



2021 SICA-USA Annual Report

SICA-USA suffered in 2021 from pandemic fatigue and the cancellation and/or postponement of plans took a toll. This was not an uncommon experience for millions of people and organizations in 2021. Despite that, SICA-USA did make progress on many fronts. The testing the board has done reinforces the fact that we have the potential to evolve not just SICA-USA, but Subud itself. This is an important thing to note for an organization (Subud) whose average member is aged 73 or thereabouts.

Our best accomplishment in 2021 was staging (to our knowledge) the first SICA-USA Fund Drive last April and over the year raising \$10,465. (Unofficially.) Subud members stepped up and validated our website-building efforts, our regular blog posts and the new energy that has been brought to this under-appreciated wing of our beloved spiritual community. The SICA-USA board deserves huge credit for making this happen and special thanks go out to Ralph Davila. Our Acting Treasurer kept track of all the funds and sent out thank you notes. Ralph has instituted standard accounting practices and procedures and has been a godsend.

The website was a key success for the organization, as there was a post almost every week of the year that went to our 1,199 website subscribers. There were 21,501 hits on the site, an increase over 2020 by 33%, with a daily average of 59 hits, up from 44 in 2020. Developing basic standards and guidelines for blog contributions was one of the activities of the Communications Committee and we are grateful to Lauren Stomel for his work on this and other web issues. We are always looking for ways to increase readership and contributions from members.

Board Development was another huge success in 2021. With the addition of Susannah Rosenthal, Sanderson Morgan and Lauren Stanley our four member board increased

to seven. Unfortunately for us, Hamilton Cheifetz left the board. He had served the community tirelessly for four years. We miss his contribution and appreciate his ongoing financial support and institutional memory. The new board members, and one addition in 2022, are bringing their own talents and perspectives to SICA-USA and we are grateful.



In 2021 the board also conceived of a Cultural Conversation. This comes out of the bright mind of board member Lawrence Pevac. What is Subud culture? We are looking to initiate basic testing/dialog on the subject of Bapak and Culture. This is part of how we see this conversation developing, a project for all Subud members who may want to better understand just what Bapak's thoughts on Culture mean to all of us in Subud, not just artists. Other aspects will likely involve artists sharing their creative processes. We expect that there will be an experiential aspect to this and not be limited to talk and testing. Our hope is that we can identify the strengths and weaknesses of Subud culture and help our organization evolve. Writing, symbolism and aesthetic development are early possibilities for the experiential sessions and this is evolving on its own schedule.

Harmony continues to be a key issue in 2021. Our National Helper Liaisons Michal Brownell and Jim Dehner are learning how to guide the organization as we evolve, add new people and continue to depend upon Zoom and emails for interaction. Testing sessions have revealed some remarkable perceptions, the potency of the Cultural Conversation and for SICA-USA itself, but organizational harmony requires continued attention.

Among the projects sponsored in 2021 include support for Emmanuel Williams and his young adult novel “Crinolina,” “Holding Out for Love” a music project with oversight from Halimah Christy and support for the spiritual memoir of Patrick Morgan “River of Dreams.” That Patrick Morgan died not long after we awarded him the grant illustrates the importance of supporting the projects of Subud members. Patrick’s project holds enormous ramifications for how he will be remembered and his involvement in Subud plays a key role. We miss him. SICA-USA also continues to support the annual Poetry Postcard Fest, an event that was established in 2007 and one in which several Subud members participate. The “Memories of Bapak; Phase II” oral history video project was also supported by SICA-USA. Donated funds were processed through the SICA-USA treasury. SICA-USA has been credited in the past for supporting this effort and we expect to continue to work with the new SUSA archives effort.

In 2021 SICA-USA joined SICA-International and SICA-Canada to evolve the Poems for Peace project started by Latifah Taormina and Zoomuse, the online poetry series founded by Emmanuel Williams into *Zoomuse Poems for Peace*, happening monthly via Zoom on the third Thursdays. The series is co-curated by the Chairs of SICA-USA and SICA-Canada, both poets who love Subud and, of course, poetry. That series continues into 2022.

As always, we are grateful for the support we get, astounded by the time and effort put in by board members and we welcome feedback on this report. Now that the worst of the pandemic is over and we await the “new abnormal”, we expect 2022 to be a remarkable year for SICA-USA and Subud. I’m honored to report this news and grateful to be part of Subud.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul E. W.", is located at the bottom left of the page.

Paul E Nelson
SICA-USA Chair

