

Report on the 2007 Sino-US Seminar on Public Library Practice

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Dear CALA Board Members,

I am extremely honored to report my participation in the Sino-US Seminar on Public Library Practice held in Dongguan Public Library, Dongguan, China on December 15-18, 2007. Sponsored by CALA and Dongguan Public Library, this seminar was one of the successful CALA 21st Librarian Seminar Series in 2007. To promote collaborations and librarianships, I was lucky to be selected by CALA to make a presentation titled “Top Emerging Technologies for Public Libraries in the 21st Century” for Dongguan Public Library, which is the seventh-biggest city library in China.



Figure 1: Image of New Dongguan Public Library Building (Main Library)

When the seminar started on December 17, 2007, Dr. Loriene Roy, Chair of American Library Association (2007-08) made an opening speech. After her speech was over, I made my presentation. Ms. Jing Liao, Assistant Librarian at Architecture and Art Library of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, made another presentation on December 18, 2007.

To the best of my experience, knowledge, and skills, I introduced primary emerging technologies applicable to public library settings in China. The following issues and/or topics were discussed during the course of my presentation:

1. Emerging Technology vs. Cutting-Edge Technology: Concepts and Examples
2. Public Libraries in the Information Age
3. Top Emerging Technologies for Public Libraries in the 21st Century
 - The Next Generation of the Internet (IPv6)

- Computer Technology: Hardware
- Computer Technology: Software
- Digital Library
- E-Paper
- Electronic Whiteboard
- Machine Translation
- Emerging Network Technologies: Ultra Broadband / WiMax
- Emerging Telecommunication Technologies: IPTV, RFID, and VoIP
- Others: Book ATM

4. Opportunities and Challenges

The highlights of this seminar were that Mr. Donglai Li, Director of Dongguan Public Library, and other primary library managers showed us around the new Dongguan Public Library new building (main library), 24x7 library and Library ATM. Taking advantage of this opportunity, I had a chance not only to visit the brand new Dongguan Public Library building (Main Library), but also to view current developing trends of information technologies applicable to urban public library settings in China, especially for the first 24x7 Unattended Self-Help Library and Book ATM in China.

During my short stay in Dongguan, I was so excited about progresses made by Dongguan Public Library. I am so proud that Dongguan Public Library has made so many remarkable processes in the fields of public information services. No doubts, some of their innovative explorations are new leading service models which we have never experienced in America.

On the occasion of reporting my Dongguan's experience, I would like to thank the CALA Board for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to learn and view the latest developing trends of information technologies applicable to a city library in China. Special thanks are also given to Ms. Lisa Zhao, University of Illinois at Chicago Library and Dr. Guoqing Li, Ohio State University Libraries. When I prepared my Microsoft PowerPoint slides, both of them provided me with a lot of constructive suggestions for my scheduled presentation in China. Dr. Guoqing Li even spent his precious time on modifying my Chinese translations. At the same time, I am very thankful for Ms. Jing Liao, Architecture and Art Library of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who also gave me a lot of encouragements to complete this tough project.

In one word, I sincerely hope that CALA will promote more academic and scholarly seminars and other similar programs among Sino-US libraries. To build ubiquitous libraries in the coming years of the 21st Century, I would like to encourage more CALA members to play active roles of exchanging and sharing information technologies applicable to Sino-US library settings.

Thank you so much for your time and attention.