

The 6th Wah Yan International Conference – Panel Discussion/Action Items

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Communication

- a) Kelly Chang (San Francisco Chapter):
- The central web site address is: www.wahyan.org
 - If forgotten, the net address could be searched via any search engine by typing in: wahyan
 - Currently the central web site has 7 links (HK, Kowloon, San Francisco, LA., etc.). Our target is to connect via internet with all alumni chapters world wide by the end of 1998.
 - Each alumni chapter will be responsible for its own web content.
 - The function of the web page is mainly to advertise alumni chapter activities. Through the web site, buttons can be clicked to see the alumni chapter's address, to find out who is the chapter's International Convenor, to send E-mail, and to correspond with other alumni chapters.
- b) Father Zee (Kowloon Wah Yan):
- Each alumni chapter maintains its own autonomy, so there is no need to centralize
 - There is a need for overall (internet) security and better coordination
 - Those attendees currently with E-mail addresses are advised to inform the organizer.
 - Need one or two Wah Yan grads of each year to help in locating more past alumni, to promote and attract new members.
- c) Danny Ngan (Edmonton Chapter):
- Due to the large number of graduates from Wah Yan, this often results in many alumni showing up (on the membership list) with the same names such as James Lee, Peter Wong or whoever.
 - SUGGESTION: Make it optional to add the nickname and the year of graduation to the membership data base on the web, and perhaps this could attract more new members. (Note: this suggestion has been supported by all attendees.)
- d) Philip Ching (HK Chapter):
- During the second International Conference (1990) in Vancouver, it was suggested that each alumni chapter would appoint an International Convenor responsible for communication, information exchange and coordination among different alumni chapters, e.g. to coordinate chapter representatives in visiting other chapters or attend meetings.
 - Another role of the International Convenor is to voluntarily and diligently follow up on requests, improve relationship with other chapters by making visits, and provide regular information updates (on web sites).
 - Each chapter would need to be more aware of the basic roles of the International Convenor.
- e) Delegate from Eastern U.S.:
- Currently 71 members (both HK and Kowloon Wah Yan grads) are on the membership directory; last year there were about 6 members with E-mail addresses, and this year the number may have increased to about 20 members with e-mail addresses.

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- For further information, please contact the New York Chapter.

About INC

f) Dominic Hon (Calgary Chapter):

- INC means International Network Committee. The expectation is to have a centralized data base on names and addresses of the chairmen of different alumni chapters and help to administer the membership lists of individual chapters.
- The question of whether the INC base could be relocated to somewhere outside Hong Kong had crossed some members' minds during 1990 when there was a wave of relocation (of HK corporate headquarters), but never materialized.

g) Philip Ching (HK Chapter):

- INC was created in 1990 to ensure that there would still be a group of people to maintain good networking and alumni functions (somehow, somewhere) if the majority of the core group of active alumni members were to leave Hong Kong due to the uncertainty of the local environment around 1997 [back in 1990, there were only three to four alumni Chapters, and we never expected that the number would have grown to 15 Chapters at this point in time].
- INC is solely set up as a service provider: it is not intended to control or interfere in individual chapter's affairs, but if an individual chapter has experienced problems, INC would be a resource in offering information or advice. Currently based in Hong Kong, INC would hold four meetings annually, update the International Convenors' addresses, gather news from individual chapters, and continue to publish newsletters to circulate back to each chapter.
- If individual chapters are not clear about the many functions of INC, clarification could be provided via information exchange through E-mail.
- INC does not necessarily have to be located in Hong Kong if a better alternate location could be offered, with more resource and core people involvement (perhaps with more new ideas).
- A request has been made to chairmen of all Chapters: please be on time to provide individual chapter news and information updates for INC to be published in the newsletter which has currently experienced difficulty in getting news from the International Convenors.

h) Leo Chu (Edmonton chapter):

- It appears that the percentage of INC people based in North America is higher than any where else, and if INC is located in North America, then it is closer to where things are happening;
- SUGGESTION: Southern California could be the new base for INC as the (technical) support members for INC would be much stronger than any where else at this point in time) this was concurred by Dominic Hon of Calgary Chapter).

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[Note:

- Albert Young (LA Chapter), and Kelly Chang (San Francisco Chapter) both accepted the request;
- Further discussions will be held later to determine which city would be the host (San

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- Francisco or Los Angeles), but tentatively the location is agreed to be Southern California;
- Delegates from LA and San Francisco Chapters will later sort out the details on how to hold regular INC meetings.]
- i) Alfonsus Hui (Vancouver Chapter):
- INC could offer help to Wah Yan students going overseas to work or study by setting up a mentorship program in each Chapter so that each student could have a mentor to offer guidance or stewardship for personal, academic or career development.
- j) Joseph Hui (Vancouver Chapter):
- Could we waive the requirement that every second International Conference must be held in Hong Kong (normally this coincides with the leap year or summer Olympics), as the overseas alumni chapters have grown much stronger?
- k) Raymond Yu (Vancouver Chapter):
- About 12 to 13 years ago, there were very few alumni chapters set up outside Hong Kong. The International Conference was established to facilitate communication between different chapters with the Hong Kong alumni so people could meet. At that time, we were also prejudiced in assuming that a new alumni chapter outside Hong Kong would lack the experience to host the International Conference and might produce sub-par results. Hence it was decided to have every second International Conference to be held in Hong Kong so as to help develop better organizational skills for other overseas chapters. However, from my own experience (as I have attended all but one International Conference), every International Conference held outside Hong Kong had been very successful.
 - Because of geographical reasons, if the host city is in North America, many delegates from other North American cities would show up for support as the distance to travel would be relatively short and much more convenient. On the other hand, when we consider hosting the International Conference in Hong Kong, the overseas delegates might feel that this is a special trip (a lot of time in the air), and the attendance level may drop. There are also other limiting factors in Hong Kong that could negatively affect the desirability of hosting the conference there.
 - SUGGESTION: Alternate site should be accepted instead of requiring every second conference to be held in Hong Kong. If a chapter keenly feels capable of hosting the International Conference, then we should let that Chapter go ahead and be supportive.
[Note: this view is also supported by the delegate from Kowloon Wah Yan who has been quite impressed with the current International Conference. The attendees have all voted to pass the resolution in waiving the requirement of hosting every second International Conference in Hong Kong.]
- l) Bidding of the Next International Conference in Year 2000:
- Interests to host the next International Conference had been expressed by 3 chapters and they are: Toronto, New York and Los Angeles.
 - Delegates representing different chapters had voted to accept the winning bid from Los Angeles to host the next International Conference in year 2000, and the date to be held

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would be decided later but preferably in the summer.

- Philip Ching (HK Chapter):
 - Would urge the chairmen of all chapters to give support to the L.A. chapter which is keen to host the next conference and to spread the words back home. Expects prompt responses and have more chapter members involved to fully support the success of the next conference.
- Albert Young and Bill Ying (L.A. Chapter):
 - Would request Kelly Chang and members from Northern California Chapter to help out and support hosting the next Conference in L.A.

(Note: this request has been accepted)

m) Father Zee (Kowloon Wah Yan):

- Name tags will also bear the "year of graduation".

Wah Yan Affairs

a) Mark Siu (Vancouver Chapter):

- Both Hong Kong and Kowloon Wah Yan's recent drop in academic achievement rankings might be a cause of concern for some people, as I had three sons in Wah Yan. However, the eldest son, when in Form 1, informed that there was a survey performed by the teacher to correlate family income with academic achievement. The survey results indicated that the families with students achieving good academic standards often worked for the families with students performing less well academically. Hence I would be less concerned with this implication.
- My main concern would be the lack of contact or interaction between secondary school and primary school students if Wah Yan is to retain 80% of its primary school students to feed into its secondary schools.
- If the primary school were offering courses for a full day instead of half day, then the students would interact better, develop stronger relationship and school spirit. Primary school students often seem to spend much of their free time in school catering to their visiting parents or maids and fall short in interacting with their fellow classmates or schoolmates. By the time the bell rings, the gates would close and students must return to the classrooms due to strict rules. In comparison, students of an earlier era often played ball games thrice a day. Henceforth they managed to forge much stronger companionship, team spirit and school spirit throughout the growing years in Wah Yan.

b) Albert Young (L.A. Chapter):

- Students enrolled at the Wah Yan Primary Schools should be better taught to achieve academic excellence because 80% of them would enter the Wah Yan Colleges to effect the future academic rankings of Wah Yan. If the Wah Yan Colleges could attract more Band 1 (primary school) students instead of losing its own Band I students to Queens College, La Salle College or others, then Wah Yan could become better ranked as a result.
- In addition to the spirit of "bringing compassion and service to mankind and fellow people" (as we were taught by the Jesuit fathers and Wah Yan), we could bring these altogether through "educational excellence".

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- c) Opening Wah Yan College Overseas
- Delegate (Vancouver Chapter):
 - This is only a concept for discussion at this point in time as nothing has been decided. Opening a Wah Yan College in Canada is a conceptual plan for the long term.
 - The Vancouver Chapter has recorded the discussion of this concept to its minutes, however, the members are not sure on which process to undertake, or how to move this concept to the next stage.
 - The members are willing to listen for comments, opinions, or advices from teachers, principals, Jesuit fathers, other alumni chapters and concerned stakeholders before taking any action.
 - Leo Chu (Edmonton Chapter):
 - Would this require sanctions from Hong Kong, otherwise any group of people could open a similar Wah Yan College overseas'?
 - Would it be advisable to register the trademark of "Wah Yan" in Canada first'? Is there anyone who could represent Wah Yan?
 - What is the relationship of Jesuit Society with Wah Yan? Would the Jesuit Society continue its supervisory role for both HK and Kowloon Wah Yans (in future)?
 - Raymond Yu (Vancouver Chapter):
 - Opening a Wah Yan College in Vancouver would require the consent of the Jesuit Society.
 - Lawrence Yu (Vancouver Chapter):
 - From my experience of working in the Government of Canada, you would run into a lot of "red tapes", e.g. unions, school boards, etc..
 - Why not explore the concept of setting up a non-profit Education Foundation (one in HK, and one in Kowloon) to raise funds to help the present students in Wah Yan:
 - provide financial help for fees or books:
 - provide scholarships at universities;
 - subsidize a whole group of students travelling overseas for visits (not just for 2 ambassadors).
 - Why not develop local student exchange programs between HK and Kowloon Wah Yan Colleges:
 - HK and Kowloon Wah Yan grads should be treated as one family (this has been very successful in Vancouver);
 - It is regrettable to see that, in some other cities, HK and Kowloon Wahyanites tend to form their own splinter groups and do not mix well together.
 - Delegate (Vancouver Chapter):
 - In Vancouver, currently there is only one catholic boys' school. We are aware that the catholic bishop's office (or separate school board) in Vancouver has reserved a piece of land in Richmond (part of Greater Vancouver) planning for the construction of a secondary school.
 - If there is enough alumni support, we could proceed to discuss this matter with the catholic bishop's office (or separate school board).

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- Father Deignan:
 - In the foreseeable future, the Jesuit Society is still committed to both Wah Yans: performs the role of supervisor and also has involvement in the management committee working in a cooperative effort with members of the Pun Yu Association.
 - The contract was originally made with Pun Yu Assoc. for supervising Wah Yan HK.
 - So, the school does not belong to the Jesuit Society: we are running the school, but Pun Yu Association is involved in the management role.
 - The difficulty facing the Jesuit Society at this moment is that, due to a shortage of personnel, there would not be another person to follow Father Melon who is familiar with the history and has spent a lot of his time and life to interface with Pun Yu Wah Yan. So we have to rethink a new mode of relationship between us and Pun Yu Wah Yan and renew the links between us.
 - There are always difficulties when running a school which does not belong to you and you have to work with a committee (which involves Pun Yu Wah Yan); and Father Melon was always very sensitive to that as to who we are and what changes could be made to the school.
 - We would love to make it a whole day school as we think that the whole day primary school would be the best. We would try to get the land just opposite to where the school is, but up to now we are still not able to get that piece of land.
 - With regard to opening a Wah Yan College in Vancouver, I do not see any problem in linking this with Wah Yan but the question we should ask ourselves is whether this is the appropriate name to use: if it is going to be a *Jesuit school* in Vancouver, may be you want to consider the name - St. Ignatius Wah Yan?

Action Items from the 6th Wah Yan Alumni International Conference:

1. Wah Yan School in Canada:
 - 1.1 The Vancouver Chapter will investigate the use of the name "Wah Yan" for a school in Canada
 - 1.2 All Chapters interested in setting up a Wah Yan School at their respective locations will investigate jurisdictional issues with local school board(s) and/or government bodies on the governance and operation the proposed "Wah Yan" School
 - 1.3 The Wah Yan College Hong Kong (and perhaps Kowloon as well) will investigate the jurisdictional issues with tile Board of Directors and the Jesuit Society on the governance and operation of the proposed "Wah Yan" School(s) in Canada
2. International Networking Committee
 - 2.1 Implementation of a website for Wah Yan Alumni
 - 2.2 Update of the website
 - 2.3 Confidentiality and privacy issues associated with the website
3. Wah Yan Emigration and Mentor Programme
 - 3.1 Each Chapter will follow up with a mentor programme

Year 2000 International Conference Host will review the progress of the action items at the Year 2000 Conference