

PILLARS OF A VISION

ICA West - October 1988

There is a deep and widely-felt conviction that ICA West has a powerful role to play in service to the West/Southwest United States and the planet. New expressions of this vision continually bubble up. Following is the latest, describing six Pillars of Vision.

I. THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY WITH FACILITATION METHODS

We see disseminating our learnings in participatory decision-making methods to be a focus for the next few years. This will provide service to all levels of society and many constituencies:

- education
- business
- special service agencies, private and public
- special interest groups - ecology, peace, global awareness
- community leadership

The expenditure of many people has gone into creating and testing the Facilitation Methods (FM) series of courses, and they need to be made widely available. The time seems to be right for a major focus in this area in order to make an impact upon society relative to the methods and styles of facilitation that begin to predominate over the next few years. We expect this to create an extensive network of trained facilitators with whom we will be working collaboratively and who will develop into some form of Facilitation Guilds.

Right now we see this happening in Washington's Yakima Valley where several people trained in Facilitation Methods, Level One and Two, are calling on each other and ICA for assistance as they serve rural communities, migrant students, local schools, and other social service and volunteer organizations. Similar long-term efforts are in full swing in Arizona with the Hopi Tribe in the north and the refugee community in Phoenix and Tucson.

We expect the interest in participatory decision-making methods to grow in the education community. While this will happen slowly (it is NOT the mode in which this community generally operates), it is happening. A group of twenty Texas school principals and superintendents participated in FM, Levels One and Two, in July and will take FM Level Three in November. They are working toward training other administrators in these methods across Texas. Interest in the business, social service, and special constituencies is also growing. We just recently scheduled FM, Level One and Two with the training department of Texas Utilities - Electric in Dallas.

II. CONNECTING A NETWORK OF CHANGE-AGENTS

ICA West anticipates expanding its membership base in the West/Southwest U.S. and linking this ICA unit more comprehensively to the rest of the globe. This will involve a major focus on communications and on expanding support services which link, nurture and involve change-agents. The key

to this connecting dynamic is the expansion of operational field offices throughout the western United States.

There are two "Changemasters" groups meeting regularly to keep informed on approaches that are working and to share learnings. One, in Texas, is well established with local colleagues managing the organization of the events. The other, in the organizational stage, is based in the San Francisco area. This structure is easily replicated.

The Member Services unit in Phoenix is also concerned with providing support services. They are in the process of compiling a Journal of Readings Toward a Planetary Myth and a list of available ICA related materials. They will coordinate distribution of these materials. Econet II is available for electronic interchange.

III. RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATION LABS FOR LIFE-LONG LEARNING

ICA West is piloting educational ventures for two points in the life-long learning process. One is the point of moving from childhood to young adulthood. The other is at the post-secondary level. In both cases the emphasis is on providing the context and methods for effective planetary living.

Three partnerships are developing which are concerned with the passage from childhood to young adult. The first is a summer camp in New Mexico for fourth and fifth graders. This involves being part of a multi-cultural team learning to cope in a wilderness setting. The second, a "Rite of Passage" summer program for children completing sixth grade, is developing a vision quest theme. The third is a Residential Learning Center for seventh and eighth graders, located just north of Seattle, Washington. It focuses on developing peer and intergenerational relationships that will benefit our common future. Included is the option for the youth to spend a portion of their ninth grade year outside the U.S. as part of their academic program.

At the university level, ICA West has entered into a partnership with a small foundation and a university in Phoenix in order to pilot a revised version of ICA's Global Academy and University 13 curriculum for use at entry level to university. The 1988-1989 year will focus on developing overall curriculum design and testing several pilot courses. Extensive testing of the program should begin in the fall of 1989, along with the exploration of its use on other continents.

IV. CONNECTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITH MULTI-CULTURAL DEPTH

This is a "make or break" time for many of the multi-cultural populations of the West and Southwest. Working with the leadership of these communities will remain a priority of ICA West. This will involve skills transfer with the most ancient residents and the newest immigrants of our society, toward enabling local entrepreneurship without losing invaluable cultural gifts. This attention to the cultural heritage and the deep intuitions of people is necessary if the capacity for visionary, contradictional and strategic thinking, so necessary for effective action, is to develop. Over the past five to ten years, a major effort has been

made in the ICA to cultivate relationships and trust with the Native American and Hispanic communities, and more recently, the refugee community (primarily Asian and African.) Six specific long-term partnerships are under way and several more are developing. Transfer of particular skills with these groups will not be a rapid or easy process, but the potential for long range effect is great. A product of this work has been the high enthusiasm for occasions for cross-cultural exchange between communities.

V. INVITING CENTERS FOR ENGAGEMENT

At the core of this pillar is the image of a dynamic Phoenix Center which will attract over 500 people annually through a variety of program and interchange offerings. There are three areas of focus. Training Center activities will include courses and guilds in education and facilitation. Voluntary service activities provide a wide array of opportunities for engagement, from participation in the university curriculum development to graphics and the quarterly newsletter. Other activities will have a focus on planetary lifestyle, such as international celebrative events.

Equally important in the image of an expanding network of strong field offices, many of which are connected to unique and flourishing local ventures, such as the Machakos Game in Houston. In other places, like Seattle, Denver, and Oklahoma City, celebrational events and courses are regular marks of an increasingly vital community life.

The Residential Learning Center in Bothel, Washington, also anticipates increased involvement as people volunteer to help get cash crops and economic ventures underway, such as blueberries, holly, Christmas trees, fava beans, flowers, etc. A number of area people helped to make this summer's sixth grade trip a great event, and every first Saturday of the month draws new and old colleagues for a work day.

VI. CONFIDENCE THAT THE UNIVERSE PROVIDES

ICA Wests services are increasingly being recognized for their quality, requested broadly, and compensated adequately through fees and contributions. This growing reality is based upon an impeccable track record, well-cultivated ground, and an effective word of mouth marketing approach. Increasing numbers of unsolicited requests for facilitation and training services are convincing indications. During one week in September, requests came from groups as diverse as an education committee of the Zuni Pueblo, the Valley of the Sun Church of Religious Science, the Chief of Staff of the Governor of Arizona, Texas instruments in Dallas and the Division of Children and Family Services of Washington State.