

Newsletter
Issue 4
2011



Committed to the development of the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide

Inside this issue:

President Update 1

Transcaucasia and
Central Asia update 3

In Memory of Emiko
Ichikawa 4

ASLIA National
Conference 6

Keep up to date by
visiting us on
[Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)



and our website:

www.wasli.org

Update from the WASLI President, Debra Russell

Thank you to each of you for your interest in the events of the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI). Since our last update the Board of Directors has experienced a significant loss. Our dear friend and colleague, Emiko Ichikawa, passed away. Emiko served as the Asia representative since the founding of WASLI in South Africa in 2005, and made wonderful contributions in her region and to our Board. Her commitment to working closely with Deaf community organisations, her strong relationships with interpreters, and her tireless energy won her the respect and love of all, and we will miss her terribly.

Over the first 90 days the Board has completed a strategic plan. It reflects WASLI's priorities and lists the many tasks we must complete. The next step is to create a master budget for the work plan, and then for each Board member to move forward on their tasks. One task we have completed was to post the financial statements and these are on the website for public access. Our new Treasurer is implementing a new financial tracking system that will make our financial records more accessible so that we can share them with the membership regularly. We have also completed a post-conference report, including participant feedback gathered through an online survey. That report will be translated into several languages and International Sign. We have completed a sponsorship report of the experiences the sponsored delegates that attended WASLI in South Africa. This report will be used by a smaller sub-committee to draft recommendations for a stable approach to sponsorship fundraising over the next three years, not just in the conference year.

In August I attended the national conference of the Association of Sign Language Interpreters of Australia, which meant I could have collaborative meetings with Colin Allen, President of the World Federation of the Deaf, and opportunities to meet with Sheena Walters and Susan Emerson, WASLI board



Australian interpreters with Deb Russell (center)

cont.

members who live in Australia. Thank you to ASLIA for their wonderful hospitality and to each of the interpreters that I met, I wish you continued success. While there I had a chance to meet some amazing interpreters from Fiji and the Solomon Islands, who attended the conference through the ASLIA Creating Opportunities Fund. We have a short video about that program on our website and Facebook site, so please view it.



Susan Emerson (Creating Opportunities Fund, 2011 Coordinator) and Mary Maneka (Sponsored delegate from the Solomon Islands)

WASLI and WFD have produced draft *terms of reference* for a shared committee on interpreting access for Deaf people during natural disasters. The committee will produce three documents for both WASLI and WFD. These documents will offer official position statements to guide governments; they list ideas for planning the communication services and practices from different countries where the Deaf community has been effective in gaining access to information. Our representatives are José Luis Brevia (Colombia) and Igor Bondarenko (Ukraine); they will be joined by two WFD board members, and this work will begin in January 2012.

WASLI is fortunate to have several interpreters volunteer their support. We thank Kelli Stein (USA) for offering to lead our work in creating closer ties to the World Federation of the Deaf Blind. Kelli has assembled an international committee, many of whom volunteered after seeing the call for volunteers on our Facebook site. We look forward to their work. Some of our regional representatives have been busy attending events in their region, and you may notice on our website that Transcaucasia is leading the way. They have developed a webpage to share presentations made in their region. Thanks to Igor Bondarenko for modeling this and also for representing us so well at a regional WFD meeting in Moscow. One of the interesting conversations at that WFD meeting was the reorganisation of WFD and WASLI regions to allow some Eastern European countries to be part of Transcaucasia. Also they discussed renaming Transcaucasia. Watch for further information about these developments.

Stuart Anderson (Europe) represented WASLI at the September *efsli* conference and began to forge relationships with the many countries in the Europe region. Selman Hoti (Balkans) visited Turkey recently, which will be the host country for the next WFD and WASLI conferences. Selman and Stuart will work with Turkey to strengthen their interpreting organisation over the next few years and help them deliver a successful conference in 2015. Like my trip to Australia, Selman, Stuart, and Igor's travel costs were covered by other organisations, meaning that no WASLI funds were spent for any of their travel. Thank you to the sponsors who made this travel possible.

Brendan Costello (Spain) and Mary Thumann (USA) are busy editing the WASLI 2011 conference proceedings and they have recommended that we publish a free, read-only PDF copy on our website, and a printable option for a small fee. The recommendation will ensure that the information is available to all who want to access it, regardless of they can afford to buy a copy of the proceedings. It will also mean WASLI doesn't have to print, store, and ship copies around the world.

Christopher Stone (UK) and Brendan Costello (Spain) have also offered to be the Research Review team. As you may know, WASLI receives requests from researchers to distribute research invitations

to our members. Over the past few years we have streamlined the process of approval, which involves an application and letters of support from Deaf community organisations. For those of you wishing to access the process, please see our website for further details.

A small committee will review the WASLI website and it will recommend how to improve access for anyone that uses our website to access current information. WASLI continues to post Facebook updates, tweets, and videos, so consider following us through those avenues if you don't already. As part of WASLI's 6th Birthday celebrations, the Board made a nice video introduction to the Board. We have also encouraged each interpreter to donate six hours of volunteer time to their interpreter association and/or a local Deaf community organisation. And, I can tell you that each WASLI Board members has already donated their six hours of time!

To those of you who have taken out individual membership, participated in raising sponsorship dollars for other countries, or have paid the membership of an interpreter in a developing country, thank you for your contributions to the global activity of our profession. Please feel free to be in touch with any of us serving on the Board, and especially your regional representative.

Thank you for your support.

Debra Russell, WASLI President

Colin Allen (WFD President) and Deb Russell



Update from the WASLI Transcaucasia and Central Asia Representative, Igor Bondarenko.

On the 12 October **Igor Bondarenko** attended the Eastern Europe and Middle Asia WFD Regional Secretariat's meeting in Moscow, Russian Federation. Igor had the opportunity to make a presentation about the WASLI activities around the world and outlined plans for his actions in the Region. This meeting resulted in all participants agreeing to promote WASLI's aims and objectives and to render possible support to WASLI regional representative in his work in the near future.



Also at this meeting Igor had an appointment with Dmitry Rebrov, a WFD Board member. They discussed an action plan to develop a position paper outlining communication standards that are crucial for governments, Deaf and interpreter communities in times of natural disasters.

Left: Igor Bondarenko (back row, second from left) at the WFD Regional Meeting , Moscow

In Memory of Emiko Ichikawa

Dear Emiko,

Nobody ever imagined that we would have to say goodbye to you this soon. We are filled with shock and grief of losing you, being at a loss for words. Japan and the world have lost someone special on October 29, 2012.

You encountered sign language when you were a university student, and have been with deaf people hand in hand since then. You launched NRASLI, the association of hearing people involved in sign language and contributed much to the development of sign language interpretation in Japan. Your words, "There is no sign language without deaf people. Because sign language is the language of deaf people.", have been the starting point of my activities.

After you assumed the office of WASLI Regional Representative, you worked energetically on a world scale attending the Board meetings and holding the Asian meetings. There have always been some members of the International Division of NRASLI translating next to you, since you don't speak English.

You were sensible of what they feel behind translated words. How encouraged were colleagues in Asia by your smiles and sound advice!

We did lose someone who is really important. But, we know we can't be in the depths of heavy sorrow forever. We are going to take over your achievements moving forward together with colleagues worldwide.

I am so glad that I could work with you.

Yours sincerely,

Etsuko UMEMOTO
 Manager of International Division,
 National Research Association for Sign
 Language Interpretation
 Japan



Tribute by Zane Hema:

Zane and Emiko

I first met Emiko at the Inaugural WASLI 2005 Conference in Worcester, South Africa. Little was I to know just how important and how wonderful our relationship would become in the years to come. In 2005 Emiko was elected as the WASLI Regional representative for the Asia region and I as the WASLI Secretary. Over the following years I was able to get a real sense of the work that Emiko did. In particular she was able to work with the WFD Asia/Pacific Regional Secretariat to enable sign language interpreters from participating countries to meet during their annual conference. This allowed for interpreters to give a profile of what is happening in the respective countries but to also share and discuss those issues that impact on their work.

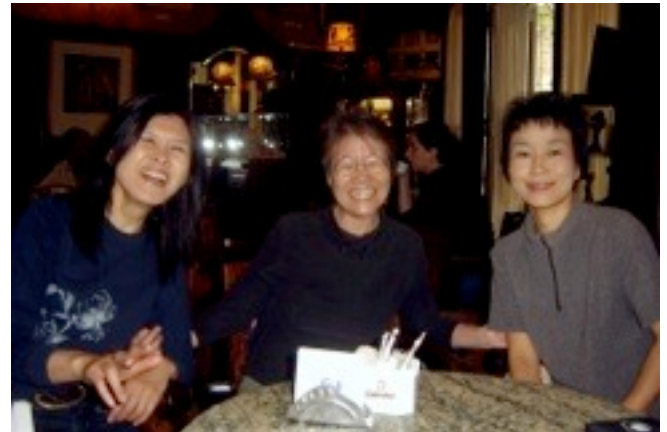
What was also evident was her contribution to the work of NRASLI and her involvement in working with other organisations to develop training structures and programmes for sign language interpreters in her country. Emiko was very helpful to me in providing a history and details of interpreter training development in Japan when I was gathering information from around the world.

I also got to know Emiko personally and realised she was very determined and strong-minded but she was also charming and funny. I happened to enjoy many a wonderful moment laughing and enjoying her company particularly after a long day at a WASLI Executive Board meeting. I couldn't speak Japanese and she couldn't speak English although I suspect her English was far better than my Japanese. But somehow this didn't matter. We found a way to understand each other.

Emiko Ichikawa san, I will miss you terribly. But I will always remember you for your contribution to the development of our profession, in Japan, in the Asia region and around the world. I will also remember you for being a wonderful hostess during my visit to NRASLI and for all the wonderful, happy, funny moments that we shared.

Zane Hema

Emiko with the previous WASLI Board and friends



Tribute by Liz Scott Gibson:

I first met Emiko Ichikawa at WASLI's inaugural meeting in South Africa, 2005. Although we didn't really have a language in common – my Japanese is pretty hopeless and Emiko was not that comfortable with English, her dynamism and energy meant communication happened anyway! It was wonderful to have Emiko as the very first representative for the Asia region on the WASLI Board; she took her responsibilities very seriously, and worked tirelessly to raise standards of the profession of sign language interpreting. She led initiatives to bring together interpreters from the Region to share ideas and experiences, encouraged them to become members of WASLI, and actively supported the WASLI sponsorship programme to bring interpreters from income poor countries of the world to take part in WASLI conferences. I have a wonderful image of Emiko with a brown paper bag 'persuading' people to donate money, and a memory of petite Emiko proudly presenting a cheque to well built Treasurer Daniel Burch at our Board meeting in Argentina.

Emiko had an infectious laugh and sparkling eyes; Board meetings were not all work – we had fun too, and Emiko had a wonderful giggle. But she could be determined and terrier-like if she felt things were not going as well as she would have wished. Her excellent working links with the Japanese Federation of the Deaf (JFD) were a model to be emulated by interpreter associations around the world, and her experience of enabling joined-up working with the JFD and interpreters at the time of the Japanese earthquake and tsunami provide us with valuable insights for WASLI's ongoing work to develop protocols for action at a time of natural disasters

I was fortunate enough to be invited to Japan last year, to help with the celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of JASLI. Although Emiko was actually in hospital recovering from surgery at the time, she had somehow persuaded the doctors to let her come out for a brief time to see me. I feel immensely privileged that I was able to spend time with her then, and will not forget her smiling face. She achieved so very much. WASLI is the better for having had her involvement, and I the better for having known her. She will be missed.



Emiko presents a cheque to Daniel Burch

Gael Seru from Fiji has written about her experiences as a delegate of the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association (ASLIA) National Conference. Gael was sponsored to attend through the Creating Opportunities Fund (COF). Gael was one of three interpreters from developing countries sponsored to attend the 2011 conference.

Bula!!!

I was privileged enough to be selected as a Creating Opportunities Fund (COF) delegate to attend the 2011 ASLIA conference in Sydney, Australia. The announcement itself came as a lovely surprise as I am still new in this field but I guess regardless of how long you have been interpreting, it's your connection and interaction in the field that matters most.

It was an honour to be meeting people that we only read of; like Debra Russell, Karen Bontempo, Marcel Leneham and Della Goswell just to name a few. The whole programme was perfectly organised and the auction night was the best! It was really moving to see the enthusiasm and willingness of our counterparts from Australia in making bids in order to raise funds that would enable next year's COF delegates to attend the ASLIA conference. It was amazing to hear Della Goswell belt out her French accent in the voiceover for Mademoiselle, the Deaf MC for the evening.

It was an eye opening experience for me as I witnessed first hand the professionalism of the interpreters in Australia. They were way ahead of us back in Fiji, however I firmly believe that we work well within our context back home but I hope that one day I will carry myself out like one of these professional interpreters.

I'm grateful that I was able to establish some friendships and I brought back materials to share with my colleagues in Fiji. We had a workshop in September and I made a presentation on my trip and experiences at the conference. I'm thankful to Karen Bontempo for the links and resources she sends which allows me to print out and pass on to other interpreters. This has been a useful tool in reading self explanatory notes and applying them in our daily assignments.

A very big thank you to the COF committee for the great opportunity!!!



Gael Seru



Lorani Kunadua and Gael Seru (both Fiji) displaying Fijian gifts for the COF auction



Mary Maneka (Solomon Islands) in green top dancing a traditional Solomon islands dance

To find out more about the ASLIA Creating Opportunities Fund see this video:
<http://www.wasli.org/creating-opportunities-fund-p146.aspx>





Happy **6th** Birthday WASLI!

Check out the birthday messages from the board:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIPaIM4Yfd8>

SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH THE WORLD!

Please send updates, announcements, articles and photos from your part of the world for the WASLI 2012 newsletter.

Please email them to: newsletter@wasli.org

IMPORTANT

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters. The Editor, together with the WASLI Executive Board and external contributors, produce the WASLI newsletter. WASLI will work to ensure the authenticity of any information provided. We reserve the right to edit all submissions that are published. WASLI accepts no liability for the accuracy of the contents or any opinions expressed. Readers are invited to reproduce information provided the source is quoted. Readers should contact secretary@wasli.org for permission to use WASLI official photographs, or to advise of a change of email address.

WASLI EXECUTIVE BOARD

Officers: Deb Russell (President); José Luis Brieva Padilla (Vice President); Awoii Patrick Michael (Secretary); Susan Emerson (Treasurer)

Regional Representatives: Sheena Walters (Australasia & Oceania); Samuel Begumisa (Africa); Selman Hoti (Balkans); Stuart Anderson (Europe); José Ednilson Jnr (Latino America); Nigel Howard (North America); Igor Bondarenko (Transcaucasia & Central Asia); Asia- To be advised.

WASLI VOLUNTEERS

WASLI Webmaster: David Wolfenden

WASLI Membership: Robin Demko

WASLI Translations Coordinator: Rafael Treviño (plus volunteers)

Newsletter Editor: Angela Murray

Newsletter Editorial Assistant: George Major

Newsletter proofreaders: Patrick Galasso and Alan Wendt