



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

Newsletter

Volume XLII, No. 8

April 2015

President's Message

Volunteerism is a subject that comes up frequently: not only do our international participants struggle with the concept that Friends volunteers really do not get paid for doing what we do, but our local community also marvels that we are able to provide the range of services and scholarships through an organization comprised of a 100% volunteer labor force.

Our international participants share that while non-profit organizations exist in their home countries, organizations similar to the Friends are non-existent and that the concept of volunteerism is, excuse the pun, foreign to them. Given the humbleness of our volunteers, most of our participants never know that they are on the receiving end of women and men who truly give altruistically, expecting nothing in return.

To bring greater awareness to the economic value conferred upon the university, the international community, and the San Diego community-at-large, future *Newsletters* will contain a

box with total hours volunteered and the corresponding economic value of these hours. The Friends began tracking volunteer hours fairly recently, at the suggestion of **Nancy Homeyer**, and thus we sadly do not have the ability to provide a 53-year cumulative total, but I trust that you can extrapolate from the information that follows that the economic value conferred by the Friends would be well in to the millions. From September 2014 - February 2015, the Friends volunteered a total of 7,400 hours—the equivalent of \$166,870.

While it is sometimes challenging to be the leader of a volunteer group (volunteers might have more, rather than less, money if they quit their Friends work), it is also the most rewarding experience to be able to work with a group of people possessing the largest hearts and smallest egos to be found in San Diego.

Applause for our wonderful volunteers!

Katya Newmark
presFIC@ucsd.edu

Three cheers for our volunteers!



Mary Woo, Jennie Chin,
Nori Faer, and Kristine Kneib

Volunteerism

The topic of volunteerism was prominently discussed at the February Friends Board meeting, which prompted **Jennie Chin**, chair of two of our programs—International Cooking Experience and Knit-Along—to write her constituents. Explained Jennie:

“Earlier today, I was in a discussion about volunteerism with Friends, so I thought I would share this with you all. I was not aware that volunteering might not be a part of other cultures in other countries.

“At Friends, and for the past 50+ years (yes, quite a long time), we have been lucky to have and continue to have many wonderful people who volunteer their time. Wednesday Coffee (**Georgina Sham**, chair), Mommy/Daddy & Me (**Alice Blake-Stalker**), English Conversation (**Nori Faer**, **Cindy**

April Calendar

April 1, 15: **Family Orientation**, 9:15

April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: **Wednesday Morning Coffee**, 10:00-Noon

April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: **Gus' Table**, 10:00-Noon

April 3, 10, 17, 24: **Friday Chat Group**, 10:00-Noon

April 5: **Easter**

April 9, 23: **Int'l Cooking Experience**, 9:30-1:00

April 14: **Board Meeting**, 10:00

April 14, 21, 28: **Knit-Along**, Noon-4:00

April 15, 29: **International Kitchen**, Noon

Tozer), Tuesday Knit-Along (myself, **Mary Woo**, **Judy Bavasi**), Thursday cooking classes (**Tashu Malik**, **Keiko Hirai**, **Mary Woo**), the Friends Dinner Socials (**Katya Newmark**—who is also the Friends President—and **Audrey Leriche**), the Resale Shop (**Marion Spors**, **Josie Foulks**), Family Orientation (**Nancy Homeyer**), Ethnic Dinners (**Liz Fong Wills**), as well as many other on-going activities throughout the year.”

To Jennie’s list of program chairs, we must add the elected officers and other volunteers that serve on the Board of Directors, who together help run the organization. Moreover, Friends publish a monthly *Newsletter* (**Ruth Newmark**, editor) and provide large numbers of international scholarships, funded in part by sales at our Resale Shop.

We are extremely grateful to all who volunteer, be it as program chair, through regular involvement, or by participation in one or more

events. We are especially proud of the fact that many of our international visitors, too, participate in this way, often going so far as to take charge of a craft demonstration, a cooking experience, or teaching a Mommy/Daddy & Me session.

As President **Katya Newmark** mentioned, we have begun to keep track of the number of volunteer hours per month and will begin to publish these in our *Newsletter*. You will be amazed at the numbers and their value as equivalents of full time university employees (FTEs).

If you would like to learn more about our volunteer opportunities, please contact Friends Volunteer Coordinator, **Nori Faer**, at <nfaerweathr@gmail.com>.

**VOLUNTEER
HOURS**
in
February 2015
1,015.5 = 5.76 FTEs

Hearts & Scholars

—by *Ruth Newmark*

The invitation to the February 12 event, signed by **Robert C. Dynes**, UC President and Chancellor Emeritus and Chair of the Undergraduate Scholarship Council read: “Please join me and other UC San Diego scholarship benefactors for an evening with our impressive and deserving students—including your Friends of the International Center Scholars—at the annual Hearts and Scholars dinner. The celebration of generous hearts and bright minds is one of my favorite events each year! This event amazes us all—with a confirmation that the future is in good hands. I promise a heartwarming evening.” Co-hosted by Chancellor **Pradeep Khosla** and the **UC San Diego Undergraduate Scholarship Council**,



Katya Newmark, Daniel Byrne, Evelyn Vardanians, Ruth Newmark

the dinner this year was held at Estancia and attracted more than 220 guests, including 75 scholarship recipients.

Quite a number of Friends members were present. **Katya Newmark**, her husband, **Matthew Costello**, and I, as well as **Louise Engleman**, were seated with **Mary Hansen** (representing Oceanids) and several fine students, two of which were recipients of 2014

Membership

Please welcome **Loren & Roland Wilhelmy** from Rancho Santa Fé to our membership.

We are saddened by the death of **Mary Bailey** (see Wednesday Coffee, p.5), and by having to say goodbye to **Louise Arnold**, who is moving to San Francisco to be near two of her children and their families.

Friends scholarships. I can say with assurance that our Scholarship Committee did not make a mistake in supporting **Evelyna Vardanians’** EAP study in London nor **Daniel Byrne’s** Global Seminar in Scotland, even though in the latter’s case, we were concerned that sending a Freshman abroad might be a bit premature.

Elisa Postila: From Finland to San Diego

I come from a place that is in many ways the complete opposite of Southern California. Finland is a Northern European country with thousands of lakes (187,888 to be exact), lush forests, and long, cold winters. A population of 5.4 million people is spread around an area that is nearly the size of the state of California.

Now that my two-year stay in San Diego is about to come to an end, this is a good moment to look back and consider what this unique period in my life has given me. Without a doubt I can say it has been a life-changing experience. If traveling abroad broadens your horizons, living in a foreign country really blows your mind! Not only have I learned about U.S. culture, but I have also learned a lot about other people from all over the world. Somewhat surprisingly, the experience of being a foreigner has led to a greater understanding of my own culture and its very own idiosyncrasies.

The biggest difference between my life in the United States and my life in Finland is the fact that here I could not work in my chosen profession as a psychologist. Although it might sound like a good deal to have a two-year holiday on the



Photo of Elisa by Antti Lylander

beach while my husband, **Pekka Postila**, is working as a post doc at UC San Diego in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, in reality it is a challenge to adjust to a new role and make yourself feel useful.

For me, the Friends of the International Center has been a vital component in settling down in San Diego. Friends activities provide the perfect setting to make friends with ease, not just with people from the United States but from all over the world. The best part of these activities has been all those interesting discussions that have allowed me to practice my spoken English, while learning about different cultures and enjoying the

support from others going through similar challenges.

Because the Friends, individually and as an organization, has had such a positive effect on my everyday life, it was quite

natural for me to volunteer in activities. I have mainly helped with the Friends Dinner Social and Family Orientation programs. Since it is their first contact with the Friends, Family Orientation plays a very special role for international spouses. On my part, I have wanted to make this welcome as warm, inspiring, and informative as possible for the newcomers. It has also been a good opportunity for me to practice my presentation skills.

In addition to volunteering with the Friends, I have given my time to various other causes that include working as a Court Appointed Special Advocate with local foster children, being a camp counselor for people with disabilities, and working in an early intervention program for young children. I have also worked as a part-time respite worker for children with autism.

Moreover, not working full-time has also allowed me to invest in a treasured hobby of mine: photography. In fact, I started a photography group with other international visitors to share in the fun. We meet once a month, pick an interesting photo shoot location, take pictures, and generally enjoy each other's company. It has been wonderful to see people getting more excited about photography as they learn from each other. Because it has plenty of beautiful locations, such as beaches, parks, and urban landscapes, San Diego is a perfect place for this kind of activity. Needless to say, the weather has never caused any problems for our meetups.

All things said, living in San Diego has been an amazing experience for me, much of it thanks to the Friends of the International Center!



Photography group at Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Photo by Elisa Postila

It's the Personal Connection That Counts!

—by Ruth Newmark

As Friends Scholarship Committee Chair I am privileged to correspond with recipients of our scholarships. I acknowledge each inquiry or report with a personal note, which, in turn, may lead to further e-mail exchanges. It is the latter that provide me much joy. I would like to share one such exchange, starting with the student's insightful report about time spent in Chile. A sophomore in Eleanor Roosevelt College, **Alan Puah** is majoring in structural engineering—seismic upheavals in Chile may well have been one of the underlying reasons that Alan chose this country for his study abroad.



Alan Puah in traditional cueca attire

UCEAP Scholarship Report

Studying and living abroad in Santiago, Chile for six months gave me the chance to further my education in structural engineering, while growing in my understanding of the world, the Spanish language, and myself.

One valuable lesson I learned is that while generalizations can be helpful, they are incredibly limited. Living in Chile allowed me to see that Latin America is not homogeneous, and does not fit many of the preconceptions people have about Latin America. I was able to learn about the history of how Chile came to be the developed and industrialized country it is today, as well as about its darker implications for those who lived through the tumultuous dictatorship of the 1970s. It was valuable being able to hear the firsthand perspectives rather than learning about the history through a textbook.

A part of the day-to-day Chilean experience that I will always hold dear to me is the deep and very visible connection the people have to music. Almost every day on public transit, I had the privilege of witnessing a street performer bring life to the commute, playing anything from folk music, reg-

gae, freestyle rap, top hits, or jazz. Moreover, many of those I met knew Chilean folk songs by heart, which especially showed around the September holidays as people gathered to sing the songs of their fatherland and dance the national dance, *cueca*. Learning to dance cueca brought me closer to the people there, as did the more general social dances of salsa and merengue.

One of my motivating reasons to study in Chile was my desire to immerse myself in the Spanish language, in order to improve my speaking and listening skills. My arrival in Chile was met with shock, as the strong Chilean accent made me question whether or not I had really taken four years of Spanish classes. Eventually, as my host family and local friends explained to me word by word the plethora of local slang words, and as I learned to fill in the omitted “s”s and “d”s in the pronunciation, I gained confidence in my ability to speak Chilean Spanish. The most rewarding part of this process was challenging myself to use the colloquial sayings in casual conversation, and seeing the surprise and delight the Chileans showed upon hearing me use them.

Something I could not have

gained outside of Chile was my personal learning experience as I reflected on my own identity. As I connected with Chileans, I had to think back on what made me American, and what made me Asian American. Living on my own and creating a new life in another country also pushed me to grow and made my transition into adulthood very tangible. I enjoyed being able to increase people's understanding of Asian Americans and their realization that there are many faces of the United States.

My six months abroad also sparked a desire to see more of the world. I witnessed priceless glimpses of the planet's natural beauty, from admiring the stunning colors of the desert sunset, listening to the blue copper waters crashing over Laja Falls, gazing at the awe-inspiring volcanoes and glaciers, and feeling the potent, frosty winds of Patagonia. Seeing how much this country holds in both natural beauty, culture, and wonderful human beings has made me want to see the rest of the world: to see what makes each of the other Latin American countries unique, and to gain an understanding of the other regions of the world as well.



Torres del Paine National Park

Upon receiving Alan's report, I replied: "Although other students who have studied in Chile have reported on the importance of music in the lives of Chileans, you went into greater detail. This interested me, and I am sure it will interest others as well.

"I am old enough to have lived through the time of Pinochet when a number of Chilean university students managed to escape to the U.S., including some who came to study at UC San Diego. Friends of the International Center held a fundraiser for them. I recently

reconnected with one of these students, who attended our May 2013 scholarship awards dinner."

I proceeded to tell Alan about **Cecilia Ubilla** by quoting from what I had written about her in the October 2013 *Newsletter*:

"Our annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony provides an ideal opportunity for donor and recipient to meet in person. It was particularly rewarding to find among our guests this year, a recipient of one of the Friends earliest scholarships: **Cecilia Ubilla**. Having been arrested and assault-

ed during the brutal dictatorship of General **Augusto Pinochet**, Cecilia fled her native Chile in the seventies to find safe haven in the United States. She came to UC San Diego to continue her graduate studies of literature. It was exciting for Cecilia and **Leonard Newmark**, founding chair of the Linguistics Department who had offered her student employment as a Spanish teacher, to reconnect, and touching to see Cecilia in tears as they embraced."

A few moments later, I received another e-mail from Alan: "Thank you for sharing that bit in the *Newsletter*. Before I left for Chile, I happened to have an Oasis meeting with Cecilia, and she inspired me and gave me newfound excitement for my trip at a time when I was having some doubts. It is incredible how Friends has enabled this full cycle of giving. Thank you for the work that you do!"

Correspondence such as this makes me look forward to our next crop of students.

The Friends Scholarship Committee will meet this month to read 2015 scholarship applications. With the generous contributions of many, we will have \$100,000 to award!

We invite you to attend the annual Friends Membership and Scholarship Awards Dinner to meet our newest scholarship recipients.

Wednesday Morning Coffee

SADLY, an organization as old as ours is frequently faced with having to announce the death of a longtime member. Such is the case once more. In February, we learned of the death of **Mary Bailey**. Informed **David Jordan**: "Mary Bailey died early Thursday morning after a long illness. According to her daughter **Myra**, 'she slipped away peacefully in her sleep and, as per her wishes, her body has been donated to medical science.'"

In 1971, Mary (wife of the British anthropologist **Fred Bailey** and herself a transplanted native of England) invited a few other internationals for coffee. Soon more and more lonely women gathered at the Baileys' home, making the coffee a regular weekly event. Once the International Center was up and running, then Dean of International Education, **Joan Walsh**, invited the group to meet at the new campus facility. Justifiably, Mary—who in 1994 was named Friends of the International Center Member of the Year—was proud that over all these years the program she started has continued to offer a warm welcome and friendship. We extend our condolences to Mary's family and mourn the loss of a colleague so instrumental in shaping the Friends Wednesday Coffee hospitality program.

The current chair of the Wednesday Coffee program, **Georgina Sham**, has scheduled these activities for the month of April:



- April 1: *Easter Egg Hunt*: We will color eggs and then hide them in the backyard for the children in Mommy / Daddy & Me to find.
- April 8: *Making lavender-scented sachets* with **Tashu Malik**.
- April 15: *Tax Day Lunch*. April 15 is tax day when everyone in the U.S. must pay income taxes, which explains why we have chosen a meal that features affordable comfort food: spaghetti and meatballs, garlic bread, green salad, with lemon bars for dessert. Lunch will be served at noon for \$5/person.
- April 22: *Henna Hand Painting* with **Tamanna Kaloiya**, a professional henna painter.
- April 29: *An English Tea*. Please meet us in the kitchen at 9:30 to prepare finger sandwiches, scones, sweets, and teas. All kitchen workers will then sit down to enjoy the repast in an elegant manner.

Mark Your
Calendar!



Friends Membership Dinner
and Scholarship Awards
Ceremony

Tuesday, May 19, 6 p.m.
International Center



Ginny Young and Matthew Costello iron tablecloths—some white, some red—but wrinkles prove hard to remove



The February menu included soup from Vietnam, entrée from Morocco, salad from Italy, and dessert from Venezuela



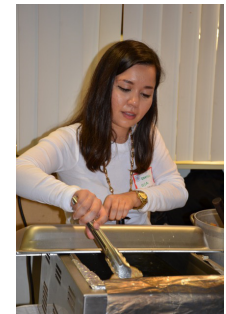
Darang Candra, a graduate student from Indonesia, helps prepare food from five continents



Yosuke Imamura teaches Karen Davis proper ninjitsu moves



Standing: Karen Davis, Audrey Leriche, Jean Selzer, Katya Newmark, Alicia Boutonnet, Susan Burke
Kneeling: Richard Chim and Darang Candra



Friends 2014 scholarship recipient, Lorena Castellanos, volunteers to serve the meal



Friends Dinner Social co-chairs: Audrey Leriche and Katya Newmark



Multigenerational fun: Kathy and Al Fredman with John Li

Global Friendship

—by Audrey Leriche

with photos by Katya Newmark and Elisa Postila

“Since there is nothing so well worth having as friends, never lose a chance to make them.” —Francesco Gucciardini

The friendship-themed dinner of 2014 was a big hit. As a tribute to that initial success, and in the hope of having at least as much fun, the theme was repeated this year with a little twist: the Friends Dinner Social celebrated Global Friendship on the night of Saturday, February 7, 2015.

Friendship is the cement of our international community, and we chose a menu that course by course honored our main continents. Guests were welcomed with American snacks and an Australian wine. The sit-down dinner started with *tom yum* soup from Thailand (clear broth made of galangal, kaffir lime leaves, and lemongrass, garnished with oyster and shiitake mushrooms and bok choy). This Asian soup was followed by couscous, the most popular dish of Morocco and much of North Africa. It was served with vegetables cooked in a mild stew and roasted chicken. Europe was represented by a lettuce, mozzarella, and orange salad, and finally the meal ended on a South-American note with a *torta de piña*, an upside-down pineapple cake from Venezuela. Such a ballet of flavors!

But the Friends Dinner Social program is also known for its fun com-



The photo session with its multitude of silly props provides lots of laughs



Justin Costello and Heinz Strässle

ponent. We put a lot of heart into fostering friendship from the outset by inviting our guests to play an ice-breaking guessing game. Already at the check-in, a tag with the name and brief description of a location was placed on the back of each guest. To guess the location, only one question could be asked of another guest, and the goal was to determine the destination within 20 questions max, or after having met 20 people in the process. People were excited and played their part with a lot of conviction.

After dinner, our talented photographer, **Elisa Postila**, took charge from behind her camera of a photo booth set-up. Guests received props to wear, and nobody needed our help to find inspiration for silly faces or funny poses. Out of our 87 guests, 9 little ones came with their parents, and it was just the loveliest thing to see one put on a knight hat, another a super hero mask or bunny ears. These were such good moments!

It is also in the spirit of friendship that I send a message of appreciation to the fantastic crew of my fellow volunteers: my co-chair **Katya Newmark**, **Matthew Costello**, **Ginny Young**, **Jean Selzer**, **Richard Chim**, **Darang Candra**, **Susan Burke**, **Karen Davis**, **Alicia Boutonnet**, **Ruth Newmark**, **Danya Costello**, **Nancy Homeyer**, **Bill Homeyer**, **Justin Costello**, **Lorena Castellanos**, **Elisa Postila**, and **Dagmar Bocakova**, who helped design the flyer even though she lives in Switzerland.

Now it is time to consider the final chapter before the academic year comes to an end. Be our special guest for a Cinco de Mayo Friends Dinner Social. Bring your *amigos* and *amigas* to the International Center on Saturday, May 2, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. for a *fiesta* filled with good food, drinks, and entertainment!

The menu will feature: *Sopa de Frijoles Negros* (black bean soup), *Pollo en Pipian Verde* (chicken in pumpkin seed sauce), or a similarly seasoned vegetarian option, that will be served with *Sopa de Arroz* (Mexican rice) and *Calabacitas* (a south-of-the border vegetable dish). The meal will end with *Kahlua Chocolate Cake* that needs no translation.

Mark your calendar and make your reservation by Monday, April 27.

Friends Dinner Social #8 • Cinco de Mayo Fiesta

Saturday, May 2, 2015 • 6:00 pm

• Mexican food, drinks, and fun •

Cost: \$15 (Friends), \$20 (community),
\$10 (UCSD international students/scholars)

For payment by credit card: ficmayo.eventbrite.com

Guests, Volunteers, and Hosts Were Vocal

☺ Wow, what an evening. I adored the atmosphere and the results of your work. The food was so tasty and variable. Special kudos go for the pineapple cake—whoever baked that has my triple, thankful hug; it was amazing! My time is limited, but I want to meet you all better and contribute to the great community you are building and supporting. It feels special and everyone is so friendly. Having so many great people around away from home is just priceless.—**Michal Rytter**

☺ Thank you for providing a wonderful event!—**Mahoko Imamura**

☺ Thank you all for making this event so extraordinary and for allowing me to be a part of it! I enjoyed every minute of it.—**Lorena Castellanos**

☺ Dear Wonderful Team: Before I call it a night, I want to thank you all SO much for your willingness to help in so many different ways. From my perspective tonight's dinner was another huge success, and I am so grateful to each and every one of you for making the evening run so smoothly from start to finish! Thank you to my fantastic co-captain, and Queen of the Kitchen, *Audrey*. Your organization and thoughtfulness makes it a pleasure to work together! Thank you a hundred times over.—**Katya Newmark**

☺ Katya, you are the Queen of Making All Feel Appreciated!—**Susan Burke**

☺ Thank you, all of you! It is one thing to be hard workers, but it is another to be efficient. Yesterday you proved again that you master both and that a lot can be achieved in such a short time, while still having fun. Thank you for your presence, your efforts, your smiles and good words. This dinner was a huge success, with 87 guests, and we can all be proud and share the credit for it.—**Audrey Leriche**

☺ We had a great time on that day... definitely, we'd love to share the photo to everyone. We are very grateful for the support of IC!—**Miyoko Imamura** (mother of ninja fan, **Yosuke Imamura**)

☺ I will say sorry for next dinner, because I will go back in March. I will miss you!—**Wei Li** (mother of **John Li**)

SCHOLARSHIP LETTERS

South Africa

When I applied for the Friends of the International Center Scholarship last year, I was not sure if I would ever be able to complete the research I have for so long dreamed of. There were obvious financial challenges, which this scholarship eventually allowed me to hurdle for the most part, but there were also networks I was not yet connected to, a country I had very little knowledge of, and a vision for the research that could at best be defined as hazy. However, I am truly thankful to the Friends of the International Center, because with your scholarship I was able to travel to South Africa and establish networking ties, familiarize myself with much of the country, come away with a clearer intellectual project, and make a ton of lifelong friends and colleagues along the way. In other words, I now know that I can and will complete my dream.

With the Friends Scholarship I was able to have some spending money left over after purchasing airfare to Johannesburg, South Africa, where I was housed by the founder and creative director of the STR.CRD Brand and Culture Festival (South Africa's #1 urban street culture festival), **Hardy McQueen**. Having made this contact prior to my departure proved to be invaluable, as I was able to save a lot of money on lodging because it was completely taken care of by Hardy.

My trip lasted from October 29th - November 10th, where I spent October 31st - November 4th in Johannesburg and November 4th - November 7th in Cape Town. My trip finished when I returned to Johannesburg November 7th to attend the STR.CRD Festival and finally departed the country the evening of November 9th. In this time, I barely slept a wink. I hiked Lion's Head on the cusp of Table Mountain with a view of Robben Island (where Nelson Mandela served 18 of his 27 years in prison) and



Martin Boston at Lion's Head, Johannesburg

went to Cape Point, the furthest point south on the continent of Africa, where in the distance you can see the point where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans collide. I attended townships, museums, Mercedes Benz African Fashion Week, the Nike Soweto Marathon, and STR.CRD, while dabbling in authentic South African cuisine from braai at Chaf Pozi in Soweto to wine vineyards in Cape Town. It truly was an amazing trip.

However, what was most important, especially for this exploration and my future intellectual pursuits and endeavors, were the networks I was able to establish that will facilitate in the completion of my research and eventual dissertation. While in Johannesburg, I was able to go to the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and meet with fellow graduate students, as well as librarians and faculty. One important connection I was able to make was with Dr. **David Coplan**, an ethnomusicologist out of Wits, who was and continues to be helpful in constructing my research questions and points of analysis.

McQueen is also an invaluable resource for my research. Through him, I was connected with various cultural producers (i.e. musicians, clothing designers, cultural entrepreneurs, photographers, activists, graduate

students, and popular culture consumers) who will be vital to the future ethnographic work I will need to perform. These connections will continue to guide my work in South Africa and my

scholarship more broadly.

As the Friends of the International Center is aware, my research looks at examining the transnational cultural linkages and exchanges between South Africa and the United States. In developing my project of bridging these transatlantic cultural neighbors with the goal of furthering unity across oceans and borders, I look at the politics of Black popular culture and resistance between post Civil Rights United States and post Apartheid ("Born Free") South Africa. Through the mediums of music, poetry, dance, and fashion, I highlight the untold history of the people (artists, activists, and the Black popular), organizations and movements that make visible the connections, inheritances, and transmissions between and within contemporary configurations of Black popular culture in the United States and South Africa.

This experience has given me immeasurable insights into this project, insights that I will continue to think and write about.

Martin Boston

Entrepreneur, Educator, and Spoken Word Artist
Ph.D. candidate, Ethnic Studies
M.A. American Studies, WSU

January 4, 2015

Happy Holidays!

I would like to once again thank you for the scholarship that has helped me fund my studies abroad here in Japan. I am currently about halfway through my yearlong research program at Tohoku University, and have already made a tremendous amount of memorable experiences. Starting from my arrival in the summer for my language program at Senshu University in Kanagawa, I have been traveling to various parts of Japan with the new friends I've made. During the summer, we had a picnic watching the summer fireworks over Yokohama Bay, took pictures at various temples and shrines in Kamakura, and went to a Kabuki theatre to watch a traditional Japanese play.

Once I arrived in Sendai in the fall, I met even more friends and was able to enjoy the beauty of the surrounding natural areas. Soon after classes commenced, I was able to meet my research professor and decide on my research topic. I chose to work with unmanned aerial vehicles, specifically quadcopters, in order to expand my knowledge of aerial robotics and autonomous control. Now I do individual research every day in my group lab where I am able to ask for help from my Japanese seniors, as well as learn about their research. This lets me not only learn more about robotics, but also to practice my conversational Japanese, which has improved quite considerably during my time here in Japan.

We have just finished our winter vacation, during which I went traveling to Tokyo with some friends in order to pray at Meiji Shrine for good blessings throughout the new year. The winter here in Sendai is much colder than I have ever experienced before, with snow falling almost every day and the temperature going close to 0 degrees Celsius. However, this extreme weather is something that has been really enjoyable for a Californian boy like me who has always lived in a warm climate.

Now that school is recommencing, I will be continuing my progress in my lab and Japanese courses, in order to make full use of all of the facilities and opportunities that are being given to me here at Tohoku University. By the end of my program, I aim to be even more proficient in Japanese and have a fully functional autonomous flying robot to show to you all!

Varanon Austin Pukasamsombut, Sixth College



Israel 2014: A Summer of Conflict and Contradictions

When I applied for the UCSD Friends of the International Center Scholarship to travel to Israel, I had no idea that the country would be under a barrage of rocket fire for the majority of my stay. The goal was to spend the summer based in Jerusalem working on my research on policing in divided societies. In a nutshell, my dissertation asks how the ethnic, racial, or religious integration of a police force in a community with deep-seated divisions affects important outcomes like crime prevention and political reconciliation across groups. The intention was to spend the summer interviewing Israeli citizens and police officers about this topic, as well as to lay the groundwork for a survey that I fielded in October 2014.

On the second week of my stay, Hamas and a number of other militant groups began launching a barrage of rockets from Gaza into Israel.

The Israeli military responded with heavy bombing of Gaza and a number of limited incursions by ground troops. By the time the conflict ended with a ceasefire on August 26th, more than 2,000 Gaza residents and 71 Israeli citizens had been killed, with thousands more injured or displaced from their homes. The comparatively low number of Israeli casualties was primarily the result of Israel's "Iron Dome" missile defense system, which prevented most rockets from impacting in populated areas.

The war's effects on my life were somewhat limited. Because of the number of Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem and the large Palestinian population in and around the city, Hamas largely refrained from firing rockets towards the capital. I was forced into a bomb shelter "only" a handful of times, and the emotional impact that these events had on me was

more a sense of inconvenience than one of fear. People in other parts of the country were not so lucky. Major population centers like Tel Aviv were targeted multiple times per day, and border towns around Gaza almost hourly. The elderly and disabled, who could not move fast enough in the event of an attack to reach a shelter in time, took to living in shelters for days on end.

In hindsight, my experience reinforced my belief that these sorts of conflicts demand political, not military solutions. Thousands of people killed and hundreds of millions of dollars of infrastructure destroyed only succeeded in breeding more resentment and hatred on both sides. If anything, peace is farther away than ever. A distressing number of Israelis with whom I spoke see the cycle of violence between Israel and Gaza as normal, as though fighting a war ev-

ery two years is as inevitable as occasional bad weather. In Gaza, tens of thousands of innocent civilians are grieving for lost family and friends, and attempting to rebuild their shattered homes. I left Israel believing that only social and political change, not continued fighting, can bring a permanent, long-lasting resolution to this conflict. Which brings this report back to my research:

While in Israel, I was able to interview police officers, high ranking officials, and ordinary citizens about the challenges that the Israeli police face in providing services to Israel's diverse population (about 20% of Israeli citizens are ethnically Arab non-Jews). I learned that the soci-

etal divisions between Israeli Jews and non-Jews are exacerbated by a lack of positive interactions between members of different communities, and the sense that there are two (or more) entirely distinct populations living unsustainably within a single country. The importance of this separation is on display in the way that the Israeli Police serve Israel's diverse communities. There is a definite sense by both Jews and non-Jews that increasing the number of qualified minority officers on the force, and paying careful attention to the way in which they are distributed, could have an effect on the police's ability to do its job. Several of my interviewees expressed that

increasing the representativeness of the police could foster a sense of ownership of the institution by citizens of all backgrounds, as well as the perception that the police intend to serve all citizens regardless of religion or ethnicity. Encouragingly, nobody was more open and conscious about this reality than the police officials themselves. They recognize the challenges that they face in serving Israel's minority populations and are keen to turn to researchers for potential answers. I left the country hopeful that my research may eventually contribute in some small way to finding these answers.

Matthew Nanes

Ph.D. candidate, Political Science

Living Out Two Dreams in Four Months: Working and Traveling in Europe

This past fall I had the opportunity to take time off from studying at UCSD and travel to Germany to participate in an Opportunities Abroad Program. Thanks to an internship offered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) that I applied for, was accepted into, and followed by sending an immediate "JA!" as a response, I was able to complete a three-month academic internship conducting scientific research on mesenchymal stem cells at the Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg.

I had always dreamed of going abroad, but the difficulty was in determining the best time to go—with bioengineering you are on a constant time crunch. The OAP program that I applied to offered the perfect place for me to satisfy my academic aspirations, explore the endless opportunities of this world, think about what I would like to do and where I would like to live in the future, and to just take a breath and appreciate all the wonders and unfamiliar things that I was surrounded by on a daily basis.

After completing my academic project at the BRS University of Applied Sciences, I backpacked through Europe and, since I was alone, I literally went wherever I wanted each day. I packed only necessities, grabbed my phone for Internet, printed out a map of Europe, and trusted my intuition for safety. I traveled very cheaply, typically carpooling from city to city and couch surfing with remarkably hospitable hosts.

During my time abroad I was able to travel to ten countries. I attended the Reeperbahn Festival in Hamburg, stared at the beautifully-lit Prague Castle at night, drank wine with a close friend in Paris all awhile dancing to music in our apartment, rode through Crete on a Vespa, fell in love with the statue of David in Florence,

breathed the freshness of the mountain air in Tyrol, Austria, explored the beauty of Lyon, France during the Fête des Lumières, grabbed a beer during Oktoberfest in Munich, wearing a traditional dirndl, saw my family members in Kyiv, Ukraine during a difficult time for my motherland, and encountered numerous moments where my childish smiles and laughs were my best reactions to being able to live a dream of backpacking, traveling, and carefree living.

I count myself lucky to have had the opportunity to improve myself academically as well as to experience new cultures and meet people from different courses of life. This network is expanding more and more—our world is truly a small place. We may speak different languages and have different upbringings, but each individual wants a life of adventure, happiness, and memories. I hope to continue living a life where I can intersect with different people and chase after and capture life's beauties provided for us.

Germany was such a superb experience that following the completion of my bioengineering degree, I am considering pursuing a master's degree in Germany.

I want to thank the Friends of the International Center for the financial support in my endeavors abroad. With your help, I have matured, become a more global individual, and have a desire to share my experiences abroad with all who are willing to listen.

Oryssa Stus, Muir College

Donation: We gratefully acknowledge **Joan Bowes'** recent donation.

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