



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

# *Newsletter*

Volume XLV, No.1

September 2017

## **President's Column**

Kentucky novelist **James Lane Allen** must have been prescient in his knowledge of the Friends of the International Center, when he wrote: *Adversity does not build character, it reveals it.* As the photos on this page sadly document, the International Center complex is no longer; yet, through the adversity of the past year, the Friends character, and specifically its heart and soul, has been revealed.

Not that there should be any doubt, but I write to assure you that the Friends remains as committed and passionate as ever to promoting international education and supporting the international community. I am also happy to report that we are once again operating in a "business as usual" environment, to everyone's collective relief.

Our programs and participants have enjoyed a lively and convivial summer, and from the reports we are starting to receive, our summer scholarship recipients have begun to fully appreciate the significance of their experiences abroad.

We hope to have our online calendar operational soon, so that you may better plan your own calendars and, as usual, we encourage you to attend as many activities and events as you can. Our first evening event will be on **Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>** for a **Friends Dinner Social** that I hope will feature regional American southern cuisine with a post-dinner concert.

The one area of concern involves leadership (e.g., Board members), and specifically the need for a new Treasurer, without whom the Friends cannot continue as it has. So, if you, or someone you know, might be interested, please contact me as soon as possible.

Welcome to the 2017-18 academic year!

*Katya*

**Katya Newmark**, PresFIC@mail.ucsd.edu

### **The End of an Era**



Onetime entrance to the International Center  
as seen from Library Walk



By early July 2017 only the IC's chimney remained standing

Over the summer, the International Center was razed and the site is being graded to make room for a temporary valet parking lot until the Osler and Voigt parking garages are completed. The Friends Resale Shop and Oceanids Kitchen Exchange containers had to be emptied and moved for construction to take place. The containers will be relocated back in the same general vicinity, hopefully to coincide with the start of the Fall Quarter.

Photos by Tuktuki Bhattacharya



Yamuna Mohanram, Ginny Young, Lynn Jahn, Marie Perroud, and Alma Coles

## Volunteer Appreciation

Since 1984, a select number of volunteers who contribute their time and energy through the International Center are honored annually with a Chancellor's Award. After careful consideration, it was decided that unusual circumstances deserve an unusual response. Said **Kirk Simmons**: "This year, we are deviating from the normal course. We will honor **all** of our community volunteers as outstanding, not a select group of individuals, with the Chancellor's recognition."

At the Friday, May 19, International Café, over a lunch featuring traditional dishes from France, volunteers from **Friends of the International Center** and **Oceanids** were recognized for "giving so much every day to enrich our international community."

Each was presented with a certificate that reads: "UC San Diego Chancellor's International Center Volunteer Award: In Appreciation of your Extraordinary Service," and is signed by both Chancellor **Pradeep Khosla** and Dean **Kirk Simmons**. Additionally, each received a lovely glass paperweight engraved with UC San Diego and a map of the world.



Most of Friends regular programs, including **Gus' English Conversation Table**, **FIC Craft Circle**, **Family Orientation**, **Wednesday Morning Coffee**, **Mommy/Daddy & Me**, and **Friday Chat**, have met throughout the summer. In August, **Nancy Homeyer** even added two Family Orientation sessions, and **Kristin Hannesdottir** introduced a 10-week **Yoga class** for beginners.

All program chairs are looking forward to the new academic quarter that promises to bring a flurry of new internationals to welcome.

Friends  
Volunteer Hours  
for May:  
886 = 5.03 FTEs,  
for June:  
563 = 3.20 FTEs,  
for July:  
402 = 2.28 FTEs.

*The total number of  
Friends volunteer hours  
for the academic year  
2016-17 was: 9,879.*



Jei Yoon Park and Diana Saunders hold a flyer that says: "A World of Thanks" and lists the names of Friends and Oceanids programs

## From the Editor: A Visitor's Reflections

Shortly before **Ayako Fujita** returned to her native Japan, we exchanged e-mails. I wish to share an excerpt:

Dear Ruth,

My husband's company sent him as a visiting scholar for two years in order to research medical devices of heart. At first I was so nervous that I couldn't come Friends chat because of my poor English. But my EIA tutor and people who I have met at International Center encouraged me a lot. And now I love to come conversation groups.

I've already missed UCSD. I hope every activities of International Center will continue for many years to come.

*Ayako*

## English Class

Please welcome as the new co-chairs of the Friends Thursday English Class, **Irma** and **Pat Canan**, who will be taking over from **Diana Saunders**, who has returned to her native England. Wrote Irma, who has considerable ELS experience: "We're looking forward to working with you (although working seems like the wrong word)." English Class will resume on Thursday, September 14, 2017.

## Membership

It is a pleasure to welcome as a new Friends Member Provost Emeritus of Eleanor Roosevelt College, **Ann Craig**, the guest speaker at our May 16, 2017 Annual Dinner, and to be able to count **Candace Gietzen & Richard Fridshal** among our life members.

We apologize for the delayed report of the February 2016 death of life member **Maxine E. White**, who was very active in our organization, and in Oceanids, until her move to Texas in the late 1980s. Maxine was particularly instrumental in raising funds for the 1984 addition to the International Center, including funding with her sister, **Bobby Hamner**, one of the three tutor rooms that was designated as the *Benjamin & Opal Kent Tutor Room* in honor of their parents. It was a joy to meet and welcome Maxine's nephew and wife, **Richard & Patty Hamner**, and college-age daughter, **Saskia**, visiting from Texas, at our May membership dinner.

Like many in San Diego, Friends mourn the death of life member **Danah Fayman**, a staunch patron of the arts, a loyal supporter of UC San Diego, and an early member of the Friends of the International Center.

## Donations

For their donations, Friends thank **Laurette Verbinski, Janine & Asoka Mendis**, as well as **Deborah Park** who made her contribution in tribute to **Eleanor tum Suden**.

Upon the death of **Luna Fung**, her family suggested that donations in her memory might be made to the Friends of the International Center's scholarship fund. Wrote her son, **Conrad**: "Thanks for the Friends of the International Center for providing a focus for the generosity of our mother's friends." We are most grateful to the following donors for their thoughtful contributions to the *Luna Fung Scholarship* made in memory of Luna: **Agnes Chen & Alexander Chuang, K.C. & Shu Chien** ("in warmest appreciation and admiration"), **Conrad Fung, Polly & Fah Seong Liew, Lily & Shao-Chi Lin, Georgina & Lu Sham, Marion & Kwan So, Linda & Charles Tu, Lily & Charles Wang**, and **Kathy Wong**.

Similarly honoring Luna's memory, **Annie & Peter Chen, Chih Chao**

### September Calendar

Sept. 8, 15, 22, 29: **Friday Chat**, 10:00-Noon

Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26: **Gus' Table, English Conversation**, 10:00-Noon

Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26: **Yoga Class**, Noon-1:00

Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26: **FIC Craft Circle**, 1:30-3:30

Sept. 6, 20: **Family Orientation**, 9:15

Sept. 6, 13, 20, 27: **Wednesday Coffee**, 10:00-Noon

Sept. 6, 13, 20, 27: **Mommy/Daddy & Me**, 1:45-2:45

Sept. 14, 21, 28: **English Class**, 10:00-11:30

Sept. 26: **Resale Shop** reopens

**FRIENDS**  
RESALE SHOP

IN KEEPING WITH THE START OF THE FALL QUARTER, THE **RESALE SHOP**, LOCATED IN BUILDING UC 214 ON LIBRARY WALK, WILL REOPEN ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2017. HOURS ARE TUESDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, FROM 10 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.



## 4th of July



A record turnout of 106 guests (with eight families on the waitlist) enjoyed coming together and eating traditional 4th of July picnic fare, while taking in the gorgeous view of the Pacific Ocean as seen through the cypress trees from SIO's Martin Johnson House.

A big thank you to **Georgina Sham** and **Lynn Jahn** for chairing the event and to their willing helpers: **Antoine Aubrey, Richard Chim, Justin Costello, Matthew Costello, Emma Forin, Katya Newmark, Mark Newmark, Marie Perroud, Mira Vendler, Liz Fong Wills**, and **Gladys Wong**.

A special thank you to the sitar player, **Sibasish Laha**, for providing guests with a surprise performance of Indian music, to **Lanna Cheng Lewin** for procuring the site, and to **La Jolla** for the celebratory fireworks.

& **Chien S. Hsu, Lanping Sung, Janet Tao, Siang & Pin Tong, Kar Beck Wong, Savio & Patricia Woo**, and **Sue P. Yang** made their donation to the UC San Diego Foundation, earmarking their gift to the Friends of the International Center scholarship fund, while **Walter & Mary Munk** made their donation in memory of **Judith Munk**.



Danya and Matthew Costello overlook a multitude of cellophane bags filled with homemade cookies and the message: "Thank you for celebrating with the Friends of the International Center"



Golden sunflowers



Tables are set

## The Evening Was Magical

—by Ruth Newmark with photos by  
Lou Adamo, Katya Newmark, and Justin Costello



Some of the catering staff plate dishes in the courtyard



The entrée



The dessert

The 2017 Friends Membership and Scholarship Awards Dinner was a grand affair, featuring a golden theme, chosen by Dinner Chair, **Katya Newmark**, quoting **George Washington Carver**: "Education is the key to unlock the *golden door* of freedom."

While the purpose of this annual event remained the same, much was different. For one, all reservations had to be made online. Once students—who came as our guests—alerted us to some complications, glitches were remedied, and using Eventbrite proved a good choice. The invitation read:

*A Message from Friends of the International Center:*

*We are looking forward to honoring our scholarship recipients and celebrating our collective commitment to international education, understanding, and friendship at the Friends Annual Scholarship Awards Dinner on Tuesday, May 16th at 6:00 p.m. at the Student Services Center Multipurpose Room. We will have a brief reception outdoors, so please dress accordingly. Looking forward to seeing/meeting you!*

*Katya Newmark, President of the Friends of the International Center*

Because Friends and staff had to vacate the International Center in the summer of 2016 (the Center was ultimately demolished in July of 2017), a new venue had to be found for this year's dinner. With the aid of the Chancellor's Office, the place chosen was the Student Services Center, conveniently located in the heart of the campus.

No doubt the biggest change was that the meal was catered by UCSD Housing, Hospitality, and Dining, and although Friends found little fault with either food or service, when Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, **Jeff Orgera**, asked in his speech whether we enjoyed not having to prepare the meal, Friends showed by their lack of hands how much we miss having our own large kitchen to work in.

That said, **Chefs Vaughn, Josie, and Gerardo** did a fine job of working with our President in creating a golden-themed menu that featured corn bisque with a hush puppy garnish, bread and rolls to be dipped in pepper-infused olive oil, and an entrée of chicken breast in a tarragon cream sauce served with asparagus spears and polenta. The dessert of crème brûlée came with a chocolate-



Joan Adamo, Kristine Kneib, and Cindy Tozer check in the 150 guests

covered biscotti sprinkled with gold dust. The service was professional and the dishes *au courant* and beautifully plated. No question but that the food presentation was far more elegant than what Friends would have been able to provide on our own. Catering was more than attentive to make sure that all would go well at the event, with Executive Chef **Vaughn Vargus** and Sales Manager **Joyce Almond** coming by to check on everything and asking for feedback.

**Joan Adamo, Kristine Kneib,** and **Cindy Tozer** welcomed guests at the check-in table and braced the wind that threatened to blow away the nametags with the Friends colorful logo and table assignments, prepared—as so much else—by **Katya**, who, to ease alcohol offerings, had carefully selected name tags bordered in different colors: red for underage guests, gold for those of legal age. Guests who had requested either a vegetarian, dairy-free, gluten-free, or vegan meal were handed an additional ticket to display at their dinner plate, so that servers would know where to place the appropriate dishes. Remarkable that the caterers could accommodate all these special requests.

Friends are slowly getting used to having an external alcohol server present at our events and are grateful to **RG Bar Service** for their discounted charges and for assigning us a friendly bartender (**Roy Givon**), who poured the Three Wishes Chardonnay purchased



Katya Newmark and son, Justin Costello

(and chilled!) for the occasion by **Liz Fong Wills**. Liability concerns restrict Friends from dispensing wine ourselves, no matter that our former servers (**Jerry Fitzsimmons** and **Danya Costello**) earned California alcohol server certification. Sunny golden lemonade was available for the many non-alcohol drinkers. Because of the wind, guests were glad the actual dinner was held indoors.

Expecting 150 guests, a total of 18 dining tables were set with white tablecloths and napkins. In the center of the table stood a bouquet of fresh flowers—primarily in gold tones to keep to the theme—a table number, and for each guest a goody bag filled with home-baked sugar cookies decorated with gold sprinkles and a gold-wrapped Hershey's chocolate kiss. If you guessed that **Katya** baked the 700 cookies, you were right; her husband and daughter, **Matthew** and **Danya Costello**, helped bag. Programs—each a 16-page booklet intended to be an informative keepsake—were prepared by **Ruth Newmark** and placed on each napkin.

Our special thanks go to the table setters: **Jean Selzer, Katya Newmark,** and **Renate Schmid-Schoenbein,** and to **Candace Kohl** and **Lynn Jahn** who, using their own vases, made the 23 lovely flower arrangements featuring sunflowers, roses, and protea (the latter from Candace's own garden). The bouquets elicited many positive comments. Several people remarked that they loved the use



Joel Erberich pours lemonade



Protea, roses, alstroemeria

of different vases. Said **Katya**: “We know these touches retain a bit of our homey atmosphere. After the event a couple of students offered to give me flowers they had taken, concerned that I did not have any: so sweet and reflective of the caring spirit engendered by this event. Needless to say, I assured them that they should continue to enjoy the flowers knowing what joy they would bring them (one had never seen a protea before).”

The room, with its golden decorations, looked so festive that it is no wonder that in a post dinner exchange in which **AVC Jeff Orgera** and I lamented that we had found no opportunity to talk to each other,

Jeff wrote: "You and your team had many people to connect with at the exceptional scholarship banquet. It was as if you, **Katya**, and the **Friends** had to plan, execute, and socialize at a large wedding or other celebration."

The sit-down dinner started promptly at 6:30. By the time guests had been served dessert, Katya welcomed all present and explained that the dinner also serves as the Friends annual meeting and that a quick business meeting would precede the speakers.

Nominating Committee Chair, **Barbara Fitzsimmons**, presented the slate of Friends officers for 2017-18 and asked whether there were any further nominations from the floor. There being none, she called for a vote from Friends members, and the slate was unanimously approved.



Barbara Fitzsimmons

Barbara surprised Katya by thanking her for her four years of service as Friends President. I quote from Barbara's heartfelt words of praise that reflect the appreciation of the entire Friends Board:

*"This has been a couple of rough years for both the staff and the Friends of the International Center. There was a mixture of concern and dismay when we were informed that after 45 plus years, we would have to leave our home and find new quarters for our programs."*

*Some of us were so concerned that we considered the idea of giving up on being a viable organization in the future. Fortunately most of us felt it necessary to pursue the possibilities of finding a solution. Among us was a captain who would*

## Slate of Friends Officers for the Year 2017-2018

President:	<b>Katya Newmark</b>
Vice President, Membership:	<b>Renate Schmid-Schoenbein</b>
Recording Secretary:	<b>Lynn Jahn</b>
Treasurer:	<b>Ruth Newmark</b>
Corresponding Secretary:	<b>Jean Selzer</b>



Jean Selzer, Ruth Newmark, Renate Schmid-Schoenbein, Katya Newmark

*NOT abandon the ship: not **Katya Newmark**, our president and fearless leader. When the going got rough, she responded by being tough, and, most of all, determined. Katya devoted untold hours and unending effort in making sure that the Friends would continue to provide programs for internationals at our university.*

*Katya knew instinctively that this situation was serious and would require much time and commitment to find solutions. She contacted and worked with university staff to locate new space for our various programs. She was always "there" for us and letting us know that our outreach really mattered to the many international students, scholars, and families at UC San Diego.*

*Her family members and many friends know of the countless hours and effort Katya devotes to keeping the Friends of the International Center afloat and looking forward to a bright future.*

With these words and a big hug, Barbara presented Katya with a gift: an engraved picture frame.



Kirk Simmons and Katya Newmark

Clearly moved, our master of ceremonies then introduced **Kirk Simmons**, Dean of the International Center, who told us about the importance in his life of his own study abroad in Taiwan that set him on his current career path, and how money plays a central role in whether students are able to have similarly meaningful experiences. When students are asked what they need most, he hears: "Scholarships, scholarships, scholarships!"

Kirk was followed by **Jeffrey Orgera**, Assistant Vice Chancellor Student Retention & Success in the Office of Student Affairs, who re-



Jeff Orgera

minded us that soon after his arrival to UC San Diego, he was faced with having to cope with the physical deterioration of the International Center complex that necessitated staff and volunteers to vacate the buildings, and having to scramble for substitute quarters on a campus where space is at such a premium that it is fiercely fought over. Jeff was kind enough not to refer to the letters of dismay and petitions signed he received from Friends, but to refer instead to the valuable work our organization does for the UCSD community. With the loss of space came loss of income, and we owe **Student Affairs** thanks for making up for this by providing Friends with some much appreciated financial support.

Like others, our main guest speaker, political scientist **Ann Craig**, Provost Emeritus of Eleanor Roosevelt College, spoke of her international concerns and background, referring, among others, to her living abroad as a child and how influential the colors and warmth of the Latin America people were in shaping her life. Ann spoke eloquently of the need to prepare young people for global competence in our intertwined world.

This year, we invited two former scholarship recipients to speak about their studies and the significance of their Friends scholarship.

**Bahram Kheramand**, an Iranian



Ann Craig

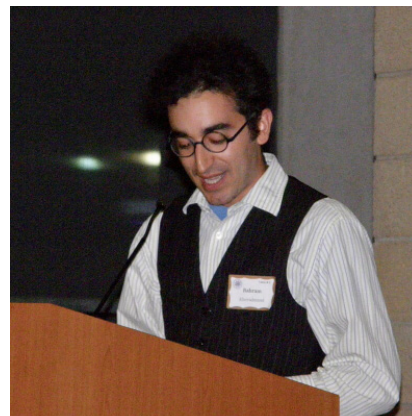
graduate student pursuing a Ph.D. in the Division of Biological Sciences, spoke with passion and humor about his research with honeybees, at one point comparing their social behavior to that of humans and revealing that, like man, bees originate in Africa. Bahram's plea for better understanding among different groups of people was to the point.

To the audience's delight, **Monica Sias**, a graduating senior in Public Health, who had spent time studying abroad, first in Scotland and then in Senegal, jumped on the stage to display her beautiful blue-and-white Senegalese dress. She regaled us with stories about learning to barter in foreign markets and learning about West African culture and history, matters of special interest to her, as she stated in her scholarship application, "as a descendent of slaves who were taken from West Africa and as a convert to Islam." (See pp. 9-10 for Monica's scholarship report.)

The program concluded with the presentation of the many scholarship recipients by **Ruth Newmark**, **Jennifer Leighton**, and **Kelly O'Sullivan Sommer**. We will report on these in some detail in future issues of the *Friends Newsletter*.

Countless people commented on the good time they had at the Friends Annual Membership and Scholarship Awards Dinner.

Remarkd International Stu-



Bahram Kheramand



Monica Sias

dent Advisor, **Carol Robertson**, a stalwart supporter of Friends scholarships, who served as one of the 18 International Center staff members who volunteered to serve as table hosts: "**The evening was magical**. I couldn't believe how you transformed that sterile room into an elegant setting. The students were so very impressed. Thank you for continuing to provide a high quality program that is one of the highlights of my year!"

**Candace Kohl**, multiple times elected as Friends President (1998-2001 and again as Co-President with **Carol Smith** from 2007-09), enthused: "The evening was lots of fun. Wonderful conversation at my table. Enjoyed the food. I ate everything!"

Friends scholarship recipient

**Luke Johns**, a Ph.D. candidate in astrophysics heading to the Université Paris Diderot, wrote: "It was a pleasure to attend the Friends dinner the other night. I was deeply impressed by the passion that the members have for international education, and by the closeness of the Friends community."

**Jennifer Leighton**, Director, Annual Giving Affinity Programs in the UCSD Development Office, commented: "The Friends Annual Scholarship Awards Dinner was a success! I've heard only wonderful feedback. I personally enjoyed **Provost Emeritus Craig's** remarks."

**Ellen Scott**, a dedicated volunteer at Friday Chats, observed: "Last night's dinner was amazing on many counts, but particularly the opportunity to meet so many inspiring scholarship participants. Those at our table had a strong music connection. Was that our common bond? Seemed so. Thanks again for all you do on behalf of The Friends."

Ellen picked up on something very important: Katya and I (as Scholarship Committee Chair) tried hard to best seat together people that have some common ground, be it fields of interest or donor with scholarship recipient, while making sure that besides the IC staff table host (each of whom was provided with information on the guests seated at his/her table), at least one Friends member was also present at the table.



IC staff who served as table hosts: Rachel Rigoli, Luis Legaspi, Sheri Liebovich, Tina Brill, Kelly O'Sullivan Sommer, Tonia Pizer, Courtney Giordano, Kirk Simmons, Jan Tuomainen, Roark Miller, Jim Galvin, Carol Robertson, Sabrina Kaiser, Kri Howland, Kim Burton, Nari Shin. Not pictured: Emily Kawahara and Jo Peters

And, as has become her habit, our President and Dinner Chair went home and wrote a very loving thank-you to all of us who, in any way at all, had helped put on the event, documenting her general remarks with 25 photos (many of them included here) accompanied by individual words of praise. Wrote **Katya**:

*"Dear 2017 Annual Dinner Team, Thank you both faithful and new members of the Friends Annual Scholarship Awards Dinner Team for your part in creating a euphoric evening spent in the company of so many interesting and amazing minds and talents! As I well know, this evening would not be possible without everyone's assistance and, thus, I write to thank you and express my sincere appreciation for your support of the Friends efforts to*

*continue building community while promoting international education and the accompanying values that ensue."*

Katya's note elicited many return compliments, of which the one by **Jim Galvin**, Director, OAP and Faculty-Led Programs, may well be the most succinct: "Thank you for organizing a wonderful evening, and for writing the amazing summary e-mail at 1:00 AM! You deserve a relaxing and fun vacation!"



Lou Adamo

A special note of thanks goes to **Lou Adamo**, who served as the evening's official photographer, a task for which he came prepared with two cameras. Some of his photos are depicted here, but many more will be featured in future accounts of the scholarship awards component of the dinner.

In the words of **Cindy Tozer**: "It was a very classy production all around. I enjoyed it all."





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# SCHOLARSHIP LETTERS

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April 26, 2017

My name is **Sophie [Osborn]** and I am a third-year International Studies major studying with a History focus and a Japanese Studies Minor at UC San Diego. At the moment I am still abroad for the school year of 2016-2017 at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan, but already so much has happened in just one semester, I can't wait to see what's in store for my last semester here.

In terms of academics, during my fall semester at Waseda I took Japanese language courses as well as history-related courses taught in English. One of the most rewarding courses that I took last semester was a Pacific Studies course that focused on contemporary issues facing the islands in the Pacific. Usually when we talk about the "Pacific" we mean the Pacific Rim, or the larger nations that surround the Pacific Ocean, but rarely do we talk about what has been dubbed by Pacific Studies intellectuals as the "hole in the doughnut," the islands of Oceania. This course opened my mind to many postcolonial issues, such as militarism, tourism, environmentalism, and sovereignty that I had never before applied to islands such as Hawaii, Guam, the Marshall Islands, Tahiti, etc. As far as I know, there are no Pacific Studies courses at UC San Diego, and the chance to learn about Oceania in a classroom full of internationally traveled students on the technically Pacific island of Japan was incredible.

In addition to my rewarding classwork, one of the more challenging experiences I've had is joining a club at my university. Clubs, or *circles* as they're called in Japan, are an integral part of the Japanese college experience, sometimes even more so than the academics. I've had a fascination for a while with traditional Japanese arts, like the tea ceremony or kimono, so I joined a club that practices *Nihon*

*Buyou*, or Japanese traditional dance. Even though I'm now pretty comfortable conversing in Japanese, I learn something new at every club practice, such as how to properly bow when greeting our teacher, or how to address the seniors in my club respectfully. What continues to amaze me is the contrast between the informal, everyday slang of my Japanese friends and the centuries old language of the traditional dance they practice. One minute the seniors of the club will be instructing me on how to properly hold my fan, and the next minute one of my friends will be gossiping to me about her movie date.

Another aspect of my time abroad that has deeply impacted me is the amazing traveling I've been able to do. In November, I visited Kyoto for a week with some of my friends and we had an unforgettable time exploring ancient temples and the old city in rented kimonos. Over winter break, I traveled to Shanghai and Hangzhou in China, and then to Washington D.C. for a Trilateral Japan-US-Korea conference held by International Student Conferences (ISC). In addition, this spring break I went to Thailand and Malaysia on a program called Learning Across Borders (LAB), which takes groups of Japanese college students to these countries to learn about contemporary issues and to meet with international aid organizations.

I plan to continue traveling through next semester, hopefully to visit my former host family in Hokkaido, or maybe to the very unique and politically tense prefecture of Okinawa.

Through my travels I've learned so much not only about Japan, but also about countries such as China, Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia. It has really broadened my perspectives and allowed me to apply what I've learned in classrooms to interactions with real people from around the world.

Next semester I will participate in an internship program at the Tokyo think tank Japan Forum on International Relations (JFIR). Because I am freed from the need of looking for a part-time job through my scholarships, I now have the opportunity to get hands-on experience at a political think tank and practice my Japanese language skills in a formal work environment.

In the future I plan on attending graduate school towards a degree in public policy, potentially to work for an NGO or even a think tank, and this internship will prove an invaluable learning experience. My time here in Tokyo has given me new perspectives on global issues, and I know that in the future I need to be working at a job that makes a real difference in the world. These first few months have already been so amazing, and I can't wait to continue learning next semester.

*Sophia Osborn*

Eleanor Roosevelt College  
Paul Yunouye Memorial  
Scholarship

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## Senegal Report

My journey to Senegal didn't start four months ago, but started in November 2015 when I made the decision to study in Senegal. I wanted to learn more about West African culture, eat West African food, dance to Senegalese drums, discover Senegalese Islam, and learn about West African history and the history of slavery. I was excited to learn about these things, because I am a descendant of slaves who were taken from West Africa and a convert to Islam.

For four months, I lived in Senegal and I had some good experiences and some bad ones. I didn't really do much sightseeing around Dakar, mainly because of my limited language skills in both French and Wolof. This also lim-



ited my interactions with the Senegalese people.

My day-to-day activities included going to classes, going to my community service, and watching TV with my host family. I noticed that many Senegalese families watch a lot of TV—my host brothers and sisters watch TV all day; they even do their homework in front of the television.

One aspect of my experience in Senegal that has greatly affected me has been how men interact with women, particularly women they don't know well. I had difficult experiences with men, especially older men. In the short time I was there, I had my hijab pulled off by three different men. I have never had my hijab pulled off in the U.S., where I'd expect that to happen.

There are many reasons for why I wear hijab, but one important reason is that I value modesty and I feel most comfortable being covered. I have been wearing a hijab for more than a year, and it has provided me with the confidence I need to handle difficult situations, especially spaces where I'm the only hijabi Muslim.

The following quote by **Yasmin Mogahed** in *Reclaim Your Heart: Personal Insights on Breaking Free from Life's Shackles* gives a good perspective on why some women wear hijab:

"With my veil I put my faith on display—rather than my beauty. My value as a human is defined by my relationship with God, not by my looks. I cover the irrelevant. And when you look at me, you don't see a body. You view me only for what I am: a servant of my Creator.

"You see, as a Muslim woman, I've been liberated from a silent kind of bondage. I don't answer to the slaves of God on earth. I answer to their King."

This quote shows how Muslim women wear the hijab because it is a part of their complete submission to Allah.

The first time I got my hijab pulled off was in Dakar, in Marche HLM. I was shopping by myself, looking at *boubous* for men, when the man who owns the boutique came over and began to *waxaale* with me. When I refused to take the price that he offered, he got angry and so I walked away. He followed me and tried to pull me back to his boutique. He then pulled off my hijab and my hair was exposed. None of the passersby said or did anything to help me; everyone just watched in shock. I not only felt violated, but also felt sad that no one intervened on my behalf. This is something I didn't expect to happen in Senegal, but just because it is a predominantly Muslim country doesn't mean that women are always respected.

[This and two other] unfortunate experiences of getting my hijab forcibly taken off by men did not ruin the entirety of my experiences in Senegal.

There are many things that I enjoyed and many things that I miss, such as the car *rapides*, which are a good bargain and can take you anywhere. I also miss how kind many people are and how they take extra care in greeting each other. I miss how wonderful the houses smell in the evenings when families burn their incense. And at times, I long for the ease of life in Senegal. It can be very peaceful, especially in the villages and smaller towns like Fatick, Thies, and St. Louis, where there are trees and great food.

*Monica Sias*

Public Health major, Thurgood Marshall College, Class of 2017

Dear Friends of the International Center,

I would like to thank you for financially assisting me in my Public Health/Primary Care Internship in India. This opportunity was a once in a lifetime experience and was very much needed in a time when I was trying to figure out what it is that I would like to pursue in my future.

In this experience, I was fortunate to visit various non-profit organizations, such as the Needle Syringe Exchange Programme, where services are provided to individuals of vulnerable population groups. As a public health major, I realized that learning concepts in a classroom very much differed from experiential learning and one is just as important as the other.

Through conversation with many project managers of these organizations, I found a trend in the health of certain populations in India. These individuals are stuck in a continuous cycle of addiction, homelessness, and HIV/AIDS susceptibility due to a lack of preventative and rehabilitation services in their country. This initiated my strong desire to make change.

Meeting with an injection drug user community liaison further reinforced my determination to make a positive impact, because I witnessed a living manifestation of public health achievements. He had previously been an ardent IDU, associated with HIV-positive IDU social groups, but through the help of this public health affiliated non-profit organization [NGO], he was able to overcome his drug addiction, and is now serving his community by empathizing with and helping those in desperate need of help.

Seeing the effects of public health efforts on HIV transmission reduction among a community of IDUs inspired me to want to serve humanity through the application of problem-solving and critical thinking skills to everyday injustices experienced by vulnerable populations in Indian society.

From illness (physical and mental), poverty, lack of access to quality healthcare, stigma, and discrimination, critical issues such as these influence the perpetuation of health equity gaps within the various populations of India. In every direction, I recognized a relationship between health and systemic oppression. Divisions in class significantly contributed to differences in adequate sanitation, hygiene, and health.

My decision to pursue an MPH has been solidified by my academic and internship experience. This experience has truly provided me with a more holistic view of health systems, their players, how they operate, and their future implications on their societies.

Thank you again, Friends of the International Center, for helping

make this experience possible for me. I cannot express my gratitude enough.

*Crystal Thompson Andreas*  
Sixth College

*Upon receiving the news that he had been awarded a 2017 Friends fellowship, Matthew Sitek, Ph.D. candidate in anthropology, wrote:*

"Thank you so much for this wonderful news! I thank the Friends of the International Center scholarship committee for the honor! I look forward to attending the dinner in May, and am excited to learn more about how I can integrate my international work with the great outreach work the Friends of the International Center provide."

Hello Friends of the International Center *Newsletter* editor,

Thank you for including my experiences in Ecuador last summer in your *June Newsletter*. It's also so awesome that my experience is laid out next to the experiences in Quito, Ecuador of one of my favorite current teachers, **Maria Celleri**.

Thank you again so much for supporting me, and many other students, in our study abroad experiences.

In regards to my post-graduation plans, I've been accepted to work from September 2017- June 2018 as an English Teaching Assistant in Asturias, Spain through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. I will definitely keep in touch.

*Dianna Ratsamy*

Ethnic Studies/Education Studies



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