

Notes from The President

What Should ISSBD Accomplish?

The realization that this is my last article for the *Bulletin*, (previously *Newsletter*) was startling. It seems like just yesterday that we were starting out on this journey together building ISSBD. Now I recognize that a presidency is more like a relay race; my turn is ending and I will pass the baton at the end of ISSBD2010 into the capable hands of Wolfgang Schneider, President-Elect.

We have accomplished much together! The purpose I articulated in my first message to all of you in 2006 is for ISSBD to advance developmental science through theory, methods, and research, and to serve society and humankind in doing so. The two most important contributions to our field are surely our biennial meeting and our flagship journal. Both are doing better than ever! *IJBD* Editor Marcel van Aken and his outstanding team of Associate Editors, are bringing to ISSBD members important research that advances understanding of human development in global context. Karina Weichold and Bonnie Barber have continued to strengthen the *ISSBD Newsletter*/now *Bulletin*. Thanks also to Andy Collins, and his Publications Committee, for their sage advice on publication issues.

The ISSBD 2010 meeting will be the third iteration of our new approach to conference sponsorship. Building from the groundbreaking work of Ann Sanson and colleagues in 2006, and Wolfgang Schneider and colleagues in 2008, Robert Serpell and colleagues are creating an ISSBD2010 meeting that bring the issues and scholarship of Africa more strongly into the rich mix of strengths that ISSBD represents. More on ISSBD2010 later.

We have also worked hard to increase the effectiveness of ISSBD, both scientifically and administratively. Suman Verma and Catherine Cooper conducted an important study (reported in the Fall 2009 *Bulletin*) on ISSBD's regional workshops, to enhance the effectiveness of these workshops for ISSBD members in the region. Building from that report, the 2009 ISSBD Regional Workshop in Kenya led by Paul Oburu was outstanding, led from the region and initiating two important experiments in capacity building. Paul also enrolled a record number of new ISSBD members. (I was unable to attend the regional workshops in China and AustralAsia but am sure that these were also effective.) I believe that these efforts will more meaningfully engage ISSBD members who may not be able to attend the biennial meeting, and build human development research capacity more broadly.

With ISSBD's growth, we have also attended to issues of membership and financial management. Ann Sanson, with Membership Secretary Xinyin Chen, led a committee to examine

membership distribution, fees and subsidies, among other issues; the recommendations of their excellent work have already been partially implemented. Finances turned out to be much more difficult, despite the outstanding efforts of Treasurer Ingrid Schoon and Finance Committee Chair Liz Susman, because of the changes in banking that limit how transactions can be conducted. ISSBD has now approved a small contract for professional financial management, still under the direction of the Treasurer and President (and the entire Executive Committee, when appropriate). This issue has taken much more time than it deserves and we are hopeful that going forward the Treasurer and the President can focus on their primary purposes. I know that ISSBD Secretary General Katharina Salmela-Aro will welcome this additional assistance for her great work as well.

Support for ISSBD management has also come from SAGE Publications, and specifically through the good efforts of our liaison, Kerry Barner. Kerry tirelessly works on our behalf, not only for all of our publications but also in support of membership, elections, our website, and many other functions. ISSBD remains an organization run by volunteers but without Kerry's and SAGE's support, we would be much less effective.

The ISSBD Young Scholars are another very bright spot on ISSBD's landscape. Under the leadership of the first Young Scholar Executive Committee member, Zena Mello, the Young Scholars are a very lively and engaged part of ISSBD. Major highlights include a new Young Scholar elected position on the Executive Committee, young scholar representation on every ISSBD committee, as well as Young Scholar leadership with some major efforts. This group assures us that ISSBD and the field have a strong future with their talent!

We hope that most of you are able to join us for a spectacular meeting in Lusaka, Zambia in July. This is our first ISSBD meeting on the continent of Africa. Robert and his colleagues have been working hard to make this an outstanding meeting scientifically, professionally, and culturally.

I will say much more about ISSBD's status and future challenges for our field at the meeting in Zambia, both in my Presidential address, and in my comments at the business meeting. I was just moving to Stanford at the beginning of my Presidency and have now moved to the University of Michigan. Please let me know if you have any suggestions to share. Thanks for all your good efforts!

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