



POVERTY ~ Theme of the 2007 Cross-National Teaching Forum

Delegates who participated in the pre-conference *Cross National Teaching Forum* in Guadalajara, Mexico suggested ways that WACRA could be a catalyst for change in eliminating global poverty. Eduardo Rosker and Amelia Klein facilitated a pre-conference (bi-lingual) work session where WACRA members – representing nine countries – created specific action plans that could become an integral part of future WACRA conferences, and beyond!

WACRA conferences provide an ideal forum for exploring the power of education as a change agent. WACRA is an interdisciplinary, international organization that

- promotes effective interactive teaching models and techniques
- highlights entrepreneurship and leadership in professional development programs
- strengthens bonds between higher education and the society it serves
- attracts mature, experienced, highly motivated professionals
- nurtures a professional and personal commitment to improving the quality of life in a global community

Participants attending the *Cross National Teaching Forum* shared their expertise and developed innovative short and long term projects that would fit in the context and structure of WACRA conferences. A wide-range of activities that focus on poverty and education was proposed, such as: a special conference track or session; a data base of teaching cases; an issue of the WACRA on-line journal devoted to related topics; and presentation of teaching practice such as service learning.

The theme of poverty and higher education was then presented to the entire body of conference participants during a plenary session. Delegates were invited to submit further ideas on how WACRA might take a lead in reducing poverty as a professional organization. The audience eagerly accepted the task and provided a wealth of ideas. The information provided at the Guadalajara conference is currently being compiled and will be disseminated to WACRA members. (An e-mail list/network of interested participants was generated at the conference. If you would like to add your name to this special interest group, please contact Denise Smith, smithdmwacra@triad.rr.com.) We invite you to accept the challenge to “conquer” poverty through education. Octavio Paz, Mexican Nobel Prize recipient, reminds us that *the search for the future ends inevitably with the conquest of the past*.