



Friends of the International Center,  
at UC San Diego

# Newsletter

Volume XLIII, No. 2

October 2015

## Peruvian Dinner

—by Liz Fong Wills

Ethnic Dinner Chair

In Peru, the cuisine builds on thousands of years of history and the many agricultural civilizations that culminated in the Incas. The Conquest brought a strong Spanish influence, and more recently there has been an explosion of culinary invention as traditional foods are blended with the foods of many immigrant communities from around the world. For example, one can get Chinese food in Lima that somewhat resembles Chinese-American food, but with more chiles. However, very innovative chefs have come on the scene in the last decade or so who have created many brand-new Peruvian fusion cuisines. Peru's restaurants are among the world's finest. **Central**, an avant-garde restaurant in Lima, was rated the best in South America by San Pellegrino and Acqua Panna in their 2015 list of the 50 best restaurants in the world. It "takes diners on a vertical journey across Peru's landscape, serving native ingredients sourced at various altitudes. The mountains, sea, desert, and jungle are all represented as Central's tasting menu travels from 25 meters below to 4,200 meters above sea level."

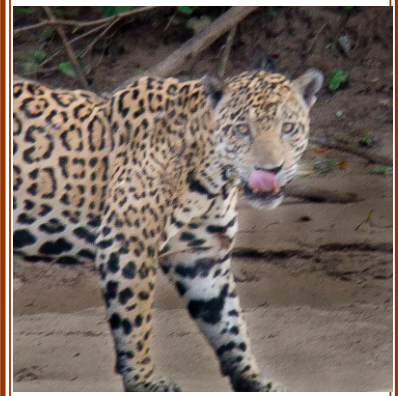
At our Friends dinner on October 17, we will explore some of this culinary wonderland. Once again, I will be working with our talented Peruvian Friend, **Alicia Flores-Meneses**.

The dinner will begin with traditional Peruvian drinks (*Pisco sours* and *Chicha morada*) and then proceed to such must-haves as *Anticuchos de corazón de pollo y muslo de pollo* (skewers of chicken hearts or chunks of chicken thighs for the less adventurous), based on a recipe by **Gaston Acurio**, the most famous of the new Peruvian chefs.

Other favorites will include *Causa rellena* (potato stuffed with tuna or chicken), *Quinoa solterito* (a quinoa and vegetable salad), and *Seco de pollo con arroz*, a classic Peruvian chicken stew. For dessert, we have chosen the ever popular *Pastel de tres leches* (three milks sponge cake). And because our dinner takes place in October at the time of the Festival of Cristo Morado/El Señor de los Milagros, we will offer an extra treat: *Turrón de Doña Pepa*, an anise-flavored pastry customarily prepared for the Lord of Miracles feast.

Come join us for a delicious meal that will be followed by an uncommon photographic tour of Peru as experienced through the keen eyes of **Chris Wills**, known

**Peruvian Dinner**  
**Saturday, October 17**  
**at 6:30 p.m.**  
**A Fundraiser for**  
**Friends Scholarships**



**Illustrated Talk**  
**by Christopher Wills,**  
**Professor of Biological**  
**Sciences Emeritus**

for his erudite and humorous presentations.

Since the event is a fundraiser for Friends scholarships, we will hear about the importance of our scholarships from a recent recipient, **Daniella Bardalez Gagliuffi**, a Peruvian graduate student working on her Ph.D. in physics.

If you haven't already made your reservation, please find the necessary information on p.11. We look forward to seeing you!



## Mommy/Daddy & Me

*"Thank you all Friends at International Center. Mommy/Daddy & Me is one of most wonderful memory for our family in such a special celebration. I've never meant to teach small kids to dance or sing (so has my husband), but now it's a part of our life. Emma is really into it and very happy to have birthday party with her little friends."*

The above message and photo were posted on Facebook by **Bree Chunharas**, one of our Mommy/Daddy & Me volunteers honored this May at the International Center's Volunteer Appreciation Reception. Bree and her husband have been in San Diego for two years and plan to live here for another three, more precisely until **Chaipat Chunharas** completes his Ph.D. in Neurosciences with funding from the Thai Red Cross. While Chaipat is a neurologist and Bree a dermatologist, neither is practicing medicine here. Their daughter was born at Scripps Memorial Hospital and the family was thrilled to celebrate Emma's first birthday at the International Center.

We are delighted that Bree, a Thai native, has enthusiastically assumed a leadership role in our Wednesday morning Mommy/Daddy & Me program, as have several mothers from Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Chile. That these young internationals were willing to step up when no single teacher could readily be found is remarkable, that they do so despite having to address the group in a language not native to them and without previous pre-school teaching experience, demonstrates all too well the importance that these classes hold for parents and children alike.



All three wearing crowns, parents Bree and Chaipat Chunharas celebrate their daughter's first birthday together with Emma's Mommy/Daddy & Me classmates

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## Resale Shop

—by *Marion Spors*

Come and check out our Resale Shop's continuously changing merchandise. Thanks to some generous donations by local shops and Friends members, we are able to offer a few designer clothes and shoes at a fraction of prices charged in other thrift shops.

We are excited to welcome new volunteers: **Yoko Kageyama** from Japan, **Diana Saunders** from London, **Jim Chase** from the U.S., and **Orlane Wang**, a student from China. Great to have them on our team. The Friends Resale Shop is a terrific place to make new friends and work with a wonderful pool of local and visiting folks from all over the world.

Since many of our very talented volunteers went back to their countries of origin in the summer, we happily accept new volunteers. Just shoot me an e-mail ([shopFIC@ucsd.edu](mailto:shopFIC@ucsd.edu)) or stop by the store.

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## FIC Craft Circle

To be more descriptive, the Friends program formerly known as *Knit-Along* has been retitled *FIC Craft Circle*. The group will continue to meet weekly, on every, except the first, Tuesday of the month. However, along with the name change has come a time change: 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Says **Jennie Chin**, who continues as program chair: "This gives us two hours to knit/crochet/sew or take up other handwork, and then, from 12 noon until 1:00, we can enjoy a BYOL, go on a shopping trip for materials, or just continue to work on projects."



Alice Blake-Stalker leading 2014 Halloween parade

14, **Marie Perroud**, our wonderful volunteer and fellow craftsman who has been in France for the past three years, will be back to show us how to embroider on felt. Welcome home, Marie!

Come and join us in the fun.

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## Wednesday Coffee

—by *Georgina Sham*

Because we have two traditional activities this month (an International Kitchen lunch on October 21 that will feature Caribbean cuisine, and pumpkin carving with children's Trick or Treat on October 28 for Halloween), it will be a short month for crafts. On October 7, **Jeongmin Choi** and **Wen Gu** will teach us to make Mason jar candles in varying colors and scents. On October



Farewell picture taken on July 1, 2015 with Glênio Sarmento in blue shirt in the center with his arm around Nori Faer in pink shirt

## The Appeal of Gus' Conversation Table

—by Glênio Sarmento

Yes, it's called **Gus' Table**, but it could just as well be called **Nori's**, **Letty's**, **Susan's**, **Dave's**, and **Claire's Table** for all the volunteers that are the leaders of this conversation group.

When I came from Brazil following my wife because of her research in cognitive science at UCSD, I didn't know what to expect of the place, how things would work out for us, or how I would spend my time between taking care of my son and my job.

On my first contact with the native and foreign speaking conversationalists, I immediately realized that by joining the group, I would be able to improve my English and learn something about American and worldwide culture. I liked the way topics were mediated and the way the local, national, and international news was interpreted by the different participants, including by the locals as well as by people from other nations.

Every Wednesday, sometimes outside on the patio, sometimes inside in the lounge, we met to discuss the news and a special topic proposed by one of our leaders. It

didn't surprise me that in a place like UC San Diego, we would find people with a high level of comprehension who displayed a greater tolerance of controversial issues, although rarely arriving at general agreement on the subjects discussed.

I came to the realization that what makes this country a leading nation is the respect paid to its laws, the importance given to education, and, above all, the commitment of its citizens to their causes.

The essence of the conversation table is that everyone is there to learn and share knowledge with each other. No conflict, no offences, amazing harmony! I enjoyed every moment ... and I made real new friends.

I'll certainly go back to Brazil a better person than I arrived, and I'll surely act more confidently in my field. Gus' Conversation Table played an important part in this improvement.

This experience has been indispensable to me, so I just want to say "thank you" and "cheers" to the volunteers!

*Before returning with his wife and their 12-year-old son to their hometown, Natal, Brazil, Glenio submitted this article for the Friends Newsletter, providing the following background: "My field of work as an executive involves coordinating the restaurant owners association office in Natal and taking care of the interest of the food and beverage companies in relation to the government, suppliers, syndicates, employees, sponsors, and partners. Also, I organize and promote food events and food festivals that increase local, national, and international tourism, the economic strength of our city." Glenio was able to do some of this work from San Diego. —Ed.*

### October Calendar

Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: **Friday Chat Group**, 10:00-Noon

Oct. 7, 21: **Family Orientation**, 9:15

Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28: **Wednesday Morning Coffee**, 10:00-Noon

Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28: **Gus' Table**, 10:00-Noon

Oct. 8, 22: **Int'l Cooking Experience**, 9:30-1:00

Oct. 13: **Board Meeting**, 10:00

Oct. 13, 20, 27: **FIC Craft Circle**, 10:00-1:00

Oct. 17: **Peruvian Dinner**, 6:30

Oct. 21: **International Kitchen**, lunch at Noon



Hazuki Kubota with samples of the lovely scrapbooks Wednesday Coffee participants created under the tutelage of Lynn Jahn

## FALL MENU

Artichoke Spread w. crackers

Pumpkin Chili

Cornbread

Green Salad  
with walnuts, cranberries, and  
a maple walnut vinaigrette

Caramel Apple Parfait

## Friends Dinner Social Fall Fun 2015

—by *Audrey Leriche*

The Friends Dinner Social program is back! We will have two events during the academic year 2015-2016, and November 7<sup>th</sup> will be our grand opening. **Katya Newmark** and I are delighted by the prospect of welcoming you and our international community together around a joyful meal.

Please join us for a Friends Dinner Social celebrating the fall season. Your taste buds will be awakened by such autumn treasures as pumpkins, nuts, and apples that will be creatively featured on the menu.

The dinner will be prepared by our wonderful volunteer crew. Please contact Katya (pres-FIC@ucsd.edu) or me (**Audrey Leriche** at ay.leriche@gmail.com) if you would like to be part of the team and discover the backstage activities of a Friends Dinner Social. We promise you lots of laughter!

Mark your calendar for an evening of good food and fun and make your reservation by Monday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> through Eventbrite: <http://fdsfallfun2015.eventbrite.com>. Cost per person is \$15 for Friends; \$20 for community/guests, and \$10 for international UCSD students, scholars, and families. A vegetarian option is available upon request when you make your reservation.

We hope to see you at the International Center on Saturday, November 7, at 6 o'clock.

## Visiting an American Home

—by *Elisabeth Marti*

The Friends program *Visiting an American Home* has brought many foreign visitors together with local people. Reports have all been very positive, from both hosts and guests alike. Hosts determine the type of hospitality offered, and may choose any meal that they feel comfortable serving: lunch, dinner, happy hour, barbecue, or a simple pastry with coffee or tea. Because many of the short-time visitors do not have cars, inviting a friend to join to help with transportation may be a good idea. This also helps with conversation, especially if there are several guests.

I have noticed that weekends work out best for the visitors, since many take classes or are working on campus during the week.

This Fall there is a mixed group of international scholars looking for a visit in an American home. Asians comprise the largest group—China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan—but other countries are also represented: Israel, England, Jordan, and more internationals are expected.

We could use more hosts. If interested, please call me at (858) 755-1408 or send me an e-mail to [kurtmarti@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kurtmarti@sbcglobal.net). A special host e-mail will be available soon and will be announced in a future *Newsletter*.

## International Cooking Experience

For the Fall Quarter, **Tashu Malik**, the new chair of our International Cooking Experience program has lined up three internationally-themed classes, as well as two classes that promise to highlight some special seasonal dishes. Tashu is delighted to continue working with **Keiko Hirai**, and is grateful that former coordinators, **Jennie Chin** and **Mary Woo**, have offered to step in with help if and when needed.

- September 24: *Chilean Cooking* with **Macarena Galaz**.
- October 8: *An Apple Affair*: a menu to celebrate the bounty of the apple season.
- October 22: *Brazilian Cooking* with **Luciana Wiecheteck**.
- November 12: *A Taste of Russia* with **Tashu Malik** and **Keiko Hirai**.
- December 10: *Colors of Christmas*: a menu inspired by the colors and themes of Christmas.



Tashu Malik, Georgina Sham, and  
Keiko Hirai



Guests mingle in the I-Center lounge



Everywhere an abundance of roses arranged by Candace Kohl



Scholarship donors Shao-Chi and Lily Lin



A map is the proper background for study abroad



Presentation of scholarship recipients

## 2015 Scholarship Awards Ceremony

—by Ruth Newmark with photos

by Stuart Smith, Carol Smith, and Katya Newmark



Emily Wolfsohn

The Friends Annual Dinner showcases well the fine collaboration between different University constituencies, and for those attending the event it is always a joy to see the easy mingling of scholarship recipients, International Center staff, University administrators, and Friends. While there is a certain uniformity to this annual event that by necessity includes a brief membership meeting to elect new officers and the presentation of scholarships to a growing number of recipients, we try to prevent total predictability, and thus invited this May not one, but two, guest speakers.

We enjoyed meeting Vice Chancellor **Juan González** who charmed everyone with his informal manner and quick wit. He particularly delighted Friends with a tale of his visit to a Turkish home that provided him with a treasured glimpse into that country's daily life. We Friends couldn't agree more that such home visits take on a special meaning and hope that many more of our members will open their homes to our international scholars and families. Chair of our *Visiting an American Home* program, **Elisabeth Marti**, will gladly match you up with one of our incoming international scholars.

Our second main speaker was **Emily Wolfsohn**, who was awarded a Friends scholarship in 2013 that she used for study in Chile. The experience was so impactful that she extended her stay from a semester to

a year and now, as a senior, Emily will be going abroad once more, this time to Spain, before planning to enter graduate school to pursue a degree in international development. Emily spoke enthusiastically about the meaning of study abroad and of the importance of scholarships.

"I studied abroad in Santiago, Chile, for one year and I have no hesitation in saying that it was the best year of my life. I chose to study in Chile for a number of reasons. After a trip to Guatemala as a high school student, I was craving a deeper knowledge of Latin America and fluency in my second language after so many years of studying. Moreover, as a sociology major, the year 2013 was a fascinating year to go to Chile. 2013 marked not only the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coup d'état initiated by the dictator **Augusto Pinochet** over Latin America's first openly-elected socialist president, **Salvador Allende**, but also the year of presidential elections. Along with my desire to go far away and have new experiences, there were a number of social and political processes that called me to Santiago and to Latin America."

Touching on some of her activities, Emily revealed: "While I was in Chile I interned for a non-profit and for an art museum. I lived in a bohemian house in the



Staff host Paul Yunouye in white shirt



Donors Carol Robertson and Carol Smith



Ruth Newmark (note lit flameless candle)

center of the city that was home to students from all over the world. I built lasting relationships with my Chilean classmates, with whom I am still in contact today. I visited the driest desert in the world and saw glaciers in Patagonia. I drastically improved my Spanish, and found self-confidence that I did not know I had. I came to better understand myself, my country, and the world."

Summing up her experience, Emily continued: "I cannot accurately express how meaningful my time in Chile was. It has opened many doors for me and led me to live an internationally focused life. And it all started here, only a few years ago, when I received the **Friends of the International Center Scholarship** at this very same ceremony. Scholarships, including the Friends Scholarship, were crucial in my decision to go abroad. As part of my work here at the Programs Abroad Office, I constantly encourage students to apply for scholarships, and share with them the importance of scholarships in determining my ability to go abroad and all of the great things that resulted from such a decision."

In conclusion: "I would like to let you all know that the Friends of the International Center Scholarship, as well as many others, exist—and they can propel many students to go abroad and have the powerful kinds of experiences that I have shared with you tonight. I congratulate those of you who have chosen to venture abroad, and those of you who are receiving scholarships tonight. Great things await you abroad, and upon your return."

As Friends Scholarship Committee Chair, I followed Emily on the program, and spoke more generally about Friends scholarships, especially in light of this being the **Friends Scholarship Program's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary**. I excerpt from my address:

"When in 1975, members of the Friends of the International Center debated whether the time had come to expand our efforts to raise money for the International Center and, if so, whether it might include allotting money for international scholarships, there were some who pointed out that this might be a bit premature, since the International Center was lacking in landscaping, not to mention that it was still short on furniture. Despite such valid objections, the board

voted to explore going in this new direction, and learned that there was financial need, in particular among foreign students working on their Ph.D. And so was born the Friends of the International Center Scholarship Program. From its modest beginnings with a single scholarship awarded to an international student in the Biology Department (years from being called Division of Biological Sciences), the program has mushroomed over these forty years to comprise **25 graduate student fellowships, 4 medical student fellowships, and 28 undergraduate study-abroad scholarships with a total value of \$100,000.**"

We thank all who in one way or another contribute to making the Friends Scholarship Program viable: be they individual donors, the many volunteers who mount fundraisers—such as our Ethnic Dinners that even predate our Scholarship Program—as well as those who give freely of their time and talents in the Friends Resale Shop that generates a considerable portion of our scholarship funds.

On behalf of our organization, I express special gratitude to our University that partners with us, and that this year has matched Friends scholarship contributions dollar for dollar. We extend a big thank-you for this unique collaboration to: (1) the **Graduate Division**, (2) the **Medical School**, (3) **Student Affairs**, (4) the **Financial Aid Office**, and (5) the **UC Education Abroad Program** through our I-Center's **Programs Abroad Office**.

Thanks, too, is due the helpful staff members that help us disseminate information and that provide the Scholarship Committee with student application files.

In conversation, we learned that Friends cannot fully appreciate how much our awards mean to students. **Kyle Johnson** shared that funding opportunities for music students are not abundant and without the Friends \$2,000 fellowship, he would be unable to complete his field research documenting Mexican Banda and Norteño music.

**Noah Ben-Aderet** revealed that while he receives support from several different sources, ours are the only unrestricted funds. For him, these are critical to the kind of dissertation research he still needs to perform. His marine conservation investigations involve travel by car (his own) in Baja California, work

that generates expenses such as automobile insurance and cost of fuel, neither of which is covered by other grants. **The value of Friends fellowships being unrestricted was a common statement made by several graduate students.**

I would be remiss if I did not thank the members of the Friends Scholarship Committee for the seriousness with which they address their task, not to mention for the days of evaluating well over 200 applications before coming to the hard decision of selecting the 2015 scholarship recipients—a task made particularly difficult by the fact that so many more students were eminently deserving and qualified. It will not come as a surprise to hear that UC San Diego has an unusually capable student body. Our scholarship recipients demonstrate a strong commitment to academic excellence, to community service, and to sharing their international experience.

Without further ado, here begins a list of 2015 graduate student fellowship recipients, beginning with their name, country of origin or destination, and their field of study. All are working on a doctorate, or on an MFA should this be the final degree offered at UC San Diego in the student's field of study.

### *International Graduate Students in Residence at UCSD*



- **Paloma Checa-Gismero**—Spain—Visual Arts
- **Fiona Digney**—Australia—Music
- **Nur Duru**—Turkey—History
- **Anne Therese Fredericksen**—Denmark—Linguistics
- **Marco Huerta Alardin**—Mexico—Writing
- **Ly Nguyen**—Vietnam—Ethnic Studies
- **Madhura Som**—India—NanoEngineering  
Diane Lin Memorial Scholarship
- **Josefin Stiller**—Germany—Marine Biology  
Carol and Stuart Smith Scholarship
- **Ruichen Sun**—China—Biological Sciences  
Luna Fung Scholarship
- **Ben Van Overmeire**—Belgium—Literature

### *Domestic Graduate Students Studying Abroad*



- **Noah Ben-Aderet**—Mexico—Marine Biology
- **Maria Celleri**—Ecuador—Ethnic Studies
- **Rebeca Espinoza**—Mexico—Public Health
- **Mikael Fauvelle**—Mexico—Anthropology  
Ruth Newmark Scholarship
- **Natalya Gallo**—Chile—Biological Oceanography  
Ruth Newmark Scholarship
- **Kyle Johnson**—Mexico—Music  
Fitzsimmons Scholarship
- **Troy Kokinis**—Argentina—History
- **Emily Little**—Guatemala—Psychology
- **Belinda Ramirez**—Ecuador—Anthropology
- **Amrah Salomón Johnson**—Mexico/Panama—Ethnic Studies
- **Michael Seese**—Kenya—Political Science
- **Harry Simón**—Chile—Communication
- **Alexis Tucker Sade**—Solomon Islands—Anthropology
- **Alex Verink**—Benin/Ghana—Political Science  
Teclé Kidané-Mariam Scholarship
- **Jason Wu**—China—Political Science

### *Medical Students Studying Abroad*

- **Victoria Liu**—England
- **Vishnu Prathap**—Mozambique
- **Hoa (Holly) Vo**—Vietnam
- **Yingzhen (Nancy) Zhang**—China  
Luna Fung Scholarship



That evening we learned of the terrible automobile accident that killed two UC San Diego medical students (including **Madison Cornwell**, one of last year's Friends scholarship recipients) and injured three more. In Madison's memory, Katya Newmark lit a flameless candle and asked guests to follow suit by lighting the many pear-shaped ones that decorated the lectern (see photo on p.7) and each table.

*Undergraduate scholarship recipients will be listed in November.*



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# SCHOLARSHIP LETTERS

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## My Experience at St. John's Institute of Dermatology

Due to the generosity and kindness of the Friends of the International Center, I had the opportunity to rotate at the prestigious St. John's Institute of Dermatology in London, England. The trip, in one word, was "unforgettable." The experience surpassed any and all expectations I had.



View from the hospital

From a medical standpoint, I was fortunate to see very rare and interesting pathology. As an internationally recognized center for skin diseases, I was able to see pathology and patients I have only read about. Seeing rare diseases such as focal dermal hypoplasia (Goltz syndrome), which is characterized by linear streaks of dermal hypoplasia with skeletal abnormalities, and Buschke-Ollendorff Syndrome was an unforgettable experience. Getting to know the story of each and every one of these patients was something I will never forget. Furthermore, I was given time to complete the first draft of a manuscript on atopic dermatitis, a project I had started on prior to my visit and in collaboration with Dr. **Carsten Flohr**, my host in London. The manuscript will be submitted to a medical journal in June 2015. Once it is accepted and published, I will be sure to inform the Friends of the International Center so that everyone can check it out.

From a healthcare standpoint, I got to see how the National Health Service (NHS) of the United Kingdom operates and compare and contrast it to the current healthcare system in the United States. It was great to see a system with universal health coverage operate successfully, allowing for all the citizens of the U.K. to have coverage. It was always interesting to have conversations with colleagues about their viewpoints of the NHS and how it could improve as a system.

From a personal standpoint, working and living in London during the month of April was one of the best months of my life. On the weekends, I explored all that London had to offer including the magnificent British Museum, the National Gallery, Hyde Park, and Buckingham Palace. I also got to venture out of London on the weekends and explore Oxford, Dover, and Edinburgh. I met individuals whom I can call both friends and colleagues today, and will hopefully remain in contact with for a lifetime.

Again, thank you so much to all those who made this experience possible for me. I am beyond grateful to have experienced an away rotation in London, and will be sure to take this experience with me in my future career as a dermatologist.

*Christine Totri, MD, MAS*

*In follow-ups, Christine, who received her MD in June 2015, shared: "My London experience has inspired me to continue to do international rotations and I hope to do another one during residency. I will be at Scripps Mercy for my internship and then NYC for my three years of dermatology residency."*

## Paris—Sciences Po

Upon returning from my semester studying abroad I look back on my experience with wonderful memories and new insight. As my plane took off from LAX airport on August 18, 2014 I had a terrible stomachache, one that didn't come from eating too many brownies; this one was caused by uncertainty, as I was about to embark on an adventure through the unknown. For me, studying abroad just seemed like something I had to do; my inner adventure seeking self was calling and I had to answer. To be completely honest however, my choice to study abroad in Paris, France was more stimulated by its proximity to a host of countries I saw myself traveling to, as opposed to the benefits of studying at one of the most prestigious schools in Europe, Sciences Po. The impetus to study abroad was sparked heavily by friends and family who told me how wonderful it was to experience new culture, get lost in a new city and rely on my wits alone, to navigate those narrow foreign streets. I must say, my experience abroad certainly lived up to those helpful pieces of advice I received; however, what I came to realize was that my scholastic experience in Paris was really the most defining aspect of my time abroad.

Sciences Po became my best friend, my worst enemy, and my greatest triumph. I certainly had reservations about choosing the Sciences Po Program as I was well aware of its reputation as being one of the toughest schools to be admitted to in France, let alone graduate from. Over the course of its existence, Sciences Po Paris has educated five French presidents and countless heads of states and statesmen from all over the world. To be able to get a chance to study at a school of this caliber, I felt extremely lucky and I soon found

how tough this school could really be.

In terms of the amount of workload, I admit that UCSD and Sciences Po are quite comparable; yet, what made being successful so difficult at Sciences Po was the lack of resources. Here at UCSD I am so privileged to have TAs who are just an e-mail away, teachers who truly explain the assignments that are handed out and who make themselves available to you whenever it suits your schedule. Geisel Library has infinitely more books to research and infinitely more space to study in.

I had no clue at the beginning of my time abroad how difficult these factors would make my life. For example, my professor for Intro to the Israeli Palestinian Conflict assigned a 6,000-word research paper on Jordan and Palestine from 1948-1970. This paper single handedly represented my biggest struggle while studying abroad: firstly, this was the only direction he gave for the entire paper; secondly, he wasn't available for questioning or advice; and thirdly, this was the largest paper I had been assigned in my entire educational career.

The positive outcome of this assignment was that I really learned to rely on and develop my own personal research abilities. I was completely devoid of any third party input and therefore was able to write the exact paper that I wanted. I didn't have to choose from a specific set of sources;

I was free to take the paper in any direction I chose. and this really forced me to find the most pertinent and important aspects of this prompt that I chose to write about. This paper helped boost my confidence in my writing and research abilities and, once back at UCSD, it really helped give me a better perspective on my writing assignments.

In a more adventurous light, I would have to say that I'm extremely thankful to have been awarded the Friends of the International Center Scholarship because it afforded me the chance to travel to Morocco, which had been a dream of mine for a long time. Just as I imagined, Morocco really was the trip of a lifetime. My three friends and I flew from Paris to Fez, where we walked through the narrow streets of the medina, learned to say hello and goodbye in Arabic, drank mint tea, and perused stores filled with argan oil and Berber rugs.

From there we chartered a bus to take us through the Atlas Mountains and onto the Sahara Desert, where we rode camels into the sand dunes to spend a few nights camping in the desert. The bus then picked us up and drove us back through the high Atlas Mountains all the way to Marrakesh, where we again roamed the streets of the medina and dined on tagine, a traditional Moroccan dish. After a few days in Marrakesh,

we traveled by train north to Asilah, a beautiful city on the Atlantic coast. Here we met many native Moroccans, who were so friendly and caring and who would often exchange mint tea for conversation about America and our travels. In total, I spent 11 days in Morocco and it was an experience I will never forget.

As I am sure many who have studied abroad before have said, it was such a learning experience, and for me, it truly was. From my scholastic experience struggling with the lack of resources and direction to navigating foreign lands with nothing but my wits and passport, I really am thankful to the Friends of the International Center for helping me accomplish and experience so much during my semester abroad. Without your contribution, I wouldn't have had quite the experience I was able to afford and therefore would be less knowledgeable than I am today. I am excited to take my experience with me and teach other people what I have learned while in Paris and beyond. I look forward to one day being able to return and adventure some more.

*James McGuirk*  
Warren College,  
Political Science major

*Already before graduating this June, James had begun working for the City of San Diego as a staff assistant to 2<sup>nd</sup> District Councilmember Lorie Zapf.*

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*Jeff Le and I have been in touch ever since he received a Friends scholarship in 2004 for a study in Ghana on OAP. This June, shortly before he got sworn in as assistant cabinet secretary for Governor Jerry Brown, Jeff proudly sent a press release, ending his note with these gratifying words: "Many thanks for your support and for the committee's encouragement over the years. Very invaluable when I was a student trying to make a difference." — Scholarship Committee Chair*

**Jeff Le**, 32, of Sacramento, has been appointed assistant cabinet secretary in the Office of Governor **Edmund G. Brown Jr.**, where he has served as deputy director of external and international affairs since 2014. Le was a senior manager for development and communications at Global Rights from 2011 to 2014 and strategic communications and reports manager at International Relief and Development's Community Outreach and Capacity Building Program in Kabul, Afghanistan from 2010 to 2011. He was a program officer for the Eurasia team at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs from 2007 to 2010 and a legislative correspondent and assistant in the Office of Congressman Joe Sestak and a research fellow at the Carter Center in 2007. Le was a research fellow at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly and a political fellow in the Office of the Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations Secretariat in 2006. He served in several positions at the U.S. Department of State from 2004 to 2005, including political officer and political and public diplomacy assistant. He was Rotary International's ambassadorial scholar of goodwill to Hungary from 2006 to 2007 and earned a Master of Arts degree in political science from Central European University. This position does not require Senate confirmation and the compensation is \$97,608. Le is a Democrat.



## Reservations for Peruvian Dinner Saturday, October 17, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Please complete this form and enclose a check, made payable to the Friends of the International Center. Send to Ethnic Dinner Chair, c/o Friends of the International Center, UCSD International Center 0018, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, CA 92093-0018.

Alternately, you may reserve via eventbrite: <http://ficperu2015.eventbrite.com>

Reservations must be received by Friday, October 9.  
Late reservations will be charged an extra \$5.00, or may be refused.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

(Please spell out the names of everyone in your party for nametags.)

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Number of Friends (@ \$50.00): \_\_\_\_\_

I need handicap parking and have a placard: \_\_\_\_\_

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I request \_\_\_\_\_ number of vegetarian meals

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Photo by Christopher Wills

Reenactment of the ancient Incan sun god Inti addressing his people

October 2015

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