New Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series Honors Merle Simmons

To pay homage to Professor Emeritus Merle E. Simmons for his significant contributions to Indiana University and Hispanic literature, the Department of Spanish & Portuguese in Bloomington has created an annual lecture series in his name. The inaugural lecture was presented on April 7 by IU alumna JulieGreerJohnson, a professor of Romance Languages at the University of Georgia, who spoke on “Metatheater in the New World: Sor Juana’s Sainete Segundo.”

Johnson received an M.A. in Latin American Studies in 1970 and her Ph.D. in Spanish literature in 1975 under the tutelage of Simmons. She is considered a leading colonialist among her colleagues and has written articles and books on a wide range of literary topics in colonial Latin America.

Introductory speeches at the First Annual Merle E. Simmons Distinguished Alumni Lecture were given by departmental chair DarleneSadlier and her colleague, RussellSalmon, Dean for International Programs PatrickO'Meara, Executive Associate Dean and Director of Overseas Study RichardE. Stryker, and John McDowell of the Folklore Institute.

Simmons was on the faculty from 1951 until his retirement in 1983, serving as chair from 1976 to 1981. From 1962 onward, he also held a joint appointment in the Folklore Institute. Simmons was dedicated to the ideals of international education and pioneered in setting up some of IU's long-standing overseas study programs in Mexico City, Madrid, Lima, Hamburg, Strasbourg, and Bologna. He also helped to co-found the CIC Program in Mexico, serving several times as IU's resident director in the Madrid and Mexico City programs, and was active in IU's Program for Latin American Area Studies.

Since retiring, Simmons has received two significant honors in recognition of his work. In 1984, he was elected as a corresponding member to the Academia Nacional de la Historia in Caracas, Venezuela. In 1989, the government of Peru decorated him with a gold medal and conferred on him the rank of “Gran Oficial de la Orden El Sol del Perú.” — RMN

Julie Johnson (first row center) is flanked by Merle and Concepción Simmons. In the second row are Spanish & Portuguese department faculty Joseph Campbell, Russell Salmon, and Professor Emeritus Walter Posey.

A New Guide to International Inter-University Linkages

The worldwide interest in inter-university cooperative agreements continues to grow. Often, however, institutions begin negotiating with each other before they have any clear idea of what each party can gain from the other. This is especially true given that the U.S. system of higher education differs substantially from most other nations.

To provide a general orientation for international and U.S. educators interested in such cooperative linkages, NAFSA: Association of International Educators is publishing NAFSA's Guide to University Linkages, edited by SusanCarty of IU's Office of International Programs.

The publication, to be released late this summer, builds on materials previously developed by NAFSA's member institutions, and gives clear and practical advice for officials of foreign universities interested in cooperating formally or informally with an institution in the United States.

For further information, check NAFSA's Website (http://www.nafsa.org) or call the NAFSA Publications office at (800) 836-4994.