

# Fellowship of Fellows

Helping libraries thrive in developing countries

BY BOB MURPHY

**I**N EARLY MAY, SEVEN CONSCIENTIOUS LIBRARIANS from different developing countries arrived at OCLC to learn about libraries in the United States as part of the IFLA/OCLC Early Career Development Fellowship Program. They returned to their countries four weeks later with a better understanding of how libraries can succeed and with a wealth of ideas to help them improve library services for people at home.

Sponsored by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), OCLC and the American Theological Library Association, the fellowship program provides career development and continuing education for library and information science professionals from countries with developing economies. Since 2001, the program has hosted 23 Fellows.

This year, the Fellows participated in programs at the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs; Chicago Public Library; the American Theological Library Association; the American Library Association; Ohio State University Libraries; Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library; Library of Congress; and Westerville (Ohio) Public Library. Between these visits, the Fellows met with OCLC staff and OCLC Members Council delegates to share ideas about how they can work together to help libraries thrive in a variety of conditions around the world.

"I was able to meet with many professional librarians, library administrators and other library leaders," said Lela Nanuashvili, Lecturer, Library Science, Tbilisi State University of Culture and Arts, Tbilisi, Georgia. "This was particularly helpful so that I could explore potential

opportunities for my library. When I return home, I will use some of my experience here to help develop an electronic catalog to make library materials more accessible to our users."

"One of the great things I have learned is the vision that so many librarians have for their libraries," said Thomas Bello, Systems Librarian, University of Malawi Libraries, Zomba, Malawi. "Every library I have visited here was guided by a vision that helps chart its way forward. The Westerville Public Library director, Mr. Don Barlow, has a vision that is very radical by some standards. He is trying new things, and they are working very well. I will not be afraid to consider radical changes in my home library."

"I hope to implement some of the great ideas on fund-raising from the Mortenson Center in Pakistan, where we are in dire need of funding," said Muhammad Rafiq, Librarian, National Textile University, Faisalabad, Pakistan. "The American Library Association is very proactive in promoting libraries and reading. I also hope to bring some of that enthusiasm to Pakistan, where many of our associations are not very active."

"I will take home to Colombia the models I have seen of cooperation among libraries to facilitate the work of individual libraries," said Edwar Delgado, Library Director, Albania School, Albania, Guajira, Colombia. "If we can cooperate like the libraries I have seen in the United States, then we can accomplish a lot to benefit Colombian society."

To find more information about the IFLA/OCLC Early Career Development Fellowship Program, visit [www.oclc.org/education/earlycareer/default.htm](http://www.oclc.org/education/earlycareer/default.htm).



This year's Fellows are, left to right: Thomas Bello, Systems Librarian, University of Malawi Libraries, Zomba, Malawi; Muhammad Rafiq, Librarian, National Textile University, Faisalabad, Pakistan; Selenay Aytac, Isik University, Istanbul, Turkey (currently a doctoral student at Long Island University); Lela Nanuashvili, Lecturer, Library Science, Tbilisi State University of Culture and Arts, Tbilisi, Georgia; Xiaoqing Cai, Librarian, Sun Yat-sen University Library, Guangzhou, Guangdong, China; Gillian Wilson, Librarian, United Theological College of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica; Edwar Delgado, Library Director, Albania School, Albania, Guajira, Colombia.