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The Global Alliance

For the last three years (and further back, in less formal terms), ASIS&T has pursued a policy of engagement with other associations and societies around the world. We call this project the Global Alliance of Information Sciences, Technologies and Services Societies, or simply the Global Alliance for short. The alliance hopes to create a space in which scholarly and professional societies can share information, conduct joint activities, facilitate international networking and jointly offer an attractive image to prospective entrants in the information professions.

Two practical outcomes of this initiative are that we are in the process of (1) creating an electronic means of sharing information on a regular basis and (2) seeking agreements with those societies desiring to establish reciprocal member rates at each other's conferences.

The point person (that is, the president or representative thereof) for each society is someone who is multilingual. In the case of ASIS&T our representative has been Michel Menou.

During the year, I will be introducing the ASIS&T membership to various of these partners. One sister society in the Global Alliance is the Asociación de Educación e Investigación en Ciencia de la Información de Iberoamérica y el Caribe / Associação de Educação e Investigação em Ciência da Informação da Iberoamerica e Caribe (EDIBCIC).

An approximate English translation of EDIBCIC's full name would be the Iber-American and Caribbean Association for Education and Research in Information Sciences, Library Technology, Archives and Documentation. It is recognized by UNESCO as a key coordinating agency for Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking information scientists.

EDIBCIC was created in 1996. The association came about through meetings among educators and researchers in the information sciences during the 1990s. They came together to exchange ideas and experiences with the intention of integrating and consolidating learned societies and interests in information science.

EDIBCIC has active membership from 17 countries in Latin America and Europe, including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Spain and Uruguay. These countries are organized into four geographic regions: Andean, Mercosur, Caribbean and Spain-Portugal. In May 2008 the Spain-Portugal group organized a meeting regarding research, education and jobs in the information professions that paved the way for systematic cooperation among the LIS schools in those two countries. EDIBCIC has held meetings in Puerto Rico (1993, 1996), Mexico (1995, 2008), Venezuela (1998), Spain (2000), Argentina (2004) and Brazil

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(2006). Both the proceedings of these meetings and a comprehensive listing of LIS programs and publications of Latin America resulting from a European Union Alfa project led by Ian M. Johnson of the University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom, are available on the EDIBCIC website.

The association has a number of working groups, including members interested in infometrics, the organization of knowledge, the growth of knowledge, international relations, information and communication technologies, archives, professional development and labor market and information literacy, among others.

The immediate past president, Professor Elias Sanz Casado, attended the ASIS&T Annual Meeting in Columbus in November

of 2008. He is a faculty member in the Departamento de Biblioteconomía y Documentación of the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid in Spain. The incoming president is Professor Roberto Garduño Vera of the Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas (CUIB), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. The vice president is Professor Marta Lígia Pomim Valentim of the Information Science Department of the Universidade Estadual Paulista, in Marília, Brazil. The EDIBCIC secretary is Professor José Antonio Frias Montoya of the Librarianship and Documentation Department of the University of Salamanca, Spain.

We are pleased to welcome EDIBCIC as one of the members of the Global Alliance. ■