

To: UHMC Professional Development Committee

October 4, 2018

Professional Development Report

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Date of Event: June 14-16, 2018



OVERVIEW

In June I travelled to the Netherlands to attend the International Small Islands Study Association annual Islands of the World 2018 conference. UHMC was a charter member of this organization from 2005, when the conference was held here. As far as I can tell no UHMC representative had attended an event since the former Chancellor retired.

The conference began on the mainland in Leewarden, a Dutch town designated as co-Cultural Capital of the European Union for the coming decade. The group the travelled the second day to Terschelling Island, an historic seaport. The conference was set up as a series of keynotes and break-out sessions with multiple speakers arranged by topic. I was part of a group which presented under the topic 'Economic Development and Decision-making' as group 4 on June 16.

EVALUATION OF THE EVENT

I am breaking the event down into various aspects for reporting.

1. Networking The event provided a great opportunity to meet many people from islands around the world, including several Pacific Islands. Many were also in academia, and this was the greatest strength of the conference. There were also quite a students from various (non-island) locations reporting on research conducted on and/or about islands. This was more of a mixed bag as some seemed very committed to island understanding and welfare, while others just seemed to be visitors.
2. Substantive Take-aways While the logistics allowed me to attend only a small portion of the total presentations, many were very good. Keynotes in particular provided insights and shared experience in methods of research, specific areas of concern and about other academic institutions. Of note was a presentation on agricultural in Guam, designed to withstand extreme weather events and possibly climate change. Another documented very carefully the beneficial aspects of coral reefs alongside historic fishing practices in the Caribbean. An interesting session presentation was from the Chatham Islands off New Zealand, and how they grew an economy independently of their mother nation.
There were also several presentations which did not feel impressive. In large part their common deficiency was a lack of relevance to important island issues. Some even seemed to belittle island practices through a non-island perspective, using general research as a means of supporting this.

3. Sub-events The conference was extremely well-organized and run. In addition to food-related events there were a couple of field trips around the island which were both entertaining and enlightening.
4. Transportation Movement with the group was easy and pleasurable. There was a bus ride from Leewarden which was a tour of historic and agricultural sites on the way to the ferry to the island. The ferry ride itself served as a dinner party and opportunity to engage fellow attendees.
5. Goals My first goal was to get to know this organization, and secondly to consider becoming more engaged, even with the object of bring the conference back to Maui. Next was the goal of learning from the island cohort. Finally I wanted make and receive feedback about my topic and presentation and our campus sustainability activities.

I feel I met the goal of understanding the organization, speaking with attendees and organizers. I had a nominal relationship with the current President so was able to speak with him on occasion also. Overall, I came away feeling that this is not the best organization for me personally as their focus really did not include sustainability as much as I hoped. I also learned that they would not repeat a location which had previously held an annual conference so that point was moot. I received some strong comments about my presentation on the UHMC Sustainability Lens, for the most part very positive and inquisitive. I also received several general comments which I felt were gracious but not interested.

There is no doubt this was a rewarding experience, even without the commitment to repeat it. I am in the process of making revisions to my presentation paper, which I have already discussed with the campus Sustainability Committee with students in class. It has added credibility and research base to our campus approach to sustainability, and seeing what others do, as well as hearing their responses, is now a part of the sustainability plan foundation. I will make the paper available to the campus at large once revisions are complete.

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT

My travel plans changed a bit at the last minute as I had to cut my trip short, which lead to changed flight plans.

More problematic, I lost my computer and bag on the train from Leewarden, and despite hopes it was found now have to accept it was lost. Unfortunately this contained several receipts from lodging in particular, though it did not change from the original itinerary. I am submitting a revised costs break-out reflecting the changes which I believe still provides adequate basis for the requested \$1000 reimbursement even without considering the lost ones.