

# AALE NEWSLETTER



Winter-Spring 2005 Vol. XI, No. 1

## Three New Members Welcomed to the Board of Trustees

At the biennial National meeting held in June 2004, the Board of Trustees voted to amend the AALE bylaws to allow the nominations and subsequent election of additional members to the Board of Trustees. The Board now more fully reflects the full scope of the Academy's membership, particularly in light of its increasing number of

accredited charter schools. The three accepted nominees bring an expertise that assists in evaluating charter school applications for accreditation.

**Olga Block** is the founding principal of BASIS TUCSON and co-founder of BASIS SCOTTSDALE, both of which are high-performing liberal arts charter schools serving middle

and high school students. Block has set high academic standards for her students--instituting, for example, the use of the AP curriculum and examinations in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. A native of the Czech Republic, she holds an Engineering degree from Economics University in Prague and, after the "Velvet Revolution," she spent a year studying  
(See "Board," page 15)

## Academy Launches International Higher Education Programs

In light of the Academy's recent accreditation of the University of London's External Programme and numerous inquiries by colleges outside the U.S., the Board of Directors formally approved three new categories of international membership at its June 2004 national meeting. The Academy's curriculum standards, most of which are universal rather than limited to the American experience, are applicable across national and geographic borders, if for no other reason than that liberal learning (inquiry into the

facts and meanings of nature and human nature) is the proper pursuit of all human beings.

liberal learning (but may be at varying degrees of development) to find a place at the table with like-minded institutions across borders.

The first category of membership, **Affiliation**, requires that each affiliated member school to submit a full mission statement outlining its commitment to liberal learning as embodied in the Academy's written documents. Often, the affiliate may be new or small, and thus might



*Pictured from left to right during a Staff Visit to International Christian University in Tokyo: AALE Director of Higher Education Jeff Martineau, ICU Vice President for Academic Affairs Mitsuo Morimoto, AALE President Jeffrey Wallin, ICU Dean of the College of Liberal Arts M. William Steele, and ICU President Norihiko Suzuki*

lack a fully developed curriculum; or it may be an established college that has become dissatisfied with the results of a nar-

Through these new categories, AALE hopes to encourage and help colleges that have been or are committing themselves to

(See "International," page 10)

# From the President's Desk, Spring 2005



In our last newsletter I noted that “globalization” (a very imprecise word, used here to refer to increasing global economic integration through the rise of global markets, and especially to the rapidly growing internationalization of higher education) has been prompting efforts by UNESCO, OECD, and other international bodies to create an international system friendly to the cross-border recognition of degrees and certificates. This has been accompanied by a growing awareness that future individual success in this world will increasingly require some form of liberal learning or general education. These are, after all, the traditional means by which students are provided the broader perspective and sharper intellectual discernment always characteristic of the educated mind, and is now so clearly necessary for making one’s way in a world no longer able to guarantee stable jobs, careers, or even particular companies.

This need has prompted many countries, formerly focused almost wholly on technical subjects, to broaden the scope of

their colleges and universities to include multidisciplinary programs and courses intended to develop a sense of the personal and societal responsibilities underlying successful free and democratic societies. Moreover, a number of new institutions, especially in the former authoritarian regimes of Russian Central Asia, are building

liberal education into their systems right from the start. This includes not only courses in the liberal arts, often interdisciplinary, but also emphasizes goals that have long been common to Western education, such as an increase in critical thinking

and a capacity for understanding other cultures. Interestingly, some of these institutions are also moving away from the pedagogy and curriculum of the past – education delivered through a prescriptive, standardized, lecture-driven system – to more interactive and open-ended forms of learning, including Socratic discussion, long the pedagogical backbone of liberal education in this country. Some

(See “Letter,” page 12)



**Jeffrey D. Wallin**  
President

## AALE NEWSLETTER

Winter-Spring 2005  
Vol. XI, No. 1

Editor: Cassie Sherman

Associate Editor: Chelsey Kelly

The American Academy for Liberal Education is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education as a national agency for the accreditation and preaccreditation of institutions and programs within institutions of higher education that offer liberal arts degrees at the baccalaureate level. The Academy is a nonprofit, nonsectarian and nonpartisan organization incorporated in the District of Columbia.

### THE AALE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Dr. Jacques Barzun**, *Honorary Chairman*
- Ms. Olga Block**, *founding Principal, BASIS, Inc. Schools*
- Dr. A. Lee Fritschler**, *Chairman & Professor, School of Public Policy, George Mason University*
- Dr. Alfred Balitzer**, *Chairman, Pacific Research and Strategies, Inc.*
- Dr. James Deneen**, *Board Member, Princeton Charter School*
- Dr. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese**, *Eleonore Raoul Professor of the Humanities, Emory University*
- Mr. Alan Fraker**, *Director, College Placement at Montclair Kimberley Academy*
- Dr. Timothy Fuller**, *Lloyd E. Warner Distinguished Service Professor, Colorado College*
- Mr. Samuel Hope**, *Executive Director, National Office for Arts Accreditation*
- Dr. Peter Kalkavage**, *Tutor, St. John's College, Annapolis*
- Dr. Ralph Rossum**, *Salvatori Professor of Political Philosophy, Claremont McKenna College*
- Dr. Sheldon Rothblatt**, *Professor of History, University of California, Berkeley*
- Dr. Charles Sullivan**, *President, American Foundation for the Arts*
- Dr. Jeffrey Wallin**, *President, AALE*

### THE AALE COUNCIL OF SCHOLARS

- Dr. Ralph Rossum**, *Chairman & Salvatori Professor of Political Philosophy, Claremont McKenna College*
- Dr. James H. Beall**, *Tutor, St. John's College*
- Dr. Jocelyn Chadwick-Joshua**, *Assistant Professor of Education, Harvard University*
- Dr. Colleen Sheehan**, *Associate Professor of Political Science, Villanova University*
- Dr. Keith Verner**, *Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine*

# AALE Continues to Evaluate Teaching American History Grants

In 2004, AALE started working with several new schools in its capacity as an outside evaluator of projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History Grants.

These grants, funded by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, are given competitively to local school districts who partner with institutions of higher education, nonprofits, humanities organizations, libraries or museums to provide intensive education programs to teachers of American history. The grants are disbursed over

a period of three years. The grant program has existed since it was first funded in 2001, and its funding has been renewed each year since, allowing new grants to be offered.

AALE-Evaluated grant recipients have approached their task in a variety of ways. A partnership of the Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center and Ashland University is using an intensive summer teacher education program and shorter seminars during the school year in conjunction with a resource-packed website. Other schools are using similar methods as

well as listservs, newsletters, and rigorous assessment practices to ensure the success of their grant projects.

AALE plans to continue offering outside evaluation if the grant program's funding is renewed in 2005. Public schools, including public charter schools, are eligible to apply for grants. For more information about the grant program, please see [www.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory](http://www.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory), and for information about AALE External Evaluation, please feel free to contact the Academy or consult our website.

## From the Director's Desk

As noted in this issue's President's Letter, the Academy currently has pending applications from colleges in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Gulf States, far-East Asia and Southeast Asia. There is a realization abroad that neither narrow technical training nor specialization well serve a people who wish to govern themselves and who need to adapt to a constantly changing and ever more borderless economic market. This is the epitome of the *liberal outlook* that Jacques Barzun has defined as the outlook of the *free man* – men and women who are responsible for their choices, and who are able to develop reasonable, accurate and flexible perspectives of the world around them. What these colleges have in common with

many of their American counterparts is a desire for students to hone their abilities beyond the technical requirements of the positions they will be seeking: to write and converse well, and to be able to consider critically and seriously the personal and public choices that lie before them.

Not surprisingly, many of the administrators and faculty on these campuses have noted that while they embrace the traditional liberal arts curriculum, they do not wish to Americanize their students or campuses. AALE standards are welcome because, with few exceptions, they are specific neither to time nor place, but extend to all who understand education to consist in a training of the mind to reason well, to make judgments based upon evidence, and to un-

derstand the differences between opinions arrived at through reason, and those arrived at through faith or handed down by tradition (which is not to say that these are necessarily incompatible sources of knowledge).

What *is* somewhat surprising,

(See "Martineau," page 8)



**Jeff A. Martineau**  
Director, Higher Education

# From the Director's Desk

**Sarah B. Cunningham**

Director, Education Assessment & Charter School Accreditation

Since June, the Charter School Accreditation Program has been advocating the value of K-12 liberal arts education and quality in charter school education. I want to take this opportunity to update you on all of our activities. At the same time, I would like to thank everyone who has been so gracious to host us, join us for presentations and serve as our site visitors or boards of review. We have had tremendous experiences working with educational entrepreneurs around the nation.

We are often asked to give presentations on our accreditation at state conferences nationwide. This autumn and winter, we have presented at conferences in Arizona, Colorado and California. In addition to our January presentation at the California Charter School Conference, we visited California in August to meet with the Charter Schools Division of



the Department of Education, the Vice President of Leadership and Quality at the Charter School Association and school leaders at the very successful Gateway High School and Aspire Schools. The California Charter School Association now lists AALE as one of two recommended school assessors/consultants on their growing menu of school inspectors. In September, we were in Boston, where we toured Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, caught up with site visitor Sandra Stotsky, met with school leaders opening a math and science school in 2005, and introduced ourselves to charter school strategic plan expert Peter Frumkin at Harvard's Hauser Center for Non-Profit Organizations (at the JFK School of Government). In Colorado, we toured candidate schools, Ridgeview Classical Academy and Monument Academy, and caught up with our member school, The

*(See "Cunningham," page 14)*

## Accountability through Accreditation: Benefits of Self-Study to Charter Schools

*By Sarah B. Cunningham  
as published in the Fall 2004  
Newsletter of the National Charter  
School Clearinghouse*

With many immediate tasks consuming the school day and year, attaining accreditation can take a back seat. After all, accreditation is an extended process, in some regions taking years to complete. The term "accreditation" provokes wincing and moans from educators. Why then would a charter school seek accreditation and how can charter schools transform an onerous task into a program for school cooperation and improvement?

1. Accreditation provides parents with an official measure of school functionality and relative success, thereby informing parent choice.

2. Accreditation reassures outside funders and state officials that the school is meeting its responsibilities. (A 2004 Philanthropy Roundtable report encourages donors to seek out quality when funding charter schools.)

3. Accreditation reassures charter authorizers of a school's relative success by producing specific documentation and evidence.

4. Accreditation suggests stability and professionalism, appealing characteristics for qualified faculty that may be interviewing with a school. In some states, teaching experience is recognized only when teaching at accredited institutions.

5. Accreditation can defuse political debates about a school's viability and authenticity, providing evidence that charter schools are concerned with accountability. ...

*(Continued at [www.aale.org/charters/ata](http://www.aale.org/charters/ata))*

**New AALE  
Website to  
Launch May 1!**



*Watch out for the new  
[www.AALE.org](http://www.AALE.org)*

# AALE CHARTER SCHOOL NEWS

A number of our member schools have been featured in local and national newspapers for their academic excellence and commitment to quality education. Here is the latest AALE Charter School News:

**Princeton Charter School** (Princeton, NJ) was named a 2004 *No Child Left Behind* Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. To receive this honor, a school with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds must improve student achievement or all students, regardless of background, must achieve in the top 10 percent on state tests. (September 2004)

**W.E.B. Dubois Academy** (Cincinnati, OH) was recognized as a 2004 State Superintendent School of Promise. The Dubois Academy was one of 102 schools statewide that received this honor and the only elementary school chosen. The award is given to schools that exceed state and federal standards in low income communities. (September 2004)

**The Classical Academy** (Colorado Springs, CO) was honored as

a National School of Character at the annual meeting of the Character Education Partnership in October of 2004. The award is given to schools and districts that demonstrate outstanding character education resulting in positive student behavior, citizenship, school culture and academic performance. (October 2004)

Science at the **W.E.B. Dubois Academy** in Cincinnati will greatly be improved after a \$105,000 grant from Impact 100. The school will convert its current Science Center into the "Over-the-Rhine Exploratorium" which will be open for all students, with weekend hours to help students become proficient in science. (December 2004)

A recent article in the *Arizona Daily Star* highlighted the accomplishments of **Sonoran Science Academy** (Tucson, AZ), which include students working together to build complex robots as well as having the number one ranked math



*BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL: Pictured at the Princeton Charter School are (from left): Maureen Quirk, PCS founder, Valerie Smith, regional representative for the U.S. Department of Education, Charles Marsee, PCS Head of School, and Peter*

league in Tucson and top-scoring AIMS scores. (January 2005)

**Sonoran Science Academy** (Tucson, AZ) student Michelle Lintner was recently recognized as the "Student of the Week" and was featured in the *Arizona Daily Star*. She describes her school by saying "the key is that it's small (370 students in grades K-12). There's not a lot of violence or drugs; you're not scared to go to school. The teachers are fantastic. There so much culture. You can be treated like an adult." (January 2005)

## AALE 2004 National Meeting a Success

The biennial membership meeting of the Academy was held this past June in Washington, D.C., and was extremely well received by a wide range of attendees. Nearly a hundred persons representing member char-



*Ralph Rossum, Chair of the Council of Scholars, introduces Bill and Carol Allen, who spoke on Assessment.*

ter schools and member colleges and universities, as well as those interested in becoming members attended, including representatives from England, Japan, and the United Arab Emirates. Four higher education panels discussed topics from Assessment to

Teaching American Democracy. Charter panels addressed such matters as the Challenges of Compliance Issues and Placing Academics First, a panel on curriculum.

Although Academy President

(See "Meeting," page 8)



# Profiles of Newly Accredited Public Charter Schools

The Board of Trustees granted national accreditation to two high-performing charter schools at the June 2004 Board meeting: the KIPP Academy in Houston, Texas, and the Sonoran Science Academy in Tucson, Arizona.

Founded in 1995, **KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) Academy**, Houston, is an academically rigorous, college preparatory,

public school for at-risk students in grades five through eight. KIPP Academy is the first charter school in Texas to receive AALE accreditation. KIPP has been recognized as an Exemplary School by the Texas Education Agency every year since its opening and KIPP stu-



dents consistently outperform the national average on the Stanford 9 Achievement Tests. KIPP Academy students have an extended school day and school year which results in all of its students spending

67% more time in school than traditional public school students. In addition to this extended time, all students and families of KIPP Academy have 24-hour access to their teach-

ers through home and cellular phones. To learn more about KIPP Academy, see [www.kippacademy.com](http://www.kippacademy.com)

**Sonoran Science Academy (SSA)** focuses on math, science, technology, and college preparation while also covering a full,

well-rounded curriculum. SSA credits its small atmosphere, diverse and experienced educators, and high standards as the keys to its success. With a student enrollment of 370 students from kindergarten through eleventh grade, Sonoran will expand to become a K-12 school next year. Sonoran offers over thirty extracurricular activities to its students and has a free Saturday tutoring program for



all of its students. Sonoran is owned by Daisy Education Corp., a non-profit educational organization located in Tucson. To learn more about Sonoran Science Academy visit [www.sonoronacademy.org](http://www.sonoronacademy.org)

As AALE member schools, KIPP and Sonoran Science Academy join the prestigious ranks of current AALE charter school members that are working to provide an academically rigorous education for all students.

## AALE Welcomes New Board Chairman A. Lee Fritschler



Dr. A. Lee Fritschler has taken over as Chairman of the AALE Board. Dr. Fritschler, a Professor in

the School of Public Policy at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, has a distinguished background in Higher Education and Public Policy. He was appointed to that position in the fall of 2003. Prior to that, he was Vice President and Director of

the Center for Public Policy Education at the Brookings Institution. The Center runs education programs in the U.S. and around the world for government and corporate executives and others.

Dr. Fritschler served as Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education during the Clinton Administration. As Assistant Secretary, he was charged with setting the direction for higher education policy and administering the department's higher education programs, which include student financial aid, FIPSE, GEAR

UP, TRIO, international education, the Fulbright program, graduate programs, Developing Institutions, and the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, among others.

Prior to joining the Department, Dr. Fritschler served as President of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, from 1987 until his retirement in June 1999. As President of Dickinson, he emphasized international education, undergraduate science, and foreign languages. In

*(See "Fritschler," page 13)*

# 10 Characteristics of Successful Charter Schools

By Sarah Cunningham,

As published in the National Charter School Clearinghouse Newsletter, December 2004

*Most traditional public schools no longer have one staff member who remembers the first day that the school opened its doors. Thus, compared to their traditional counterparts, charter schools have an inordinate amount of entrepreneurial knowledge surrounding school start-up. As charter schools learn from their mistakes, this entrepreneurial knowledge continues to expand.*

What foundation is required to make a good charter school? What internal structures need to be set in place to provide a quality academic experience for students and families?

**1) Strong charter law:** Without charter laws that support the opening of schools it is very difficult to get the charters going. CER (Center for Education Reform) has a wealth of information about this and recently issued a report on the strength of charter laws across the country.

**2) A clear, decisive mission:** A mission must be reviewed by the school community on a regular basis as the school develops. The goals must be achievable and realistic. Too many goals are difficult to achieve early on and dilute the power of providing specific, localized alternatives to current public school offerings. This mission cannot be so rigid that it does not allow administrators to make adjustments according to the school's evolving purpose.

**3) Supportive charter authorizer:** Throughout the country, there are district-based, state-based, university-based and independent authorizers. While authorizers have differing available resources, authorizers that require high standards in the application and renewal processes will contribute to founding strong charter schools.

**4) Positive climate for school choice:** Often supported by community members with libertarian sentiments, local support for school choice allows the school to avoid a variety of hurdles before, during and after its opening.

**5) Facilities and properties that**

**serve the mission of the school:** Charter schools that can establish community partnerships – in financing and real estate – may be able to secure facilities with greater ease. Across the board, the facilities challenge draws unnecessary resources and energies from our new charter schools. One would hope that the growing “New Urbanism” movement might help draw together socially-active real estate developers with needy charter school founders.

**6) Committed administration, principal, faculty, families and Board members:** The founding administrative and faculty team must be willing to stick it through the first couple years of chaos while the school gets its feet on the ground. A committed Board of Trustees, willing to raise additional funds in order to provide the school with funding above and beyond the state/federal allocation is invaluable. The Board of Trustees can have a huge impact on the success of the school, as long as they support the school and do not attempt to micromanage school programs. These Boards and financial structures make charter schools start to look like a cross between a private school and public



schools. This is particularly the case when some charter school organizations hire development officers. However, schools that avoid fundraising may especially require the support of Board members with business backgrounds in order to facilitate a lean business plan.

**7) Association with experts who provide consultation on a national basis:** There are so many curriculum programs available that schools can save a lot of work by consulting the national experts in a subject area. There is no need for schools to reinvent the wheel. Of course, innovation is the virtue of charters, so a  
(See “Characteristics,” page 15)

## Accreditation Update

The following schools will be reviewed in June 2005:

Paul Public Charter School, Washington D.C.  
BASIS Scottsdale, Scottsdale A.Z.  
University of Hawaii, Tblisi, Republic of Georgia

AALE provides formal notice of charter schools under review, and opportunity for third-party comment, through its website, [www.aale.org](http://www.aale.org).

# Benefits of AALE Charter School Accreditation

- **National recognition:** No other K-12 accreditor currently offers national accreditation.
- **Positive reactions** from faculty, parents and local community.
- **Self-study** process based on high standards
- **Third party validation:** External auditors' visit and reports.
- **Political recognition or legitimacy:** AALE accreditation helps defer political attacks and legitimizes their school. This allows them to distinguish themselves from any negative stereotype of "charter schools" in their community or in the nation.
- **Membership** with high-achieving schools: This has allowed for camaraderie to develop between our members fostering a shared knowledge of best practices.
- **Parent Choice:** Accreditation informs parents that a school is actually achieving what it claims to achieve.
- **Funding:** Accreditation draws the attention of funders and/or distinguishes schools in competing for grant money.
- **Access to Education Experts:** AALE has a broad base of contacts, experts and friends working in K-16 education.
- **Newsletter:** A yearly report on activities within the charter school movement and in higher education.
- **Email grant alerts:** Announcements regarding grant deadlines, member awards and member activities.
- **PR:** Member school information posted on our website, press releases regarding school success stories and accreditation notices. Presentation of AALE member schools at conferences and exhibit booths throughout the nation.
- **Participation on site inspection teams:** The opportunity to observe other schools as the member of an AALE site inspection team.
- **Personal contact:** Assisted by the monthly contact via the grant emails, AALE talks with member schools on a regular basis to receive feedback and/or assist schools with specific questions or concerns.

*"We take AALE accreditation as a mark of distinction. Being in the company of other good schools helps call attention to the quality of our program."*

Michael & Olga Block  
Founders, BASIS Schools

*(From "Meeting," page 5)*

Jeffrey Wallin was away at UNESCO's meeting on Quality Across Borders in Higher Education in Paris, Chris Nelson, President of St. Johns College, Annapolis (pictured), offered encouragement and wisdom to all liberal arts programs while delivering the Keynote dinner presentation

The two-day conference brought charter school members together with higher education members and provided many opportunities for all representatives to discuss the pertinent issues within their schools and offer advice and feedback to one another. AALE staff extends its thanks to the dedicated educators who participated in our conference and hope to see them all again at the Academy's next member meeting.

*Visit the Charter Website for Updates on AALE's Charter Program!*

**[aalecharters.org](http://aalecharters.org)**

*(From "Martineau," page 3)*

is that just about all of these administrators and faculty operate from the conviction that what is truly universally beneficial about educational excellence should be *required*, not merely offered. This is an assumption once widely shared in this country, but which has faded from sight in recent years.

# AALE Welcomes New Staff Members



## Kamal McCray *Assistant, Operations*

Kamal brings to the Academy extensive experience in areas ranging from computer science to office administration. As the Assistant to Director of Operations, Kamal's tasks include managing the numerous operation expenses for AALE and ensuring that invoices for fees

and dues associated with accreditation are sent and collected in a timely fashion. He also plays a key role in negotiating contracts with outside vendors that will provide the most cost effective services. Kamal is also the person whom you are most likely to speak with if you call the office.

Through his service to AALE, Kamal hopes to be a vital part of the process of improving the quality of education at home and abroad. Kamal has had vast volunteering experience with various programs such as the Department of Juvenile Justice, the STAR program, the NYSP summer program, the Rosemont Elementary/ Coppin State College program, the NAACP/ Coast Guard/ Coppin State College project. It is his passion for making a difference

and his experience with such programs that motivate him in working with AALE toward fulfilling its vision.

In his free time, Kamal continues to explore his creativity through painting and drawing, and volunteers with children to help them explore their own creative interests. He also uses his experience playing basketball in various leagues as a tool to challenge children to learn about team work and the development of a strong work ethic. Kamal is also very involved with his local church.

Kamal graduated from Coppin State College with a Bachelors in Science for Computer Science *cum laude*. After receiving his B.S. Kamal worked briefly as a software developer.



Pictured at Left: AALE Staff in the Lobby of the new office at 1050 17th Street, NW. From left to right: Cassie Sherman, Kamal McCray, Laura Wallin, Jeffrey D. Wallin, Chelsey Kelly, Sarah B. Cunningham, Jeff A Martineau, and Meg Cotter.



## Chelsey Kelly *Program Assistant, Charter School Program*

Chelsey joins AALE after graduating from Boston University with a degree in Elementary Education and a minor in Political Science. During

her time in Boston, Chelsey worked with the Pioneer Institute on researching public school choice and school vouchers in the Commonwealth. She also interned in Senator Edward M. Kennedy's Education office during a semester in Washington D.C. Her time there was spent researching No Child Left Behind implementation, higher education and special education topics.

As program assistant, Chelsey is responsible for the day to day operations of the program including incoming correspondence and website maintenance. She is also working on several projects that will help the program advance, including re-

searching key legislative members with interests in charter school accountability as well as doing more in-depth research regarding state charter laws, exemplary schools and programs.

Chelsey is also very active in the Girl Scouting program and recently went to London as the representative of the United States at an international Girl Scouting/Girl Guiding event. She often writes for teens on various subjects including how to deal with college, voting and personal rights and responsibilities. Her work appears frequently on the Studio 2B website.

(from "International," page 1)

rowly specialized education and is adding liberal arts courses or programs. In either case, the college is interested in changing course and recognizes the value of association with the only American accreditor devoted exclusively to liberal arts programs and colleges. All affiliates undergo a brief staff visit and review, but no third-party review need take place until the school is ready to apply for the next tier of membership. Affiliation attests primarily to a shared sense of academic values and is intended, among other things, to encourage the emerging international liberal arts movement.

The second tier of membership is **Certification**. Two types of schools may qualify for certification: schools with strong liberal arts components that do not offer a full bachelors degree (making them ineligible for AALE accreditation) and schools that meet many of the

Academy's standards, but do not meet them fully enough to be granted accreditation. As with our domestic certification program, schools undergo a staff visit and initial assessment, write a self-study in light of the AALE standards, receive an outside team review of the school or program, and stand before the Academy's Board for final review and approval. The chief benefit of this category is to signify to the academic community the school's commitment to a high quality, liberal arts infused curriculum. Upon application, the school will be granted affiliated status, pending a staff visit and during the time of review.

The final and highest category of excellence is **Programmatic Accreditation**. This status attests that the school or program sufficiently meets *all* of the Academy's liberal education standards, just like any domestic U.S. institution would be required to do.

During this past fall and cur-

rent spring terms, the Academy will accept applications from, and visited no fewer than, **fifteen** schools outside the U.S. (our newest affiliates mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter). We have serious inquiries or applications from schools in Japan, India, Singapore, Indonesia, the Republic of Georgia, Ukraine, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Thailand, Morocco, Germany, Spain, Malaysia and England. By the time this newsletter reaches you, our Director for Higher Education will have been to nearly all of these campuses.

With this number of schools actively seeking support from the AALE, along with our growing number of U.S. institutions seeking institutional accreditation, programmatic accreditation and certification more eyes are opening to the value of a real liberal education.

---

## Council of Scholars Welcomes James H. Beall

The AALE Council of Scholars gained a new member, James H. Beall, in June of 2004. His expertise in the liberal arts and sciences has already made him a valuable contributor to the Council.

Beall has been a member of the faculty at St. John's College for more than two decades. He has also been a Senior Contract Professor for the School for Computational Sciences at George Mason University since 1992.

In addition to teaching, Beall has held many prestigious research positions. From 1975-1978, he served as a Research Assistant in the Labo-



ratory for Astronomy and Solar Physics at Goddard Space Flight Center. He was a Congressional Science Fellow for the Office of Technology As-

essment from 1978-1979, and a Resident Associate in the Space Sciences Division at the National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council/Naval Research Laboratory from 1981-1983. He has been a Consultant to the E.O. Hulbert Center for Space Research, at the Naval Research Laboratory, and a member of the Science and Engineering Advisory Board for High Frontier, Inc., since 1991.

Beall's expertise and interests range from political theory to public policy associated with technological

(See "Beall," page 15)

# New Member Colleges

These schools were granted membership at the June and November 2004 Board Meetings



Annapolis, Maryland  
Institutionally Accredited, June 2004

Founded 1696

Undergraduate FTE: 483

Website: [www.stjohnscollege.edu](http://www.stjohnscollege.edu)

Mission: "St. John's College is a community dedicated to liberal education. Such education seeks to free men and women from the tyrannies of unexamined opinions and inherited prejudices. It also endeavors to enable them to make intelligent, free choices concerning the ends and means of both public and private life.

At St. John's, freedom is pursued mainly through thoughtful conversation about great books of the Western tradition. The books that

are at the heart of learning at St. John's stand among the original sources of our intellectual tradition. They are timeless and timely; they not only illuminate the persisting questions of human existence, but also have great relevance to contemporary problems. They change our minds, move our hearts, and touch our spirits."



Albany, New York

Certified, June 2004

Website: [www.excelsior.edu](http://www.excelsior.edu)

Mission: "Excelsior College exists to expand educational opportunity, with efficiency, economy, and academic excellence, and with a particular concern for those historically underrepresented in higher education. The College meets students where they are academically, geographically, and technologically and personally assists them in reaching their goals by offering a full range

of flexible academic options. The College seeks to meet the needs of a pluralistic society, increasingly dependent on an informed and educated citizenry. It focuses upon the needs of individual students, primarily adults, who want to advance themselves in a flexible, self-paced manner, using a variety of faculty approved learning resources, frequently at a distance. The College is an international resource, a global leader, and a prime advocate for higher and distance education."



Elyria, Ohio

Certified, June 2004

Website: [www.lorainccc.edu](http://www.lorainccc.edu)

Mission: "Lorain County Community College, a vital and dynamic leader, serves a culturally diverse community by promoting education, economic, cultural and community development. The College encourages lifelong learning through accessible and affordable academic, career-oriented and continuing education."

## Welcome, New Affiliates!

*International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan*

-

*Kuwait University, Kuwait City, Kuwait*

-

*American University of Humanities, Tblisi, Republic of Georgia*

-

*European College of Liberal Arts, Berlin, Germany*

-

*American University of Humanities, Kiev, Ukraine*

-

*American University of Humanities, Dubai, United Arab Emirates*



London, England

Programmatically Accredited, June 2004

Website:

[www.londonexternal.ac.uk](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk)

Mission: "To promote worldwide a programme of degrees and other awards primarily for students who cannot attend full-time courses at the University of London."

( See "New Colleges," page 13)

AALE provides formal notice of institutions under review, and opportunity for third-party comment, through its website, [www.aale.org](http://www.aale.org).

(From "Letter," page 2)

of this I have remarked on before. Nevertheless, I expect that the pace of this international movement, and especially AALE's engagement with it, will come as a surprise to many of our friends.

For instance, I recently returned from an eye-opening trip to southern India, while other staff members

here at AALE have spent time during the past several weeks in Georgia, Kuwait, and Tokyo, to mention just a few of the places we are involved in outside our own borders. We are preparing for several more international trips to be made in the coming months.

By "eye-opening," I do not mean to refer to the well-known poverty that exists throughout India. Seeing it up close is, of course, unsettling to any Westerner who travels to that part of the world for the first time. Yet what was truly surprising was the widespread hope for the country's future that I found. India is experienc-



A clocktower on the campus of the University of Kuwait



ing a sort of reverse Diaspora, a large-scale return from abroad of highly educated and skilled natives determined to build new businesses and, right along with them, new schools and universities. They certainly have their work cut out for them — but what noble work it is.

On this past trip most of my time was spent in Bangalore, often referred to as the Silicon Valley of India. Here I visited a full spectrum of new institutions, from primary and secondary schools to undergraduate and graduate universities. Although their quality varied, they

shared one thing in common: all of them devote a significant part of their curriculum to liberal learning. Of course, the most pervasive overseas liberal art is English, which has long been taught in India. However, history, science, mathematics, philosophy and some of the other traditional liberal arts are also finding pride of place in these new schools and colleges. Indeed, at one point I felt a tinge of sadness in reflecting that the rest of the world seems to be picking up on the value of liberal education just as we here in the U.S. seem bent on abandoning it altogether — at least if such an edu-

cation must include required courses and demonstrated knowledge and skills.

The organization responsible for founding and running these schools, and which served as my host and guide, has a presence in over 140 countries. It is not creating schools in all of them; nevertheless, the vast geographical extent of the operation means that I saw no more than a tip of the iceberg. Moreover, since the foundation is headquartered in Bangalore, it is likely that the best of these schools are there, and it seems reasonable to suppose that I was taken only to the very best. It was hearten-



The American University of Hawaii, Tblisi

ing to meet with so many people who not only understand that education is the key to their nation's future, but who also understand the kind of education that is required, and are

committed to producing it.

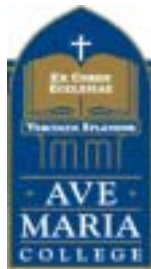
Now, perhaps, is the time to step up efforts aimed at getting that message across here.

(From "New Colleges," page 11)

Objectives:

"1) To provide through examination and, where appropriate, distance learning a portfolio of degrees and other awards for External students of the University of London examined to a standard equivalent to those available internally.

2) To develop high quality distance learning materials to support External students."



Ypsilanti, Michigan  
Institutionally Accredited,  
November 2004  
Undergraduate FTE: 745

Website: [www.mi.avemaria.edu](http://www.mi.avemaria.edu)

Mission: "Founded in fidelity to Christ and His Church in response to the call of Vatican II for greater lay witness in contemporary society, Ave Maria College exists to further teaching, research and learning in the abiding tradition of Catholic thought in both national and international settings. The College takes as its mission the sponsorship of a liberal arts education curriculum dedicated, as articulated in the apostolic constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, to the advancement of hu-

man culture, the promotion of dialogue between faith and reason, the formation of men and women in the intellectual and moral virtues of the Catholic faith, and to the development of professional and pre-professional programs in response to local and societal needs. As an institution committed to Catholic principles, the College recognizes the importance of creating and maintaining an environment in which faith informs the life of the community and takes expression in all its programs."



Warner, New Hampshire  
Institutionally Accredited,  
November 2004  
Undergraduate FTE: 70

Website: [www.magdalen.edu](http://www.magdalen.edu)

Mission: "Magdalen College was established thirty one years ago to answer the Second Vatican Council's call for the Catholic education and formation of young people. The founders endowed the College with its mission of teaching young men and women to seek intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual excellence. ...

The Program of Studies provides a curriculum of the ancient and modern classics in the Great Books tradition, taught by the Socratic semi-

nar method. Students engage in the dialogue between faith and reason by learning from the masters, including Socrates, Augustine, Aquinas, and John Paul II, to seek the "ultimate and overarching meaning of life." The Program of Studies is devoted to philosophy, mathematics, science, language, culture, and a special four-year catechetical program focused on Sacred Scripture, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the documents of Vatican II, and Catholic social teachings...

The Program of Studies calls the students to encounter and respond to modern philosophical thinking with its rationalist critique of faith. The College's common life challenges them to form the natural and supernatural virtues without which their faith and reason will not survive in modern culture, let alone transform it."



Naples, Florida  
Preaccredited, November 2004  
Undergraduate FTE: 302

Website: [www.naples.avemaria.edu](http://www.naples.avemaria.edu)

Mission: AMU will be taking over Ave Maria College's mission as the college moves toward closing its doors in three years.

---

(From "Frischler," page 6)

1991, Fritschler co-founded the Annapolis Group, a contingent of 110 presidents of the nation's leading liberal arts colleges created to build support for college liberal arts programs. He was Director of the Center for Public Policy Education at The Brookings Institution from 1981-1987, and served as the Chairman of the U.S. Postal Rate Commission, after having been nominated by President Carter, from 1979-1981.

From 1977 to 1979, Fritschler was dean of the college of public and international affairs at the American University (AU), Washington, D.C., and in charge of managing two schools, three centers, 3,500 students and some 100 full and part-time faculty. He held a number of other academic and administrative positions at AU between 1964 and 1979.

Fritschler is the author of several books and numerous articles and a member of many boards and profes-

sional societies. His books include *Smoking and Politics: Policy Making and the Federal Bureaucracy*, now in its fifth edition.

Fritschler earned a master's degree in public administration from Syracuse University (1960), and a doctorate in political science from the University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs (1965). He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Union College (1959), N.Y.

*(From "Cunningham," page 4)*

Classical Academy. (A big thanks goes out to school leader Hal Meyer for giving us a bonus tour of the Air Force Academy!)

We also went to Arizona, where member school principals, Carolyn McGarvey (BASIS Tucson) and David Curd (Humanities and Sciences Institute) spiced up our usual AALE presentation by talking about their positive experiences with AALE. While in Phoenix, we had the opportunity to chat with candidate school, Veritas Prep, and visit candidate school, Basis Scottsdale. While in Phoenix, we made a point to visit member schools, Tempe Prep and Humanities and Sciences Institute. We are excited to report that Tempe Prep's successful program will be replicated in Phoenix under the EMO Great Heart Academies. In November, we were hosted by Bob Haag and presented our program to principals at a



meeting of the Florida Consortium of Charter Schools. While we were in Fort Lauderdale, we visited Bob's candidate school, The Charter School of Excellence and another candidate school, Central Charter School

in Lauderdale Lakes. In December, at a Performance Institute conference on charter school excellence, W.E.B. DuBois (OH) development officer Reba George-Dysart and The Franklin Academy (NC) principal David Mahaley shared their success stories, after being introduced by AALE program officer, Meghan Cotter. This year, we look forward to assisting new schools in chartering and quality assessment, such as T.R. Ahlstrom's promising (potential) addition to the D.C. community, Washington Latin Charter School. Good luck with your charter, T.R.!

In DC, our program assistant Chelsey Kelly has represented us at a variety of meetings including the DC Public Charter School Board, The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and The Progressive Policy Institute (PPI). Thanks to Chelsey's assistance, we also completed an update of our printed materials.

In addition to her other duties, Meghan Cotter has been hard at work managing details and logistics of the two school accreditation reviews for this spring. In February, we reviewed our first DC school, Paul Public Charter School, the first

conversion charter school in the District. In April, AALE will be doing the site visit for BASIS Scottsdale, the sister school to our member school BASIS Tucson. In the meantime, we look forward to receiving applications from our first Mosaica Inc. school and Idaho Leadership Academy.

Finally, I have tried to get the voice of AALE out on the airwaves by publishing a number of articles on charter school accountability. National Charter School Clearinghouse Newsletter has published three articles, "Accountability Through Accreditation," "Ten Characteristics of Successful Charter Schools," and most recently, "The Ten Accounts of Charter School Leaders." We were glad to see "Ten Accounts" picked up by the PEN weekly newsblast, while "Ten Characteristics" was originally penned for cooltownstudios.com, a digital urban renewal think tank.

In 2005, we look forward to continued growth of charter school accreditation, to assisting new schools with accountability practices, and to challenging public education to establish high standards for each academic subject area in order for students to achieve the intellectual success that leads to college matriculation and a prosperous undergraduate experience.

[www.LIBERALEDUCATION.org](http://www.LIBERALEDUCATION.org)

Check our website for the latest editions of important AALE Publications, meeting registration information, public announcements, and Academy news.

(From "Characteristics," page 7)

combination of consulting resources and adapting resources to your locale and mission are what makes the schools innovative. Charter leaders who find other charter leaders running schools with similar missions (even out of state) can learn from real examples. This can also help a founder realize how the ideal mission of the charter application actually might come into existence.

**8) Willingness to engage in external evaluation:** We have found that, across the board, the best char-

ter schools engage in school inspections and assessments from a variety of outside parties. When we interview our candidates, their track record of third-party assessment often immediately indicates a level of quality within their program. Their experience in seeking feedback only makes the accreditation process easier for them.

**9) Positive teacher recruitment and teacher development programs:** Recruiting teachers is becoming more difficult and - because

they work so hard to start a school - current faculty sometimes burn out and move on. Good professional development programs provide teachers with incentive to remain at the school as well as attracting new teachers.

**10) Political savvy:** This is closely related to the financing, obtaining local buy-in (including students), acquiring a charter and recruiting teachers. The charter school movement has an unusual combination of conservative and liberal impulses, depending on the community. The charter movement has the potential to be a model of bipartisan action to improve public education. Schools that can work with opposing forces will have better luck defusing difficult situations. A sound educational program, however, is a powerful antidote to criticism born of political debate. It is difficult to argue with high test scores, a satisfied parent community, excellent graduate rates and college placement with scholarships. Thus, school leaders must balance investment in the community with developing program excellence.

(From "Beall," page 10)

development to UNIX system administration, astrophysics, and missile defense. He has advised undergraduate theses at St. John's on such topics as the implications of non-linear dynamics for a reading of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*; Bell's theorem in Quantum Mechanics; Lobachevski's "Theory of Parallels"; and Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*.

From 1963-1967, Beall served in the U.S. Air Force. From there he went on to earn his B.A. in Physics at the University of Colorado, *cum*

*laude*, followed by a M.S. and PhD. in Physics at the University of Maryland. He has organized several international scientific conferences, and adds his position on the Council of Scholars to a list of memberships that also includes Phi Beta Kappa, the Scientific Research Society of North America, the American Physical Society, the American Astronomical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Astronautical Society, and the Cosmos Club of Washington, DC.

Do we have your most recent contact information? If you have moved or are uncertain that we have your preferred email address, please write to [info@aale.org](mailto:info@aale.org)

(From "Board," page 1)

economics at Cornell.

**James Deneen** is a former director of the Advanced Placement Program at the Education Testing Service as well as a board member of the Princeton Charter School, one of the nation's top-performing charter schools. Deneen holds a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from Indiana University and has held training seminars for our member charter schools on the use of assessment. He has been, from the start, a key figure in the AALE Charter School program, serving as Chair of our

Board of Advisors, a site visitor and a reviewer.

**Alan Fraker**, currently Director of College Placement at The Montclair Kimberley Academy in New Jersey, has served as Dean of the Fisher School Leadership Program for the KIPP Foundation, as well as Director of College Advising, History Chair, and Academic Dean at Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts. He was the first high school teacher to chair the AP United States History Test Development Committee and also chaired the Social Studies

Framework Committee in Massachusetts. Fraker helped design and implement charter school renewal inspection processes for Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio. He has worked with British OFSTED inspectors in Europe and the United States for the last seven years. He holds an A.B. from Dartmouth College and an A.M. and M.A.T. from Duke.

The Academy welcomes these new Board members, and has full confidence that their input will be valuable to all of its membership reviews.

American Academy for  
Liberal Education

1050 17th Street, NW  
Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20036

*Website:* [www.aale.org](http://www.aale.org)

*E-mail:* [info@aale.org](mailto:info@aale.org)

*Telephone:* (202) 452-8611

*Fax:* (202) 452-8620

## In this Issue:

---



- AALE's New International Higher Education Membership Programs
- Additions to the Board of Trustees
- New Staff Announcements
- Teaching American History Update
- Characteristics of Successful Charter Schools
- Profiles of Recently Accredited Schools
- New Board Chairman
- And more!