



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

Newsletter

Volume XLVII, No. 8

April 2020

President's Column

Dear Friends,

Continuing my musings from last month's column inviting discourse about the continuing role of Friends of the International Center in today's society. I trust you are aware that the issues we face are not so dissimilar from those being experienced by other non-profits and even on the larger geopolitical stage.

Even simple things as how we talk about our country, ourselves, and those we serve is challenging. America has long-been called a melting pot society, yet I predict in some short period of time this expression will fall into disuse since its very connotation speaks to the idea of a predominant culture to which other cultures are added. Take a moment to reflect that many Californians were under the misguided belief that Anglo culture was the dominant culture, and only recently, bolstered by statistics, have Californians finally accepted that the predominant culture is Hispanic/LatinX ... please, allow me to group together though I admit the very act of grouping may understandably cause offense.

The terminology we use when referring to ourselves and those we serve has changed over the past fifty-eight years and continues to change. Many once com-

monplace words are now deemed politically incorrect and/or simply insensitive. Clear examples: foreign/foreigners, third world, and less clear: lands, dependents, beginning. Has it been easy for you to stay abreast of change? Are you aware that in the job market there is debate about whether or not it is permissible to ask where someone is from?

How should we talk about ourselves and those we serve without being divisive or alienating? How do you feel about the words "locals" and "international visitors?" Granted, these words are not ideal, though in my opinion preferable to using residents (legally charged) and immigration/visa classifications –within the University this latter practice is the norm and admittedly a convenient shorthand. Do you have other suggested terminology?

Can you identify the needs of our present international visitors? Are you aware that many arrive already embraced by a local community that speaks their language, shares their culture, and offers the type of support Friends provides? Granted this welcome differs from Friends, since there is little opportunity for cross-cultural exchange; however, if this is what current international visitors want, then ...? Are you aware



**PLEASE VERIFY
Programs may be cancelled.**

April 1, 15, 29: **Family Orientation**, 9:15

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

April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: **Mommy/Daddy & Me**, 1:45-2:45

April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: **Everyday English**, 10:00-11:30

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

April 4, 11, 18, 25: **Yoga**, 11:00

April 6, 13, 20, 27: **Tai Chi**, 2:00-3:00

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

April 7, 14, 21, 28: **FIC Craft Circle**, 1:00-3:00

April 9: **Cooking Class**, 9:00-Noon

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

April 18: **Friends Dinner Social**, 6:00

that an increasing number of international visitors attend our programs for shorter lengths of

time and that most trailing spouses (another questionable phrase) come as dual professionals, equally eager to gain work experience in the United States? Have you considered that the internet and access to informational resources available around-the-clock and at the University make our publications and limited program hours less practical for those accustomed to receiving assistance 24/7?

And what about the desires of our local community? Are you one of our many locals who wish to increase your own travel or otherwise enjoy untethered time rather than volunteering on a regular basis? Are you one who finds the University campus less accessible, such that you do not attend/volunteer? Have you considered that our programs operate year-round and require coordination of occasional volunteers?

And, I would be remiss not to mention that Friends faces the same problem being faced by many non-profits nationwide: attracting new Board members. Have you considered serving on the Board? It may not be the most alluring activity, but it is essential to support the organization. Do you cast your vote each year for our elections, or assume it is not necessary? Do you wish to see change on the board and/or in Friends, and if so, how do you propose this be accomplished?

Please do not misinterpret this column as saying that I no longer believe Friends is relevant as this could not be further from my sentiment: I strongly believe in all that Friends represents and strives to achieve. Instead, please interpret this missive as stewarding discussion to ensure the organization's ability to adapt to changing times and to seek greater involvement by our membership in this process.

Katya Newmark
PresFIC@ucsd.edu

Nominating Committee Report: Election of Officers for 2020-2021

I'm pleased to report that the Nominating Committee has a recommended slate of officers to present to our membership, but first I must extend my heartfelt and enthusiastic thanks to the other committee members who all volunteered their time to this effort. They are **Elisabeth Marti, Eileen Tozer, Yukina Nakazawa, and Georgina Sham.**

We have consulted with each of the proposed officers to confirm that they would agree to serve if nominated and elected. Fortunately for us, each has agreed.

The Board approved the proposed slate at its February 11, 2020 meeting, endorsing the Nominating Committee's belief that it be prudent to nominate the current officers to serve another term, thus providing some stability and expert knowledge of the Friends of the International Center dynamics at a time that the university is discussing plans for a more permanent space with a more cohesive grouping of our organization.

The Friends Nominating Committee recommends that the following slate be nominated to serve as our officers for the 2020-2021 fiscal year:

President:	Katya Newmark
Vice President, Membership:	Georgina Sham
Recording Secretary:	Jean Selzer
Treasurer:	Linda Ferri
Corresponding Secretary:	Renate Schmid-Schoenbein

Elections will take place on Tuesday evening, May 19, 2020 at the Friends Annual Membership and Scholarship Awards Dinner to be held at the Student Services Center Multipurpose Room. Further nominations may be made from the floor, but must have received prior approval from the nominee.

We invite all Friends members in good standing to voice their vote. Should you be unable to attend the meeting, you may vote by proxy. For convenience, we have prepared a Proxy Statement on the back page, but please note that it may take up to three weeks for U.S. postal service mail to reach our campus address. We therefore suggest that you send the signed proxy statement via e-mail, to icfriends@ucsd.edu, marking the subject line: Attention Parliamentarian.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Ferri
Nominating Committee Chair
Friends of the International Center, UCSD

Captivating Colombia

—by Katya Newmark

Our final Friends Dinner Social for the year will be on April 18, 2020, at Village 15 meeting room, starting at 6:00 p.m. and is entitled Captivating Colombia. Do you know that Colombia is the only South American country with a coastline on both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea? Do you know that Colombia produces between 70-90% of the total global emerald supply and that the beautiful green color is the result of impurities of chromium and/or vanadium? I imagine that most of you have enjoyed a cup of Colombia's world-famous Arabica coffee, but do you know that coffee growing is the largest source of rural employment in the country?



We have a fun-filled evening in store for you and a tasty menu representing a number of the country's

Make Your Reservation:
Friends Dinner Social: Colombia
Saturday, April 18, 2020, 6:00 p.m., Village 15
<https://fdscolombia2020.eventbrite.com>
Reservations due by Friday, April 10

favorite regional dishes, although absent will be hormigas culonas—fried ants that are a traditional delicacy and which locals believe to be an aphrodisiac.

After dinner guests will enjoy a concert of traditional Colombian music performed by **Alex Arango**, a pianist and accordionist from Medellín, Colombia. Alex is also a recent graduate from UC San Diego, where he studied jazz piano and music technology.

While we cannot predict how COVID-19 may play out, should you be interested in attending, please make your reservations as soon as possible since our dinners sell out.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

We encourage you to visit UC San Diego's webpage at <http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/covid-19> and use the many links on this site to stay up-to-date on best practices, advisories, etc. regarding Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Friends is following the policies and guidance promulgated by UC San Diego with a bit of added precaution. At press time, UC San Diego is requesting that anyone traveling from CDC level 3 countries (mainland China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea) self-isolate upon arrival for fourteen days (with a notation that the list of countries might expand). Friends has broadened its request to ask that anyone who has traveled self-isolate upon arrival for fourteen days with the belief that we are doing all we can to protect our attendees and to prevent further spreading of the virus.

Needless to say, anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of any illness is respectfully asked to stay home.

We ask that you check our calendar webpage icfriends.ucsd.edu and/or contact program leaders to learn of any last-minute cancellations and, in advance, thank you for your flexibility.

Katya Newmark
President, Friends of the International Center
PresFIC@ucsd.edu

Mark This Date



Tuesday, May 19, 2020
Annual Membership Dinner



Election of Officers
Celebration of
Scholarship Awards

Program Changes

At press time, the directives in response to the spreading of the coronavirus were changing not merely from day to day, but so frequently that it was difficult to keep up. How to proceed with planning gatherings, large or small, in many cases was left to individuals. Some of Friends program leaders cancelled meetings, reevaluating decisions on a regular basis, while others continued to meet. Gus' Conversation Table cancelled the March 10 meeting, in part because heavy rains were forecast, as did the Mommy/Daddy & Me class in the belief that children were apt to spread infections. Everyday English suspended classes until further notice. The Resale Shop was discussing the matter, as was everyone else.



In consultation with Chef **Vaughn Vargus**, our Friends President and co-chair of the cooking class, decided to cancel both the March and April sessions: "The culinary team is unable to offer a hands-on experience and this defeats one of the primary goals of holding this class. I am really sorry that this decision had to be made: the spring menu was really good. Knowing that it is difficult to attract participants if we have no programs running, it is not clear how we will address May, even if policies change."

In the same week, Wednesday Coffee planned to meet, asking participants to bring a large rock to stabilize the butterfly desk mobiles that crafters would be making. All other materials were to be provided.

Understandably plans for Easter are on hold.

Donations

We acknowledge with gratitude the donations made by **Danièle Rodé**, **Christa McReynolds**, **Ariane & Hannes Pessentheiner**, **Carol Robertson**, and **Nikki & Larry Waters** as part of their reservations to the Friends February 29 Indonesian dinner, a fundraiser for scholarships. We also thank **Mitchell Furumoto**, **Kim Signoret-Paar**, and **Ronald and Nicola Ranson** for their donations to the Friends scholarship fund.

A special thank-you goes to **Jane Kalionzes**, **Mary & Victor Dhooge**, and **Carol Robertson** for their latest contributions to the *Teclé Kidane-Mariam Scholarship*.

Many of our scholarship recipients write about the significance of a Friends scholarship. In a recent e-mail, **Margherita Capriotti**, who came to UCSD from Italy to earn a Ph.D. in Structural Engineering, revealed that she had moved to Rochester Minnesota to pursue research at the Mayo Clinic.

"I am currently a Post-Doc in the Department of Radiology, where I continue my investigation

on ultrasonic wave propagation and non-destructive techniques. It has been challenging switching fields and laboratory, but the motivation is definitely strong and the intellectual stimuli are extremely intriguing, keeping my enthusiasm high and my research wide-open. Also, I am embracing a whole new set of activities and winter experiences, joining the Mayo Research Fellow Association's events and keeping the long-lasting tradition of international dinners.

"I want to deeply thank the Friends of the International Center for awarding me and my research the *Carol & Stuart Smith Scholarship*: it encouraged my commitment to integration, open-mindedness, and collaboration, together with supporting my research career. ... Again, thank you so much for the award and the great event on the ceremony night. It is quite rare to see so many different people—in nationality, personality, and background—share the same ideals and support each other in one place. I was very happy about it, felt understood, and free at the

same time. Thank you!"

Please don't forget when ordering items from Amazon to use the AmazonSmile website, indicating that you wish to have a portion of the purchase price go to Friends of the International Center. The latest quarterly donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation was \$17.97. The amount may be tiny, but is appreciated; as is the money generated by those who purchase the flowers after our special events.



Scholarship Committee Meeting

—by Ruth Newmark

The Scholarship Committee met on March 9 to select the graduate and medical students Friends intend to offer a 2020 fellowship. (Undergraduate study abroad scholarships will be addressed in April.)

Prior to the meeting, committee members reviewed 48 applications from students working towards an advanced degree (mainly a Ph.D.) in fields ranging from anthropology to visual arts, as well as medicine. The candidates' citizenships were equally diverse (among them a student from Armenia, likely our first applicant from that country), and, of course, included a significant number of students from the United States.

Selected were 30 graduate students and four medical students each to receive \$2,000.

Many applicants mentioned in their essay what an important role a Friends award can play in their life. One pointed out that many graduate students at UC San Diego "pay 60% of their income on housing. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development qualifies individuals and families who pay more than 30% as 'cost burdened,' leaving little for other expenses." Our money can provide considerable relief.

Another student, **Nicole King**, from Austria, a Ph.D. student in Visual Arts, wrote what others expressed in similar words: "There is a real economic hardship for international students without

external financial support, as work authorization and eligibility for grants are extremely limited. In my department, international students receive two years of funding, while its programs are set up to last longer than that. Our situation is further aggravated by expenses for traveling home (often required for maintaining visa status)."

Also frequently mentioned was that a Friends fellowship made it possible for recipients to attend workshops and conferences essential to the completion of their degree in that the award provided them an opportunity to present their work, to network, and to exchange ideas with colleagues that might lead to future collaboration.

Gabriel Carrasco Escobar, a Ph.D. student in Public Health, closed his application with this sentiment: "This award will help me to build on my previous research on new technologies such as drones and GPS-trackers to better understand the malaria epidemiology in the Peruvian Amazon, as well as articulating efforts between researchers at UC San Diego, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, and at the Health Ministry in Iquitos (Amazon Region), and officers of the malaria control program in Peru. Doing this, I will involve my colleagues and mentors at UCSD to better understand the Peruvian context and challenges towards the elimination of malaria. This interaction with such a diverse academic body at UPCH and UCSD



Ruth Newmark, Katya Newmark, Joan Adamo, and Kathleen Micheletti
Absent: Jeri Abernathy, participating from the state of Washington

will be beneficial for both institutions and their members."

Sheena Cruz, one of the medical students, revealed: "By participating in this international clinical experience in the Philippines, I will be given the extraordinary chance to fully engage in a primary care and public health setting and grow as a critical, independent thinker. My goal is to use these clinical experiences to become a well-rounded physician specializing in Preventive Medicine."

It was good to read that **Jessica Ng**, working on her doctorate in Climate Science at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, referred favorably to having received a Friends award in 2018. "A second scholarship from the Friends of the International Center would help me carry out a full field campaign to sample groundwater throughout the Salar de Atacama [in Chile], supplementing the National Geographic Explorers Grant, which is partly for laboratory expenses. As I have learned, starting off less financially constrained allows for more thorough planning and preparation for smoother fieldwork, and it enables me to better handle unexpected obstacles in the field, which are sure to come up."

Friends of the International Center can be assured that our scholarships make life a little bit easier for the recipients.

Friends Volunteer Hours
for February 2020
843 = 4.79 FTEs



Tana Toraja houses



Liz Fong Wills in spectacular manta ray hat



Jeff Selzer, Katya Newmark, and
Matthew Costello



Christa McReynolds



Nancy Homeyer

Another Memorable Fundraising Dinner!

—by Liz Fong Wills with photographs by
Chris Wills, Katya Newmark, and Mark Newmark

The February 29th Indonesian dinner was the best **Newmark & Company** production ever! For all of us who were lucky enough to attend, the gamelan orchestra was memorable. If you closed your eyes, the sounds were enough to transport you to Indonesia. Then you opened your eyes and saw that you were in the Great Hall at UCSD's International House.

Thank you **Katya** for your Indonesian photos shown on the big screen before dinner. I find it fascinating that your pictures do not overlap with Chris's, but complement them. Yours show people and food; Chris's focus is on insects, birds, animals, and underwater denizens. It's great to have the balance.

The centerpieces on each table were filled with pincushion protea from **Candace Kohl's** garden and handmade paper flowers copied by Katya and her daughter **Danya** from a Balinese festival that Katya and **Matthew Costello** were lucky enough to see. Candace has the artistry of a florist, the skills of a gardener, and the persuasiveness of a good salesperson: she was able to sell most of the centerpieces to help add to the Friends scholarship fund.

The decorations were "over the top." **Nancy Homeyer** lent us various hand-batiked fabrics for which Indonesia is justly famous, and **Christa McReynolds** lent us wonderful Indonesian puppets. **Katya Newmark** and **Lily Lin** contributed fabrics that Matthew Costello managed to hang on the walls using only blue painter's tape. Southeast Asian kaffir lime branches from the **Wills' "orchard,"** with their unusual bumpy fruit, filled a vase on the drinks table.

As usual, **Ruth Newmark** arranged for us to hear from one of the students whose research has been aided by the Ethnic Dinners' scholarships. Ph.D. candidate **Thomas Chan**, a 2019 scholarship recipient, told us a little about his research in Modern Chinese History.

Linda Ferri and **Barbara Fitzsimmons** took care of the guest check-in. **Mark Newmark** and **Justin Costello** lent their skills in keeping the computer goblins at bay.

As someone who, with the help of her buddies, organized and cooked the previous Indonesian dinner in this long-running Friends Ethnic Dinner series, back in November 1996, I have to say that this dinner had some real highpoints: the passion fruit juice served before dinner; the krupuk udang (shrimp crackers) that were



Protea from Candace Kohl's garden

not in the least bit greasy, despite the cook having had to fry enough to serve 100 guests; the wonderfully tender and flavorful beef satay; and an interesting version of gado gado with green tomatoes, amongst other Indonesian dishes.

My husband, **Chris Wills**, Professor of Biological Sciences Emeritus, was happy to share his photos of some of the highlights from our seven trips to Indonesia, just days before leaving for the 8th trip. Indonesia is a photographer's and scientist's delight, and Chris hopes to be able to show you photos from the next trip at a future Ethnic Dinner.

Most amazing was the contribution of **Georgina Sham**. Georgina has been responsible for making the nametags, organizing the printed program, and doing the seating arrangements for each of the fundraising Ethnic Dinners since 1986 (34 years!). Unfortunately, she needed a hip replacement operation five days before the February dinner. But that didn't slow her down, and Georgina ably managed to organize and print everything for us ahead of time. Talk about true dedication! And we are glad to report that she is recovering with amazing speed, and will soon be back doing the folk dancing that she loves.

As usual, the Ethnic Dinner Team managed to create another memorable night!

Many favorable post-dinner



Great Hall with seated guests and gamelan instruments

comments streamed in. Wrote **Barbara Fitzsimmons**: "Well, Katya you've done it again! What a terrific dinner and program last night. It was really such a good time—every little detail and the food and entertainment—superb! I love my bamboo straw [brought back by Katya from Indonesia that each guest found at our place setting]. Thanks so much for all your efforts. It was wonderful!"

Another guest, **Laurette Verbinski**, enthused: "Lovely evening last night. I especially enjoyed the music. And, of course, Chris's talk was amazing and informative, as usual. I did not know about the cave paintings of 44,000 years ago.



Liz and Chris Wills

*Editors Note: We would be remiss if we didn't thank UC San Diego Catering for its willingness to embrace the requested thematic menu and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, **Alysson Satterlund**, for financial support.*

*Our praise also goes out to **Liz Fong Wills** for contributions large and small. Her dedication to the Ethnic Dinner series remains unmatched. Through her and **Chris**' adventurous travels—which they generously share in words and photographs—the two of them have cultivated a devoted following that loyally attends our Ethnic Dinners for no other reason than to follow vicariously in their footsteps. Liz and Chris have opened the world to many of us.*

***Mark Newmark**, on leave for a few days from his job in Qatar, fondly recalled the many Friends events he has attended over the years, and how Chris's illustrated talks inspired him to travel. About the recent Indonesian dinner, he raved: "What an achievement! A stunning venue, dish after dish of exotic food, an enthusiastic crowd, a vibrant musical performance, gorgeous decor, a compelling graduate student spokesperson, a captivating narrated slideshow, a talented MC."*

SCHOLARSHIP REPORTS

Supercomputer Workshop in New Delhi

I am a graduate student in mechanical engineering and I work on large simulations of fluid flows in nature. My recent work pertains to studying the interaction of tides and currents with islands. Such interactions can help understand sediment transport, patterns of phytoplankton growth around islands, etc.

There are two distinct aspects to my research. Firstly, a research team at Scripps Institution plans an expedition to specific “hot spots” in the ocean (e.g. regions where turbulent interaction between currents are observed) for data collection. While flow patterns in the sea are analysed and published in journals, numerical simulations are undertaken to reproduce these climate features.

This brings me to the second aspect of my research. I am extensively involved in numerical simulations using input data from research at SIO. I make simplifications to the geographical location to feed it into my numerical model. Accurate data collection from ship-based observations is extremely difficult. Numerical simulations often extrapolate this data, thus extracting additional information about sea surface speeds, heating/cooling of the sea surface, etc. at locations that are inaccessible to field research. Thus these simulations serve as support systems for ship and satellite oceanic observations.

With advancements in computing, researchers rely on supercomputers for speeding up their simulations. The Friends of the International Center fellowship enabled me to attend a workshop in New Delhi, India on exascale computing, organized by the National Science Foundation. The workshop was focused on tuning our numerical model to enhance computational efficiency and handling of large data. Summit is the first exascale supercomputer capable of performing 10^{15} operations every second and is now operational at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. This workshop was a huge learning experience for me, and some of the ideas from the workshop are now being tested in my numerical model. Additionally, collaborations with professors at IIT Delhi have been established for my project during my stay in India.

I am immensely grateful to Friends of the International Center for your monetary support, without which all this would not have been possible.

Pranav Sureh Puthan from India

Amman, Jordan

It's 6 p.m. overlooking the city of Amman. I'm surrounded by the cool calm breeze of a late evening. The sun is setting, and the orange glow of twilight gently traces over the uniform limestone of the Arab buildings.

This image remains one of the most memorable from my time in Amman, Jordan. Filled with discovery, adventure, and awe, my seven weeks studying and traveling throughout Jordan were incredible.

For a majority of my time, I worked with physicians at the Ministry of Health to conduct surveys and focus groups on the barriers and facilitators to improving mental health care across Jordan. This process not only enabled us to gather valuable information regarding the current state of affairs, but also to learn from the community and gather suggestions for ways that we might improve care in the future. With the results from this project, I am now in the process of writing about our research with hopes to publish a paper sometime this year!

In my off-time, I had a number of amazing adventure highlights: riding a camel for the first time in Wadi Rum; enjoying Arab tea at a rest stop at the famous Petra ruins; meeting a fellow medical student from another country (Hungary) as a part of a group that scaled the water-filled canyon of Wadi Mujib; and lathering myself up in mud as a part of a local do-it-yourself spa treatment in the Dead Sea.

With all these great findings and adventures came some great challenges from which I was able to learn a number of lessons about myself and those around me. I was gratified by my ability to try to connect and push myself to go out. At first, it was easy to stay home and watch Netflix on my computer, but by tapping into my in-



Medical study in Jordan; Joebert Rosal third from left

ner curiosity to go places and meet people, I was able to learn that the Jordanian people are hospitable and resilient. Everywhere I went, I would be greeted "Welcome to Jordan" by the locals.

Despite the struggles they face both around and within their country, they maintain this expression of hospitality, as well as a respect for family and a love for others that I will take with me long after my travels.

All of these adventures would not have been possible without the generous aid of the Friends of International Center, which covered my flight and most of my living expenses in Amman. You made this wonderful journey possible and for that I am grateful.

Joebert Rosal
Medical Student



Jade Hookham dressed in Korean finery

Dear Ruth, Katya, and the entire Friends community,

I have just returned from a life-changing semester in Seoul, South Korea.

For four months, I was a student at one of Korea's top three schools: Yonsei University. Founded in the 19th century by American missionaries, Yonsei has long since been a place where domestic and foreign students alike could learn, live, and thrive. I stayed near the East Gate of campus, in a dormitory for exchange students called International House. True to its name, I met plenty of students from all around the U.S. and beyond. I befriended a Russian girl who is fluent in Korean, a Vietnamese girl who goes to school in the Netherlands, and two Duke students with whom I later travelled to Japan, just to name a few. And, of course, plenty of University of California students littered the halls, too.

As for my classes, I took the opportunity to learn as much about my host country as I could; I enrolled in Korean history, Korean cinema, Korean media communication, and semi-intensive Korean language. To my surprise, these courses overlapped quite a bit, providing me with heaps of knowledge, which could apply to my everyday life. The language class in particular was helpful, bolstering my vocabulary and improving my speaking. It was very much a point of pride for me that I could hold my own in a conversation with a local waitress or taxi driver.

Thanks to Korea's cheap and convenient public transportation, I could travel all over without worrying too much about my wallet. Out of all the cities I went to, a place called Jeonju has to be my favorite. I ventured there with some friends during *Chuseok*, a traditional Korean holiday that celebrates the autumn harvest; the closest American equivalent would have to be Thanksgiving. Because of this holiday, we could spend four days in Jeonju instead of, say, just a weekend. And not only that, we could see throngs of families who had come home from Seoul to celebrate, clad in traditional *hanbok* dress.

We were lucky enough to join in the festivities, renting *hanbok* to wear at the behest of some very persuasive shop ladies. The gowns were absolutely gorgeous, despite being a bit heavy and difficult to walk in. We took photos in front of old-school Korean houses called *hanok* (not to be confused with the aforementioned *hanbok*), feasted on the local delicacy that is Jeonju-style *bibimbap*, and drank *makgeolli* rice wine aplenty. Needless to say, I had a lovely time.

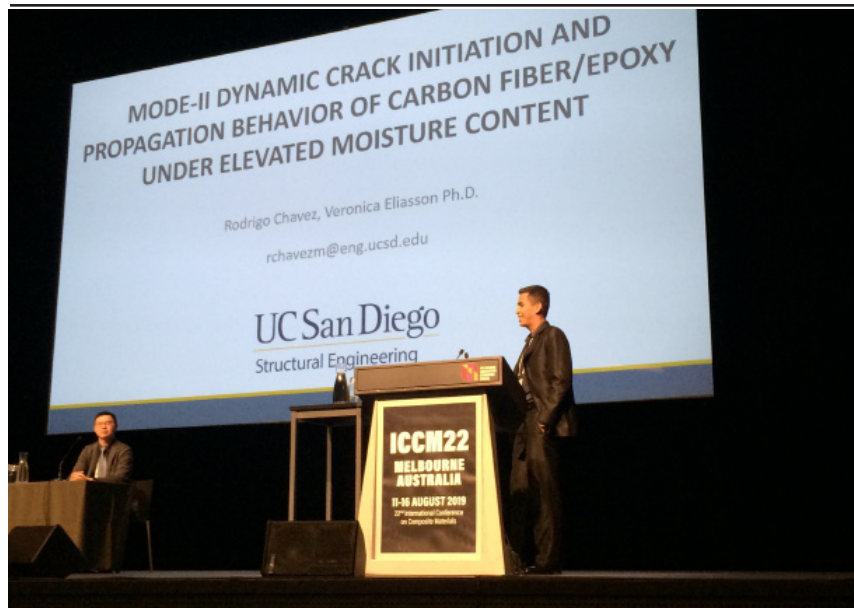
Though I've only given you a small glimpse into my life in Korea, I hope that reading my letter was enjoyable! I would like to thank Friends of the International Center once again for giving me the opportunity to live happily and comfortably while abroad. This experience has only sparked a renewed interest in travelling for me, which makes me beyond excited about what the future holds.

Jade Hookham
Cognitive Neuroscience major

Travels to Conferences and to India

I express my deep and gratitude and sincere thanks to the Friends of International Center Scholarship Committee for considering me for an award. This recognition provided me a strong impetus for continuing my graduate studies at the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry of UC San Diego. Currently, I am carrying out my doctoral research in the laboratory of Prof. **Neal Devaraj** in the area of chemical biology. My research interests include synthetic life, lipid materials, and origins of life studies. An important aspect of our research is attending internationally reputed conferences, where we can convey our findings to a broad scientific audience. The fellowship helped me immensely to meet the expenses for attending some of the leading conferences in my research areas such as the Biophysical Society Annual Meeting and American Chemical Society National Meeting. The fellowship also helped me to meet my expenses during a recent visit to India, where I visited several academic institutions for collaborative research work.

Ahanjit Bhattacharya from India, *Luna Fung Scholarship*



Friends of the International Center Scholarship Report

My research deals with the dynamic fracture mechanics of composite materials in marine conditions. This means that I get to study how materials, like carbon fiber, break and fail during very violent events when they have been exposed to an aquatic environment. This kind of research is useful, since now more ships are starting to use composite materials in their construction and any ship can be exposed to violent events, such as wave slam.

I performed experiments where I launched projectiles from a pressurized gas gun and hit carbon fiber plates. These plates were submerged in water for several weeks before the experiments so that they absorb water. The objective was to compare how plates that absorbed water performed, when compared to plates that didn't absorb any water.

The experiment takes place in a fraction of a second, so in order to be able to gather information we record the experiment with an ultra high-speed camera. This camera records the experiment at 2 million frames per second. By doing this, we are able to gather all of our experimental data without needing to install sensors on the plate. So far, we have discovered that water can have a detrimental effect on certain types of carbon fiber plates. However, there is still more research to do, to make sure we can safely apply these results in seafaring vessels.

The Friends of the International Center scholarship has allowed me to be able to focus on my research and help communicate it. Thanks to this scholarship I was able to partially fund conference travels. It gave me financial backing to preregister for conferences and therefore secure my participation.

After receiving the scholarship, I was able to attend the Society of Experimental Mechanics 2019 Annual Conference in Reno, Nevada and the 2019 International Conference on Composite Materials in Melbourne, Australia. Attending both of these conferences really helped in my research, both by networking with other researchers and by showing them my research.

These opportunities, in turn, helped me improve my research as well as bring other funding opportunities into my lab. I am extremely grateful to the Friends of the International Center for the impact they had on my Ph.D. journey and the opportunities it allowed me to get. Obtaining this scholarship was a great honor and the opportunities it provided won't be forgotten.

Rodrigo Chavez from Peru

Department of Structural Engineering

Kant Studies in Berlin

It is my pleasure to write with an update on the research I have been conducting over the past six months, made possible by the generous award I received from the Friends of the International Center scholarship. This year, I am spending a year in Germany to write my dissertation on the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, and although many of my basic living expenses for the year are covered by a separate fellowship-giver, the Friends scholarship has proved absolutely indispensable in allowing me to attend academic conferences outside of my "home base" in Berlin.

First, in August, I attended the 13th International Kant Congress in Oslo, Norway and presented some of my own work on Kant's metaphysics. Not only was it an amazing experience to visit Norway, connect with the philosophical community in Oslo, and spend some time enjoying the beautiful fjords and mountains, but also it was a true honor to attend this conference in particular. The International Kant Congress occurs only once every four years, and it is easily the largest meeting of Kant scholars in the world. It was truly amazing to spend a week among hundreds and hundreds of scholars, all of whom share the same obscure interest! Moreover, I was very fortunate to meet a scholar from Japan who has done extensive research on the very topic I'm concerned with in my dissertation. This was a particularly good stroke of luck, as this scholar is not particularly well known outside of Japan, and yet his work has been extremely useful to me so far.

Second, thanks to the Friends scholarship, I was also able to spend three weeks in Mainz, Germany, where I worked on chapters of my dissertation and attended a weeklong workshop on the Antinomy of Pure Reason, the particular section of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that my dissertation focuses on. This workshop was for young scholars only, and it was a truly wonderful experience. The participants came from countries around the world, and I have

since maintained friendships with several of them [a couple of whom happen also to be spending time in Berlin]. Here too, the trip would not have been possible without the support of the Friends scholarship.

Sometimes, working in the humanities can feel quite solitary, but the Friends scholarship has helped me connect with a wonderful community of international scholars in my field. I cannot begin to express how grateful I am for this [or how useful it has been for me as a source of energy as I continue the long process of writing a dissertation]. My deepest thanks to the Friends of the International Center!

Rosalind Chaplin

Ph.D. student from the U.K,
Department of Philosophy

Dear Friends,

I am happy to say hello from Nigeria, where I have had a very productive month. While I originally planned to travel here earlier in the Fall, my planning was delayed a bit when I was busy teaching. This month, for my doctoral dissertation research on the politics of regional security cooperation, I interviewed several senior regional organization staff members, generals and colonels from the Nigerian military, former diplomats, officials from the Nigerian National Defense College and Institute for Security Studies, and even one former Nigerian president!

I also traveled to Nigeria's only (and Africa's first) presidential library, where I worked in the archives for several days.

My interviews have shed new light on the politics of military cooperation in West Africa, and the primary challenges that still exist for regional cooperation. Because my archival work provided me with thousands of documents related to meetings and letters between heads of state, I have a great deal of new evidence regarding how and when African leaders help to maintain each other in power.

Funding from the Friends of the International Center covered my plane ticket to Nigeria and helped to pay for my living expenses here. Thank you again for your generous support. This trip has been invaluable.

Christina Cottiero

Political Science Department
Tecle Kidane-Mariam Scholarship



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