewing Sequitur's recruitment software, mobile devices, and wireless connectivity capabilities. The presentations made the case that by fully integrating the power of cyberspace there was significant potential for cost savings, and plans were made for follow-up activities within ACS. Even though the follow-up plans were not realized as envisioned, several individual institutions took the information and modified their technological use in their on-line dissemination of information and interaction with potential and first-time enrolled students. In 2004, several ACS institutions had the opportunity to explore serving as an ACS pilot institution for the online admissions *Genie* program produced by CONNEXIA, a local Atlanta company. Mostly for local campus reasons, the interested institutions decided not to pilot the CONNEXIA program for ACS. While the efforts in the admissions area have been disappointing, the concern to develop collaborative programs in admissions remains high on the list of the ACS Presidents.

A serendipitous by-product of cost-containment efforts was realized in 2002 when the ACS Council of Deans experimented with using secure pages within the ACS web site to view staff reports that were submitted for both scheduled meetings and for interim reports. This eliminated the time consuming and costly activity of mailing voluminous printed reports to them before each meeting. This experiment was so well received by the Council of Deans that it has become the standard reporting practice for them and for the ACS presidents, as well. Posting reports online saved an estimated \$3,000 in 2003, in such items as paper, postage, notebooks and supplies. The savings would be even greater if the staff time required to copy, collate, and mail the materials were included.

In conclusion, the generous support of the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation has enabled the ACS consortium and its member institutions over the past five years to undertake and to support cost containment activities that have had appreciable and positive impacts on learning/teaching opportunities and on administrative practices. These consortial and campus efforts have:

- demonstrated the benefits and validity of collaborative efforts.
- offered models of cooperation.
- developed sustainable programs.
- raised the consciousness about and visibility of cost containment.
- generated cost savings.
- supported resource maximization.
- reduced duplication of efforts.
- promoted collaboration among faculty; administrators, and institutions.
- encouraged innovative teaching and learning techniques
- expanded horizons.
- identified new policies and practices
- led to creative and supportive networks throughout the consortium.

Even though the Cost Containment Grant has ended, the ripple effect of the activities generated under its auspices will be around for a long time to come as faculty and administrators continue to implement and hone practices and policies that evolved through grant funded activities and as students reap the benefits of a more engaged and active learning/teaching environment.

The individuals and the campuses that have benefited from the opportunities made possible through this Cost Containment Grant are deeply grateful for the Foundation's investment in the Associated Colleges of the South.

