

# Initiatives

Helping everyday people work together, build community and learn for life!

## Elizabeth Houde is ICA's new Chief Executive

**ICA USA Board announces an important new milestone**

*Richard Wilkinson, President, Board of Directors, ICA USA*

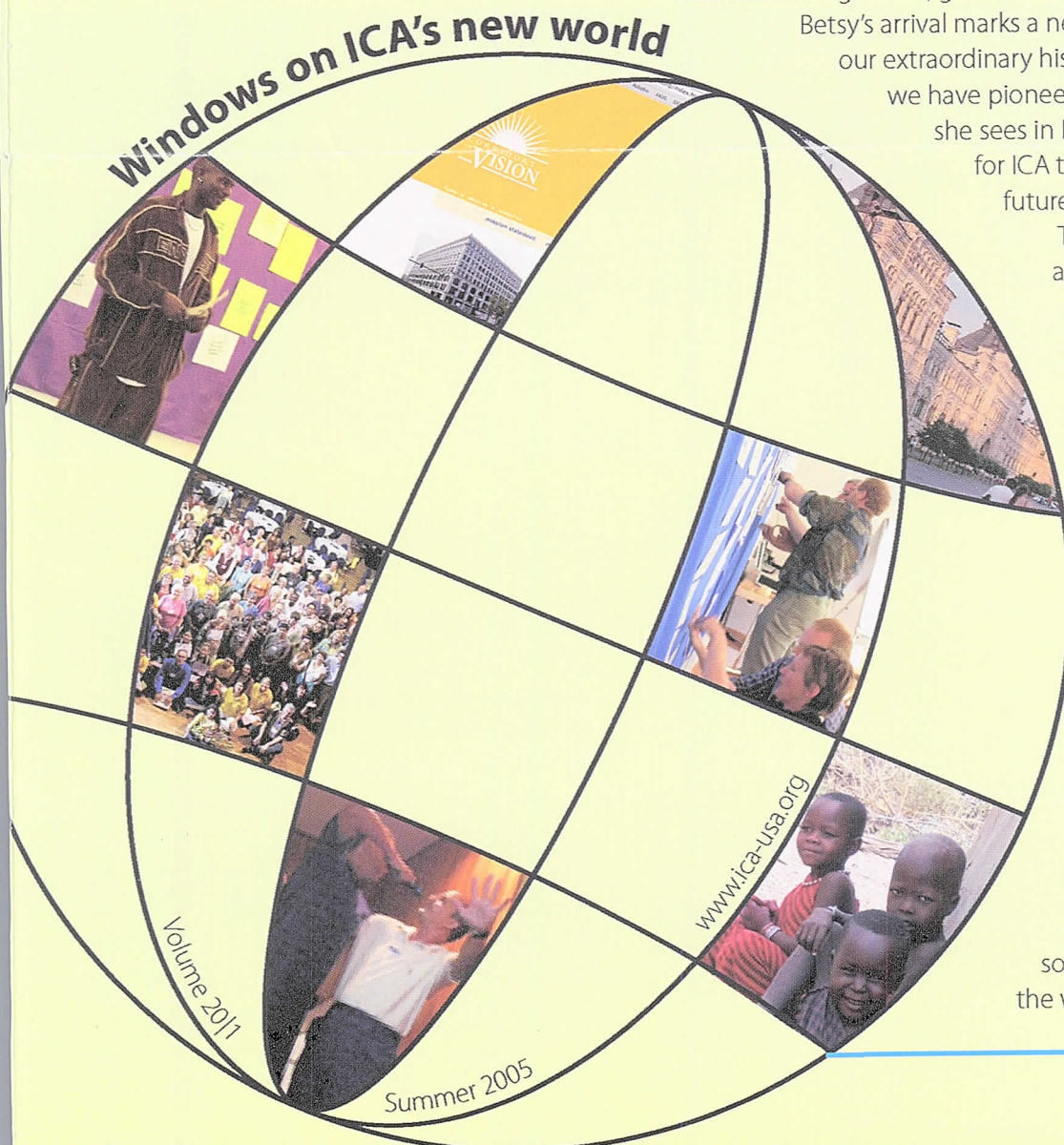
I am pleased to announce that Elizabeth Houde has been hired to serve as ICA's Chief Executive beginning August 1, 2005.

Betsy Houde (pronounced "Hood") brings to ICA over 30 years experience in international NGO management and leadership, most recently as the European and Russian Regional Director for Kidsave International, dividing her time between Moscow, Russia, and her home in Tempe, Arizona. She was also an executive director of a Washington, DC-based nonprofit, and is especially strong in financial management, grants management, and social marketing.

Betsy's arrival marks a new beginning for ICA that builds on our extraordinary history and the participatory processes we have pioneered. She is energized by the strength she sees in ICA's core programs and the potential for ICA to make an even greater impact in the future.

This fall we will hold events in cities around the US to introduce you and Betsy to each other. Please generously share your stories about ICA and your hopes for our future.

*Initiatives* is published two times each year by the Institute of Cultural Affairs in the USA, a nonprofit organization promoting life-long learning, collaborative change and community initiative through direct services, practitioner training and innovative leadership. The purpose of the ICA is to equip, inspire and support individuals, organizations and communities to create inclusive, just and sustainable societies—across America and around the world.





## An opportunity to pursue a dream

ICA's new Chief Executive shares a vision of the future

**At** a recent conference in Moscow, the U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Mr. Vershbow, said to me that he "was so tired of the world's obsession with hatred." We wondered together how we could change this madness.



I told him about my consulting trip to Srebrenica a few years ago. A Bosnian woman said that the week before, the Serbian man who had killed her husband and two young sons in 1995, spit on her as they passed in the street. Sadly, such hatred is not only in the Caucasus but also in our own backyards.

My dreams are to address this sad state of affairs.

Robert Fulghum wrote, "...when survival was the only concern, one individual did not eat what he found but decided to take it back to the cave and share it with others—a first act

of community in the most elemental form." Somewhere along the path of history...we have evolved into a world that prizes the life of the "rich and famous"—materialism—instead of the value of each individual—each soul—in a benevolent community.

### Introducing Elizabeth Houde

Watch the ICA USA web site at [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org) for more information as dates are set this fall.

- September 15, **Chicago**
- October 4–6, **San Francisco**
- November 7–11, **New York City and Washington, DC**
- December 7–8, **Denver**

When I first learned about ICA's work...I recognized a real opportunity to facilitate the resolution of disputes and build consensus on neighborhood, business, and citizen issues. My hope is first and foremost that we promote a culture of change that recognizes democratic ideals and values each individual in this world. Working together we can advance civil society worldwide through ICA's participatory methods of conflict resolution and strategic planning.

*Elizabeth Houde*

## Celebrating great facilitative leaders

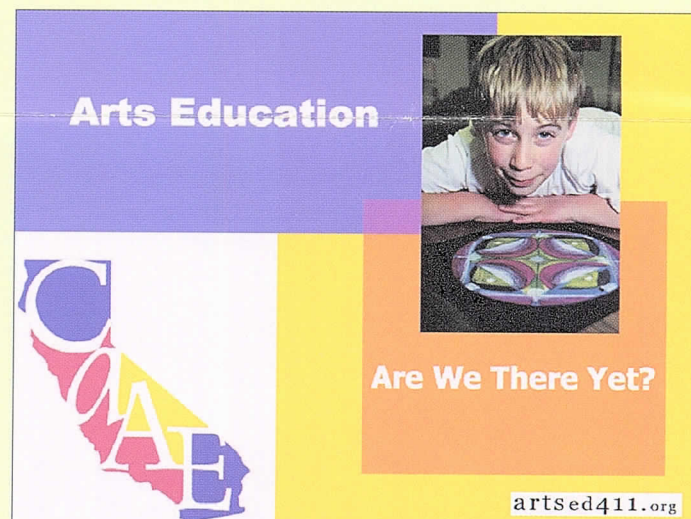
ICA announces the ToP® Champions for 2005

David Dunn and members of the ToP® Trainers Network in the US

**ICA** is pleased to announce the winners of its second annual ToP® Champion awards for excellence in facilitative leadership. Fifteen organizations were nominated by ICA staff and ToP trainers around the US. Winners range from a major online travel agency to an arts advocacy group. We can highlight only one of this year's winners here. Visit [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org) to see the others.

**The methods provide the leveling ground that enables everyone to work from the same set of assumptions and toward a common goal.**

California ToP facilitators **Jane Stallman and Liz Lindsley** nominated the **California Alliance for Arts Education**, and its Executive Director, **Laurie Schell**. Unlike math or English, the arts need advocacy and support from a larger community and CAAE is using ToP methods to help that happen.



Laurie writes, "The ToP methods have made it possible for the CAAE to work with teams comprised of school administrators and community members, who represent very different perspectives, and achieve consensus around a district-wide K-12 vision and strategic plan for arts education. The methods provide the leveling ground that enables everyone to work from the same set of assumptions and toward a common goal."

Laurie has trained over 15 school district teams throughout California in ICA's ToP methods. CAAE has used ICA-trained facilitators to conduct its own strategic planning and has used ToP methods in statewide and local meetings.

Learn more about CAAE at [www.artsed411.org](http://www.artsed411.org) and about the other ToP Champions at [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org).



All fifteen ToP Champions are listed below in the following order: **Person—Organization, City, Title.** To see photos and learn more, click on *InitiativesOnline* at [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org).

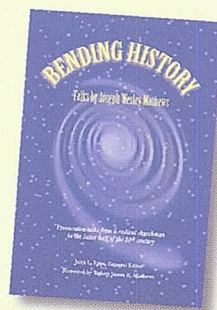
## 2005 ToP® Champions



- **Christina Welter—Cook County Dept of Health**  
Executive Director, Community Preparedness
- **Karen Boran—[formerly] Chicago Public Schools**  
Manager of the High School Demonstration Project, now with the Chicago Teachers Center of Northeastern Illinois University
- **Karen Freitag—Southern Illinois Regional Social Services (SIRSS),**  
Carbondale, IL, Executive Director
- **Misty Shatto—Sabre Holding/Travelocity**  
Southlake, TX, Senior OD Consultant
- **Brett Jenks—RARE Conservation, Arlington, VA, CEO**
- **Linda Brekken, Ann Carr, Linda Brault, Anne Kuschner—CA Institute of Human Services**  
Rohnert Park, CA, Senior Managers
- **Darci Smith—CA School Age Consortium (CALSA)**  
San Francisco, Executive Director
- **Laurie Schell—CA Alliance for Arts Education (CAAE)**  
Pasadena, CA, Executive Director
- **Deb O'Brian, Sr Kerry O'Reilly—Archdiocese of St Paul/Minneapolis, Training Team, Office of Social Justice**
- **Cindy Maag, George Brewster—Allied Solutions**  
St Paul, MN
- **Karen Zeleznak—Bloomington Dept. of Public Health**  
Bloomington, MN, Public Health Administrator
- **Susan Day Scherz, Supt—Williams Unified School Dist**  
Williams, AZ. Nicole Vorpahl, Beth Packard, Williams Alliance Against Drug Abuse
- **Tesha Hensley—Committee Alliance Against Family Abuse**  
Apache Junction, AZ
- **Carla Roberts—Arizona Community Foundation**  
Phoenix, AZ
- **Esther Moyah, Nancy House—Gila River Indian Cmty**  
Sacaton, AZ

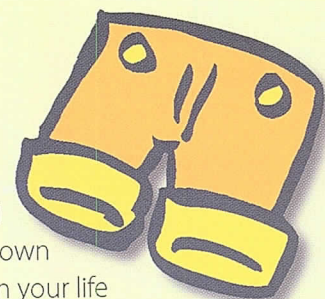
## Bending History—a new book of interest to faith communities.

This collection of seminal talks is a window on the profound insights of Joseph W. Mathews, founder of the Ecumenical Institute, the predecessor of the Institute of Cultural Affairs. Order online from [www.resurgencepublishing.com](http://www.resurgencepublishing.com).



## Summer 'shorts'

Explore the rest of these stories and more in *InitiativesOnline* at [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org).



### This Moment in Time Retreat—August 10–12

This retreat offers quiet time in a collegial atmosphere on Lake Tahoe to explore your own inner journey and its authentic expression in your life and work. Learn more at [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org); click on TMIT.

### International Conference Center (ICC)—Chicago



The ICC is a great resource for nonprofits.

Dean Keith Anderson, Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, credits this unique ICA service for its "hospitality, welcome and partnership." After 15 years, 19 groups and 800 participants, Dean Anderson offers an appreciation in *InitiativesOnline*.

### "The Long Road Home" forums on refugee assistance in Arizona

The ICA and InterAction, America's largest alliance of US-based international development organizations, sponsored public forums to explore ways to better assist refugees' resettlement journey. Read about the forums in an article from InterAction's *Monday Developments* at: [http://interaction.org/campaign/townhall/arizona\\_refugee.html](http://interaction.org/campaign/townhall/arizona_refugee.html). You can read about InterAction's Global Partnership for Effective Assistance at [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org) and about the forum's results in *InitiativesOnline* at [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org).



### Lowry-East Montclair Neighborhood Academy—Denver



ICA volunteers, staff, and the Rocky Mountain Mutual Housing Association organized and led a successful leadership capacity building program with a diverse east Denver community that includes Ethiopians, Somalis, and Mexicans. Read about their project to improve a dangerous intersection and their impact on a Denver city councilwoman in *InitiativesOnline*.

**6th biennial International ToP® Training of Trainers—nationwide**  
Last April and May, ICA staff and volunteers helped 20 participants from 12 countries develop facilitation skills, practice teaching methods, and explore how to build democratic, participatory societies. A Chilean participant wrote, "Here I could grow more like a human being and understand that I have the tools to be a part of the change." Read more in *InitiativesOnline*.









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
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*Friends' Flashes* link at [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org).

### The Institute of Cultural Affairs • [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org)

The **mission** of the Institute of Cultural Affairs in the USA is to help individuals, families, organizations, and communities work together to create inclusive, just and sustainable societies. ICA emphasizes the central role played by culture—our shared understandings, patterns, stories, and symbols—in working for the effectiveness and quality of life of individuals and groups at all levels of society. The ICA was incorporated in 1973 as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Through **programs** in family literacy and early learning, life transition mentoring, facilitative leadership, organizational development, and community building, the Institute touches thousands of individuals and communities across the United States each year. ICA staff and volunteers also offer capacity building support and technical assistance to ICAs and other NGO partner in nations overseas.

ICA **coordinating centers** are listed below. Call for information about ICA staff, course registrars, and volunteers in California, Iowa, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Washington, and other locations around the US.

**Chicago, Illinois**  
4750 N Sheridan Road  
Chicago, IL 60640  
773-769-6363  
Email [Chicago@ica-usa.org](mailto:Chicago@ica-usa.org)

**Phoenix, Arizona**  
4220 N 25th Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
800-742-4032 (602-955-4811)  
Email [Phoenix@ica-usa.org](mailto:Phoenix@ica-usa.org)

### Invest in nurturing literacy, preventing child abuse

**Learning Baskets** are used to nurture very young children and Learning Basket training supports their caregivers and parents. Donations to the Learning Basket Project touch many lives.

Learning Baskets are made by two women's cooperatives in Viet Nam and the Philippines.

**Your donation of \$100** helps these women support their children by selling this wonderful product at a fair trade price. It also helps provide a unique resource we use to nurture learning with our very young children, their caregivers, and parents.



**Your donation of \$150** provides *Play to Learn* activity books for groups of parents who meet regularly to learn how to nurture learning in their young children through play. The book provides over 100 activities that help parents establish loving bonds by playing with their children 'the Learning Basket way.'

**Your donation of \$600** for a Learning Basket scholarship makes it possible to train caregivers and parents. Caregivers in childcare settings learn how to give individual attention to each child using the Learning Basket. They also learn how to guide parents so that their children's learning unfolds gradually and naturally because they are working in concert with caregivers.

Visit [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org) to explore other ways to support ICA projects.



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