



*Friends of the International Center,
at UC San Diego*

Newsletter

Volume XLII, No. 7

March 2015

President's Message

The Friends do not need a groundhog or flower bulbs blooming to know spring is here: we have many new international visitors' babies to herald the arrival of spring. Science has taught us that flowers bloom in spring because of the warmer weather and that animals give birth during the warmer months because food sources are more abundant. Perhaps we humans also appreciate the greater ease of managing newborns in warmer weather?

While you may be beyond childbearing age, I hope that, like me, you still find learning about different customs and labor policies regarding motherhood to be fascinating. I share just a small fraction of what I have learned through my conversations with our wonderful international visitors.

For Europeans, an American baby shower is novel and appreciated; however, in many countries a pre-delivery celebration is seen as bad luck. That said, pre-delivery showers do occur elsewhere around the world: in Brazil, celebrations are women-only events called *chá de bebê* (baby tea); in Iran, showers are called *sismoony* with family and friends providing all the items needed for a child;

and in South Africa *stork parties* are held and are always a surprise for the mother-to-be.

For many, celebrations are held after the baby is born. In the United Kingdom, men celebrate *wetting the baby's head*, which I gather is an excuse for Dad to have a night out with his male friends to drink a toast (or more) to his new child. In China, welcoming parties are held on the evening of the second full moon after the baby's birth when friends and family attend a lavish banquet and give money in red envelopes to the parents for good luck. In Egypt, a *sebou* is held seven days after birth, at which time the baby is named and friends and family give religious gifts to both mother and child. In France, a celebration is held after the baby's first birthday, attended by both men and women with gifts for both mother and baby.

Labor policies differ widely and sadly, the U.S. fares the least well in a country comparison. Only Papua New Guinea and the United States lack a legally protected, partially paid time off policy for working women (California is rare offering both parents up to six weeks off at 55% pay). Countries in South America (e.g. Brazil,

Chile) provide up to six months paid leave and job security for one year after giving birth.

Scandinavia is one of the best places for parenthood so much so that stories about Finland's "cardboard box" babies have gone viral. In Finland a box of baby staples valued at @ 400 Euros is given to every new parent. In addition, Finland offers ten months paid maternity leave with the option to extend for another year, and has a law requiring employers to give the mother back her job upon her return to the workplace. In Sweden, both parents are given 16 months of paid leave (at 80%), which can be taken however they like until the child is 8 years old. And in Bulgaria, employed mothers-to-be receive 45 days of fully paid leave pre-delivery and receive 410 days paid maternity leave (at 90%) after delivery. At the end of this time, the mother is entitled to an additional parental leave until the child is two, which leave can be transferred to the father and/or the grandparents.

Whatever the customs, we all unite in the simple joy that babies bring to the world. Wishing everyone a Happy Spring.

Katya Newmark
presFIC@ucsd.edu

Dear Friends of the International Center,

It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to communicate with the full membership of the Friends through the monthly *Newsletter*. Allow me to be redundant, but I must convey my immense appreciation for the many, ongoing contributions of the Friends to the international community of the University. Every day the volunteer support of the Friends offers opportunities to connect our campus community to the world community. The richness of this contribution cannot be measured in simple metrics, but at a much more complex, sophisticated level, which speaks to the absolute commitment of the Friends membership to world peace and understanding. Now, I move to the more mundane news impacting the International Center.

Beginning last June, the Chancellor charged the International Strategy Work Group on which I was privileged to serve. The Work Group was comprised of virtually every member of the University leadership with few exceptions. The outcome of this effort was remarkable. Many hours of debate and discussion concluded in what I believe to be a cogent document addressing the future global engagement of the University. Both education and research received equal attention, as did the need to leverage evermore the vast international network of research activity with the day-to-day education of students on every level. The final report of the Work Group was submitted, on schedule, to **Chancellor Khosla** precisely on December 31, 2014. The report is under review by the members of the Academic Senate and the Chancellor. I, as others, am eagerly awaiting the outcome of this effort. I applaud the Chancellor for making the future global engagement of the University a major priority.

In the meantime, we saw the enrollment of international students continue to soar. In the fall of 2010, UC San Diego enrolled 2,259 international students. In the fall of 2014, 5,178 international students were enrolled, with a substantial increase in the number of graduate students. The increase in graduate enrollment is significant in that we continue to capture the best and brightest of scholars in the world. Coupled with the increase in graduate enrollment, the numbers of international faculty and scholars in residence at the University reached an all-time high of 2,722, making UC San Diego the seventh-ranked institution in the country in the hosting of international scholars.

The one challenge we face as a nation is the impact of rising tuition on the general affordability of higher education and, specifically, the affordability of study abroad opportunities. At UC San Diego, we continue to aggressively diversify the opportunities for a study abroad experience, which in recent times means an initial experience of shorter duration. The upside is that a summer session or an intercession abroad often leads to further study and research abroad of longer duration. It is the short-term experience in another culture and country that is now often the "hook" for a lifetime of engagement in the world community.

The Friends Scholarship Program has played and continues to play such a key role in providing an entrée to an international experience. Therefore, I encourage each and every one of you to consider a major contribution of support to the Friends Scholarship Program. Your contribution will be life changing in a way that you cannot imagine.

Kirk Simmons

Dean, International Center

Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor, Experiential Learning



Dean Kirk Simmons

MEMBERSHIP

We are delighted to welcome as Friends members **Keiko Hirai** and her husband, **Maretoshi Hirai**, Assistant Project Scientist in UCSD's Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science. For years, Keiko has given devoted and outstanding service to the Friends, so much so that already in 2010 she was named International Visitor of the Year. Unquestionably, the membership includes baby **Yuki**, who joins her mother at all Friends activities.

We send our condolences to **Mariette Kobrak** upon the death of her husband, **Hans Kobrak**, Adjunct Professor Emeritus of Physics.

March Calendar

March 4, 18: **Family Orientation**, 9:15

March 4, 11, 18, 25: **Wednesday Morning Coffee**, 10:00-Noon

March 4, 11, 18, 25: **Gus' Table**, 10:00-Noon

March 6, 13, 20, 27: **Friday Chat**, 10:00-Noon

March 10: **Board Meeting**, 10:00

March 10, 17, 24, 31: **Knit-Along**, Noon-4:00

March 12: **Int'l Cooking Experience**, 9:30-1:00

March 13: **Friends sponsor International Café**, Noon-1:15

March 18: **International Kitchen**, Noon

March 26: **Cooking with the Seasons**, 9:30-1:00

March 27: **César Chavez Holiday**



Akiko Ebi in the kitchen



Participants enjoy the dishes they helped prepare

Cooking with the Seasons

"In January, right in the middle of winter, we find ourselves still craving for warm, comforting food, while looking for ways to leave behind the indulgences of the holiday season. It is a time when root and winter vegetables, such as carrots, cabbages, and kale, rule farmers' markets, and citrus, such as lemons, oranges, grapefruits, and blood oranges, provide lightness to the otherwise heavy ingredients. Pears are abundant with a delightful sweetness that can replace rich decadent desserts." This is how **Tashu Malik** and **Keiko Hirai** described the January 22 cooking class that they taught together, as the first of what we hope will be many other *Cooking with the Seasons* classes to be held on the fourth Thursday of the month. True to these words, the luncheon menu featured hearty Sausage Minestrone with Garlic Ciabatta, Roasted Root Vegetables (Italian style), and Poached Pears with Citrus Mascarpone.

Because the Friends International Cooking Experience classes coordinated by **Jennie Chin** and **Mary Woo**, held on the second Thursday of the month, have been consistently oversubscribed, this second series was inaugurated upon student requests. Judging from the sample comments Tashu and Keiko received, these classes, too, are likely to fill up quickly.

"Thank you for the class yesterday! I really enjoyed, and studied a lot of things. The plate was all so tasty! My husband also said that."—**Akiko Ebi** from Japan

"Thank you so much for your cooking class. I enjoyed it a lot. I got

the leftover of the soup and my daughter loves it. Thank you. I can't wait the next cooking class and meet new friends."—**Tomoko Yamamoto** from Japan

"BIG THANK YOU to Tashu and Keiko! I was so glad to join the Cooking with the Seasons class yesterday and it was great fun. Thank you so much for your great effort and also for sharing the recipes with us."—**Wen Gu**, a native of China with ten years of study and work in Australia

Wednesday Morning Coffee

—by *Georgina Sham*

Here follows a list of this month's Wednesday Coffee activities:

- March 4: *Needlepoint embroidery* with **Lynn Jahn**.
- March 11: *Decorate jars and bottles* using yarn. This creative project will be led by **Keiko Hirai**. Around 11 o'clock, we will hold a quadruple *baby shower* for moms-to-be: **Kanako Fujita, Padma Dolma, Eriko Saragai, and Natalie Ania**.
- March 18: *Lunch*, featuring *avial*, a delicious southern Indian curry dish, served with coconut rice, *kosmili* salad, plus a special Indian dessert and drink. Our chef will be **Bharat Sridhar**, a graduate student in bioengineering, who will show us how to prepare these dishes starting at 9:30 a.m. Lunch will be served at noon for \$5/person.

Bharat came to a previous International Kitchen and immediately volunteered to prepare a lunch for us. We are always thankful for such wonderful volunteers!

- March 25: Start of our *egg projects* in preparation for Easter. **Alma Coles** will teach us how to dye eggs using silk ties. We will also use wax-resist methods to dye eggs. But best of all, we will cook with eggs and prepare deviled eggs, Hindoo eggs, and marbled tea eggs. Then we'll all taste-sample these international egg dishes!

Mommy, Daddy & Me classes continue to meet on Wednesday mornings. For children 24 months and under, the class is held from 10:00 to 10:40, and for children above 24 months, the class is held from 10:45 to 11:30.

Letter to the President

From **Doris Sant'Anna**, who moved to Florida:

Dear Katya,
I'm so grateful for having had the opportunity to serve as a volunteer at the International Center. It has been a wonderful year!

I'm going to miss you, **Georgina, Mary, Kristine, Jennie**, all the volunteers, all the girls, all the babies, **Keiko** and little **Yuki**... let me stop, I'm getting emotional.

I wish you and all the Friends the very best for 2015. You will be in my heart forever.

Photo by Elisa Postila



THIS IS THE FIRST TIME that I am asked to write my bio and I feel honored to do so. My name is **Audrey Leriche**. I am from France and a board member of the Friends of the International Center since 2014. But my story with the Friends and the International Center started in 2013, in February to be exact, the month of my arrival in San Diego.

My story has nothing out of the ordinary: it was in 2013 that my husband, **Geoffray**, started his post-doc in the Chemistry/Biochemistry Department at UC San Diego. Moving to the U.S. was a longtime dream, and we both arrived thrilled and excited. Nevertheless, a spouse's status is not an easy one. To come here, I had to quit my job; I became a "dependent" (true legal status), needed to apply for a work permit, and felt discouraged by the slow pace of life, as my previous years were full and professionally active.

That's why I came to look upon the International Center as a place to lead a real life with activities and social connections. Needless to mention that at the very beginning everything was frightening, but the Friends, through Wednesday Coffee, were very supportive. By a smile, a kind word, invitations to other activities, and through volunteering, I soon stopped almost

The Perfect Chemistry Between the Friends of the International Center and a Representative of France: Meet Audrey Leriche

every day by the International Center. In addition to Wednesday Coffee, I participated in Knit-Along, in cooking classes, and I even became a volunteer in the Friends Resale Shop and at Friday Café. I also entered the English-in-Action program, where I met **Nori Faer**. At first Nori was my English tutor, but I now consider her a dear friend—we have shared so many things in the past year!

I have met fantastic people, learned a lot of things about different cultures and the world at large, and, most and foremost, I developed real friendships. Six months after my arrival, I was offered the opportunity to co-lead a new project with my international friend **Dagmar Bocakova** and soon-to-be friend **Katya Newmark**. The idea? To create a social and family-friendly event for visiting international scholars and their dependent partners. We hoped to make it a casual, affordable, and fun event, where the visitors could meet with the local community to share their mutual experiences—a way for all to make friends. That's really how the Friends Dinner Socials started.

Now, it is a quarterly event, welcoming 80 guests, always themed and fun, with good food. I am so proud of that program and its outcome. I was thankful and overjoyed when the Friends Dinner Social received an International Center Chancellor's Award as "Program of the Year 2014," just as I was for being similarly recognized as "International Volunteer

of the Year 2014."

That same year, I also found a job here in San Diego. Since June 2014, I have been a lab coordinator for a subsidiary company of Johnson & Johnson, Crucell Vaccine Institute. I feel privileged to be able to work and to become more fully integrated into American society through my work environment.

Even so, I don't want to forget my roots at the International Center! I want to be able to give back to the Friends of the International Center all the support I received from them. That's why I entered the Family Orientation program, with the guidance and support of **Nancy Homeyer**. I am excited by the idea of greeting newcomers by offering them a warm welcome given by someone who used to be one of them. I enjoy supporting them through their first steps of getting settled, and providing them with useful tips that will allow them to make the best of their American experience. I hope to manage both my professional work along with my volunteer work for the Friends of the International Center. The Friends is my family now.

At this point I can imagine you trying to guess where I come from and what I did before I came to San Diego, which is also the point of a bio. Well, I was born in southern France, near the Mediterranean Sea, and due to my father's job (he was a sales manager), I moved a lot within this large area throughout my childhood.

After earning my master's de-

gree in chemistry, I moved for professional reasons to Paris, to Lyon, and then to Strasbourg, where I spent the two happiest years of my life. It is always hard for me to say that I am from the South of France when I had such a wonderful life in Alsace, an area I recommend you all to visit one day. It is the place where I got married to the one who had been my boyfriend for many years; it is also the place where I found myself from both a personal and a professional standpoint.

My few months of unemployment here in San Diego were used to improve my knowledge of food and my cooking skills, with an emphasis on baking. Because it requires both creativity and rigor, baking is the right thing for me. It is technical and artistic at the same time. I am also a lover of nature and enjoy hiking, traveling, and exploring my surroundings. I am so thankful to be living in California—the playground seems infinite!

I wish for all newcomers to have an equally satisfying experience in San Diego, and I thank the Friends for making all this possible. I hope that through these lines you will feel the good you all do, the difference in people's lives you made—make—and will make in the future. The Friends of the International Center is truly a unique organization that has achieved the success that it deserves.

Sincerely,
Your French Ambassador

Friends Sponsor Friday International Café

In keeping with our mission of supporting International Center programs, Friends committed this year to sponsoring three Friday International Cafés. The dates chosen were: December 5, March 13, and May 15.

The program, which generally attracts from 250 to 300 people, has a distinguished history dating back to 1981. In an effort to keep the luncheon cost affordable, sponsors—drawn from the campus and wider community—help underwrite expenses. Until recently, the meals were prepared in-house with the aid of volunteers. Currently, meals are prepared by an outside caterer (**Bekker's Catering**), but are served by members of the sponsoring group or other volunteers. Despite changes in operation, the purpose of the Café has remained the same. It is a place where international and domestic students, scholars, faculty, staff, and members of the local community can come together to celebrate cultural diversity and international education across the globe.

Come join the fun. Themed menus change from week to week and reflect the cuisine of a different country. Because of the proximity to St. Patrick's Day, for the March 13

Café, the International Center's Programs and Events Coordinator has chosen to highlight Irish dishes. On the menu will be cottage pie (an Irish version of shepherd's pie) served with a slaw salad and traditional

soda bread, with the meal ending with a slice of chocolate potato cake for dessert.

Lunch is served Fridays, from noon to 1:15. Cost is \$5. No reservation necessary.

Kudos

*The following letter was addressed to the January 7, 2015 Family Orientation leaders: **Nancy Homeyer** (chair), **Madeleine Rast**, **Audrey Leriche**, and **Elisa Postila**.*

Thank you so much for having the opportunity to meet such wonderful people!

I am still getting used to living in Southern California, but I have to say that it will be a breeze having all this sun and smiles around! Nancy and Madeleine—thank you for hosting these meetings and having so much joy in introducing the Friends community; it is inspiring! Elisa—can't wait to see the article with the photos that you took (*Family Orientation article appeared in the Friends February 2015 Newsletter*). Working in the cinematography industry, I am always appraising anyone working with a good camera! And Audrey—it was lovely to hear about your passion towards volunteering. Like in France, for people to commonly volunteer in such groups certainly is also not common in Poland or rest of Europe for that matter. Your amazing smile clearly tells that the way the volunteering goes here gives you an impressive amounts of happiness!

I deeply hope to meet all of you much better in the future.

Pozdrawiam,

Michał Rytter from Warsaw, Poland



Some of the large kitchen crew



Elisabeth and Kurt Marti dispense premium wines

IT TAKES A VERY LARGE VILLAGE

—by Liz Fong Will's

I have the pleasure to report another outstanding success in our Ethnic Dinner fundraising dinner series. Once a year, the dinner celebrates Chinese New Year. And this year we had a bumper crop of participants, with well over 130 paying guests.

There are still many people in our organization who are missing out on these wonderful affairs. At a recent wedding, one of our head cooks *extraordinaire*, **Theresa Song**, talked to **K.C. Chien**, a life member of the Friends. K.C. is the pediatrician that all the UCSD Mainland Chinese chose for their kids, who all called her “Grandmother” in Mandarin. Theresa told the Chien's, who had never been to one of our Chinese New Year dinners, how much fun she has cooking for us. Theresa did such an outstanding selling job that the Chien's decided to come. In addition, they treated seven of Professor **Shu Chien's** bioengineering lab students! We need more Theresas! Too bad we can't clone her yet.

For the eleventh year in a row, **Theresa**, Chef **Jimmy Chen**, and **Peggy Cheong** prepared a Chinese banquet for us. As has become tradition, Chef Jimmy designed a dish featuring the animal

from the Chinese zodiac whose year we are celebrating. This being the Year of the Sheep, we were treated to the most succulent lamb chops imaginable, cut from tender racks of lamb. Other dishes were requested by attendees from previous years. Everyone loves the filet mignon dish and looks forward to it every year. I love the eggplant and basil dish, because it is not greasy despite eggplant's natural tendency to soak up oil like a sponge.

Putting on a large dinner like this could not have happened without the help of the many people who supported the chefs' efforts. The kitchen helpers were **Lanna Cheng Lewin, Richard Chim, Alma Coles, Sudipta Das, Jingwen Ding, George Foo, Alice Gu, Diane He, Belinda Hermosisimo, Keiko Hirai, Lawrence Lin, Elisabeth Marti, Alicia Meneses, Wei Qu, Nahib Razi, Renate Schmid-Schoenbein, Frederick Soldau, Nissi Varki, and Ginny Young.**

With the exception of the two Costellos, the waitstaff was composed entirely of international postdoctoral fellows: **Eileen Collyer, Danya Costello, Justin Costello, Sudipta Das, Danielle John, Asma Khan, Wolfgang**



Anita Marovac Beeston, Claudia Barton, Jennie Chin, and Georgina Sham came dressed in their Chinese finery



Ethnic Dinner Chair Liz Fong Will's wore her Japanese apron

Moens, Davide Povera, Heinz Straessle, and Bjoern Tackmann.

Beverage servers were **Danya Costello, Justin Costello, Bill and Nancy Homeyer, Elisabeth and Kurt Marti.** For the first time, we experimented with an option of “premium wines,” arranged by the Martis, who felt that our dinner deserved the option of a better wine than Two-and-a-Half-Buck

Chuck. Naturally, the extra money raised also goes to the Friends of the International Center Scholarship Fund.

Reservations were processed by **Joan Adamo**. Nametag distribution was handled by **Nori Faer** and **Jennie Chin**.

Nametags and programs were done by **Georgina Sham** and **Gail Fliesbach**. The seating arrangements were handled by **Georgina Sham**.

We had wonderful floral centerpieces that picked up on the evening's Chinese and Japanese themes. **Ginny Young** folded the origami cranes, **Lanna Cheng** arranged for us to get the bamboo from campus landscapers, and **Marion Spors** arranged the centerpieces. **Barbara Fitzsimmons** was in charge of setting the tables.

Publicity with photo of our chefs in the *La Jolla Light* newspaper was handled by **Kristine Kneib**. Our photographer was **Katya Newmark**, who was involved with just about every aspect of the event, and not only served as a great hostess, but also helped with cleanup!

Our parking attendant **Justin Costello** managed the traffic expertly.

The participation of two Friends scholarship recipients was arranged by **Ruth Newmark**, chairman of our scholarship committee: **Yeung-ping Chen** from Hong Kong entertained us with an excerpt from one of his original compositions. **Kyung Hee Ha** from Japan, but of Korean ances-



Kyung Hee Ha and Cheung-ping Chen

WHAT YOU SAID THE DAY AFTER...

☞ A quick note to thank you for all your help and also for being such great hosts at the wonderful event last night. It was very meaningful and valuable for me to get to see so many guests and Friends who have kind heart and care about international students. Wish you a happy and peaceful Year of Sheep!—**Yeung-ping Chen**, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Music

☞ I was very happy and honored to be at the Ethnic Dinner, meeting wonderful people—the very reason why we are able to continue our study and research here at UCSD. At my table, I met two lovely couples who had deep knowledge of Japan; one of them had traveled all over Japan, and the other had actually lived in Tokyo for several years. I also very much enjoyed the whole after-dinner program. **Ping's** music was fascinating, and I simply cannot wait to hear more of his works and I would definitely go to his concert in May! And a wonderful, funny, and very informative photo presentation by **Chris**. What a great way to wrap up the night! Lastly, I really appreciate that you spared me some time to share what I do with great deal of passion with the audience. Thank you very much!—**Kyung Hee Ha**, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Ethnic Studies

☞ Thank you very much for the pics, very nice! It was a pleasure and fun as always to help out. While the fellowship recipients were talking, I was thinking that you guys are doing a very great job supporting many students in their research and studies, particularly internationals. As an international guest in this country, I think this support means a lot to the recipients. Congrats for your effort and thanks for doing this. See you next Saturday at the Friends Dinner Social.—**Davide Povera** from Italy, postdoc, Department of Pediatrics

☞ Thank you to the many who volunteered to make our 2015 Chinese New Year celebration another resounding success! A special thanks to **Liz** for being willing to once again take the lead for our ethnic dinner scholarship fundraiser! Given that Liz leaves today for a month trip and pulled off the dinner as if she had all the time in the world is amazing.

Beginning with origami crane folding, followed by alcohol permitting, and on to publicity, scholarship recipient recruitment, collecting bamboo, reservations, programs, nametags, seating (including assignments and provision of chairs!), decorations, table setting, cooking, parking supervision, wine service, dinner service, presentations, and all the way through cleanup, so many tasks needed to be done and our corps of volunteers did another amazing job, coming together and stepping in to make sure everything got done. It is a wonderful group of people and I am proud of what we are able to accomplish!—**Katya Newmark**, Friends President

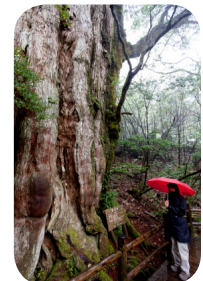
try, spoke of how our two scholarships helped her do fieldwork on immigration issues in Japan for her Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies. Their presentations reminded us of why we have these fundraisers.

Chris Wills finished up the after-dinner presentation with photographs from many remote parts of Japan, taken during the cherry blossom season. Included were “hidden gems of Japan” like Ai, the genius chimp, and the snow monkeys in their natural Jacuzzi.

As usual, it took this large vil-



Sika deer at floating gate at Itsukushima



Liz Fong Wills in Yakushima's cedar forest

lage of people to pull off our biggest fundraiser of the year. Many thanks for everyone's help!

Football 101

—by *Judith Muñoz*

On Sunday, February 1st, over 40 international scholars, students, and their families gathered in the International Center lounge to attend American Football 101. Then the group went to Round Table Pizza in the Price Center to watch the AFC champion New England Patriots defeat the Seattle Seahawks in the 2015 Super Bowl.

The event was co-sponsored by IFSO, the International Center's International Faculty and Scholar Office, and the Friends of the International Center.

Football 101 provided the basics of American football, and a new understanding of the game helped the international students and scholars to better enjoy the Super Bowl. This was confirmed by two Danish attendees who singled



An attentive audience listens to Dan Muñoz and Tony Williams explain the intricacies of American football



out **Dan Muñoz** for his commentary throughout the game, which they felt provided them a much deeper understanding of the game than could otherwise be gained by listening to broadcasters.

Football 101 was presented by Friends **Judith Muñoz** and her husband **Dan**, with “technical” assistance from retired professional football player, **Tony Williams**. The game watch party was lively,

the Super Bowl game was exciting, and pizza was enjoyed by all. The event was hosted by **Roark Miller**, Director of the International Faculty and Scholar Office.

DONATIONS

Our treasurer, **Karen Davis**, is pleased to report that donations keep coming in. In January, Friends received gifts from **Maureen & Joe Nichols**, **Kim Signoret-Paar & Hans Paar**, **Laurette Verbinski**, and from **Esther Lee Fong**, a Stockton, California friend of **Liz Fong Wills**.

Alma & Bill Coles made a donation to the *Luna Fung* Scholarship, as well as an additional donation in memory of **Florence Masters**; **Ruth & Leonard Newmark** made a donation to the *Ruth Newmark Scholarship* in honor of their grandchildren, **Danya** and **Justin Costello**; **Carol Robertson** and **Katherine Hodges**, former colleagues of **Tecle Kidane-Mariam**, made donations to the scholarship named in Tec's memory; and **Eleanor tum Suden** made a donation towards the *David Crowne Scholarship*.

Several people made contributions to the Friends Scholarship Fund in connection with our January Ethnic Dinner. They are **Thomas Baker**, **Janet & Maarten Chrispeels**, **Ken Watson**, **Liz & Chris Wills**, and **Penny & Dane Winkelman**.

We thank you!

Meet Justine Desan

—by *Joe Nichols*

We say *bonjour et merci* to one of our newest Resale Shop volunteers. **Justine Desan** is a proud daughter of France, and is elated to join our ranks. Justine has two masters in management, one from France and one from Germany—impressive indeed.

She discovered the Friends shop at an orientation meeting. When she arrived at UCSD with one suitcase, the clothing at our boutique helped her to complete her wardrobe.

Our shop gives her an opportunity for personal interaction and she enjoys working with the other volunteers. Being in the shop also allows her to experience the diverse culture we have here in California, and she is trying hard to pick up some of the nuances in



Justine models at UCSD's International Fashion Festival

the American English language. One thing she particularly likes is that proceeds from the shop go for scholarships to aid international students.

San Diego, she finds, is a friendly place, highlighted by the Friends organization itself.

She and her husband, **Alex Charnukha** (who is originally from Belarus but holds a Ph.D. from Germany, and is currently a postdoc in the physics department), live in La Jolla. We say *bienvenue* to Justine.

SCHOLARSHIP LETTERS

Child Mortality in Kenya

The *Teclé Kidane-Mariam Memorial Scholarship* was phenomenally helpful in allowing me to conduct research in Kenya in August and September of 2014. Specifically with the funds from this award, I conducted a focus group meeting with members of the Kenyan health field, met with members of the Millennium Village Project and the Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), read a local newspaper daily (which is not available online), and hired a research assistant who has continued to send me transcriptions of local newspaper articles that pertain to the Kenyan health system.

These projects were in addition to a separately funded project (which occurred during the same trip), in which I conducted a 120-question survey of 1,006 residents in Kenya. The grant for that project was awarded because I had already received funding from the Friends of the International Center that was covering many of the administrative expenses of my trip (such as travel and lodging). None of these projects would have been feasible had it not been for the gracious support of the Friends of the International Center.

The core question of my dissertation is to uncover why child mortality from diarrhea is so high in Kenya. The support from the *Teclé Kidane-Mariam Award* allowed me to do preliminary research, which has become the inspiration of the bulk of my dissertation. Three independent hypotheses and projects resulted from the funds from this grant.

The first discovery I made in my travels is that health dispensaries in Kenya are very hard to access. In my reading on the topic, I knew that the Kenyan Ministry of Health is attempting to build a dispensary within 5 kilometers of every Kenyan home.

While I was in Kenya, I twice attempted to visit one of these dispensaries. In both cases, my driver and I failed to find the dispensary as a result of the poor road quality and the fact that the route contained many twists and turns (making the actual distance to the dispensary far more than 5 kilometers). These experiences made me realize that dispensaries are actually quite inaccessible to the general public, which is likely a reason for the high child mortality in Kenya. Since returning, I have used GIS (a geographic information system) to conduct a test of this hypothesis, and verified my hypothesis that counties with weaker road infrastructures do have worse health outcomes.

Secondly, I learned various aspects of the health sector are regularly reported in *The Standard*, one of Kenya's national newspapers. However, the articles regarding the health sector rarely appear on *The Standard's* webpage. This realization has vastly improved my knowledge of health in Kenya, as I was able to hire a research assistant who on a daily basis e-mails me all of the articles that pertain to health. As a direct result of my travels to Kenya, I am now vastly more connected to current information on the health field in Kenya. I am working on a dissertation chapter that uses these articles as the primary source of information.

Lastly, I was extremely fortunate to have been able to conduct a focus group meeting with 6 individuals from the health sector in Homa Bay Kenya. These individuals were from different ranks of the health field, from a Community Health Extension Worker up to a Sub-County Pharmacist. In a two-hour meeting, I learned an enormous amount about how the health system works in Kenya, as well as many of the common problems. The biggest

problem that I learned is that the majority of Community Health Workers in Kenya are unpaid (despite the fact that they are supposed to receive a stipend from the government). The practitioners told me that the lack of payment likely leads to poor performance by the CHWs. If I can access funding, I am hoping to conduct an experiment where CHWs are randomly assigned to receive these stipends, and I will measure if these small payments (about \$20 per month) significantly improve CHW performance.

Each of these projects would not have been possible without the generous support of the *Teclé Kidane-Mariam Award* through the Friends of the International Center. In addition to each of these discoveries and projects, the support for this award made me eligible for funding that allowed me to do an extensive survey of 1,006 respondents. My gratitude towards the Friends of the International Center cannot adequately be put into words. Thank you so much for your assistance in my dissertation progress.

Nathan Combes

Ph.D. candidate, Department of Political Science



Carol Smith with International Student Advisor Teclé Kidane-Mariam, in 2000, at a luncheon at the home of Friends Scholarship Committee Chair, Ruth Newmark

Dear Friends of the International Center,

I am currently a fourth year human biology major and studio arts minor at UC San Diego, and recently studied abroad at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, where I took a course in functional anatomy designed for pre-med students. I was able to work with cadavers, do dissections, and have direct hands on experience with the study material. Because the class was small, I was able to get to know the professor and the teaching assistants, both inside and outside of class. I also took an honors-level diseases of the nervous system course and two art courses from the Glasgow School of Arts. All these classes were very challenging, but I enjoyed them very much.

While in Glasgow, I also took the opportunity to see other parts of Scotland through student organizations. I visited Edinburgh, Oban, parts of the beautiful Scottish Highlands, islands, and lochs.

I want to thank each donor and member of the International Center who made my scholarship possible. Without the help of your generous scholarship, my study-abroad experience would have been much more financially burdensome. I truly appreciate every single warm-hearted donor who helps students in need like myself. Your scholarship enabled me to complete my study-abroad experiences without worrying about rent, food, and textbooks.

I am writing you at my layover stop in Finland before heading home. Soon I will be back in San Diego for winter and spring quarters before graduating in June. I am looking forward to seeing you all and other scholarship recipients at future International Center events.

Again, thank you for your kindness and generosity.

Julia Zhuyu Guo

Eleanor Roosevelt College



Dear Friends of the International Center,

I write to you from France, where I have been participating in a semester-long EAP program at the University of Bordeaux. I would like to share some of my wonderful experiences with you and describe briefly what life abroad has been like for me.

Upon arriving in Bordeaux, I was immediately captivated by the differences between my hometown and this city. Its downtown and shopping strip of St. Catherine, oysters and beaches of Arcachon and Cap Ferret, amazing wine, and old monuments render the town a wonder I will never forget. I have had the opportunity to thoroughly explore the city during my stay and can attest to its close-knit, homely feel.

The education has been a great aspect of the program: meeting other foreign exchange students, getting to know French professors, and taking all my courses in French have all made this experience a challenging, but great one. I had the opportunity to take several French litera-

ture and political science classes, learning a lot about different famous French authors and philosophers.

One of the greatest highlights of the program has been my host family. Their welcoming, kind-hearted spirit and their enthusiasm to show me "la vie française" have really touched me. Every day, I look forward to learning something new about French culture, and especially, to having a delicious French meal. It is definitely through them that I have immersed myself the most, not only improving my level of French, but exchanging cultural values and perspectives. They even took me to a family-owned countryside mansion in the Auvergne region! I know this is a relationship I will cherish for life.

Thanks to your scholarship, I have been able to explore Europe as a whole through weekly trips to various cities. Throughout my semester, I have had the privilege of traveling to: Bayonne, Biarritz, Lyon, Nice, Marseille, Monaco, Paris, Lon-

don, Prague, Amsterdam, Brussels, Rome, Barcelona, and Lisbon. No city has disappointed—it is incredible, almost indescribable, the magic that each city has to offer. Visiting ancient ruins, tasting new cuisines, trying (and sometimes failing without shame) to communicate with native citizens, and simply strolling through the streets of these European cities have all been inspiring and eye-opening.

Upon return, I am excited to share my stories and hopefully inspire others to study abroad. I know I have been changed immensely as a person—but definitely for the better. In addition, I hope to cherish the diversity I have been exposed to abroad in my own local communities.

I would like to thank again the Friends of the International Center for your assistance and encouragement, without which I could not have enjoyed this experience as much as I did.

Thejas Kamath

Warren College

Bioengineering major

Dear Scholarship Donors,

I am a fourth year Political Science major with an emphasis in Public Policy, and am writing this message to express my gratitude for your generous contribution to the Friends of the International Center Scholarship and the impact it has had on my education.

As part of my fourth, and last, year at UCSD, I decided to venture out into new horizons and apply to my first ever exchange program. As a destination I chose Paris, due to its vast historical and political culture and its invaluable influence throughout the world. Moreover, in a similar fashion in which France's innovative philosophies and policies have

improved the world, I hope it can improve me as I gain new life and political perspectives. These new learning experiences will serve me well in my future plans to work for a couple of years for an NGO in my parents' country of El Salvador, in hopes of helping to improve the lives of many underprivileged people.

I have been in this beautiful country for merely three weeks, but I have already learned things about myself that I did not know I was capable of, and I am confident I will continue to grow even more throughout the duration of my program.

I am especially looking forward to learning about the many social

and political programs working so efficiently in France. I hope these will prove useful when I come back to California.

However, none of this would be possible without your desire to help students with economic needs like myself. Thanks to your donation, I have been able to embark on one of the most enriching, powerful, and unique experiences of my life, and gain experiences that will benefit me forever.

Thank you again for your generosity and for all you do.

Lorena Castellanos

Warren College

Political Science major



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icfriends.ucsd.edu
icfriends@ucsd.edu

The Friends of the International Center *Newsletter* is published monthly, September through June. All material submitted must be received in writing by the editor no later than the 10th of the month prior to publication.

Editor: **Ruth Newmark** (editorFIC@ucsd.edu)

Contributors: **Joan Adamo, Barbara Baehr, Jennie Chin, Karen Davis, Nori Faer, Nancy Homeyer, Kristine Kneib, Audrey Leriche, Judith Muñoz, Katya Newmark, Joe Nichols, Renate Schmid-Schoenbein, Georgina Sham, Marion Spors, Eleanor tum Suden, Liz Fong Wills**

Contributing Photographers: **Katya Newmark, Elisa Postila, Carol Smith, Stuart Smith**

Circulation: **Renate Schmid-Schoenbein**

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