When he looks at a map of the world, Eugene R. Tempel, executive director of the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy, sees dozens of places where the center either is playing or has played a significant role in helping other countries develop philanthropy for the 21st century. The center is perhaps the preeminent national university resource for research, academic programs, public affairs, and public service in philanthropy, and its reach knows no borders.

The Center on Philanthropy reaches out to nations around the world to provide public service, staff and information resources, technical assistance, and training related to philanthropy. In partnership with individuals and organizations based in the countries they are serving, staff from the center work with nonprofit practitioners, philanthropic institutions, and universities to increase understanding and improve the management and practice of philanthropy.

While the center is heavily involved in philanthropic efforts throughout the world, Tempel is quick to note that it works closely with local partners to develop each project. "We don't want to be imperialistic about the center's training and impose it on someone. We don't want to be seen as the Americans coming in and trying to save things," Tempel says. Instead, Tempel says, the center educates individuals from other countries about the center's principles and its potential to serve as a facilitator; they then assist in evaluating how the center's program could or should be adapted or applied in a particular country or culture.

The strategy has produced a global demand for the center's expertise, and Tempel sees many new opportunities throughout the world. Currently, for example, the center is involved in an ongoing program with several universities in Ireland. The universities sent a team of 12 to the center at IUPUI for a five-day course in April 1997. Last September Tempel and Timothy Seiler, director of The Fund Raising School and Public Service at the center, went to Limerick and taught a three-day follow-up course at the University of Limerick, for participants from all over Ireland and Northern Ireland.

What Tempel hopes will evolve from this program is that one of the universities will become a place where more study about philanthropy in Ireland is undertaken, where courses can be offered and outreach programs can help nonprofit organizations throughout that country. While the Center on Philanthropy often starts with training sessions, the hope is that the work will lead to involvement with a university and eventual "local ownership that can continue without us," Tempel stresses.

The center's extensive work in Mexico demonstrates its success in transplanting the techniques that center faculty employ to help colleagues around the globe establish effective philanthropy. The work began several years ago when a woman from Mexico became interested in the center and thought the center's approach could be adapted in her country. She took courses in the United States and then set up a nonprofit organization in Mexico called Procura, which operates fund raising training programs in Spanish, based on the IU center's techniques. All of the center's programs now have been translated into Spanish and perhaps as many as 1,000 people have been trained, Tempel says.

The Mexico project is also an excellent example of how The Center on Philanthropy's
programs are growing and expanding. The center is now discussing the possibility of setting up a university-based program at Universidad Iberoamericana, the Jesuit university in Mexico City. Tempel says this kind of partnership with a university will not only help the program grow and increase its stability, but also will insure high quality.

The center also has an ongoing program in the Philippines, working with an organization called Asian Pacific Philanthropy Consortium. The Philippine group sponsors the center's programs and invites participants from throughout the Pacific region. The goal is to create expertise and assets that participants can use in their own countries.

Center staff skillfully address cross-cultural issues and assist local organizations in balancing cultural considerations and philanthropic goals. During meetings in Bangkok, for example, center personnel discovered that the tradition in Thailand is that philanthropy goes primarily to Buddhist monks. This raised the question of how to legitimately ask people to give to other causes without violating this dominant tradition. With the center's assistance, the Thai group was able to determine that it is possible to seek funds for worthy causes and still allow people to give to the monks, and even to involve the monks themselves in broader social philanthropy.

Tempel is excited about a possible relationship between IUPUI, the Center on Philanthropy, and the University of Bremen in Bremen, Germany, which would establish a philanthropy center for northern Europe. The president of the University of Bremen has invited IUPUI representatives to Bremen for a May workshop.

In addition to other programs, the University of Bremen is interested in replicating the entire spectrum of activities the Center on Philanthropy offers by translating center programs into German.

"They have a small nonprofit management program in their school of social work, but they want to expand it to the humanities and social sciences and have interested faculty members do research about philanthropy in Germany and the role of nonprofits in Germany. They would then be interested in developing a master's level program jointly with IUPUI and in doing outreach work. This is one of the few places where the discussion has started at the..."

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university level and would then go to the practitioner level. Most often these relationships begin with practitioners and move toward a university,” Tempel says.

The earliest international work of The Fund Raising School, even before 1987 when it became part of the Center on Philanthropy, was in the early 1980s in Australia and New Zealand. So many people have been trained in New Zealand that they now carry out the work under contract with the center, and discussions are going on with the University of Victoria in Wellington, New Zealand, to make philanthropy part of university courses. Training continues in Australia, and the center is currently developing contacts with Fund Raising Institute Australia to train trainers there and have them carry out work on the center’s behalf.

The Fund Raising School sponsored a five-day course in Vienna in February on the principles and techniques of fund raising that attracted 36 enrollees from 15 European countries. Such courses often lead to other training opportunities when attendees see a place for the center’s training in their own countries. The center is either involved or has been involved in not only the countries already mentioned, but in Canada, Argentina, South Africa, Algeria, Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia, Switzerland, Israel, and Puerto Rico.

A foundation in Italy has requested training from the Center on Philanthropy to help them set up community foundations patterned after those developed by the Lilly Endowment and the Kellogg Foundation. “This would be a very different program,” Tempel says. “Most of the countries in Europe do not have anything like these community foundations. There are lots of foundations that are older than our American foundations, but they don’t have anything quite like community foundations where a number of people can put their money together through donor-advised funds.”

Tempel has found that there are significant differences in other countries in terms of corporate philanthropy. In fact, he hears from U.S. nonprofits in communities with foreign-owned corporations that the foreign owners don’t understand the importance of community relations and corporate philanthropy.

No one should think, however, that philanthropy happens only in the United States. Tempel finds there are philanthropic traditions in all countries but that they may look different from those in America and often are based on different rationales. “Philanthropy may be based on religious culture, neighborhood involvement, or family structures,” Tempel says, “but every one of the cultures throughout the world has some aspect of carrying out philanthropy.”

— Ruth Albright
Special to the OIP Newsletter

IU Art Museum Opens West African Horse Exhibit

“Representations of Horses and Riders in West African Art,” will be on exhibit at the IU Art Museum March 10 – July 31, 1999. Horses are not indigenous to Africa, but were introduced into Egypt around the middle of the second millennium B.C. From there they spread across the continent, and were known to be in West Africa by the rise of the Mali Empire in the 13th century. Difficult to keep healthy and expensive to maintain, horses in West Africa became symbols of wealth, prestige, and power.

This small exhibit offers visitors an opportunity to see how artists depicted them in wood, brass, ivory, and clay. It includes 16 sculptures and one painting, some from the Indiana University Art Museum’s permanent collection, and others from private collectors. The exhibit is co-curated by Diane Pelrine and Abigail Amos (IU art history graduate student and Art Museum graduate assistant). It is housed in the Focalpoint Gallery, located on the third floor of the museum inside the Raymond and Laura Wielgus Gallery of the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas.

—Diane Pelrine
IU Art Museum