



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

# *Newsletter*

Volume XLVI, No.3

November 2018

## President's Column

Perceptions are often more meaningful than facts—consider the placebo effect in medicine, world events, and even one's own faulty beliefs: I recall being told by my linguist father that no one language was harder to learn than another, proven by the fact that children around the world develop language skills at the same age, regardless of what I perceived as the unique challenges of a particular language.

Traveling, as well as interacting with others not like us, provides multiple opportunities to confront one's perceptions and to test them against reality. Since many of us cannot travel as much as we would like, I suspect that you, like me, are grateful to Friends for providing so many opportunities that test and broaden our cultural understanding right here at home.

I recently had the pleasure of leading a Friends Friday Chat session and left feeling that I had traveled around the globe picking up many interesting tidbits in just a couple of hours. And, since I am just as curious about how our participants perceive America as I am to learn about their culture, I cannot recommend the experience highly enough. Feel free to join any of our daytime programs, as you will get to chart the journey

of your own staycation.

During our chat, I learned that the diverse group's perception is that Americans have a strong sense of national identity as evidenced by the large number of flags displayed. Interestingly, in comparison, they felt that their own countries lacked this sense of national identity; yet when I visited most of these countries, I sensed that their countries had a strong sense of national identity, leading us all to wonder how little it takes for such perceptions to take root.

I learned that many were surprised by the physicality of our cities as compared to what they anticipated seeing: sprawling metropolises with straight roads do not align with prior perceptions. All were surprised by the quietude of our neighborhoods and the ability to go weeks without seeing a neighbor. A visiting Chinese scholar shared it took considerable time for him to adjust to this lack of connectedness since, in Shanghai, one's neighbors are as important as one's family, a sentiment repeated by many from differing countries.

We spoke about how our cultures shape not only our perceptions but also our openness to differences without judgment: what may be a delicacy in one



country (horse sausage/meat in Korea, southern Italy) may be illegal to consume in another; what may be the accepted practices between adult family members in one country (selling of a parent's home to a child) would be unfathomable in another country (Japan, Korea, China); what may be common ways to greet one another differ widely in space, frequency, volume; and what is acceptable parenting in one country is often met with resistance in another.

And yet, despite our differences, subtle or not, we agree that we enjoy the ability to learn and come together in our newly formed Friends-connected communities and gain tremendously by questioning our own perceptions and modifying where appropriate.

I encourage you to exercise your privilege and right to vote knowing that so many around the globe are denied an opportunity to participate in a meaningful election process.

Until next month,  
*Katya*

**Katya Newmark**  
presFIC@ucsd.edu



Celebration of Holy Week in  
Caltanissetta



A FUNDRAISER FOR  
FRIENDS SCHOLARSHIPS

**Ethnic Dinner: SICILY**  
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17  
6:30 PM, GREAT HALL,  
INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

RESERVATION DEADLINE:  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2017  
[http://FICSicily2018.  
eventbrite.com](http://FICSicily2018.eventbrite.com)

## No Fusion Cuisine in Sicily!

—by *Liz Fong Wills*

Sicily is home to traditions, some of which date back many centuries. The mass tuna fishing called *mattanza* has been traced back at least a thousand years. And Sicilian food, too, is overwhelmingly traditional.

Chris and I have been enjoying fusion cuisines everywhere. For example, in Peru, Nikkei food is Japanese food done the South American way. A widely liked dish is *tiradito*, the result of combining Peruvian ceviche and Japanese sashimi.

The very popular Taiwanese restaurant chain, Din Tai Fung, is famous for its soup dumplings. But for dessert, one can have chocolate-filled *mochis* (Japanese desserts made of short grain, glutinous rice flour). The *mochis* look just like the dumplings! Din Tai Fung is soon to open a branch in UTC, so all of us can try these dishes. The chain has branches all over Asia, but only the branch in Hong Kong has a Michelin star.

During our trip to Italy, we were struck by the fact that the Sicilians (and Sardinians) do NOT believe in fusion cuisine—they are very proud of their regional dishes and are not interested in evolving the dishes into anything else. I loved ricotta gelato, but could find it only in the Ragusa area. I really liked a pasta dish called *culurgiones* (potato and mint stuffed pasta), which is heavenly but impossible to find outside of Sardinia.

As we discovered, fusion cuisine is lots of fun, but traditional food can be wonderful. Be sure to come to the Sicilian dinner on Saturday, November 17 and experience what the chefs will prepare for us!

### Menu

**Antipasto** *Caldo: Arancino*

**Zuppa:** *Minestra di Ceci*

**Primo:** *Anelletti alla Palermo*

**Secondo con Contorno:** *Pesce Spada al Pistacchio, Falsomagro, Caponata*

**Dolce:** *Cassatelle alla Ttapanes*

We look forward to seeing you at our Ethnic Dinner CXIX, a fundraiser for Friends scholarships. Enjoy the cuisine of Sicily at a catered, sit-down dinner, take a virtual tour of the island by way of Prof. **Christopher Will's** marvelous photographs, and hear from one of the Friends scholarship recipients. A musical surprise awaits you!

If you haven't already done so, please make your reservations right away; the Wednesday, November 7 deadline is upon us:

<http://FICSicily2018.eventbrite.com>

## Wednesday Coffee

—by *Georgina Sham*

We are going to try something new at Wednesday Coffee this month—a group project. We will make a hooked rug of the Friends logo! We have many hooks, and every participant who creates a minimum of a two-inch square can sign her name on the backing. When the rug is finished, we will be able to see the names of all the people who have participated in making it. Because the rug is projected to be almost 60 inches wide, it may take us a while to complete the task. When finished, we may try to hang it!

Besides the rug, we will be working on Thanksgiving- and Holiday-themed projects.



Dear Friends,

It is always a privilege and a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to communicate with the full membership of the Friends of the International Center. It affords me an opening to thank each and every one of you for the many ways in which you so willingly and generously support our ever-growing international community on campus. The frenzy of the beginning of a new academic year is underway. It is always an exciting time. As of fall semester, by early, unofficial accounts, we will be exceeding over 10,000 international degree-seeking students in residence on our campus. It will be a couple of weeks before we will have an official count, but the growth in our international community in the last five years has been truly astounding and speaks volumes about the leadership of UC San Diego in education and research across the globe. Again this year, UC San Diego is ranked the 15<sup>th</sup> best university in the world in the prestigious Shanghai Academic Rankings of World Universities, just one of many measures that speaks to the continued excellence of our faculty and our students.

As a public-serving university, we are evermore challenged in providing every deserving Californian with a world-class education. Rising tuition and living costs continue to challenge our students. In providing opportunities for global experience, money is an issue for a large majority of our students. The Friends continue to play a very critical role by providing our best, brightest and most deserving students with that extra boost

that makes possible an international research or learning experience. This past spring, through your generous contributions and that of the Friends' campus partners, the Friends awarded over \$128,000 in scholarships to UC San Diego students. In my six years on campus, this number has literally doubled. I sincerely thank those many donors among you for so generously supporting our students.

Your gifts, along with regionally and nationally competitive scholarship programs, provided a total of over \$820,000 in scholarship and fellowship support for study abroad in the current academic year. Financial need continues to rise, and I encourage those who have not given before to the Friends Scholarship Program to consider it in the coming year. It is an investment in the future leaders of California and an investment you will never regret.

I was excited to learn over the past week that the Matthews quadrangle will soon be consumed by construction trailers and demolition of the crumbling buildings along Myers Drive, between Rupertus Lane and Gilman Drive, will begin. Your first reaction is probably, "Oh no, more chaos and less parking," but there is the silver lining. The Triton Pavilion construction will ensue and our beautiful new home for the division of Global Education will be within sight. Along with housing our departments within Global Education will be generous new space for Friends programs and designated office space. The timing of the transition from our wonder-

ful, historic IC to the new centerpiece of the campus has been less than perfect, but I am very grateful to the leadership of the University in making Global Education a top priority in the creation of our new campus center.

In closing, please be reminded that your voluntary and financial contributions are integral to the ever-expanding global footprint of this great university.

Best wishes,

*Kirk*

Kirk Simmons

Dean, Global Education

### November Calendar

Nov. 1, 8, 15, 29: **Everyday English**, 10:00-11:30

Nov. 1, 8, 15, 29: **Yoga Class**, Noon-1:00

Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30: **Friday Chat**, 10:00-Noon

Nov. 5, 19, 26: **Tai Chi**, 2:00-3:00

Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27: **Gus' Table: English Conversation**, 10:00-Noon

Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27: **FIC Craft Circle**, 1:00-3:00

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

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

Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28: **Mommy/Daddy & Me**, 1:45-2:45

Nov. 8: **Cooking Class**, 9:00

Nov. 12: **Veterans Day Holiday**

Nov. 13: **Friends Board Meeting**, 10:00

Nov. 17: **Ethnic Dinner**, 6:30

Nov. 22-23: **Thanksgiving Holiday**

## Friends Dinner Social: Germany

—by *Katya Newmark*

Our second Friends Dinner Social for this academic year will take us across the Atlantic Ocean to Germany, a favorite winter destination for its charming *Winterzaubermärkte* (Magic Winter Markets), and a country that has in recent years emerged as one of the most open-minded and welcoming of the European nations towards immigrants.

Alas, we will have no snow or fine wooden crafts for sale, though on Saturday, December 8, beginning at 6:00 p.m., in the Village 15 meeting rooms, we will offer our guests a traditional glass of *Glühwein* (German mulled wine) and/or mulled cider.

Our icebreaker will further warm people's hearts and help guests reconnect to their childhood love of the holidays, as we play my variation of a popular German game called *Stadt, Land, Fluß* (City, State, River), before settling down to a heart-warming meal that will resonate for all those familiar not only with German, but also with Austro-Hungarian, cuisine.

After dinner we will be treated to a classical violin concert by Friends Scholarship Recipient and History Ph.D. student, **Peter Braden**.

Please make your reservation, <https://fdsgermany2018.eventbrite.com>, quickly since space is limited!



**Thank You!** Frequent guests at our Friends Dinner Socials, **Ariane** and **Hannes Pessentheiner**, from Austria, have once again made a contribution to Friends.

## Mission Accomplished



When Friends had to vacate the International Center much of what had been in our office and kitchen was moved to a storage unit. Now that we have a better handle on what will prove useful in the future and what documents must be retained, a team, consisting of **Lynn Jahn**, **Georgina Sham**, **Marion Spors**, **Cindy Tozer**, and **Liz Fong Wills**, emptied it of all items relating to Wednesday Coffee, Kitchen Exchange, and the Resale Shop.

The residual kitchen items were donated to the **Friends of the Trinitarians**, a nonprofit organization that serves the poor and homeless. Friends were thanked for our donation that contributes to making "countless and substantial differences in the lives of the children and families of Tecate, Mexico."

**Katya Newmark** took care of sorting through the remaining items determining what could be further disposed of. For the heavy lifting, she brought along her husband, **Matthew Costello**; together they labeled file cabinets and a few other items that Friends hoped could be moved

to the Dance Hall where many of Friends programs currently have found a home, and photographed boxes and furniture that could be tossed or moved to surplus, as determined by the university. To complete the mission, they brought home a van load of boxes that Katya must now sort and further distribute.

Throughout these changes, Friends have received the assistance of the university, and we are grateful to the university for taking charge of the physical moves and covering the cost of renting the storage space.

## A Baby Shower: A Delightful Friends Tradition



For years, Wednesday Coffee has held a baby shower for its expecting mothers-to-be. Invitations are extended to all Friends program participants, and from the feedback received over the years, this is a much-appreciated American custom unfamiliar to most of our internationals. Honorees receive useful gifts, but the organizers—most recently **Georgina Sham, Lynn Jahn, Mary Woo, and Jennie Chin**—also plan fun games, understandably with a focus on babies. Of course, there are tasty dishes, and a cake, for what's a party without food?

On September 12, there was a baby shower for not just one, not for two, but for three expecting internationals. Wrote **Jennie Chin** in a sweet note to the 30+ attendees:

"So yesterday, at Wednesday Coffee, we had a baby shower for three of our lovely, soon-to-be moms: **Mayra Nevárez, Sung Won Park, and Rosa Park**. Ladies, you were wonderful. Thank you for coming and having fun and participating in this lovely get-together. Moms-to-be, you are all just BEAUTIFUL! Thank you for letting us share this special time with you. I hope you all had a lot of fun!"

**Noriko Honjo** shared a picture of herself and four other pregnant

women. **Noriko**—who was treated to her own Friends baby shower in a previous month—was eager to have a picture of the five before her own delivery. No doubt, there soon will be another shower for **Jeii Yoon Park** and **Emma Forin**, two more of our expecting internationals.

One of the honorees, **Mayra Nevárez** from Mexico, sent this touching e-mail thanking people for coming to the triple baby shower:

"It's really nice that being far away from our families and countries we can feel like being at home. I'm really happy to be part of this Family. Because, thanks to this family, I met new friends and I do a lot of cool activities inside and outside of the Friends. Here I learned that helping others and your community is something I will never stop doing.

"And also, I will be always thankful for all the things that you do for us: **Katya, Georgina, Lynn, Mary, Jennie, Nancy, Marion**, and the other volunteers that I have the pleasure to work with. I will never be tired of repeating it."

More than a regular participant in Wednesday Coffee and the Tues-



Jeii, Rosa, Sung Won, Mayra, and Noriko  
September 12 baby shower

**FRIENDS  
VOLUNTEER HOURS  
FOR  
SEPTEMBER 2018  
842 = 4.86 FTEs**

day Craft Circle, **Mayra** is a shining volunteer in our Resale Shop, as well as a longtime Family Orientation volunteer. Amongst her many talents, **Mayra** has shared her skills as a graphic designer.

Of course, Friends are always pleased to hear words of appreciation, but we are most pleased when our international visitors express a feeling of belonging to our community of Friends, as did **Mayra**.

**Jennie** sums it up perfectly: "It is nice to know that we are considered *Family*. For me, that's what Friends of the International Center is all about. Each and every program that works to bring the participants together is so very important. Friends provide the 'shelter from the storm' of moving to an unfamiliar setting, having to speak in a different language, starting anew knowing no one, and trying to figure out where one puts that first step. Every participant who takes that first step outside the door of her home to come to a Friends activity means Friends has helped some individual fight against fear and loneliness, words which I hear even now."

A big thank-you to **Georgina Sham**, who took over the baby shower tradition from **Emily Stowell**, came up with the games, and continues to be an extraordinary influence in Wednesday Coffee activities.



Matthew Costello studies the evening's program

The Friends Annual Membership Dinner and Scholarship Ceremony takes place in the spring and unquestionably is one of the highlights of our year. It brings together Friends with UCSD administrators, faculty and staff, international and domestic scholarship recipients, as well as donors and members of the local community. Many guests comment on how much they enjoy meeting people from different areas. Equally supportive words came this year from **Kirk Simmons**, Dean of Global Education: who wrote: "The dinner truly is the 'feel good' event of the year—how can you not walk away inspired?"

In earlier *Newsletter* issues we discussed the dinner proper, the election of Friends officers, and the scope of Friends scholarships, including those awarded to graduate and medical students. In this, the November issue, we will focus on the undergraduate study-abroad scholarship recipients.

Study Abroad returnee, **Michaela Juels**, recipient of the Friends 2017 *Betty Burton Memorial Scholarship*, and one of the evening's main speakers, talked about her fulfilling fall semester in Denmark. A Physiology and Neuroscience major, Michaela addressed her words primarily to her fellow students: "I remember sitting where you all are sitting now. Even though I had already made the commitment to studying abroad, the concept seemed so far away and abstract. Everyone told me,

## Study Abroad

—by Ruth Newmark with  
photos by Justin Costello and Katya Newmark



Michaela Juels

'It's going to change your life,' and 'You're gonna come back a whole new person.' All I could think of was that I was scared, and I had no idea what to expect. If I've learned anything from my experience abroad, it is that you should never let fear hold you back from doing anything in life, including making a speech in front of one hundred and seventy people! I cannot predict the boundless things you will learn abroad. I can only share my story in hopes of shedding light on the wonders to come."

Unsure of her future career path, Michaela confessed: "I had dreams of becoming a doctor but had no true illustration of what it was really like or the kind of person it required. I could recite the Krebs cycle backwards or explain the physiology of the kidney, but I couldn't tell you if I could truly see myself being a doctor." Through her Opportunities Abroad Program, Michaela was able to learn what being a doctor was really like. She observed patient cases "dummy's that can literally throw up and scream at you, cadaver labs, operating rooms, a hysterectomy, and even a live birth. And yes, I did cry, watching that live birth. The most important lesson I learned was less about the daily life of a doctor, and more about what I learned about myself." But it was a lecture by a nuclear medicine physician about his new therapy to treat cancer that finally led Michaela to truly see herself becoming a doctor.



Guests, including Jean Selzer and Christopher Fernandes, listen attentively to our speakers



Four happy scholarship recipients



Georgia Crowne awaits the recipient of the David K. Crowne Scholarship



Katya Newmark and Ruth Newmark present scholarship certificates

“In life there are people who do things they love, and there are people who do things because they have to. I don’t have any evidence to back this up, but from my own personal experiences I have seen how it is always those who do what they love that lead profound, happy and awe-inspiring lives,” observed Michaela. On a trip to Poland, she was able to shadow a young physician, who provided patients with long hours of medical care under difficult conditions and with limited remuneration. Asked why she had become a doctor when she received so little pay and so little respect; the physician had replied: “I know what to do with the skills I have.”

“What I learned from this experience,” Michaela continued, “is that you have to be able to see yourself doing whatever it is you want to accomplish in order to do it. You have to believe you are capable. And that was something I had been missing this whole time.”

Michaela concluded her speech with some inspiring words: “If I have any advice for you, it is to be open. Open to every and all experiences. Try to ignore your biases, try to forget your fears. If you do, I can promise, you will be rewarded with a lifetime of experiences, memories, and knowledge, and I can’t wait to hear what incredible lessons you will learn.”

Upon hearing of their Friends scholarship award, most students respond with ecstatic notes. To quote two of our 2018 scholarship recipients:

✿ *You have no idea how much this means to me!*—**Tanaya Sawant**, an Economics major in Muir College heading to England on EAP

✿ *Thank you so much for investing in my education.* — **Isabella Silva**, a Sixth College Japanese Studies major going to study in Japan

The graduate and medical students were featured in the October *Newsletter*; here follow the names of the undergraduates, along with their study-abroad program, destination, and major.



### Undergraduates Studying Abroad on UC EAP

NAME	DESTINATION	MAJOR
<b>Bohey, Janelle</b>	China	Environmental Policy
<b>Ceballos, Chelsie</b>	Germany	Chemical Engineering
<b>Chan, Crystal</b>	Singapore	Environmental Systems
<b>Chen, Joanna</b>	Thailand	Int’l Studies: Anthropology
<b>Chen, Sabrina*</b>	Scotland	Literature/Writing
*David K. Crowne Memorial Scholarship		
<b>Dugas, Nathalie</b>	France	Cognitive Neuroscience
<b>Dusto, Jennifer</b>	Australia	Marine Biology
<b>Fernandes, Christopher</b>	Argentina & Chile	Human Biology
<b>Javaherpour, Lily</b>	Spain	Physiology & Neuroscience
<b>Kawakami, Matthew</b>	Argentina & Chile	Human Development
<b>Le, Tina</b>	Netherlands	Psychology
<b>Ma, Yulin</b>	Scotland	Human Development
<b>Montijo, Marina</b>	Spain & Italy	Political Science
<b>Morejón-Ramirez, Laura</b>	France	Aerospace Engineering
<b>Murase, Ryan</b>	Denmark	Computer Science
<b>Pang, Elizabeth</b>	Japan	Literature/Writing
<b>Sawant, Tanaya</b>	England	Economics
<b>Silva, Isabella</b>	Japan	Japanese Studies
<b>Tran, Huy</b>	South Korea	Mechanical Engineering
<b>Wang, Tiffany</b>	New Zealand	Chemical Engineering
<b>Van Brummelen, Ryan</b>	Switzerland	Int’l Studies: Political Science
<b>Yew, Kimberly</b>	Taiwan	Human Biology
<b>Zhang, Victoria</b>	South Korea	Int’l Studies: Business



## Undergraduates Studying Abroad on OAP

NAME	DESTINATION	MAJOR
Bryce, Timarie	Netherlands & Belgium	Visual Arts/Media
Liu, Scott	Spain	Cognitive Science
Weerts, Madeline	Spain	Psychology

**Friends award 74 scholarships  
valued at \$128,000**



## Undergraduates Studying Abroad on Global Seminars

NAME	DESTINATION	MAJOR
Alarcon, April	Germany	Urban Studies & Planning
Bagcus, Jemima Ruth	Greece	Psychology
Duran, Elizabeth	Switzerland	Earth Science
Eid, Hassan	France	Electrical Engineering
Estrada, Serina	Switzerland	Theatre
Fujimoto, Aki	South Africa & Zambia	Int'l Studies: Political Science
Garrafa-Luna, James	Spain	Chemistry
Lasher, Christopher	Italy	NanoEngineering
Litto, Sarah*	Italy	Mechanical Engineering
*Betty Burton Memorial Scholarship		
Luong, Jacinda	Czech Republic	Political Science
Mumford, Joshua	France	Aerospace Engineering
Quon, Julia	Thailand	Global Health
Roden, Ryan	Czech Republic	Political Science
Stull, Nathan	Greece	Political Science
Wilson, Laura	South Africa & Zambia	Int'l Studies: Sociology
Wong, Kirsten	Italy	Bioengineering

Friends are extremely grateful to all who help make our scholarship program flourish. We cherish the continued partnership with our university colleagues and thank all who contribute so generously to our scholarship fund.

Focusing on the value of scholarships, **Ryan Murase**, a Warren College Computer Science student, insightfully wrote in his scholarship application: "Scholarships are so much more than money. It is someone telling me that they believe in me and the path I am on. It makes me want to give to others, and I hope someday I can fund scholarships for others."

The Friends Scholarship Committee awarded him a scholarship for his planned study in Denmark, but was saddened when family obligations forced Ryan to withdraw from the program. True to form, he graciously thanked Friends for our generosity and support.



Many stayed after the ceremony to chat: Michaela Juels, Katya Newmark, Ruth Newmark, Lily Javaherpour, Tiffany Wang, and Study Abroad staff members, Lisa Armstrong and Jim Galvin



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# SCHOLARSHIP LETTERS

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Dear Friends of the International Center,

My name is **Maxie Gluckman** and I am writing you from Central America where I have spent the summer exploring the best ways to wield research as a tool for change.

History has shown that every year thousands of children leave Honduras and Guatemala to head north in search of opportunity—many traveling the treacherous journey alone. Just last week, when conducting a survey at a high school in the middle of a banana plantation, 17 of 23 students openly shared with me their desires and plans to leave Honduras in the near future, many attributing this to the lack of safety and jobs.

This school forms part of a larg-

er study I am conducting that seeks to understand the preparedness of rural schools to serve students with international educational experiences referred to as “transnational students.”

The reality is that while many may leave for various reasons, children of schooling age are also returning to these countries in increasing numbers—many against their will. Research on this field in the region is limited and can yield key understandings for schools as to the needs of their diverse student population, as well as provide support to teachers of transnational students.

It is with your support that I have

been able to advance in this work, as well as further my understanding of teachers’ experiences in rural schools in Central America. This trip has served to strengthen my partnership with 18 local schools and over 150 teachers serving over 2,000 students.

As I progress in my Ph.D. journey, I carry the mission of the Friends of the International Center with me to “support international education, foster friendship, understanding, and cooperation within the international community.” Humbled and thankful, I remain committed to working for change until every child has the opportunity and right to a quality education.

Grateful and full of hope,  
*Maxie Gluckman*  
Department of Education Studies

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Dear Friends of the International Center,

In no way can my words possibly do justice to the unbelievable experience I had in Rome. However, I can say with absolute certainty that it was the best trip I have ever embarked on. My total experience of the city is due to three things: 1) the city itself, 2) the classes, and 3) the people I went with.

I always dreamed of going to Italy, especially to Rome, and it was no disappointment. I felt connected with the city while I was there—I felt at home. I know that sounds odd to feel at home in a completely foreign country, but I did. My Italian heritage, engineering mind, and obsession with the Ancient Greek and Roman gods made me think and feel like a Roman. Even the Romans mistook me for a local a few times, when they tried to talk to me in Italian, addressing my peers in English.

Rome was an amazing place to explore. We saw the Pantheon, the Coliseum, the Tiber River, the Vatican, the Sistine Chapel, the Forum, and so much more. There is just so much mind-blowing history all throughout the city of Rome. Some buildings are over two thousand years old and they are still standing! As an engineer, I could only dream of building something that permanent.

Although exploring Rome was fantastic, my whole experience with the city really should be credited to my classes and professor, Dr. **Pasquale**. Anyone can wander around Rome, see some sights, and enjoy herself, but if you really



want to appreciate what is around you, you need to dig into the geometry and engineering behind all the buildings. There is a reason every ancient building in Rome is aesthetically pleasing—because it was mathematically designed to be so.

Knowing the math behind the buildings added to my overall appreciation of them. The Colosseum takes your breath away simply because it is large and is still standing after two millennia. But what if I told you the layout for the oval shape was constructed off a geometric sketch using only a compass and a straight edge? It is unbelievable, right? It does not seem possible that something like the Colosseum came from two simple tools. Dr. Pasquale is a walking encyclopedia of the city of Rome. All his extra fun facts and stories just made each sight more real and impressive.

I had a wonderful time in the city, but it was with everyone in my program, that I truly got to enjoy the social aspect of Rome.

We ate, cooked, shopped, learned, and adventured to other cities. I would never have been brave enough to venture throughout Italy by myself, but with my peers, I got to see Pompeii, the Amalfi Coast, Tivoli, Florence, and Venice. And none of those trips would have been as enjoyable without everyone there together. We all hiked Mount Vesuvius, relaxed on the beach, wandered through the villas, climbed the Duomo (565 steps), and got lost in Venice. We laughed, we cried, we sweated, we watched *The Lizzie McGuire Movie*, we became a family.

I learned that my Italian heritage is something many other people share, which makes my family more normal than I thought we were. I also learned that there is beauty in what I do, even though society has deemed STEM work to be cold, hard, and calculating, I got to see engineering and geometry create true art that has lasted thousands of years.

Lastly, I learned that I can make true friends even where I least expect to. I thought I might get along with one or two people in my group, but I never imagined that all ten of us would become our own little family unit, or that we would all choose to travel and live together.

I want to thank you so much for helping me fund my trip to Rome. I could spend hours talking about so many reasons why this trip will be one I will never forget, but even then, I do not think I could fully describe how amazing my Global Seminar Mathematical Beauty in Rome was. But as a Roman at heart, I think this should do: *Veni, vidi, vici*.

*Sarah Litto*

Sixth College, Mechanical Engineering major

*Friends Betty Burton Scholarship*

Dear FIC,

My most memorable experience from studying abroad was being in Paris, France when they won the World Cup. It's hard to believe it wasn't planned. I know many sports fans in the U.S. and I've seen how crazy fans get after Super Bowl wins, but I have never seen anything that came close to the football [soccer] fans in France. They are die-hard fans; I really think they would die for their team.

After every win and every goal scored before and after the final game, fans were going wild. They honked their car horns; they stopped buses and the bus driver let them come inside to high five fellow fans



while he drove; they set off fireworks and flares; they chanted so many different catchy chants; they climbed poles, stood on top of big trucks, and threw open beer cans, bottles, you name it in the air.

The only celebratory action they added after they won the World Cup

was jumping inside public fountains and sitting outside of their car windows while speeding down streets and honking their horns. It was such a beautiful event to witness. The whole city of Paris was in a state of celebration and it didn't end until early the next morning.

Just imagine being in a city where everyone is happy at the same time. I was high-fiving, smiling, and chanting with strangers for hours!

*Serina Estrada*

Global Seminar: Geology in Geneva, Switzerland

Muir College, Theatre major

## Midway Reflections on My Global Seminar in Thailand

I have always been interested in learning how culture can influence the way people see their sexuality. Growing up in a Christian household, especially as a child of Chinese immigrants, sex and identity were things we never discussed.

During the first few weeks in class, Sex and Health in Southeast Asia, with **Dr. Kang**, we learned about how gender is associated with sexuality. Here in Thailand, people generally see themselves as a specific gender based on who they are attracted to; of course, there are many exceptions to this case. Men who have sex with men do not necessarily identify themselves as being gay. In many Southeast Asian countries being gay can be a criminal offense, so people do not label themselves as such.

In a lecture by Social Scientist **Kath Khangpiboon**, co-founder of the Thai Transgender Alliance, we learned that Thailand is not as LGBTQA+ friendly as it may seem from some of its government policies. There are few rights for members of the transgender community. Their identification cards, which allow them to demonstrate Thai citizen-

ship, do not reflect their gender only their sex. Thus, if someone was born with male genitals at birth but identifies as a female, that person is not allowed to change the identity on his card from “male” to “female.”

Transgenders are discriminated in the workplace. Kath Khangpiboon is one of the first successful transgender academics who won a case against her university that did not hire her based on her background. She fought back saying the accusations that she was “unfit” to be a lecturer were “illegitimate.” Eventually she won her case, and was hired after a three-year court battle. Hearing her story was inspiring. Transgender people are not in places of power in Thai society, so hearing her story was eye opening.

*Julia Quon*

Marshalll College, Global Health major

*“As a future healthcare worker, I know I will treat every patient with the dignity and respect they deserve” wrote Julia Quon in her scholarship application —Ed.*



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