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August 23, 2004

To: Alan Sweedler, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice President, Office of International Programs.

From: Members of Tijuana Collaborative Project: School of Social Work
Dr. Lucinda Rasmussen, Dr. Sally Mathiesen, Dr. Terry Carrilio, Dr. David Engstrom,
Dr. Joseph Kelley, Professor Donna Daley

RE: Activities Update

The purpose of this memo is to provide a brief progress report of the activities that the Tijuana Collaborative Project undertook during the 2003-2004 academic year, using the grant of \$3798 received from the Office of International Programs in May, 2003.

The Tijuana Collaborative Project was organized in Fall Semester 2002 to facilitate a professional and cultural exchange between social work practitioners in Tijuana and Faculty and students of the School of Social Work. The School of Social Work Faculty of the Collaborative Project met with their social work colleagues in Tijuana and agreed upon the following initial goals: (a) provide opportunities for students, Faculty, and social work practitioners to dialogue with each other about common social problems that concern both sides of the Mexican border, (b) increase the awareness of students, Faculty, and social work practitioners from each side of the border of the social services provided on the other side of the border, and (c) provide opportunities for students from each side of the border to have internship experiences on the other side of the border. The ultimate goal of the Collaborative is to establish SDSU social work internships in Tijuana.

A proposed series of professional activities were designed to meet the initial goals of the Collaborative Project. These activities included: (a) Tijuana social workers' tour of San Diego institutions, (b) SDSU Faculty and students' tour of Tijuana health and mental health facilities, (c) a round table conference in Tijuana with speakers from the United States and Mexico, (d) specialized workshops on child sexual abuse treatment, play therapy, and mental health practice with children (e) a professional conference with juried paper presentations that would include representatives from many regions of Mexico.

The first two activities (i.e., Tijuana social workers' tour of San Diego institutions and SDSU Faculty and students' tour of Tijuana health and mental health facilities) took place in Spring Semester 2003, before the OIP funds were received, with assistance from the Center on Latin American Studies. The OIP funds were used to help plan and carry out the third and fourth activities – the round table conference and specialized trainings.

The third activity, the round table conference, known as "Binational Encounter / Encuentro Binacional" was held on April 23, 2004 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The conference was held at La Sociedad de Historia : Calle Ermita Norte #3801 Col. Corona del Rosal Delegación La Mesa in

Tijuana. The conference began with two keynote addresses – one from Dr. Joseph Kelley, Professor Emeritus of the School of Social Work and the other from Ines Favela Hernandez, a social work practitioner employed as a supervisor at DIF (the Tijuana equivalent of Child Protective Services). The keynote addresses were translated simultaneously into both English and Spanish, using translation equipment provided by the U.S. Consulate.

Following the keynote addresses, five breakout sessions or “round tables” were held. Each “round table” focused on a social problem of mutual concern for social work practitioners on both sides of the U.S./Mexican border. The five social problems were: domestic violence, child abuse, mental health issues, human rights issues, and school social work. At each round table, speakers from the U.S. and Mexico gave short presentations and then participants engaged in a dialogue about the issue.

Following the round table breakout sessions, a plenary session of all conference participants was held. Representatives from each of the round tables reported the results of their discussion to the entire group. The conference concluded with a large lunch and an awards ceremony presenting certificates of attendance to participants.

Approximately 80 participants attended the Binational Encounter (approximately 40 participants from each side of the border). The participants from the U.S. side included 13 MSW students, 3 BSW students, 3 participants from the Council of International Programs (from Ghana and Germany), 5 practitioners from the professional community (i.e., one LCSW, one Associate Clinical Social Worker, one psychiatrist, and two marriage and family therapists), and 6 Faculty from the School of Social Work.

The funds from the OIP grant were used to support: (a) transportation and meals for the planning meetings between the SDSU Faculty and the Mexican social work practitioners, (b) the bus transportation of the SDSU Faculty, students, and San Diego community practitioners to the conference, and (c) the cost of lunch for the guest speakers for the round table break out sessions.

The fourth professional activity planned by the Tijuana Collaborative Project was a series of workshops on children’s mental health issues. Dr. Lucinda Rasmussen, assisted by Maria Teresa Kelley, MSW, facilitated these workshops. They included trainings on Dr. Rasmussen’s area of research expertise – child sexual abuse, including the treatment of children who engage in sexually abusive behaviors, as well as trainings on play therapy and assessment of children. The workshops were held approximately once monthly, starting in September 2003. Location for the trainings rotated between two agencies – Ciudad de los Ninos and Lazaro Cardenas Escuecala. In addition to these trainings, Dr. Rasmussen and Ms. Kelley provided consultation services related to treatment of child sexual abuse and domestic violence to another Tijuana agency, Servicios y Solidaridad en Mexico a.c.

The activities of the Tijuana Collaborative have generated other collaborative efforts involving cultural interchange with professionals in Mexico. Two members of the Collaborative, Dr. Terry Carrillo and Dr. Sally Mathiesen, were involved in a 4-week Summer language and cultural immersion program in LaPaz, Baja California Sur, Mexico, sponsored by the SDSU Center for Latin American Studies. This interdisciplinary program included engagement with faculty and students of a Mexican university and the opportunity to begin to develop joint research projects and student exchanges.

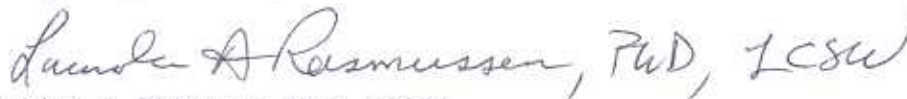
The SDSU Faculty members on the Tijuana Collaborative wrote up their experiences in Tijuana and LaPaz for a refereed journal article. This article, "At the border: Beginning dialogue and partnership between a California university and a Mexican practice community" was published in the journal, *Professional Development: the International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education*, 7(2), 42-52 (Mathiesen, Carrilio, Rasmussen, & Engstrom, 2004).

We received the award of \$3798 from OIP in May, 2003. Funds from the OIP grant were used for transportation and meals for the training and consulting services described above, as well as for multiple bi-national collaborative meetings in Tijuana and for the "Bi-National Encounter" in April, 2004. Dr. Carrilio used some of the funds to travel to Loreto with Dr. Paul Ganster and Dr. Jim Gerber on a community project directed by Dr. Ganster, in collaboration with UABCS. To date we have utilized \$2515 of the funds provided through the grant. In the spring semester, 2004, we requested, and received permission from OIP to carry the \$1283 that remains in our grant into the next academic year.

During the coming academic year, the members of the project plan to continue to develop their relationships with their Mexican colleagues in Tijuana and LaPaz. Planning meetings will be held with the Tijuana social work practitioners to develop a follow-up conference to the Binational Encounter. This conference may include juried paper presentations (the fifth activity initially planned by the Collaborative). It is hoped that this second conference will draw participants from other regions in Mexico besides Tijuana. The remaining \$1283 from the OIP grant will be used to support these endeavors, with the goals of: (a) strengthening the relationships between SDSU Faculty and students and the social work practitioners in Tijuana, (b) continuing to engage in meaningful dialogue about ways to effectively intervene with social problems affecting people on both sides of the U.S./Mexican border, (c) providing SDSU social work students with meaningful experiences involving cultural interchange with Mexican social work practitioners.

We are grateful for the continued support of the Office of International Programs in our efforts with Mexico.

Respectfully submitted,



Lucinda A. Rasmussen, Ph.D., LCSW
Associate Professor
SDSU School of Social Work
Member, Tijuana Collaborative

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