CLACS Wins Department of Education TICFIA Grant

Indiana University Bloomington’s Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) has been awarded a four-year $600,000 grant for academic years 2005–2008 from the U.S. Department of Education’s Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access (TICFIA) Program. TICFIA grants support projects that will develop innovative techniques or programs using new electronic technologies to collect information from foreign sources. Typically, funds are used to create, collect, preserve, and widely disseminate digital resources that address teaching and research needs in international education and foreign languages.

The CLACS project, the Central American and Mexican Video Archive (CAMVA), allows IUB to create a repository that will make accessible hundreds of hours of raw footage, videos, and films whose preservation is currently in a precarious state, on the point of irreversible deterioration and destruction. The archive project will annotate, index, and deliver this diverse footage in such a way as to be useful in college and high school classrooms throughout the United States, Mexico, and Central America. These materials will be distributed via the Internet.

IU Bloomington’s partners in Project CAMVA are faculty and

continued on page 28

African Studies Participates in Islamic Resources TICFIA Grant

Three faculty members of IU Bloomington’s African Studies Program are participating in the development of a Web site component that will be part of a larger project, “Diversity and Tolerance in the Islam of West Africa: Creating Online Resources of Peaceful Muslim Practice,” under a Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access (TICFIA) grant that has been awarded jointly to Michigan State University (MSU) and African Online Digital Library (AODL) at Harvard University.

Its goal is to present the tolerance and diversity of Muslim religious practices and highlight the dominant tradition of incorporation, pragmatism, and mutual respect that has marked many West African Muslim communities, particularly those in Senegal and Ghana. The project will digitally preserve and create accessible archives—to be distributed via Web sites—of currently unavailable materials such as audio interviews, interview transcripts, West African newspapers, photographs, videotapes, and other archival text or image documents. These sources involve several languages (e.g., Arabic, French, Pulaar, Twi, Wolof) and range in content from the religious, cultural, and political history of these two countries, and topics such as peace and dispute resolution, international migration, the impact of globalization on societies, relations between religious and government organizations, and Muslim Sufi networks.

In addition to MSU and Harvard, other African researchers and specialists from Indiana University, Boston University, and University of Florida will participate. From IUB, John Hanson, director of the African Studies Program, will contribute materials on the Ahmadiyya mission and reform movement for a section on Ahmadiyya secondary schools in Ghana, which have a secular Muslim orientation. Gracia Clark will travel to Kumasi, Ghana, to add audio and visual resources about markets and trading, including the spread of Islam along historic trade routes and the roles and dynamics of trade between Muslims and Christians today. Maria Grosz-Ngaté, associate director, will travel to Senegal to document the Qadiriyya spiritual center of Njaassaan, a center for Bamana pilgrims from Mali.

The project will be coordinated by historians David Robinson at MSU for the Senegal component and Emmanuel Acheampong of Harvard for the Ghana component.

For further information on digital preservation of African materials, see: www.aodl.org