



CVIP Spring 2017 Newsletter

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

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International Friendship Program

During the 2016-17 academic year, the International Friendship Program (IFP) matched more than sixty international students with local friends. The students came from all over the world Bangladesh, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Germany, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, Vietnam, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.



Elisha DeFrain, an IFP volunteer, and her student friend, **Sissi Hsieh** from Taiwan, are shown following Sissi's cello recital at the MSU Music Building. This is just one of many fun experiences they shared together. They also enjoyed picking apples, carving pumpkins, and simply spending time over coffee or a meal sharing stories about their cultures and lives.

We know that students like Sissi who have the opportunity to participate in IFP greatly enjoy getting to know their American friends and they benefit from experiencing our culture and customs. Our goal is to recruit more students to participate in IFP, but before we can do that, we need more local individuals, couples and families to volunteer to be matched with an international student for this fun and enriching opportunity.

Help expand your own knowledge of the world while helping an international student learn more about us. The better we know and understand each other as fellow members of our global community, the better the future will be for all of us.

Please check out the CVIP website at cvip.isp.msu.edu/friendship to learn more about IFP and what is involved in becoming a friend.

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CVIP Newsletter Editors:

**Stacey Bieler
Patrice Klein
Pat Barrett
Katy Bahrami**

We welcome your submissions of articles and other features by email. Please send them to cvip@msu.edu.

You are cordially invited to the
**CVIP Annual Meeting
and Potluck Salad Luncheon**

Wednesday, May 10
at the University Lutheran Church
1020 S Harrison Rd, East Lansing, MI

**Reception 11:30am;
Luncheon 12:00; Program to Follow**

Bring a salad to share. Bread, beverage and table service will be provided.

President's Corner



Rick Emerson, CVIP President

As I reflect on the past year for the organization, my first thoughts are of gratitude.

In most organizations, taking on the presidency of a multi-program service organization would be a daunting task. With CVIP, however, the programs are each led by such dedicated leaders that one of the president's main duties is to stay out of the way and let them do what they do so well. I am very grateful for the work of all our leaders.

With many organizations, transitions bring questions and concerns: What will happen when a program or project leader is ready to step away? This year we successfully transitioned leadership in two of our programs - the Lending Center and International Spouse Connection. In both cases we have been able to replace outstanding leaders with new people who are just as capable.

As we approach the next year, we will transition to new leadership in the Home

Visits program and the World Gift Shop. I am confident that these transitions will be just as smooth, and I'm grateful for these people who are willing to step into new roles.

I believe CVIP's role of being the bridge between the broader community and the international students at MSU is more important than ever. So, I am grateful to our amazing international students who have engaged me with enthusiasm and with patience of my ignorance this year.

Thank you to all CVIP members for the work and effort that you have given this year on behalf of the international students whose experience you have enriched.

I invite all CVIP members to attend our annual Spring Luncheon on May 10 (see front page for details). I hope to see you there!

International Friendship Program *cont'd*

You will also find our online volunteer application there; we are currently accepting applications for participation beginning with the Fall 2017 semester.

If you have previously participated in the program and are ready to be matched with another student, there is no need to re-apply. Just send us an email at cvip@msu.edu or leave a telephone message at the CVIP office (353-1735).

International Spouse Connection

The International Spouse Connection was active over the winter. Under the leadership of **Ruba Alfar** (Jordan) and **Livia do Vale** (Brazil) with assistance of **Ansome** (Jordan), **Sandra** (Columbia) and **Giulia** (Italy), the members enjoyed weekly meetings of learning, socializing and games. General attendance was 10 - 12 women, and occasionally a man would join the group as well.

ISC participants visited the Broad Art Museum on campus. Great interest was shown in the range of displays, especially the Chinese art.

Among leaders of discussions were **Kandy Bauer** about baby showers and **Giulia** and **Livia**, who reported on *Carnival* celebrations in Italy and Brazil. **Mindy Erickson** described navigating the local education systems to a large and interested audience. **Don Christenson** discussed American Indian Wars and the devastation wrought on the Indian Nations, the effects of which are still felt today.

Plans are under way for a final Spring meeting on April 28 with a potluck lunch followed by a trip to the Lansing Potters Guild sale. The group will continue to meet during the summer. Contact **Don** and **Carol Christenson** at christ10@msu.edu for more information about ISC.

Wendy Pope Wins Homer Higbee Award



Wendy Pope won the Homer Higbee Award at the 2017 International Awards Ceremony hosted by **Steve Hanson**, Dean of International Studies and Programs at MSU.

She has been the Chair of the World Gift Shop for the last four years at the Global Festival at MSU. This involved organizing a team of sorters and pricers and setting up the Gift Shop room in three different locations over four annual Global Festivals. Wendy has also been a driver for Home Visits.

Global Festival World Gift Shop

As part of the Global Festival this past November, the World Gift Shop was held in the Lake Huron room of the MSU Union.



Articles for sale included a mix of items from all parts of the world, including some spectacular aboriginal paintings from Australia, fabrics from Africa and South America, and artwork, pottery, carved wood and metal items from a variety of countries.

The annual Gift Shop represents considerable work and planning. Thanks are due to **Dottie Schmidt** of CVIP, **Joy Shantz** of OISS and **Cathy Fitzpatrick** and staff of the MSU Union. The Gift Shop team of **Gengen Chan** and **Mona Brandou**, who have helped in pricing and packing activities for many years, were joined by **Tina Awokuse** and **Teruko Miyazaki**. Other CVIP and student volunteers also participated in packing and selling the donated items. A special thanks is due to **Harold Sollenberger** who, with his wife **Lois**, has handled the pricing and selling of jewelry for many years. As usual, **Carlos Fuentes** and his student volunteers were invaluable in carefully and efficiently transporting items to and from the MSU Union.

All proceeds from the World Gift Shop are designated for the Lillian Kumata Scholarship Fund, which offers scholarships to spouses of MSU international students. Proceeds from the Fall 2016 shop totaled more than \$4500. If you would like to donate international items to be sold at the World Gift Shop at the Global Festival in November 2017, please contact **Dottie Schmidt** at 351-2812. Cash donations for scholarships are also welcome.

Lois Sollenberger



Lois Sollenberger, a long-time dedicated volunteer and friend, died earlier this spring. In 1990 Lois joined Lillian Kumata as Gift Shop Co-chairs. She and her husband **Harold** educated their MSU friends about the importance of the CVIP tuition scholarships. For many years they stored donations in their basement, which became a workshop for pricing and organizing the treasures. Lois learned how to use eBay to sell expensive items such as a mink coat and a valuable amber necklace.

She also worked hard to bring the scholarship endowment up to \$50,000 so the interest would provide scholarships. Despite being seriously ill, Lois worked at the last Fall's Global Festival, supported by her husband, daughter and granddaughter.

The Lending Center is Moving!

Part of Spartan Village is closing this spring, resulting in the Lending Center moving to a more central location. Though most international students will be moving out of Spartan Village, visiting scholars from around the world who come to MSU for three months to a year will live in a smaller cluster of renovated units.

The Lending Center is still open for business at our old location until May 31. Our new location will be next door to the new Spartan Village leasing office. One of the one-bedroom units will be used for storage and the other will be used for the Lending Center display room.

On April 14, CVIP volunteers packed up half of the goods to be moved to the new Lending Center location. Many thanks to, **Pat and Mary Barrett, Bill Durkin, David Horner, Carol Towl, Susan Ventocilla-Galley** and **Ann Wilde** for their assistance.

Thank you to **Chris King-Dye**, Facilities Manager, University Apartments, **Bob Hernandez**, and their crew for their help moving boxes.

The Gift Shop items were also moved. **Peggy Arbanas, Mona Brandou, Gengen Chan,** and **Bernard and Wendy Pope** packed the goods up. Their storage room will be next to the Lending Center storage room.

The final move to this new spot will be in June. Volunteers will then put up shelves, stock the Center and get ready to welcome people on August 1.

We are pleased to continue to be near the visiting scholars who are here for a short time. They appreciate being able to borrow

household items from the Lending Center rather than needing to buy these necessities. Of course, MSU international students who live elsewhere are still welcome to visit the Lending Center.

If you would like to volunteer once a month for 1-2 hours at the Lending Center, please contact **Barb Sawyer-Koch** (775-6000) or **Marge Weldon** (582-1369). To donate kitchen, bedroom and bathroom items, please contact them as well.

Volunteer Opportunities

Consider a new volunteer opportunity with CVIP. Here are some great options!

International Friendship Program: Become a friend with an international student. Meet once a month, at your convenience.

Volunteer English Tutoring Program: Become a conversation partner and meet for one hour a week to help an international student improve his/her ability to use spoken English.

I Speak: Drivers take international student speakers to presentations and return them to campus.

For more information, and to submit a volunteer application, go to cvip.isp.msu.edu or call the CVIP office, weekday mornings, 353-1735.

Volunteer English Tutoring Program

The Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP) offers conversation classes throughout the year. Volunteer class leaders facilitate discussions on topics ranging from idioms to American holidays.



A new VETP class was started this semester after international students mentioned that they wanted to better understand and discuss current events. “Behind the Headlines” is led by VETP tutor **Emily Lawler**, a reporter for MLive who works at the state Capitol. She has lots of experience in reporting news accurately and impartially. Emily prepares a PowerPoint for each class outlining the history of the topic, what is currently happening, and invites questions. VETP tutor **David Choi** assists in leading the discussions. Topics this year have included the Black Lives Matter initiative, the history of immigration in the United States, and the American K-12 education system.

At the latest class about our education system, students talked about schooling in their home countries, and the various countries’ systems were compared and contrasted. Questions were asked about public vs. private schools, homeschooling and online schooling. Students were from Iran, Turkey, Taiwan, China, Korea and the United States.

Currently 64 VETP conversation partners meet for an hour a week at a public location for discussion and cultural exchange. VETP will continue over the summer. If you are interested in being a conversation partner, contact **Mary Hennessey** at vetp@msu.edu.

A+ English Language School

A+ English Language School is having a wonderful year! We have grown to include multiple sites in the Lansing area to support our ESL population, including programs at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing, Stockbridge, Dexusys and Peckham.

In late March, our program celebrated our partnership with the 4th grade class at Okemos Public Montessori Central. We also hosted our International Festival, with over 18 countries represented and lots of food and entertainment. We had a blast welcoming 115 boys and girls to our school for this event.

Activities for the rest of the year include going to the Michigan History Center and Capital Area Michigan Works!, holding a Family Literacy Night, and enjoying Home Visits and our Certificate Day. Summer classes will begin on May 30.

Home Visits

Home Visits take place twice each school year in the fall and spring, usually in October and April. American hosts invite A+ ESL students to see their homes.

Most hosts welcome six students and their driver in for a tour of their home and for light refreshment and conversation. The students are encouraged to practice their English by talking about their families. The total visit usually lasts about 1.5 hours.

Once back in their classroom, the students enjoy comparing their visits to homes of different sizes and styles. Laundry chutes are often a surprise.

The Home Visits program this spring (after the newsletter deadline) is expecting 50+ students. The hosts will be **Pauline Adams, Herman Arends, Stacey Bieler, Mary Estes, Alice Hamacheck, Susan Leavitte, Rebecca Lesmez, Harold Sollenberger, Marge Weldon and Joan Witter.**

The drivers will be **Tom Bartley, Fred Graham, Mary Hennessey, Charlotte Poston, Dottie Schmidt, Bob Tobey, Carol Towl and Susan Ventocilla-Galley.**

In the past, some students and host-drivers have developed friendships. One young man became a friend of a high school Foreign Exchange Student who was living with a Home Visits host family and he returned to their home for social events.

For more information about Home Visits this fall, contact **Iris Horner**, 349-1865.

Lillian Kumata Scholarship Program

The Scholarship Committee is very pleased to announce that our endowment fund has reached \$65,000. We are thankful for the generous donations given in memory of long-term CVIP members **Cynthia Johnston** and **Lois Sollenberger**. Their friends and families knew how much the CVIP Scholarship Program meant to them. And they knew what a difference a tuition scholarship to the spouse of an MSU international student could make.

Because of these donations and the sales in the 2016 Global Festival World Gift Shop, we were able to award four scholarships for Spring Semester 2017:

Jiang Chang from China is studying for a PhD in Human Geography.

Rabia Faizan from Pakistan is completing a Masters degree in Environmental Design.

Katy Bahrami from Iran is studying Arts and Cultural Management for a Masters degree.

Bomi Eom from South Korea is working towards a Masters degree in Human Resources and Labor Relations.

It is always a pleasure and a learning experience to meet and talk with all the applicants as we conduct the face-to-face interviews. Meeting students and getting to know a little about their academic interests and life plans reenergizes us every semester. Thank you to **Wendy Pope** for joining us for the interviews.

For more information, contact **Dottie Schmidt** (351-2812) or **Peggy Arbanas** (669-1239).

I SPEAK at Delta Township Library

CVIP Board Member **Jim Stedman** arranged for a panel of international students and scholars to speak at the Delta Township Library on March 2. The Friends of Delta Library hosted the event, which drew a crowd of close to 40 Lansing-area community members. The presenters were recruited by I SPEAK and OISS and represented an array of experiences, from an international undergraduate to a visiting faculty member to a spouse of a Ph.D. student. They also represented several countries, including China, Nigeria, Italy, Nepal and Rwanda.



After a brief presentation on international students at MSU and an empathy-building language activity, the audience heard stories from the panelists about their adjustment to life in East Lansing. Panelists described cultural differences in the United States, such as how families spend their weekend time, differing perceptions of personal space, and of course, the home-cooked foods they cannot find in this area. They shared how it feels to be an ambassador for their country, and how they in turn educate their families and friends back home on what they have learned of American culture.

Following the question-and-answer period, participants traveled to Jim's home nearby for refreshments and continued conversation. By the time the event ended, community members were hugging the student panelists goodbye at the door.

Leaders from the Friends of Delta Library have already requested a similar event next year, excited to continue the relationship-building and intercultural understanding this evening has sparked.

Contact **Carol Towl**, ctowl@comcast.net, if you would be willing to drive student speakers to their presentations to community groups, or if your group would like to host an international speaker or panel.

