

Report of GAJE Steering Committee Meeting

September-October 2011

The Steering Committee, sitting as the GAJE Board of Directors, met via email from September 27, 2011 through the end of October. The following members participated in the meeting: Sara Chandler, Anna Cody, Lindi Coetze, Filip Czernicki, Diego Blazquez-Martin, Martin Geer, Catherine Klein, Minna Kotkin, Bruce Lasky, Sahar Maranlou, David McQuoid-Mason, Mao Ling, Ajay Pandey, Simon Rice, Celeste Romero, and Carlos Varas. Tewodoros Alefe and Mariana Berbec-Rostas did not participate. Frank Bloch, GAJE Executive Secretary, was also present.

President Filip Czernicki presented the following agenda for the meeting:

- 1) Proposal for GAJE participation in proposed Mideast regional conference.
- 2) Criteria for election of at-large SC members.
- 3) Election of Treasurer.
- 4) Election of Executive Committee members.
- 5) Appointments of new committees.
- 6) Report from the EC on request for GAJE sponsorship of the BABSEA CLE Trio for Justice
- 7) Proposal for GAJE participation in proposed regional conference to be organized by BABSEA CLE in either Malaysia or Thailand

An additional agenda item was added during the course of the meeting:

- 8) Optional/voluntary membership fee

The Board discussed and reached decisions on the agenda items as follows:

- 1) Proposal for GAJE participation in proposed Mideast regional conference

Filip noted that GAJE received a proposal for GAJE participation in a Mideast regional conference from Mohamed Mattar, Senior Research Professor of International Law and Executive Director of The Protection Project (TPP) at The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in the USA. Before the meeting began, Filip had asked David, Catherine, and Frank to clarify certain things with Mohamed related to that proposal and they met via Skype with Mohamed and his assistant, Anna Koppel. David reported that it would be more like a colloquium than a conference, with about 50 invited participants and 10 facilitators to be nominated by GAJE. TPP will come up with a list of ten preliminary topics which GAJE would then consider to see if they will be useful in promoting clinical legal education in the region. Once the topics have been settled, GAJE will help to identify appropriate facilitators. Frank reported, in addition, that participants would be chosen according to what they can contribute to the event, as well as the extent to which they and their home countries can benefit from their attendance. Representatives from all countries in the region will be allowed to participate – and in

order to assure that there would not be problems for anyone to obtain visas, the colloquium will most likely be held in Jordan or perhaps Qatar. The exact details, including the extent of GAJE's responsibilities in organizing and administering the event, remain to be worked out. Filip then proposed that David, Catherine, and Frank continue to work with Mohamed on these matters and that the Executive Committee be charged with reaching a final agreement with TPP.

Board members expressed great interest in the proposal and agreed that David, Catherine, and Frank should continue to work with Mohamed on the event. The Board also charged the Executive Committee to reach a final agreement with TPP.

2) Criteria for election of at-large SC members.

Filip noted that the question of electing at-large members came up in Valencia and was not addressed in part because the SC had not developed a policy or set of criteria on at-large membership. He then suggested that he appoint a sub-committee to come up with a proposal of such criteria. Later in the meeting he asked SC members to suggest criteria, noting that at-large members elected so far have all had long histories with GAJE and that the only formal guidance at this point is Section 5(c)(2) of the constitution, which provides with respect to at large members: "In making appointments the Steering Committee shall endeavour to maintain a gender balance on the Steering Committee and shall also make special efforts to appoint members from indigenous peoples and other groups in special need of social justice." He also proposed that Frank compile a list of criteria based on the various suggestions of SC members, which could then be reviewed and voted on by the members later in the meeting.

Other criteria suggested during the course of the meeting include: 1) a demonstrated commitment to having worked successfully in, and made a significant contribution to, the GAJE structures, perhaps for a minimum number of years; 2) a special talent and a demonstrated ability in some other field relevant to GAJE (perhaps a specific skill or expertise that is currently lacking in the SC or a skill or expertise that would increase the effectiveness) which would contribute to the activities of the Steering Committee and cannot be used in some other manner by GAJE - such as on one of the GAJE committees; 3) expertise/experience in supporting justice education initiatives in more than one (or multiple) GAJE region(s); 4) be able to provide mentoring to newly elected SC members to enhance their confidence and assist them in making an active contribution to the SC.

Frank then prepared draft criteria based on those suggested during the meeting for review and further comment by SC members. The final criteria approved by the SC are as follows:

Guidelines for appointing at-large members of the Steering Committee/Board of Directors

In making appointments of at-large members, the Steering Committee shall endeavour to maintain a gender balance on the Steering Committee and shall also make special efforts to appoint members from indigenous peoples and other groups in special need of social justice.

In addition, the SC should consider the following criteria: 1) a demonstrated commitment over a significant number of years to having worked in, and having made a significant contribution to, the GAJE structures; 2) a special talent and a demonstrated ability in a field that would allow the person to contribute most effectively to GAJE by being on the SC, such as a specific skill or expertise that is currently lacking in the SC or a skill or expertise that would increase its effectiveness; 3) expertise/experience in supporting justice education initiatives in more than

one (or multiple) GAJE region(s); 4) ability and willingness to provide mentoring to newly elected SC members to enhance their confidence and assist them in making an active contribution to the SC.

3) Election of Treasurer.

Filip pointed out while that Frank can continue to maintain GAJE's financial records in his capacity as Executive Secretary, GAJE's by-laws require that the Treasurer be a member of the Board. He therefore nominated Catherine Klein to be the new GAJE Treasurer. The Board then voted to appoint Catherine as Treasurer.

4) Election of Executive Committee members.

Noting that GAJE's by-laws don't set limits on who should be on the EC, Filip suggested that it might make sense to put up the President, Secretary, and Treasurer – plus two other SC members to make up a diverse but also manageable committee. He then proposed the following slate, which was approved by the Board:

Filip Czernicki (GAJE President)
Celeste Romero (GAJE Secretary)
Catherine Klein (GAJE Treasurer)
Diego Blazquez-Martin (SC member)
Sahar Maranlou (SC member)

5) Appointments of new committees.

Noting that the SC operates with a number of key committees and working groups, Filip asked for ideas and suggestions for filling various committees, most importantly the Communications Committee and the Fundraising Committee. Later in the meeting Filip announced that he had discussed the Communications Committee with Ajay Pandey and the Fundraising Committee with Marguerite Angelari and made the following nominations, both of which were approved by the Board:

Ajay Pandey – Chair of the Communications Committee
Marguerite Angelari – Chair of the Fundraising Committee

6) Report from the EC on request for GAJE sponsorship of the BABSEA CLE Trio for Justice

This item followed a request by Bruce Lasky that GAJE be a sponsor of the BABSEA CLE Trio for Justice Access to Justice Fair and 1/2 Marathon event, scheduled for 12th & 13th November 2011. Bruce explained that BABSEA has this event each year as an awareness raising event for the work they and their partners do in the area of access to justice, including social justice education. They also use the event to raise money for the work they and their partners are doing, which this year include raising funds for an In-House clinic building at the Faculty of Law in Laos. BABSEA is asking to use the GAJE logo on promotional materials and that notice of the event be sent out on the GAJE list serv. BABSEA is not asking for any financial support from GAJE. Filip announced that this matter would be taken up by the Executive Committee and that he would report the EC's decisions to the SC. Later in the meeting Filip reported that the EC decided to support the BABSEA CLE Trio for Justice and that the GAJE logo can be

presented on that project's promotional materials and BABSEA can send out notice of the event on the GAJE list serv.

7) Proposal for GAJE participation in proposed regional conference to be organized by BABSEA CLE in either Malaysia or Thailand

This item followed the presentation by Bruce Lasky of an outline of a proposal for a regional conference in March 2012 that would be organized in either Malaysia or Thailand by BABSEA, in which he expressed interest in having both GAJE and the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education (IJCLE) participate. Filip asked Bruce to supplement then proposal with more detailed description of the planned event and suggested that he would then appoint a working committee to serve as the SC's representative in planning the conference and to report back to the SC members on its outcomes.

Filip indicated that the EC could consider the proposal between SC meetings and Bruce reported that upon further consideration that the conference would be held later in the year, probably in October. Later in the meeting Bruce submitted a detailed description of the regional GAJE conference proposal in Malaysia.

Board members expressed great interest in the proposal and agreed with Filip's plan to appoint a working group to follow up with Bruce and BABSEA, in consultation with the EC. Then after Board members approved the proposal in principle without a final commitment and granted the EC the authority to work further with BABSEA on details in order to make the final decision.

8) Optional/voluntary membership fee

This item is a follow-up of a discussion at the SC meeting during the Valencia during which a number of SC members expressed support for the idea of establishing a voluntary membership fee for GAJE. The basic proposal is for a recommended optional, or voluntary, membership fee of \$50 USD a year. Membership material would make it clear that membership remains free—and that payment of the fee is optional. At the same time, members would be advised that the \$50 amount is a recommended amount for the optional fee, and that members who wish to pay the fee are welcome to pay any amount. Thus, the website could have a field for \$10, \$25, \$50, and \$___[other]

The Board agreed to establish an optional/voluntary membership fee, but it was pointed out that there are a number of logistical and legal matters that must be clarified first, including how the payments can be made (setting up a payment page on the website with PayPal, having GAJE set up its own credit card account, assuring that payments can be made from all countries, etc.) and tax consequences (how GAJE will need to report contributions, tax-deductibility for US taxpayers, consequences for non-US contributors, etc.). Filip asked Catherine (as Treasurer) and Marguerite (as Fundraising Committee Chair) to work on this in cooperation with Frank.

Dated: 21 November 2011

Celeste Romero, Secretary