Joining Balyuzi Lecturer Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam at this year’s ABS annual conference will be Member of the Universal House of Justice Paul Lample; Joy DeGruy Leary; Robert Rosenfeld; Ismael Velasco; the television production team of Clark Donnelly, Michael Snook, and Mary Darling; and a panel of young scholars who will address the experience of the Bahá’í student on campus.

The conference will be held over the weekend of 29 August–1 September at the San Diego Marriott La Jolla in La Jolla, California, on the theme of “Religion and Social Cohesion.”

Paul Lample, an author and educator, is well known for his work in publishing and social and economic development, and his book Creating a New Mind. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in biology from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and a Master of Science degree from National University in San Diego, California.

In the early 1990s Mr. Lample served on the National Teaching Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States. In 1994 he moved to the Bahá’í World Centre to serve as coordinator of the Office of Social and Economic Development. He was appointed to the International Teaching Centre in 2003 and was elected to the Universal House of Justice in 2005.

Joy DeGruy Leary holds a Bachelor of Science degree in communications, a master’s degree in social work, a master’s degree in psychology, and a PhD in social work research. She is an assistant professor at Portland State University. Dr. Leary’s seminars on culture, race relations, and contemporary social issues have been lauded as the most dynamic and inspirational currently being presented, and she will speak on her innovative work on Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome.

Robert Rosenfeld founded Idea Connection Systems, a company dedicated to releasing an organization’s creative potential, serving public, private and international clients, including many Fortune 200 companies as well as regional and national governmental agencies. He is the author (with John Kolstoe) of Making the Invisible Visible: The Human Principles for Sustaining Innovation. In 2001 he served on the Commission on Race and Ethnicity charged to address issues of race in the Rochester, New York, community. He spearheaded the development of Mosaic Partnerships—an innovative process for breaking down barriers between races—and will speak on his recent work on racial integration and diversity.

Active in Bahá’í scholarship for more than a decade, Ismael Velasco lives in the United Kingdom. He is a

Continued on page 8
Breakout sessions at the annual conference

A variety of exciting presentations and panels will be offered during the breakout sessions at the annual conference. They will include:


Kamilla Bahbahani and Marie Gervais, “Forum on Social Integration through Junior Youth and Children’s Classes”

Bret Breneman, “Heroes of the Dawn,” an epic poem based on The Dawn-Breakers

Valerie J. Davis, “Divine Revelation as a Valid and Requisite Epistemology in Academic Study”

Paula Drewek, “Discerning Directions in Bahá’í Women’s Scholarship”

Jobin Eslahpazir, “The Development of a New Theory of Knowledge”

Gity Etemad, “A Model for Individual Bahá’ís to Initiate Interfaith Dialogue and Study”

Sandra Fotos, “The Evolution of CALL: E-mail Exchange for Motivation and Proficiency Gains”

Marie Gervais, “Intersections of Religion and Culture in the Bahá’í Community: A Case Study”

Jane Tarané Helzer, “Transcending our Condition”


Harold Javid, “A Physical and Mystical View of the Upset in the World’s Equilibrium”


Robert Kim-Farley, “Challenges of Health for All in the 21st Century”

Wolfgang Klebel, “Work and World Evolution; Karl Marx in Bahá’í Perspective”

Samir Koirala, “From Autism to Schizophrenia to Alzheimer’s: Developing a Bahá’í Approach to Disorders of the Mind”

Tom Kubala, “The Spiritual Engine Powering Regenerative Design”

Augusto Lopez-Claros, “Love as Heaven and Hell”

Sovaida Ma’ani-Ewing, “How We Achieve Social Cohesion by Replacing Expediency in Managing World Affairs with a Principled Approach to Solving Global Problems”

Saba Mahanian, Fahdah Fani, and Farjam Majd, “Miracles of a Different Kind: Accessible and Predictable, Yet Inexplicable”

Damien-Adia Marassa, “Prophetic Vocation, Poetic Response: A Transnational Genealogy of Iranian Feminisms”

John Fitzgerald Medina, “Western Civilization’s Cartesian-Newtonian Worldview as a Barrier to Social Cohesion”

Brad Miller, “The Geography of America’s Spiritual Inheritance: Seeking the Personal Soul within the Bahá’í Vision”

Ramin Modir Massihai, “Developing ‘Spiritual DNA’ as the Building Block of the New World Order of Bahá’u’lláh”

Bahman Nadimi, “Unity of Religions—Key Aspect of the Lesser Peace”

Alain Noghiu, “Spiritual Capital: A Bahá’í Perspective”

Taravat Ostovar, “Society in Transition: Reflecting on Identity, Suicide, and Well-being in Aboriginal Populations”

Phyllis Perrakis, “Literary Continued on page 4

San Diego skyline (Photo courtesy San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau)
From the Executive Committee

The ABS Executive Committee has decided to initiate a regular column in the ABS Bulletin for the purpose of sharing the current vision and plans of the Committee with members, and inviting members into greater dialogue with the Committee as we embark on a process of systematic “learning about scholarship” in the context of the global plans of the Faith. The goal of our first column is to clarify the mission of ABS, to present the major initiatives that the Executive Committee is focusing on at this time, and to introduce our new Executive Director and explain his mandate.

The mission of ABS

The mission of the Association for Bahá’í Studies is “to stimulate scholarly study of the Faith and its teachings, to promote a sound understanding of the Cause in academic circles, and to demonstrate its relevance to the study of social issues,” as well as “to stimulate an appetite for learning within the Bahá’í community generally.” Aspects of this mission are pursued within the context of the global plans of the Bahá’í community.

Major initiatives

As a means of advancing this mission, the Executive Committee of the Association is currently focusing on seven major initiatives:

• fostering Bahá’í scholarship more widely among students and young adults
• fostering the development of university courses across disciplines on diverse aspects of the Bahá’í Faith
• developing opportunities for the exchange, publication, and circulation of diverse forms of Bahá’í scholarship
• developing the Journal of Bahá’í Studies into an outstanding forum for Bahá’í scholarship that is acceptable in academic circles and accessible to wider audiences
• developing extension activities that stimulate Bahá’í scholarship through grassroots initiatives and other decentralized approaches throughout the year
• fostering an outward-looking orientation that engages diverse leaders of thought through symposia, seminars, and other opportunities for dialogue and collaboration
• refining the annual conference so that it better serves the broad mission of the Association and advances the previous six initiatives.

In order to advance these initiatives, the Executive Committee relies on the active participation of its members. This takes the form of efforts to mentor students and young scholars, efforts to establish courses on aspects of the Faith at colleges and universities, the submission of high-quality and innovative proposals for the annual conference, the submission of high-quality articles to the Journal of Bahá’í Studies, leadership and participation within the work of Special Interest Groups, and efforts to engage others in dialogue and collaboration on university campuses and elsewhere. In this regard, the Executive Committee attempts to provide a framework within which individuals and groups can take initiatives on behalf of the Association, in order to advance its mission in a systematic manner.

At this moment in the development of the Association, the Executive Committee is focusing much of its attention on strengthening the Journal of Bahá’í Studies and the annual conference while, at the same time, endeavoring to expand the influence of the Association through diverse lines of action that advance the broad initiatives outlined above. For example, the Executive Committee is currently experimenting with new systems for mentoring youth and young adults, most of whom are not ABS members, in their efforts to more fully integrate Bahá’í scholarship with other aspects of their lives, such as their academic studies, their services to the Faith, and other forms of social action or professional advancement.

In addition, the first book in our new collaborative publishing venture with Wilfrid Laurier University Press has just been published, and other manuscripts are under consideration.

The Executive Committee is also studying a proposal to create a comprehensive, searchable, online bibliographic reference database that we hope to one day provide as a powerful research tool for Bahá’í and non-Bahá’í researchers around the world who are interested in conducting literature reviews of primary and secondary literature related to the Faith dating back to 1844. In the months ahead, we hope to report in more detail on these and other lines of action.

New executive director appointed

In order to further support the work of the Association at this important juncture, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Canada has recently appointed Dr.

Continued on page 8
Breakout sessions
Continued from page 1

Representations of the Spiritual Dimension to Aging”
David Piff, “Does It Matter if It Happened?: Inspirational Force vs. Factual Content in Popular Bahá’í Stories”
Omid Pour-Ahmadi, “Preventing Family Breakdown: Incorporating Unity into Therapy”
Taeed Quddusi, “The Effects of Prayer on Healing and Recovery: A Review of the Literature”
Jalaliyyih Quinn, “Religious and Social Forces of Unity/Division in Paintings”
Lev Rickards, “The Valley of Search Engines: Outwardly-Oriented Websites”
Rouha Rose, “Is there a Creator? Creation and Evolution”
Harold Rosen, “Centuries of Darkness and Light”
Barbara Ruys, “Does Beauty Matter in the Built Environment?”
Farshid Samandari, “Out of the Ashes Rises the Phoenix: Precedents and Prospects of Bahá’í Artists”
Dara Gay Shaw, Naomi Rohrer, Cilla Drinkwater, Bob McIlvride, and May Abhar, “Affective Factors and the Application of Spiritual Principles in Online English Teaching”
Nozomu Senda, “Art of Bahá’í Translation: The Japanese Case”
John Steere, Michelle Thelen-Steere, and Timothy Kraft, “The Garden of Being and the Eternal Complementation”
Peter Terry, “A Theological Analysis of the Biography of the Báb”

Iscander Micael Tinto, “Text, Author, Reader and the Relationship with the Sacred”
Jiling Yang, “In Search of Martha Root: An American Bahá’í Feminist and Peace Advocate in the Early Twentieth Century”
Gloria Yazdani (Shahzadeh), “A Westerner’s Pilgrimage to Iran in the Early 20th Century: Martha Root’s Courageous Journey through the Cradle of Bahá’u’lláh’s World-embracing Religion”

Panels
In addition to the presentations listed above, there will be panels on the following topics:

International Development and the United Nations (Noora Arfaa, Augusto Lopez-Claro, Dessi Dimitrova, and Neysan Rassekh)
The “New Atheism” (participants TBA)
University Courses on the Bahá’í Faith (participants TBA)

Children’s and junior youth program
Every year the annual conference Children’s Program Team works hard to put together a stimulating program of educational activities for children and junior youth, aged 5 to 15. This year is no exception! So why not bring the whole family to the ABS annual conference?

The children’s program will include speakers from the main conference as well as other activities addressing the conference theme. Note to parents: if you wish to register your children to attend the children’s program, they must be preregistered by 31 July 2008. For more information, call the ABS office, tel.: 613-233-1903.

Registration and hotel information
The registration form and hotel information for this annual conference is included in this Bulletin (pages 5-6) and is also available for download on the ABS Web site: <www.bahai-studies.ca/conferences.php>.

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the conference hotel, the San Diego Marriott La Jolla, 4240 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, CA, 92037; tel.: 858-587-1414; toll-free reservation number: 800-228-9200.

Be sure to mention the Association for Bahá’í Studies conference to receive the special conference rate.
Room rates: $109 single/double; $129 triple/quad.

ABS–Japan annual conference
ABS-Japan announces that its 16th annual conference will be held in Kyoto, 13-15 September 2008, with the conference theme of “Understanding More About the Themes in the Ruhi Institute.”

The theme will include presentations on topics such as the history of the Faith, teaching, holding children’s classes, devotional meetings, life after death, prayer, the importance of arts, and other subjects studied in Books 1–7.

The Saturday evening public meeting will feature a panel on the importance of music and the arts for spiritual development.

The Site Chair this year is Mary Noguchi. Please send presentation proposals to her at <marynoguchi@gaia.eonet.ne.jp>, with copies to Sandra Fotos, e-mail: <sfotos@gol.com> and Hayashi-san, e-mail: <hayashi-ak@w4.dion.ne.jp>.
“Religion and Social Cohesion”
Association for Bahá’í Studies
32nd Annual Conference
29 August–1 September 2008
San Diego Marriott La Jolla, La Jolla, California, USA

Online registration: www.bahai-studies.ca/conferences.php
Please register for EACH person attending the conference by fax: 1-613-233-3644, by phone: 1-613-233-1903, online, or by mail: 34 Copernicus Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 7K4.

Name ________________________________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________________________________________________
City __________________________________________ Province/State ______________
Country __________________________________________________________________________________________
Postal/ZIP Code ____________
Telephone __________________________ E-Mail __________________________

If this registrant is a child, please indicate age __________ Do you have any special needs? __________________

ABS Member Non-Member

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>By July 31</th>
<th>After July 31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Adults</td>
<td>$90</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples</td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors (65+)/</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students/ Unwaged</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This fee includes a 1-year membership in the Association, including a year's subscription to The Journal of Bahá’í Studies and ABS Bulletin, and discounts on ABS publications and conferences. U.S. memberships are charged at the U.S. currency rate.

Children (ages 5–15) $60 children must be registered by July 31

Total Fees: _______________
Scholarship Contribution: + _______________
GRAND TOTAL = _______________

Method of Payment
☐ Cheque ☐ Money Order
☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
☐ American Express

Credit Card Number __________________________
Credit Card Expiry Date __________________________
Cardholder’s Name (please print clearly) __________________________
Cardholder’s Signature __________________________

CANCELLATION POLICY: Registration fees are refundable, less 10% administrative fees if the Association is notified by July 31, and less 20% administrative fees if notified after July 31. Registrants from outside Canada, please note: fees paid by credit card are processed in Canada. Some credit card companies apply a service charge for transactions taking place in another Country.
LOCATION & RESERVATIONS

This year the conference takes place at the San Diego Marriott La Jolla, conveniently located at only 10 miles from San Diego International Airport and 15 miles from downtown. The hotel has four restaurants and a fitness centre on site and it is a short walk away from the University Towne Centre offering 150 upscale shops including four major department stores, restaurants, bar and even an ice rink.

San Diego Marriott La Jolla 4240 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, California, USA 92037

Special conference room rate:

Single/double occupancy: US $109 per night (plus tax)
Triple/quadruple occupancy: US $129 per night (plus tax)

Conference attendees must make hotel reservations directly with the hotel. To receive the special rate ask for the Association for Bahá’í Studies special conference rate when making your reservation.

Toll-free Reservations: 800-228-9200
Local Reservations: 858-587-1414
Code: ABIABIA.

Please note: ABS has been guaranteed a limited block of rooms at this rate until August 7, 2008. After that date, reservations may be accepted on a space-availability basis at the negotiated rate. To ensure that you obtain the low rate, be sure to make your reservations as soon as possible, and no later than August 7.

TOURISM AND ENTERTAINMENT

La Jolla boasts beautiful beaches, the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library and a Museum of Contemporary Art housed in the landmark Ellen Browning Scripps house. San Diego is easily reached and is home of the world-famous Zoo and SeaWorld. The Gaslamp Quarter and its Victorian-era buildings is a great place for shopping and dining. For further information about tours, attractions, and activities in San Diego, check the San Diego Tourism Web site at <http://www.sandiego.org>.

ROOM SHARING

Reduce your conference costs (and make new friends!) by sharing a room at the hotel. To contact other attendees interested in sharing a room, please join the Yahoo! Group “ABS-NA Conference” by visiting its site <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/absconference> or by sending an e-mail to: <absconference-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>. NOTE: attendees must make their own hotel reservations and are responsible for contacting interested parties to make their own sharing arrangements. If you encounter difficulties with the Yahoo! Group system, please contact the Association for Bahá’í Studies office for assistance.
Gate of the Heart

Understanding the Writings of the Báb

by Nader Saiedi

“A pioneering and groundbreaking work... provides fundamental keys for understanding some of the distinctive features of the Writings of the Báb.” —Vahid Rafati, Centre for the Study of the Text, Haifa, Israel

“A masterpiece. It is not an exaggeration to say that for the first time in history a scholar who is well versed in Persian, Arabic, social science, especially sociology (including the sociology of religion and sociology of knowledge), and with a great knowledge of the Bahá’í Holy Scriptures, has produced a scholarly introduction to the Writings of the Báb, His station, and Bábí Law.” —Nosratollah Muhammadhosseini, author, The Báb

“With special emphasis on the Báb’s symbolism and logic, it is based on meticulous scholarship and profound spiritual understanding. At the same time, it elucidates both the historic significance and contemporary relevance of the Báb’s writings. Written in a clear and engaging style, Gate of the Heart is a welcome contribution to Bahá’í Studies, the study of World Religions, and the study of Spirituality.” —Tamara Sonn, The College of William & Mary

“This outstanding work clearly conveys Dr. Saiedi’s scholarly enthusiasm for the ‘richness, beauty, and fascination’ of the Writings of the Báb. The author successfully embeds the discourse of the Báb in both nineteenth-century and contemporary thinking. His sociological approach does not rob these Writings of their revelatory grace, nor does his faith in those Writings preclude a detailed analysis of their significance for society. Students of religion, society, hermeneutics, and history of religion will welcome Gate of the Heart as a bridge between religion and social science. It offers a fine example of how others might approach an analysis of revelatory writing.” —Will C. van den Hoonaard, Professor Emeritus, Univ. of New Brunswick, and author, The Origins of the Bahá’í Community of Canada, 1898–1948

Published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press and the Association for Bahá’í Studies

Order your copy of Gate of the Heart from ABS to receive your member’s 15% discount!

Order online from the ABS Online Bookstore at www.bahai-studies.ca by phone: 613-233-1903 • by fax: 613-233-3644
graduate of Edinburgh University (in history) with a professional background in social and economic development, specializing in issues of social exclusion. Mr. Velasco has published scholarly articles and book chapters on Bahá’í scripture, history, and community development, and will directly address the conference theme through an in-depth consideration of modern social change and religious belief.

Clark Donnelly, Michael Snook, and Mary Darling are executive producers with Westwind Pictures, an independent television production company in Toronto and Regina. Most recently, Westwind has produced *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, and the panel will speak on their service to religious communities. Making and broadcasting the show has been a learning experience as diverse groups of Muslim and non-Muslim Canadians respond to its messages.

Clark Donnelly has worked in television for almost four decades, and left his post as vice president of CKCK television in Regina to produce first commercial, then series and documentary work with Westwind Pictures. He served as an Auxiliary Board Member in Western Canada and the United States in the 1980s and 1990s.

Mary Darling is co-owner of Westwind and came to television from a background in management and marketing.

Michael Snook is an executive producer, producer and writer, with nearly four decades of experience in film and television, radio, print and the music industry, and is based at Westwind’s Regina office. He served as an Auxiliary Board Member in the 1990s.

Following on the success of last year’s special Friday programs, this year’s conference will again include a series of special programs on Friday for students and young adults, faculty, and other conference participants.

**Faculty/graduate program**

The day-long special program for university faculty (including prospective faculty and advanced graduate students who are interested in academic careers) offers a forum to learn and consult about aspects of Bahá’í scholarship and service most relevant to university faculty. Topics will include publishing opportunities and strategies, the development of university courses that incorporate Bahá’í content, the mentoring of youth and young adults, influencing discourse and practice in academic fields, support for the Bahá’ís in Iran who are denied access to higher education, the role of scholarship in the context of the global plans of the Faith, and related issues.

**Collaborative workshops**

Students, young professionals, and all who desire to more directly incorporate systematic study and application of the Writings in their life are invited to a set of interactive workshops designed to catalyze individual and collaborative Bahá’í study and scholarship. The workshop sessions will be held Friday, with a follow-up held Sunday evening for those wanting to direct effort towards action, dissemination, and publication. The workshops, organized by a multidisciplinary group of students, professionals, and academics, will guide attendees through an exploration of consultative and collaborative scholarship, addressing issues where the Bahá’í community has great interest and can make an impact. The Friday morning workshops will focus on basic Bahá’í texts relevant to scholarship and the afternoon workshops will focus on current issues and developments, seeding collaborative projects to be carried out through the coming year.

---

**Members’ input sought on the Bulletin**

The Executive Committee would like to invite ABS members to provide it with feedback regarding the content and design of the *Bulletin*.

Please let us know how the *Bulletin* can best serve the needs and interests of our members. E-mail your suggestions to <abs-na@bahai-studies.ca>.