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2007 Boston Conference Progress Report

Roberta L. Spencer - 06-7-8 at 03:41 PM

2007 CONFERENCE STATUS REPORT
By Bob Eberlein and John Sterman

Please find the Preliminary Call for Papers in your conference satchel.

THEME: 50th anniversary of the field

DATES: July 29, 2007 – August 2, 2007

CONTRACT: We have a signed contract with the Seaport Hotel, Boston Massachusetts.

ROOM RATES: $145 for a double or single plus taxes and hotel fees.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION: The Seaport is donating five complimentary double rooms for four nights each (20 room nights) for conference scholarship recipients. Additionally, the Seaport is donating a complimentary 2-night weekend stay to encourage early room reservations.

CONFERENCE TEAM: Program Co-chairs: John Sterman of MIT and Rogelio Oliva of Texas A&M; Conference Chair: Bob Eberlein of Ventana Systems; Workshop Chair: Jack Homer; Conference Manager: Roberta Spencer. In addition, others have agreed to play significant roles in organizing the conference and the program as well as to provide support and organization for specific events as needed.

SPECIAL EVENTS: We are in the process of establishing a 50th anniversary celebration committee with broad international representation to help coordinate the publication of the special issue of the System Dynamics Review and highlight other activities done in celebration of this anniversary around the globe. Details remain to be settled.

Gary Hirsch has written directly to two potential guest speakers. 1. Paul Epstein, MD, MPH (Associate Director, Epstein Center for Health and Global Environment, Harvard Medical School) is an expert on the human health effects of global warming and someone the Health Policy SIG thought would be a good speaker. Dr. Epstein indicated he is quite willing to speak at ISDC 2007, but was reluctant to make a firm commitment with the conference being more than a year away. 2. Medical anthropologist and physician Paul Farmer, MD, PhD (Faculty, Department of Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School), founding director of the international health organization Partners In Health, and the subject of Pulitzer Prizewinner Tracy Kidder's "Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World," has been contacted, without reply as of this date.

JamesThompson - 06-7-10 at 08:37 PM

First, please understand that I have absolutely no sense of these things and don't mean to offend anyone. But given the kind observations made by Al Gore at the MIT Commencement exercises a few years ago (10?) about SD and Jay Forrester, might he be someone to consider to speak at the 50th?
(The text of Gore's address can be found at http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/1996/gore-0612.html)

Bob_Cavana - 06-7-19 at 02:51 AM

hi all,
i have just returned from the 50th anniversary conference in Sonoma, California of the International Society for System Sciences (ISSS). a very interesting conference, although obviously more diverse than ours in terms of systems methodologies and approaches.

However, on reading Jim Thompson's contribution to this discussion that Al Gore could be invited to our 50th anniversary conference, i had a look at the web site where Al Gore's comments were made at MIT's commencement? about 10 years ago. they make extremely interesting reading and perhaps even more relevant today.

In addition to referring to the work of Jay Forrester and the SD group at MIT, Gore also referred to the work in complexity theory, 'edge of chaos' (Waldrop), and also the contributions of Illya Progogine to systems thinking & complexity. Gore was talking about 'uniting two cultures: science & society.'

this 50th anniversary of SD could be a great opportunity for us to try and 'unite two cultures' ie the system dynamics community and the broader systems science community.

hence, i would certainly like to support Jim's suggestion that Al Gore be considered to be invited to give a keynote presentation at the Boston 07 conference. In addition i would like to recommend that we invite Fritjof Capra (author, inter alia, of 'Web of Life', and 'the Hidden Connections: a science of sustainable living'.) Capra gave the leading plenary speech at the ISSS conference, and was extremely impressive.

Al Gore was spoken of very highly on a number of different occasions at the ISSS conference, and i am sure that Al Gore & Fritjof Capra would provide a fascinating insights and new opportunities for members of the SD community.

Perhaps an eminent member of the SD community (eg Dennis Meadows or John Sterman) could also speak alongside Gore & Capra, and form the basis of a panel discusssion following their presentations [along the lines of George Richardson & others plenary presentations at the ISSS conference].

unfortunately i wont be able to get to the SD conference in Nijmegen to discuss this topic further (as i have now used up my travel budget, and we are into the third week of our 2nd trimester!), but i will follow the conversation in this forum.

all the best for the Nijmegen conference.

Bob Cavana
VP (at large)
SDS