

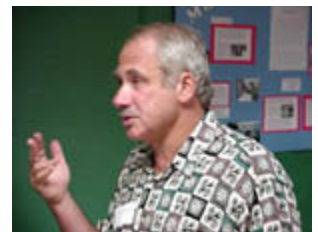
## Amherst Area Mini-Reunion & Fund Campaign

Reported by Cole Genge



If ever there were an image of social cohesion across a broad and diverse group of people, the second mini-reunion and Fund Raising Campaign held on a warm Friday evening in May 2001 at CIE was one to remember. It was an organic, co-mingling of CIE graduates, current students, faculty, staff and friends of the Center spanning a third of a century. One could observe faces from every continent, smiles, embraces, old friends catching up on each other's lives, new connections being made, and above all a general sense of shared values and experiences.

The cohesiveness of the gathering, however didn't come about without help. In fact, getting the world savvy and well traveled CIE alum to come to such an event was another story altogether. E-mails and phone calls came and went for a good while. Alan Hurwitz said "If George Urch is calling people he knew "they pulled out the big guns", so he changed his plans and was glad to have come. "It's always great to meet people from the Center," he said. Also on hand to greet those who came were Anna Donovan, David Schimmel, Ash Hartwell, Bob Sinclair and Barbara Gravin-Wilbur.



As the event got started, David Evans tried several times in vain to bring some order to the more than 50 people gathered in the Kinsey Room, now including a picture of David and a plaque honoring him. Once the room quieted down, George Urch had everyone rolling in laughter with his time-honored story of the "simple farmer from Vermont." Mike Seppala, the development officer for the School of Education, referred to the rich background of CIE as a vibrant, living reminder of the values that characterized the school under the leadership of [Dwight Allen](#). Mike announced the recently established Distinguished Professorship honoring Dwight and alluded to the fact that "CIE had kept the spirit and values of those times alive in its program."



DRE continued by stressing the richness of the experience at CIE. That's what makes this place special, but CIE is in a time of transition and a fund campaign was started this March as a way to help ensure the future of CIE. "There are two aspects to this campaign: having widespread participation and fund raising," he said. He announced that since the kick-off in Washington, faculty and former faculty of CIE had pledged over \$20,000. One of the goals of the Amherst mini-reunion was to get those in the Northeast actively involved in the campaign, starting with those present. CIE alumni, professors and staff have responded enthusiastically to the campaign by pledging nearly \$42,000 as of the May 11, 2001. He stressed the value of making contributions before July 1st, to maximize the income from the first year of the endowment, with the goal of being able to provide an assistantship for a student from a developing area in the fall of 2002.

Then a "Tuesday morning meeting" broke out! Almost immediately it conjured up images for David Schimmel, the Center's first director, of the gatherings under a tree at the Colorado Retreat where the idea of CIE was dreamed up. They wanted to have regular meetings, Schimmel said, "Thursday was the School meeting so Tuesday became CIE meeting day", and we've been having them ever since. At that point Ash Hartwell spoke up, saying "I was part of that first cast of characters in starting the Tuesday morning meetings. Thirty-three years ago, I found CIE to be one of the most exciting places to be and that is one of the reasons that I came back." Ash is now an active adjunct faculty member in CIE and works closely with current students bridging the world of academia and the realities of educational development in Africa today.



The feelings of connection and commitment to CIE were evident from the comments. Jeetendra Joshi, now assistant Dean of Continuing Education at UConn said, "I'm delighted that you've started doing this", referring to the fund raising campaign, "because you may not know what CIE alumni have made of themselves." He gave the example of a recent 25 million dollar gift to the the University of Connecticut from an early 1970s graduate who had become a multimillion-dollar business owner unknown to the university. A reporter asked him why he hadn't contributed anything in the past and he allegedly said "nobody came to ask me!" DRE quickly looked at the audience and asked "Who are each of you going to ask?"



During the discussion, a number of other ideas were suggested. Carla Clason-Hook said "we could give presentations and donate the proceeds." She mentioned that she recently was invited to present at a middle school and later received a check which she could easily donate to CIE. Gretchen Rossman, a faculty member and author of several books, said "There can be other ways of giving," for example the royalties from the sale of her books are going to CIE this year. David Rosen volunteered to help out with followup phone calls and to contribute by helping to teach one of the literacy courses at CIE to maintain that component of the program.

But by far, the wildest suggestion came from current doctoral candidate Elias Moning, who said "Sometimes it's difficult to give money, but antiques, cars, and houses that are auctioned via internet can be a good alternative." He offered to donate a new laser printer; who knows this may even lead to the Center's own "CIE bay" cyber auction house!

Mary Jo Connelly, was more pragmatic as she pulled out her checkbook and said "In line with our learning philosophy of combining theory and practice, lets stop talking and get to the action." Others followed her example and by the end of the evening pledges of over \$2,000 had been made with more to come later.



DRE closed the evening by thanking everyone and reminding them that there were some incentive gifts from Zimbabwe provided by Dwight W. Allen. For gifts over \$100 there are small stone carvings, and for gifts over \$250 there are some very attractive cloth prints from Zimbabwe—while supplies last.