



International School for Jain Studies

Report - ISJS

Thursday, 29 December, 2011

www.jainstudies.org

REPORT CARD

ISJS and JAINA ACADEMIC LIAISON COMMITTEE 'ALC' 2011

The Game changing year for Jain Studies in North America

Jainism used to be least known, most misunderstood and was not of interest of academia in general. Hence it had a miniscule presence in the universities and colleges of the world but thanks to ISJS and ALC this is changing fast as evident from 2011 activities of ISJS and ALC. The year 2011 has been a good one with the progress with the ongoing projects and significant start of a few new initiatives. Jain studies are taking good shape at several universities in USA and Canada such as ECSU, LMU, CLU, VCU, Elizabeth town College and Vanier College etc. . . .

Significant activities in 2011

1. Visit of Jain Community to Eastern Connecticut State University 'ECSU'

On April 6, 2011, President of ECSU in Willimantic Connecticut invited a delegation of 27 Jains from all over USA to express thanks for the donation of 500 books on Jainism (courtesy Dr Prem Gada JAINA Ratna), several scholarships awarded to faculty members of ECSU to attend ISSJS programs in India and for the support extended in running Jainism programs at ECSU and in India. More than 300 students have attended courses in Jainism at ECSU. Several of their students are now pursuing Ph.Ds in Jainism.. Prof Hope Fitz and an alumnus of ISSJS2006 is the key promoter of Jain studies at ECSU. ISJS officers attended the gathering. Vegan meals were provided for luncheon hosted by the President of university.

2. Seminars and exhibition on Jain studies at JAINA CONVENTION 2011

ALC and ISJS put an exhibition booth and organized the seminars on '**Jain Academic Studies; Strategies for Growth**' and '**Perception of Western Visitors to Jain Temples in India**' which were well visited and attended by many Jains:

3. Launch of ISJS Centre of Jain Studies at Claremont Lincoln University 'CLU'.

On September 6, 2011 the centre, being the first outside Abrahamic religions, was formally inaugurated with day long programs attended by Dr. Shugan Jain, Chairman ISJS India, Past Presidents and current vice president of JAINA, JCSC members and several academicians. The center was conceived and brought to fruition by Ms. Brianne Donaldson of CLU; **an ISSJS2009 alumnus**. The first year schedule of the centre includes; Co-hosting at each other's website; graduate level courses on Jain Bio ethics and Jain Dharma, annual international conference (first one being on Jain Bio ethics); sponsor graduate students to attend ISSJS2012.6W, offer courses for members of JCSC, Also the university will celebrate Ahimsa day on Oct 2nd every year, set up a gallery of Jain paintings and temple at CLU and offer Online courses on Jainism.

4. Participation in Uberoi Conference at LMU. (Sept30-Oct 2nd 2011).

The organizers invited a delegation from ALC and ISJS to attend their conference on Indian religion studies in USA. Mr. Dilip Shah presented the paper on Jain Academic Studies. This conference was attended by over 105 participants including Pravin Shah, Sulekh Jain and Yashwant Malaiya from ALC- and several Jain academics (such as Prof. Chris Chapple, Anne Vallely and others).

5. Jain Education Retreat in Vermont (Oct 7th-11th 2011).

Thirty two Jain members attended this annual ISJS retreat at Rockingham VT. The group deliberated extensively about the status of Jain academic education and strategies to promote it further. Those who participated included influential academicians like Profs. Hope Fitz (ECSU), Prof. Dan Smith (VCU), Prof. Nathan Loewen (Montreal Vanier College), Prof. Jagmohan Humar (Carleton University) and Prof. Subhash Jain (University of Iowa). They all made thought provoking suggestion.

6. Jain Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University at Richmond VA (VCU) on Nov 13th 2011.

Prof. Dan Smith (an ISSJS2011 alumnus), Kusum Jain and Yogi Jain of Richmond, VA, achieved another milestone in formally inaugurating the Jain studies program at VCU. JAINA president, Dr. Sushil Jain, two past JAINA presidents (Dr. Sulekh Jain and Dilip Shah), Past president of Washington DC Jain Center and many prominent Jains from Washington and Richmond areas attended the program along with a large gathering of VCU faculty and student members. Prof. Mark Wood (Chair of Dept of World Religions) of VCU summarized the near term plans for Jain studies at VCU.

7. Hosting of Jain academics.

ISJS and ALC hosted a Meet & Greet Jain vegan dinner on November 18, 2011 in San Francisco for a large # of Jain Academics (nearly 45) who came to attend DANAM and AAR conventions so as to build relationship with Jain Academics. At both the conventions, several papers were presented on Jainism. The entire theme of the DANAM conference was on Non Violence. The Meet and Greet dinner attracted quite a few world known Jain scholars such as Profs Peter Flugel and Paul Dundas (from U.K), Chris Chapple, Jeffery Long, Nathan Loewen, and President of California Institute of Integral Studies. Prof. Padmanabh Jaini was honored by the gathering and delivered a 45 minute long excellent and very informative lecture on Jain history which normally is not mentioned by Hindu scholars. 4 of the paper presenters were ISJS alumni.

8. A Unique opportunity for our Jain Youth to study Jain dharma in summer 2012

This new initiative is being offered jointly by the Academic Liaison Committee of JAINA and ISJS in India. The entire program in India is run and administered by the International School for Jain Studies (ISJS) in New Delhi, India. This program will run from May 28-June 18, 2012 and can be eligible to earn up to 3 credit hours. For details see www.jainstudies.org

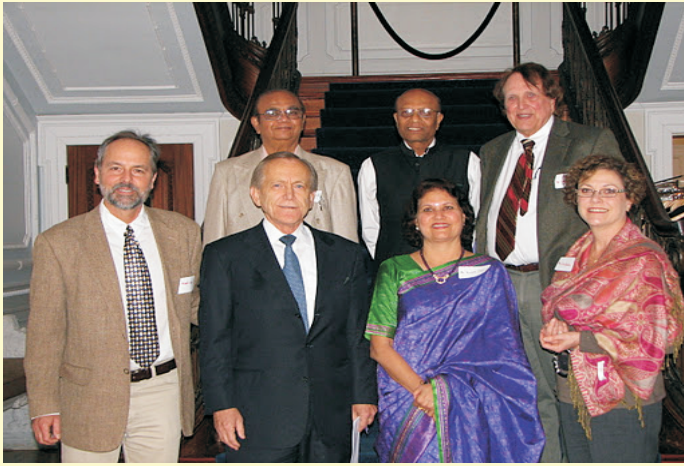
9. Lectures by Dr. Shugan Jain

Dr. Shugan Jain, Chairman ISJS India delivered lectures on Jainism at Harvard University and at VCU in the month of September 2011. His 2 lectures at VCU were attended by over 220 students and faculty. In addition to these lectures, Dr. Shugan Jain attended the Jain studies launch ceremony on Sept 6 at CLU and met with Prof. Phyllis Granoff and her PhD students (Yale University) and Prof. Gary Francine.

10. ON Line Teaching of Jain Dharma:

To promote Jain studies globally, at any academic institution, we are collaborating with Claremont Lincoln University to make this journey possible. Several activities to camera record 100s of hours of lectures on hundreds of topics and subjects of Jainism have already started. The program is digital video recording for online learning of Jainism will be made available 24/7 online anywhere and at no cost. This is a long road but the work has begun.

ISJS Jain Studies Center at VCU



ISJS Jain Studies Center at CLU



Jain Educational Summit at VERMONT



Dr. Shugan Jain at VCU

